

# Track star brings out the masses



**S**he was awesome. At least that was the consensus opinion of middle distance runner Suzy Hamilton Saturday at Hayward Field, where Hamilton won the 800-meter run in her season debut.

Hamilton, with her trademark golden tresses and bare midriff singlet, is quickly becoming the most recognizable American track and field athlete. And judging from the reactions of both fans and athletes, she may be able to do something previous track stars were never quite able to accomplish.

She can help track and field attain mainstream status among sports fans.

"Suzy's the best runner around. She's awesome," said middle school student Matt O'Brien. "She ran one of her best races today."

O'Brien was one of 22 students from Lincoln Middle School in Cottage Grove who had taken a bus to come see Hamilton run. O'Brien made it clear why he came to the meet.

"I came here to see Suzy. Just Suzy," O'Brien said. "A whole busload of us came to see Suzy."

Some will argue that such an infatuation with one athlete is unhealthy. But the interest Hamilton generates is positive and should be a sign to the track and field world that it now has the charismatic athletes necessary to attract the casual sports fan.

So what if it is an appearance by Hamilton that finally causes the casual sports fan to buy a ticket to a track meet? Hamilton may be the draw that causes a fan to enter the gate, but it is the sport of track and field that must eventually sell itself.

Two other students from Cottage Grove, John King and Tyler



A busload of Cottage Grove students made the trip to Hayward Field Saturday to see Olympian Suzy Hamilton in the Oregon Invitational.

Ish, also came to see Hamilton. They enjoyed watching her run and they went home fascinated, not by Hamilton, but by the pole vault event. Both now want to become pole vaulters.

And this is precisely the reason Suzy Hamilton is so good for track. People go to a track meet "infatuated" with Hamilton, but they leave the meet infatuated with track and field. They become hooked on the sport and realize it is every bit as exciting as other major sports. As adults, they will consider track and field on the same par as basketball, football, and baseball — a status track has never attained in the United States.

Undoubtedly, much of the attention Hamilton receives is

due to her physical appearance. But much of her popularity lies in the fact that she, unlike other major sports stars, remains accessible. The chance for a kid to ever speak personally to Michael Jordan is non-existent, but after a race, with a little persistence, it is possible to receive a private audience with Hamilton.

O'Brien still appeared in shock when he told me about the conversation he had with Hamilton.

"I told her 22 kids from Cottage Grove, Oregon, came to see her," he said.

And what was her reply?

"That's awesome."

*Erick Studenicka is a sports reporter for the Emerald.*

# Women's tennis team finishes season at 24-5

By Evangelina Rodriguez  
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon's women tennis team defeated Seattle University and Washington State before losing to Washington in the Pacific-10 Conference Northern Division Tennis Championships at the 15th Avenue Courts.

The Ducks finished the season 24-5, setting a school record for victories in a season.

Oregon kicked off the tournament by upsetting Washington State Friday 6-3. The Ducks' No. 3 singles player Krissy Barger came from 5-4 and 6-5 down in the third set to win a tiebreaker. On Saturday Oregon defeated Seattle 7-2 in non-conference play.

Sunday the Ducks faced fierce competition against the Huskies. Oregon was up 2-1 in doubles before falling to the Huskies 5-4. Oregon's No. 2 doubles team, Jackie DeFord and Krissy Barger triumphed over the Huskies' April Appel and Paige Stringer 6-1, 6-3.

"They beat us at Pullman two weeks ago," DeFord said. "We never wanted a match as much as today. The intensity is just there with rivalry, we closed off the net and took advantage of short balls."

In the No. 4 singles match, Oregon's Elise Adams defeated Paige Stringer 6-3, 6-3. Other Duck winners were Kara Yoshida, who defeated Michelle Thomas 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 and Jackie DeFord, who defeated Karin Costi 6-1, 7-5.

Oregon ended its season 24-5, the best record in school history.

Coach Tom Greider was pleased with his team's season.

# Men's golf team wins second straight tourney

The Oregon men's golf team concluded a successful trip to California by winning the U. S. Intercollegiate in Stanford Monday.

The Ducks shot a final round 281 to pass second-round leader Washington and win the tournament by eight shots. The victory was Oregon's second in a row and third in a month and a half.

"This is so big to win two prestigious tournaments back-to-back," Oregon head coach Steve Nosler said. "It's scary."

Senior Cam Martin led the Ducks again by firing a final round 67 to finish tied for first, but he lost to Oregon State's Kevin LaMair in a playoff. It was the second consecutive tournament Martin came from seven shots back in the final round to

tie for medalist honors. Martin won the Western Intercollegiate last week.

Oregon sophomore Ted Snavely shot a final round 66 to move into a tie for fifth place at 213. The Ducks' Jeff Lyons opened with 76 in the first round, but followed it up with a 68 in the second round and 71 in the final round to finish in seventh place.

Oregon's Chris Bensel shot 71 in the second round and finished at 225 followed by Randy McCracken and Paul Regali at 233 and 241, respectively.

The Ducks will travel to Santa Barbara to compete in the Pacific-10 Conference championships next Monday through Wednesday.

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