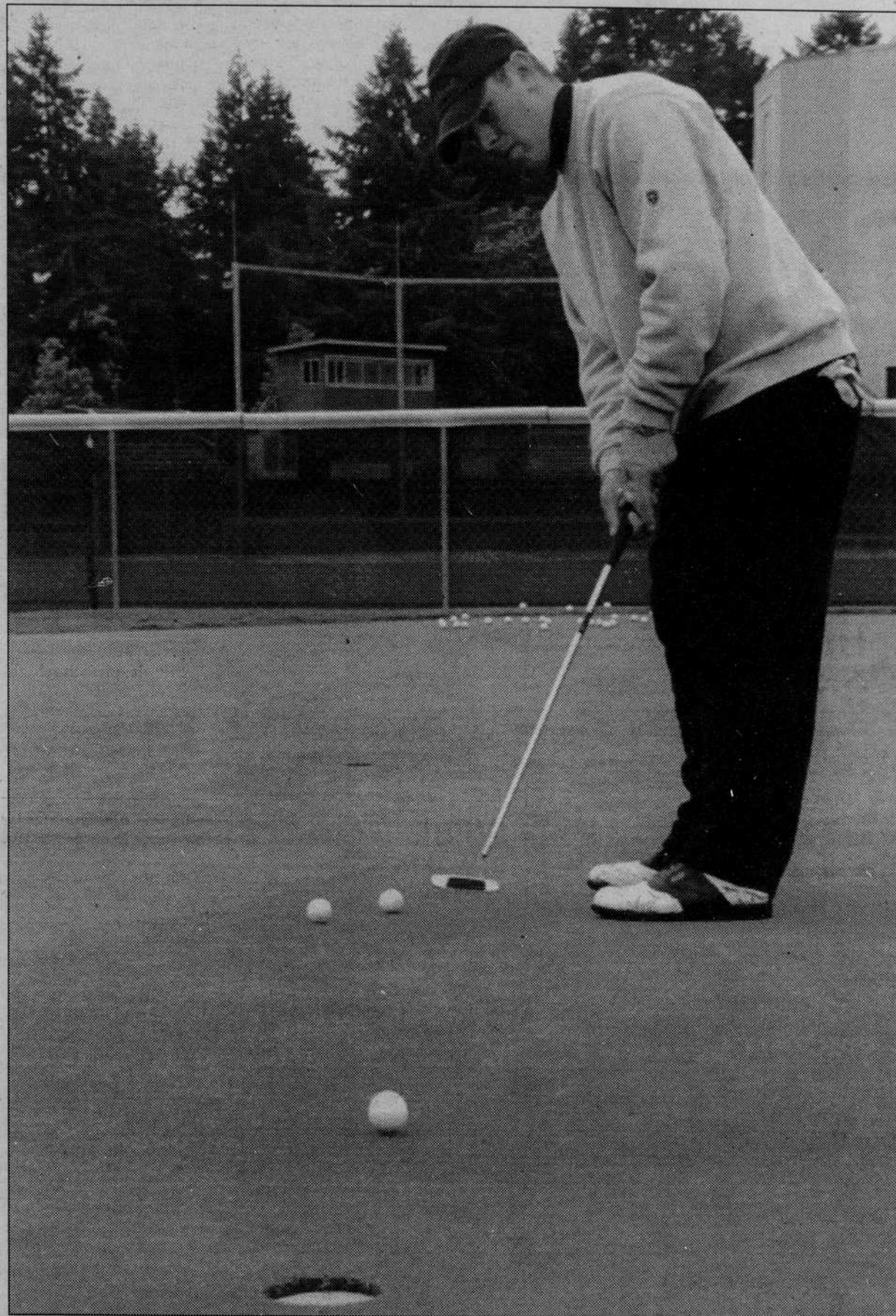


Best Bet

NBA Playoffs: Toronto at Philadelphia
5 p.m., TNT

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Tom Patterson Emerald

Oregon sophomore John Ellis has high hopes for himself and the team at the NCAA Regional at Trysting Tree Golf Course in Corvallis.

A HIDDEN FIRE

Sophomore John Ellis has been a spark plug for the men's golf team in his first year of top collegiate action

By Jeff Smith

Oregon Daily Emerald

John Ellis admits he's a "shy guy."

His roommate Matt Genovese describes him as "quiet, settled and passive."

In fact, put Ellis on the golf course with anyone else and you couldn't tell by his expression who was doing better.

