

Ellis, Ducks finish strong in California

Oregon senior co-captain John Ellis finishes in second place while the Ducks finish fifth in the California tournament

Golf

Jon Roetman
Freelance Sports Reporter

John Ellis made sure there wouldn't be another final-round meltdown for the Oregon men's golf team.

The senior co-captain finished in

a tie for second place, and the Ducks climbed into fifth place Tuesday at the Alister MacKenzie Invitational at the Meadow Club in Fairfax, Calif. Ellis, who finished with an 8-under par 205, had rounds of 68 and 72 Tuesday to complement his personal-best round of 65 Monday.

"John had a very good tournament," Oregon head coach Steve Nosler said. "It was exciting to have John lead our team and to be in a position to challenge for the individual title."

It was the first tournament of the fall

in which the Ducks improved their ranking over the second day. The Ducks jumped from eighth place to fifth, finishing with a 7-over 859, 15 strokes behind tournament winner Fresno State. UCLA and Northwestern tied for second, three strokes back.

"Overall, we played pretty fair," Nosler said. "The course was playing a lot tougher today due to the wind and some challenging pin placements, but we did ourselves some good down the road by beating a lot of teams from our district."

Players had to finish the second

round, which was postponed due to darkness Monday, before they started on the final 18 holes. Fresno State senior Nick Watney, ranked No. 1 in the nation by the latest Golfweek/Sagarin poll, was the individual winner with an 11-under 202. Watney finished three strokes ahead of Ellis, No. 3 ranked Northwestern junior Tom Johnson and UCLA junior Roy Moon.

Duck junior Mike Sica had a strong showing with a career-best 12th-place finish. Sica's 1-under 212 included two rounds of 71 and one 70.

"Mike Sica really played some sol-

id golf for us," Nosler said.

Junior Jimmy White, making his fall debut, finished in a tie for 43rd at 221. Senior co-captain Chris Carnahan, coming off a ninth place finish at the Club Grove Intercollegiate, finished in a tie for 62nd. Redshirt freshman Justin St. Clair also tied for 62nd at 225.

The Ducks fall finale is Nov. 4-5 at the Prestige at Palm Desert in Palm Desert, Calif.

Jon Roetman is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

Westendorf

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drove to Manhattan Beach, a popular hangout in the Los Angeles area. While there, she worked out with Krystal McFarland, a stalwart with UCLA, and took on competitors in beach volleyball.

"That was fun," Westendorf said of her summer. "I just tried to work out and my goal was to come back stronger and faster."

That's been noticed.

"She has a perfectionist attitude, so she's always working hard," senior Sydney Chute said. "She's always in the gym before practice and

after practice. She always goes the extra mile and has a great work ethic. She also has a really good attitude on the court."

Improvement means inevitable comparisons to former Ducks. For Westendorf, that former Oregon star is current graduate assistant coach Monique Tobbagi.

The two shared the same court last season as teammates, and this year, Westendorf has swallowed Tobbagi's advice with vigor.

"Monique is probably my biggest role model," Westendorf said. "I love Monique and cried for two weeks after her last match. She's the one we all want to be and look up to.

"So just hearing (myself compared to her) is so humbling and just such an amazing compliment and something that I hope I can strive to be. I would work hard every day to be just half the player she was."

That tireless work ethic has paid off so far, but Westendorf understands the necessity of listening and learning. Still just 18 years of age, she has a long way to go.

"Carl reminds me daily that I need to have an empty cup," she said. "Every day I'm just reminded I need to keep growing and improving on a daily basis."

To be successful, the typical college athlete needs to be intense on the court. But off the court, it is a whole other story.

