

Men: Freddie Jones among UO's new recruits

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guard last season, when they combined for 124 assists. Donte Quinine, a 6-foot-6 junior, provided the Ducks with a strong defensive presence last season and averaged 2.4 points per game.

In the front court, Kent will be able to tap the talents of new recruit Chris Christoffersen, a 7-foot-2 native of Denmark and a recent high school graduate from Ojai, Calif., who averaged 17.4 points and 14 rebounds per game in his senior season. Christoffersen is not the Ducks' only foreign recruit this season. At 6-foot-8, Canadian Skouson Harker will transfer to Oregon from McNook Junior College in Nebraska, where he averaged 14 points and 8 rebounds per contest.

"We'll have more of a presence in the middle, down low, definitely giving us more scoring options," Carson said.

Oregon returns the 7-foot Carson, who redshirted last season after being sidelined with a season-ending foot injury, and 6-foot-9 sophomore Flo Hartenstein, who showed consistent improvement throughout last season in collecting almost four points and 4.2 rebounds per game. A.D. Smith, a 6-foot-8 junior, also returns, bringing with him a soft-shooting touch. He shot 44.8 percent from behind the arc last season and contributed 10.4 points per game.

Whether or not the 1998-99 Ducks succeed depends a lot on how quickly they learn and accept their roles on the team.

"The sooner we come together, the better we'll be," Brown said.

Newman will be helping find ways to blend the team's talent from the sidelines. As the interim coach at Arizona State, he led the overachieving Sun Devils to an

18-14 record and an NIT appearance.

"He's going to bring a lot of inspiration," Brown said. "He took a team at the bottom [of the Pac-10] all the way up to the middle."

"Don Newman is just amazing," Carson said. "We kind of got lucky with him. He's a great guy and he has a great enthusiasm for the game. He could be a head coach at just about anywhere, and to have him with our staff is just going to be exciting."

To have a shot at breaking into the Pac-10's upper tier, the Ducks will need to make the most of their new and returning talents. Stanford returns four of their five starters from last year's final four team, and Washington, Arizona and UCLA, all of which advanced to the sweet sixteen of last year's NCAA tournament, look strong again.

"We expect nothing but the best," Brown said. "Even possibly the Pac-10 championship, so if we fail a little bit we'll still achieve very high. The Pac-10 looks tough. It's always been one of the top conferences in the nation, and I think it'll get more respect with four teams reaching the Sweet Sixteen."

The Ducks see their first action on Nov. 12 in an exhibition against Australia at McArthur Court. They'll face Coppin State on Nov. 15 in the first regular season match-up and begin the Pac-10 season on Jan. 2 where they finished last year, in Oakland against California.

"Our goal is to win a Pac-10 championship," Carson said. "I don't know if that will happen this year or next year for us, but I only see the program going up. I definitely think we'll have a better year this year than last year."

Ems: Portland can muster just three hits

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early 5-0 lead.

Eugene never looked back. Portland's only run came in the bottom of the third, when Jason Franklin was batted in by Juan Pierre. For the game, Eugene out-hit Portland by a margin of 11-3.

"It was a tale of two nights," Pierre said. "Last night we came out and hit the ball; tonight we didn't. We never got any runners on and it showed up on the scoreboard. We gave up a lot of hits early and we

kind of laid our tents down and we didn't battle back. They hit the ball tonight, and I think that was the biggest part."

Neither team scored in the eighth or ninth innings. The Emeralds picked up their final two runs in the top of the seventh with RBIs by Bry Ewan and Jerry Simmons.

Portland played Eugene well in the third, fourth and fifth innings, holding them to no hits in that time. But while Portland's defense was doing well, its offense was not. Besides the

base hit that put the Rockies only run, Franklin, in scoring position, Portland did not have any hits during the three innings.

The Emeralds' other run came early in the sixth, when Portland's defense sputtered. Brignac made it to second base from an error on the first base throw, and when Portland pitcher Carlos Barboza was called for a balk, Brignac advanced to third. He scored on Oropeza's second RBI of the evening.

Deuces wild for Ems' Strickland

Eugene outfielder Greg Strickland scored twice, stole two and knocked in a pair on Monday

By Tim Pyle
Freelance Reporter

PORTLAND — The Eugene Emeralds were in need of a spark heading into Monday night's game at Portland against the Rockies.

A five-game losing streak, last-place standing and offense that ranked worst in the Northwest League in runs scored showed the Ems desperately needed a jump start.

