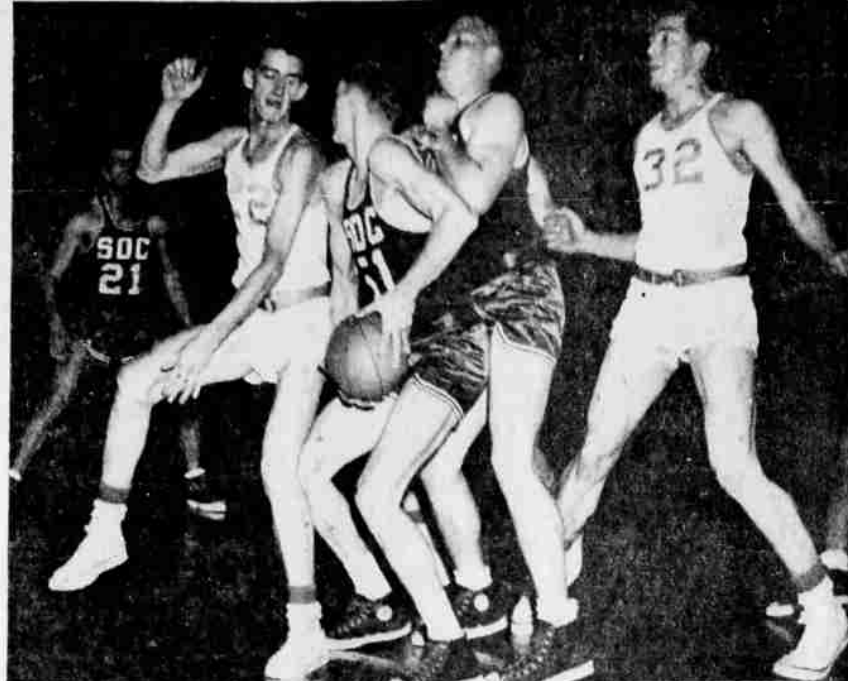




GOING FOR DISTANCE — Oregon Tech's Gene Branson, number 54, right, missed this time and it may have been a good thing for big John Payne, SOC, who snatched the ball away just in time. At left Dick Lillebo, 35, moves up to help. The Owls evened the count with the Ashlanders winning 71-64.



TENSION MOUNTING — The faces of Paul Layher, 42, from Oregon Tech, John Payne, 51, SOC, and Gene Branson, 54 left, reflect the tension and excitement of the hard-fought struggle on the Mile High Court Tuesday night. Payne and Layher broke even on rebounds.



HEAVY TRAFFIC — Owls Bruce Guill, 22, at left, and Troy Koontz, 32, at right aren't helping matters a bit as Southern Oregon's John Payne, with the ball, and Hughie Smith (almost on his back) get jammed up in the middle. In the left background is SOC high pointer Gordie Carrigan, 21.

West Virginia Bids For Top Nat'l Rank

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Virginia resumes its bid for the top national ranking after an 11-day layoff while its Southern Conference neighbor, Virginia Tech, continues its push for just plain recognition in college basketball features tonight.

West Virginia, fourth-ranked nationally but with the best overall record of all major teams at 15-1, plays at Pitt in its first game since it blasted Villanova from the unbeaten ranks on Jan. 16. Virginia Tech — quietly building up

to West Virginia's class in the Southern Conference — seeks its ninth straight victory and its 13th in 15 games in a road toughie at Dayton.

Both West Virginia, riding a 56-game winning streak within the Southern Conference, and VPI have 6-0 conference records this year but don't meet during the regular season. Depending on the draw and early round games, they might face each other in the post-season conference tournament which advances its winner into the NCAA tournament.

Meantime, West Virginia continues its challenge to Cincinnati, Bradley and California — the three once-beaten clubs ahead of it in The Associated Press national poll, and VPI keeps moving from stop to stop on the road on an admitted campaign to make a national name for itself. The Gobblers are 17th in this week's AP poll.

Of Tech's 24 games this season, 18 are on the road. So far, they've played at home only twice and after tough Dayton (13-3) tonight, they move on Thursday to Toledo, ranked 13th nationally after building an 11-2 record that includes a victory over Dayton.

Smith's big men are 6-6 Chris Smith and Bob Ayersmen, both averaging around 20 points a game. West Virginia, of course, has All-America Jerry West with a 26.9 scoring average and some handy teammates who form such a top club that Pitt coach Bob Timmons comments:

"Sure we can beat 'em — if they have a bad night. If we stop West, if our defense muzzles their offense, and if we're lucky," Pitt, which usually gives the Mountaineers fits on the Pitt court, has a 6-8 record.

