



# Gillespie says team will be successful under Smith

Both Gillespie and Oregon senior Matthew Davis expressed disappointment in athletic director Bill Moos' decision, but agreed the program is in good hands

By Allison Ross  
Freelance Reporter

When Martin Smith arrives in Eugene to begin his career as Oregon's head track coach, his biggest challenge may be convincing dedicated locals that he's the one.

Smith comes to Oregon after 15 successful years as head cross country and assistant track coach at Wisconsin, hoping to bring the Oregon track program to its highest potential.

"I know the program hasn't been where the coaches or kids want it to be the last few years, but this is still the New York Yankees of track and field, and now it's my job to keep that legend alive," Smith told *The Register-Guard* Thursday.

Perhaps his excitement and his success as a coach will ease the concerns of all those involved. When athletic director Bill Moos first announced the decision last Wednesday, his choice surprised many, including Oregon athletes and assistant track coach John Gillespie.

Gillespie was raised in Eugene and has been involved with track and field since 1968. Before coming to Oregon, he had a successful five-year tenure at South Eugene High School, where his teams lost only six meets in five seasons. Once at Oregon, Gillespie coached his athletes to 13 Pacific-10 Conference titles in the last 10 years. They have broken school records in the high jump, long jump and triple jump.



"I think I am a head coach in an assistant coach's position," Gillespie said. "I was successful before — I'm not your typical assistant that might not have done anything. That's what surprised me, but obviously I don't get to make the choice."

Many athletes voiced concerns as well. "It's a hard situation for us to be in because we're good friends with Gillespie and knew how bad he wanted this position," senior distance runner Matthew Davis said.

But after talking with Smith, Davis said, "I just got an overall good feeling."

The decision was made by Moos, who had to choose between Gillespie, Smith and Matt Centrowitz, a former Oregon runner and current coach at American University in Washington, D.C.

"At the time, I thought that Bill Moos making the choice was good for me because his last couple hires have in fact been people with Oregon connections," Gillespie said.

Smith, although not previously associated with Oregon track, said he has the desire to be here as well as the qualifications. During his reign at Wisconsin, the Badgers won 12 Big-Ten team titles, and finished no lower than third. Smith was twice named NCAA National Coach of the Year and led Wisconsin to two cross country championships.

"Smith is a very good coach and Oregon will end up doing well," Gillespie said. "I hope he can get the people behind him right away."



GILLESPIE

## Emeralds get second-straight win

Eugene held on after taking a five-run lead over Southern Oregon to win 6-5 on Monday

By Allison Ross  
Freelance Reporter

What started off as something all too familiar for the Eugene Emeralds — an error on the second pitch of the game — quickly turned into something different.

Tallying 10 hits, five runs and committing only one other error, the Emeralds pulled it all together, winning their second straight over Southern Oregon Monday night in front of 3,113 fans at Civic Stadium.

Through four innings it was a dual between the pitchers. Eugene starter Scott Sobkowiak was perfect, allowing no hits, runs or walks, while Timberjacks starter Jason Dobis allowed no hits, one run and three walks. An error by Southern Oregon second baseman Justin Hall in the bottom of the second inning allowed Ems first baseman Casey Cheshier to score.

Offensively, Eugene rallied in the fifth. A textbook bunt down the third-base line by left fielder Greg Strickland loaded the bases. Strickland was going for the sacrifice, but Dobis couldn't make the throw in time.

"I wanted to get a hit out of it, but I was just trying to get it to third base because they tell me if I can get a bunt down I should be able to beat it out, so I got it down," Strickland said.

