



Emerald Media

JULY 18, 2022

Monday Edition

OREGON PLAYS HOME TO A SPORT FLOODED WITH FLAWS

Does a future exist where track and field athletes earn fair recognition for their accomplishments?

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ONLY OFFICIAL QUEER
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EMERALD MEDIA GROUP
1395 UNIVERSITY ST., #302
EUGENE, OR 97403
541.346.5511

NEWSROOM
EDITOR IN CHIEF
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PRINT MANAGING EDITOR
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VISUALS EDITOR
Julia Stalnak

BUSINESS

PUBLISHER & PRESIDENT
Bill Kunerth X317
bkunerth@dailyemerald.com

VP OPERATIONS
Kathy Carbone X302
kcarbone@dailyemerald.com

DIRECTOR OF SALES &
DIGITAL MARKETING
Shelly Rondstvedt X303
srondstvedt@dailyemerald.com

CREATIVE & TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Sam Rudkin X327
creative@dailyemerald.com

STUDENT SALES MANAGER
Amy Mendez

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Riley Valle
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ON THE COVER
Kyree King dazzles in opening day of NCAA Track and Field Championships (Emerald Archives)

everything you need to know
EVERYTHING UO

FROM YOU PREVIEW TO THE WORLDS EDITION



Cooper Teare outkicks the field to win the 1500-meter final at the USATF outdoor national championships. (Photo courtesy of Kevin Neri)

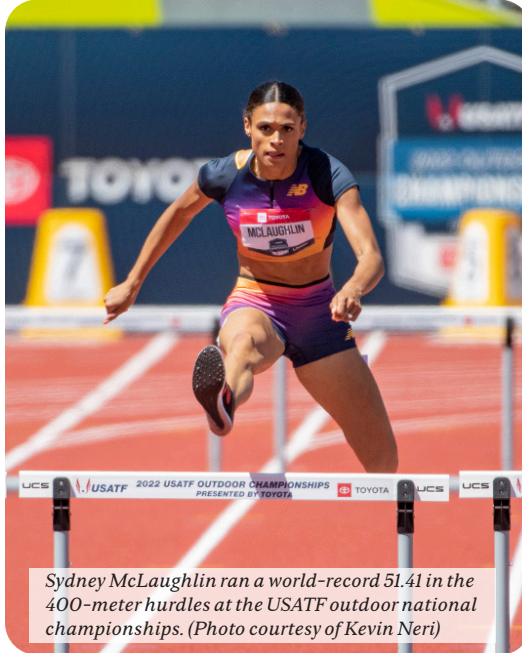


Reader Recommends

BY KRISTA KROISS
BOOK RECOMMENDATION:
"THE SILENT PATIENT" BY ALEX MICHAELIDES

Summary: In this psychological thriller, Alicia Berenson lives a grand life as a successful artist married to a popular fashion photographer. That is, until the day she murders her husband, then refuses to speak another word ever again. While the public is fascinated by the tragedy and the price of her art soars, she is moved far from the limelight to a secure forensic unit in London. Theo Faber, a criminal psychotherapist, begins his work with Alicia determined to uncover her motivation for the murder but ends up with an obsession for the truth.

Recommended by: Sydnee Warren, a senior double major in psychology and sociology
"It has a very good ending and keeps you guessing the whole time."



Sydney McLaughlin ran a world-record 51.41 in the 400-meter hurdles at the USATF outdoor national championships. (Photo courtesy of Kevin Neri)

LOOK ONLINE

Instagram poll:

Have you come to karaoke in Eugene?
Yes: 29%
No: 71%

Related arts and culture story:

"A swinging night for some karaoke" by Brandon Roth



(Emerald Archives)

Top viewed story in the past week:

"Eugene City Council passes middle housing ordinance" by Alexis Weisend



(Licensed by Baltimore Heritage)

Voices of UO

Scan here or visit the Emerald's social media to participate in our next Voices of UO. **What do you think about international athletic events?**



We want to hear from you:

We want to hear from you: Email editor@dailyemerald.com to submit a tip or a letter to the editor. The ideal length for a letter is 200-500 words, but we publish letters of various lengths online.



(Maisie Plew/Emerald)

The College “lowkey grateful I kept this” Packing List

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FUNDING AND FOCUS ON ROMANTIC LANGUAGES AT UO LEAVES OTHERS BEHIND

Due to budget cuts and lack of professors, UO language departments suffer impact on curriculum and enrollment.

BY RUBY ABUHJLEH

Several languages at UO have received management and budget cuts, leading to fast-paced curriculum changes that leave some enrolled students behind in credits and class enrollment.

UO offers 25 different languages for students to enroll in, ranging from French to Russian to Swahili. Amid such a wide variety, many students are drawn to the Department of Romance Languages -- containing French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese. According to the Department of Romantic languages, more than 1,100 students are enrolled in a Romantic language. During freshman orientation and "IntroDUCKtion," incoming students are encouraged to transfer their high school language credits rather than explore the many languages that were not provided in their high school.

Although Romance languages are a convenient way to transfer credits, several other languages and departments have been forced to change their curriculum and course loads.

In the spring term of the 2021-2022 year, Deiahdeen Alhij, an incoming senior operation and business analytics student said students that took Arabic courses since their freshman year received an abrupt curriculum change after the department changed its course plan. Students that had planned to carry on through Arabic 202 were moved to take an uncredited class that would fulfill the Arts and Letters requirement for the new curriculum. The new curriculum involves an influence of Egyptian dialect to gain the interest of more students. The students were not aware of this transition. Half of the students dropped from the Arabic program leaving credits behind.

"I wish we were told about the changes ahead of time because in the transition phase, I basically was not able to get my arts and letters credits for the class," Alhij said. "I feel like I just wasted the whole first year."

In order to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree, a student needs to complete a two-year language requirement. Arabic, like many other languages, requires three years to become proficient or fluent in. With the Arabic department only consisting of two professors, David Hollenburg and Hanan Elsherif, the curriculum needed to be adjusted to accommodate the lack of professors. The course coding changed to create repeatable courses for students who wanted to continue Arabic. This set up classes for the 2022-23 academic year so that the department could remain



The University of Oregon Department of Romance Languages office is located in Friendly Hall. (Samuel Marshall/Emerald)

on campus.

