

Full of competitive spirit and high aspirations, Wilson says he will try out for the track and field team in the spring then decide the following year which sport he will continue with during his sophomore year. "I like sports," he says.

And while he spends little time on the court in actual play, Wilson is exuberant just to be on the team, he says.

"Who knows, I might be a player or I might be a fan next year," he says.

Regardless of the amount of playing time, all athletes must practice, which amounts to a considerable time commitment and, to a lesser extent, social sacrifice, says Michelle Crowston, a junior walk-on volleyball player who joined the team two years ago.

"You really have to study every chance you get," Crowston says. The large amount of road games occupies virtually every weekend during the season, which runs from the start of August until November.

During the height of the season, the team practices three

hours a day, while during the off season an athlete might practice between one to two hours a day developing her individual areas needing improvement, says head volleyball coach Gerry Gregory. In addition, the players lift weights and condition during the off-season, he says.

The reward is participating on an intercollegiate level, Crowston says, and being able to compete on a team of the volleyball's caliber is the ultimate challenge. She says she plans to extend her academic career to five years so she can use her final year of athletic eligibility.

As the team becomes stronger, it becomes increasingly difficult for a player to play immediately, Gregory says. The key is to be honest with the athletes and focus on the importance of being a good team player, he says.

"All have needs, and we seek to have those needs filled," he says. Some students train hard to be an individual athlete while others strive with a group of people to meet a common goal.

'It's everyone's dream to play Division 1 basketball. I used to watch them on TV when I was young so it's a privilege to play for the Ducks. I really get excited when I get in.'

— Curtis Wilson

Gregory says he tries to give team credit rather than individual credit when giving compliments and understands an occasional off day.

Supporting players are important for the team in scrimmages and practice because it forces the first string to make themselves better, Crowston says. The family atmosphere found among the 12 to 15 members of the volleyball team helps make the overall experience fun, she says.

"I think the motivation comes from what I want to do in the future — that being coaching," Crowston says.

Coming to the University as a highly recruited freshman three years ago for the women's

basketball team, senior and scholarship recipient Kim Neal says her first year's performance was her best. Now, sidelined for the last four weeks with an injury, Neal is more a spectator than a participant.

"It gets tiring — you get fatigued, and you have to take a full load of classes (to remain eligible)... You get to a point where you might say, 'I don't want to go to practice,' but you must go," she says.

"Our coach is pretty fair, and we all know that if you work hard, you will get some playing time," she says. It's frustrating for the newer players to not be able to play because everyone wants to play, but one has to be

mature enough to look beyond that, she says. For the most part, the group respects each others' skills, she adds.

"It was a worthwhile sacrifice, and I enjoyed my four years. It was worth it," she says.

"The kid that had experience — whether one month, one year or four years — has had an experience that someone else has not," Monson says. The idea is to be a contributor to the team, and whether the media or boosters consider the athlete successful is really not that important, he says. The athlete still has his or her experience.

— STAN NELSON

Dance

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"follow," says Taylor, who has been dancing for almost six years. "Let's say they go out to a nightclub and they hear a piece of music. Well, that's one-fourth of the amount of things they have to learn to do. 'Gee, what

am I going to do to this?' They don't want to be waltzing to a swing or fox-trotting to a rumba. So it does take a little bit of time for them to recognize."

"The man not only has to learn to recognize the music but

he also has to know how to lead. Basically, he has to know how to keep the timing... And the other thing too is when the man is out on the floor dancing around, he wants to know how to lead well enough so he doesn't run her in-

to people and get her into trouble.

"Surprisingly, the old myth and the old fantasy of a lady needs to move faster than the man to get out of his way is very untrue. It's something that's

very frustrating... she actually has to move slower because it's just like leading a horse. If a horse is five feet in front of you while you're leading it, it's not following."

— MICHAEL RIVERS

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