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THE DAILY TOREADOR

Black & Red

Tuesday

Friday, July 22, 2008
Volume 82 Issue 156

**STUDY SHOWS MANY
SUNSCREEN BRANDS
INEFFECTIVE,
HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH**

See page 6

Jazz concert raises endowment money for aspiring musicians at Tech

BY ANGELA FARMER
STAFF WRITER

Live music, hugs and laughter filled the auditorium of Dunbar Middle School on Friday during a jazz concert featuring former Dunbar High School band students.

The jam session, sponsored by the Tech Black Faculty Staff Association, was hosted by board members of the Dunbar International Alumni Association as a part of their all-class reunion. The concert was organized to help raise money for the James T. Braxton Scholarship endowment for high school graduates.

Although the endowment mainly targets black students, said

Aretha Marbley, president of the Black Faculty Staff Association, any student with an interest in jazz is eligible. However, students must study at Tech.

"We're not gonna turn somebody down who has a talent who's not African-American," she said.

Marbley said the endowment process began as a part of the university's celebration of Black History Month in February when Tech hosted a jazz concert featuring James Braxton's son, Tom Braxton, as a part of a fundraiser.

So far, the association has raised \$10,000 and still is accepting donations. The money is not yet available for recipients because the association's selection committee



Coleman Morefield/The Daily Toreador
Ricky Horton and Norman Garnett honor the endowment at Dunbar Middle School Friday afternoon.

has not been appointed.

"We wanted to help with the enrollment of African-American

students at Tech," she said. "That's one of our missions as the Black Faculty Staff Association."

One reason for the establishment of the scholarship is to honor James T. Braxton, said Eric Strong, director of the Lubbock Roots Historical Arts Council.

James Braxton always wanted to learn how to play the violin, Strong said. So James Braxton attended classes at Tech to learn how to play and teach violin.

"Mr. Braxton taught for over 30 some-odd years in the public schools and did touch a lot of lives," he said.

Previous reunions included activities such as talent shows, said Quincy Carter, president of

the Dunbar International Alumni Association. The jam session was an idea initiated earlier this year by the alumni association to honor Dunbar alumni and "music legends" James Braxton and Roy Roberts.

"Dunbar used to win band competitions all the time," he said. "They were just perfectionists."

This year's reunion is the eighth all-class reunion, said Vicky Kyle-Rodgers, treasurer of the Dunbar International Alumni Association.

"This is international," she said. "Dunbar is international. We had somebody from Japan one year, and two or three different countries. We had them come from all over the places and all over the state. That's why we changed (the association's name) to international."

The all-class reunion began Thursday with an opening reception and ended with a farewell breakfast Sunday. The biennial reunion drew more than 400 Dunbar alumni to Lubbock. Tours, bowling, a barbecue dinner, a dance and banquet also headlined in this year's reunion.

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Evolution of Tech research facility results in name change

MATT COBB
STAFF WRITER

Many Tech researchers may want to get some new business cards printed because they don't work at the International Textile Center any longer.

The Tech Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute hosted an open house from noon to 4 p.m. Friday to celebrate the name change of its facility.

Tech's former International Textile Center revealed that it was changing its name to the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute in May, according to a press release. This change came after the review and approval of Provost William Marcy and several other university officials.

The institute changed its name partially as a result of a new lab that opened at the facility earlier this year but does not focus strictly to textile research. Also, the name change partially was the result of general growth and evolving research at the facility.

The purpose of the open house was to give people the chance to visit the facility, see the laboratories and get a better understanding of the research that is being done, said Dean Ethridge, the managing director of the institute. It also gave people the chance to see how the name change better reflects the research that is taking place there.

"The name change does not signify something fundamentally different from what we have been doing in recent years," he said. "Name changes usually lag the reality, rather than precede the

reality."

The overall, root focus of the facility, however, has remained constant since it opened, Ethridge said. The goal has been about trying to add value to natural fiber, which researchers have done through a great deal of fiber testing and fiber spinning at the laboratories.

Members of the facility's staff led visitors along tours of the facilities and explained the activities in the different laboratories, he said.

"We had a lot of informal visitors," Ethridge said. "We even had some cotton people stop by with their whole families."

In addition to the name change, the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute recently opened a new research laboratory at the location, he said. Scientists at the institute hope the new lab's resources will

give them the tools they need to further their biopolymer research.

"The instrumentation that equips that lab is good for any polymer evaluation," Ethridge said. "It's good for fibers, but it's also good for oils and other polymers."

