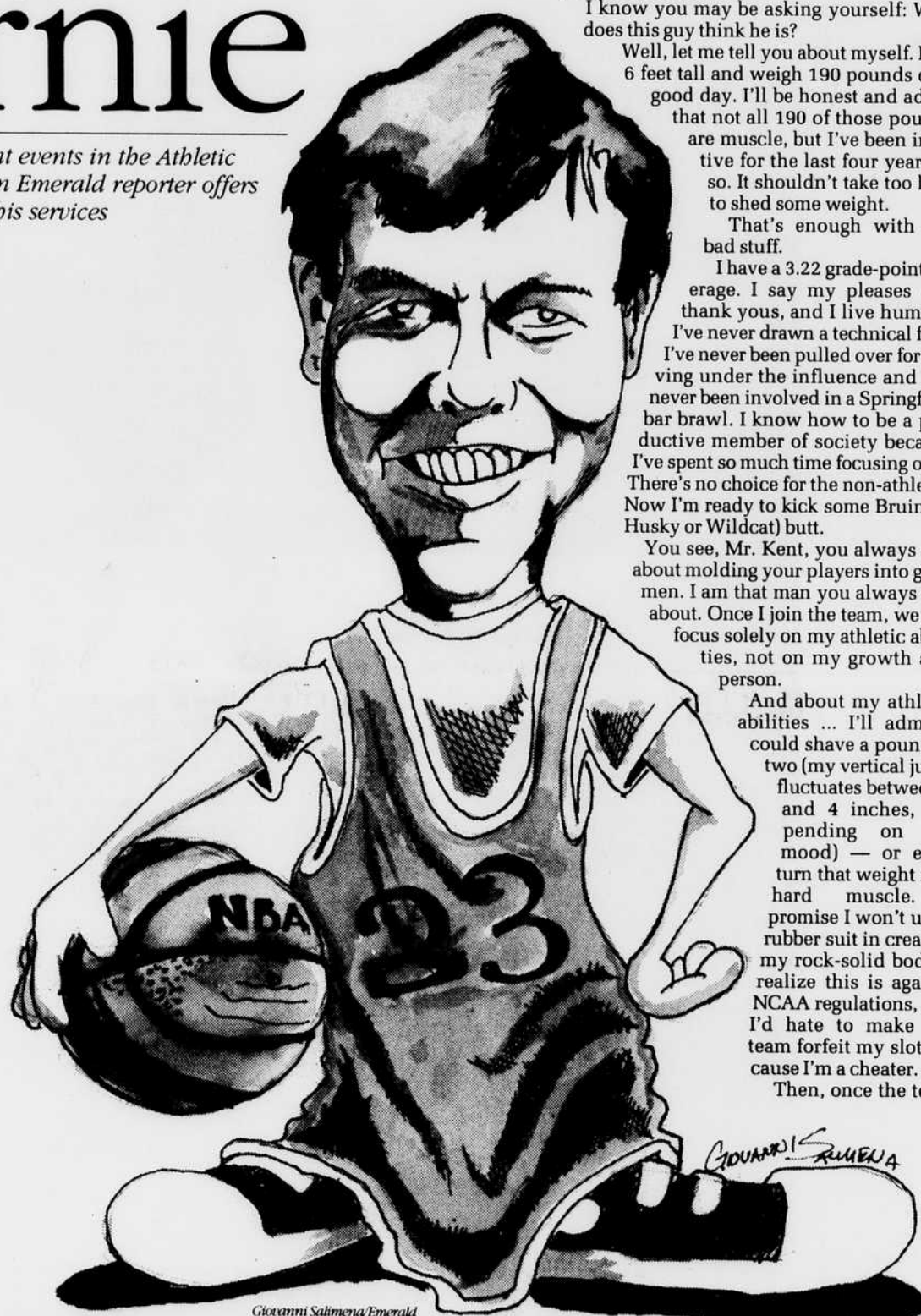


PERSPECTIVES

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Kameron Cole
Stefanie Knowlton

A letter to Ernie

Given current events in the Athletic Department, an Emerald reporter offers his services



Giovanni Salimena/Emerald

Dear Mr. Kent,
Now that Mike McShane and Donte Quinine have left your team, I am declaring myself eligible to become an Oregon Duck baller.

Coach, I am the man you want taking the court side-by-side with Utah transfer David Jackson next season.

I know you may be asking yourself: Who does this guy think he is?

Well, let me tell you about myself. I am 6 feet tall and weigh 190 pounds on a good day. I'll be honest and admit that not all 190 of those pounds are muscle, but I've been inactive for the last four years or so. It shouldn't take too long to shed some weight.

That's enough with the bad stuff.

