



ON THE TUBE
National Basketball Association
Utah vs. Phoenix,
TNT (27), 8 p.m.

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald

Clinton leads celebration of Jackie Robinson's triumph

HONORS:

Robinson's grandson will throw out the first pitch of tonight's Mets-Dodgers contest

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With symmetry so perfect it almost seemed planned, the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's major league debut will be celebrated Tuesday, two days after Tiger Woods became the first African-American to win the Masters golf championship.

Robinson would have gotten a kick out of Woods' trailblazing triumph because he loved golf and cherished equality.

And 50 years after he pushed baseball into racial reality, a season of tributes reaches its apex at Shea Stadium when Tuesday night's game between the New York Mets and Los Angeles Dodgers is halted in the fifth inning for ceremonies led by President Clinton.

In a letter to readers of the New York Daily News, Clinton saluted baseball's first black player.

"With grace and steely determination, he pushed open a door that should never have been closed and held it open for the countless talented young men and women who followed him," the President wrote.

Hank Aaron, baseball's home run king, who suffered much of the racial abuse as he pursued Babe Ruth's record that Robinson faced before him, put it more simply:

"Without Jackie Robinson," he said, "there wouldn't have been any Hank Aaron."

Or Willie Mays. Or Bob Gibson. Or Ernie Banks. Or any of the scores of other black stars who changed the pace and pulse of the game after Robinson led the way.

son led the way.

On Monday, a five-mile stretch of New York City's Interboro Parkway that runs past Cypress Hills Cemetery, where Robinson is buried, was to be renamed for the pioneer who integrated baseball a half century ago. A proposal to rename Shea for Robinson will be considered by the City Council.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance is presenting an exhibit honoring Robinson that will tour stadiums starting at Shea on Tuesday and will be at the All-Star game in Cleveland in July.

The first pitch Tuesday night will be thrown out by Jesse Simms, Robinson's grandson, who will play football at UCLA this fall, the way his grandfather did before revolutionizing baseball.

scoreboard

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

MLB

American League

Oakland	1	Detroit	0
Boston	10	Milwaukee	7
Seattle	6	Kansas City	3
Cleveland	1	Toronto	2
Minnesota	2	Anaheim	5
Baltimore	4	NY Yankees	1
Chicago	1		
Texas	3		

National League

Houston	4	Montreal	8
St. Louis	2	Colorado	10
Cincinnati	5	San Francisco	3
Atlanta	15	NY Mets	2

NBA

Detroit	91	Minnesota	95
Orlando	100	Miami	87
Cleveland	82	New York	107
Charlotte	94	Indiana	110
Toronto	100	LA Clippers	99
Chicago	117	Dallas	93
Golden State	103	San Antonio	106
Denver	93	Sacramento	120
Washington	131		
Philadelphia	110		

Grand jury decides not to charge Blazer forward

PORTLAND (AP) — A Multnomah County grand jury declined Monday to indict Portland Trail Blazers forward Gary Trent in connection with a fight at a bar, his lawyer said.

Trent hit a man with a pool cue on March 15 in what began as a fist fight. Trent said the man provoked him and that he acted in self-defense.

Attorney Robert Weaver said the other man in the fight had a criminal record for assault, and that one of the man's associates wrote Weaver's office within a week asking for money.