In spite of heavy demand, French classes always faced department troubles. Multiple retired professors have not been replaced, while other tenured professors and career instructors are on research sabbaticals. This summer, many French classes were canceled, forcing some students to study at other institutions to earn enough credits to graduate, said Connie Dickey, a senior instructor and first-year supervisor of French.

"They have quite a detailed framework that they have come up with, but how that is implemented will be greatly influenced by the new director and dean," Dickey said.

This upcoming year, a new director of languages

and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will be taking on languages at UO. Both will have influences over which languages and departments are included in a new College of Global Arts. Several languages have not been included so far. UO language departments continue to operate with funding cuts and curriculum changes, while enrolling and maintaining success within the students.

CENTER FOR SCIENCE COMMUNICATION RESEARCH GETS BUSY WITH RESEARCH, NEW MINOR

BY SIMON SCANNELL · TWITTER @SJSCANNELL



Allen Hall is home to the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication. (Ian Enger/Emerald)

The science communication minor at UO may be new, but the Center for Science Communication Research is not. Established in 2017, the center works to make complex science useful to people's lives through various research initiatives and the newly established science communication minor.

"The goal of the center is to do and promote cutting edge research in the science of science communication," Mark Blaine, co-founder of SCR and professor of practice for the School of Journalism and Communication and the Knight Campus, said. "There is science communication between scientists as well, but the SCR's focus is on public perception, public decision making, and public use of scientific information."

The SCR has five different areas of research including environmental communication and health communication. Blaine would also recommend a global health minor for students interested in learning more about how health stories are communicated to the public.

The science communication minor was launched through the SOJC in fall 2021 and despite a lack of advertising, there are now more than 30 students registered for the minor, with the program graduating its first student this past June. Demand was so high for fall 2022 that they had to increase the seats in J377 The Science of Science Communication from 20 to 30. J377 is the first mandatory journalism course of three for the minor.

Eliza Lawrence, a rising junior with a double major in earth science and spatial data science and technology and a minor in science communication, worked on a research project last summer with Ellen Peters, director of the SCR, Philip H. Knight Chair and professor for the SOJC and psychology department. The two met at a coffee hour for faculty and students to get to know each other.

As science communication becomes more relevant than ever, UO's Center for Science Communication Research is expanding its science communication minor and encouraging research on vaccine hesitancy.

With Peters' help, Lawrence won the First Year Research Experience Award, a grant for students to do research projects the summer after their first year of college.

Lawrence joined Peters' lab where she designed and ran a study about the effects of including or excluding numeric information affects vaccine intentions. She analyzed the data and co-authored the research paper "Excluding numeric side-effect information produces lower vaccine intentions." Writing the research paper during the school year would have come with many challenges for Lawrence, so Brittany Shoots-Reinhard, a senior research assistant in Peters' lab, is the primary author. It was published June 10, 2022, a year after the process began.

While the study was pointedly not about the COVID-19 vaccines, it provided a lens through which to view vaccine hesitancy in regards to the pandemic. Lawrence said that her research could be helpful for future vaccines because at this point in the pandemic, most people have made up their mind about getting the COVID-19 vaccines.

Lawrence used to only think of science communication from an environmental perspective. However, once the pandemic hit, her view broadened to include public health information.

Based on the data of the past year, Peters anticipates a 50% to 100% growth in the minor in the next year. She and other SCR faculty members are currently planning ways to accommodate the demand for these classes.

"There's all kinds of ways that science communication is at the core of what we do as citizens of a nation. And if you have people who are better able to take part in science and its impact on our lives, if we have a more informed public, then we will have [a] better quality of life," Peters said.



(Emerald Archives)

NELSON'S TAQUERIA AT THE WHITAKER

A man that delivers more than food and provides a sense of comfort to the Whitaker community

BY MELVIN BRAVO

Sometimes good food isn't categorized by where it comes from, but by the work a person puts into it. It can come from sacrifice and ambition, or bringing people together in unconventional ways. A mix that can welcome a dish as well as the community that surrounds it. Good food is what makes restaurants last, an evergreen idea that is sought after by restaurant owners with hard work and determination.

At Nelson's Taqueria, you can see and taste these ideals of someone cooking food not just with passion but with a purpose in their community. The taqueria brings out a style of food from a wide range of Mexican regions, showing Eugene what these dishes represent.

"La comida no se caracteriza en un solo estilo, pero como una diversidad, un mix para la comida (Food isn't characterized in a single style, but with diversity, a mix in food)," Nelson López Contreras, owner and cook at Nelson's Taqueria, said about his food and the years he's been at Whitaker. Nelson's Taqueria has been open for seven years now, operating in a food truck right off of Blair Boulevard feeding the Whitaker community from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. He works in a food truck with a staff of three cooks and hostesses, welcoming those itching for some authentic Mexican dishes.

Dishes the taqueria offers include tortas, a sandwich disguised with everything a taco has; wet burritos, a phantasmagoric classic topped with sauces and ingredients both inside and out (bring napkins); and my personal favorite, birria tacos, which you dip in a stew made of peppers, onions, cilantro, adobo and other goodies.

Contreras said he likes to add a mix of Mexican cultures to his plates. Mexico is a country with 32 states and has a wide range of traditional dishes that combine a variety of ingredients. He says he welcomes those from everyone's region in Mexico and Oregon. "Ha sido un bebé para mí (It's been my baby)," Contreras said of his restaurant. "Fue mi principio, mi prioridad (It was my beginning, my priority)."

Almost everyone who comes across Contreras will see the generous and zealous personality he brings to his work. "Everybody loves Nelson," Nick Sousley, a long-time friend of Contreras's, said. "He greets everyone with 'hello beautiful, hello handsome,' he doesn't discriminate on who he says it to."

Sousley is a Oregon native and grew up both in Springfield and Eugene. He had a troubled youth, but always tried to manage where he was going in life. Sousley met Contreras in 2019. During that time, Sousley was having trouble with drug addiction and was going through a 12-step program with a group called the Jesco Club. He noticed Contreras unloading his car one day and offered to help him. For six months after that, he assisted Nelson in unloading his car, while Contreras would cook for him as thanks for helping out.

"He helps out so many people, it's crazy," Sousley said. Ever since then, he's helped Contreras with his restaurant, working for him on some carpentry projects and electrical issues at his new spot.

