



NEWS

Media Contact:
Brooks Hatch
(541) 752-5656

For Immediate Release

www.oregonallstarseries.com

Liberty High School Slugger Kevin Lave Hits Home Run with Extraordinary Senior Project

Corvallis, Oregon, Wednesday, May 8, 2013 – Kevin Lave, Jack Merrill and Chandler Whitney were each lucky enough that their families could comfortably finance their high school and club athletic careers.

The Portland-area trio realized that not everyone was as fortunate as they were. But instead of simply taking a pitch and turning a blind-eye to the problem, they decided to do something about it.

Lave, Merrill and Whitney formed the “Player to Player Youth Sports Foundation,” a nonprofit organization whose mission is helping other players pay their youth sports fees.

A student at Liberty High School in Hillsboro who will play baseball at Chapman University in Orange, Calif., next year, Lave wanted his senior project to blend baseball with community service. So he founded “Player to Player” with childhood friends Merrill, a Hillsboro High senior (frosch-to-be baseball player at George Fox University) and with Whitney, a Southridge High senior (frosch-to-be baseball player at Walla Walla CC).

Lave, Merrill and Whitney were opponents in Little League baseball and then became teammates on Mound Time Baseball in their teens.

“For my senior project, I wanted to do something with substance and something to do with athletics,” Lave said. “Growing up, I was fortunate enough to participate in a wide variety of sports because of my family’s financial situation. However, throughout the years, I have had some friends who couldn’t play because their family could not afford the registration fees and/or cost of equipment.

“Some of these friends ended up going down the path of using drugs, getting in trouble, and quitting school, which was very sad to watch. Jack and Chandler also saw (similar) kids in their schools.

“We wanted to find a way to help these kids participate in sports, and this is where our idea, the Player to Player Youth Sports Foundation, started forming.

“When kids stay busy with sports and have structured, supervised activities, they stand a better chance of staying in school, getting better grades, staying out of trouble, and making better life decisions. By increasing the participation of financially-disadvantaged youth in local sports activities (with) scholarships, we hope to help give these kids those chances.”

Their motto is, “Helping kids pay so they can play.” The foundation recently obtained 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status from the IRS and their initial fund-raising event, a seminar advising prospective college players on how to find the right place to play, was held on May 5.

A website should be active by June; they’ll start corporate fund-raising after they graduate from their respective high schools, and they hope to start awarding scholarships this fall.

Lave said the most satisfying aspect of the undertaking was choosing exactly how they could make an impact.

“It’s our project, and we are responsible for it,” he said. “I feel that the harder we work to give to those in need, the more satisfaction we will get out of it. Once we give that first scholarship away, that will be a pretty neat moment.”

They are now accepting tax-deductible donations from individuals and corporations. Checks should be made payable to “Player to Player” and sent to:

Player to Player Youth Sports Foundation
PO Box 6886
Portland, OR 97228

The Liberty Falcons slugging first baseman is enjoying great success on the diamond too, as the senior was hitting over .400 as of the end of April with 3 home runs and 17 RBI. He’s making a strong case for being selected to play in the 2013 Reser’s Oregon All-Star Series June 15-16 at OSU’s Goss Stadium as either a first baseman or pitcher (he’s tossed two conference shutouts).

ABOUT THE OREGON ALL-STAR SERIES

The Reser’s Oregon All-Star Series showcases the top senior high school baseball players from the state’s 5A and 6A classifications June 15-16 at Goss Stadium in Corvallis, Oregon. The 2013 series starts with a doubleheader on Saturday, June 15 at noon (two 7-inning games) and concludes Sunday, June 16 with a single 9-inning game at 11 am. The All-Star Series, formerly known as the State-Metro Series, thrived in The Dalles for decades (1971-2007) celebrating its 50th anniversary in its last year at Quinton Street Ball Park. After stints in Bend and McMinnville, the Oregon All-Star Series moved to Corvallis in 2011 where attendance for the two-day showcase was 1,099 in 2011 and 635 in 2012.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.oregonallstarseries.com.