

Ellis leads UO to second-place finish in Seattle

Transfer John Ellis won the individual title at the Husky Invitational, leading the men's golf team to their second top-five finish of the young season

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Who is John Ellis, and where did he come from?

That was the question on the lips of everyone at the Husky Invitational this week as Ellis, Oregon's junior college transfer, won the tournament in a playoff with Washington's Joey Ramos Tuesday.

Ellis, a sophomore transfer from Gavilan Community College in Gilroy, Calif., shot a one-over-par 217 over the 54-hole tournament. His individual crown was the second for the Ducks this year, adding to Chris Carnahan's victory at the Northwest Classic two weeks ago.

Oregon finished second in the

10-team field — its second top-5 finish in two tournaments so far this year. The Ducks finished fifth at the Northwest Classic.

Junior co-captain Brandon Hadden took fifth, his best-ever showing at Oregon, while sophomore Carnahan finished 13th. Senior Matt Genovese ended up in 20th, while freshman Brad Mombert finished 44th and junior Aaron Byers finished 49th.

Carnahan came back from a poor first day and missed the top-10 by one stroke.

Oregon head coach Steve Nosler had been disappointed with his team after the first round but was happy with Oregon's final-round

performance.

"I'm proud of [the team]," Nosler said. "We made some adjustments from yesterday and the end result was a solid second-place finish."

The Ducks proved once again that they could compete with top-ranked teams. Pacific-10 Conference foes Stanford, Washington, UCLA and California all fell behind Oregon at the Husky Invitational.

Washington finished seven strokes behind Oregon, in third place. UCLA finished fourth, 14 strokes behind the Ducks. California ended up fifth, 19 strokes behind, and Stanford finished ninth of 10 teams, 28 strokes behind the Ducks. Other Pac-10 teams included Washington State, which finished fifth with California, and Oregon State, which finished eighth.

Beating those Pac-10 schools, Nosler said, "carries a lot of weight

when the NCAA selection committee hands out its bids next spring."

If the Ducks continue to play this

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well, a trip to the NCAA West Regionals in May will be inevitable. That tournament is being held at the Trysting Tree Golf Course in Corvallis, where the Ducks played so well at the Northwest Classic. If the Ducks can place at the West Regionals, they will accomplish a

prize that escaped them last season — a trip to the NCAA Championships.

Oregon started off its 1999-2000 campaign in almost the same fashion as this season. The Ducks finished second at the Northwest Collegiate, eighth at the Pacific Invitational and second at the Husky Invitational, all in September of '99. The golfers went on to eight more top-10 performances on the season.

Oregon will square off with top-ranked teams again at the Pepperdine Intercollegiate in Oxnard, Calif., from October 9-10. Pepperdine won the Husky Invitational by five strokes over Oregon after leading by ten strokes before the final round. The Ducks beat the Waves out for fifth place at the Northwest Classic.

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game when an unranked home team destroys a highly-ranked opponent.

But those Bruins are people too, probably no different than our own Ducks when in their natural habitat. Just think how much tougher Ryan McCann's sophomore year got — why make it any tougher on the poor kid?

And Freddie Mitchell, one of the players the fans taunted. Granted, he may be a jerk. Actually, he all but proclaimed he is a

jerk when he started spouting trash about Oregon's Rashad Bauman after the game.

Maybe Mitchell had a little post-Bauman incentive when he made all those remarks?

So that's it, as far as the fans are concerned.

For having to use these valuable column inches to write about something that seems so trivial, I apologize to the more than 44,999 of you who cheered on your Ducks, rightfully chanted "over-rated" until your throats went dry, and then, at game's end, left the stadium without being disorderly.

But to those few bad apples in the barrel, remember that people are watching. Last Saturday, when a few rowdies took it upon themselves to tarnish what otherwise was a perfect day for Oregon football, the *entire nation* was watching.

Imagine, just for a second, what would have happened to the Ducks' national reputation had a fight broken out. The media would have had a field day, and despite that 29-10 final score, Oregon fans would be losers for years to come.

The athletic department also needs to take some responsibility

for the taunting that took place. According to Oregonian reporter Ken Goe, who was on the scene, Autzen Stadium's security personnel seemed more intent on protecting the goal posts and the Casanova Center than they did the UCLA players.

Shame!

While fans need to not cause trouble in the first place, the security officers' first priority should be to keep people out of danger, not to mind the facilities.

When Washington comes to town on Saturday, it is hoped that everyone will be a little more careful about what they say or do,

especially if Oregon wins.

So go out and be a rabid fan. Scream your head off. Shout "Huck the Fuskies" (or something similar) when Washington runs onto the field and keep getting into the players' heads after that. Go crazy and make the noise level displayed against the Bruins look like nothing more than a child's tea party.

But when the game is done, it's done. Let the losing team escape with some dignity.

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American hoops team fouls out with crowds

By Chris Sheridan
The Associated Press

SYDNEY, Australia — The crowds want to see an upset on the basketball court, and they're sending that message loud and clear with boos and whistles for the American teams and cheers of support for their opponents.

"They want to see the underdog take down Goliath. That's been the case all week," U.S. basketball player Ray Allen said Tuesday, a day after preliminary round play ended.

The medal round begins Thursday for the U.S. men with a quarterfinal game against Russia. Assuming they win, their next opponent will be Yugoslavia or Lithuania.

No matter who the opponent is, the American players won't be getting much support. The folks in the stands want to see the unexpected.

Same goes for the U.S. women, who play Slovakia in the quarterfinals Wednesday.

"When we played against Korea," Chamique Holdsclaw said, "they were going crazy for Korea. They always cheer for the underdog."

