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Eugene falls short of sweep, loses fifth game to Hawks

The seventh inning was stretched for the Ems as they had two errors and allowed Boise to score six runs

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Editor

The seventh inning of Tuesday night's 10-5 loss to Boise will be an inning the Eugene Emeralds (32-29) won't soon forget.

Through six innings, Eugene had accumulated a 5-4 lead and all appeared well for the team looking for its fifth straight win to sweep the series against the Hawks.

But in an inning with two Eugene errors, five walks and six Boise runs, the Ems saw their lead crumble before their eyes.

"It's frustrating, we've been playing well the whole way through and we had that one fall-out inning where nothing was going our way," center fielder Brian Wahlbrink said. "One thing after another, then pressure was building up, one error led to another and things piled up there."

First baseman Pat McIntyre led off the inning for Boise with a walk. Center fielder Chris Walker followed with a bunt that left him safe at first only because pitcher Ronnie Robinson (2-6) couldn't run him down.

Shortstop Sammy Rosario followed with another bunt that earned him a seat on second base after the Emerald defense had an error at first in missing the catch. McIntyre scored on the play.

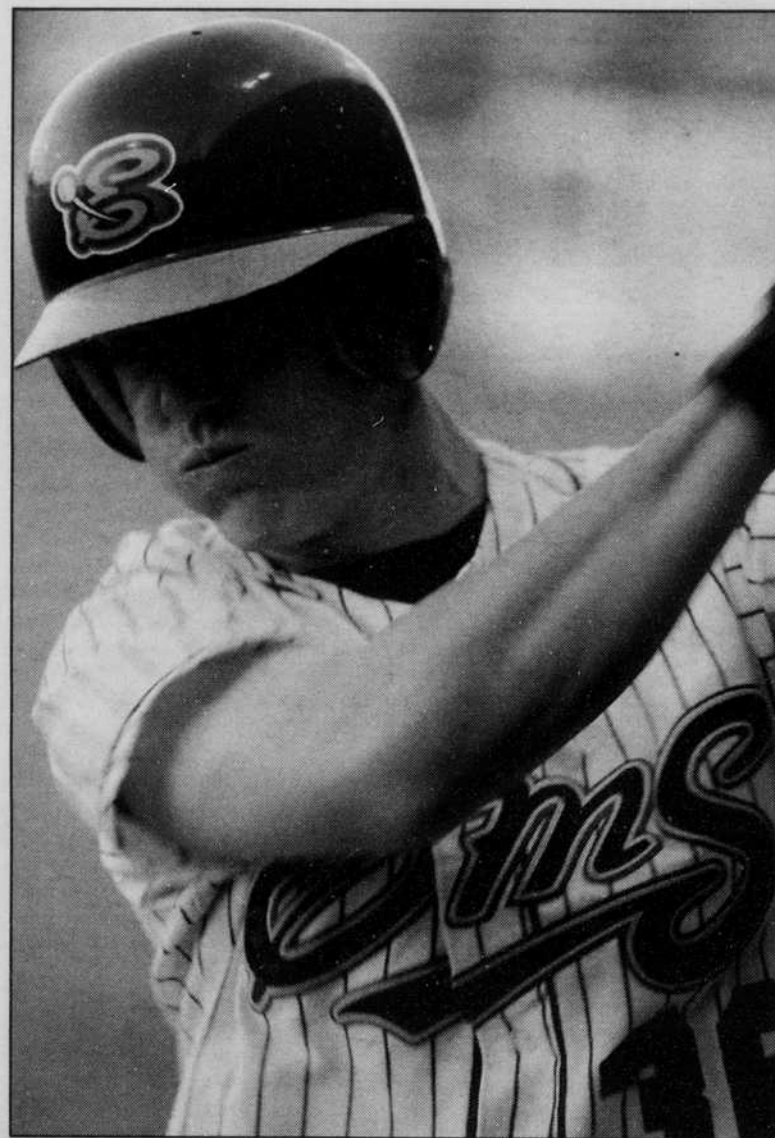
Eugene then earned its first out but proceeded to walk designated hitter Andrew Larsen to load the bases. Boise then earned its second run off a wild pitch that brought Walker home.

