

Emeralds

continued from page 5

it all the way through and caught it. Cooper did score on the sacrifice fly to cut the lead to one, but Peter Graham ended the rally, and game, when he struck out.

Sheaffer, though, said he would take that scenario any day.

"I'd like to have the tying run on base every night in the ninth inning," Sheaffer said. "We'd come out on top."

Perhaps the biggest positive out of Monday's loss was the pitching of Frangil Cordero. The left hander struck out three and walked one in his five innings of work. Only one of the three runs he gave up was earned — a Kevin Covington blast in the second inning that was ruled a home run, but protested by Sheaffer who believed it to have bounced off the wall and over.

"It clearly hit the front fence and I think the umpires should just let the kids play and not make questionable calls," Sheaffer said. "But Cordero did a tremendous job and kept us in the game."

The Emeralds locker room was full of solemn faces afterward, but even in a losing effort the players were acknowledged by the fans. As the players were leaving the stadium they were stopped by

adoring children and signed plenty of autographs.

A child was heard telling a player, "Last night you guys were awesome and tomorrow you will be, too. Tonight was just a bummer."

Indeed the 5-4 loss did nothing to diminish the jubilant feeling of Sunday night's 9-3 win in front of a near sellout crowd of 5,991.

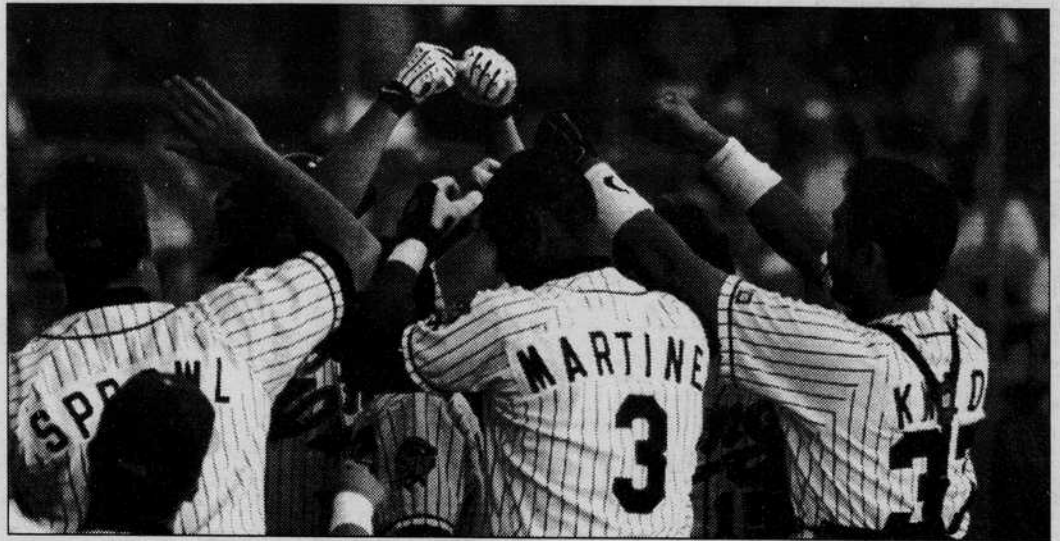
In the game, the Ems batted around and got terrific pitching from Wilton Chavez, who only gave up one run, three hits and recorded six strikeouts in six innings of solid work.

Chavez was named Northwest League Pitcher of the Week as his record stands at 2-0 and ERA at a blistering 0.00. He shut down the Spokane Indians in the season opener on June 20.

"It makes my job easy as a manager when I got pitching like that," Sheaffer said. "He pitches on emotion and is fun to watch."

In Sunday's win Michael Mallory, Sing, Kweon and Felker each had two hits for the Ems. Sing and Mallory had the most crowd-pleasing hits of the night as both drove pitches over the left-field fence.

"It felt nice to hear the crowd cheer like that after my hit," said Mallory after Sunday's win. "They get behind the team real well here and that picks us up."



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

The Ems were unified on Sunday during its 9-3 home-opening win. Eugene knocked around 13 hits, including two home runs.

Felker, who has made some impressive defensive plays at first in the last couple of nights, also was singing the crowd's praise.

"Oh, it's great," said Felker who went 2-for-5 with a double and single on Sunday. "This is a very knowledgeable crowd and they make for a great atmosphere for Single-A baseball."

Ems second basemen Blake Blasi came down to earth a bit on Monday night after getting off to a sizzling start in the club's first six

games. Blasi noted last year's disappointing year for the Ems and seems eager to turn things around for the people of Eugene.

"I heard we didn't have that good a year last year and you're never sure how the crowd is going to react to that," said Blasi, who before Monday's game was batting a league-leading .520. "So you want to come out and play hard and keep them all coming out and watching."

