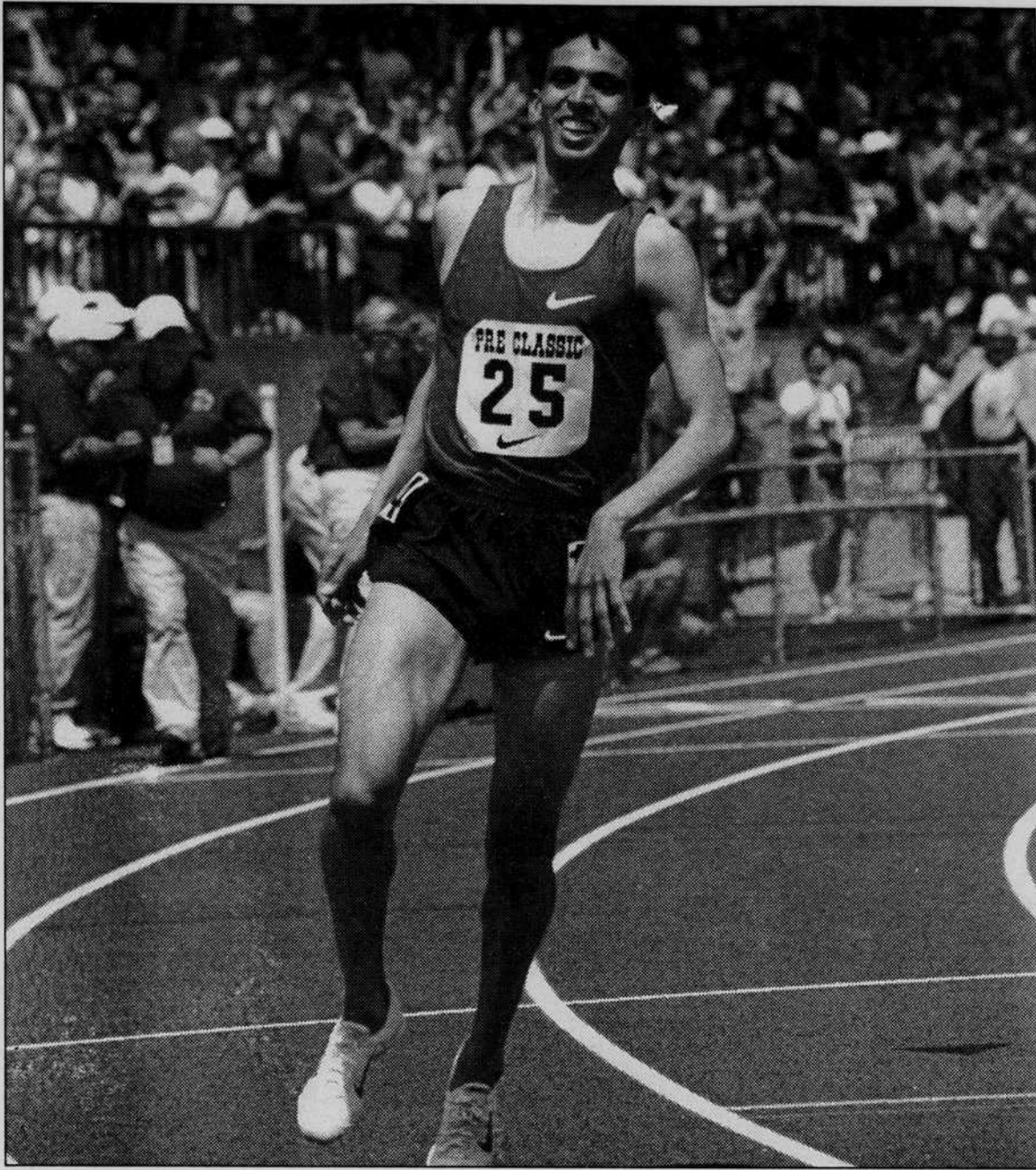




World record holder Hicham El Guerrouj crosses the finish line at the 2001 Pre Classic, where he became the first man to run a sub-3:50 mile on U.S. soil. At this year's Pre, he said his would like to break his own world record of 3:43.13, which he set in 1999.

Jonathan House Emerald

'El G' promises more

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Hicham El Guerrouj. Learn the name. Remember the name. Cherish the name.

If that's too difficult, just go watch him run. You'll surely remember his name then.

