

Coach

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interview process, and it was a little different than she remembered — or at least Eugene was.

"During my whole interview I couldn't find anything I didn't love about this place," Larsen said. "And it got to a point where I was walking around like, 'All right, there has got to be something.' And I really left wanting and just dreaming about getting this job."

That dream came true last week for 29-year-old Larsen, who describes herself as energetic, passionate and fun.

"Our search and our pool of candidates was unbelievable," Athletic Director Bill Moos said July 29 in a press conference. "The one that we selected rose above (the others) quite dramatically in my opinion. We are very thrilled that Jen Larsen has agreed to be an Oregon Duck."

And thus the journey began in starting a team from scratch. Larsen will look to her mentor in North Carolina, women's head coach Jenny Slingluff Levy, who also started her program from the ground up.

Larsen's first tasks will come in recruiting and preparing to host a summer clinic camp on Aug. 16. The camp will allow high school athletes from across the state to im-

prove their skills, meet Larsen and play along side some U.S. national team players.

Larsen's hope in the future is to have as many Oregon athletes on her roster as possible.

"I know that there are some really fine athletes in this state and they're starting to fall in love with lacrosse as a lot of people have on the East Coast," she said. "I want kids to dream about playing lacrosse at Oregon."

The most recent addition to the new staff is assistant coach Robert Bray. Bray is a former 4-year lacrosse coach at St. Mary's College of Maryland and was one of the

other candidates who applied for Larsen's position.

For Larsen, adjusting to this new lifestyle has not been easy. The majority of her furniture and belongings remain on the East Coast as she continues the moving process. And in her spare time she is looking to do some white water rafting and kayaking.

"I love nature, I love being outside," said Larsen, who has only been in Eugene since July 27. "I'm just taking it a day at a time at this point. It's a whole new life out here."

But thus far, Eugene has seemed the perfect fit for the 1993 lacrosse national champion. And the overwhelming feeling that is Oregon ath-

letics has not scared Larsen a bit.

"I've just been surrounded by big-time athletics my whole life," she said. "I'm an athlete down to the very last part of me. I feel excited and honored to be part of it because it is such a big-time athletic department. You just pull up into this facility and almost get chills, it's so cool."

Larsen's team will take to Papé Field and begin competition at the start of next school year. She hopes to have some athletes signed to the roster by November in her ever-continuing crazy schedule.

Contact the sports editor at jessethomas@dailymerald.com.

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to dates of reaching mountain peaks, the walls and ceiling were filled top-to-bottom with unforgettable experiences.

I hoped my trip could be worthy of toilet literature by the end of the day.

As I waited at McKenzie River's rocky beach, listening to safety precautions about how to tuck one's self

in a fetal position when getting stuck in a hole underwater, I tried to remember the fine print of the liability form I signed a half hour before.

But the sun began to peak through, and we pushed off into the clear water, ready to begin our six-mile trek. Kat asked me to be on the front-left of the boat and set the paddle pace since I had minimal white water experience.

As Alan, the paddle captain, famil-

iarized us with the strokes, "forward, back left, back right and dig," we approached our first rapid, known as the Screamer.

Having never rafted the McKenzie, I was only left to imagine what it could entail. As we approached the Screamer — only a class two-plus rapid — it was definitely our first wake up call. I took a few good splashes in the face that helped me forget my mere three and a half hours

of sleep the night before.

Our raft played sweeper through the afternoon, allowing the two other rafts and four inflatable kayaks to stay in front. I persisted in setting a pace that Olga, Adeena and Alan could all feel comfortable with.

As we continued through the slow current, we were easily overtaken by the osprey soaring above and the overwhelming greenery that soared high into the sky from the river's bank.

Through the passing journey, the river offered soothing sounds before we approached Clover, another class two rapid. After more water in the boat and a few big rocks to clear, we were soon safe on our way.

Just before lunch break, we approached the Eagle Rock Rapids, which would not treat us as fairly. Prior to the class two, we had maneuvered into shallow water and became stuck on a rock that was by no means forgiving.

Even through vicious paddling, the rock refused to let go as we seemingly pivoted in a circle on it going nowhere fast. As frustration mounted, we jumped out of the raft and walked it into deeper water and were back on our way.

After a lunch of vegetables and homemade oatmeal raisin cookies we anticipated our approach to Brown's Hole. This was one of the class three rapids on our run and one that we wouldn't soon forget.

Our boat was the last one to head into the rapid on the left side of the river. Brown's Hole is a decent drop

through some rough waves that you barely see until they're right in front of you.

And at this point, all of us were nearly swimming. As we were in the rapid approaching the drop, Alan and I couldn't paddle strong enough to straighten us out and we dropped in sideways pushing ourselves against another boulder. We soon jumped high side on the raft before nearly capsizing and, luckily, escaped without being submerged.

Yet we did much better through Martin's Rapids, a class three that concluded our journey. By that time my arms were screaming for mercy, but we caught the wave train and rode through comfortably.

As we approached the take-out point, we enjoyed our last minutes on the water by engaging in water fights with the kayakers. I was nearly able to push Kat in the water, as is custom for first-trip initiators, but she wouldn't budge.

Our trip lasted for nearly six and a half hours, and the peaceful journey won't soon be forgotten. The outdoor program offers something for everyone, and it isn't difficult to take part in — you just have to sign up.

Although I didn't end up making an imprint on the bathroom's walls, I plan to enjoy more outdoor experiences through the program, and eventually become a toilet author myself.

Contact the sports editor at jessethomas@dailymerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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Arena

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something that maybe is overlooked in all of the white noise that (surrounds) this."

The University has yet to announce the site for the new arena, but it is expecting an evaluation regarding the seven prospective sites from the International Facilities Group this month. Frohnmayer commented that he wants to make a decision as soon as possible after that.

"This is a delicate but very seriously undertaken balancing process in balancing opportunities against the downside," Frohnmayer said.

According to the feasibility report issued by a consultant in April, the arena could generate up to \$6.6 million in additional revenue for Oregon athletics. The project itself is slated for a \$90 million to \$130 million bill and will be funded by private donors. Construction could begin next summer.

"There will be a select group of donors, some of whom have been identified but haven't chosen to be publicly identified yet," Frohnmayer said. "This won't be a broad-based fund raising effort as Autzen was. This will be much more targeted and focused."

Among those identified are Nike, Inc. CEO, Chairman and President Phil Knight and Pat Kilkenny, chairman of The Arrowhead Group.

From the nearly completed Lillis Business Complex to the Museum of Art renovation, the new arena is part of a much larger scheme involved in transforming the University.

"This is part of a comprehensive rebuilding and facilities upgrading set of projects that hopefully are emblematic of what a campus of this kind should be doing," Frohnmayer said. "Our hope is to replicate the sound, feel, intensity and intimacy of Mac Court with a facility that's worthy of a 21st century campus."

The arena could open as early as the fall 2006.

"It will hopefully be the largest and most modern facility of its kind between Portland and the Bay area," Frohnmayer said. "And that itself is a statement not only about the University but about Eugene. It should be an exciting project, and the fact that it's not only driven by — but completely funded by — private dollars means we're not taking away from academic priorities, and in fact we're making the Athletic Department more likely to be able to be self-sufficient in revenue raising."

Contact the sports editor at jessethomas@dailymerald.com.

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