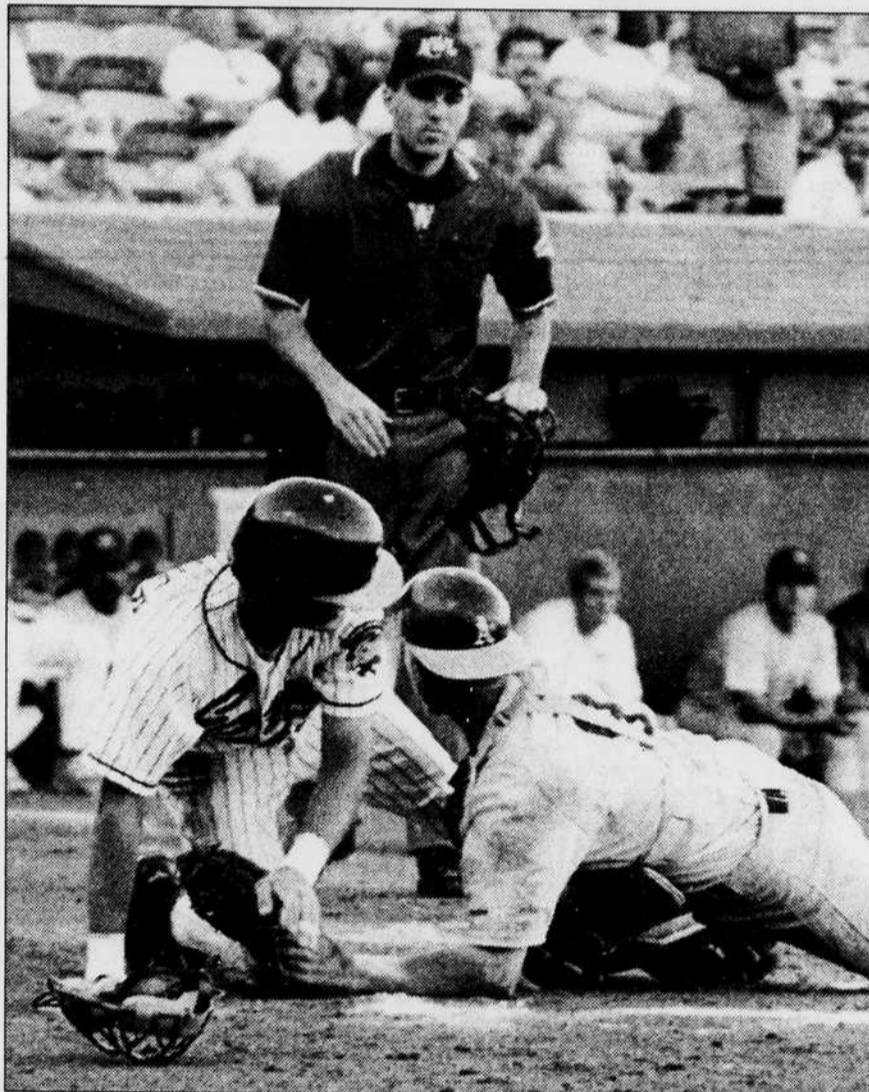
It was a play that paid off for the Ems. Bry Ewan's double to right field scored Strickland as well as catcher Tye Hanseen.

The Emeralds brought pitcher Zack Franchiseur on in the fifth to relieve Sobkowiak, who recorded five strike outs, bringing his league leading total to 52.

"[Sobkowiak] was stiff tonight when he came out in the fifth, and being who he is, what he is and what he's done, we didn't want to take a chance," Eugene pitching coach Jerry Nyman said. "But we're not concerned."

"Franchiseur did an outstanding job," Eugene manager Jim Saul said. "He challenged the hitters. They got some home runs, but he went right at 'em. Whenever you've got a four or five-run lead, you don't want to nibble. If they hit the ball out of the ballpark, they hit the ball out of the ballpark. You still got a lead."

Ems closer Aaron Garmong came on in the ninth to grab his fourth save, while Sobkowiak recorded the win.



CHAD PATTESON for the Emerald  
Eugene first baseman Casey Cheshier picks himself up after scoring the Emeralds' first run Monday after a collision with the Southern Oregon catcher.

## Sobkowiak maintains his winning ways

By Rob Moseley  
Associate Editor

It took a loss and two no decisions before the awareness kicked in, but it appears the Eugene Emeralds have finally realized they have a chance to win each and every time Scott Sobkowiak takes the mound.

After Monday's 6-5 victory over Southern Oregon, Sobkowiak and the Ems have each won three of their last four starts. The Loveland, Ohio, native struck out five men in five innings while allowing just one un-

earned run on one hit and no walks to improve his record to 3-2 on the year.

It was Sobkowiak's fourth straight start of at least five innings while allowing three or less hits, and the righthander has now struck out at least five hitters in each of his seven starts in 1998.

"He's been outstanding for us," Eugene pitching coach Jerry Nyman said after the win over the Timberjacks. "He's been out-

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## McCullough, Smith found not guilty

Oregon quarterback Akili Smith and former Duck Saladin McCullough were acquitted after a brawl at the Mill Camp

By Rob Moseley  
Associate Editor

Oregon quarterback Akili Smith and former Duck tailback Saladin McCullough were acquitted Thursday of all charges stemming from a February altercation with bouncers at Springfield's Mill Camp Lounge.

Smith, a senior who is expected to compete with Jason Maas for the Ducks' starting job this fall, was found not guilty of assault, harassment and trespass. McCullough, who completed his collegiate eligibility and a two-year stint at Oregon following the Ducks' Las Vegas Bowl win over Air Force in December, was found not guilty of both assault and trespass.

He is currently a free agent in search of a professional contract.

The charges stemmed from an early morning incident on Feb. 1 when, according to the police report, Smith and McCullough attempted to enter the Mill Camp through the front door. Lacking identification, McCullough attempted to persuade bouncer Michael Stam to check an Oregon media guide for his date of birth, which Stam refused to do.

The players then walked around to the building's back entrance, and at that point the players' and bouncers' accounts of the incident began to differ.

According to Stam's testimony in the police report, Smith and McCullough tried to sneak into the club. However, Oregon head football coach Mike Bellotti, after speaking with the players, told Springfield Police Detective Thomas Rappe that Smith and McCullough were trying to attract the attention of former Duck offensive lineman Paul Wiggins, who was inside the club and thought to have "some pull with the ownership." This was supposed to serve as a means to gain entrance for Smith and McCullough, according to the police report.

A physical altercation ensued after Smith and McCullough were escorted to the parking lot by Stam, fellow bouncer Michael Un-



SMITH

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