

Wrestling team recruits fresh blood

Chuck Kearney continues to build a successful group for the 2000-01 Oregon wrestling team.

The team recently signed its third recruit for the season, which all join a Duck team that has two wrestlers ranked in the top four and four in the Top 20.

Shaun Williams is the latest recruit, and he joins Luke Larwin and Justin Godley, who were both signed in the fall.

"These young men are talented enough to make an immediate impact on what could be the best team in Oregon history," Kearney said. "Shaun should make an impact not just at Oregon, but also on the national level. Our goal is to turn him into a wrestler challenging for the national title. He is that good."

Williams wrestles at 125 pounds and is transferring from North Idaho Junior College. He was a national junior college champion both years that he was there and even competed on the 1996 Olympic team in South Africa. He also placed at the 1995 ESPOIR World Championships.

With Williams' arrival, Kearney can't help but get excited about his team's upcoming season.

"This team has the potential to make a run at the Pac-10 title and a Top 10 finish at the NCAA Championships," Kearney said. "We are in the position we want to be in."

Sosa wows them all with homers

ATLANTA — Step aside Junior, Sammy's the man.

Slammin' Sammy Sosa ended Ken Griffey Jr.'s two-year reign as Home Run Derby champion, hitting the longest, loudest and largest number of shots at Turner Field on Monday night.

Sosa beat Griffey 9-2 in the finals and hit 26 overall, including a pair of 508-foot shots — one to the 755 Club in the left-field upper deck and one that came to rest atop the second green batter's backdrop in straightaway center, below the scoreboard.

"I came here to put on a show. I didn't necessarily come here to get the win, but I guess I got the win," Sosa said.

"I know I have people behind me, who support me and love me," Sosa said to the crowd of 50,118.



Best Bet

MLB: The 71st All-Star Game, American vs. National
5 p.m., NBC

Sports

Blasi is anything but blasé

■ Blake Blasi has proved his critics wrong by becoming the Northwest League's leading hitter and the Emeralds' spark plug at the top of the order

Blake Blasi

Position: Second base

Height: 5-foot-9

Birth date: 3-23-79

Hometown: Wichita, Kan.

College: Wichita State

Draft: Selected by the Chicago Cubs in the 10th round of the 2000 draft

Notable: Named the Missouri Valley League Player of the Year this past season at Wichita State...

Underwent groin and back surgeries on Dec. 23, but came back after only three months off and played the season for Wichita State.

By Jeff Smith

Oregon Daily Emerald

"You're too small."

"You don't hit enough home runs."

"You'll never make it."

Those were just a few of the many "encouraging" words Blake Blasi has received over the years.

Now it's the summer of 2000 and Blasi is the Eugene Emeralds lead-off batter, hitting a team and league-leading .379.

A smile creeps onto the face of the 5-foot-9 second baseman when he looks down at the uniform he gets to wear every day and thinks back to the many people that never thought he would be where he is.

