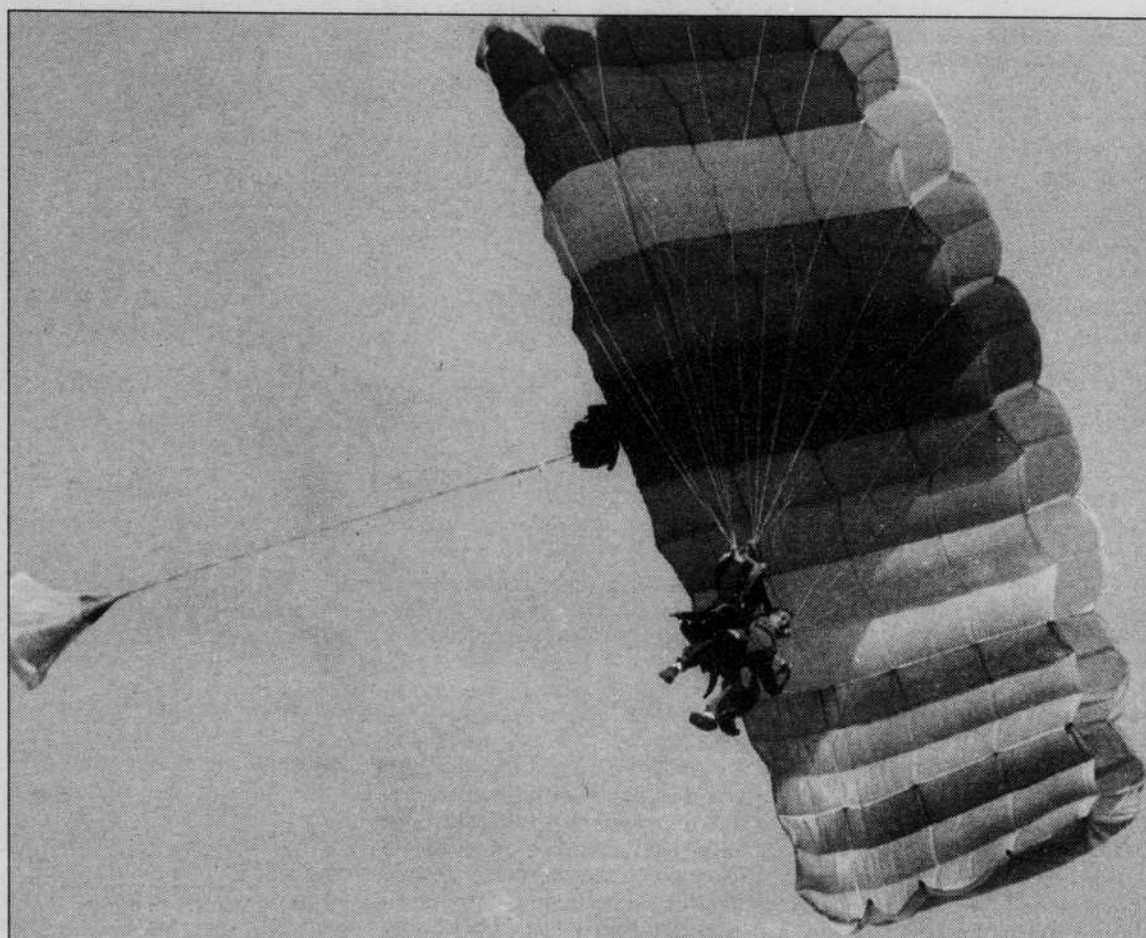


SPORTS

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Best bet
MLB: World Series Game 3
Anaheim at San Francisco
5 p.m., FOX

Tuesday, October 22, 2002



Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Former club sports sky diving coach Lewie Pettit, seen here coming in for a landing, founded the program four years ago.

The sky's the limit

The Club Sports sky diving team is a fledgling unit that is just trying to get off the ground after years of trying

Scott Archer
Freelance Sports Reporter

Jumping out of an airplane is crazy. Jumping out of a plane 15,000 feet in the air is crazier. Training, preparing and competing in sky diving is the craziest. Unless you're Lisa Delambert.

Delambert is the coach of the Oregon sky diving club. But to have a club, you need to have members — and this team is looking for them. Currently, only one Oregon student is a member of the club. That person is also the coach.

One reason for the low participation is because the club has been

around only four years.

Former coach Lewie Pettit, also the founder of the club, understands the difficulty of organizing and overseeing a sky diving club.

"I was stressed every year to keep the club going," Pettit said. "A lot of people think about jumping or joining the club, but they don't take that first step."

That first step is a huge step. But once that step is made, a lot of students get hooked.

"Everyone seeks something different to learn," Pettit

said. "We teach them to fly. We literally fly, that is the goal."

Learning to fly, however, takes more than just your basic Duck wings.

"The problem with the club is that you need 20 to 30 jumps to qual-

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Club Sports Tuesday

Falling from the open sky like any regular sports guy

So, first of all, take a long, hard look at my mug down there.

Does it look like the mug of an extreme-sports guru? Do I look like a BMX-biking, cliff-diving adventure freak? Heck no.

I'm a sports guy, not an extreme-sports guy. I like my baseball packaged on satellite television. I like my hockey from the La-Z-Boy — with the leg rest kicked up, please.

And yet I, like many people, have that list. That list of things you want to do, things that break the couch-surfing monotony. At the top of that list was sky diving.

So when Dave Wright — one of the "Bros." of Wright Bros. Skydiving, which is one of two sky diving companies that operate out of the

Creswell Airport — offered me the chance to fall from an airplane at 15,000 feet, I grabbed it like I normally grab the remote.