Earlier this year, Nelson's Taqueria expanded its location and hours. Right in the parking lot of where his food truck is, there's a house that he's transformed into an indoor restaurant open after his food truck hours are done. It offers a wide variety of drinks, including margaritas and beers, with the same delicious menu as his truck. The place is open from 4:30-10:00 p.m. Another event he's started to offer is a drag show every first Friday of the month, where they play music and offer a good show for those looking for delicious food and a fun time.

Nelson's Taqueria is only beginning to show what good food can do for a tight-knit community. Good food is about the work you put into it, whether it's the dish itself or the community that surrounds it -- no matter where it's from. So if you get a chance to swing by the Whitaker area, dine on some unique food and get to know those around you at Nelson's Taqueria and Nelson himself.



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Feel the Glory

Kyree King looks towards the crowd after the men's 100m dash. The Prefontaine Classic was held at Hayward Field on Friday, May 27 and Saturday, May 28. (Will Geschke/Emerald)

TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETES AND FANS DESERVE BETTER

For a sport predicated on speed and strength, its improvements remain rather slow.

BY AARON HEISEN · **TWITTER** @AARON_HEISEN

As Jeff Oliver flew back to Eugene, Oregon after the London 2012 Summer Olympics, he realized he was sharing a flight with a world champion – American high jumper Jesse Williams.

After the flight landed, Oliver saw Williams walk through baggage claim and out of the airport without receiving any attention.

That didn't surprise Oliver. He's been the Press Chief at the Prefontaine Classic for the last 20 years and he's traveled around the world working at track and field meets.

It wasn't the first time he'd seen a track and field star go unnoticed at an American airport.

"If you're in another country and you're a medalist, you'd get mobbed at the airport," Oliver said. "There would be TV cameras everywhere. Word would get out."

In July, Hayward Field will play home to World Athletics Championships Oregon22 – the first World Championships on American soil. It will also serve as a platform to help accelerate track and field's footprint in the United States.

Hayward Field, the venue for the Worlds, had to

expand its stands to hold a capacity of 17,000 fans. The 2022 USATF outdoor national championships had over one million viewers on NBC on June 26 alone, according to Rich Perelman, who covers track and field for The Sports Examiner.

While track and field is a sport growing in popularity, the process remains a slow one. It's one that has hindered former University of Oregon sprinters, Kyree King and Alaysha Johnson, throughout their careers.

King has expressed his disappointment about expensive streaming services – RunnerSpace +Plus charges over \$100 dollars a year for its services – which make it tough for his family to watch his races in foreign countries.

Due to the costly services, athletes can struggle to build a following.

Athletes also experience a financial strain when paying their entry fee to meets that have minimal amounts of prize money, such as the Wanda Diamond League meets, which offer only \$25,000 for each discipline.

Signing sponsorship agreements can help boost athletes' earnings and popularity, but others, like Johnson, who compete unattached, must rely on their own self-promotion skills.

King won three individual Pac-12 titles and has experienced success at the professional level. He beat Olympic champion Justin Gatlin in Miramar in 2021 and posted a personal best of 20.02 seconds in the 200-meter at the New York Grand Prix in June.

Yet, some of King's success has flown under the radar due to these streaming expenses. As have many of his peers' achievements.

While the World Championships is one of the highest-grossing meets of the season, most professional track and field athletes don't have the chance to make their mark there.

"It's not just Olympics and Worlds, the ball keeps rolling after that," King said. "Not making it doesn't really stop anything. That is only like a block of maybe a week or two weeks out of our season... we still have a month and a half of meets after that."

A selection of those meets are part of the Wanda Diamond League circuit such as the Prefontaine Classic in Eugene, Oregon in May; the Golden Gala in Rome in June; and the Herculis EBS in Monaco in August, along with other meets across the world.

For the athletes, these meets are imperative to their season.

"They help because you can put your big race together," King said. "You don't want to be putting your race together at the big meets. For example, at USAs, you want to be able to put together a big race. You want to have already gotten the kinks out or figure out what you can do and what you need to train for."

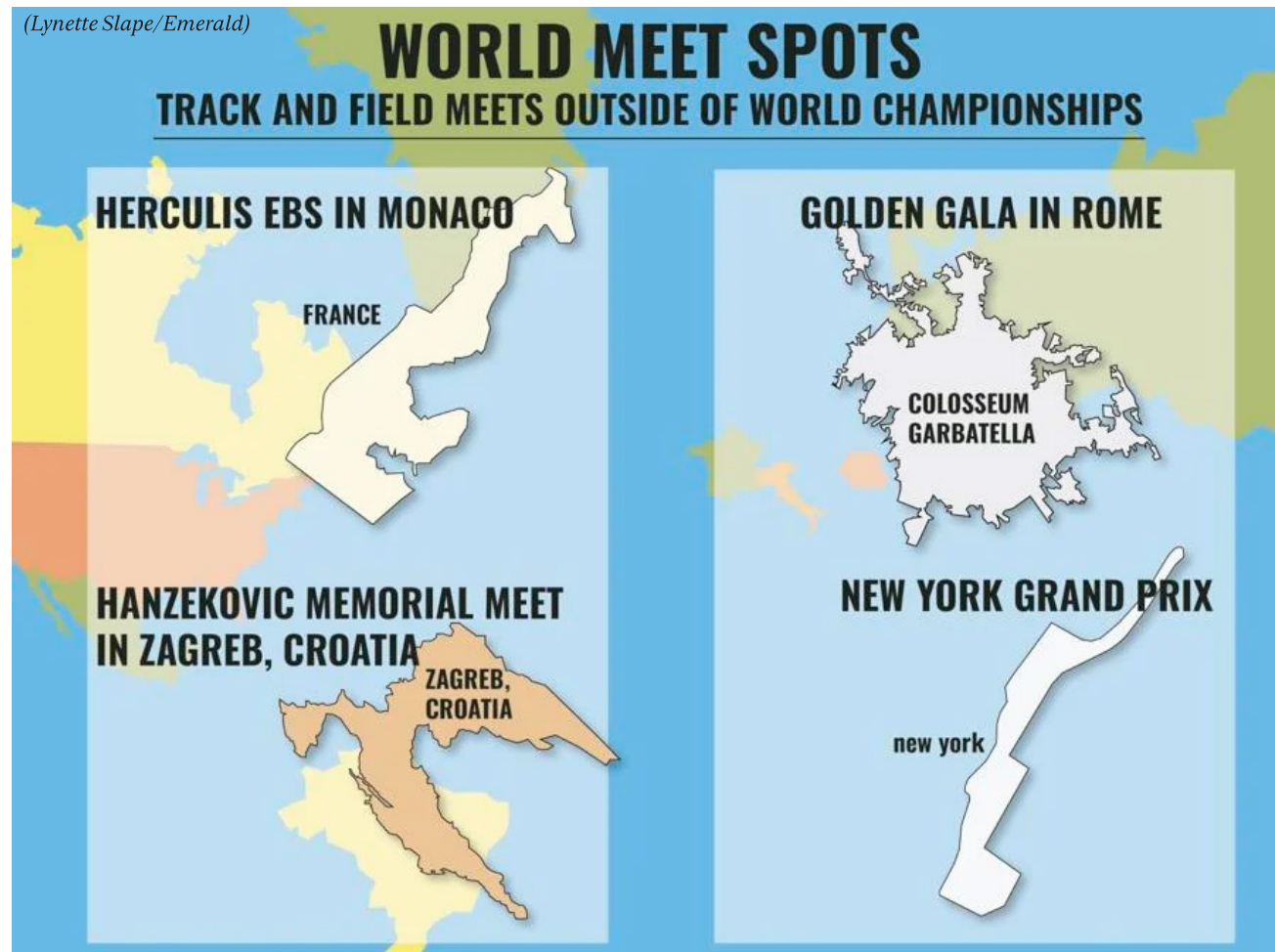
Wanda Diamond League meets have produced world records. Burundian distance runner Francine Niyonsaba set the world record in the women's 2,000-meter in Zagreb, Croatia, in September 2021. Ugandan distance runner Joshua Cheptegei set the world record in the men's 5,000-meter in Monaco, in August 2020.

