

Erik R. Bishoff Online & Photo Editor

Eugene catcher Colt Morton leads the Northwest League in home runs with nine this season. Morton is also the Emeralds' cleanup hitter and is currently batting .270.

EMS

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16 runs off 17 hits against Boise in its 10th victory of the season. Four Emeralds blasted home runs and eight of the nine hitters had at least one RBI. After the sixth inning, Eugene was already leading 15-0.

"I don't know if we used up all of our hits that one night, but the last two games, we haven't come out and hit the ball like we could," Diaz said. "We're getting guys on base, but we're just not getting key hits here and there with guys on base."

Leadoff hitter and right fielder Matt Thayer, who has a team-leading .377 batting average, said it is important for his team to bring a consistent approach to every at-bat. Thayer had seven hits and scored three runs in the five-game home stand against Boise.

"We can't go out some days and have everybody feeling it," Thayer said. "Offensively, we struggled and we can't let that escalate and snowball into a big struggle. It's real tough and I think it gets worse and worse as the game goes on."

One of the few reliable contributors on offense has been catcher Colt Morton, who is the team's cleanup hitter. Morton, who had two home runs and five RBIs in the last week's five-game home stand against Boise, said the day off on Monday is something the team needs to recharge.

"The day off is always good because you try and sit back and try to get away from things," said Morton, who is batting .270 with a league-leading nine home runs. "So we're going to take advantage of the day off and come out ready Tuesday ready to swing the bats and take a good approach up there and score a lot more runs."

Eugene visits Spokane, the 2003 Northwest League champion, for the opening game of a five-game series beginning today at 6:30 p.m. The Emeralds return to Eugene's Civic Stadium on July 18 for a six-game series with Everett.

NOTES

Eugene lost the five-game series against Boise 2-3 and have a 5-8 home record ... Eugene pitchers Jonathan Ellis and Mike Ekstrom continue their success as part of the piggyback pitching rotation. The duo combined for zero runs and seven strikeouts in eight innings in Friday's 16-1 victory. The pair will start again on Thursday ... Ekstrom leads the Emeralds with three wins and has allowed zero earned runs in 12 1/3 innings and six appearances. ... Boise leads the all-time series against Eugene 124-112.

alexam@dailyemerald.com

TAM

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Woods of the poker world.

If an amateur could win poker's most prestigious tournament, why can't people like you and me win it all too?

While many professionals will try to claim that there is a lot of skill involved, a lot of the game's success is from luck.

Just one year after Moneymaker won the World Series, he came back to defend his title this year, but lost all of his chips on the very first day.

This shows anyone can be lucky at any point and win.

Nevertheless, I'm still not up to that point of risking actual money to play. With several places online to play for free, that is enough to satisfy my dreams of winning an actual poker game.

Call it being cheap or just being a poor college student at this moment.

Watching poker can be as enjoyable as playing because of the game's nuances, including guessing what other players are holding or staring down opponents to see if they are bluffing or holding a full house.

So fold or call.

Check or raise.

Do they have a hand or do you go all-in?

Oh, the decisions to make in this popular, ever-growing game.

alexam@dailyemerald.com

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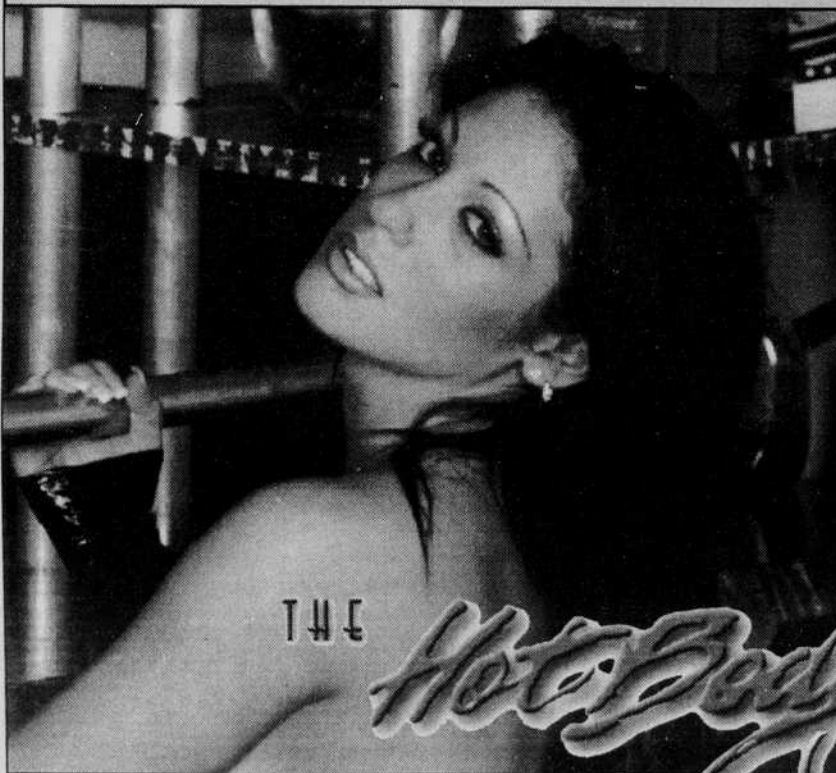
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