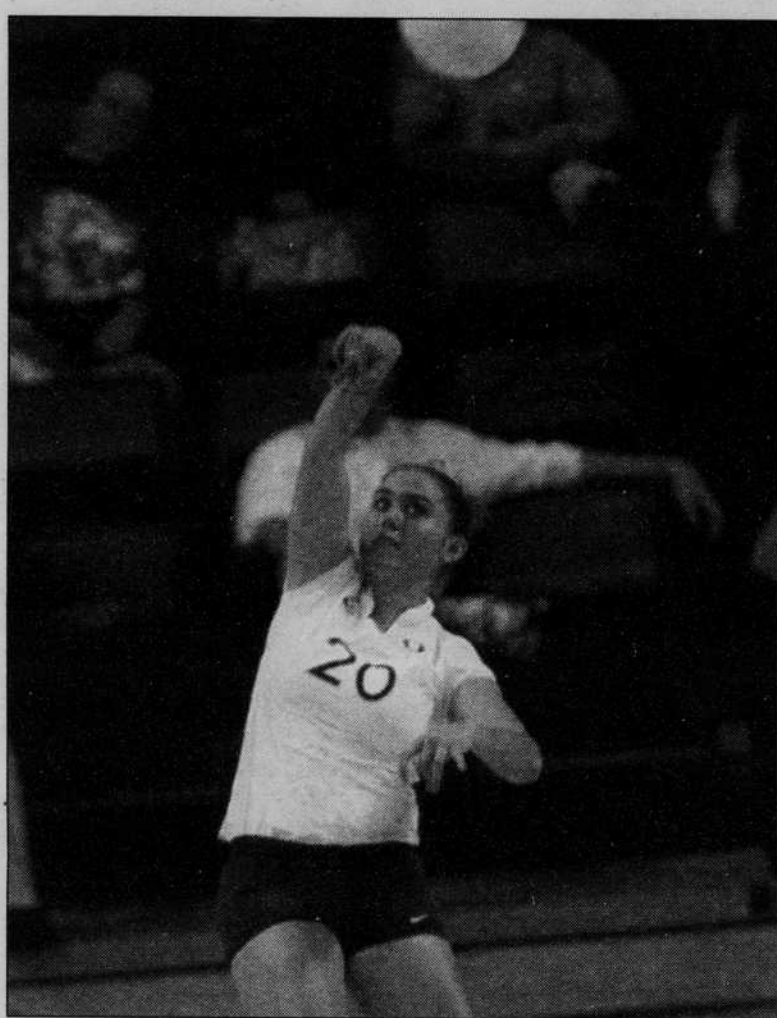
"I do tend to make a fool out of myself on a daily basis," Westendorf said with a laugh. "My teammates love the fact that I relate everything in life to 'Saved By the Bell' or (Beverly Hills) 90210. I'm such a teenybopper and I've grown up on those shows. So pretty much, they love to make fun of me on that."

Apparently, Westendorf loved being a freshman so much that she can't get over the fact she is now a sophomore.

"Lauren can't let go of being a freshman," Chute said. "A couple of times this season she has introduced herself as a freshman when we have to introduce ourselves to different people. She says, 'Hi, I'm a freshman. Oh, wait, wait, sophomore.'"

"Definitely, she has some growing up to do in that regard, remembering what year she is," Chute added with a smile.

A little more than two years remain for Westendorf at Oregon. First and foremost, she has her eyes on a Pac-10 victory. But after that, it's all about improving and making



Adam Amato Emerald

Lauren Westendorf admits to being a 'teeny-bopper,' but the sophomore is a force on the volleyball court.

her mark on the Duck program.

"I'm ready for any role that is open for me," she said. "I can't wait for next year, but right now, I'm focused on this year and doing whatever I can this year to improve."

If anything, consensus is that Westendorf will become a positive fixture in the Oregon program.

"She's always had an extremely in-

fectious personality that is so engaging," Ferreira said. "She makes other people better just by being around her. Not just as an athlete, but a person as well. You didn't know how good she was going to be, but you always liked being around her."

Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

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the hearts of most colleges in America, including fans in the Eugene area. He made a statement upon his appointment last week that definitely shouldn't sit well with Duck backers.

"We must make certain that academic concerns are first and foremost," Brand told a National Press Club audience recently. "To do that, we don't have to turn off the game. We just have to turn down the volume."

Turn down the volume? That's exactly the opposite direction the Ducks have taken.

From Autzen Stadium on down to Oregon merchandise, the Ducks have done everything it takes to get noticed. Each team's uniform is stylish, while each gigantic poster in downtown New York screams "Look at us!"

And that "us" is not just athletics. The Oregon folks up top have done it right, modeling the public relations attempts at the University as a

whole, not just the football program.

There is nothing wrong with having athletics help enrollment at a university. Based on current enrollment numbers at Oregon, one could make a reasonable assumption that they have increased, not only because of improved academics, but also because football has taken leaps and bounds off the map while each other program has seemingly improved.

Athletics, in this day and age, gets universities noticed. That is really vital to Oregon.

Academics, as Brand inferred, do need to be at the forefront of a university's purpose, but it is possible to do so without taking away from athletics. The two can co-exist as they do now. Tinkering is not needed.

So, getting back to Brand, it almost seems like he could be directly pointing at Oregon without actually saying so.

He was president at a time when Oregon was just beginning to realize its potential on the gridiron, from 1989-94. He was here when the Len Casanova Athletic Center went up, signaling the

rebirth of a program that had been dormant for years.

Then, four years after his resignation from Oregon, the Moshofsky Sports Center was dedicated, this time proclaiming Oregon's rise to the top of the Pacific-10 Conference.

Brand was there at the beginning. So now, it seems, he is calling for a stop to the process he helped oversee.

Granted, Oregon is just a prime example because it is in our backyard. Who knows where Florida will go with its program, or what UCLA is thinking of doing in the future?

So to single out and say that he is doing this because, specifically, Oregon has jumped the gun on every program in the Pac-10 and most in the country, is absurd.

And make no mistake, he is not entirely "anti-athletics" as is assumed by many who have followed his appointment.

Still, his words sound off with a tinge of irony.

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