BASEBALL BEARS AIM FOR ‘80 HONORS

It is often said that pitching is 90 percent of the game of baseball. If that time-tried adage is true, the Black Bears will be making their fifth post-season appearance under veteran coach John Winkin in six years.

“We have deep pitching this year and, defensively, we’ll be as tough as we’ve been in years,” says Winkin, who has a five-year record of 119-46 at Maine.

The Bears finished eighth in the nation in earned run average with a team ERA of 2.72 in 1979, with righthander Tom Mahan finishing ninth with a 1.07 ERA as a freshman.

Mahan, a crafty knuckleballer, joins senior southpaw Skip Clark, expected to be the staff ace after a sparkling season (6-3, 1.92 ERA), highly-touted freshman strikeout artist Joe Johnson, and either sophomore lefty John Balerna, back from a freshman season injury, junior Don DeWolfe, junior Don Mason or sophomore Rick Bouchard in the team’s four-man starting rotation.

In the bullpen, Winkin can call on one of the most effective pitchers in UM history, senior righthander Tom Griffin. Noted for his calm approach in the clutch, he has yet to give up an earned run in 17 career appearances and 33 innings. He has allowed just 15 hits and racked up 39 strikeouts on his way to a 5-1 record and five saves. (continued on back page)
Rufus Harris Smashes 2,000 Points

HOOP BEARS MAKE FIRST-EVER PLAYOFFS

Statistics don’t usually tell the entire story, but for the 1979-80 University of Maine basketball squad, 15 new records indicate that this past season was something extra special for head coach Skip Chappelle’s Black Bears.

It was a season that found Maine up against the nation’s two top-ranked teams (DePaul and LSU). It was a year filled with the amazing exploits of honorable mention All-American Rufus Harris, perhaps the finest player ever to wear the Blue and White. It had its problems with the loss of several key players like Rick Boucher, a starting senior who missed the second half of the season with an injury. It was a season filled with frenzied comebacks, brilliant contributions by players mislabeled “reserves” and the first-ever post-season games.

But mostly it was a season the TEAM could be proud of.

For the recordbook, captain Rufus Harris had his best year, breaking six career marks and five single-season records. The 6-4 senior from Framingham, Mass., scored 2,206 points to become New England’s second-highest career scorer.

His 718 points, 28 games played, 271 field goals, 176 free throws, 216 free throw attempts and his 25.6 points per game were all new UM standards for one season.

Harris’ career totals for points (2,206), field goals (834), field goal attempts (1,759), free throws (538), free throw attempts (680), and games played (103) will all be listed in the record section of next year’s Black Bear pressguide.

Harris led Maine in scoring 26 times this past season. He scored 30 or more points in a game nine times and led Maine in rebounds on eight occasions.

Oddly enough, the former Maine Central Institute standout did not set any one-game records in his four-year career.

As a team, the Bears set three records on their way to a 15-13 record, the seventh winning season in Chappelle’s nine-year UM career. Maine shot a sparkling .506 from the floor, played 28 games for the first time, and scored 2,067 points.

Other individuals made their marks as well, with both freshman Rick Carlisle (Ogdensburg, N.Y.) and junior Dave Wyman (Westminster, Mass.) playing a record 28 games, along with Harris. Carlisle was second in team scoring with 12.3 ppg. The 6-4 point guard led Maine in assists with 118, the highest Bear total for a player in four years, in field goal shooting (.555) and free throw shooting (.856).

One record was set by the coach. Chappelle upped his career record to 126-99, the most ever by a UM basketball coach.


MAINE ICEMEN SHARP IN FIRST DIV. I YEAR

Will hockey history repeat itself in 1980-81? In its first season, the University of Maine squad just missed the Division II playoffs. During the second campaign, it was home ice for the playoffs, and this season, the Black Bears were edged out for a Division I playoff berth on the final day of the season.

Head coach Jack Semler’s Bears (15-16-1) were nipped from this season’s ECAC Division One Playoff picture when Cornell University, needing two victories in its last two games, defeated number two-ranked Providence and Boston University in overtime.

