

MONTERO'S LIFE IN THE PEN

STORY AND PHOTOS JACOB THOMPSON
SPORTS EDITOR



He sits in the bullpen waiting, waiting for pitching coach Jeff Lahti to give him the signal "get him hot." He springs from the bench, grabs his mask and gets the next pitcher loose and then he returns to the bench. His name is Zach Montero and he is the bullpen catcher. Montero is currently in his redshirt season, which means he is ineligible to play, but unlike the other redshirts who might keep the scorebook or chase down foul balls, Montero has a role that can affect the outcome of the game without stepping onto the field.

"It's rough [not playing]," Montero said. "But I'm just glad to be a part of the team.

We have a great group of guys and I'm excited for the next two years."

Montero grew up in Banks, Oregon where he started playing baseball at four years old, originally as a shortstop. His father and coach, Dave, moved him to catcher one day and it stuck. After Montero's family moved to Arizona his eighth grade year, he started to feel like baseball was the sport for him.

"The baseball competition is crazy down [in Arizona]," Montero said. "You got ex-Major League guys' kids you're playing with, guys are throwing low 90s in high school, a lot of Division-one players, guys getting drafted. Down there baseball's a lifestyle not just a sport."

Now back in Oregon, the hardest transition for Montero has been the weather.

"Our first game was up at Lower Columbia [College]; it's 38 degrees and I'm freezing sitting in the bullpen," Montero said with a smile. "I called my mom after and I was like 'what did I do.' After sixth months I've kind of got used to it."

Montero's biggest goal in the bullpen is to keep the atmosphere light.

"A lot of times relievers get put in tough situations," Montero said. "You have to keep them up and keep them stress-free. As much as I can keep them laughing that's my main goal."

The relievers agree that Montero does a great job as bullpen catcher.

"[Montero] always has a lot of energy," freshman

pitcher Derek Eubanks said. "He always gets me pumped up and works on my spots. He helps me perform the way that I do."

As much as Montero keeps it light in the bullpen, he also keeps it light outside of baseball, said Mason Schimmel, freshman pitcher and Montero's roommate.

"Every morning he comes into my bedroom and wakes me up by saying 'come on baby Schim,'" Schimmel said while holding back a laugh. "When he's around your day just lights up."



LEFT: Montero anticipating a warm-up toss from freshman pitcher Derek Eubanks.

RIGHT: Montero watches game versus Chemeketa from the bullpen.

photo by Austin Boltz



Cameron Gleason pitching versus Lane on April 30.

BROTHERS GLEASON

STORY BY JACOB THOMPSON
SPORTS EDITOR

Pulling onto campus in a yellow 2007 Chevrolet Cobalt are a pair of brothers. The younger, a relief pitcher, the older a catcher, both playing for Clackamas. Hip-hop plays as Cody Gleason tries to wake up Cameron

Gleason who's been up all-night playing Fortnite.

The Gleasons both changed positions late in their careers. Cameron Gleason was an outfielder until his very end of his senior year of high school and Cody Gleason played shortstop until his freshman season of high school. Now the brothers work together as pitcher and catcher.

"It's not horrible," Cody Gleason said "I didn't expect [Cameron] to be very good, but he is. When he gets down on himself I just go out there and I tell him 'he's a piece of s---' and he gets back into it. He just does his thing up there and I like it."

"I prefer [having Cody] catch me, but I pitch to all the catchers," Cameron Gleason said. "I prefer Cody the most because he knows my stuff better than everyone else."

The brothers' working relationship reflects a lot of how they grew up, admittedly at each other's throats like brothers tend to be, still arguing about who bested who in schoolyard fights, but the brothers get along nicely on rides to and from practice.

"It's not bad," Cody Gleason said. "He usually sleeps on the way here and on the way home he falls asleep too, it's pretty nice."

On the field the brothers get along well, but still have their disagreements.

"He gives me good advice most the time," Cameron Gleason said. "But when he says stupid s--- like 'just

throw a strike' it pisses me off because that's what I'm trying to do."

Even though the brothers don't always see eye to eye, they want to see each other do well: Cody Gleason saying that he was proud of Cameron Gleason's performance this year and Cameron Gleason hoping Cody succeeds at the next level.

Next year will be the first time the brothers don't live together during the baseball season and they are trying to prepare for the change.

"I'm usually up all night listening to [Cameron] play Fortnite," Cody Gleason said. "That'll be nice, but it'll be weird not having him around."

As for Cameron Gleason, he said he'll miss the car rides.



Cody Gleason catching versus Chemeketa.

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