

# Rain, hail delay golf regionals

Despite poor weather conditions, Oregon completes the regional's opening round in Seattle

## Golf

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Freelance Sports Reporter

It wasn't quite the opening the Oregon men's golf team had in mind, but if any one team is suited for this kind of weather, it's the Ducks.

The opening round of the NCAA West Regional got off to a smooth start for the teams teeing off in the early morning hours Thursday at the 7,183-yard, par-72 Washington National Course in Auburn, Wash. However, midway through the day and before half the field took their first swings, rain and hail delayed the tournament for 2 1/2 hours before play resumed again. One hour later, rain again revisited the course, and another delay was called, this time for 65 minutes.

No. 18 Oregon finished the day at 7-over-par and is currently tied with No. 17 Denver. However, at what position the two teams are tied was not able to be determined. Oregon will finish the first round no worse than 16th place, after the Ducks finished ahead of the rest of the field that was able to complete the entire 18 holes Thursday. The first round is scheduled to be completed early this morning.

It was a freshman that led Oregon in its opening, rain-

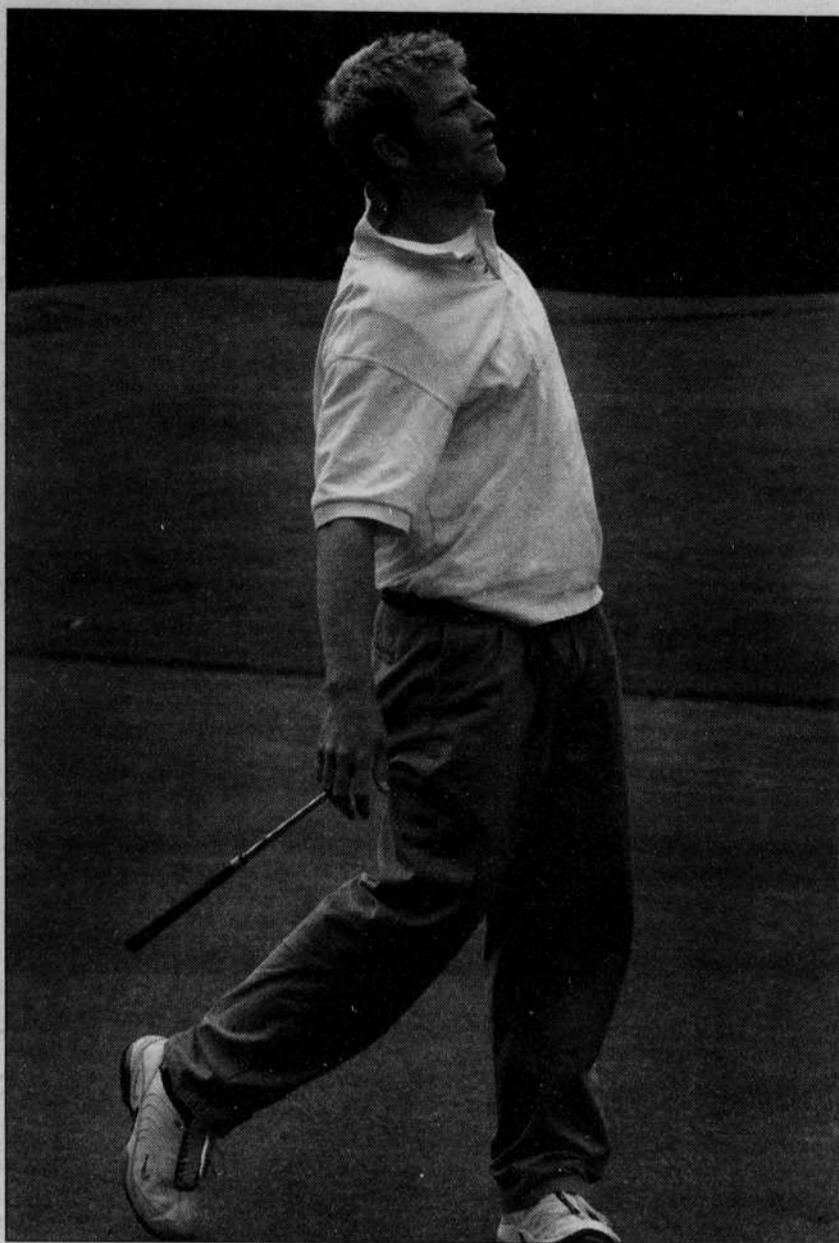
soaked first round Thursday. Freshman Gregg LaVoie, competing in his first postseason tournament, finished the day with an even-par 72 and is currently tied for ninth overall in the as-yet-completed first round. Senior John Ellis currently sits tied for 19th overall after shooting a one-over-par 73. Redshirt freshman Kyle Johnson, also in his first postseason tournament, sits 3-over par and tied for 44th overall, along with teammate junior Mike Sica. Senior Chris Carnahan shot an 8-over-par and is tied for 73rd overall.

