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Unlimited opti**mism**

University junior Eric Ball returns to school after seriously injuring himself on a July hike

BY CANELA WOOD
NEWS REPORTER

After breaking his pelvis, puncturing a lung, cracking his tailbone and suffering other injuries in a fall during a hike at Ape Cave near Cougar, Wash., University junior Eric Ball plans to return to finish his hike to the cave's end.

He insists his injuries won't stop him from completing the trek or doing other things he loves, such as skiing, sailing, rock climbing and hiking.

But Ball had to overcome something most people never will — the 21-year-old biology and philosophy major was born with an impairment that distorts his vision. He can't see well, and, unlike most people, he can't drive or play ball sports.

"I would imagine that it'd be like a normally sighted person looking through a telescope or binoculars the wrong way," Ball said.

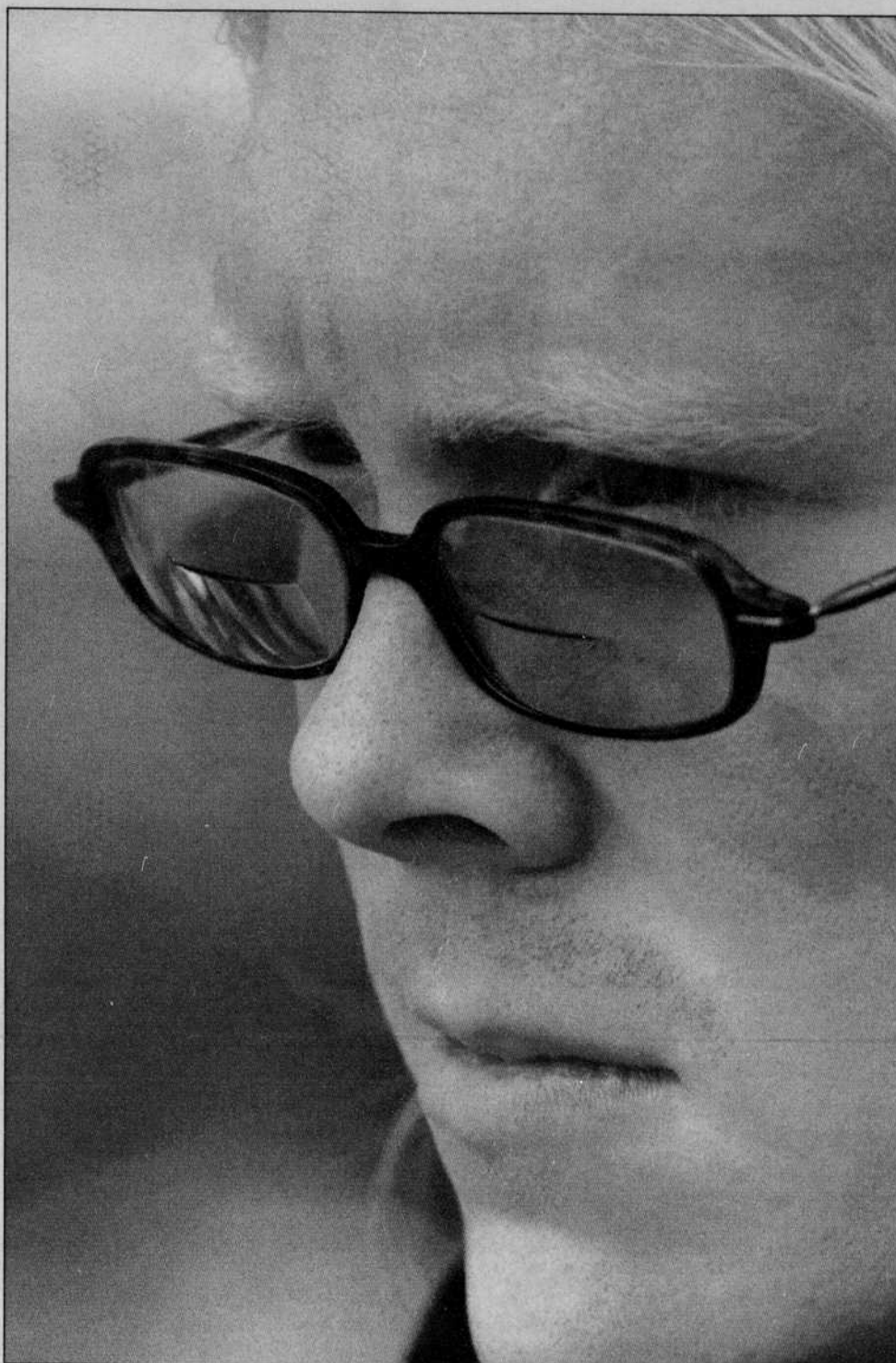
But according to Ball and his family members, his disability has never been limiting.

"Eric's always been in talented and gifted programs and was working toward his Advanced Placement diploma in high school without any help. Generally, he just goes to class and figures it out on his own," said Melody Ball, Eric's mother. "We've always let him try things he's had an interest in, and we let him make it work for him."

"I think he's adventurous and he likes to do things that are exciting to him," said Jenny Lee, Eric's girlfriend of two-and-a-half years. On July 5th, Eric and four of his friends began a hike in Ape Cave, near Mount St. Helens. The group was about three-quarters of a mile into the cave when it noticed a rock shelf about 10-feet high, Ball said.

