Owl Sports Program Must Go Up in 1960-61

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With the 1959-60 athletic year destined to go into the record books Saturday as one of the worst in the modern history of Rice athletics, the time is ripe to look forward to next year, with the thought of making some semi-educated guesses as to how the Owls will fare in the year 1960-61.

Although in dire need of a good break-away threat and a semi-potent passing attack to go with their vaunted middle line, we are picking the Owls to finish fourth in next year's tight conference race. We are giving the Owls a season's record of 5-5 with wins over Tulane, Florida, Texas, Texas Tech, and A&M and losses to Georgia Tech, SMU, Arkansas, TCU, and Baylor.

Although losing only one letterman, Johnnie Frankie's round ballers are again solid favorites to dwell deep in the second division. With defensive play as the key to their success, the Owls short on height and speed, could possibly move into the number seven position in the league, but no higher unless some immediate help is obtained from the junior college ranks.

With Ronnie Fisher returning to action to join Paul Como, De Edward Greer, and a hoped-for returned to form Neal Marcus, coach Sammy Giammalva's net men should regain the conference tennis crown which slipped thru their hands for the first time in three years this season.

Losing only two lettermen, the Owl baseballers are again a threat for the conference title. Blessed with an overabundance of hitters and pitchers and needing only improved defensive play to round out their repertoire, the Owls will again battle Texas down to the wire for the number one spot. However, the Horns who lose their highly rated outfield, their number one catcher, and three relief pitchers, are going to have to settle for the bridesmaid's role in 1961, as Rice wins its first baseball title.

With the return of the likes of Mickey Hollingshead, Norman Charlton, and Dave Edwards, Rice's thin clads will again be assured of a first division finish. Rice's bid for title contention will depend on the somewhat fragile legs of the Southwest's top sprinter Taylor Jones. Should Jones avoid injury and regain his position as the top sprinter in the league, the Owls could go all the way.

With a young squad and no place to go but up, Rice's fortunes are certain to improve next season. With Dave Larson returning as the number one player, the Owls could move into the first division, but certainly no worse than fifth.

Thus after a year of 6-8-8-2-? finishes, we are predicting a vastly improved record in 1960-61 of 4-8-5-1-3-1.