As an encore to the fastest mile ever run in the United States, El Guerrouj — a native of Morocco who has been called the greatest middle-distance runner ever — returns to the Prefontaine Classic on Sunday looking to break the record he set in the 2001 Pre Classic.

"I'd like to promise the crowd that I'll be back next year to break the world record," El Guerrouj said after last year's event at Hayward Field, where he ran the first sub-3:50 mile on American soil. He finished the Bowerman Mile in 3:49.92.

During his first trip to Eugene — just his second race in the United States — "El G" said he was surprised by the attention and affection he received. While visiting the Nike store downtown, he was approached by a young girl who had a scrapbook of newspaper clipping from his races. El Guerrouj said he was touched that the kiss he gave the girl brought tears to her eyes.

"All the people that come and see me are so passionate that it makes me want to be at my best," he wrote in his diary on the International Association of Athletic Federation Web site.

"It is with great pleasure that I

am coming back to Hayward Field," he said. "I have to admit that I was not sure last year when I decided to make the trip to Eugene, but I was very surprised with the track and field knowledge of the crowd there."

Tom Jordan, director of the Pre Classic, said El Guerrouj agreed to participate in the 2001 IAAF Grand Prix event because Nike, El Guerrouj's sponsor, asked him to come.

"It is with great pleasure that I am coming back to Hayward Field. ... I was very surprised with the track and field knowledge of the crowd there."

Hicham El Guerrouj
"King of the Mile"

"Nike really wanted him to come, and he was doing it as a favor to them," Jordan said. "Now, he really wants to come back."

El Guerrouj, 27, holds the world record in the mile with a time of 3:43.13, which he set in Italy in 1999 soon after having hemorrhoid surgery. He holds the world record in the 1,500 (3:26) and the 2,000 (4:44.79), was a silver medalist in the 2000 Olympics, and has won six world championships in indoor and outdoor events.

"I want to be the strongest in the Turn to El Guerrouj, page 9C



**university
COMMONS
apartments**

90 COMMONS DRIVE
338-4000

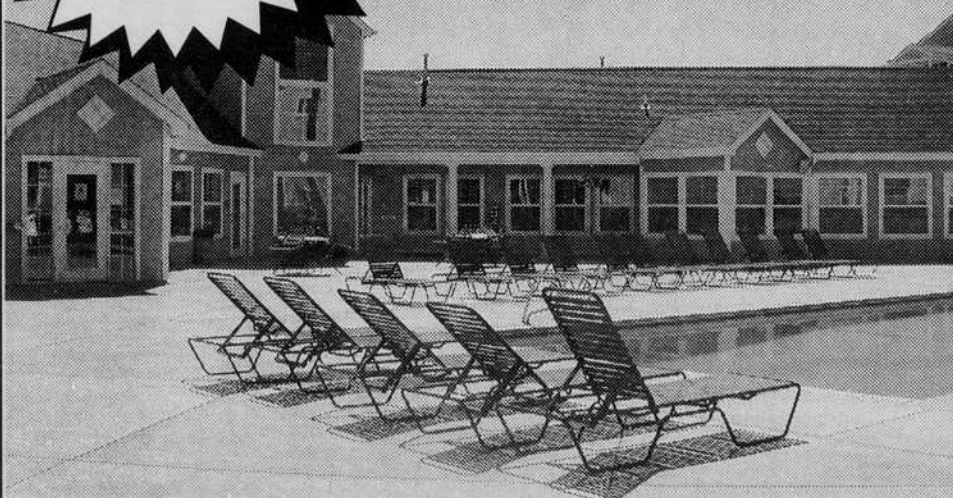
WE SUPPORT UO TRACK & FIELD

338.4000

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

**Now leasing
FOR FALL '02**

FURNISHED 1, 2 & 4 Bedroom Apartments with WASHER & DRYER



- CLUBHOUSE w/GAME ROOM
- FITNESS CENTER
- AMPLE RESIDENT and VISITOR PARKING
- HEATED SWIMMING POOL
- LIGHTED VOLLEYBALL & BASKETBALL COURTS
- OUTDOOR GAS GRILLS & BBQ

- DECKED OUT KITCHENS
- CABLE/INTERNET HOOKUPS
- EMERGENCY ALARM BUTTONS
- INDIVIDUAL LEASES
- ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE
- ON BUS ROUTE TO CAMPUS

**2 bedroom, 2 bath
STARTING AT \$395**

www.universitycommons.com

**4 bedroom, 2 bath
STARTING AT \$325**