

Sports Editor:
Alex Tam
alexam@dailymerald.com

Best bet
75th MLB All-Star Game
5 p.m. Tuesday, FOX

Tuesday, July 13, 2004



ALEX TAM
HOLDING COURT

Sport or not, poker gains fans, brings wins

Call or check.

Raise the bet, fold or go all-in.

Those are the choices facing the participants in today's newest and growing phenomenon, No Limit Texas Hold 'Em poker.

It's a cross between sports and reality television that has captivated both sports fans and non-sports fans alike.

Poker has many things in common with sports. It has suspense, strategy, colorful personalities, a form of trash talking and an eventual winner. I, for one, have been fascinated by the anticipation of whether a player will risk all of their chips and money on the turn of the next card.

Any person can play the game, whether it be in a casino, at home with friends or on the Internet.

Any person can win, which probably is one factor contributing to its growing popularity. A majority of us aren't like former Oregon forward Luke Jackson, who earned a three-year contract worth \$6.37 million to play professional basketball. But a majority of us do have the ability to learn No Limit Texas Hold 'Em and actually win money.

The several professional poker players on the poker circuit simply look like the average person, unlike actual sports athletes who stand 6-foot-7 and weigh 220 pounds. Athletes, whose physiques many of us cannot and will never physically have.

This year's winner of the World Series of Poker, which can be seen on ESPN today, earned a total of \$5 million. Yes, \$5 million dollars was made by the winner for the poker tournament that lasted just one week.

One week and \$5 million dollars? No wonder a lot of people are taking up this game. A record 2,576 people entered this year's World Series, up from 839 in 2003.

This year's second place finisher came away with \$3.5 million, while third place earned \$2.5 million.

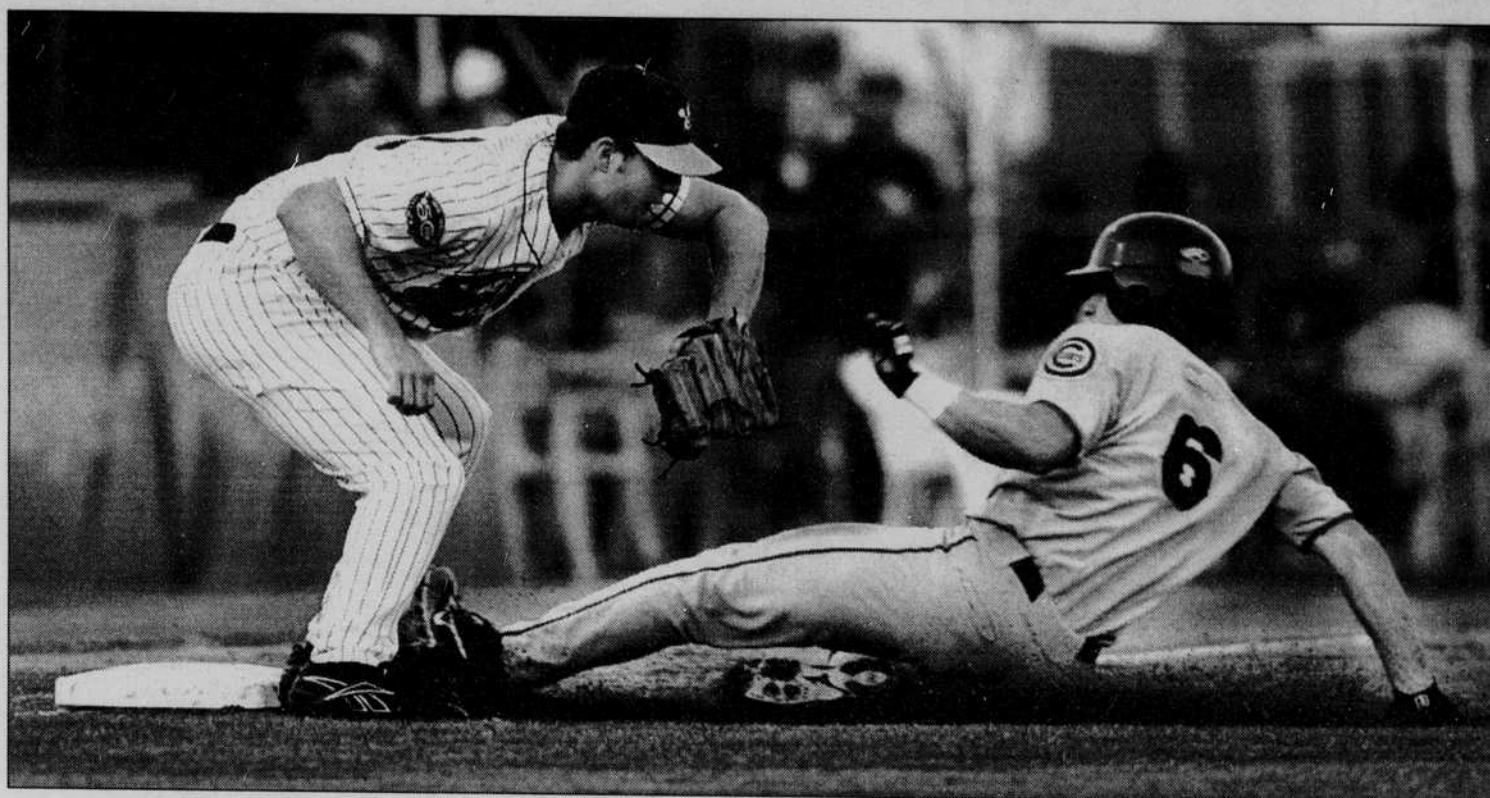
Not bad for a week's worth of work.