Kentucky, just about knocked out of the Southwest Conference race it usually dominates, plays Georgia at Columbus, Ga., eighth-ranked Villanova (12-1) is at Army, and Loyola of Los Angeles against seventh-ranked Utah (14-2) in other major games tonight.

The Eastside Electric Tigers administered an 87-18 pounding to Lost River in Victory League basketball at Fremont Junior High Monday night.

Bob Yurek with 31 points and Joe Pynes with 29 were the big point producers for the winners.

In other Monday games Fleets Sporting Goods dumped the Gun Store 45-31, Farmers Sand and Gravel waxed DeMolay Gold 54-37 and the Yogis trampled DeMolay Blues 62-37.

Don Hamilton hit 18 points for Farmers while Jack Sandmeyer was high for the Golds with 12. Dave Saks laced the twine for 19 points in the Yogi-Blue test while Ray Sessler was high for the losers with 14.

Dave Bruns hit 15 points to lead Fleets and Jim Barnes collected 10 for the Gunners.

The short scores:

Fleets 45—Phillips 8, Bruns 13, D. Lancaster 12, Alexander 6, J. Lancaster 4.
Gun Store 41—Fasanello 7, Husted 6, Barnes 10, J. Baker 4, Bunyard 2, Jackson 9, Binkley 2.

Eastside Tigers 87—Inley 17, Moore 2, Easley 8, Yurek 31, Pynes 29.
Lost River 18—Pippin 3, McBride 6, Ferguson 2, Say 2, Howe 3, Ziegler 1.

DeMolay Gold 57—Kenyon 2, Jensen 9, Puckett 11, Kemmizer 4, Sandmeyer 12.
Farmers Sand 54—Rhodes 13, Barnes 6, Owens 14, D. Hamilton 10, Burke 2.

Yogis 62—Head 13, Jones 8, Styles 6, Curran 4, Riley 3, Mitchell 4, Saks 18, Hancock 4.
Blues 57—Killington 4, Kajiwaki 4, Parks 7, Johnson 7, Atkins 10, Elliott 8, Sessler 14.

Owls Whack Red Raiders, 71-64

Oregon Collegiate Conference

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

W L Pct

Portland State 3 2 .600

Oregon Tech 3 3 .500

Southern Oregon 4 4 .500

Eastern Oregon 3 3 .500

Oregon College 2 3 .400

Tuesday Night Results

Oregon College 73, Portland State 69 (Overtime)

Oregon Tech 71, Southern Oregon 64

By WAYNE SCOTT

Herald & News Sports Editor

The battle for second place in the Oregon Collegiate Conference

title chase turned into a three-way scramble when the Oregon Tech Owls stuck Southern Oregon College with the short end of a

71-64 score in a loosely played basketball game on the Mile High Court Tuesday night.

For the Owls the victory was number five against 10 defeats for the full season and it boosted them to a 3-3 mark for OCC league play, but perhaps more important, the win meant that they were once again even with the SOC Red Raiders. A week ago Tuesday, on the Raider floor, the Owls were squeezed out 74-70.

Despite the fact that the Techmen were little more than Luke-warm from either the foul line or the field over the distance Tuesday night, they spent literally the entire final six minutes of the first half at the foul line and converted 11 of 15 free throws for what turned out to be a mighty impor-

tant group of points.

SOC had committed eight fouls within the six-minute period.

At the halfway point the Owls were on top 33-24 and even though the Raiders were to outscore them in the second half the margin was enough.

There was a time, however, when it began to look as if it wasn't. With 3:52 left to play, high-pointer Gordie Carrigan cast off with one of his two-handed howitzers to bring the Raiders to within two points, 61-59. Owl Paul Layher sank a layup, missed a free throw, then the Techmen went into a stall with 2:30 left, and gained a couple of valuable points when Norm Oliva canned two foul shots. Brad Flanary, counted with a two-pointer off a drive

and with the score 65-61 Oliva fouled Hughie Smith who hit one of his shots to make the count 65-62.

At this point OTI speedster Leon Wilson broke for a driving layin and was blasted clear into the second row by Smith. The basket was good, however, to make the board show 67-62. Seconds later Wilson was back at the free throw line after being fouled by Smith and with 41 seconds left, he sank both gifties to make the score 69-62.

After a mixup in mid-court when Dennis McKee fouled out to give Smith a chance to sink two free throws, Layher grabbed the ball and drove for the final two points as the gun sounded.

Layher, Jack Horton and Gene Branson were the Tech high scor-

ers, each with 12. Carrigan, who hit eight two-handers from way outside, plus four for five at the foul line, was high with 20. Team-mate Brad Flanary hit for 12 while big John Payne and Glen Peterson, 6-6ers who both fouled out of the ball game, were next with 11 and 10 respectively for the Raiders.