I have a 3.22 grade-point average. I say my pleases and thank yous, and I live humbly. I've never drawn a technical foul, I've never been pulled over for driving under the influence and I've never been involved in a Springfield bar brawl. I know how to be a productive member of society because I've spent so much time focusing on it. There's no choice for the non-athletes. Now I'm ready to kick some Bruin (or Husky or Wildcat) butt.

You see, Mr. Kent, you always talk about molding your players into great men. I am that man you always talk about. Once I join the team, we can focus solely on my athletic abilities, not on my growth as a person.

And about my athletic abilities ... I'll admit I could shave a pound or two (my vertical jump fluctuates between 2 and 4 inches, depending on my mood) — or even turn that weight into hard muscle. I promise I won't use a rubber suit in creating my rock-solid body. I realize this is against NCAA regulations, and I'd hate to make the team forfeit my slot because I'm a cheater.

Then, once the team

realizes it should focus on me, I will develop as a player. In textbook fashion, I will box out every opponent, make every layup and free throw and hustle on defense in every practice and every game. By the way, once I get that far, Mr. Kent, can you teach me how to do a reverse jam?

In regards to McArthur Court, I know the Athletic Department considers the non-athletic students riffraff, a waste of space in the historic building. I'll tell my friends to stay the hell away from Mac Court so the alumni can pay double to sit on their hands for the game. That's no problem. As you will soon find out, I'm a team player, Mr. Kent.

I get the impression you like to know your players as individuals, so I'll tell you a little more about myself. I'm not a gifted athlete like Freddie Jones or Alex Scales. I'm someone who works hard to achieve lofty goals — kind of like your now-productive center, Mike Carson.

I am someone who never got what he wanted easily. A chance to play Division I NCAA basketball in the Pacific-10 Conference in Mac Court would be a dream come true, Mr. Kent. How many people get to play organized ball with future NBA giants? I would

never take my playing time for granted.

And when someone obviously better than I (and who can dribble with his left hand, and has fewer turnovers than assists) gets more minutes, I will fight back any urge to pout or quit.

Like I told you already, Mr. Kent, I am that man you talk about turning your athletes into. I know I will not always be a star. I know I will not win every battle. I know I will sometimes play a supporting role. I know sometimes the best leader is the one who listens to the coach. I know everyone gets benched now and then in real life. I know that athletics is just for fun.

Mr. Kent, I know everything former Duck, current Harlem Globetrotter Jamar Curry knows. I remember watching him brick a point-blank dunk and grin at the crowd. I remember Curry having his minutes drastically cut when you became head coach. I remember Curry playing with just as much fire when he got in the game. I remember Curry pumping up a crowd like nobody else. I remember a player who didn't quit when things went wrong.

As a tribute, Mr. Kent, I want to have the number 23 displayed on my back when I drive the lane, when I shoot from downtown and when I sit on the bench.

Thank you for listening, Mr. Kent. My size is extra large.

Mike Hines is the community editor for the Emerald. He can be reached via e-mail at mbines@gladstone.uoregon.edu. His views do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald.

No vote means a vote for student representation

The volume of letters the Emerald editorial board has received about last Thursday's editorial (ODE, Feb. 11) indicates that there is some confusion about the intent of the piece, which we would like to clear up.

But first we would like to state that the editorial board stands behind every word of Thursday's editorial and this is by no means a correction. The editorial board at the Oregon Daily Emerald has always endorsed involvement in student government, voting and the democratic process in general at our University, when this process is pursued through the proper channels and conducive to the intent for

which it was designed.

The special elections, however, circumvent the democratic process at the University unless it is called for by an emergency situation. The grievance process, vote by Duck Web, the Gardenburger boycott and funding for OSPIRG and Spencer View Family Housing are not emergency situations. They can wait for the spring elections.

By holding special elections when voter turnout is expected to be between 2 and 5 percent, ballot measures could be decided by a very small minority.

Special elections also face a much smaller budget than do regular elections, which

ultimately means that advertising and rallying for voter turnout will suffer. We, the editorial board at the Oregon Daily Emerald, believe that special elections hinder the democratic process and cater to special-interest groups.

Obviously this cheats students of having a say in student government, and that is what we are opposed to.

We believe each group has a right to pursue funding through proper channels, which means the spring elections. Any other process simply denies students their full rights and responsibilities inherent in the establishment of ASUO and the ASUO Constitution and denies the true nature of

the democratic process.

Therefore, should the special elections still occur, we still urge everyone to vote and vote no on every measure to ensure that special-interest groups do not win by default.

Doing so will send a clear message to the ASUO that students do not need and do not want a special election.

Instead, a larger portion of the student body should voice its opinion — in the spring elections.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.