Boise's sixth batter, catcher Alan Rick, earned a single that scored Rosario after the Ems missed the tag at home. Right fielder Kyle Boyer was walked to load the bases, followed by left fielder David Gresky who was hit by a pitch, bringing home Larsen for the fourth run.

The scoring bonanza ended after another wild pitch brought in Rick and Boyer to give the Hawks a 10-5 lead that would end all scoring.

"Poor inning, very poorly played and those are the types of innings you have to learn from," Manager Roy Howell said. "We panicked, we threw the ball away and it's like hitting when everyone's racking, everyone's racking. When you start making mistakes like that it's contagious."

Boise finished the seventh inning with six runs after never hitting the



Jessica Waters Emerald

Center fielder Brian Wahlbrink earned a triple in the fourth inning to score two runs and tie the game at 4-4. Yet, Wahlbrink breathes a sigh after the seventh-inning fallout.

ball out of the infield. The Hawks earned four hits on the night and had two errors.

Prior to the seventh inning drop-out, Eugene was off to a good start. Eugene took an early 1-0 lead in the second off an RBI by second baseman Peeter Ramos, before Boise jumped out to a 3-1 lead off a three-run homer by second baseman Uriak Marquez.

Boise scored again in the top of the fourth before Eugene tied the game in the bottom of the inning off a triple by Wahlbrink that brought home designated hitter Tom Fabrizio and right fielder Casey Baker.

The Ems earned eight hits in the loss that ran through the pitching lineup with a total of five taking the

mound. Right hander Matt Hines (1-2) got the win for Boise as one of six pitchers on the night.

Eugene will now look to re-group in its day off today before starting a three-game series against Salem/Keizer. The Ems face only the Volcanoes and the Vancouver Canadians the rest of the season.

The Ems currently sit in second place of the Northwest League West Division after Tuesday night's loss; Salem/Keizer defeated Tri-City. Eugene's regular season schedule extends through Sept. 4 before the playoffs begin, and the Ems will have to get some wins to make the postseason.

Contact the sports editor at jessethomas@dailymerald.com.

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Paris

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longer," Holliday said.

Having to work out by herself at Hayward field and having to push back training due to injury have all taxed her physically. But when it comes down to it, Holliday faces a battle that's more mental than physical.

"It's better to go into a meet sometimes to have your mind just fresh from track rather than be mentally drained," she said. "To be a little bit rusty and still be mentally fresh (is better) than to go in top shape and be mentally drained."

"It is (a mental battle) but it's a good experience because I never know where my season is going to go and I'm going to learn from it."

And if the mental aspect wasn't enough to deal with, the pressure of the world's largest track meet has been mounting as well. Holliday said the USA Track and Field News pre-

dicted she'd finish 10th at the World Championships. Schwartz and Sauer were placed nowhere higher than her.

How does that make her feel? "A little bit of pressure — a little bit," Holliday said, with an air of understatement.

Yet in prepping for her first world competition, Holliday is trying to stay grounded and be reasonable. It's only her second time competing abroad after traveling to Beijing, China, in 2001 for the World University Games.

"My goal is to make it out of prelims," Holliday said. "I think if I do that, then I can handle a little bit of the pressure going into a world class meet like that."

Holliday arrives in Paris on Thursday morning where she will have two days to adjust to the time difference and the culture. She will compete Saturday in the qualification round of the women's pole vault at 4:40 p.m., Paris time.

And after it's all over?

Holliday plans to take a minimum of three months off before beginning next season's surge. The 23-year-old plans to train and be ready for the season beginning in June 2004 when she will be on the same competition schedule as Sauer, Dragila and Schwartz. She also plans to compete at the 2004 Olympic Trials in July.

But before the big time, Holliday is focused on setting her mind straight after a long physical season, and to do her best at the World Championships.

"I'm trying to go in with a good frame of mind — 'No pressure, don't be nervous, it doesn't matter how I do' — but after I'm done, if I do poorly I'm going to be so mad at myself," Holliday said. "So I'm trying to still keep it going."

Contact the sports editor at jessethomas@dailymerald.com.