Answering his team's cries for help was leadoff man Greg Strickland, who provided the kind of aggressive offense expected of his spot in the lineup in the Ems' 8-1 bashing of the Rockies in front of 3,577 fans at Civic Stadium on Monday.

Strickland, who plays left field, set the table perfectly for the rest of the Ems' lineup by reaching base four out of five times. He delivered three hits, including a two-run double, received one walk, stole two bases and scored two runs.

"Any time you have your leadoff man on base, it always

helps," said Gregg Maluchnik, who played first base and went 1-3 with a walk. "We have Al Castro and Bry Ewan in the two holes behind him and then Jerry Simmons, who's leading the team in home runs, so once somebody's on, we can score runs. Every single time he gets on base, we are a threat to score."

Strickland, who was an 11th-round draft pick out of Cumberland University in the 1997 draft, displayed the kind of attitude managers love in their leadoff hitters.

"I'm just trying to steal bases and trying to put the ball in play as the leadoff hitter," said Strickland, who raised his batting average to .318 and boosted his stolen bases and runs scored totals to 11 and 23, respectively.

Ems manager Jim Saul was pleased with Strickland's play in what he called his team's "best performance in three weeks."

"He can make a few things happen," Saul said. "I've given

him the green light on the basepaths, and he uses controlled aggressiveness."

Strickland's speed and aggressiveness were perhaps best exemplified in the ninth inning after he led off with a single. When the Rockies' Ryan Lamatina fired a wild pitch past catcher Erik Johnson while Ewan was at the plate, Strickland took off from first. He didn't stop until he slid safely into third.

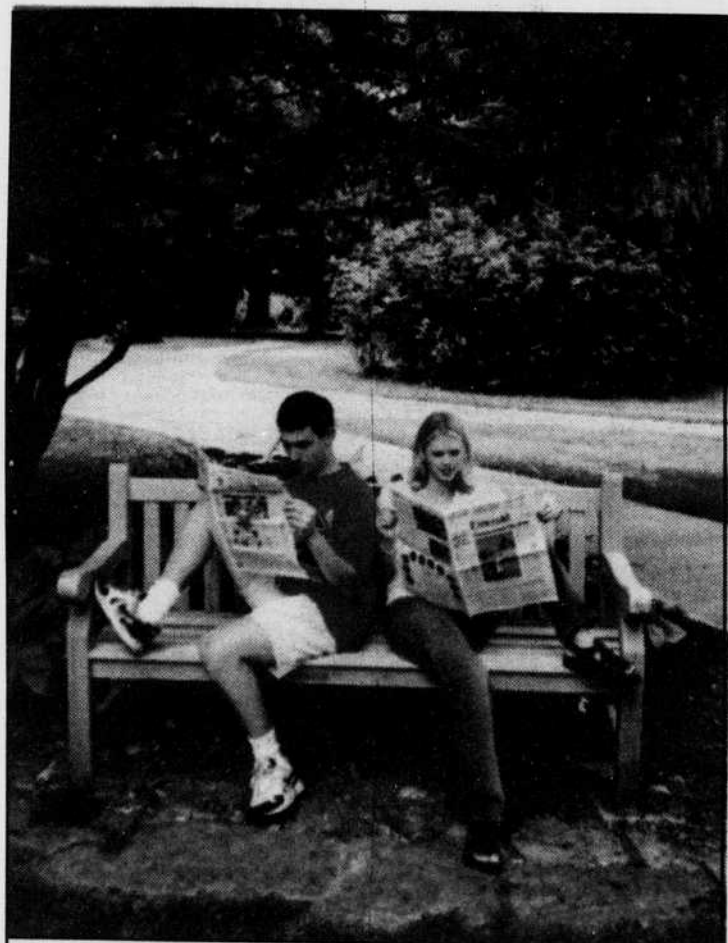
Although he failed to score that inning, Strickland's hustle impressed Rockies manager Jim Eppard.

"I like him," Eppard said. "He's a scrappy player, he can do some things offensively, and he's a terror on the bases. Every time he gets on there it's like a triple."

The humble Strickland, who speaks in a soft tone, said he hopes to be able to make similar contributions to the Ems for the remainder of the season.

"I'm just trying to stay confident and consistent," Strickland said.

If he can continue to put up numbers like he did Monday night, Strickland could run himself straight to the top of the Atlanta Braves' batting order.



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