Athletes have to find other ways to bring attention to themselves and their races. Signing sponsorship deals can act as a starting point. King signed a deal with Nike after graduating from UO in 2017 and it helped kickstart his professional career.

He's also built an individual brand.

"I like to have a lot of flair," King said. "I like to dye my

(Lynette Slape/Emerald)



hair and wear glasses. If people see me on the track I want them to know I'm having fun."

It's something that fans can attach themselves to.

At the USATF national outdoor championships in June, King sported a red flash in the right side of his hair in tribute to Brazilian UFC Fighter Deiveson Figueiredo. Before his 100-meter final, he crowned himself with his hands as his name was called by the public announcer.

"It gives me confidence," King said. "I feel like I'm sticking out, so I feel like I have to perform. I like to feel like all eyes are on me, but I like to show my personality off as well."

King ran a personal-best 9.96 to finish sixth in the men's 100-meter final. Micah Williams, who finished fourth, announced his season was over following the USAs. King will take his spot on the national team 4x100-relay pool at the Worlds.

Along with his achievements, King's gained popularity throughout his career because of his sponsorship deal. However, many track and field athletes at the professional level compete unattached to sponsors, therefore, building fame falls heavily on their shoulders.

It's a responsibility that has burdened Alaysha Johnson.

Johnson won the silver medal in the 60-meter hurdles at the indoor World Championships in March. She made the U.S. national team for the outdoor World Championships in 2017 and 2018.

At the U.S. Championships in June, she placed second in the 100-meter hurdles with a personal-best time of 12.35 securing a spot on the national team for the World Championships.

Still, she has yet to receive a sponsorship deal.

"I have a huge chip on my shoulder," Johnson said. "I'm racing to prove myself to everybody and the one thing that I want to leave on the track is people to remember me for my resilience because there's been a lot of times where I could have gave up and it would

have been easier to do that and I didn't."

Track and field athletes push the limits of the sport and make it entertaining. So how can their careers gain more appreciation?

Jeff Oliver has witnessed this puzzling dichotomy throughout his career.

He said he believes this problem can be helped by shoe companies and government subsidiaries investing in more U.S. meets. Nike's Prefontaine Classic is the only Diamond League meet in the U.S.

He offered media and local journalism, in particular, as a way to help to expand athletes' brands to a larger fanbase. An emphasis on this has mostly been forgotten as local newspapers have lost the budget to travel to cover their hometown athletes.

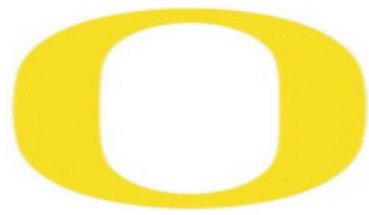
"If there was an initiative behind that, like 'hey, every American athlete that runs at the Worlds, we want a story in their hometown newspaper about what they did.' I think that would go a long way," Oliver said.

To push forward this solution, Oliver's helped to install the virtual mixed zone, which helps get interviews out to anyone who can't afford to cover the meet in person.

At the U.S. Championships, 286 VMZ interviews were conducted. Many Diamond League venues across the world have contacted Oliver looking to adopt this innovation.

For the next six days, World Champions will walk amongst Eugene's locals. It may be tough to get a seat in Hayward Field to watch the action, but their faces will soon become familiar around Eugene.

While some athletes may go unrecognized, Oliver hopes that these steps are the beginning of a future where World Champions like Jesse Williams are appreciated as they walk through American airports.



Fraternity and Sorority Life

University of Oregon's Fraternity and Sorority Life community is comprised of 33 chapters and more than 3,000 students. Students represent hundreds of clubs, honor societies, volunteer experiences and academic disciplines. This community becomes a home away from home for many members and encourages students to become the best version of themselves!