Tuesday was a day off for the American men, who closed out preliminary play with a 12-point victory over France. It was their second closer-than-expected margin of victory, coming four days after a nine-point victory over Lithuania.

Already in these Olympics, the American men have trailed in the second half and trailed by double digits — two things that never happened to the U.S. teams at the 1992 Olympics and the 1996 Olympics.

They also allowed France — not exactly a world basketball powerhouse — to score 94 points. It was the highest score by a U.S. oppo-

nent at the Olympics since 1976.

The 1994 U.S. team, also composed of NBA players, allowed Spain to score 100 points. But that was at a world championships and not the Olympics.

"People in the States don't want to believe there are teams that could be better than some NBA teams," Allen said. "But with teams like Lithuania, Yugoslavia and France, those countries play the game of basketball as a team sport."

The U.S. team has been together for a little more than a month, while several of their competitors have been together for years.

Australia, which has never won a medal in Olympic men's basketball, is competing with basically the same team that went to Atlanta in 1996 and lost the bronze medal game to Lithuania.

Several members of Canada's roster have been playing together on national teams since they were teenagers.

Same goes for Yugoslavia and Russia, whose players have developed a familiarity with each other that often appears to be missing from the U.S. team's repertoire.

"When five guys play together as a team, they can accomplish anything. And these teams have been together for a long time and have been preparing for this all year," Allen said.

No one would ever argue against the statement that the Americans have the best players, best athletes and deepest roster.

But they also have Goliath issues — distribution of playing time, balancing of egos — that are foreign to the rest of the world.

That could end up being the singular underdog advantage that makes the rest of the tournament more interesting than expected.

Surprise, surprise, Atlanta seizes yet another NL East division title

By Ben Walker
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Now, the real work begins for Atlanta.

Atlanta clinched the NL East to win its record ninth straight division title, beating the New York Mets 7-1 Tuesday night behind John Burkett's pitching and Chipper Jones' home run.

"We've got to start preparing for the playoffs," Atlanta manager Bobby Cox said. "We've got to start reading the scouting reports and start getting ready."

After the final out, Atlanta shook hands on the field, keeping the high-fives to a minimum. The only sign this victory meant more came when Atlanta relievers ran out of the bullpen to join their teammates.

Inside the clubhouse, however, Atlanta players sprayed champagne and put on T-shirts proclaiming themselves champions.

"We didn't want to show anybody up out there," Cox said. "It's not the World Series; it's the playoffs, the division. But you absolutely should celebrate."

20-game winner Tom Glavine added, "Division titles don't come easy, but it's still all about winning the World Series."

With John Rucker back at Shea Stadium — and dodging a beer bottle on the mound — Atlanta prevented the Mets from wrapping up the wild card spot.

New York would have been assured of that berth if both Arizona and Los Angeles had lost later in the evening. The Diamondbacks eventually fell 7-6 to Colorado, but the Dodgers beat San Francisco 9-0.

"I'll probably be awake, I don't know," New York manager Bobby Valentine said. "We might have to come out and win one tomorrow."

The crowd of 48,270 had little to

cheer about on a damp, chilly night other than Edgardo Alfonzo's home run. The fans started booing the home team during a sloppy seventh inning.

"There is disappointment, but you still realize there's a very good chance of your going to the playoffs, and it's the same playoffs," Mets third baseman Robin Ventura said. "It's not like they go to a different tournament."

Rucker drew loud jeers when he left the Atlanta bullpen to relieve in the eighth. A beer bottle landed about 10 feet from him as he prepared to warm up, and police quickly appeared to have the man who threw it in custody in the first-base box seats.

Rucker retired Ventura on a routine fly to end the inning, looked at the crowd without emotion as he walked off and smiled for his teammates in the dugout. Rucker finished up in the ninth.

Atlanta begins the playoffs on either Oct. 3 or Oct. 4 against either St. Louis or San Francisco.

"We feel good at this point in the season. All facets are falling into place," Jones said.

Atlanta won the NL West from 1991-93 and, after a strike wiped out the end of the 1994 season, has won six consecutive NL East championships.

Atlanta began the night with a magic number of three over New York. Several Atlanta players wondered about their standing, asking aloud in the clubhouse whether they could clinch and dubious that it could be done.

Closer to the first pitch, though, they seemed clued in — but that came only after Atlanta called the commissioner's office to clear up the confusion.

"We're absolutely aware of it," Atlanta general manager John

Schuerholz said at game time. "If we win tonight, we win it."

According to baseball's new math in the wild-card era, here's why Atlanta clinched: At 94-63 with five games left, Atlanta is assured of at least a tie with the Mets (89-68).

If they finish even and both are in the playoffs, the division winner is determined by head-to-head record. Atlanta is 7-4 against New York with only two games left.

Atlanta won its fourth in a row and stopped the Mets' three-game winning streak.

Burkett (10-6) improved to 3-0 against the Mets this season, allowing three hits in six innings. He also hit an RBI single off Al Leiter (16-8) in the fifth for the game's first run.

"With Atlanta, you figure you're going to be in the playoffs unless something goofy happens," said Burkett, who joined the team in March.

Leiter, who won at Atlanta last Wednesday, lasted 5 1-3 innings and gave up four runs and seven hits.

Reggie Sanders doubled in the fifth and scored with two outs when Burkett, batting .132, singled for his third RBI of the season.

Jones, a perennial New York nemesis, hit his 35th homer leading off the sixth. That made him 15-for-32 (.469) against the Mets this year.

Ventura made an ill-advised throw home with the bases loaded later in the sixth, allowing two more runs to score.

Atlanta added three runs in the seventh. Andres Galarraga hit a two-run double — right after catcher Mike Piazza threw to second base when no one was stealing — and an error by shortstop Mike Bordick set up Brian Jordan's sacrifice fly.