

Frankly

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but I guess his brand of humor isn't directed at 50-year-old geezers like myself, who are armed with a dash of intelligence.

I did find the Ferrell vehicle *Elf* mildly amusing. For about 15 minutes. And by the way, hasn't this movie already been made? Or was it a TV series? Get confused sometimes. Anyway, the reviewers haven't been too kind to the current flick. But I am sure Mr. Ferrell cashed his paycheck anyway.

Here is a novel idea for Ferrell's next project. Seems that there is an opening in the USC athletic department. The football school on Figueroa is looking for a men's hoop coach after Tim Floyd abruptly resigned last week. Seems Floyd was given the option of quitting or being fired by Athletic Director Mike Garrett. Something about Floyd handing a bag of pennies to one of the peeps representing teen hoop star O.J. "One and Done" Mayo. Can't believe that with all the alleged shady dealing dotting the smarmy landscape of college athletics, that Floyd, who had done a good job at SC, was canned because he was somehow involved in handing over a bag of cash earmarked for a recruit.

I think that Garrett should put in a call to one Bobby Knight, the ex-Indiana and Texas Tech coach who may be getting tired of spinning his wheels working for ESPN.

Bring the General out West to the Galen Center, and let him garner a little pub for the program, which appears to be circling the drain after mass player defections to the NBA and the renegeing on commitments by sought-after high school recruits.

But if Knight isn't considered, how bout giving the job to SC alumnus Ferrell? If the team is going to tank, can't think of a better guy to lead the charge into the "Land of the Lost."

And on the prediction front: Selected the Penguins to win the Stanley Cup, which they did last weekend, edging the runner-up Detroit Red Wings 2-1 in a riveting game seven. Said Lakers in six, which was pretty darn close. The kid picked the Lakes in five. Bingo! And, most importantly, guaranteed that the Little League Mighty Mariners would win the incredibly prestigious "King of the Beach" tourney, which actually wasn't named the KOTB tourney this year. We lost in the final Sunday 7-6 to the fine team from Manhattan Beach, the Waves. Congrats, MB coaches and kids!

Two for three in the old prediction game. Watch out for Retief Goosen, folks! And Happy Father's Day to all. From where I sit, nothing beats being a dad...



Senior pitcher Joe Schaffhauser won 10 games for the Eagles this year, was named to the All-League and All-Area teams and pitched in the South Bay All-Star Game. Photo by Bob Schaffhauser. ES-GREG 6-18.JPG

Eagles Kept Tradition Going This Year

By Gregg McMullin

The El Segundo high school baseball season finished its season in what most people believe was premature fashion. Over the past five decades, the Eagles have built a tradition of fielding strong teams built on pitching, timely hitting and solid defense. This year was no different, and this team continued the long and storied tradition of being a force to be reckoned with—especially when you consider it won 23 games and the prestigious Redondo Tournament.

In the past, the Eagles regularly schedule tough non-league games and participate in high-profile tournaments to prepare for the Pioneer League schedule. The year started off with wins over traditional powerhouses Long Beach Poly and Banning. A successful squeeze bunt by West Torrance kept the Eagles from starting off 3-0 and getting to the finals of their own tournament. They went on to win 10 out of their first 12 games, including a doubleheader sweep of rival Mira Costa and a 3-0 win over highly-ranked Palos Verdes.

The Eagles played brilliantly at times, but were also victims of their own undoing. When the pitching was solid they committed errors, but through it all the hitting was consistent. In fact, the Eagles outhit all but two opponents this year. Junior catcher Justin McCullough led the way with a .474 average on a team that collectively hit .349.

The Eagles played in a tournament in San Diego over their Easter break when they were clearly the better team than the three opponents they faced, but physical and mental errors led to two losses. The Eagles played arguably their worst game, perhaps ever, when they lost to St Augustine 13-7. The Eagles committed seven errors and surrendered 11 unearned runs, including three runs on a ball that barely got out of the infield.

The poor defensive efforts ended up being a turning point for the Eagles when they got home because the focus in practice was working on their defensive fundamentals. "We played much better after the San Diego tournament because the team took it really personal," said assistant coach Craig Cousins.

In a non-league game against Crescenta Valley, the Eagles put together their best game in terms of pitching, defense and timely hitting. Sophomore pitcher Nigel Nootbaar was cruising along and had a no-hitter through four innings against a team filled with capable hitters; he gave up just one hit in the fifth inning. In the sixth inning, Richard Seigel fought off an inside pitch and took it to left field for a double. Justin McCullough then clobbered a two-run home run to give the Eagles a 2-0 lead. Ben Doucette came in relief of Nootbaar and the Falcons scored

once in the sixth, but Doucette got out of a jam in the seventh by striking out the last hitter to help the Eagles come away with a 2-1 win. "It was a quality win with good pitching and defense against an excellent team," said Cousins.

The showdown with Torrance for the Pioneer League title turned out to be another undoing by the Eagles, as they lost both games. But El Segundo bounced back with a sweep of Lawndale, including a near perfect game thrown by Nootbaar. The infielders made some great plays to keep the perfect no-hitter intact. With two outs and two strikes away from Eagle immortality, Lawndale's best hitter whacked a 1-1 curveball into left field for a solid single. The tall right-hander said he had no idea he had a no-hitter going into the seventh inning. After the game when he realized how close he was, he said, "I wish I had that pitch back."

The Eagles went on to win eight out of their last nine games heading into the playoffs and were set to make a run at a CIF title. One of the reasons the Eagles started to hit their stride was the insertion of senior first baseman Seigel, who wound up hitting .400 on the year. He came on so strong that the lineup was now a formidable one with Doucette (.370), McCullough (.474), Grant Palmer (.422), Jake Booterbaugh (.267) Logan Erickson (.380) and Jimmy Quinones (.347). Though the team struggled to hit home runs early in the season, it ended up with 15 for the year after having none in the first 10 games.

Eagle head coach John Stevenson has taken 42 teams to the playoffs in 50 years at the helm. Though people like to compare teams from year to year, Stevenson adamantly admits he does not offer comparisons to any of his past or current teams. This year's team certainly had the make-up and talent to play with any team based on their schedule that included an 18-7 record against teams that went to the playoffs. The Eagles were once ranked number one in their division and number 10 in Southern California, so this team was carrying on a tradition of success.

Since the Eagles lost two crucial games to Torrance and another one to North Torrance in league play, they fell in the polls and lost a favorable draw in the CIF Southern Section Division IV playoffs. The Eagles played Don Lugo (19-6) in the first round and El Segundo continued its hitting assault by hammering out 17 hits and scoring runs in each inning en route to an 11-1 win. Doucette led the Eagles by going 4-for-4 with a home run and five RBIs. Meanwhile, Nootbaar and

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