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12.8 The errorPage and isErrorPage Attributes

The `errorPage` attribute specifies a JSP page that should process any exceptions (i.e., something of type `Throwable`) thrown but not caught in the current page. It is used as follows:

```
<%@ page errorPage="Relative URL" %>
```

The exception thrown will automatically be available to the designated error page by means of the `exception` variable.

The `isErrorPage` attribute indicates whether or not the current page can act as the error page for another JSP page. Use of `isErrorPage` takes one of the following two forms:

```
<%@ page isErrorPage="true" %>
<%@ page isErrorPage="false" %> <%-- Default --%>
```

For example, Listing 12.4 shows a JSP page that computes speed based on distance and time parameters. The page neglects to check whether the input parameters are missing or malformed, so an error could easily occur at runtime. However, the page designates `SpeedErrors.jsp` (Listing 12.5) as the page to handle errors that occur in `ComputeSpeed.jsp`, so the user does not receive the typical terse JSP error messages. Note that `SpeedErrors.jsp` is placed in the `WEB-INF` directory. Because servers prohibit direct client access to `WEB-INF`, this arrangement prevents clients from accidentally accessing `SpeedErrors.jsp` directly. When an error occurs, `SpeedErrors.jsp` is accessed by the *server*, not by the *client*: error pages of this sort do not result in `response.sendRedirect` calls, and the client sees only the URL of the originally requested page, not the URL of the error page.

Figures 12-7 and 12-8 show results when good and bad input parameters are received, respectively.

Figure 12-7. `ComputeSpeed.jsp` **when it receives legal values.**

Figure 12-8. `ComputeSpeed.jsp` **when it receives illegal values. Note that the address line shows the URL of** `ComputeSpeed.jsp`, **not** `SpeedErrors.jsp`.

Note that the `errorPage` attribute designates *page-specific* error pages. To designate error pages that apply to an entire Web application or to various categories of errors within an application, use the `error-page` element in `web.xml`. For details, see Volume 2 of this book.

Listing 12.4 ComputeSpeed.jsp

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN">
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>Computing Speed</TITLE>
<LINK REL=STYLESHEET
      HREF="JSP-Styles.css"
      TYPE="text/css">
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<%@ page errorPage="/WEB-INF/SpeedErrors.jsp" %>
<TABLE BORDER=5 ALIGN="CENTER">
  <TR><TH CLASS="TITLE">
      Computing Speed</TABLE>
<%!
// Note lack of try/catch for NumberFormatException if
// value is null or malformed.

private double toDouble(String value) {
  return(Double.parseDouble(value));
}
%>
<%
double furlongs = toDouble(request.getParameter("furlongs"));
double fortnights = toDouble(request.getParameter("fortnights"));
double speed = furlongs/fortnights;
%>
<UL>
  <LI>Distance: <%= furlongs %> furlongs.
  <LI>Time: <%= fortnights %> fortnights.
  <LI>Speed: <%= speed %> furlongs per fortnight.
</UL>
</BODY></HTML>
```

Listing 12.5 SpeedErrors.jsp

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN">
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>Error Computing Speed</TITLE>
<LINK REL=STYLESHEET
```

```
      HREF="JSP-Styles.css"
      TYPE="text/css">
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<%@ page isErrorPage="true" %>
<TABLE BORDER=5 ALIGN="CENTER">
  <TR><TH CLASS="TITLE">
      Error Computing Speed</TABLE>
<P>
ComputeSpeed.jsp reported the following error:
<I><%= exception %></I>. This problem occurred in the
following place:
<PRE>
<%@ page import="java.io.*" %>
<% exception.printStackTrace(new PrintWriter(out)); %>
</PRE>
</BODY></HTML>
```

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