Surprising all observers, the Black Bears finished third in the Eastern region of Division One, behind top-ranked Providence.

Leading the Black Bears in scoring for the third straight year was junior Gary Conn (Marblehead, Mass.). Playing in all 32 games this season, he led the team in goals scored (21), total points (45), game-winning goals (3), and tied for the lead in power play goals (8). Conn, who has played every game in which the Bears have competed, leads UMO career scorers in five different categories.

Following Conn in the scoring derby is junior John Tortorella (Concord, Mass.). The hard-working winger had 14 goals and 22 assists for 36 points, and again led the team in penalty minutes with 71.

Junior Joe Crespi (Bridgewater, Mass.) finished one point behind Tortorella with 17 goals and 18 assists for 35 points.

Career stats show Conn on top with 138 points on 77 goals and 81 assists, followed by Crespi (59-63-124), Brian Hughes (38-57-105), captain Bill Demianik (40-34-94), and Andre Aubut (16-57-73).

Junior goaltender Jim Tortorella (Concord, Mass.) carried the load after Jeff Nord (Quincy, Mass.) elected to redshirt with an injured ankle. Tortorella played more than 1600 minutes, compiling a 3.93 goals-against average and a .879 save percentage. His 14 wins tie the single-season record, and his 794 saves shattered the old mark of 494, which he held.

On the team side, Maine was outscored 144 to 129, and had more goals in only the first period (44-40). The Black Bears had a good powerplay, converting 25.4 percent of its chances (35 for 138), while holding the opposition to just 17.6 percent (25 for 142). Maine was hurt, though, by allowing 12 short-handed goals, while netting six of the short-handed variety.

In their first Division One Campaign, the Bears came up with their first overtime victory, winning 6-5 at New Hampshire, and freshman defenseman Ken Fargnoli (Smithfield, R.I.) became only the seventh player ever to score a goal in his first game at UMO.

Two All-Americans Rufus Harris stands with coach Skip Chappelle after the 6-4 senior broke all-time record

Sophomore Andre Aubut named ACHA All-American
TED CURTIS REMAINS BLACK BEAR BOOSTER
by Donna Pinkham

A former jack of all trades in the sports world at the University of Maine at Orono during his 36 years here, Ted Curtis, age 79, still remains an active and loyal fan of the Fighting Black Bears since retiring in 1966.

A 1923 graduate of UMO, Curtis returned to his alma mater in 1930, after gaining some coaching experience at Lee Academy and Caribou High School to assume the role of Faculty Manager of Athletics.

At the onset of the depression era it appeared the university athletic program would suffer and fold, but Curtis kept close tabs on the powerful athletic board and devised a financial plan whereby the program was able to grow and prosper.

It was Curtis who helped in the planning of the Memorial Gymnasium and brought basketball back to UMO. The program had been dropped a year prior to his arrival and he was told that a team wouldn’t last due to “lack of interest” in the sport. But Curtis’ determination carried him through and for each game there was a more than healthy student turnout, much as there is today. According to Curtis, there was no question in his mind about the move.

A dairy husbandry major, Curtis ventured north to Lee Academy upon graduation, where he took on a teaching job, while coaching seven teams a year. During his five years at Lee Academy, his cross-country and ski teams each won four state titles, while posting undefeated seasons.

From Lee, he went further north to Caribou High School, where he taught and coached nine teams per year including basketball, cross-country, winter-sports, and tennis. Again he carried on a winning tradition.

Curtis is a leader and a compassionate man. He encouraged his athletes and showed them sportsmanship and pride. “It’s exciting and rewarding to see them go on to bigger things,” he said.

The “Yankee Trader,” as he is known by his friends and associates, has seen many outstanding Maine athletes over the years and feels that UMO is long known for its track background. “Track has the greatest history of any sport at UMO, having had several Olympic men and national and international champs.”

Curtis has seen the evolution of sports. “The equipment has changed. We didn’t have ski tows and there was no outside lighting.” Another exciting development in sports was the aspect of “moving pictures,” which allowed teams to see themselves and their mistakes through video playback.