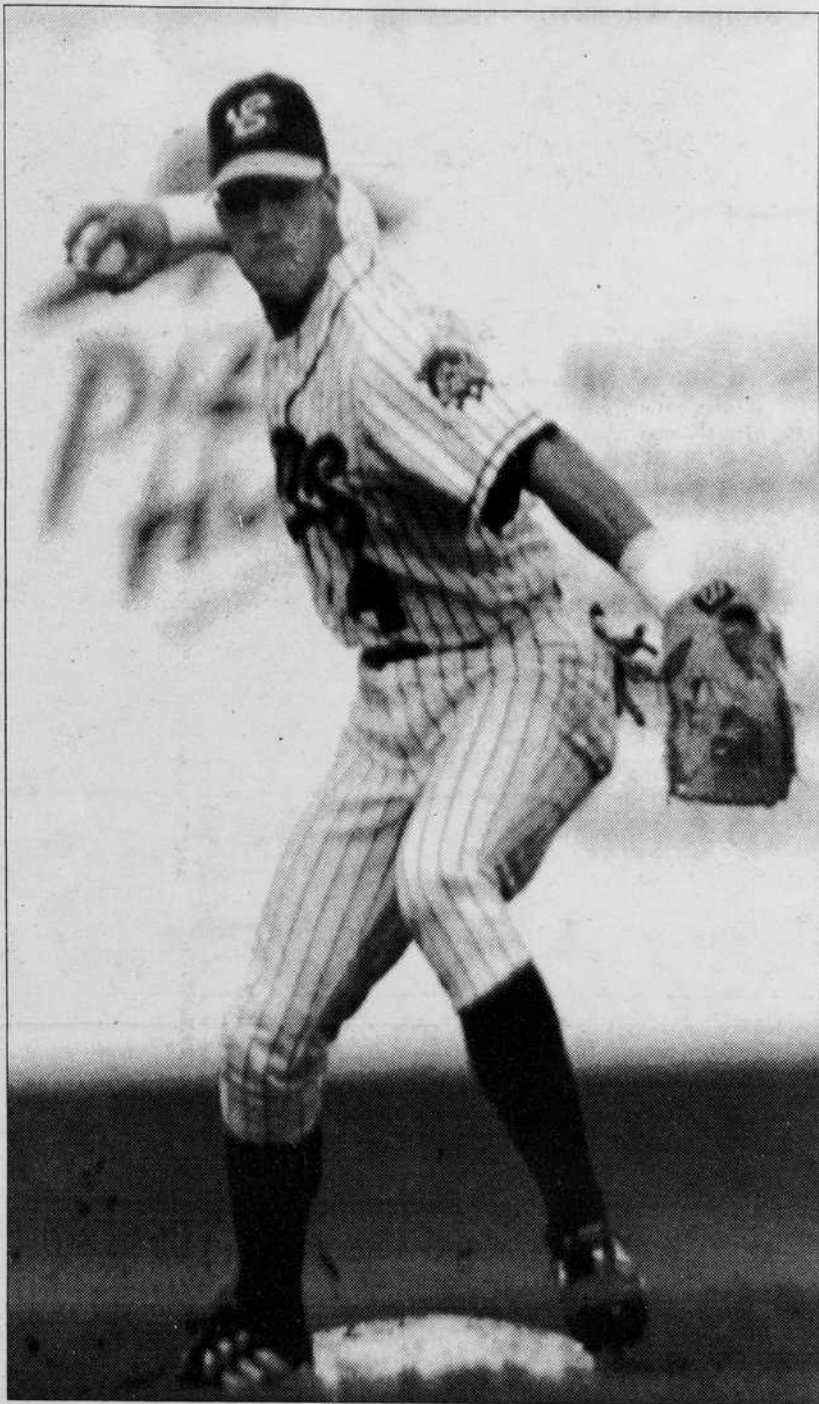
"It's nice for me because growing up in Wichita (Kan.), I was just an average player," said Blasi, who was a 10th-round draft pick (out of 50 rounds) by the Chicago Cubs this year. "I never thought I'd get a shot at it. I'm just trying to take advantage of it as much as I can."

"There's so many people I could say 'I told you so' to."

But instead of gloating, Blasi just keeps on working. Whether that means hitting extra balls off the batting tee or fielding extra grounders in the infield.

And don't think his coaches haven't noticed.

"He's given us such a good jump start to the season," manager Danny Sheaffer said. "He's Turn to **Blake Blasi** page 8



Eugene's Blake Blasi may be the Northwest League's leading hitter with an average of .379, but he also prides himself on his defense at the second base position. Emerald

Tracksters anticipate Olympic Trial runs



It has been quite a year for Jason Boness, who captured the Pacific-10 Conference Championship at Hayward Field in May. He is looking forward to competing against the nation's best at the Olympic Trials. Emerald

■ Six Ducks head to Sacramento this weekend for the U.S. Olympic Trials, having a shot to make the prestigious U.S. Olympic team

By Robbie McCallum
for the Emerald

Their collegiate season's may have ended six weeks ago, but for four members of the 2000 Oregon Track and Field team, the competitive season is long from over.

Overall, six past, present and future Ducks will compete in the U.S. Olympic Trials in Sacramento, Calif., starting Friday, July 14 through July 23.

Steve Fein, who recently graduated, will compete in the men's 5,000 meters along with world-class runners like Bob Kennedy, Adam Goucher and Marc Davis. Fein's personal best of 13 minutes, 43.4 seconds easily made the qualifying mark of 13:47.

Fein, whose collegiate career ended on a disappointing note when he failed to qualify for the 1,500 finals at the NCAA meet, has been focusing on the Olympic Trials all season. While at Oregon, Fein was a five-time All-American.

Sophomore Jason Boness, coming off an impressive win at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and a NCAA appearance, will compete in the high jump. Boness' school record mark of seven feet, five inches

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