

*"I looked over and Cordero grabbed himself ... there's no reason to come over and act like an idiot in front of our dugout."*

Royals catcher John Buck on Texas pitcher Francisco Cordero's actions after hitting Shane Costa with a pitch in Sunday's gameback

■ In my opinion



CLAYTON JONES  
SEVENTH INNING STRETCH

## Thanks to all for an epic era on the sports desk

Taking this job, in the back of mind I thought I was biting off more than I could chew.

But it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

Starting last summer, this job was a personal baptism by fire for me. I took over a staff and was responsible for not only five sports sections per week, but also a Game Day supplement every Friday. Add that to a full class load, and I felt I was in a little over my head (which I tried to hide most of the time, but bits of frustration often seeped out).

At that point, I learned a valuable lesson: When in charge, it is essential to surround yourself with trustworthy people who are professional and with whom you can get along — you end up spending a lot of time together.

Honestly, I got better than I deserved.

I had three sports journalists who worked their asses off to get their jobs done.

The editor in chief of our paper told me not too long ago that I should be proud of having the only desk on which no one left or got fired all year.

I'm not proud; I feel lucky.

All year it's been the four of us: Jon Roetman, Brian "Dome" Smith, Stephen Miller and myself.

We've been blessed with the job of getting paid to cover sports. I can safely speak for all of us when I say we would probably do it for free considering the experiences we've had.

Some of the many of the memories I will take with me are the epic trips Roetman and I took to cover the football and basketball teams. There was the voyage to Pullman, Wash., where we not only witnessed one of the best football games we've ever seen in person but also managed to get ourselves in a situation that Roetman called an "11 out of 10 on the awkward scale," and the five-mile, Friday-night hike back from downtown Palo Alto, Calif., culminating in a 4 a.m. walk through the drive thru of Jack in the Box.

And hearing about Dome and Miller's trip around Redding, Calif., trying to find an In-N-Out Burger.

While we've had the opportunity to cover and be around the limelight of college athletics, important things I will take away are the memories off the "field."

Our legendary night at Miller's full of ping pong, poker, booze and oversized sombreros.

Going to Rennie's after a long night of putting together a Game Day or covering a basketball game (except Miller, as he was the only one under 21).

Playing in a dodgeball league ... something we took way too seriously.

Participating in more poker games, where I often donated much of my salary.

In all these ways we've bonded, much like a sports team does, like a family.

We make fun of each other. We buy ridiculous shots for each other on one another's birthday to inflict pain and suffering. In the end, though, we stick up for each other.

Most importantly, we've been able to whet our appetites in the world of journalism.

We've learned what it takes to be (and I hope I've come closer to becoming) respected

JONES, page 12A

# The year's best players and plays

The Emerald sports desk honors the brightest spots in Oregon sports this year with its Emmie awards

BY CLAYTON JONES & JON ROETMAN  
SPORTS EDITOR AND SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

It has been the year of the woman athlete at Oregon this season.

With many men's sports teams not reaching their potentials, including a football team that had a losing record for the first time in 10 years and an over-hyped men's basketball team that finished ninth in the conference, women's athletics dominated the landscape of Oregon sports.

The women's basketball team advanced to the NCAA Tournament, the softball team almost made it to the super regionals for the third consecutive year, Sarah Malone had a historic heave of the javelin at Regionals and the women's lacrosse fared well in its inaugural season.

Women's athletics didn't disappoint.

The men had their shining moments as well with Galen Rupp living up to expectations in track, Sven Swinnen achieving the highest rank of any Oregon tennis player in history and Scott Barker dominating on the mat.

Now its time to recognize all the athletes with the sixth annual Emmies.

No, not the Emmys. These are the sports awards given by the Emerald sports staff to the best athlete, team or performance of the 2004-05 season in Oregon athletics.

And the Emmies go to ...

### Most Valuable Female Athlete: Cathrine Kraayeveld

After losing her first senior season to a torn ACL in 2003-04, "Cat" came back to help lead the Ducks to a second-place finish in the Pacific-10 Conference, a berth to the NCAA Tournament and upset victories over No. 5 Stanford

(the Cardinal's only loss of the conference season) and TCU in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Kraayeveld led the team in scoring and rebounding, averaging 14.7 points per game and 8.3 rebounds per game for the Ducks while garnering All-Pac-10 honors.

### Most Valuable Male Athlete: Kellen Clemens

While the football team under-achieved in 2004, the junior quarterback was anything but sub-par. Clemens completed 60 percent of his passes for 2,548 yards and 22 touchdowns even as two of his biggest receiving threats, Demetrius Williams and Tim Day, battled nagging injuries for most of the season. The Burns native left his heart and soul on the field of every game and was the main reason the Ducks won even five games.

