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Sports

Lacrosse team looks for fans

By Jack Millikin Emerald Contributor

It operates in anonymity, but the University club lacrosse team is doing its best to change that. Saturday, in a rare home appearance, the team will take on Lewis and Clark College at 1 p.m. on the intramural field.

"I would say we are one of the top lacrosse teams around," said player/coach Kent Harvey. "We just finished playing at the biggest lacrosse tournament in the Northwest."

Indeed they did. And played

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"We reached the championship round in our division," said Charlie Groves, also a player/coach. "The tournament featured teams from all around the region, including Canada. I think we played very well there."

Harvey and Groves are talking about the Pacific Northwest Lacrosse Association Tournament. The team proved itself a formidable opponent for the 18-team field, lasting until the final game against a Canadian team, which narrowly defeated the university team by two goals.

While lacrosse is regarded highly among eastern colleges according to Harvey, interest in the West has not yet reached its

"Lacrosse has always been big with the Ivy League schools," he said. "Now, lacrosse is slowly moving out west. It's big in Colorado and California, and there is increasing interest among the Oregon and Washington schools. It is one of the fastest growing sports around."

It has been said football is a physical game and baseball is a mental game. According to Harvey, lacrosse features the best of both worlds.

"Lacrosse is basically a combination of both the physical and mental aspects," he said. "It's like hockey in the air. You get the contact of hockey while the mentality of the game is more like soccer."

Part of the reason for the minimal interest here is the lack of lacrosse clubs in the area.

"The way to improve the level of play in the West is to establish high school programs," said Groves, who played for his high school team in Colorado. "With their development, more talent can be drawn to the college programs. As of now, I would say we are comparable to the 'B' (junior varsity) teams in the East."

Although Harvey and Groves are team coaches, the fact they double as players makes for a more relaxed atmosphere.

Groves offers a view of the sport that cannot be said about most other sports.

"So many other sports demand so much," he said. "Lacrosse demands a lot, but it is just as fun to practice as it is to play."



