

Club Sports: games for all

■ The co-ed organization gives students an athletic outlet without the high-level competition of the NCAA

By Jeff DeMoss
for the Emerald

From fencing to footbag and baseball to badminton, the Oregon Club Sports program has a recreational activity for just about everyone.

Club Sports is a co-ed athletic organization based on student involvement in the planning and coordination of various activities. Students organize their own teams and events, choose their own student coaches and schedule appropriate meeting times based on what works best with everyone's schedule.

A Club Sports activity can be a happy medium for students who aren't able to approach NCAA or other intercollegiate competition, but still want to be recognized as college athletes.

"We provide a program that enables students to feel connected to campus by gaining recognition through competition," said Sandy Vaughn, the Club Sports program director and recreational coordinator. Vaughn also said that the program helps the University by providing student representation in a positive way.

Most Club Sports endeavors fit in with students' schedules well, requiring a time commitment of only a few practice hours per week plus competitions.

"It's a great way to take your mind off school after sitting in class studying all day," said Philip Gerhards, a member of the ultimate frisbee team.

Anna Greaney, who has played on the women's water polo team, agrees that Club Sports can be a welcome diversion.

"Being active in sports can help you get through school," Greaney said. "It's a healthy outlet for the frustrations of student life."

The wide variety of individual and team activities within the Club

Sports program reflects the diversity and far-reaching interests of the student body. There are 36 different activities to cater to an assortment of interests.

The program offers activities for varying interests including team sports, individual and one-on-one competitions of strength and skill, and a wealth of outdoor-oriented activities. Club Sports also offers several styles of martial arts.

Any student with desire and organizational ability can start a new club. Since the program is run by students, it functions much like a grassroots organization; therefore, new ideas are always encouraged and welcomed.

Club Sports has thus far been a successful program and is growing every year. Vaughn gives the credit to the students.

"Students are really the ones who design the programs. The administration does not set the goals," she said. "I would like to see students get more University recognition for their hard work and commitment to these programs."

Establishing lasting connections

■ The FIG program is offered to incoming freshmen to help ease their transition into a big university

By Bennett Lacy
for the Emerald

A new year at the University has brought with it more freshmen, reaching the highest number in University history. With packed classes and more 18-year-olds than you can shake a Frog's Jokebook at, Freshman Interest Groups have become even more popular this year.

For those unsure what a Freshman Interest Group is, it's a group of 3-4 classes that allows first-year students to get their feet wet in their chosen subject area. The FIG structure typically carries a 12-credit load while simultaneously satisfying some general education requirements. Participation occurs during fall term of a student's freshman year.

"One aspect of the program that helps ease new college students into the transition of attending a large university is making sure stu-

dents have familiar faces in their classes," freshman exercise and movement science major Liz Hoffard said. To accomplish this, FIGs are organized so groups of 20 to 25 students attend their core classes together.

"I think it's important to have a good connection to the University and I thought I could be the one to help students foster those connections."

Windy Borman
junior FIG leader

"I like having most of my classes with the same people," Hoffard said. "It's easier to make friends when you have the same classes as them."

The FIG experience doesn't always end with winter break. Many students return in their following years to become FIG leaders. As

the program has grown with the number of freshmen attending the University, so has the number of inspired students who decide to take on the role of a FIG leader.

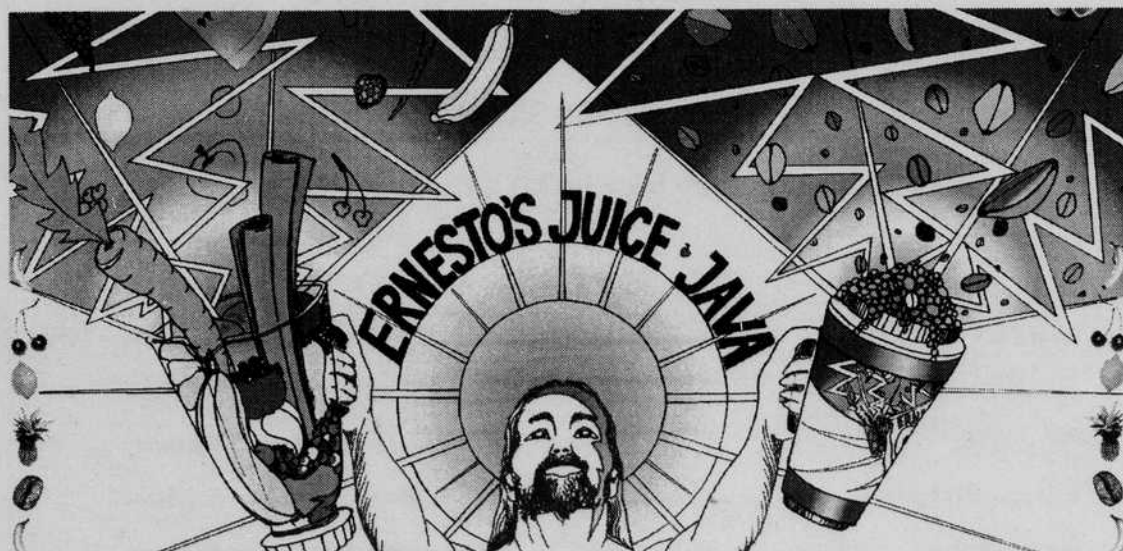
Windy Borman, a junior double-majoring in journalism and theatre arts, is an example of a student who simply wants to help freshmen make the transition into college. Borman leads the FIG group Understanding Images.

"I think it's important to have a good connection to the University and I thought I could be the one to help students foster those connections," she said.

Leaders are responsible for planning weekly meetings for the students in their FIGs. At these meetings, the students take a break and talk about how the week went and vent about anything that they might have on their minds. They take tours of campus resources pertaining to their interest and break the ice with fun activities.

"I'm just fun," Borman said, expressing what she tries to include as part of the experience for the

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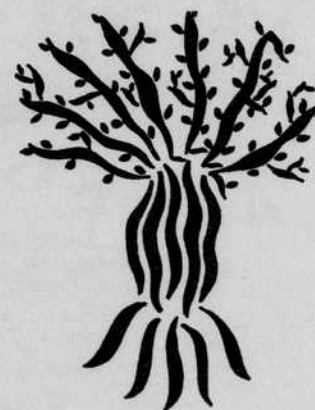
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