Van Zitek, Leon Wilson and Norm Oliva had 9, 8 and 7 respectively for OTI.

Both teams got off to a slow start, the Owls holding a 5-4 edge after the first three minutes, then letting SOC get a slight bulge, 10-8. The OTI quint got a lead, 15-14, on a rebounder by Horton, with 9:12 left in the half, and from here on the Raiders were never quite able to catch up.

The Owls hit only 20 of 79 tries from floor for a .253 and scored .646 from the foul line off 31 successes of 48 tries. The SOC five notched .362 from the field, 21 for 58, and 22 for 31 from the charity stripe for a .709.

The Techmen, led by Norm Oliva who pulled in 16, Horton, who collected 10 and Layher with eight, outscored the Raiders 60-42. Payne, Peterson and Carrigan each collected nine for SOC.

The Tech squad journeys to Monmouth for a two-game series with Oregon College this weekend while the Ashlanders draw a weekend off.

The box score:

SOC (64)
Carrigan 4 4-5 3 20
Flanary 4 4-5 3 12
Barnet 0 0-0 2 2
Gardner 0 0-0 0 0
Lillebo 0 2-2 1 2
Puhl 0 1-3 2 2
Gull 0 1-2 3 1
Vannice 5 1-1 5 11
Payne 3 4-4 5 10
Peterson 1 3-6 3 5
Smith 0 0-0 0 0
White 21 22-31 31 64

OTI (11)
Layher 4 4-10 3 12
Wilson 3 2-2 2 8
McKee 0 5-7 5 5
Horton 4 0-1 3 12
Oliva 1 3-7 2 7
Koontz 1 2-3 2 4
Johnson 0 0-0 2 0
Guill 0 2-2 1 2
Branson 3 6-9 4 12
Zitek 2 5-7 2 9
TOTALS 26 31-48 26 71

SOC
OTI

FG FT PF TP

4 4-5 3 20

4 4-5 3 12

0 0-0 2 2

0 0-0 0 0

0 2-2 1 2

0 1-3 2 2

0 1-2 3 1

5 1-1 5 11

3 4-4 5 10

1 3-6 3 5

0 0-0 0 0

21 22-31 31 64

FG FT PF TP

4 4-10 3 12

3 2-2 2 8

0 5-7 5 5

4 0-1 3 12

1 3-7 2 7

1 2-3 2 4

0 0-0 2 0

0 2-2 1 2

3 6-9 4 12

2 5-7 2 9

26 31-48 26 71

Basketball Scoreboard

Portland League

Jefferson 57, Cleveland 43

Lincoln 48, Washington 36

Roosevelt 79, Madison 65

Wilson 53, Benson 44

Franklin 55, Grant 49

West Linn 53, Newberg 45

Banks 75, Clatskanie 61

Newport 40, Taft 49

St. Helens 59, McMinnville 38

Oswego 61, Dallas 56

Forest Grove 50, Tillamook 30

Albany 46, North Salem 32

South Salem 50, Lebanon 39

Corvallis 50, Sweet Home 48 (Two overtimes)

Philomath 51, Salem Academy 42

Dayton 73, Amity 45

Williamina 55, Sherwood 40

Sheridan 43, Yamhill 29

Independence 53, Mt. Angel 37

Turner 65, Estacada 60

Stayton 54, Molalla 39

Vernonia 74, Gervais 60

Woodburn 41, Silverton 31

Alsea 42, Jefferson 41

St. Paul 72, MacLaren 48

Sobriety 45, North Catholic 36

Mill City 49, Fall City 39

Toledo 33, Siletz 21

Chemawa 72, Washington Deaf 65

Eddyville 56, Detroit 53

Perrydale 77, Gaston 74

Seaside 56, Knappa 48

Wallowa 71, Enterprise 44

Fortland Christian 67, Corbett 45

The Dalles 6, WyEast 56

Central Catholic (Portland) 76, Sunset (Beaverton) 44

David Douglas 59, Gresham 52

Cascade Union 65, Estacada 50

Tigard 52, Oregon City 32

Jewell 61, Warrenton 56

Clackamas 54, Hillsboro 32 (overtime)

St. Francis (Eugene) 62, Halsey 39

Pleasant Hill 48, Oakridge 32

Junction City 62, Elmira 57

Yoncalla 62, Camas Valley 21

Reedsport 58, Mapleton 41

Waldport 52, Florence 38

St. Francis (Eugene) 62, Halsey 39

Pleasant Hill 48, Oakridge 32

Junction City 62, Elmira 57

Yoncalla 62, Camas Valley 21

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Waldport 52, Florence 38

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