

Baseball seeking revenge

■ The Oregon Club Sports baseball team gets back into the swing of things in its season-opener

By Shigenari Matsumoto
for the Emerald

The Oregon Club Sports men's baseball team starts its season against the team that ended it for them last year.

For their season opener the Ducks face Humboldt State University in a double-header on March 4 at 11 a.m. at Willamette High School.

First-year coach Rich Fay said the Ducks are looking forward to paying Humboldt back.

Oregon has come together as a team that really wants to win, Fay said.

"I told them at the first meeting that we are going to win the championship," Fay said. "We were not going to fool around and be the worst team in the league anymore."

Isaac Isaia, one of six returners,

is set on contributing to such success.

"I just want to get some hits," Isaac said. "Help the team out and have some fun."

Twenty-two team members have been practicing since November at the inside practicing facility underneath the bleachers of Hayward Field. The space provides one



pitching mound, a few batting nets

and a space where the players can play catch.

The completion of the new turf field has helped the team develop a solid defense, Fay said.

The Ducks have a strong lineup that include catchers Brandon Cresswell and Keyonosh Maljai, shortstops Suguru Saito and Corey Maynard, who will take over Saito's position after he returns to Japan, and outfielder Ty Cademartori.

The Ducks pitching staff is also

loaded with talent eager to prove their potential.

"The pitchers on this team have great quality," said Fay. "I am confident to send anyone out to the mound."

The Ducks' three starters are Zach Ross, Kurt Langworthy and Darrick Manezes. Ross is a hard-throwing right hander, with an unhittable slider. Lefty Langworthy keeps hitters off-balance with his curve balls and sliders. Manezes is a rookie who has good placement and velocity.

Regan Shaller and Corey Maynard will be the closers for the Ducks. Shaller, a southpaw who delivers a good fastball, is expected to be Oregon's go-to guy.

Hitting, defense and pitching are important, but the players' desire to win is the team's glue.

"We have players who are not afraid to take a pitch in their back, and we have pitchers who will make the batters hit ground balls," Fay said.

"I think this year will be great."

Flo

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their lunch money like some big bully."

But it's fairly easy to see why people would think that of Oregon's starting forward. He is 6-foot-9 and weighs 265 pounds. His body is chiseled, his shoulders broad. And when he gets that certain look on his face, his bald head and goatee only add to the perception of meanness.

Yet he's the polar opposite.

"Flo is one of the warmest human beings that I've had the opportunity to coach," head coach Ernie Kent said. "He has tremendous heart and does a wonderful job handling his situation. You won't find many people his age that would even be able to cope with what he does on a daily basis."

Which is being a student, an athlete, a father and a husband.

All roles that Hartenstein cherishes.

"It's a lot of work, but I love to do it," Hartenstein said. "I love my kids, my wife and everything. They're all real supportive, and it all pays off when I see them at the games laughing and smiling."

Hartenstein speaks and acts like someone far beyond his 23 years.

He graduated from Springfield's Thurston High in 1996 after coming to America as a foreign exchange student from Germany. The Thurston High School shootings in the spring of 1998 were disturbing to him for an obvious reason.

"It's really scary," Hartenstein said. "I have a first-grader, and for me to be afraid about sending my child to school is tough."

While other teammates go out after practice, he heads straight home to see his wife Theresa, seven-year old daughter Jasmine and almost two-year old son Isaiah. Jasmine is Theresa's child from a previous relationship.

Hartenstein wakes up every morning between 6 and 6:30 a.m. to take his kids to school. And after a long day of his own school and hoops, he returns home between 7 and 9 p.m. "to basically wake them up and put them back to sleep."

Kent knows that Hartenstein's off-court behavior certainly affects his basketball play.

"The biggest area is his sense of responsibility," Kent said. "He understands what it takes to be accountable all the time because he is in a situation where he must be accountable. There are no days and nights off when you're raising children."

Although Hartenstein's overall stats of 3.7 points and 3.7 rebounds a game are hardly eye-opening, it is his on the court presence that impresses teammates.

"When he's at home he takes care of his family, and when he's out here he plays hard," senior forward Alex Scales said. "He has the ability to score the ball. He

works hard, and it's just a matter of him going out and doing it."

In this Oregon season, the home loss to Washington on Feb. 19 is seen as one of the low points, but it was one of Hartenstein's best games. He started out by sending a shot by Husky forward Chris Walcott into the stands. He then repeatedly overpowered the Husky big men to post nine of his season-high 12 points in the first half. At one point, Hartenstein was so dominating that the "Pit Crew" began chanting, "Flo's on fire!"

"Flo is playing a lot better lately," sophomore guard Freddie Jones said. "He has more confidence when he gets the ball down low and makes his move."

Hartenstein can muscle up with anybody on the court or in the weight room where he benches and squats 300 and 450 pounds, respectively.

"His strength is awesome right now," Kent said. "Coach [Mike] Bellotti always tells me he'd love to have him out there in football. I think he'd make a great defensive end."

"In the summer time when I'd be working out, Coach Bellotti would tell me that he has a spot open for me," Hartenstein said. "He always jokes around about it. So that's funny."

But Hartenstein loves his bas-

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Ernie Kent
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ketball. And with the recent loss of starting forward A.D. Smith, he will be counted on to step up to an even larger role. He knows that he must improve on his team-leading 80 fouls this season.

"I would say I don't ever foul, but the refs see it differently," Hartenstein said. "Lately, I've been doing better so I need to continue to work on it."

Hartenstein is excited about the postseason possibilities and what he will be able to contribute to the team with his tough-minded tenacity.

But as his then-roommate Bryan White soon discovered back in 1997, Hartenstein is as genuine a person as they come.

"I'm pretty much a teddy bear off the court," Hartenstein said. "But I always say that the teddy bear can turn into a grizzly bear."

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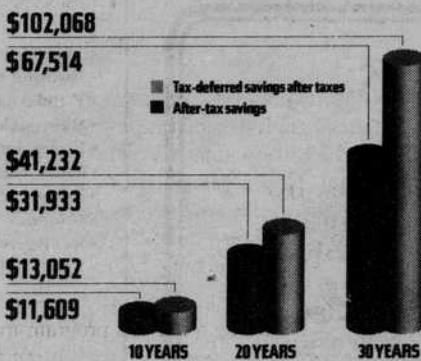
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