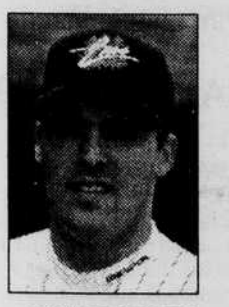
Emeralds shutout in three of first six

PEAK PERFORMERS

POOH HINES

In the Ems' first six games, Hines led the team with a .333 batting average, three home runs, one more than he hit all of last season, and eight RBIs. Against Everett on Thursday, Hines went 2-for-4 with two home runs, five RBIs and three runs scored.



MIKE ROBERTS

Roberts is the Ems' only starting pitcher with a victory through the first six games. He gave up three runs on six hits in Eugene's 11-3 win over Everett on Thursday.

■ **START:** *Eugene was not able to hold onto an early 1-0 lead as Boise came back to win 9-3 on Sunday*

By Joel Hood
Freelance Sports Reporter

The Eugene Emeralds' bats fell silent again Sunday as the team dropped their fourth game in six days with a 9-3 loss to rival Boise.

The Ems (2-4) jumped out to the early lead on a Jeff Spencer single to right that brought in Stewart Smothers in the top of the first, but Boise countered with two runs in the second and three more in the third off Emeralds' starter Ben Wyatt to snap its three-game losing streak.

Wyatt, who was acquired from the Danville Braves in the offseason, walked six batters and surrendered six runs in five innings of work. The loss dropped him to 0-2 on the season.

Monday's loss comes on the heels of a five-game homestand against the Everett AquaSox during which the Ems went 2-3.

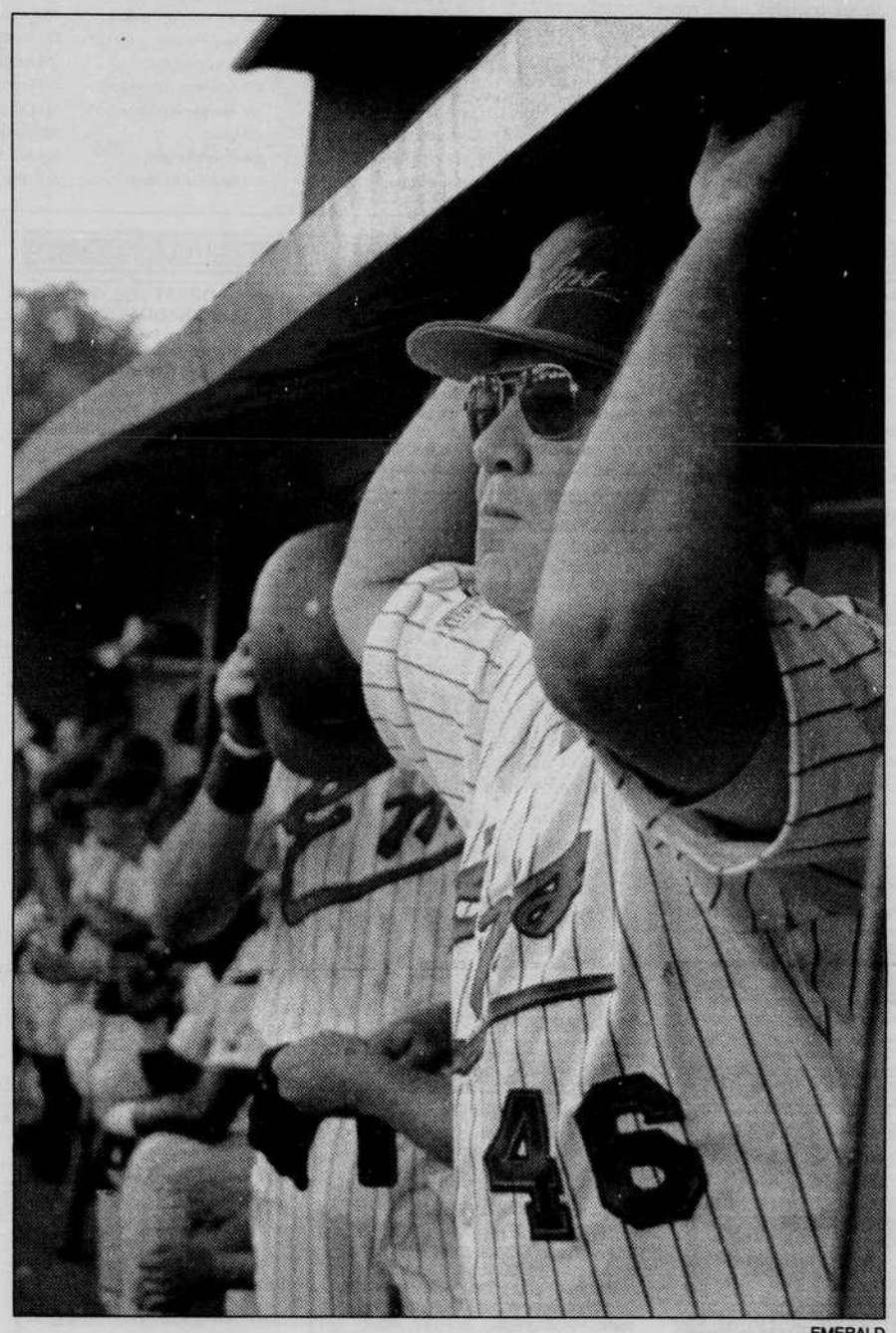
In front of near-record crowds at Civic Stadium, Everett pounded Eugene's young pitching staff for 42 hits and 30 runs in five games.

