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Photo by Steve Dykes

As the leading scorer on the Oregon field hockey team, Dellamotta can usually be found around the ball. "She has at least three years of experience above most of the players," said Duck coach Nancy Plantz.

Dellamotta proves valuable as Oregon hockey's leading scorer

By JOHN HEALY
Of the Emerald

In terms of sheer value, Veronica Dellamotta may be the most valuable freshman athlete on campus this fall.

While most Eugeneans have been groaning over the football team's failure to win a game this fall, freshman forward Dellamotta has scored seven goals in nine games to lead the women's field hockey team to a 7-1-1 record.

Three things — the University's academic record, first-year coach Nancy Plantz, and a partial athletic scholarship — convinced Dellamotta, from Downingtown, Pennsylvania, to sign a letter of intent with Oregon.

Dellamotta, affectionately called "Ronnie" by her teammates and coach, explained her reasons for heading west after a two-hour practice last week at South Eugene High School.

"I wanted to go someplace that could take me somewhere in hockey," she said. "Plantz is a good coach, and I knew she could do a lot for me. She lets you know exactly where you stand."

"I was also looking for a school with a good business program, since I'm in accounting and computer science."

Dellamotta has been playing field hockey since the seventh grade, which is a lot more than most players, according to Plantz.

"She has at least three years of experience above most of our players," said Plantz. "Ronnie has good stickwork and maneuvers the ball well for a freshman."

She leads the team with seven goals, three of them coming against Willamette last week. Her role is obvious.

"Ronnie is out there to score goals," stated Plantz. "She has a lot of natural talent, but she still

needs experience as a forward. In a couple of years, she will be extremely outstanding."

Dellamotta played on her high school team for two years, a team that she called "super athletic and very competitive."

At a hockey camp that the team attended before her senior season began, Dellamotta and four teammates were told that they had the potential to be on the national team.

Four of the five are attending colleges on field hockey scholarships this year at places like Bucknell, Penn State, and Maryland — east coast giants in women's field hockey.

But Dellamotta decided to come to Oregon. A state that has two high schools with women's field hockey teams.

"I definitely think we have the potential to be up with the Eastern colleges," said Dellamotta. "Maybe not this year but next year."

That's a pretty positive statement considering that Eastern schools traditionally dominate the national collegiate field hockey championship each year.

In fact, Oregon has never won a game at the national tournament, although the team has qualified for the nationals the last three years.

"Our team goal this year is to win at least one game at nationals," explained Plantz. Oregon will achieve that goal if "more players like Ronnie keep coming here," she added.

"Ronnie has the potential to be on the United States national team. It all depends on how much work she is willing to do, and how strong her desire is," Plantz said.

Dellamotta has the desire and the willingness to work, which means Oregon may win a game at nationals this year.

And Ronnie Dellamotta could be playing field hockey for the United States in Moscow Olympics in 1980.

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