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Competition heats up for Club Sports

■ The EMU Club Sports program gives many students the opportunity to compete athletically on a collegiate level

By Dominique Beaumonté
for the Emerald

In the midst of March Madness, basketball fans aren't the only folks experience craziness.

With more than active teams, the EMU Club Sports program is at the height of this season's competition. Offering sports ranging from aikido to water polo, the program gives students the opportunity to compete in athletics on a collegiate level beyond intramural sports.

Club Sports is co-ed and open to all students, staff and faculty. It is partially ASUO-funded and is required to fund-raise part of its operating budget.

Amanda Studdard, a junior, recalls her freshman year participation in Club Sports with pleasure.

"I remember wanting to go home so badly," she said. "That's when I found out that there was a women's water polo team." Now she's the team's captain and coordinator.

The presence of Club Sports on

campus has benefited many of its participants.

Sophomore Pete Bayly is a member of the men's rugby team. Bayly said Club Sports gives people who can't compete on the varsity level a chance to participate in athletics. Like many other Club Sports teams, rugby has both men's and women's teams that compete regionally against other college teams in the Northwest.

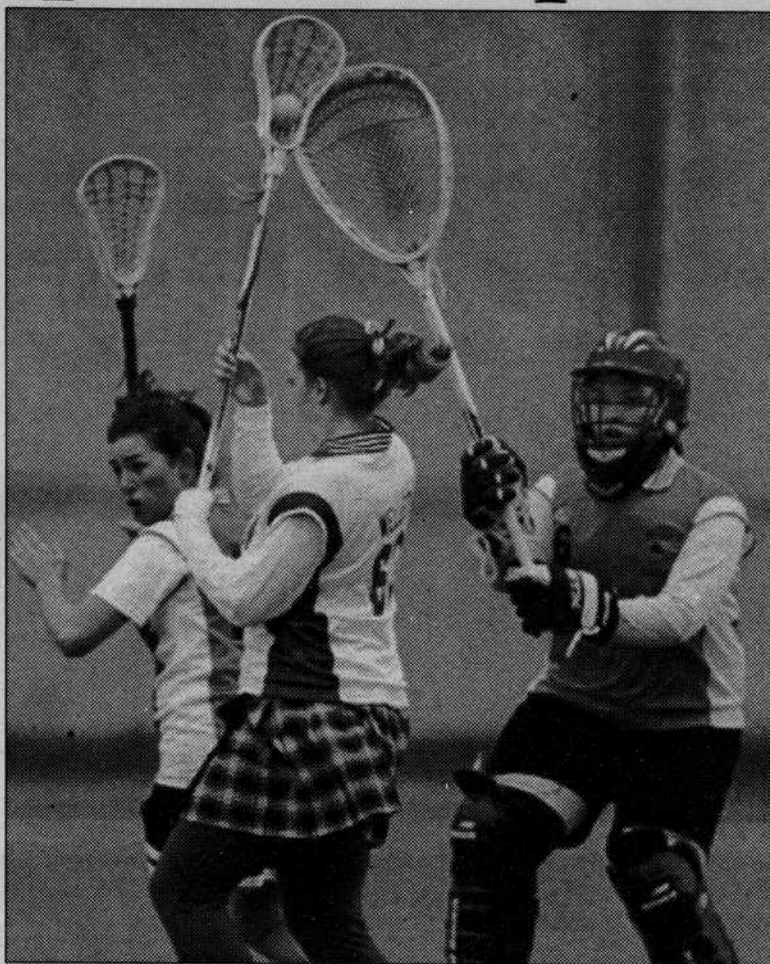
"Playing rugby and being a part of Club Sports teaches people how to work as a team and trust each other," Bayly said.

While Club Sports seems to be a recreational outlet for their members, the teams have also enjoyed competitive success.

Erin Koenig, a junior, encourages people to be a part of Club Sports, particularly crew. The women's crew team has the opportunity to compete on the Pacific-10 Conference level against teams including Stanford and UCLA. The water polo team came in fourth at its national competition in 2001. Oregon Ultimate, the men's Frisbee team, is ranked fifth in the nation and finished third in 2001. Women's volleyball won the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association Championship in 2001 and just won a regional title.

The Wushu Club recently hosted an international competition on campus. Because of its national success, the club was invited to host the competition for the first time this year, Vaughn said.

The dance team has also been successful. Now in its fourth year with Club Sports, the team has competed for three of them. This year, the team members' skills have led them to be ranked by the United Dance Association, a national dance and spirit organization, dance team coordinator and co-



Adam Amato Emerald

In her second year with the women's club lacrosse team, Sarah Weller (center) scores her first of two goals in Oregon's 8-2 win against OSU. The team split its games Sunday with OSU and the University of Portland. Oregon is sub-.500 for the season.

captain Amy Gaeth said.

"The dance team is the first in Oregon history to compete nationally on the collegiate level," dance coach Karl Mund said. "Over 40 million students are competing nationally, and we are proud to be a part of the fastest-growing area in collegiate spirit, thanks to Club Sports."

"The biggest contribution is that

Club Sports allows students to have a program to be involved in," Vaughn said. "It really keeps students here, even when times are tough academically. All the students who travel to compete are representing the University in an exceptional manner."

Dominique Beaumonté is a freelance reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald.

PHOTO SPECIALS

MARCH 18-24

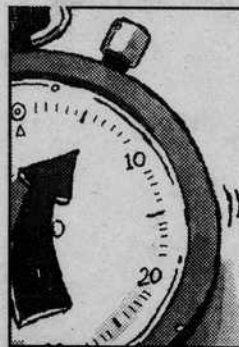
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