"You get out and play with him and you think you're staying at his same level and hitting the ball just as well as he is," said Genovese, a senior leader on the Oregon men's golf team. "But then when you add it up, he's got you by five shots. He plays quiet and you don't know he's three-, four- or five-under, but he is."

Ellis, a sophomore transfer from Gavilan Community College in Gilroy, Calif., is the type of person that lets his golf clubs do the talking. In his first season as a Duck, Ellis has finished in the top-20 eight times, in the top-10 three times and even came in first at the Husky Invitational.

He is currently the only individual Duck ranked (No. 97) and was selected to the all-Pacific-10 Conference second-team.

The 6-foot, 185-pounder will again be looked upon this week for success as No. 22 Oregon participates in the NCAA Regional, which runs Thursday through Saturday at the Trysting Tree Golf Course in Corvallis.

"I'm very excited," Ellis said Tuesday as he practiced

his putting. "We've been working for this since day one."

Ellis has actually been working for this type of top-notch competition since he began playing on the Live Oaks High School golf team. The San Jose Calif., native lived and breathed the game of golf as a prep, where he was named the Northern California Golf Association junior golfer of the year after winning seven tournaments.

But as he dedicated so much of his time on his golf game, he didn't realize the downside to not focusing just as hard on his academics.

"I worked so hard in high school to play college golf and the academics kind of disappeared there," Ellis said. "It was frustrating to have to go to junior college because of that, but it taught me a lesson, that's for sure."

Ellis sucked in his pride and played for GCC, hoping that a solid season would attract the attention of some quality Division I programs. As was evident during that year, he wouldn't need to worry about being noticed.

He went on to become the No. 2 amateur golfer in Northern California and qualified for the 2000 U.S. Amateur. Teams such as Southern California, Arizona State, Arizona and San Jose State pursued him, but Ellis followed his gut instinct and accepted Oregon head coach Steve Nosler's invitation to be a Duck.

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Women's track readies for Pac-10 Championships

Two dozen Ducks will compete at Berkeley, but only a handful have shots at titles

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's time for the Oregon women's track and field team to get busy.

After a season of preparation, the Ducks will start the postseason this weekend. For some Oregon athletes, this weekend's Pacific-10 Conference Championships mark their last opportunity to run, jump or throw onto the NCAA provisional or automatic lists.

But for some Ducks, this weekend's meet could provide a legiti-

mate chance to win a Pac-10 title. Sarah Malone, this week's Pac-10 field Athlete of the Week, could do it. Mary Etter could do it in the discus. Pole vaulter Niki Reed, who has struggled recently, could do it if she gets back on track soon.

"The last three meets I haven't been doing so well," Reed said. "But it's most important to get good marks at the Pac-10 meet."

The Ducks will start competition at the Pac-10s Saturday morning and continue through Sunday night.

Super Sarah

Freshman Sarah Malone, the Ducks' number one javelin thrower, is one of those Oregon athletes in a

unique position to win a Pac-10 title. The Newberg native moved from third to second on the national list with a school-record heave of 174 feet at the Oregon Twilight.

"The Pac-10 title is what I'm shooting for," Malone said Saturday after the throw.

Malone received Pac-10 field Athlete of the Week honors for her toss, the first for the season.

If Malone can repeat her performance from the Twilight at this weekend's Pac-10s, winning the Pac-10 Championship could be as easy as a stroll through Alton Baker Park.

Malone is one of only three athletes to throw an NCAA automatic mark this season, and she is the first

among Pac-10 athletes. Inga Stasiulionyte of Southern California is third in the nation, but no other Pac-10 athletes are in the nation's top-15.

Pole position

The only Oregon contingent to send all athletes to the Pac-10s is the pole vaulting crew. Reed, senior Holly Speight, freshman Kirsten Riley, freshman Georgette Moyle and senior Karina Elstrom will all make the trip to Berkeley.

All have different goals in mind. Reed said she "wants to win." Speight wants to "make an NCAA automatic mark," while Elstrom is "just happy to be there."

Elstrom, the former all-American, has been battling back from injuries and didn't technically make it to the Pac-10s, but received a rare "wild card" berth. Speight has been steadily improving all season, and said she could break through and make her first NCAA Championship meet.

"My goal is an NCAA automatic mark," Speight said. "I've jumped that high in practice, so I know I can do it."

Moyle and Riley, Reed said, are hoping to make the NCAA provisional list for the first time.

But all the pressure will be on Reed this weekend.

"I'm ready for it," Reed said.