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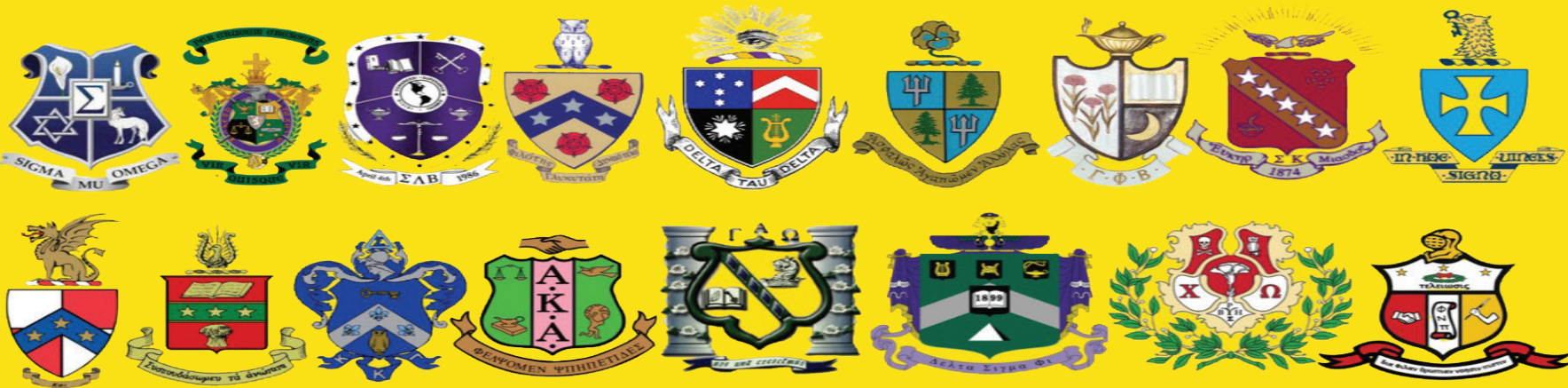


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FEON



ANTICIPATION AND ANXIETY RAMP UP AHEAD OF TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY ERIC BERNIKER • TWITTER @ERICBERNIKER

With under 48 hours until the start of the World Athletics Championships, Eugene natives shared a variety of sentiments surrounding the event.

“When the world competition came... when they secured that I was really stoked to be part of that and to see that,” Jim Gore, a 42-year Oregonian said. “It’s the closest to the Olympics that I will get.”

With an estimated 30,000 people – athletes, tourists, media and volunteers flocking to Lane County for the competition – many see it as an opportunity to showcase the city and the University of Oregon.

“It’s nice to see them do their due diligence and clean some things up to be a good representation of Eugene, Oregon,” volunteer and Eugene resident Devin White said. “I’ve heard from several athletes about the beauty. We take that for granted.”

Gore and White agree the WCH is the perfect forum to show not only Eugene but also the 270 million dollar renovation to Hayward Field, including the largest video board in a track and field stadium, a sports medicine facility and a green scale of seats complemented by exposed wood beams to preserve the Pacific Northwest feel of the stadium.

“I’ve been inside it a few times over the past couple of years and it’s just a fantastic facility,” Gore said. “There’s more leg room in the cheapest seat in Hayward Field than you get in an airplane.”

There is much to be excited about for the athletes as well.

“When people come here, they are just amazed by the beauty and craftsmanship,” White said. “Every athlete all they want to do is get in there but they are just taking picture after picture.”

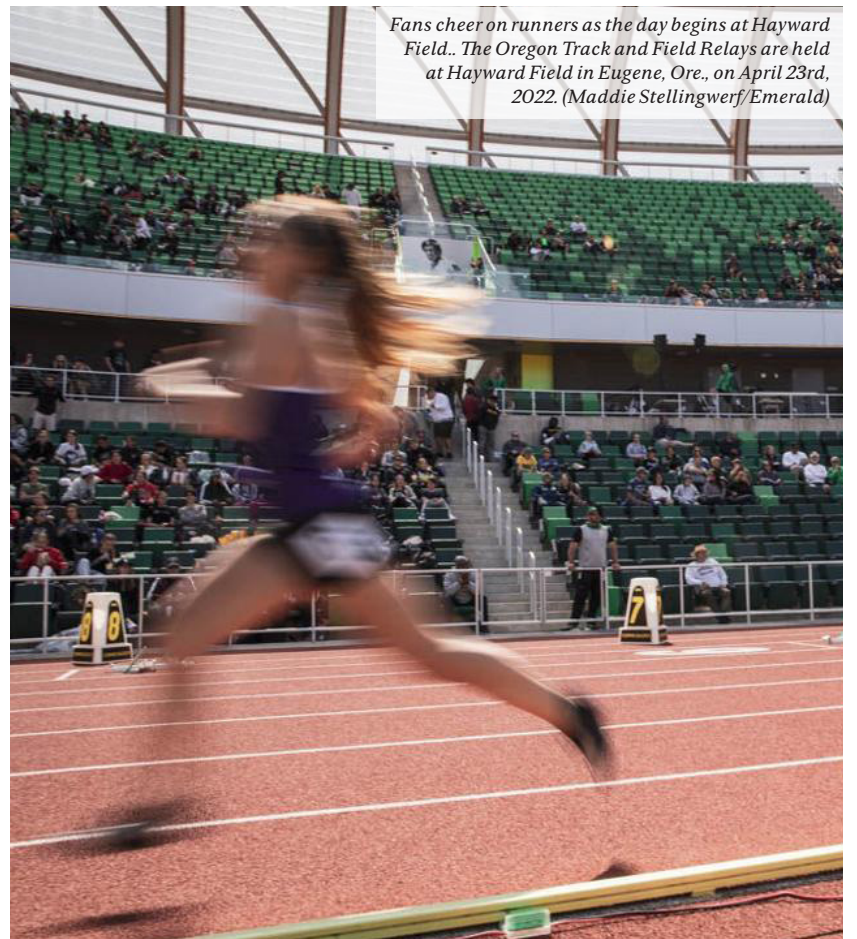
Amidst Hayward Field’s newly finished splendor, not all are equally optimistic and excited about the prospect that the WCH provides for Lane County.

“I really love international events, and I’m glad that it’s happening, but I am a little bit concerned about this many people and the public health effect during a pandemic,” Eugene resident Kyle Purdy said. “I think it’s split 50-50. I think some people are not concerned and really excited and other people are more concerned.”

In addition to COVID-19 concerns there are also questions about the quality of accommodations for the athletes and tourists.

With athletes being housed in seven different residence halls, some with bathrooms and dining halls, others with neither, there is still speculation about the quality of accommodation for athletes who are more than likely to be impressed by Hayward Field.

The World Athletics Championships commence Friday, July 15.



