

# Clackamas runner goes national

MAGGIE JIRASEK

Feature Editor

As one of the youngest participants at the Winter Cross Country Championships in Vancouver, Wash., 21-year-old Clackamas student Paul Kezes placed 30th while competing with top College long distance runners all throughout the U.S.

Kezes started running competitively during his junior year in high school and continued when he was recruited at Clackamas in 1998.

"He was my first recruit and right after that I knew that he would be a pretty talented runner," said Mike Hickey, cross-country coach.

While attending Clackamas, Kezes has shown continuous hard work as well as good running ethics.

"I have learned a lot so far. I learned how to compete with the team better and it was a good opportunity to move

on," explained Kezes.

Since Hickey started coaching at Clackamas about three years ago, Kezes has been the only runner to attend the Senior National Cross Country Championships.

"He was the first guy I thought was ready to race at that level," stated Hickey. "He is a pretty driven young man and I know that he has very high goals. It would be very exciting to see him achieve these."

At the Championships, Kezes raced 69 other top runners in the 4000m

run and placed 30th with a time of 12:01.

"It was one of my best races ever," stated Kezes. "I have raced with the top American distance runners. I have gone with them for four km and I had fun."

According to Hickey, being 21 years

old and attending the Senior National Championships is an outstanding achievement since distance running is mostly dominated by runners between ages 25 and 29.

"To have a runner that's 21 years old attending the championships was really special. It was exciting because a couple of guys Paul raced, I have raced back in my college days," said Hickey.

Having the opportunity to race with the top runners in the U.S. was an exciting experience for Kezes, and of course, preparation was necessary.

"I cut back a little bit. I went down to 78 miles that week. My mileage had been 100 miles the week before," explained Kezes. "If I had used up myself completely, I might have been a little burned out."

After Clackamas, Kezes is planning on transferring to Western State College in Colorado where he wants to continue running.

"I love running. It gives me a lot to think about when I run and I solved a lot of my problems in life that way. I also meet a lot of people. I have friends all over the nation."



MIKE HICKEY / Clackamas Print

Paul Kezes runs at a Cross Country competition. The 21-year-old runner placed 30th of 69 against men four to eight years older.

## Crouching Tiger isn't draggin'



WEB PHOTO

Tiger Woods crouches to judge his putt.

I don't mean to be overly critical of the media, but I have a brief statement to all of the golf writers, commentators, and late night sportscasters who've seemed to prematurely designate 2001 as "The Year of Tiger's Slump."

You're all idiots.

Because Tiger Woods has yet to win this year on the PGA Tour, many who follow golf have begun to suggest that he has somehow fallen from grace. These are the same writers that, last year, ran out of superlatives to describe Tiger's achievements. How soon they forget.

It's baffling really when you think about it. Why have the media and fans come to expect so much from those who have already elevated themselves to greatness?

Think about it: Mark McGwire hits 70 home runs; the next year what do reporters hound him about? Hitting 71.

Last year, Tiger Woods played in 19 of the PGA Tour's 55 events. He won nine times and was the top

money earner at \$9,030,821. Phil Mickelson, one of the most consistent players on tour year after year, placed second on the year's final money list, nearly \$4.3 million behind. In just two full seasons, Woods has won more total money in his career than anyone... ever.



RYAN BRINKLEY  
Sports Columnist

If that wasn't good enough, Tiger also won three of the four tournaments that the golf world terms "The Majors." With victories last year at The British Open, The U.S. Open, The PGA Championship, and his 1999 win at The Masters, Woods completed golf's "career grand slam." Woods is only the fifth player in history to accomplish this feat and the youngest... ever.

Tiger Woods is many things. He's one of the most marketable personalities in sports history. He's arguably the best golfer ever. Moreover, he's been able to do the unthinkable: make golf cool.

One thing that Tiger isn't though is content. Last year, during his extraor-

inary domination of what we know to be professional golf, Woods' coach, Butch Harmon, said in an interview that Tiger has only reached about 75 percent of his potential as a golfer.

At age 25, Woods has five years before he is, according to the golf world, "in his prime."

Woods said in recent interviews that he approaches the major tournaments like "the playoffs." While many have always held the major championships as special, this type of attitude is somewhat of a novel approach. I'm sure that Woods wants to win every time he plays, in fact he's said so. But it is going to be interesting to see how Woods' determination to improve will manifest itself when the majors appear on the schedule.

My guess is that by the time April rolls around and golf's best head to Augusta for The Masters, Woods will be back on his game and on top of the leader-board. Other pros will rack their brains trying to figure out how to beat him and golf writers will spend all day trying to come up with another word for "incredible."

## Women Cougars place third, prepare for NWAACC

ELENA BORYSKA

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During the last week of league play in the 2000-2001 season, the Cougar women's basketball team was able to come up with two more wins.

The first game, which was at Portland, was against the lowly P.C.C. Panthers. Once again, it was an easy victory for Clackamas, 88-64. Mercedes Juarez was the top scorer with 21. Kathryn Kettles had 15, Kayla Steen scored 13 and Jennie

Kooch finished with 12 points and 13 rebounds.

Next up for the Cougars was a home game against Linn Benton. As the last regular season game of the year, it is very easy to sometimes overlook a team while focusing on the post season.

This was not the case for the Cougars. They stayed in this game up until the very end when they finally pulled away. Kayla Steen had a great game, finishing the night with 27 points, eight rebounds and five steals. Mercedes Juarez had 19 points

and Amanda Lee scored 14 points and grabbed eight boards.

With that final win, the Cougars ended the season at 10-4 in league and 21-8 overall. They also hold the third place spot in the Southern region.

Now that the regular season is over, it is time to look ahead to the NWAACC Championships. As the Cougars prepare for that, they are enjoying the calm before the storm.

"This is a good time to take a break and get healthy," said Assistant Coach P.J.

Martineau.

And healthy is what they will need to get, especially since right now, 3 or 4 key players are fighting colds, including Head Coach Jim Martineau. Even so, confidence in this Cougar team is running pretty high.

"We have just as good a chance as anybody," said Martineau. "We already beat quite a few better ranked teams."

That is the attitude the Cougars are going to need to bring to this tournament March 8-11,

at Mt. Vernon, Wash. Going into the Championships, the Cougars have already done better than last year, improving from fourth place in the division to third.

"We definitely have a better record," said Martineau. "We are all-around an improved team in basically every position"

The Cougars don't know whom they will play first, but they are expecting to find out on Thursday.

No matter who it is, they will be prepared.