

"Flash" Comes Home

By VINCENT GATES, Old Oregon Sports Editor

Ten years ago in Portland a mere mite of a shortstop scampered around the diamonds with the vim and finesse of a big-league baseball player, as he stopped sizzling grounders and punched out home runs for the American Legion Junior champions of Oregon. They called him Joe, and his coach said someday fans would forget about Babe Ruth and Mark Koenig when this Joe "got up there." Meaning up in the Big Leagues.

Today Joe is "up there" and fans who followed the destinies of New York's Yankees three-time championship team this year have all but forgotten the heroes of yesteryear, as Joe Gordon from the University of Oregon sparked double-plays, cut off line drives, and poled out home runs. His boss, another guy named Joe (McCarthy), wouldn't trade the Gordon who plays the keystone sack at second base for all the Ruths and Koenigs of all time.

Some sports writer who reads the funny papers called Joe "Flash," because Flash Gordon sounded good. Now, they call him Flash Gordon because he is good. You doubt it—then take a look at his record in the 1938 world's series.

It's a far cry from the championship of the Northwest Conference with the Oregon baseball team in 1935 to the championship of the world with the Yankees in 1938, but that's the path Gordon took in his meteoric climb to fame. Not content to just be a member of the world's champions, Joe started showing up the veterans early in spring training by clouting home runs with the regularity of Dimaggio and darting around the second base area in errorless fashion. Not content to just come through with a bang, with he and Crosetti pulling double plays faster than a versatile confidence man. Not content to enter the World Series against the Cubs' old timers with a darn good chance of being a "goat"—a tradition set aside exclusively for rookies—Joe stumped the baseball world with some of the outstanding plays of the season and led the "murderer's row" in hitting with an astounding .400. Aside from that he handled 26 chances with but two errors. If that isn't playing second base in big-time fashion then Ty Cobb was downright slow.

Joe Gordon's baseball days date back principally to his early boyhood in Portland, where he was a star even



Joe "Flash" Gordon, ex-'36, Oregon's "local boy who made good" will return to the campus to receive his degree.

then of sandlot teams. Following this he stepped into the shortstop post at Jefferson high school, and also found time to play a couple of years of first-rate football. When Joe entered the University of Oregon in 1931 it was quite natural that he should find a place on the baseball team. With big-league scouts eyeing him for three years Joe, despite the handicap of approaching fame already staring him in the eye, literally burned up the conference as he led the Oregon nine to a championship his last year of intercollegiate play. By the way, before he took the baseball business too ser-

iously, Joe edged in a season of football for the Frosh, and Mr. "Prink" Callison, then coach of the Webfoots, was a sad man when Joe declined to help out the varsity the next year.

After disposing of college shortstop pastures at Oregon, Joe tripped over to a little place called the Pacific Coast League and rounded out a season of successful play with the Oakland (Calif.) club, batting .300 and fielding in his same precise manner. Then in 1937 he looked over the eastern field and showed his wares to Newark of the International League, where his batting average was about the same and his fielding was good enough to get him a try with the Yanks.

"Mrs. Joe"

Highlight of Joe's first season with the Yankees was not the increase in salary offered him after a great year, nor his name on the roster with such greats as Crosetti, Selkirk, Gomez, Dimaggio and others, nor the acclaim that was given him for his World's Series playing, but his marriage early in the season to Dorothy Crum—Mrs. Joe Gordon to you. The University of Oregon's loss was the Yankees gain—or Mrs. Joe's gain.

The star second baseman of the Yankees will enroll again at Eugene this winter term to complete three hours of study for his degree in physical education.

New Swimming Coach

Ned Johns, former Stanford pole-vaulter and star athlete, has been named to take "Mike" Hoyman's place as swimming coach for the University of Oregon. Hoyman is on leave of absence doing graduate work.

Johns has been track coach and physical education instructor at the Palo Alto, Cal., high school, for the past four years and has been doing graduate study at Stanford.

Homecoming Committee

Alumni members of Homecoming committee will be Flossie Radabaught Steckmest, '28; Joe Freck, Jr., '31; Robert Mautz, '27; Roland Davis, '28; "Baz" Williams, ex-'19; and Claire Kneeland, '27.

**Homecoming
November 5**



No definite schedule of workouts and trials for the Cross Country team applicants has yet been made.