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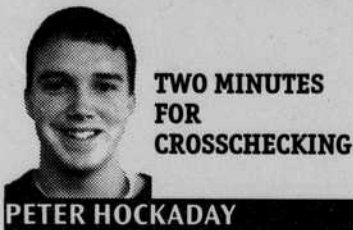
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# C'mon A-Rod, don't leave



**TWO MINUTES FOR CROSSCHECKING**

Dear Alex Rodriguez, Don't go. You owe it to Seattle's fans, to yourself and to baseball as a whole to continue playing with the Mariners. It's going to be tough not to go, A-Rod. The Rockies set you up with John Elway for a candlelight dinner and a "come to Colorado" speech. The Rangers will get you a perfect house next door to Mike Modano, the Dallas Stars' all-star. The Dodgers are willing to increase their payroll by millions of dollars for you.

But don't forget about Seattle, Alex. They're sleepless over you. Seattle loves you. Seattle needs you. The complaint against the Mariners has always been that they won't build around a star player. But once Ken Griffey, Jr. — and his financial burden — left for Cincinnati, Seattle went out and acquired Rickey Henderson, Aaron Sele and John Olerud.

Those players helped lift the M's to the American League Championship Series, where they almost toppled the mighty Yankees.

Think about it logically, A-Rod. I know it's tough, with all these people telling you how good you are by offering you more money than you could spend in a lifetime, but try to keep your level head.

Why leave Seattle? You'll get a bigger contract, and you might have a better shot at winning the World Series. That's what Griffey thought, and he brought down the Reds just like he brought down the Mariners. That's what Randy Johnson thought, and he hasn't gotten any closer, either.

Why stay with the Mariners? You will be the hero for fans everywhere. You will convert cynics like myself who think that fan loyalty and player loyalty are growing at opposite ends from each other in the money-driven world of sports. They'll even move around the fences at Safeco Field for you because you've complained about your ability to hit there.

The Mariners management is keeping a low profile during the hype that is starting to build around your future. That's because GM Pat Gillick and the rest of the Seattle higher-ups know they can't compete financially with other

clubs. But is money really the issue, A-Rod? On your official Web site, you said, "The two most important things I'm looking for are stability and commitment" in management. Seattle has commitment and proved last season that stability can be arranged, even if the past would prove otherwise. The Mariners showed their stability just a few weeks ago, when they resigned manager Lou Piniella.

For once, it would be nice to see a premier athlete pick the fans over the dollars. Yes, if I were a Rockies fan, I'd write a column convincing you that Coors Field was the place to play. If I loved the Braves, I'd mention the national television exposure. If I lived in Texas, I'd be telling you what a nice guy Mike Modano is. But if I were a fan of any of those teams, and you decided to stay in Seattle, I'd say you were a good man.

You may be only 25 years old, Alex, but you're in a unique situation to help restore fans' faith in the great American pastime.

My advice to you? Go out there and shake up the system a little bit. Be different. Be outrageous.

Stay in Seattle.

Peter Hockaday is a sports reporter for the Emerald. He can be reached at phockaday@yahoo.com.

## UO club volleyball set to start

■ The men's club volleyball team battles international competition, while women's soccer strives to be champ

By Jesse Thomas  
 For the Emerald

The Oregon Club Sports men's volleyball team hopes to come out spiking in a new season this year with its first tournament on Saturday.

The international tournament will consist of 16 teams and will be played at Washington State. It will start out with round-robin competition and then switch into bracket-style play towards the end.

According to senior captain Vince Butera, Idaho is the team that the men are looking forward to playing, based on its skill level.

"We are going to get a feel this weekend for how we play together," Butera said. "Everyone is really dedicated, loves to play the game and is very excited."



The team is currently limited to having only nine players, with only three returnees. The key for the team members is to learn how to flow together as if they have played with each other for years.

"This game will show us our strengths and weaknesses," Butera said.

### One championship down, one to go for soccer

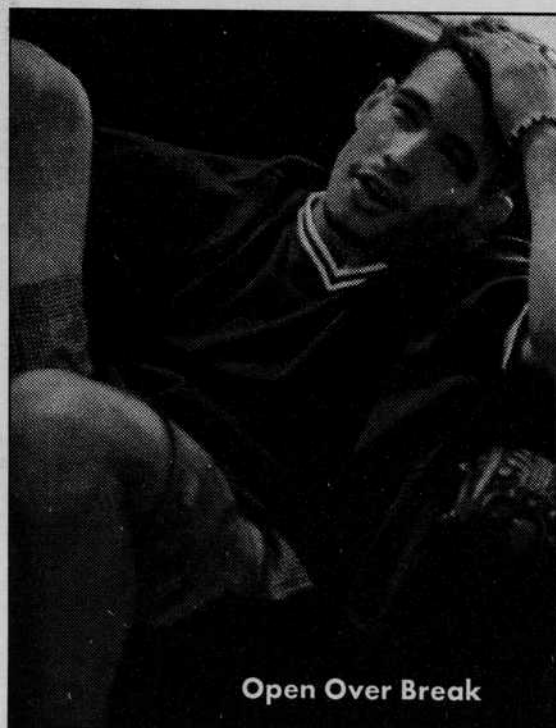
It is now a reality: The Oregon women's club soccer team is the indoor league champion.

The team earned the title when it smashed Oregon State, 15-4, on Wednesday in Corvallis.

"We came out really strong and kept up our intensity the whole game," coach and senior forward Barbie Bowling said. "We were simply the better team and we knew we were from the beginning."

But the quest to be the best is far from finished. The team will be traveling back to Corvallis again Saturday with the goal of proving to be the best in outdoor competition. Oregon will compete in the playoff matches against Oregon State and Lewis and Clark.

The winner will then be crowned the outdoor league champion. And if it's the Oregon team, then bragging rights will clearly be Oregon's to treasure.



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