The new name is a sign of growth for this Tech program, said Mike Stephens, the communications coordinator of the institute. The name of the lab reflects how the institute is going through numerous changes in its research.

"It gives us an opportunity to really investigate things and not just investigate things on the fabric front," he said. "It actually gives us an opportunity to pursue the value of this raw material and all of its potentials."

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RUNDOWN

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WEEKLY WEATHER

Today
Sunny
High 96/Low 69



Wednesday
Sunny
High 95/Low 69



Thursday
Sunny
High 92/Low 70



Friday
Mostly Sunny
High 91/Low 70



View the weekend forecast in Friday's paper.

Texas, Mexico prepare for Dolly

McALLEN, Texas (AP)—Residents along the Texas-Mexico border kept a watchful eye on Tropical Storm Dolly on Monday, stocking up on plywood, generators and flashlights as forecasters predicted the storm would strengthen into a hurricane later this week and make landfall.

The storm was expected to bring high winds and dump 10 to 20 inches of rain in coastal areas near the U.S.-Mexican border. Emergency officials feared major flooding problems and urged coastal residents to prepare.

Shell Oil said it was evacuating workers from oil rigs in the western Gulf Of Mexico, and the federal government was trying to decide whether they could begin construction on a new border fence, which was to be combined with levee improvements along the Rio Grande in Hidalgo County.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami issued a hurricane watch from

Brownsville north to Port O'Connor, but so far U.S. government officials had not asked residents to leave the coast. Mexico also announced a hurricane watch from Rio San Fernando north to Matamoros and the U.S. border. Dolly was expected to make landfall Wednesday as a Category 1 storm with sustained winds of 74 mph to 95 mph.

At 2 p.m. EDT, the center of Tropical Storm Dolly was located about 475 miles east-southeast of the lower Rio Grande Valley. Mexico discontinued its tropical storm warning for the Yucatan peninsula, which was battered by strong winds and drenched with rain a day earlier.

Dolly was moving toward the west-northwest at 18 mph. The storm was expected to gradually slow in the next couple days but stay on track toward the U.S.-Mexico border. Maximum sustained winds were 50 mph but were expected to strengthen Tuesday to hurricane force, which would mean at least 74 mph.

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Heath Ledger, as The Joker, goes bump in "The Dark Knight"

The Dark Knight" already has shattered box office records and will continue to do so quite deservedly. It is the best movie out of Hollywood so far this year, and it's probably one of the greatest superhero movies ever made. It's definitely one of the most interesting. It pushes the boundaries of what a superhero movie can be. It's terrifying, dark and philosophical. Its complex story and themes are so multi-layered, the film requires — and merits — a second viewing.

Moving away from the psychoanalytical style of "Batman Begins," in which Christian Bale as the caped crusader admirably held the weight of the film on his shoulders, "The Dark Knight" is an ensemble film. Batman, The Joker (the late Heath Ledger), Lt. Jim Gordon (Gary Oldman), and District Attorney Harvey Dent (Aaron Eckhart) carry equal weight. Each is pretty dark and dreary, with any and all light-heartedness coming from Michael Caine as Alfred, Morgan Freeman as Lucius Fox,

Chris Kellerman



and the charming Maggie Gyllenhaal — Katie Holmes' replacement — as Rachel Dawes. It's like "Crash" or "Babel," but not annoyingly pretentious.

Each of these actors is talented, and, with the sole exception of Eckhart, the performances are flawless.

Heath Ledger, however, is otherworldly.

His portrayal of The Joker is absolutely haunting. Remember, folks, this is the guy who was most famous for his roles in "Brokeback Mountain," "A Knight's Tale," and "10 Things I Hate about You." When director Christopher Nolan first confirmed Ledger was cast as The Joker, people were justifiably

skeptical.

He always had been good, but this didn't quite seem like his role.

He proved everybody wrong, though, and created the most chilling movie villain since Hannibal Lecter. Just like Anthony Hopkins, Ledger owns the role of a mad man. And just like Dr. Lecter, The Joker seems too-in-control to be crazy. His maniacal laughter, fetish for chaos and an ever-changing explanation of his scars are counter-balanced by his impeccable planning and fearlessness. To try to describe Ledger's performance in words would be as futile as trying to describe Beethoven's 9th symphony. It's simply genius, and genius cannot be reduced to a couple adjectives.