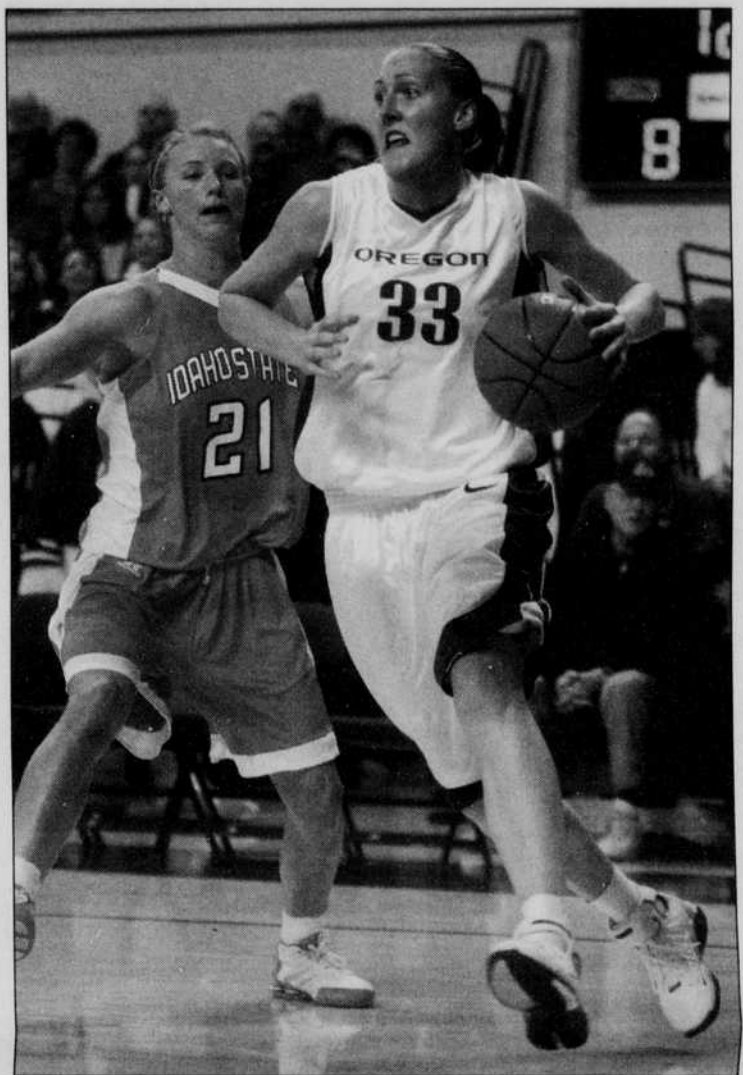
### Coach of the Year: Bev Smith

In her fourth year as head coach of the women's basketball program, she turned around a disappointing 14-15 team in 2003-04 to a 21-10 team this year. She led the team to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in her tenure as coach and guided the Ducks to a perfect 9-0 home conference record.

With the recruitment of Kristen Forristall last season, the first big recruit Oregon has been able to keep in the state, and with her recruitment overseas, particularly Australia, Smith looks to be reloading talent to keep the women's program strong for years to come.

### Best Individual Performance: Clemens vs. Washington State

Facing a 13-point deficit and the possibility of a 1-4 start,



EMERALD

Oregon's Cathrine Kraayeveld helped lead the Ducks to their most successful season under fourth-year coach Bev Smith. The Ducks made it to the second round of the NCAA Tournament before being bounced by eventual champ Baylor.

Clemens rescued the Oregon football team with one of the greatest performances in school history. The junior completed 16 of 21 passes for 200 yards and accounted for four touchdowns — all just in the fourth quarter — to lead the Ducks to a 41-38 victory against the Cougars. In all, Clemens completed 36 of 55 passes for 437 yards and three touchdowns, while rushing for 36 yards and three more scores. His 473 total yards rank second behind former Oregon quarterback Bill Musgrave's 498-yard performance

against BYU in 1989.

### Best Game: Oregon upsets Texas Christian in the first round of the NCAA Tournament

Trailing 46-38 late in the second half, the 10th-seeded Oregon women's basketball team rallied to outscore TCU, 20-9, to upset seventh-seeded TCU and move on to the second round of the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1999.

Oregon cut the right point

# Mutola, Kipchoge shine at Prefontaine Classic

Maria Mutola earned her 13th consecutive win in the 800, and Eliude Kipchoge ran a record-breaking two miles race

BY STEPHEN MILLER  
SPORTS REPORTER

Mozambique's Maria Mutola is already looking forward to a 14-peat.

The 2000 Olympic gold medalist glided to her 13th consecutive victory in the 800 at the Prefontaine Classic in front of 12,885 fans who packed into Hayward Field.

Mutola avoided a collision 550 meters into the race and finished in one minute, 59.95 seconds, just ahead of Jamaica's Kenia Sinclair.

"This is my first outdoor race and to run under two minutes felt very good," said Mutola, who ran her first Prefontaine race as a Springfield High School senior in 1991. "Anything under two is a good start."

In Saturday's race, Mutola recorded her

slowest time since 1999, when she ran it in 2:00.30 — and still won. However, her time was the second fastest 800-meter time recorded worldwide this year.

"I'm just glad I can come back year after year and win races. And winning 13 times, it's incredible," said Mutola, who set the Prefontaine Classic and Hayward Field records at 1:57.57 in 1997. "If I can come back and win next year, I will be even happier."

Mutola extended her streak amidst other world-class-athlete records being set.

Kenya's Eliude Kipchoge closed the Prefontaine Classic appropriately, as he recorded the fastest two-mile run ever on American soil in a time of 8:07.68. American Bob Kennedy,

PRE CLASSIC, page 12A



NICOLE BARKER | PHOTOGRAPHER

Mozambique's Maria Mutola claimed her 13th consecutive Prefontaine Classic victory in the 800 with a time of 1:59.95 at Hayward Field on Saturday.