

Ducks suffer lack of big name recruits

Oregon sports have seen much success in recent years. Whether it be the football team's going to two-straight New Year's Day bowl games or the women's basketball team's being invited to the NCAA Tournament for the past two years in a row, the Ducks have made a lot of noise lately.

But despite this, it is questionable whether Oregon will ever be a powerhouse in any particular sport.

Why is this? Is it the coaching? Is it the players?

Maybe it's a little bit of both, but most of all, it's the recruiting.

Recruiting is the most important part of college sports

these days. It is not only necessary to recruit the best in-state athletes, but also to expand to hit other states that have strong athletes.

Oregon is at a disadvantage in recruiting. There are currently 78 high schools in the state that are designated as 4A schools. That gives the state at least 40,000 students who are eligible to participate in high school sports.

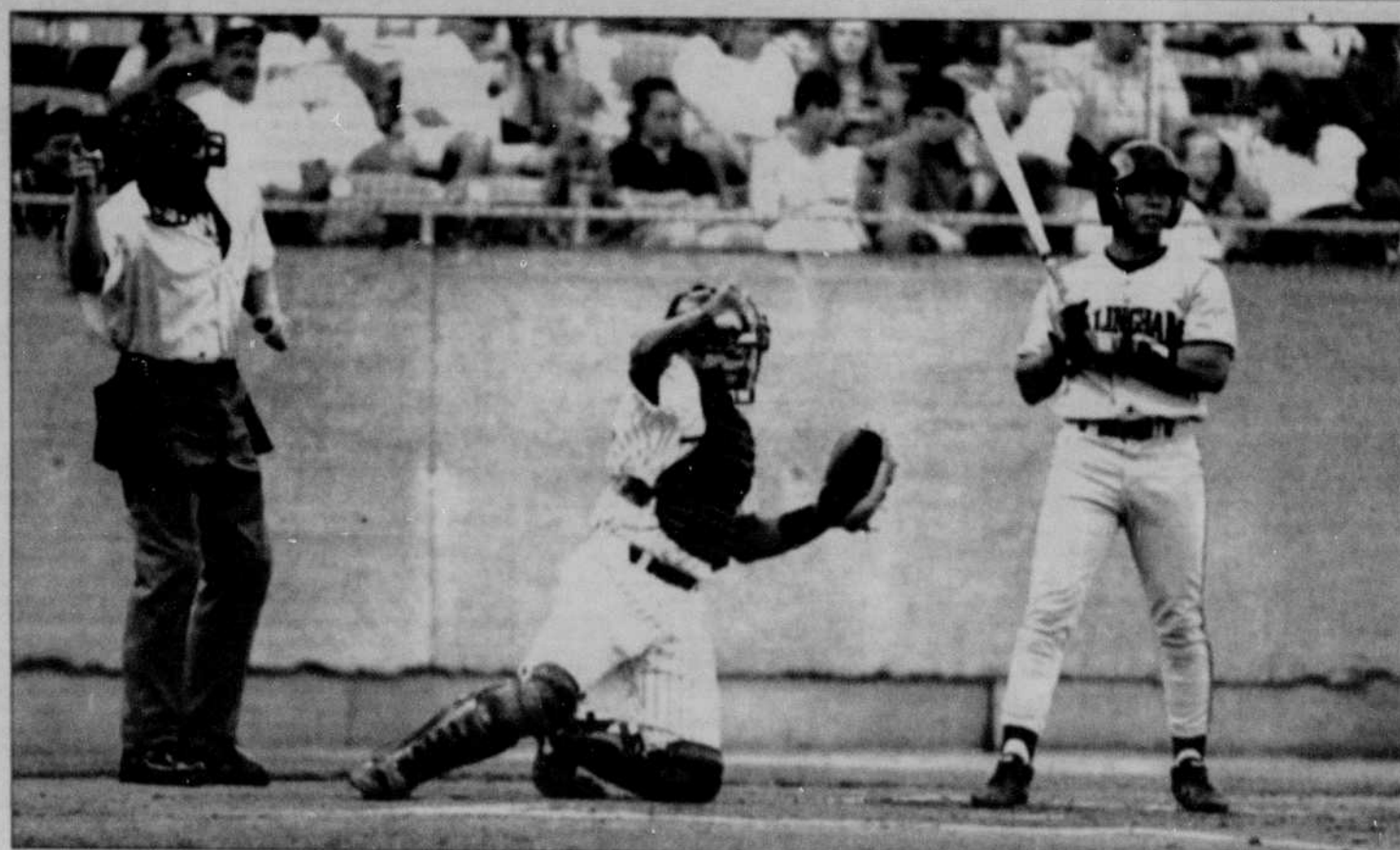
If half of those people play, that's 20,000 athletes. But most schools have far less than half of their student bodies in sports. Many athletes do come out of smaller high schools in the state, but that still doesn't come close to the number of athletes in other states.

States such as California and Texas most likely have as many athletes participating in their medium-size cities as Oregon has at its big schools. Like any other state, Oregon produces some outstanding athletes, but the smaller the state, the smaller the number of stand-outs.