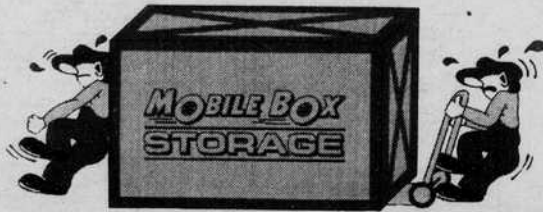
The Ems seem refreshed to fi-

nally be home after playing the first five games on the road — a period in which they went 2-3 against the Spokane Indians.

"It was good for us to get on the road and play some games together," Felker said.

"But it's even better to have a place to call our own and settle into a nice routine."

In the course of the 76 game season, Emerald players and fans hope that routine turns out to be a winning routine.



We bring the storage unit to you.

☛ You pack it, we pick it up and store it.

☛ We'll deliver it when you're ready.

☛ Perfect for the summer!

485-2115

818800



Little Caesars

Tuesday Special!

**MEDIUM PEPPERONI
OR CHEESE PIZZA**

\$2.99
CARRY OUT
Extra Toppings
99¢ Each

1711 Willamette
(next to Blockbuster)

343-3330

07/975

Classic men

continued from page 5

much weight on that one competition. People's careers are made and broken there."

Which is why the Pre Classic was so important to these athletes so they could compete under the national spotlight and against competition worthy of the Olympics themselves.

One man who seems more than ready for the Games to begin is sprinter Maurice Greene. Greene pushed the pace in the men's 200 meters, and won in a scintillating time of 19.93. The time would have given him the meet record, established by Johnson, but the wind reading of 2.1 was just barely over the allowable limit to be counted for record purposes.

Nonetheless, Greene was satisfied and eager for the next step up the Olympic ladder.

"I'm fairly pleased with the 200," Greene said. "I wish I would have run faster, but with the wind conditions and this being my first 200 race of the season, I'm very happy."

Greene was quick to make a prediction about possibly winning both the 100 and 200 meter dashes at the Olympics in Sydney, Australia.

"I will double in Sydney," Greene said.

Greene's win on Saturday was a little anticlimactic for some because it wasn't against Johnson. But the two are on track for a head-to-head showdown at the Trials, and it should be a duel that lives up to the hype.

Johnson, however, claims that Greene never enters his mind.

"At this point in my career I don't really focus on my competition," said Johnson, who plans to defend his 200 and 400 meter gold medals that he won at the '96 Games. "All I can control is how fast I run, so that's all I need to focus on."

While most of the focus was deservedly on the track for the better part of the day, the hammer throw attracted a huge audience with its early 11:15 a.m. start time. Lance Deal, the Eugene resident who was a silver medalist in the '96 Olympics, performed for the last



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Johnson is focused straight ahead toward the Olympic Trials and the Olympics.

time in front of his hometown fans.

"This is sort of the beginning of the end," said the 38-year old Deal, who plans to retire after competing in Sydney in September.

Deal picked a great way to begin his swan song as a hammer thrower. With adoring fans cheering on his every move, Deal unleashed six throws that clearly pleased the crowd. He clinched the win on his last throw when he twirled around and heaved the hammer 262 feet, 11 inches — more than 11 feet ahead of second-place finisher Stuart Rendell of Australia.

"I almost teared up on that last throw," Deal said. "I really wanted to give something to the people who stuck around to watch me."

Fellow American Kevin McMahon was disappointed in his fourth-place finish, but pleased for Deal.

"It's tough when you know how far you can throw and it just doesn't get out there," McMahon said. "So it's frustrating. But I'm happy for Lance. This is a great hometown farewell. It's ideal — get the pun?"

Other winners on the afternoon included Khadevis Robinson, who thrilled the onlookers with his 800 meter winning time of 1:45.90, and Coby Miller, who captured the 100 meters with a clocking of 10.00.

Miller's time established a new meet record, breaking the old record time of 10.08, set by none other than Carl Lewis.

Nick Hysong captured the pole vault with a leap of 18-10 1/4, and C.J. Hunter — husband of Marion Jones — took the shot put competition with a distance of 70-1 3/4, despite fouling on four of his six attempts.

Luke Kipkosgel edged out two fellow Kenyans to take the men's 5,000 meters (13:21.59), but it was the men's mile that stole the show.

The Bowerman Mile, named after legendary Oregon coach Bill Bowerman, again was a fan favorite. Kenyan William Chirchir (3:51.84) led eight runners who broke the hallowed four-minute barrier. Prep runner Donald Sage (4:00.29) just barely missed becoming the first prep athlete to break the mark in 33 years.

"It was pretty overwhelming," Sage said. "But I think that helped me."

Just as Saturday's Pre Classic helped some of the world's best get ready to take on the rest of the world later this year.

"It's an Olympic year," Johnson said. "That says it all."

The countdown to gold has begun, and Eugene was lucky enough to be a part of the journey.