In addition to the World Series of Poker, three other channels are broadcasting this emerging game, including shows like the World Poker Tour and the Celebrity Poker Showdown.

The poker craze began last year at the 2003 World Series of Poker when accountant Chris MoneyMaker, who earned the \$10,000 buy-in to the tournament after paying \$40 and qualifying through an online tournament, won the grand prize of \$2.5 million dollars.

Viewers of last year's World Series saw the amateur MoneyMaker take out the professionals like Johnny Chan and Phil Ivey — who is also known as the Tiger

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Boise's Anthony Granato slides into third for a triple in the fourth inning during Eugene's 11-0 loss on Saturday. The Emeralds have lost three of their past five games.

Erik R. Bishoff Online & Photo Editor

Inconsistent offense hurts Emeralds

Eugene loses three games in its five-game home stand against Boise

ALEX TAM
SPORTS EDITOR

Inconsistency on offense has plagued the Eugene Emeralds through the first quarter of their season.

The Emeralds (10-14) have lost two straight games at home, scoring only one run. As a result, Eugene has fallen back into last place in the West Division of the Northwest League and sits five games behind first-place Everett (15-9).

On Sunday, Boise defeated Eugene 9-1 behind four runs in both the fifth and ninth innings en route to clinching the season series 6-4 in front of a crowd of 3,026 at Civic Stadium.

"That's why it's baseball and you never know what's going to happen," Eugene manager Roy Howell said. "They got to go out there and swing the bats well."

The Emeralds' only run came from first baseman Orlando Diaz's home run in the fourth inning — his first in the season.

"I've been waiting for that for awhile," Diaz said. "I'm still trying to get the hang of swinging the wood. The last couple of days I've been working on my swing and I've felt more comfortable up there and I finally got one."

Eugene also produced eight hits, but failed to capitalize after leaving ten runners on base, which is unacceptable, Diaz said.

"Eight hits and one run is not going to cut it and is not going to win a ballgame," said Diaz, who is batting .271 with six RBIs. "With eight hits, you got to have more runs. We need some

of those key hits with guys on second and third. That's what's going to win the ball games for us."

Eugene starter Danny De La O (2-2) gave up five runs in 4 1/3 innings and was replaced after surrendering a three-run home run to Boise's David Gresky.

However, pitching has not been the problem thus far with the team ERA sitting at 4.19, which stands fourth in the league.

Eugene's main issue is attaining consistency in offense and producing runs. The Emeralds currently hold the league's worst team batting average at .231. In ten victories this season, Eugene has scored an average of 7.5 runs per game. In their 14 losses, the Emeralds have scored an average of 2.9 runs per game.

A glimpse of their offensive potential was put on display Friday after the team scored a season-high

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UO junior inches closer to Olympics



Sarah Malone holds the UO record in the javelin. She must meet the Olympic 'A' qualifying standard by Aug. 8 to compete in Athens, Greece.

Erik R. Bishoff Online & Photo Editor

Malone takes second in javelin at the U.S. Olympic Trials while Skipper falls short

ALEX TAM
SPORTS EDITOR

After claiming to have a slight chance of making the U.S. Olympic team, Oregon redshirt junior Sarah Malone inched one step closer to fulfilling the ultimate goal of a track and field athlete.

Malone, Oregon's school record holder in the javelin, finished second in the javelin final at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Sacramento on Sunday.

The Newberg native tossed 177 feet, 11 inches on her sixth and final attempt, which was less than five feet behind the winner and current American record holder Kim Kreiner (182-7).

"My goal was to be in the top three, so it feels really good," Malone said. "I looked over at Lance (Deal, Oregon assistant coach) before my last throw and we have our own sign language system. He signed a few things and helped me compose and relax myself, and I was able to get a good one off."

In order to qualify for the U.S. Olympic team that will compete in Athens, Greece starting August 20, Malone needs to meet the Olympic 'A' qualifying standard of 198-5 by August 8.

According to the USA Track and Field selection procedures, the United States can take up to four athletes from each track and field event to the Olympics as long as they meet the Olympic 'A'

qualifying standard.

Despite never having thrown 180 feet, Malone said she is proud of what she accomplished on the nation's biggest stage.

"I may not have the 'A' standard, but that doesn't minimize how I did today," Malone said. "It's been a long season with the collegiate meets thrown in, I knew making the (U.S.) team was a long shot." This past track season was very successful for the 22-year-old Malone. She finished third (178-01) at the NCAA Championships, second (171-05) at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and also broke her own school record (179-7) at the Texas Relays in early April.

On Sunday, Malone made her second appearance at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials. She competed in 2000 as a high school senior. Back then, she finished eighth in her flight (156-11).

Malone said that experience of knowing what to expect helped her this year and is already eager about her prospects of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in China.

"When I was here a high school senior in 2000, I was much more nervous," Malone said. "(Sunday) was more fun since I have more experience throwing against these people. I'm looking forward to 2008 and trying to win a spot on the team that goes to China."

Oregon's other representative at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials, however, did not fare as well.

Freshman Tommy Skipper missed advancing to the men's pole vault final after finishing 14th overall in the preliminaries and needing three

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