The only downside is to Ledger's brilliance is that he overpowers the other actors. In "The Silence of the Lambs," the scenes without Hopkins are sustained by Jodie Foster's Oscar-winning performance. While Bale and Oldman are superb, there's not enough

meat for them in the script to balance The Joker's material.

The other flaw comes in the performance of Eckhart. He's not very convincing as a good-natured, idealistic district attorney. His "transformation" later in the film is not as radical as it could have been if a less cocksure approach had been taken to his character.

Those flaws are so minor they don't merit a half-star reduction. The tension never lets up in the film's two-and-a-half-hour run time, and it's over before you know it. Christopher Nolan's direction is innovative (for a superhero movie) and compelling. The action scenes are as heart-pounding as "The Bourne Ultimatum" and, at times, as terrifying as "United 93." A "magic trick" at the beginning of the film is a new version of the haunting curb-biting scene from "American History X."

All special effects, makeup, lighting and cinematography are top-notch. If there's one thing I hate in life, it's

a co-composed film score, but James Newton Howard and Hans Zimmer's score is not bad. It's not even close to the greatness of Danny Elfman's music for the original "Batman," but their rising one-note siren for The Joker is very effective.

I've seen "The Dark Knight" twice already, and I plan to see it again. Even if you're not a fan of Batman, the film is worth it to see Heath Ledger in his final completed role. Oscar season hasn't begun yet, but I can't imagine Ledger not winning Best Supporting Actor for this performance.

"The Dark Knight" is deep, disturbing and incredible.

Five out of five guns up.



Chris Kellerman is The DT's movie critic. E-mail him at chris.kellerman@ttu.edu.

Hot damn! Underdog movie, "Hellboy II", surprisingly imaginative, witty

I never saw the first "Hellboy" movie directed by Guillermo del Toro in 2004. I was not too excited about seeing this sequel, either, but that is the life of a movie critic. Right?

I am not even a fantasy fan, though I did see del Toro's "Pan's Labyrinth" and enjoyed it. My ignorance of comic books also led me to suspect "Hellboy" would be some evil monster who eats people or something.

I figured it would be pretty stupid.

Of course, I was wrong.

"Hellboy II: The Golden Army" is a gorgeous, funny and wildly imaginative popcorn flick. If it weren't PG-13, it could have been one of those "for the whole family" kind of movies. The villains are terrifying, the good guys are endearing and the images

are unbelievable. There are a few missteps along the way, but most are outweighed by the surprising strengths of the movie.

The story begins with a flashback. It's Christmas Eve 1955, and Professor Bruttenholm (John Hurt) tucks his little demon into bed and reads him a story. Way back in the day... OK, the story is way too bizarre for me to try to recount. If you really want to know it, check out the Wikipedia entry. In short, there's a mythical world who made a pact with humanity, a golden army that lives underground and hasn't been awoken in, like, a gazillion years. There's also one really ticked-off prince named Nuada.

Present day, we're at an auction house. A piece of a crown (which somehow controls to the golden army) given to humanity from the mythical world is on the auction

block, and Prince Nuada ain't happy. He brings a couple crates full of a bunch of scary creatures called tooth fairies (they don't carry dollar bills), and everybody dies. Yikes.

Hellboy (Ron Perlman) and the gang are called in to fix the situation. Meanwhile, Abe Sapien (Doug Jones) uses his strange powers to discover Liz (Selma Blair) is pregnant, but her relationship with Hellboy is strained, and she doesn't want to tell him yet. Let's hope the kid gets her looks, right? Anyway, the team spends the rest of the film battling Prince Nuada while Hellboy and Liz try to work out their problems.

Del Toro is an incredible director, and his imagination is limitless. The creatures he created for this film are so original and fantastic, it's hard to stop looking at them.

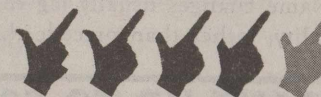
They are lifelike, scrupulously detailed and terrifying at times. Tim Burton doesn't have anything on del Toro. He has done a good job balancing the scary moments with light-hearted fun, including the warm opening scene and a drunken duet between Hellboy and Abe.

All the acting is fine, and though this film doesn't call for any serious chops, the performances of Luke Goss and Anna Walton as the prince and princess of the mythical world are quite good. Unfortunately, Perlman and Blair have to deliver some ridiculous lines, and they often seem a bit uncomfortable with them. If there's anywhere this movie falls short, it's the cheesy dialogue. A lot of the lines seem like they're straight out of a Saturday morning cartoon, and you can't say that's just the

comic-book style — "Spider-Man 2," "V for Vendetta" and "Batman Begins" are just a few examples of comic book movies with outstanding scripts.

