

Ducks' day overshadowed by Cougars

Several Oregon golfers have career rounds, but are outplayed by Washington State's Kim Welch on the final day

sophomore Kim Welch wore green and yellow. If only.

Oregon, hosting its own Duck Invitational at Shadow Hills Country Club in Junction City, had its best round of the season Tuesday at the par-72, 5,953-yard course.

Golf

Scott Archer
Freelance Sports Reporter

If only Oregon could shoot like this everyday. If only Washington State wouldn't show up in Oregon's backyard and dominate like it did Tuesday. If only Washington State

The Ducks carded a team-low 299 in the last of three rounds Tuesday, led by freshman sensation Therese Wenslow's round of 74, which placed her in a tie for 10th place. It was also Wenslow's third top 10 finish in seven tournament appearances. Oregon leapfrogged one spot in the final round, finish-

ing the tournament 7th overall with a combined score of 940.

Oregon's spectacular final round was upstaged by the defending individual champion, sophomore Kim Welch of Washington State.

Welch shot a one-under-par final round to finish an amazing 7-under-par, ahead of San Diego State's Shayna Miyajima by 14 strokes. Maria Kostina of Washington State finished third overall at 226 and, along with Welch, led the Cougars to a team total 896 and an 18-stroke victory over SDSU. Missouri came in third at 916, followed by Portland

State, Colorado and Idaho.

Welch, who set a course record during Monday's second round with a 4-under-par 68, earned her second consecutive Oregon Duck Invitational individual title. The Sacramento, Calif., native won the event last year at Mallard Creek Golf Course in Lebanon.

Junior Lacy Erickson finished in the second-highest position of her career. She tied for 27th with a three-round score of 237. Erickson finished 15th at Arizona State as a freshman. Freshman Erin Andrews posted her best finish as a Duck with

a 238, tying for 29th overall.

Oregon fielded two teams in the event, the second of which was led by senior Annie Davis, who shot a career-low 75 Tuesday, which culminated in a career-best finish, 36th. Sophomore Jess Carlyon tied for 34th overall at 239, also the second-highest finish of her career. The Ducks' second squad moved up one spot Tuesday to 10th at 978.

Oregon continues its season in the UCLA Bruin Classic, March 24-26.

Scott Archer is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Brian Helquist is one of the players who attends regular pre-game chapel service.

Faith

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tough time doing that."

The coach and most of the players on his team are Christian. They hold chapel before games, say a prayer before heading onto the court, say a prayer at the end of the game and at least half the team, according to Jackson, goes to church every Sunday. They have a team pastor, Pastor Keith Jenkins, who facilitates most of the religious activities.

Kent, by law, can't force his team into any kind of religious practices. Not that he would if he could. Kent himself has strong faith, but he describes it as just one of the many choices he gives to his team, like where they want to live or what they want to eat on the road.

It just happens that most everyone on the team, on this issue, chooses the same meal.

"The only thing I try to do is say, 'Here's a room — here's a place you can go,'" Kent said.

For the Ducks, their faith is something much deeper than a prayer, much more intangible than a chapel service. It's a path, and the Ducks are a band of young scouts, sticking to the trail.

But there are those who choose a

different route. There are only two players who don't regularly attend chapel, but they and the rest of the players are quick to point out there is no separation of "sinner" and "saint" on the squad.

"Everybody's different," said Robert Johnson, one of those who doesn't attend chapel. "It's just something they do, something I don't do. It's not like I look down on them or they look down on me. It's like a brother who does something different. You appreciate what they do, give them much respect for what they do."

Johnson, who is in a unique situation to judge such things, also commented on the toughness issue.

"(Faith) has nothing to do with how tough you are," Johnson said. "They come out and prove it every night. These guys are really strong in their beliefs and really strong on the court."

Marcus Kent, the son of a preacher man, er, Ernie Kent, has perhaps the strongest convictions of anybody on the team. He's needed them. He played for Oregon last year before an injury forced him into a managerial role with the team this season. He's in the process of starting a Christian fraternity and sorority on campus, and he spoke the words his dad couldn't speak.

"Last year and this year, especial-

ly, there's just been a peace and a calm that exists on our team," Marcus Kent said. "I think it's there because the presence of God is with our team. We've got guys that are depending on God for a lot of things in their lives, and it just brings you that peace and that confidence."

For the Lukes, their faith has been like an umbrella for the storm of Pacific-10 Conference hoops. When Ridnour turned down an offer from Playboy magazine to be a Playboy Preseason All-American earlier this season, he cited his religion as his reason for defecting.

"The naked women and things like that; it's not something I can be seen on if I'm going to state my faith to people," Ridnour said. "The Lord just humbles me, keeps me humbling him, and just lets me know that everything I do is to glorify him. Anything I get is not for me, it's for him. It keeps me level-headed and makes everything easier."

It comes back to that post-game circle. Ridnour and Jackson, the stars, the best friends, the look-alikes, never stand next to each other in that huddle. The Christian faithful stand next to the nonbelievers.

Sure, they pray. But they stand as one. As a team.

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Women's

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the final four games, Oregon can only hope for a better go-around next winter. The Ducks will return four of their five starters.

Seniors Alissa Edwards and Kourtney Shreve part ways with Oregon. Kraayeveld will return for a senior season and Kedzie Gunderson, Bills and Brandi Davis all return as juniors.

Transfers Corrie Mizusawa and Chelsea Wagner will enter the lineup as guards after cheering from the bench this season. The

Ducks will be expecting more guards in incoming freshmen Ashley Allen and Kaela Chapdelaine along with 6-foot-6-inch post player Jessie Shettters.

"They're going to be young and going to be a little bit raw, but they are going to bring something that will contribute to our team immediately," Smith said.

In 2003-04 it will be a different team with many new players. The expectations will again be there. And hopefully for the Ducks, the winning will return.

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Forwards

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Okwumabua may not start on a regular basis while at Oregon, but could easily step into a pivotal bench role.

"I look forward to a lot of things next season," Bills said. "We have more big people coming in. As long as everybody stays healthy next season, we should be ready to compete."

The new forward Bills spoke of is 6-foot-6-inch Portland native Jessica Shettters. She will become the second-tallest player in program history, and should be valuable off the bench, al-

though it will undoubtedly be in a learning role.

It was a long year for the Ducks, and an especially longer one for the forwards. With Kraayeveld out, that group turned into a three-player rotation. That's not easy.

But let's let Kraayeveld tell how it was.

"It did seem like one thing, and then we got over that, and then there was one more thing," Kraayeveld said. "Finally, we were all healthy, and then somebody else (got hurt). We tried to push through that and not focus on it and do what we could."

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Men's

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flicked on.

Jackson, despite being thrown off by a finger injury for several games, still finished the regular season in the top 10 in Pac-10 points, rebounds and assists. He still has the size — he's officially listed at 6-feet-7-inches and 210 pounds — to play in the NBA. He just doesn't have the hype he had

at the beginning of the season.

Cross-eyed

Lost amid the hustle and bustle of Ridnour winning the Pac-10 Player of the Year award Monday was another Duck honor. Freshman Ian Crosswhite was named as an honorable mention on the Pac-10 All Freshman team.

Crosswhite finished the regular season averaging eight points and 3.8 rebounds per game. He shot .457 from the floor, good enough for

third on the team.

Add Bracketology

The Ducks remained a No. 12 seed in this week's edition of Bracketology, but at least the Ducks moved closer to home.

Lunardi projects Oregon will play No. 5-seeded Oklahoma State in Spokane, Wash., in the first round March 20.

Contact the sports editor at peterhockaday@dailymerald.com.



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