



NHL Playoffs
Washington at Buffalo,
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SPORTS

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Emerald

Ducks disappoint in opening round

The men's golf team finds itself in dead last after shooting a 15-over-par 303 in the first round of the NCAA Championships

By Tim Pyle
Sports Reporter

Heading into its first appearance at the NCAA Championships since 1990, the Oregon men's golf team had only one player with prior championships experience.

That inexperience was apparent in Wednesday's first round at the 7,248-yard, par-72 Championship Golf Course in Albuquerque, N.M., when the Ducks shot a dismal 15-over-par 303 that left them dead last in the 30-team field by seven strokes.

"Those kind of numbers are just com-

pletely not acceptable at this level," Oregon head coach Steve Nosler said.



at the NCAA West Regional.

But Day 1 was not kind to Crane, either, as

Ben Crane was expected to lead Oregon because of his appearance in the 1997 championships, where he tied for 57th, and the sparkling performance that landed him second-place individually

he recorded the Ducks' highest score with a 79.

"He's saved our ass most the year, and he just had a bad day," Nosler said. "He made a couple doubles back-to-back, then four-putted his 17th hole for a triple. He finished [the round] off with a birdie, but school was out, so to speak."

In order to make the 15-team cutoff after today's second round, Oregon needs a near-flawless display, according to Nosler.

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Leaders

■ OREGON:

Cone 74

■ INDIVIDUAL:

3-way tie 67

■ TEAM:

1. Oklah. St 278

2. Georgia 279

3. Ga. Tech 281

30. Oregon 303



NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Molde has scored 10 goals as Oregon's star forward in the City of Eugene League.

Foreign Exchange

A native of Norway, Jay Molde first came to the state as a high school foreign exchange student; now he's a high-scoring forward for the Oregon Club Sports men's soccer team

By Jeanette N. Diaz
Freelance Sports Reporter

Senior sensation Jay Molde has been scorching the nets for the Oregon Club Sports men's soccer "A" team and is currently averaging two goals per game in the City of Eugene League.

Hailing from Bergen, Norway, the 22-year-old business major has come a long way to play for Oregon.

In 1992-93, Molde spent his senior year of high school on an exchange at Beaverton High School. After graduation, he went back to Norway for three years and then returned to Oregon in the fall of 1996 to attend the University.

In the five City of Eugene League games Oregon has played this spring, Molde has scored 10 goals. He usually plays midfield while in Norway, but now Molde strikes gold as a forward for the Ducks.

"Our goal now is to win city league,"

he says. "But it's not that big of a deal now. Fall term is a lot more important than spring for us because that's when we play other schools and go on to national tournaments."

Oregon team coordinator and fellow forward Chad Wright says he has enjoyed playing alongside Molde the past two years.



"Jay's so good because he knows the game so well," he says. "He eats and breathes soccer. He's really made my college soccer life more enjoyable."

Ever since he was a 4-year-old tyke, Molde says he has been a soccer fanatic.

"I played a lot of sports, but soccer is the main thing in Europe, and it's played year-round," he says.

Molde says there is definitely a differ-

ence between soccer played in the U.S. and in Europe.

"There are a lot of good individual players here, but it seems that in Europe they pay a lot more attention to the organization of the team," he says. "They are a lot more strategic because [Europeans] are more used to playing all-year round. Most people here don't play that much. It's slower here and not as competitive."

Molde says he gets in as much soccer action as he can — at least back at home.

"I don't play as much here, but in Norway I'd play at least five days a week all-year round," he says. "Even though it might not be organized practice, we always get together and play."

Even though Oregon doesn't have a varsity men's soccer team, Molde says he finds himself a Duck because of what else the school has to offer.

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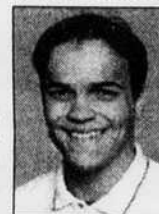
Kergroach succumbs to leg cramps

The lone Oregon entrant in the NCAA Individual Men's Tennis Championships retired with a third-set lead Wednesday

By Tim Pyle
Sports Reporter

Oregon's Erwan Kergroach said he had his opponent, New Mexico's Jeff Williams, on the ropes Wednesday in the first round of the NCAA Individual Men's Tennis Championships at Athens, Ga.

After splitting the first two sets, Kergroach, who is ranked No. 52 in the Rolex Collegiate Tennis Rankings, had broken No. 54 Williams' serve and was serving with a 3-1 lead in the third and decisive set.



KERGROACH

"I was playing pretty good," Kergroach said. "My serve was going well. I'd broken him, and I was ahead. I was feeling good."

But then the rain came and effectively washed away Kergroach's attempt to become the first Duck to win a championship tournament match since Gundars Tilmanis in 1968.

The precipitation was not anything new to Kergroach after enduring Eugene's storms all year, but the hot, humid Georgia weather was out of the ordinary for the Paris native.

When the rain-delay struck, Kergroach said he took a seat and began icing his legs, which had begun to cramp during the match. After 15 minutes and with the rain storm passed, Kergroach said he tried to get up, but his legs would not let him.

Three trainers tried to help Kergroach stretch the cramps out but nothing worked. Kergroach ended up in the hospital attached to an IV when he could have been avenging a loss to Williams earlier in the season on college tennis' grandest individual stage.

Instead, the cramps forced Kergroach (20-11) to forfeit the match to Williams and end his Oregon career on an ominous note.

"For half an hour, it was just a nightmare," Kergroach said.

Kergroach, who is returning to Paris at the end of this semester for personal reasons despite being only a junior, said he was frustrated with the way his Oregon career finished.

But Kergroach's plethora of accomplishments — including earning Oregon's first berth in the championships since 1968 and leading the team to its first-ever NCAA Regional Championships appearance — during his one season as a Duck left head coach Chris Russell with a different final impression.

"Erwan has taken this program to heights that we never expected to reach," Russell said. "It is sad that his play here at the NCAA's had to end so quickly and in such bad circumstances, but he definitely went out a winner."