Fans cheer on runners as the day begins at Hayward Field.. The Oregon Track and Field Relays are held at Hayward Field in Eugene, Ore., on April 23rd, 2022. (Maddie Stellingwerf/Emerald)

Over 6,000 fans attended Hayward Field on the final day of the Prefontaine Classic. The Prefontaine Classic was held at Hayward Field on Friday, May 27 and Saturday, May 28. (Will Geschke/Emerald)



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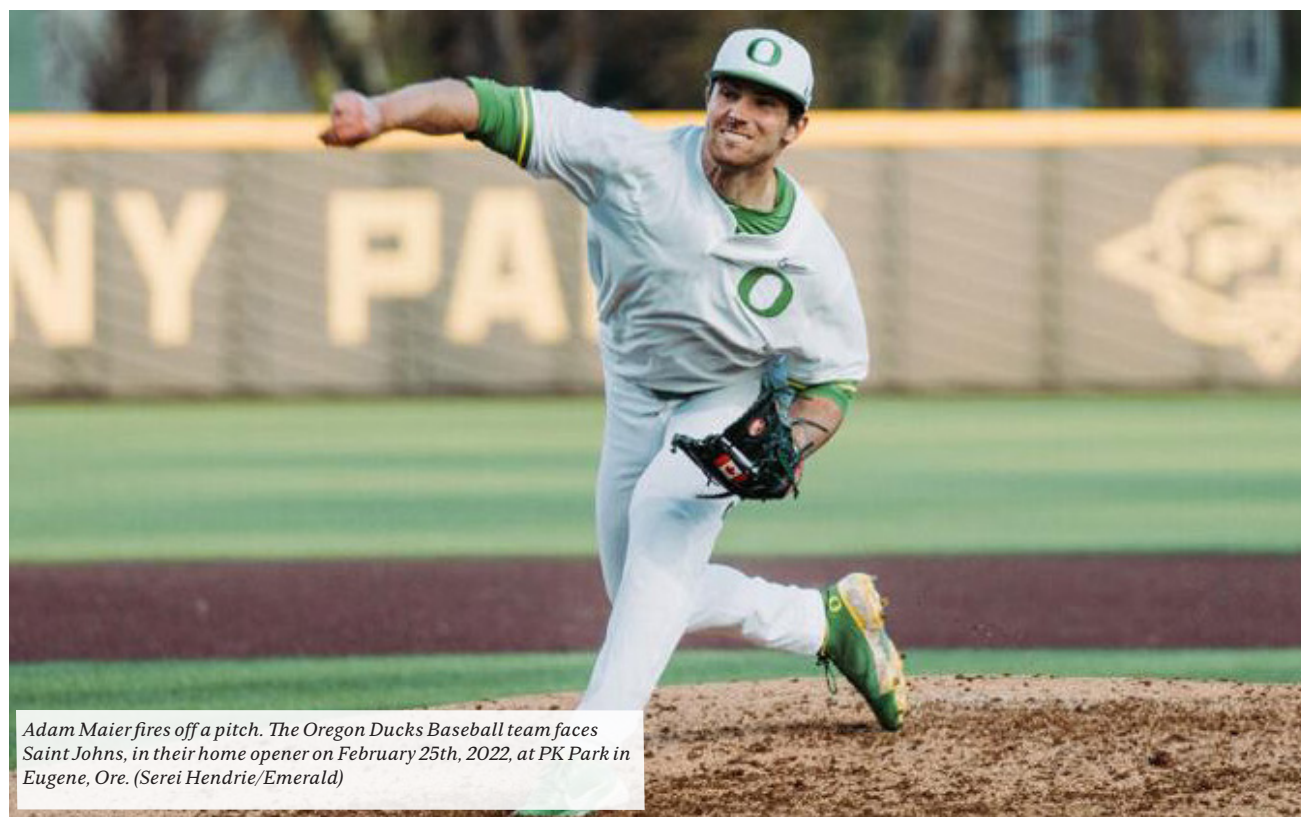
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OREGON BASEBALL ADDS TWO TRANSFER OUTFIELDERS FROM SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

BY MOJO HILL · TWITTER @MOJOHILL22



Adam Maier fires off a pitch. The Oregon Ducks Baseball team faces Saint Johns, in their home opener on February 25th, 2022, at PK Park in Eugene, Ore. (Serei Hendrie/Emerald)

The Ducks have added Owen Diodati and Isaiah Thomas to their formidable lineup.

The college baseball wheel never stops spinning. Despite the Ducks' season coming to an abrupt end, they've been hard at work on the recruiting trail. While they have the typical batch of high school commits poised to join the team, they've also added two Southeastern Conference transfer outfielders this offseason: Owen Diodati and Isaiah Thomas.

Diodati comes from the University of Alabama with two remaining years of eligibility. Over two seasons (plus the COVID-shortened 2020), he owns a .247/.351/.470 batting line with 25 home runs. His strikeout rate is below average, but he brings a solid amount of power and on-base ability to the Ducks. He's gotten off to a strong start this summer with the Wareham Gatemen in the Cape Cod Baseball League.

"My time at the University of Alabama has been unforgettable," Diodati wrote in a tweet on June 25. "With that being said, I am beyond excited for the next chapter. Proud to announce my commitment to play baseball & further my education at the University of Oregon! Go ducks!"

It didn't take long for Oregon to add another outfielder, one who fits a similar mold as Diodati. Vanderbilt outfielder Thomas transferred to Oregon, the Daily Emerald reported on July 4.

Thomas sat out the 2022 season for mental health

reasons after publicly criticizing the Vanderbilt baseball program in an Instagram post last year.

"I'm happy to announce I will be stepping away from my last year in the program," Thomas wrote in the post. "After years of relationships, they choose their beliefs over the well-being of mental health and took advantage of that sensitive aspect in my life. That is all there is to share publicly at the moment. My teammates, this is not about you; it's for me."

On July 4 Thomas joined the Springfield Drifters, a summer ball team located just east of the Willamette River. The team features Oregon commits such as Dominic Hellman and McCabe Moyer, as well as current Duck pitcher Jace Stoffal.

He made his Drifters debut on July 9, going 2-for-3 with a walk and an RBI. This summer will be an opportunity for him to get back in a rhythm in time for the 2023 season.

Despite being unsatisfied with how he was treated, Thomas was largely successful with Vanderbilt. He hit for a 1.089 OPS in 21 games his freshman year, then an .846 OPS in the COVID-shortened season. He put together his best campaign in 2021, hitting .305/.361/.583 with 13 home runs in 59 games.

