



Lavoie exemplifies team concept

Oregon men's golfer Ryan Lavoie uses his unselfishness and mental game to propel the Ducks into the postseason

By Brett Williams
for the Emerald

In an era when athletes are portrayed as selfish and more worried about personal accomplishments than team goals, Oregon men's golfer Ryan Lavoie is a breath of fresh air.

"I wanted to contribute this season," said Lavoie, who is in his third season as a Duck. "Individual accomplishments are just bonuses on the team's success."

Lavoie led No. 21 Oregon to a third-place finish in the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament last week, tying teammate Andrew Tredway for a ninth-place individual finish. Lavoie was in fourth place after the first day, but he didn't fall in the rankings because of a lack of effort.

"I played pretty well," Lavoie said. "When it wasn't going well, I did every-

thing possible to help the team. When you give 100 percent, you can't get down on yourself."

Lavoie has been giving 100 percent since his early days on the course. When he was 5 years old, his father, Pat, introduced him to the game of golf, and it has been a passion of Lavoie's ever since.

"[My father] was the head greens keeper at Canyon Lakes [in Pasco, Wash.], and when he went out to work at 6 a.m., I would go out there with him and practice," Lavoie said.

His competitive golf days began when he was 9 years old, and he figured out early on that golf wasn't an easy game to excel at.

"At a young age, I was easily frustrated," Lavoie said. "As I got older, I tasted success and golf became more fun."

At Pasco High School, Lavoie reached

multiple milestones. He won his district championship three years in a row in addition to sixth-place finishes at the state championship three times. But his most memorable moment in high school was playing with one of golf's most recognizable figures.

"When I was a freshman, I played in the U.S. Junior in Portland with Tiger Woods," said Lavoie of the tournament held at Waverly Country Club nearly six years ago.

When college-decision time rolled around, Lavoie had many offers. Besides Oregon, scholarships came in from Washington, Oregon State, Minnesota and Texas A&M. But one thing drew Lavoie to Eugene.

"As soon as I met Coach [Steve] Nosler, I made up my mind," Lavoie said of the sev-



LAVOIE

Turn to LAVOIE, Page 12

In constant flux

Kaarin Knudson's senior year is a fine balance between athletic and academic pursuits

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

She enters the Bowerman Building from the back entrance to Hayward Field, clothed in black running gear and fresh from her postworkout warm-down.

"Where do you want to do this?" she asks, before suggesting the interview take place in the stretching room.

Down a hallway on the ground floor and through a door to the left, the stretching room is no more than "four walls, a floor and a ceiling," she jokes. She sits on the carpeted floor in front of the room's only couch and says she is going to continue stretching exercises throughout the interview.

The only interruption takes place when women's track and field teammate Marie Davis pokes her head in to say something. But Kaarin Knudson keeps the talk short, because as she loosens her muscles, she is running a mental race against her toughest opponent of all — time.

And if anyone knows how to keep up with time, it is Knudson.

Through the senior track athlete's experiences in the journalism school, Knudson knows how to race against time in the face of day-, week- or month-long deadlines.

But the threat of time changes considerably on the track. The All-American understands that gaining a fraction of a second can be the difference between winning and losing.

"I work against the clock while racing, and I work against the clock on deadline," Knudson said.

Knudson's ability to run — with a daily schedule that begins at 7 a.m. and ends late in the day — was not forged overnight. As a prep at Diamond High School in Anchorage,

Alaska, Knudson was the editor of the school's yearbook and of the literary magazine.

Then as now, when she stepped outside the classroom she was a runner.

She was selected as Gatorade's Alaska Athlete of the Year in 1992 after scoring an 800-meter/1,500-meter double in the state meet as a sophomore. She won the state cross country title as a senior.

The Ducks recruited Knudson for the 1994-95 season with the knowledge that she lacked the experience that many college athletes her age had. Being separated from the mainland United States, Knudson's Anchorage home did not allow her easy access to out of state championship meets.

However, Knudson has gained plenty of experience in her years as a Duck. She attended the NCAA meet as a sophomore and earned All-American honors during her junior season.

Knudson missed last season because of a serious back condition, but in her final season she has successfully secured a spot in the NCAA meet, with two solid NCAA-provisional marks in the 800 and 1,500.

Oregon women's head coach Tom Heinonen is impressed with Knudson's improvements.

"She's gotten better and better at racing over the years at Oregon, as she should," Heinonen said. "She has become a good big meet racer, a good big meet racer. That is part of an athlete's development. She's now a mature athlete, which is what we're looking for."

Knudson, a double major in journalism and fine arts, has also made tremendous steps toward a career off the track. She is the editor of Flux, a campus magazine written, designed and produced by students at the



Nick Medley/Emerald

All-American Kaarin Knudson divides her time between distance running and her job as editor of Flux.

School of Journalism and Communication.

"I couldn't choose between [track and Flux], which is why I'm doing both," Knudson said. "When I agreed to do Flux, it was on the condition that it wouldn't affect track adversely."

How hard is it to be the editor of a publication and still be a national-level college athlete? Knudson insists it is difficult, but proves it is completely possible.

"Time management right now has

been an issue; life is all about deadlines in recent days," she said. "I want to give as much as I can without shortchanging either one."

"If I decide it won't affect me, it's not going to."

Knudson has loved running since elementary school. Before her first race as a fifth-grader in Fargo, N.D., she recalls challenging other kids to races on the playground.

Turn to KNUDSON, Page 12