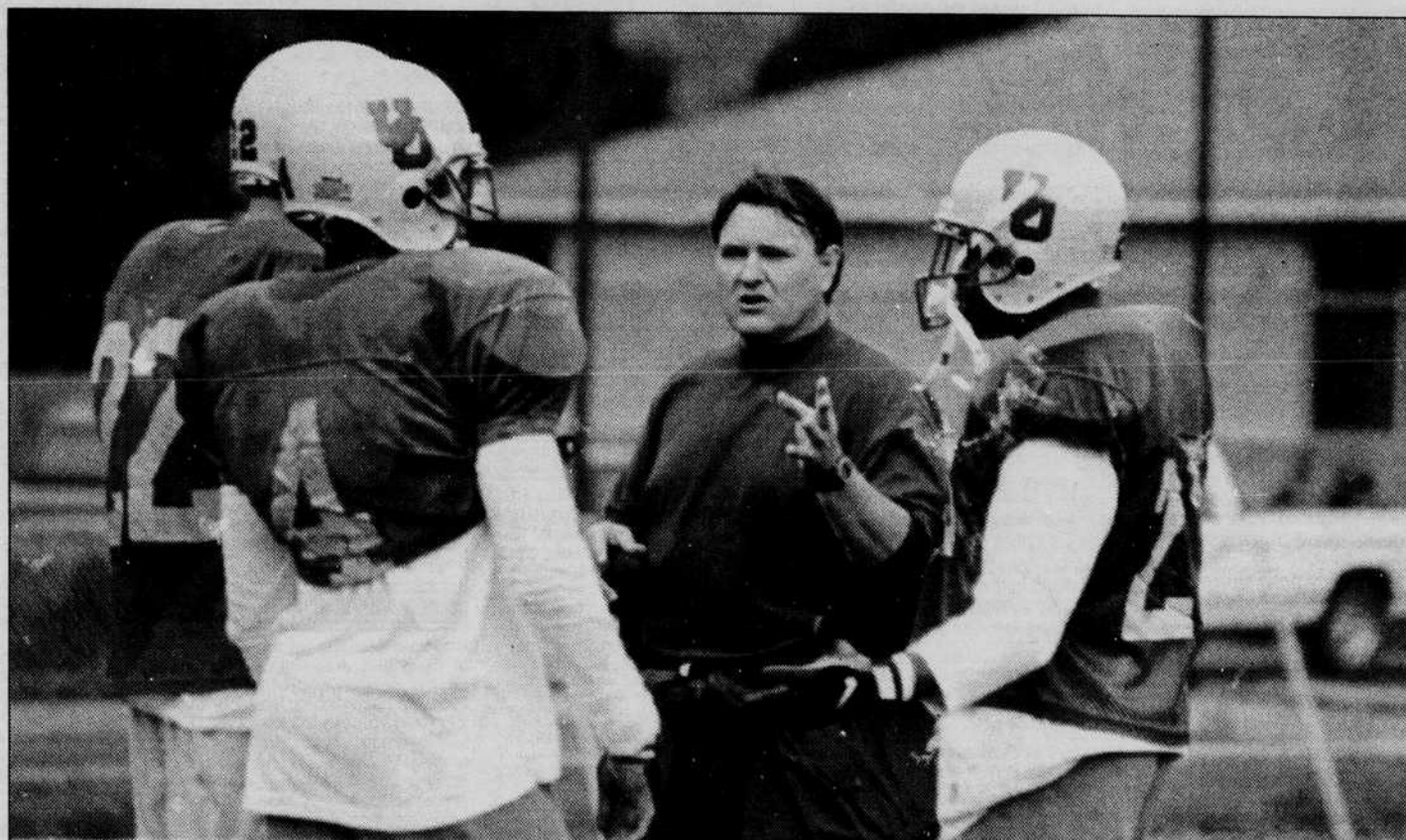
"That should speak for itself," Weaver said.

Fresno State basketball player sues newspaper

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Attorneys for Fresno State point guard Dominick Young filed a libel suit Monday against The Fresno Bee over reports that the player is the focus of a point-shaving investigation.

The Fresno Superior Court suit charges that Bee articles falsely accuse Young of criminal activity and that Young "has consorted with illegal bookies, gamblers, criminals and other scoundrels."

OREGON FOOTBALL



MARK McTYRE/Emerald

Oregon defensive coordinator Rich Stubler is trying to replace the loss of six defensive starters from the Ducks' 1996 squad.

Change may be good for the new Duck defense



Ryan Halvorsen

When I initially looked at the Oregon spring football depth chart, I was deathly frightened of the season to come. I thought that the Ducks probably would only have a chance at beating Oregon State, and that is a harsh thought no matter how you look at it.

There was no Pacific-10 Conference experience to be found on either side of the ball, and it was one big long list of names that I had only seen printed in the program. I thought the Ducks would be doomed in '97, relative to the last three seasons.

But upon further examination, seeing the team practice a few times and talking with some of the players, my view changed 180 degrees, and now I think the Ducks might even be pretty good this year. I'll even go out on a limb and say they have the potential to be as good as last season's team. Key word here is potential.

The biggest change during the course of last season was in the play of the defense. Gang Green was non-existent, giving up some 400 yards and change every game. It wasn't until the last four games of the season that things turned around for the Ducks, and their record over that stretch reflected it.

Gang Green, however, is no longer. Only seniors Desmond Byrd and Jaiya Figueras saw significant playing time during that era. So this season begins the retooling of the Oregon defense, and the members of that squad are already preparing to hear it if they don't improve on last season's disastrous start.

"I've talked it over with the coaches and they're pretty happy with the way the defense is responding to the kind of criticism that we're going to endure after all of the big names have left," Byrd said.

Anyone who was on last year's squad knows that a bad performance leads to questioning interviews and abusive articles from media that have grown accustomed to covering a winning team ever since that fateful '94 season, and no one on this squad wants to repeat that.

The holes left by the departure of the seniors and Kenny Wheaton have caused a mild chaos among the coaches and players in an attempt to fill the enormous void. The effort has led to some healthy competition and some reshuffling.

"I think that these guys are looking for something to prove and with that they bring a little more desire to the game than you would if you were just expected to play good," Byrd said. "People don't expect them to play good, so that's why they're going to play better than normal. I think they're pulling a little something out from their gut to play this game."

One of the most interesting moves the coaching staff has made is moving tailback Kevin Parker to left cornerback. The junior started three games last season, but on the other side of the ball. He has big shoes to fill.

The rest of the defensive secondary is young, but laden with talent. With Figueras taking over again at free safety, Brandon McLemore has been moved from his free safety position to the right corner this spring.

Dietrich Moore, a sophomore, is listed as the front runner for the strong safety position with sophomore Chris Young, who saw significant playing time last year, close behind. Michael Fletcher, who started five games last year at strong safety, has been moved to right corner and is listed behind McLemore on the depth chart.

One of the most experienced areas the Ducks have on

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