Thomas owns a miniscule walk rate of 3.7% over his college career. Strangely, he's been hit 15 times – two

more times than he's walked. But he also has a .303 batting average and a .585 slugging percentage, giving him a star-caliber .942 OPS. In Thomas, the Ducks are getting a right-handed outfielder who can hit for average along with serious power.

Diodati and Thomas will presumably fill the void left by Anthony Hall and Tanner Smith. Hall has a chance to be drafted in the top five rounds of the MLB draft, while Smith is also likely to move on. Both of them still have college eligibility remaining.

The Ducks were tremendously successful in the transfer portal last year, and they'll look to repeat that success with Diodati and Thomas. They added two transfer bats last offseason as well, bringing in Drew Cowley and Brennan Milone. The pair turned out to be two of Oregon's top hitters in 2022, helping lead the best offense in school history.

Last season's Ducks also added transfer pitcher Adam Maier, a top prospect who ended up missing most of the year due to injury. Maier is expected to be healthy by 2023, but the team could still use some more arms to shore up their relatively weak pitching depth.

With the additions of Diodati and Thomas, the Ducks hope to be on their way to repeating last season's offensive success.

COSSETTE: TRACKTOWN ON THE WORLD STAGE



Opinion: Despite the disruptions it may cause, it's an honor and important test for Eugene to be the first U.S. city to host this year's World Athletics Championships.

BY SOPHIA COSSETTE
TWITTER @SOPHIACOSSETTE

< Sydney McLaughlin waves to the Hayward Field crowd after breaking the 400-meter hurdles world record at the USATF Outdoor National Championships (Photo Courtesy of Kevin Neri).

Beginning July 15, Eugene will host the World Athletics Championships, marking the first time the event has ever been held on U.S. soil. From July 15-24, Eugene will hopefully live up to its infamous title of "Track Town USA" as the world's best track and field athletes descend upon the newly renovated Hayward Field to compete.

Due to the global nature of the Worlds, Eugene will be welcoming approximately 30,000 visitors this week.

Eugene's population is estimated at around 175,000 people, and the addition of 30,000 people is not a small uptick in traffic around the city and its surrounding areas. Niels de Vos, the head of Oregon22 – a group responsible for producing the games here in Eugene – recently spoke about the challenges of hosting such a large event in a city of our size.

"We're fitting a size-12 foot into a size-6 shoe," Vos said, as Eugene is noticeably smaller than past cities to host sporting events of this importance. Hosting the Worlds is also set to cost roughly 80 million dollars, so Vos hopes that the event will generate enough revenue in return to the local economy as well as elevate Eugene's status as a global sports hub.

There is no denying that these massive crowds of visitors are great for Eugene's economy and local businesses, not to mention the excitement of hosting an event of this magnitude brings to our town. However, this sudden influx of people will inevitably cause disruption for the everyday Eugene citizen and worker.

If you have been living in Eugene the past year, you have noticed the preparations for the event. Everything from our street signs to the airport has been decked out in purple Worlds promotions for weeks now, boasting slogans to come "feel the glory," at the upcoming games in Eugene. Local hotels – as well as ones spanning from Portland to the Oregon Coast – are

jacking their prices three times normal rates while rapidly filling up, and creating mass street closures began a week in advance of events.

In an in-depth look at the upcoming Worlds, Orange County Guard sports reporter Scott M. Reid said hosting the games in Eugene is "an opportunity to live up to the claim as Tracktown USA with a global television audience watching, a chance to solidify its place in the sport's domestic and international histories while silencing critics who doubt a city with a population of 170,000 can pull off a major international event."

These World Championships will serve as an accumulation and celebration of all the recent work put into the new Hayward Field. With all eyes on Eugene, we can only hope the city pulls it off. And, while life as usual may be disrupted, it is still a once in a lifetime occurrence to be in the presence of such a historic event and incredible athletes.

Despite the city of Eugene and the state of Oregon priding themselves on their culture of acceptance and inclusion, it isn't a secret that racial and cultural diversity is still lacking. In hosting a global event like the World's in our city, we are lucky to get the chance to experience so many different languages, ethnicities and ways of life that Eugene doesn't always expose us to.

So, while many underestimate and question the legitimacy of our city of Eugene hosting this international event, I would argue we are up to the challenge. A rich history of track and field is ingrained in our city's culture, and I can only hope that everyone will rise to the opportunity of displaying our love and appreciation for track alongside the welcoming and inclusive nature of our town.

SPECTRUM: EUGENE'S ONLY OFFICIAL QUEER BAR

Spectrum Queer Restaurant and Bar reopened its doors this April and has a packed schedule full of events for the LGBTQIA+ community in Eugene this summer.

BY CELESTE GRIFFITHS

If you're scoping out a queer dance party this summer, Spectrum Restaurant and Bar in downtown Eugene brings a vibrant energy and a packed schedule of events after reopening their doors in April.

As the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, Spectrum requires that attendees wear masks inside the venue and bring proof of vaccination.

Once you're inside, Spectrum has it all -- from a majestic unicorn mural to disco balls and specialty drinks that manager Kiki Boniki described as "fruity and gay." One that stands out is Captain Heldog's Gender Non-Specific Merpersion Splash, an ode to the venue's owner, Helen Shepard.

Boniki was drawn to their position at Spectrum during the pandemic after bidding corporate America farewell. They have a background in drag, professional theater, and business and were driven to shift their career to maintain a welcoming environment for Eugene's queer community.

"During Coronavirus, a lot of people decided to do what they're passionate about," Boniki said. "For me, serving the community is more important than anything else, and making sure that we have a safe space for everyone in the LGBT+ family, especially people that are gender variant of any kind because they have less safe spaces to be in the world."

Boniki explained that Spectrum hosts drag performances nearly every day, alongside a wide variety of events to match the diversity of the queer community. The Lip Sync Extravaganza is one of their long-standing events, featuring amateur performers or other professionals practicing a new number.

This past June, Spectrum held a memorable lip sync night that sums up the excitement the community is feeling after lockdown from COVID-19.

"We had a night that just blew the roof off the building. So many people came to that stage and threw it down, threw it down hard. There was a drag king who performed to boy band pop music, and they were comfortable enough to fully go shirtless in [their] performance, and they got a five minute standing ovation, which I don't know if that's ever happened before," Boniki said. "Everyone's just really supportive. Everyone is there to see other people succeed. And it's really heartwarming."