The CGI and visuals are stunning. Danny Elfman's score is one of his best in years — finally, something that doesn't sound like "Batman". The editing and sound are both strong, and though the movie loses energy at some points, it's entertaining throughout.

"Hellboy II" is pretty heavenly.



Chris Kellerman is The DT's movie critic. E-mail him at chris.kellerman@ttu.edu.

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Study: sick truck drivers responsible for many highway deaths

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tractor-trailer and bus drivers in the United States have suffered seizures, heart attacks or unconscious spells behind the wheel that led to deadly crashes on highways. Hundreds of thousands of drivers carry commercial licenses even though they also qualify for full federal disability payments, according to a new U.S. safety study obtained by The Associated Press.

The problems threatening highway travelers persist despite years of government warnings and hundreds of deaths and injuries blamed on commercial truck and bus drivers who blacked out, collapsed or suffered major health problems behind the wheels of vehicles that can weigh 40 tons or more.

The U.S. agency responsible for cracking down on unfit truckers, the Fed-

eral Motor Carrier Safety Administration, acknowledges it hasn't completed any of eight recommendations that U.S. safety regulators have proposed since 2001. One would set minimum standards for officials who determine whether truckers are medically safe to drive. Another would prevent truckers from "doctor shopping" to find a physician who might overlook a risky health condition. It's unclear whether any of the eight recommendations will be done before President Bush leaves office.

"We have a major public safety problem, and we haven't corrected it," said Gerald Donaldson, senior research director at the Washington-based Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, whose members include consumer, health and safety groups and insurance companies. "You have an agency that is favorably

disposed to maintaining the integrity of the industry's economic situation."

Truckers violating federal medical rules have been caught in every state, according to a review by the AP of 7.3 million commercial driver violations compiled by the Transportation Department in 2006, the latest data available. Texas, Maryland, Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, Alabama, New Jersey, Minnesota and Ohio were states where drivers were sanctioned most frequently for breaking medical rules, such as failing to carry a valid medical certificate. Those 12 states accounted for half of all such violations in the United States.

Some truckers said the government should enforce existing rules, not make new ones.

"Do you enjoy your clothing and

house? Without the truck driver you would have none of it," said Gary Hull, 52, a trucker for a Louisiana company, as he drove from Edinburg, Texas, to Mansfield, La. "Our economy is based on the truck. People don't understand the ramifications of making it more restrictive for truck drivers to drive."

Hull said most drivers are hard workers who earn a modest salary and cope with rising diesel prices. New regulations could add to costs and force truckers to evade the rules, he said.

"There are enough government regulations as it is," agreed Ken Cornell, interviewed at a truck stop. "The medical profession should be able to take care of it. If they have a condition where they shouldn't be driving, they should be able to catch them."

The Transportation Department said 5,300 people died in crashes involving large commercial trucks or buses in 2006, the latest year for which figures are available, and about 126,000 more were injured. A federal safety study last summer found that cases where drivers fell asleep, suffered heart attacks or seizures or otherwise were physically impaired were a leading cause of serious crashes involving large trucks. But those cases included healthy drivers who fell asleep.

"The problem is major," said Dr. Kurt Hegmann, chairman of the federal motor carrier administration's medical oversight board, which is urging more doctor visits in many cases for truckers with serious medical conditions. "It's one of the biggest causes of occupational death in the United States today."

Missouri firefighter dies from gunshot wounds after apparent ambush

MAPLEWOOD, Mo. (AP) — Firefighters became victims of what appeared to be an ambush Monday when they were fired upon from a house as they worked to put out a vehicle fire across the street, police said. One young firefighter was killed, two police officers were wounded and the house where the shots were fired later burned to the ground.

It was unclear Monday afternoon whether the gunman died in the house fire; authorities were searching the remains of the brick bungalow, St. Louis County police spokeswoman Tracy Panus said.

Little was known about the man who lived in the house in Maplewood, a suburb just southwest of St. Louis. Neighbors described him as quiet and reclusive.

Someone began firing shots from the house when firefighters arrived in

response to a 5:40 a.m. report of a pickup truck fire.

The city identified the slain firefighter as 22-year-old Ryan Hummert, son of former Maplewood Mayor Andy Hummert. Officials said he was shot to death as he got off the fire truck.

The firefighter had graduated from paramedic training in August and from the fire academy in March.

