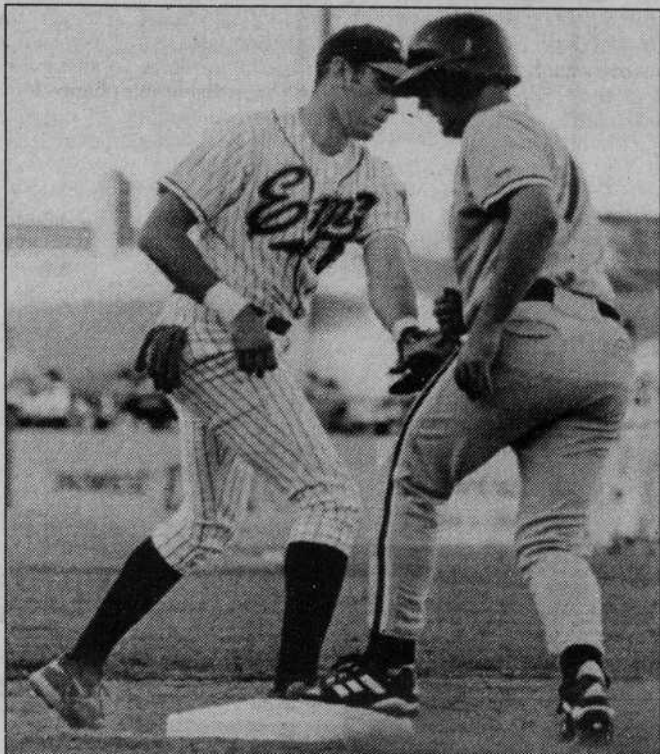




Best Bet
Major League Baseball
Atlanta vs. Toronto
4 p.m., WTBS

SPORTS

Gomer's pitching paves Eugene's way



Pete Zoccolillo attempts to pick off a Volcanoes base runner during the Ems' win.

Catharine Kendall/Emerald

Starting pitcher Jeramy Gomer retires 10 straight Volcanoes at one point, leading the Ems' win

By Chris Aster
for the Emerald

Summer has finally arrived in the Willamette Valley and 3,107 fans showed up at Civic Stadium on Monday night to enjoy the best thing that comes with summer, baseball.

The Eugene Emeralds began a six-game home-and-home series against the last-place Salem-Keizer Volcanoes on Monday with the hope of continuing their gradual climb out of the cellar and into contention in the South Division of the Northwest League.

They hoped to ride the strong left arm of 20-year-old starter Jeramy Gomer to their fourth win in five contests, which is exactly what they did. Gomer pitched a masterful seven innings in which he gave up two earned runs on four hits and one walk and struck out seven to propel the Ems to a 9-4 victory.

Salem second baseman Eric Mattern drove a Gomer fastball over the left-field wall for Salem to take a 1-0 lead with just one out in the top of the first. Gomer regrouped and got out of the inning by striking out Salem

cleanup hitter Sean McGowan and never looked back.

After Salem starter Ryan Cox was removed from the game after the first inning due to a foot injury caused by a line drive hit by Ems designated hitter Jim Deschaine, the Volcanoes put in big lefty Mark Hills, who promptly gave up two runs, one earned. A triple by first baseman Pete Zoccolillo gave the Ems a 2-1 lead. Hills struck out three and walked four in 3 1/3 innings of work.

Hills was still on the mound when the fifth inning rolled around. It was there that things began to fall apart for Salem. Hills and the man who relieved him, righty Reinaldo Jimenez, combined to allow some of the most atrocious pitching statistics this side of the Colorado Rockies. In the fifth inning alone these two gave up five runs, threw two wild pitches, hit one batter and walked two. This coupled with two errors gave the Ems the lead that they would never relinquish.

Between the fourth and eighth innings, Jeramy Gomer retired 10 Salem batters in a

Turn to EMERALDS, Page 8

Back in the Running

Coming off season-ending leg injuries, Reuben Droughns vows a return to form

By Mirjam Swanson
Oregon Daily Emerald

The current quarterback vacancy is the only issue more pressing than Reuben Droughns' healthy return as the Oregon football team heads into the 1999 season.

Midway through the summer, the starting quarterback question remains unanswered. On the other hand, Droughns said he has no doubt that after missing the last half of the 1998 season with severe leg injuries, he'll be ready to go against Michigan State on Sept. 4.

"[The leg] feels good," Droughns said. "Come season, it won't be the same size, but it'll be ready."

When he went down with a broken right fibula and ligament damage in his ankle during the Ducks' showdown with UCLA on Oct. 17, Droughns was the Pacific-10 Conference's leading rusher at 164.8 yards per game — the fourth best mark in the nation. His 7.4 yards per carry was the best in the country.