During his career in athletics, Curtis helped organize and create countless new teams, clubs and organizations, recognizing the needs of his community. He has deep-seated love for youth and mankind, which led him to help organize and develop the Old Town-Orono YMCA. He was also active in agricultural exhibits, Grange, Boy Scouts, and church activities.

He helped organize the “M” Club at the University and served as secretary for 34 years. He started the first chapter of the Future Farmers of America in Maine, and was honored as “State Farmer.”

During his tenure at UMO he served as: president and secretary of Maine Intercollegiate Athletic Association, president and secretary-treasurer of the N.E.A.A., president of N.E.C.C., secretary of Yankee Conference, advisor of Maine Outing Club, advisor of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity (31 years) of which he is a member, president of Eastern Intercollegiate Ski Association, chairman of eligibility committee of E.I.S.A.

Curtis and his wife, Augusta, in their 52nd year of marriage, reside in Orono. The couple has four children: Mrs. William (Mary) Betts, 51, of Mattapoisett, Mass.; Mrs. Arthur (Edith) Partridge, 50, of Moscow, Idaho; Mrs. William (Marian) McDonald, 46 of Winthrop; and Ted Curtis, Jr., 38, of Orono. The Curtises have 16 grandchildren.
PETER NORRIS NAMED TO DEVELOPMENT POST

Peter Norris, 33, of 472 Essex Street, Bangor, a 1968 graduate of the University of Maine at Orono, has been appointed a program associate for athletic fund raising in the UMO Development Office, effective March 1. The appointment was made by UMO acting President Kenneth W. Allen.

Norris, who played on the UMO football teams of 1965, 1966 and 1967 as a defensive end and punter, will be responsible for raising private funds to provide non-need scholarships for athletes participating in UMO intercollegiate programs.

Since 1972 Norris has been the owner and manager of a fishing, hunting and vacationing business in northern Maine. Prior to that he was teacher and assistant football coach at Rockland District High School and a sales consultant for the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company.

Norris is married and the father of two children.

BLACK BEAR SIDELINER

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SCHOLARSHIP CORNER

RENEWED COMMITMENT

The competition for talented athletes continues to escalate. Coaches must be willing to put in long hard hours of searching to locate and recruit the best players available. All of their efforts will go unrewarded if they are unable to compete with other coaches in the scholarship arena. To state it candidly, their success is directly related to our support.

All of the non-need scholarship money at the University of Maine comes from direct gifts from alumni and friends. This makes us rather unique in comparison to most of our opponents. This also allows us an opportunity to make direct contributions to Black Bear victories almost as important as the contributions of the coaches and players.

Since the inception of the non-need scholarship program, the public level of participation has continually increased. The results of this involvement are becoming more evident each year. Many of our athletic teams have shown a marked improvement, and should continue to do so, so long as our scholarship support does not waiver. We are asking all of our previous contributors to renew their pledges and increase them if possible. We encourage them to invite others to join with us to raise the necessary monies to keep our teams competitive and in the public eye.

More academic institutions are realizing the importance of a winning athletic program to their morale, reputation and vitality. The success of a team on the field can now be translated into a positive reaction to the school as a whole.

To personalize the relationship of the University to you, the donor and supporter, is one of my top priorities. Offering you real and specific answers to where our programs stand in relation to others will be standard policy. Letting you know, as much as possible, how and where your gifts are used is essential if we are to reinforce your willingness to give.

Presently the task is ours alone. We must allow the coaches an opportunity to recruit on a more equal basis with their counterparts. This can only be accomplished by a steadfast commitment to financial support. We all enjoy leaving a contest on the winning side. We’re headed in that direction, let’s not let our athletic train of success get sidetracked. I look forward to your support.

Pete Norris

WINTER TEAMS EXCEL: 88-52-1

Capturing two state championships and one New England title, the University of Maine at Orono men’s and women’s winter athletic teams compiled an impressive 62.8 winning percentage, winning 88 contests, losing 52 and tying one.

