

Sports Editor:
Jesse Thomas
jessethomas@dailyemerald.com

Best bet
Tennis: Wimbledon
women's quarter finals
10 a.m., ESPN

Tuesday, July 1, 2003

Seattle snatches Ridnour for No. 14

Former Oregon guard Luke Ridnour is chosen in the first spot outside the lottery and heads to the Seattle Supersonics

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Editor

Former Oregon point guard Luke Ridnour had his first chance to relax Thursday.

After weeks of flying around the country for team workouts leading up to the 2003 NBA Draft, Ridnour woke up at 5 a.m. and took some time for himself.

Following an afternoon at the beach, Ridnour was all ears when the draft began at 4 p.m. The draft took nearly two hours before his wait was over and Ridnour could breathe a sigh of relief after being chosen at No. 14 by the Seattle Supersonics.

"I didn't even know until they said my name," Ridnour said via a conference call after the draft. "Now that I'm there I'm ready to play at that level."

"It's real exciting to be able to play there; Seattle's going to be a good fit. To be a Sonic and in the NBA is a big honor."

Luke Ridnour
former Oregon guard

The Sonics, who had shown interest in Ridnour ever since his workout in May, chose the Pacific-10 Conference player of the year in the first round with their second pick.

And Ridnour may now live the dream as he plays for a professional team a mere two hours away from his hometown of Blaine, Wash.

"It's real exciting to be able to play there; Seattle's going to be a good fit," Ridnour said. "To be a Sonic and in the NBA is a big honor."

The Supersonics also held the No. 12 pick in the draft and chose power forward Nick Collison, formerly of Kansas. Collison will likely start for Seattle, as could Ridnour, who was the fourth point guard chosen in the draft.

"We were trying to be as active as we can (be)," Sonics General Manager Rick Sund told ESPN via teleconference Thursday night. "We are very fortunate with Nick, he can run. Speaking of running, that's where Luke comes in. They're young players and I think they'll be able to contribute next year."

Ridnour was chosen just one spot out of the top 13 picks — known as the Lottery — a position where former Oregon star Fred Jones was selected in the 2002 NBA Draft.

Ridnour had a chance of going as high as No. 11 to the Golden State Warriors, but they chose guard Mickael Pietrus, of France. After the Sonics picked up their big man at No. 12, they got the point guard in Ridnour that will help Seattle recover from their trade of Gary Payton.

Turn to **Ridnour**, page 6



Patrick Farrell Miami Herald (KRT)

Miami President Donna Shalala and Athletic Director Paul Dee moved their school into the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Departures rattle Big East

The Miami Hurricanes and Virginia Tech Hokies defect from the Big East conference, favoring the ACC, which offers equal revenue-sharing

By Michelle Kaufman
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

MIAMI — The Hurricane watch is over.

After a seven-week courtship, wrangling among college presidents and athletic directors up and down the East coast, and a lawsuit with rotating plaintiffs and defendants, the University of Miami announced Monday it is defecting from the Big East Conference to the Atlantic Coast Conference.

The Hurricanes will begin ACC play in the 2004-05 season.

Miami's decision — along with that of co-defector Virginia Tech — drastically alters the balance of power among the conferences, dealing a major blow to the Big East and strengthening the ACC's football presence. UIM officials cited financial, academic, athletic and geographic reasons for the switch.

"I don't want to pretend money wasn't a factor, because that would be disingenuous of us," Miami President Donna Shalala said. "We have a comprehensive athletic department and there were several factors that went into this decision, one of them being money."

The Big East made a last-ditch effort to retain Miami, offering a lucrative short-term economic package, but Miami officials felt the Hurricanes were better off in the ACC for the long run because of the conference's equal revenue-sharing, commitment to Olympic and women's sports, academic vision, proximity, and intention to add a 12th football

school, which would guarantee a conference championship game and \$12 million more to divvy up.

"It has been a bizarre, strange and goofy process," Shalala said. "But it has allowed us the opportunity to have the distance to decide who we are, where we are and where we want to go."

Beginning in Fall 2004, Miami athletes and fans will have to forget the Big East's big-city markets (New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C.) and become familiar with cozier Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; Charlottesville, Va.; Clemson, S.C. and Tallahassee, Fla., where the rivalry with the Seminoles will intensify.

Instead of the Georgetown Hoyas and Syracuse Orangemen, the Hurricanes will be playing the Duke Blue Devils, North Carolina Tar Heels and Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets. Miami's travel budget will get some relief, as plane tickets to ACC cities are generally cheaper than to the Northeast, and teams will be able to travel closer to game time, allowing them more class time and savings on hotel bills.