Everett's Gerald Eddy hit a grand slam off the top of the scoreboard on opening night that capped a five-run sixth inning for the AquaSox and set the tone for the series.

Perhaps the only thing hotter than Everett's bats during the first weekend of Northwest League baseball was Everett's pitching.

The AquaSox hurlers made

Turn to **START**,, Page 12A



EMERALD

Eugene manager Jim Saul and the Ems are looking for offensive production after struggling to a 2-4 start, which included three shutouts.

Ems' bats silenced in opening week

■ **OFFENSE:** *Half of the team's 22 runs through the first six games came in an 11-3 win last Thursday*

By Joel Hood
Freelance Sports Reporter

To say that the Eugene Emeralds 1997 season is off to a rocky start at the plate is perhaps putting it lightly.

The defending Northwest League Southern Division champion was shutout in three of its first five home games against the Everett AquaSox and managed six hits in its series opener with the Boise Hawks.

In six games this season, the Ems (2-4) have scored only 22 runs. Of those 22 runs, half were scored in Thursday's 11-3 clubbing of Everett.

For the year, Eugene has mustered just 39 hits in over 200 plate appearances, a far cry from the 1996 season when the Ems were second in the league in batting with a .266 team average.

A near-sellout at Civic Stadium for the season opener was witness to the Emerald's embarrassing 12-0 loss Tuesday.

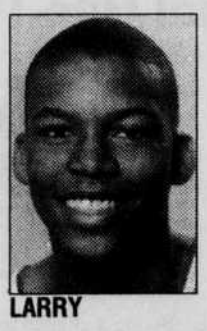
Eugene managed only three hits off the Seattle Mariners 1996 first-round draft pick, Gil Meche. The right-hander struck out seven, while holding Eugene scoreless through seven innings.

Wednesday's game proved to be more of the same for the Emeralds as three AquaSox pitchers shutout

Turn to **OFFENSE**, Page 12A

Larry will not return to Oregon

Oregon basketball player Andre Larry was kicked off the Oregon basketball team for academic reasons Monday, the Oregon Athletic Department said.



LARRY

Larry, a sophomore who averaged 3.3 points and 1.5 rebounds during the Ducks' 1996-97 season, will not return to team next season or any time soon, a University official said Monday.

Duncan goes first, anything goes after

■ **NBA:** *Four of first seven teams in the draft have been involved in trade talks*

The Associated Press

Depending on who's talking, this week's NBA draft is either dreadfully weak or deceptively loaded.

At least one thing is certain: Tim Duncan will be chosen first overall.

The San Antonio Spurs own the No. 1 pick in Wednesday night's draft, which will be held at the Charlotte Coliseum. Barring an overwhelming trade offer, the Spurs will select Duncan and welcome aboard one of the most well-rounded players to enter the league in years.

After that, anything is possible.

The Nos. 2 through 7 picks belong to Philadelphia, Boston, Vancouver, Denver, Boston and New Jersey.

And that order may be different by the time commissioner David Stern makes his second or third trip to the podium.

The 76ers, Celtics, Nets and Grizzlies have been heavily involved in trade discussions.

"Everything's available after No. 1," one Eastern Conference general manager said. "Everything has been available for months because this draft is regarded as such a weak one."

Observers have long been saying this will be a weak draft, but such comments are heard almost every summer.

"They all say that because nobody wants to take a risk," said Marty Blake, the director of the league scouting service. "There are 20 to 30 guys who are going to be good players. It's a deep draft, but it's being called weak because there aren't any marquee players."

NBA DRAFT

■ **WHAT:** The NBA Draft

■ **WHEN:** Wednesday, June 25

■ **WHERE:** Charlotte Coliseum, Charlotte, N.C.

on deck IN SPORTS

NBA

(AP) — The Portland Trail Blazers on Monday conveyed their 20th pick in the 1997 NBA Draft to the Minnesota Timberwolves. The move completes last summer's deal in which the Blazers obtained guard Isaiah Rider from Minnesota.

NCAA Football

(AP) — Bowl Alliance officials agreed Monday to virtually guarantee teams from the Western Athletic Conference and Conference USA a bid to an alliance bowl if they are ranked in the top five, beginning in 1998.

NHL

(AP) — An investigation continued Monday into a limousine crash that left a Detroit Red Wings defenseman and team masseur comatose. Possible charges against the limo's driver must wait until police wrap up their investigation, officials said.

UCLA

(AP) — UCLA running back Skip Hicks was cleared Monday of charges that he lifted keys from a valet parking attendant and took a joyride around Westwood, officials said.In January, the city attorney's office charged Hicks with joyriding and driving without a license.

ESPN

(AP) — ESPN's wisecracking anchor Keith Olbermann will get to show more of his serious side this fall. Olbermann is shedding some of his shtick to jump to MSNBC. Olbermann is joining the cable network as an anchor, with plans to be host of a program.