The women’s swimming team, 7-2 on the year, captured its third straight New England championship (see related story). The men’s indoor track team remained undefeated over two seasons, going 4-0 this season, and captured its third straight Maine indoor title, while the women’s basketball team took its second straight title with a 16-4 record, the best since 1976-77.

The men’s basketball team made its first appearance in post-season play (see related story), while the hockey team was edged out of the playoff picture on the last day of the year (see related story).

Head coach Alan Switzer’s men’s swimming team finished at 9-2, and again swam well at the Eastern Seaboard Championships, finishing ninth. Vince Martino’s wrestling team finished 4-6 on the campaign, but was nixed by just .25 points for the Northern New England Championship by Plymouth State.

Lisa Burger’s gymnastics team completed the season with a 9-1 mark and finished fourth in the Tri-State Championships. The rifle team posted an 8-5 record under first-year coach MSG William Trussell, and the women’s indoor track team took one of four dual meets and finished third in the state championships.

The ski teams, under Brad Folger, had a long year, as lack of snow made things difficult for many eastern schools. Senior John Mathieu of Waterville qualified to ski in the NCAA 15-kilometer race held at Lake Placid in early March.
Coach Jeff Wren’s women’s swim team splashed its way to its third straight crown in the 1980 New England Women’s Swimming and Diving Championships held earlier this month in UMO’s Stanley Wallace Pool.

The Black Bears, 7-2 on the regular season, were paced by sophomore Cary Bryden and junior Beth Carone. Bryden finished first in four events, while Carone captured three firsts to account for all seven of Maine’s number one finishes in a meet won by Maine by 168 points over second-place Boston University.

Bryden won the 50, 100, 200, and 500 freestyle events, while Carone took the 50 breaststroke and both the 100 and 200 I.M. events. Carone also finished second in the 100 breaststroke and the 50 backstroke events. Other second-place finishes included Susan Moore in the one-meter diving, Patti Ward in the three-meter diving and Mary Sowa in the 400 I.M.

The Bears wound up third in three relay events, while other third-place performances came from Sowa in the 200 I.M. and from Nancy Kurt in the 1650 freestyle.

The final team scores were: Maine 734, BU 566, Springfield 554, UNH 458, BC 406, Smith 331, UConn 321, URI 306, UMass 241, Clark 235, and WPI 93.
BASEBALL BEARS AIM
Joining Griffin will be pitcher-outfielder Kevin Buckley (3-1 in 1979) and Steve Roy.

Behind the plate will be sophomores Ed Pickett, last year's number two backstop, and Peter Ouellette, who also plays quarterback on Maine's varsity football squad. Both Pickett and Ouellette have fine arms and have played well in preseason drills, helping the team overcome the loss of graduated All-New England catcher Mark Armstrong.

The infield looks set with co-captain Bobby Anthoine at second base, sophomore Pete Adams at shortstop, junior Mike Coutts at third and big Jon Perry at first.

The speedy Anthoine, a converted centerfielder after his freshman year, makes all the plays. Adams, a rifle-armed hustler, showed his mettle with countless sparkling plays last season. Coutts is a much-improved fielder who blossomed into one of the most dangerous hitters on the team as the 1979 season progressed and will be counted on as a key both offensively and defensively.

A deep unit backs up the starters with ice hockey standout John Tortorella and Mark Sutton at the top of the list.

The outfield looks strong with the team's top hitter, Kevin Buckley, in left, co-captain Mike Schwob in right and either freshman Brad Colton or freshman Tom Vanidestine in centerfield. All four can make the big play and will provide a big part of Maine's offense. Junior switchhitter Roger Willwerth and junior Jim Foley, who will see plenty of action as the team's designated hitter, are close behind.

Winkin sees a team with improved speed for 1980. The 1979 Bears stole 44 bases in 54 tries, led by Anthoine's 8 for 8, Buckley's 6 for 8 and Schwob's 5 for 5. Look for Maine to run more this year.

FOOTBALL TRI-CAPTAINS NAMED

QB John Tursky
Senior
Randolph, NJ

G Andy Neilson
Senior
Sharon, MA

LB Pete Thiboutot
Senior
Waterville, ME

Support The
BLACK BEAR HALL OF FAME