Texas El-Paso, Old Dominion, Oregon State, Xavier, Austin Peay State, Stanford, Navy, Oral Roberts, Central Connecticut and Loyola College all were able to finish their first rounds while also finishing below the Ducks.

This is Oregon's seventh consecutive NCAA West Regional tournament. The Ducks last advanced to the NCAA Championships in the 1998-99 seasons. The Ducks must finish the tournament as one of the top 10 teams if they wish to advance. The two top individuals whose team does not advance become qualified to participate in the NCAA Championships. Oregon was only three strokes back from making the NCAA Championships last year but instead finished tied for 13th overall.

Oregon was scheduled to begin play today at 11:51 a.m., but the delayed opening round most likely will force the Ducks to start later in the day.

Scott Archer is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Danielle Hickey Emerald

Gregg LaVoie finished the rain-shortened first round tied for ninth overall with an even par.

## Oregon provides no outlet for love of the game

When I was six, I played in my first baseball game.

One year later, I witnessed what was nearly a no-hitter at Candlestick Park in San Francisco. When I was 11, I lived and died through the last days of the 1993 regular season, only to feel as though I was six feet under when the Giants lost in the last day of the season, and ultimately finished second to Atlanta.



**Hank Hager**  
Behind the dish

In 1997, at the ripe age of 15, I started my career at Willow Glen High School in San Jose, Calif. Four years later, after learning that 5-foot-8-inch catchers couldn't compete in college, I played my last game for the Rams, an embarrassing loss as the No. 16 seed in the Central Coast Section playoffs.

Suffice it to say, I couldn't leave the field that day for hours after the game, my eyes filled with tears as long as the memories in my head.

I love baseball. I think baseball loves me.

That's why it's still hard to live in Eugene, to see that after next season, there won't be a collegiate program within 40 miles of the city. If you want to see college baseball, you're going to have to go to Corvallis and

see the Beavers take on the Pacific-10 Conference's best.

And as the baseball theme goes, any team any can beat anybody any day of the week. That's true for Oregon State this season, even if No. 3 Arizona State did take care of the Beavers this week.

Quite frankly, it's refreshing to see the Beavers survive. And in an era where escalating salaries have cheapened the game, college baseball is becoming an endangered species.

"It's got a long and storied tradition," Oregon State Athletic Director Bob De Carolis said. "Traditionally, the sport of baseball has been a symbol of America."

Indeed.

De Carolis said it is important for him and the staff at Oregon State to have a competitive spring sport, something that the Beavers have generally lived up to — at least for most of this season.

But really, when you have no competitor to the south and your biggest competition is up in Portland, it's hard to really field a team every season that plays the game as hard as it can.

I'm not saying at all that the Beavers are lazy or have a program that needs repair. No, not all. But if Oregon had a team, now that would be a whole different situation.

Now that I think about it, if Eugene even had a team.

"It's sad, because I think baseball

has endured a lot of things through time," Lane Community College head coach Donny Harrel told me Tuesday. "It endured some ups and downs here through budget situations, and all of a sudden, there's people making the decision that it's time to get rid of it."

The 22 years that have passed since the formal announcement of the Oregon baseball demise have provided a number of things for the sport at the collegiate level.

Where once it stood far behind football and basketball in terms of reverence, college baseball has a religious following. I, for one, hope to see the College World Series at Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha, Neb. I would consider that one of the great sporting pilgrimages you could take these days.

Sure, you've got history with the Rose Bowl and other major college football bowls out there, and yeah, college basketball may be exciting, but there's just something about lying around in the warm sun in June.

Especially when those players are just playing for the love of the game. When was the last time you heard about a college baseball scandal, one where you heard the boosters paying that star catcher if he attends State U.?

And look at professional baseball rosters. The game has a number of former collegiate starts playing in the bigs, from Pat Burrell with Philadelphia — formerly of Miami — and yup, you guessed it, Roger

Clemens of the ever-hated Yankees, formerly a star at Texas.

Oregon even once had a former No. 1 draft choice, Dave Roberts. The third baseman was taken in 1972 by San Diego.

Maybe one day Oregon will have baseball again.

Until then, all we have is the memories and the thoughts of what could have been.

Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailymerald.com. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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