

In my opinion



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

With some extra dough, you can be a baseball pro

Have you ever wanted to play professional baseball but were a step too slow, unable to hit or field even when a ball was hit off a tee, or generally have never possessed an ounce of athletic talent?

Were you always the last kid picked on the playground?

Are you of the entrepreneurial vein, looking for something different?

Well, fear not; your day of redemption is here. As long as your pockets are deep and filled with money.

The River City Rascals of the independent league are auctioning off the chance to play in a minor league game against the Gateway Grizzlies in a preseason contest at T.R. Hughes Ballpark in O'Fallon, Mo.

The highest bidder of the eBay auction will be guaranteed a half inning in the outfield and at least one trip in the batter's box.

Here are the rules: You have to be at least 18 and ready to pay out. That, and you need to bring your own glove, pay your own way and get your own shoes, transportation, meals and housing.

But hey, you have the chance to experience a fastball buzzing past your chin, and believe me, that's the best pitch you're going to have a chance to hit, so good luck with that.

Also, the winner gets 20 tickets to the game and gets to keep the uniform.

This is one of the rare opportunities to further distinguish the abilities between yourself and professional athletes, realizing that even though your coach in the sixth grade claimed you had talent, you really don't.

With that said, this short, bald sports writer probably has a good chance as any to make a fool of himself in a professional uniform. (Provided I had enough money.)

I played baseball in high school; I even played in the outfield. However, I have never swung a wooden bat in a competitive game.

I have faced live pitching before — my last at-bat was more than six years ago.

I have a small strike zone, and I am patient at the plate. (Except in slow-pitch softball. Have to work on that.)

I have recently been playing intramural dodgeball and the aforementioned slow-pitch softball to help keep those critical fast-twitch muscles in top shape.

Watching baseball on television in large amounts has kept my knowledge of the game fresh, and I have perfected the Sosa sprint out to right field just for this occasion.

I was always a good hitter to the other way, and I'm sure for half an inning, the team wouldn't care that my shoulder is being held together by duct tape and some yarn.

So now, even though I am a 5-foot-nothing, 100-nothing-pound, soft-tossing lefty that would be laughed out of an open tryout, I finally have my chance to live a professional baseball dream...if only I had \$1,200 dollars (the last bid as of 1:54 PDT.)

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Duck lacrosse



Oregon attacker Jana Bradley, left, and midfielder Jen May prepare for today's rematch against UC Davis in the first round of the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Tournament.

EMERALD

Ducks tackle first postseason game

Oregon looks to avenge an 11-9 loss when it faces UC Davis in round one of the MPSF tournament

BY STEFANIE LOH
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

Sixty-four.

That's the number of goals twin terrors Jen May and Jana Bradley have combined to score for the Oregon women's lacrosse team this season.

This week May, Bradley and the rest of the Ducks take their firepower down to Moraga, Calif., to play in the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Championship Tournament.

Oregon (5-10 overall, 1-4 MPSF) is seeded fifth in the six-team tournament and will first face number

four seed UC Davis on Thursday.

"We're really excited to play UC Davis again," May said. "We only lost by two the last time we played them, and we've learned so much since the beginning. The team is excited to go off and show everyone what we're capable of now."

Oregon last played the Aggies in March, losing a close battle, 11-9. At the time, the Ducks were mired in the middle of a five-game losing streak.

Things have changed since then.

The Ducks finally found their rhythm toward the tail end of their inaugural season, finishing

with three wins in their final four games.

Oregon scored 57 goals in its last five games, increasing production by 50 percent from the 38 goals scored in its first five contests.

With almost a full season of play under their belts, the 22 freshmen on the Ducks' 24-player roster have finally adjusted to the rigors of the collegiate game.

"It's (lacrosse at the collegiate level) definitely a lot different from the high school game. The pace is a lot faster," Bradley said.

May agreed with her teammate.

"The pace is really different," she said. "And everyone is so much more conditioned. In high school, you'd have maybe a couple of girls who stood out as the star

players, and who could really play.

"On the collegiate level, everyone on the field is good, everyone on the field can catch and throw, everyone can switch left and right. You have to get used to that level of competition."

Both May and Bradley have had to make adjustments to their games this year to perform better at the collegiate level.

"I'm a lot more composed now," Bradley said. "I can see the field better as a player instead of just running down and scoring."

May agreed that the increased competition has stretched her abilities to make her a more all-around player.

"I'm a lot more involved on the

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Outdoor recreation

Extreme climber hosts 'Return2Sender'

Timmy O'Neill, who is featured in the movie, presents a collection of six climbing shorts today

BY AIMEE FURBER
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

"Dangling from a hand jam 500 feet in the air, the blood courses through your ears as you realize that this could be your last move, and then you pull through, and it's all right," Timmy O'Neill, extreme rock climber and comedian, said while describing free-solo rock climbing.

O'Neill is hosting the University screening of "Return2Sender," a 90-minute collection of six climbing films, today at 7 p.m. in 177 Lawrence Hall. The showing is part of a West Coast tour traveling through Colorado, Utah, Washington, Oregon, California and British Columbia.

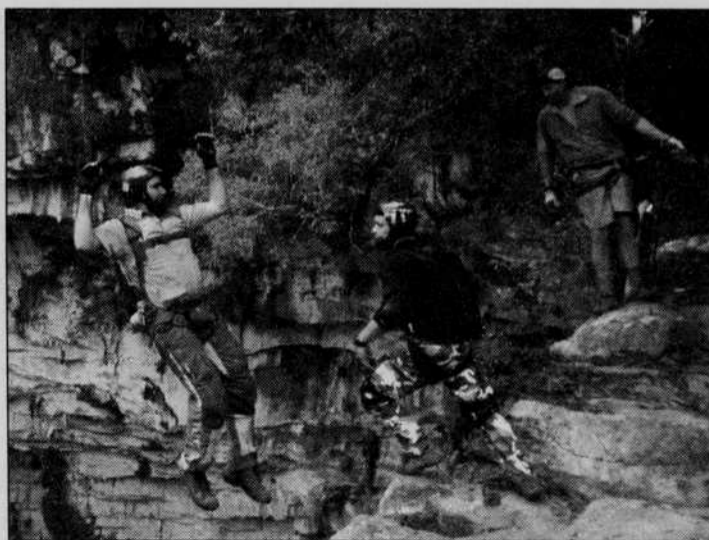
O'Neill, 35, is known in the climbing community for his record

ascent of three-and-a-half hours up Yosemite's El Capitan. He is currently starring as the infiltration specialist in the Discovery Channel's new series "Urban Explorers," which highlights climbing, or "buildering," on urban structures.

"Return2Sender" is director Peter Mortimer's second collaboration with O'Neill. His first, the award-winning "Front Range Freaks," featured O'Neill in the "Urban Ape" segment, where the climber demonstrated his urban climbing abilities.

"I love climbing sculpture," O'Neill said. "I think the sculptor would be elated if he knew I was climbing his work."

As a child, O'Neill climbed trees, tombstones and buildings in his hometown of Philadelphia until he



JAY EPSTEIN | COURTESY

Timmy O'Neill, left, seen here base jumping at the Cave of the Swallows in Mexico, will preview his 90-minute movie, "Return2Sender," in Lawrence Hall.

took a five-day bus ride to Yellowstone National Park and found his true calling as a rock climber.

"Climbing is an incredibly fun, extremely engaging method to

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