As is the case in any other state, the best players have the pick of the schools they want to go to. If somebody from Bend is being recruited by Nebraska, UCLA, Notre Dame and the Ducks, state loyalty can only go so far — many athletes want to play on a team that has a chance to contend for the national title.

Recruiting people from out-of-state is equally tough. Oregon is not a school with a lot of national exposure. Even when Oregon's teams go to bowl games and NCAA tournaments, the Ducks just aren't as well-known as the big-

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Civic Stadium will be hopping with baseball action once again when the Eugene Emeralds start their 76-game schedule in mid-June against Portland. Single-game Ems tickets go on sale on June 3.

Emeralds baseball just around the corner

■ **BASEBALL:** The Ems open their season on June 18 against the Portland Rockies

By Trevor Kearney
Sports Editor

Mid-May and no baseball in Eugene? Not for long.

The Eugene Emeralds, the Atlanta Braves' Class A-short season affiliate, are gearing up for their season opener by opening the gates for all single-game reserved tickets on June 3.

Up until then, the only Ems tickets available are season tickets. But on June 3, all tickets go on sale, including ones for the popular July Fireworks Extravaganza on July 4 and Turn Back

the Clock Night on July 20.

According to Chris Metz, Ems Director of Ticket Sales, those tickets go the fastest.

"[On June 3] people like to pick up their Fourth of July reserved tickets, as it is our most popular game of the year every year," Metz said, adding that season ticket sales have gone well so far this year. "Season ticket sales are going very well at this point. With the season just under a month away, things are starting to heat up."



"Emeralds baseball is as popular as ever."

The Ems roster will be assembled in mid-June, when players will be assigned to Eugene primarily from two sources: the June free-agent draft and extended spring training in West Palm Beach, Fla. A handful of players could also come from the Macon Braves, Atlanta's Class A affiliate in the South Atlantic League.

After the roster is filled, the players congregate for a short mini-camp before opening the season at home against Portland on June 18.

Eugene plays 76 games — 38 of which are home games — in the Northwest League, an eight-team league that includes Port-

land, Boise, Yakima, Spokane, Bellingham, Everett and Southern Oregon. The Ems finished last season with a 37-39 record, good for third in the Northwest League South.

Ticket prices for individual games are \$6 for adult reserved box seats, \$5 for senior and child box seats, \$4 for adult general admission and \$3 for senior and child general admission.

Season tickets can be purchased in a full ticket plan (\$175) or the "10-pack" option (\$60). The season continues through Sept. 1, when the Ems play the Southern Oregon Timberjacks.

Tickets can be purchased by phone at 342-5367 or at the Emeralds ticket office at Civic Stadium.

Jordan was not even challenged in MVP race

■ **NBA:** The Chicago Bulls' superstar wants his accomplishment to be recognized in the form of a raise

NORTHBROOK, Ill. (AP) — For the fourth time in his celebrated career, Michael Jordan is the NBA's Most Valuable Player. This time, he wants his pay to match his value.

Jordan, who won an unprecedented eighth league scoring title in leading Chicago to the best regular-season record in NBA history, received the MVP trophy Monday — a day after demanding at least \$36 million to play the next two seasons for the Bulls.

He received 109 of 113 first-place votes — 96.5 percent, the highest percentage since the media began selecting the winner in 1980-81. Jordan had 1,114 points, almost double the 574 of runner-up David Robinson of San Antonio. Orlando's Anfernee Hardaway finished third with 360 points.

Jordan, who also was MVP in 1987-88, 1990-91 and 1991-92, has been relatively underpaid his entire career. His salary for

this season is just under \$4 million, less than many players who are younger and have not put up the numbers that he has.

Shaquille O'Neal, Alonzo Mourning and Juwan Howard — good young players, but hardly athletes of Jordan's stature — have talked about getting upward of \$20 million per season beginning next year.

Of his two-year, \$36 million demand, Jordan told the Chicago Tribune on Sunday: "That's the absolute bottom figure."

He went on to say: "If they mess around with me here, which I don't think they will, I'll go elsewhere for whatever. I'll play on another team for \$10 million less if I have to, just on principle. They've made a lot of money here, and it's time to give a little back."

Jordan, who makes an estimated \$40 million annually in endorsements, didn't want to talk about his contract at his MVP news

conference Monday.

"We're in the process of trying to win a championship. For me to start complaining or negotiating would be a very selfish act," said Jordan, who led the Bulls to NBA titles in 1991, 1992 and 1993 and has the team within seven wins of another this year. "My attorneys haven't talked. I haven't communicated with [team owner] Jerry Reinsdorf. It's purely speculation."

When told that the speculation apparently was his own, Jordan said his quotes were "taken a little out of context," and that he "didn't understand the intentions of what was happening."

Tribune sports editor Tim Franklin said columnist Bob Verdi made sure "Michael was clear on the terms of the conversation."

"At no point did Jordan dispute the facts in the story at his press conference," Franklin said.

Jordan said the business of basketball sometimes overshadows the enjoyment of



JORDAN

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