I wanted to fly. And on Sunday, I did.

When you sky dive, the instructors make you keep a log book of each jump, so I thought I would instead keep a log of one jump — my first.

Here is that running diary.

10:20 a.m. — I arrive at the hangar and begin making preparations to jump. We learn about rip chords and altimeters and chutes and every other thing you could possibly need to know about sky diving. The instructor tells us about jumping out of the plane, saying it's important not to grab on to the walls of the small exit when it's your turn to jump — grab your chest straps instead.

Hey, I figure, there is no way I'm going to be grabbing onto those walls. I've got it under control. I'm no wall-grabber. Riiiiight.

11 a.m. — I meet Lewie, the founder of Oregon's club sky diving team and also my

tandem partner for the day. Lewie is a big, jovial man and looks like he's been on maybe one too many sky dives. Later, he will be the only person to dive without a jumpsuit when the instructors go up by themselves. He dives in jeans.

But Lewie is great, obviously loves sky diving and has a reassuring personality. I learn he's running for Creswell mayor — on a sky diving platform. I'm not even kidding.

Please, if you live in Creswell, elect this man mayor. You will not be disappointed.

11:26 a.m. — I finally get around to signing the release form. Some of the sentences give pause. Words like "risk of personal injury" and such abound.

Of course, I initial everywhere, literally signing my life away on the dotted line.

11:45 a.m. — I start to realize that they shouldn't call it "sky diving," they should call it "sky watching." Every person in the hangar, and there are a lot of people involved with the sky diving process, keeps walking outside, checking the sky, then

walking back in, usually muttering things like, "Damn clouds never gonna break up," or "10,000 feet at the most," or other such sky diving talk. Very entertaining.

2 p.m. — We're watching a group of divers from the other sky diving outfit take their jumps when we see a parachute floating in mid-air with no diver attached. This means someone's initial chute didn't work and they were forced to land with their reserve chute.

Great. Now I start thinking about what happens if my chute doesn't work. And then what happens when my backup doesn't work. This is not very entertaining — this is very worrying. I want my mommy.

4:30 p.m. — Just kidding about my mommy. After hours of waiting for the clouds to break up, a huge patch of blue sky is headed our way, and we mobilize to jump. Lewie starts to play therapist, telling me to relax. Sure, I'll relax. I'll relax when I'm sleeping in

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Conference teams appear in season's first BCS standings

Washington State is the highest-ranked Pac-10 team in the recently-released BCS poll

Pac-10 Notes

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

With the release of the year's first Bowl Championship Series rankings Monday, the Pacific-10 Conference powers avoided any controversy that usually surrounds the controversial poll.

Nope, the Pac-10 is sitting BCS-pretty.

Washington State was the top-ranked Pac-10 team, coming in seventh in the first poll. Southern California was 14th, while Oregon was 15th after its first loss of the season Saturday.

The Cougars caught the biggest break of any Pac-10 squad. WSU, ranked ninth in The Associated Press poll and 11th in the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll, had the highest strength of schedule of any one-loss team, which propelled it into the seventh spot in the BCS.

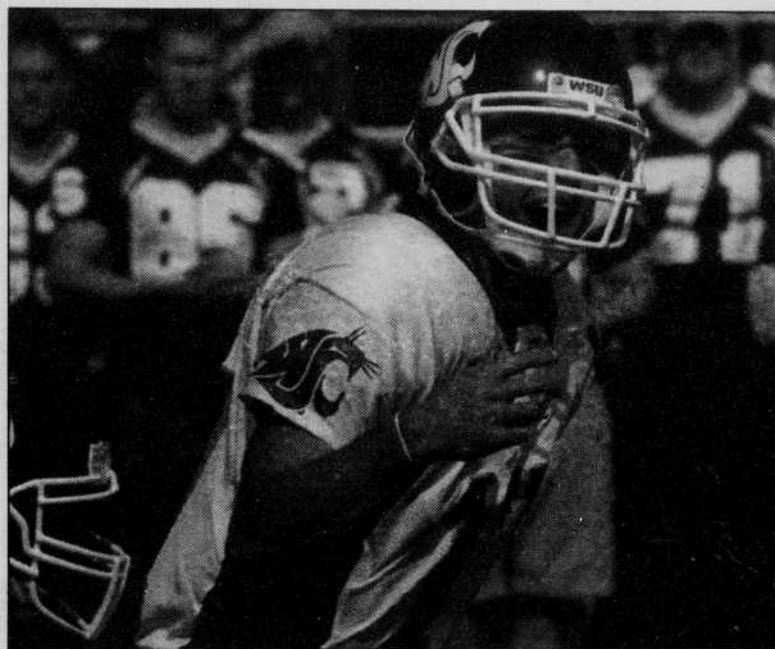
USC was also helped by a strong schedule, a schedule that allowed the Trojans to break into the BCS despite having two losses. USC had

the fourth-hardest schedule in the country. The only other two-loss BCS team, Florida State, had the third-highest strength-of-schedule ranking in the country.

Oregon was hurt by its poor strength of schedule. At No. 63, the Ducks had the second-easiest schedule of any BCS squad. Only undefeated North Carolina State, ranked No. 11, had an easier schedule.

The biggest BCS controversy surrounded Miami and Oklahoma. Ranked second in both major polls, the Sooners 13-ranked schedule propelled them into the top BCS spot. Miami, with the nation's 27th-

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Courtesy Washington State Media Services

Jason Gesser has led Washington State to seventh in the BCS standings.