"There was a large rock built out of the shelf that had a rope tied to it; me being the usual adventurous person that I am, I climbed the rope up there," Ball said. Once Ball was up on the rock,

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TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Eric Ball, a partially blind University student with a passion for the outdoors, surveys the University from near the Heart of Campus Tuesday. His handicap doesn't stop him from sailing, skiing, rock climbing and hiking. "I would imagine that it'd be like a normally sighted person looking through a telescope or binoculars the wrong way," he said.

Support, voting key topics at Kerry rally

Hosted by Carry Oregon,
Tuesday's event coordinated
several pro-Kerry campaigns

BY PARKER HOWELL
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Looking out over the faces of about 100 University students in a dimly lit lecture hall, Michelle Dixon, Carry Oregon student outreach director, asks audience members to raise their hands if they are scared by polls about the recent presidential debate.

Nearly 100 hands shoot into the air.

Poised before the crowd, Dixon springs forward as she asks how many people do not feel represented by the polls, which show that President Bush may win the state. Once again, a forest of hands rises, and irate shouts echo throughout the room.

But Dixon tells the crowd not to worry.

"We can win the election here," she said. "We can be the campus that wins the state of Oregon for John Kerry."

Dixon and other speakers addressed student supporters of democratic nominee John Kerry during a rally Tuesday night in an effort to coordinate student involvement in the Kerry campaign. As the audience snacked on cookies, pizza and soda, the representatives from regional and campus Kerry campaigns emphasized the importance of the University and Eugene communities in winning Oregon for Kerry. The meeting kicked off a coordinated effort between several groups of Kerry supporters, including the University College Democrats.

Lane County Commissioner Peter Sorenson also addressed the crowd. Sorenson encouraged students to participate in state and local elections, citing gay marriage and the potential dissolving of the SAIF Corporation.

RALLY, page 4

Legislature to blame for tuition hikes, survey says

Despite Executive opposition, a reduced tuition plateau may ease costs for some University students who carry lighter class loads

BY MORIAH BALINGIT
NEWS REPORTER

Students this year are bracing themselves for higher tuition rates, with fall term tuition rising as much as 15 percent for some students. In spring 2004, resident undergraduates taking 15 credits paid \$1236 for tuition — this year, they will fork out \$1419.

Institutional Research Analyst J P Monroe said the state legislature is mostly to blame for the increases.

"It was really a failure of the legislature to fund higher education which resulted in the increases," he said. He added that the state legislature is only responsible for about 14 percent of the University's budget this year, the lowest contribution yet.

"It's certainly less," Monroe said. "It's been going down."

The failure of Measure 30 last year, which would have created an income tax surcharge, also added strain to the University's budget and created a \$1.5 million budget shortfall. Last January, Senior Vice President and Vice Provost John Moseley said the University would be

forced to raise tuition, cut programs or do both to compensate for the shortfall.

According to Monroe, programs and classes were spared, though departmental budgets were cut.

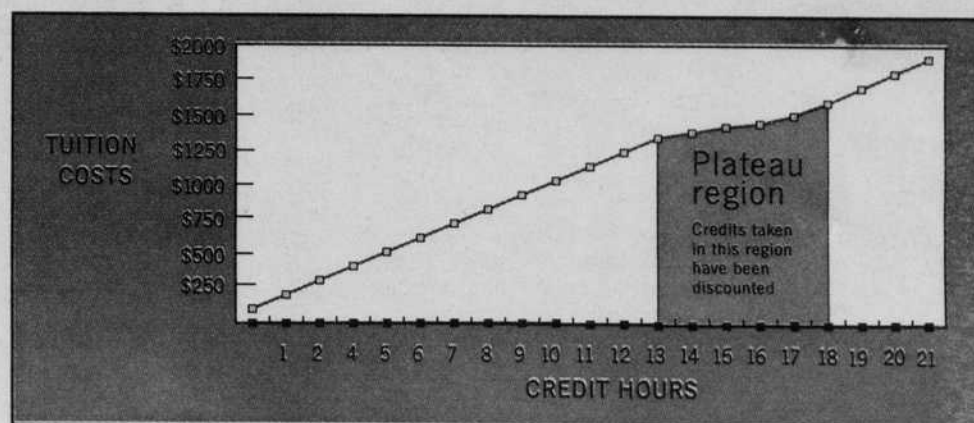
"There's a hiring freeze and a wage freeze, so through those steps we've been able to absorb some of the cuts," he said. "But in terms of actual courses taught, that hasn't been affected yet."

ASUO President and Oregon Student Association Chair Adam Petkun said he's unhappy with the increases and wants to see the state step up to the plate.

"It's time for the state legislature to start investing in higher education because the costs are becoming unbearable," he said, adding that "funding for need-based aid hasn't kept pace."

According to Petkun, the OSA is lobbying for a tuition freeze, which would mandate that tuition stay the same for the next two years and would require an additional \$55 million investment on the part of the legislature.

In addition to the tuition increase, the so-called "tuition plateau" has also been changed. In Fall



BRET FURTWANGLER | GRAPHICS EDITOR

This graph shows the tuition plateau as credit hours rise for fall 2003, winter and spring 2004, and fall 2004. Mandatory fees are not included.

2003, students would pay the same tuition rate for 13 credits as they would for 16 credits, or \$1,196 for a resident undergraduate. This plateau created an incentive for students to take more credits and graduate on time. However, Monroe said the University felt plateaus were unfair because students taking less than 13 credits were subsidizing the discounts for other students.

The plateau changed for winter and spring

terms of 2004, so that students paid an additional \$20 for each credit between 14 and 16 credits.

This year, the plateau has once again been reduced. Students can expect to pay more for that same range of credits, though those credits are still discounted.

Monroe added that so far adjustments in the plateau have not affected students carrying

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