He set the Oregon record for yards rushed in a debut, when

he powered his way through the Michigan State defense for 202 yards in the season-opener.

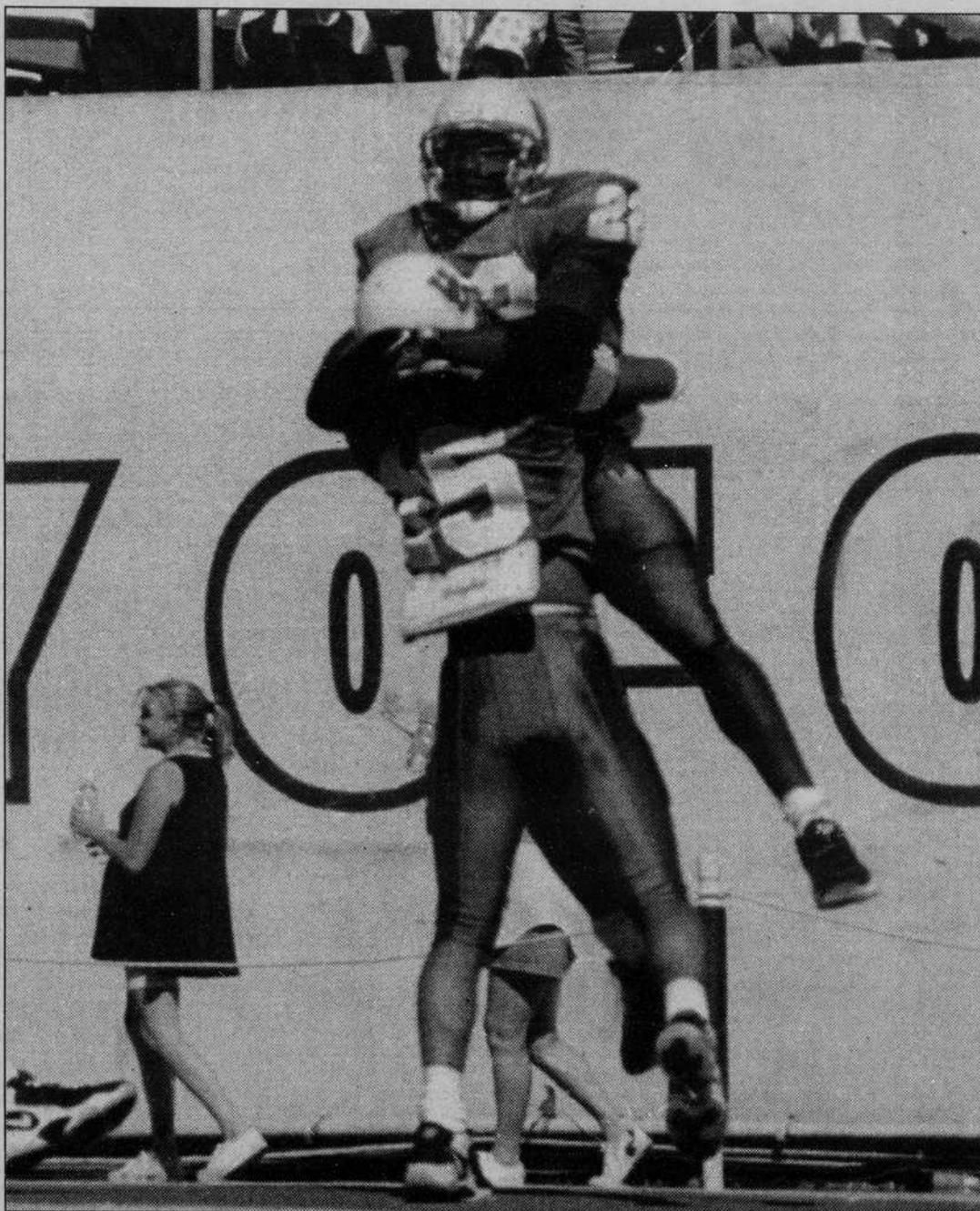
In fewer than five full games, Droughns became only the third Pac-10 player to rush for more than 200 yards three times in one season. O.J. Simpson and Marcus Allen are the only other players to achieve that feat.

He also exceeded Bobby Moore's (now Ahmad Rashad) one-game Oregon record for carries with 39.

Although the Ducks' other running backs played well in his place, they lacked the speed and elusiveness — and the leadership — to replicate what Droughns accomplished.

Herman Ho-Ching's 117 yards against Texas El Paso during the second game of the season was the best single-game yardage total any of Oregon's other backs accumulated.

And on three occasions after Droughns' injury, the Ducks failed to rush for more than 100 yards.



Emerald

Turn to DROUGHNS, Page 8

Reuben Droughns (22) hopes to be doing more celebrating like this at the expense of Michigan State come the Sept. 4 season opener.