Spectrum's reopening provides a venue for a new generation of performers, finally able to unleash their talent into the queer nightlife scene after the pandemic put everything on hold.

"We have an outer cloud of newer drag performers that are basically a bunch of people who during Coronavirus, couldn't learn to do

anything from other drag people," Boniki said. "Some of them are more professional than you can realize, having only really performed for two to three months. They're outstanding. So it's kind of like a drag school."

Spectrum also hosts Drag Race Watch Parties each Friday, which also features live drag performances as the crowd gathers to cheer on their favorite drag queens. RuPaul's Drag Race is a popular reality television show where a group of drag queens compete in front of judges until one is crowned as America's Next Drag Superstar. Weekly social mixers allow for different groups within the LGBTQIA+ community to collaborate and get to know each other.

While the majority of Spectrum's events are restricted to ages 21 and over, Boniki said that the venue is lining up more youth-friendly events to be inclusive to the younger queer people in Eugene. Each Sunday at noon, Spectrum hosts a free family-friendly Drag Brunch headlined by drag queen Lyta Blunt.

"We want the local community to be able to access and see the shows," Boniki said. "Yes, it's fun to have mimosas...but it's also really refreshing to see queer teens with their parents or queer parents with their kids, [and] trans teens and trans kids that are getting to know the community."

Spectrum has emphasized its commitment to creating and growing as an open space for the queer community since opening in 2018, when it took over the same building that used to house the Wayward Lamb, a gay bar.

"If you don't feel safe at other bars or venues in town, because you're getting gawked at, stared at, treated differently, venues like Spectrum are important so people can feel that their life is valid. It's important that we have places we can gather to share ideas, and talk about our problems, frankly, and how to find solutions for them," Boniki said. "Sometimes we have to organize and make our voices heard via protests and stuff like that. Spectrum is a place that you can do all of those things -- you can get validated as a performer, know that your art is important, and celebrate queer culture."

Spectrum's inviting venue isn't just for entertainment; it's a space where people can safely gather to organize and communicate, which will always be vital to the queer community.

To learn more information about upcoming events at Spectrum, check out its website, spectrumeugene.com, Facebook @spectrumeugene, and Instagram @spectrumeugene.

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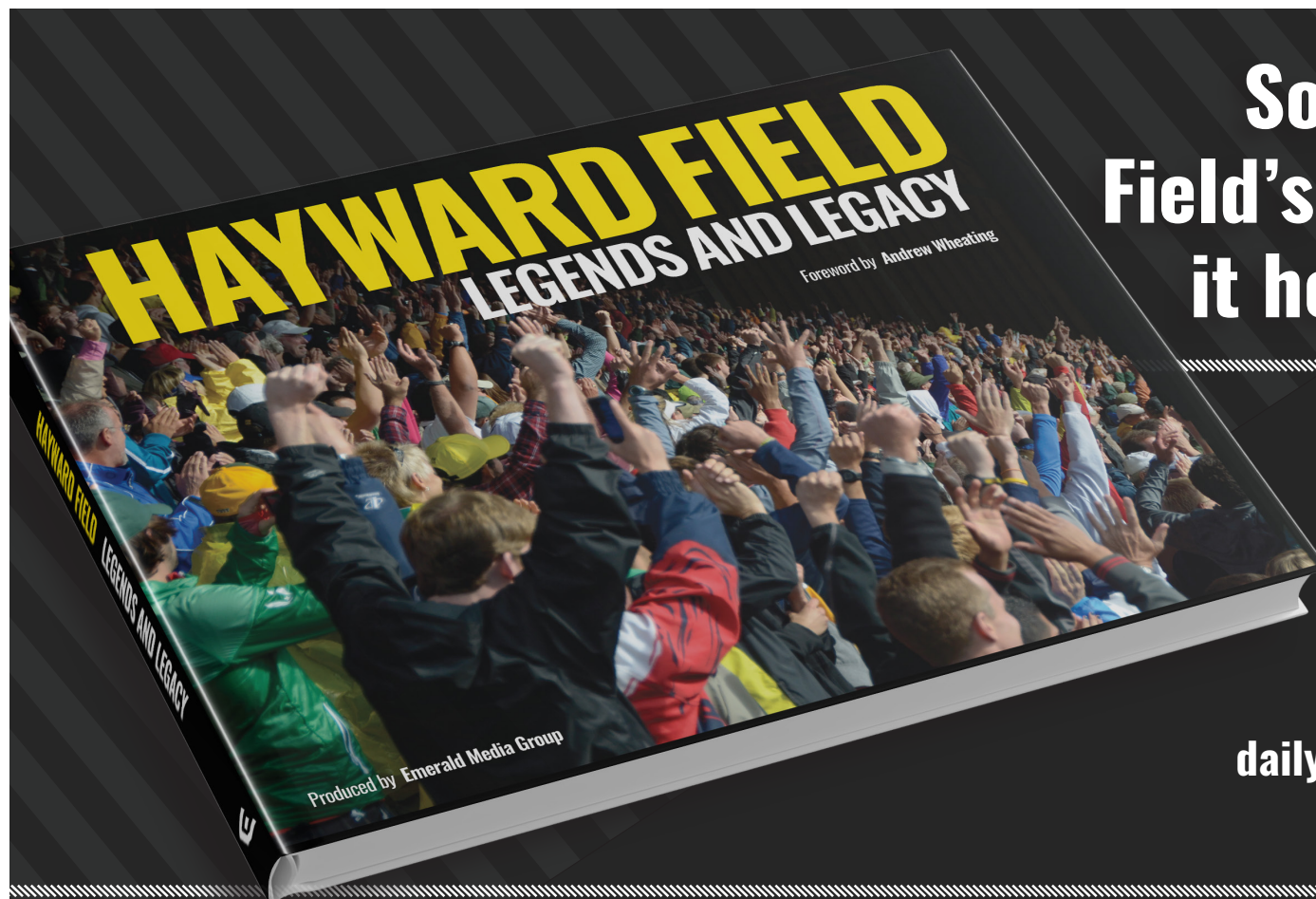
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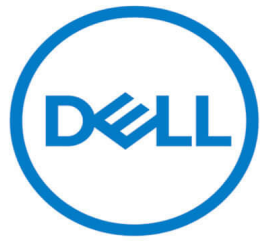
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