OWLOOK

Owls May Hold Key To SWC Track Meet

By PAUL BURKA

When the Southwest Conference closes the books on its 1962-63 season tomorrow, the annual Track and Field meet will draw most of the attention, although competition will be going on in golf and tennis as well. Defending champ Texas, host school Baylor, and dark horse A&M will battle it out in a replay of their bitterly-fought triangular meet of April which was won—barely—by the Longhorns.

But this time the entire SWC will be there, and for the Longhorns, three schools are fine, but eight's a crowd. In the triangular meet, Texas edged Baylor on the strength of victories in the field events, but Rice figures to rob the 'Horns of some points there.

THE NATION'S LEADING collegiate pole vaulter and also a contender for the conference broad jump honors will be representing Rice in the person of Fred Hansen. The high-vaulting Owl junior will be joined in favorites' roles by soph Ed Red and senior Dave Edwards, who could easily sweep the javelin. Triumphs in these two events should cost Texas enough points to allow the Bears to sneak through to their second track title in three years.

If all goes according to Owlook's form chart—and it never does—then the SWC meet will provide a fitting end to the sports season. It's been a year of few championships, but even when the Owls fell well short of the mark, they had a lot to say about who carried off the honors. It's not the same as winning, but it's still good to feel important.

A quick look at the year in review:

Football: this is still THE great mystery. Were the Owls over-rated, or could they have been very, very good? Although at times Rice played far below its capabilities, while rarely playing too far above them, the simple fact is that the Owls lacked the speed to compete with teams like Texas. Nevertheless, a second straight 7-3 season and a resounding win over LSU's potential national champions can't be too bad. Outlook for next year is more hostile but fewer victories.

BASEBALL: PITCHING has been estimated as 75 per cent of baseball. This helps to explain why the Owls won only 30 per cent of their games in conference play, for their three-man staff found double-headers too grueling. The season was further dulled by the untimely death of Coach Dell Morgan. But the Owls dealt Texas a costly defeat in the clutch, and the pitching showed promise for next year, when some swift freshman throwers can back up new-found ace Frank McKeown, Ken Schoppe and Wayne McClelland. The Owls will definitely be tougher here next year, even with the loss of all-star Jim Fox.

Basketball: a crowd-pleasing, sophomoric Owl five made a surprising bid for the championship, but had to settle for a 7-7 finish. We felt that Rice fielded the second-best starting quint in the conference, but inexperience and lack of depth hurt, especially on the road. There were satisfying victories over the Aggies and Texas at home, and a heartbreaking loss to the Longhorns in Austin. Next year could be even more satisfying, for the Owls should reach the NCAA playoffs for the first time in a decade.

SPRING SPORTS: tennis, golf, and track won't be over till tomorrow, but they've already provided Rice with one SWC championship, and there should be more. Hansen in the pole vault, Red in the javelin, and Fritz Schunk in tennis have good shots at individual crowns. Schunk has the toughest fight, but played the number one position on Rice's winning tennis team, and has to be reckoned with. Next year watch for an even tougher tennis team, an even higher Fred Hansen, and a bid by the golf team to vacate the cellar.

Casting the sportlight: Cardinals celebrated the appearance of last week's column picking them to win the National League by losing three straight games .... Roger Babe Ruth Maris hit four of first five homers against the deceptive pitching of the Washington Senators.... we'll fire the first shot in the prediction war by tabbing Texas, Arkansas, TCU, and A&M as the teams to beat in the conference next year .... goodbye for the summer ....