"Our nearest conference opponent FSU is now 400 miles away instead of 1,000 Temple," Miami Athletic Director Paul Dee said.

Added Miami basketball coach Perry Clark: "We're going from \$300 a night for a hotel in New York to \$65 a night in Winston-Salem. But more important, this puts UIM in a conference where it can house all its sports and more revenue to help support everyone."

The price for the move is steep. Miami will pay the Big East a \$1 million exit fee and the ACC a \$3 million entrance fee over the next few years. But Miami officials and trustees felt the switch was the

Turn to **Miami**, page 6



Jesse Thomas
Go the distance

Big East exodus may ignite reshuffling

Just like the bids that went back and forth for Barry Bonds' 73rd home run ball last week, the Atlantic Coast Conference ended with the winning offer to bring Miami over from the Big East Conference.

According to The Associated Press, Miami accepted the ACC's invitation to join the conference despite last minute desperation efforts from Boston College and Syracuse to try to get the Hurricanes to stay.

And with Virginia Tech by its side, who can really blame Miami President Donna Shalala for making such a decision?

The Hurricanes and Hokies have been the two most dominant Big East programs for years now, as well as two of the strongest programs in the nation. Now, at the end of the 2003-04 season, they will pack their bags and take a stroll into a conference where they can earn more money and put up a fight in what is considered the strongest football conference in the nation.

So now the Big East is left to cry like Bill Walton, whose son wasn't even worthy of a first round choice by any team, or Todd McFarlane, who blew nearly half a million dollars on a baseball team that will be forgotten in two years.

To run a few numbers by you, Miami (6) and Virginia Tech (3) have combined for nine of the 12 Big East football championships, and the

Turn to **Thomas**, page 8

Ems look for consistency against Volcanoes

The Ems will look to get things back on track as they meet the Volcanoes again after taking two of three from the team to start the season

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Editor

The Eugene Emeralds have been as up and down as a roller coaster as they head into today's matchup against Salem/Keizer at Civic Stadium.

After winning six games in a row, including five against Tri-City, the Ems went on to lose three in a row.

The Ems and the Volcanoes already met once this season in a three-game series to begin the 2003 schedule. The Ems took the first two games at Salem/Keizer before the Volcanoes took away game three.

The Ems (8-4) currently lead the West

Division of the Western League Standings with the Volcanoes in a close runner up spot at 7-4. The two rivals will play tonight through Thursday evening in a three-game series before meeting again on Aug. 21.

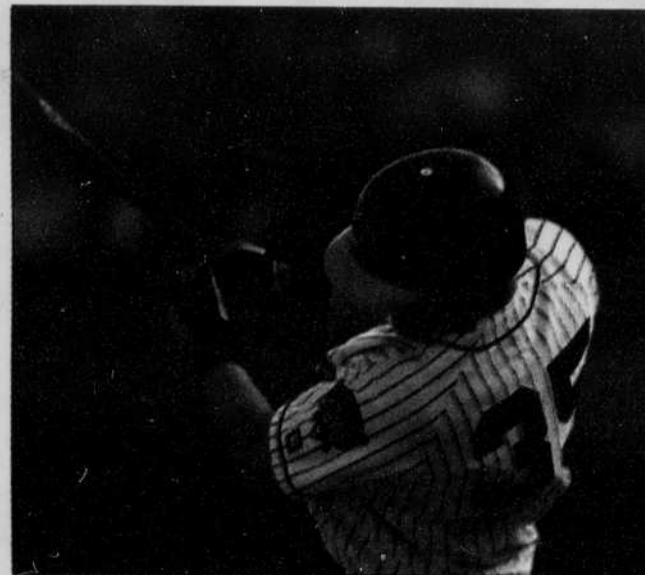
Starters for today's game are right-hander Jared Wells for the Ems and right-hander Jesse Floyd for the Volcanoes.

Prior to today's matchup, the Ems wrapped up a rough series against Yakima. After jumping out to a rocket start, the Emeralds are struggling after losing three in a row to the Yakima Bears.

On Sunday's fourth game of the five game series, the Bears scored five runs in the fifth inning and six runs in the sixth inning to rally from a four-run deficit.

Yakima won 13-6 in the battle of the Northwest League Divisional leaders before 1,168 at Yakima County Stadium. Eugene dropped to 8-4 overall as the

Turn to **Emeralds**, page 8



Jessica Waters Emerald

Ben Johanning puts his powerful swing to use for the Emeralds.