"He had been with the fire department

for only 10 months but knew it was his calling," Fire Chief Terry Merrell said as he fought back tears. "It's impossible to say in words the emotion and pain we are feeling right now."

A Maplewood police officer was treated for a shoulder wound that was not considered life-threatening, St. Mary's Hospital spokesman Eric Clark said. There was no immediate word on the condition of the other wounded police officer, who

was taken to another hospital.

Police evacuated some nearby homes — using armored vehicles in some cases — as dozens of officers surrounded the house.

"They knocked on my door — bam, bam!" said neighbor Joanna Bedford, who was asleep when police arrived. "They said,

'Let's go. Go right now!'"

The house caught fire later in the morning. Police rifles stayed pointed at the house as smoke poured from it, but authorities saw no one leave the building before it burned to the ground.

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Study finds many sunscreens ineffective, hazardous to health

BY BRIDGET DE STEFANO

Not to rub it in, but some sunscreens just don't work.

A recent study conducted by a non-profit environmental watchdog organization, Environmental Working Group, found four out of five name-brand sunscreens either do not protect as advertised or contain

harmful ingredients.

The experiment tested each sunscreen to determine its overall effectiveness in three categories: UVA protection, UVB protection and the stability of the active ingredients during their exposure to sunlight.

According to the report, 15 percent of the 952 sunblocks tested for the study met EWG health standards in these three areas.

The EWG requirements are based on data from industrial, government and academic sources that establish criteria for the safety levels of potentially toxic chemicals often found in sunscreen. The risk factors also were based on tested products' effective ultraviolet radiation protection and their associated chemical stability.

According to the report, the FDA has set no mandatory standard for any of these categories. Sunscreen manufacturers are not legally obligated to produce products that protect consumers from the sun or guarantee consumer safety.

Of the tested sunscreens with a sun protection factor of 30 or more, according to the report, 7 percent lack the ingredients necessary for UVA protection, or, in the case of many products tested, only protect from UVB.

Russell Akin, a dermatologist at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, said he recommends the use of sunscreens that protect from both UVA rays — the rays linked to aging and skin damage — and UVB rays, which are the

rays linked to sunburns. Overexposure to both UVA and UVB rays contribute to the development of cancer.

"Number one: SPF is a rating for UVB rays only, which are involved in causing cancer, but more involved in burning," he said, but UVA rays, which also can cause cancer, are linked more closely to cosmetic damage of the skin known as "photo-aging."

The organization's analysis found 48 percent of products on the market contain chemical compounds that quickly break down in sunlight. This instability prevents the products from protecting skin from UV radiation as effectively as they claim.

Some commonly misleading claims on sunscreen labels, according to the report, include broad-spectrum protection, all-day protection, waterproof and chemical-free.

Many sunscreens contain minute amounts of potentially hazardous chemicals, according to the EWG. While these chemicals do not normally absorb through healthy skin, using sunscreens in powder or spray form can introduce these chemicals into the bloodstream through the lungs after inhalation.

More effective UVA filters that could replace these potentially harmful ingredients are available in Europe but have not been approved for use in the United States, according to the report. Its conclusion: the United States lags behind other nations in the approval and utilization of more effective sunscreen chemicals.

The EWG study reported some leading brands — like Coppertone and Neutrogena — are the worst offenders, but there are a

number of sunscreens on the market that do their job, such as Blue Lizard and the generic CVS Pharmacy brand.

Researchers identified 143 sunscreens that adequately protect and contain ingredients that cause minimal health risks to users.

Akin does not recommend a specific brand of sunscreen, but said he advises patients to use those with an SPF of at least 30 and to actually apply it accordingly.

He tells patients to wear hats and sun-protective clothing. He also asks them to stay in shaded areas if they are going to be outside for a long period of time.

"Putting on sunscreen doesn't mean that you're completely protected either," Akin said.

The rise in skin cancer cases resulting from prolonged exposure to the sun and tanning beds, Akin said, concerns many dermatologists.

The National Cancer Institute reported more than 1 million new cases of non-melanoma cancer in the United States in 2008. That type of cancer that resulted in less than 1,000 deaths during that year.

Americans could decrease their incidence of skin cancer, Akin said, by limiting the amount of time they spend exposed to the sun's radiation.

In its report, the EWG warned consumers about certain ingredients that may cause contact allergies when absorbed into the skin.

Contact allergies to ingredients like para-aminobenzoic acid, and benzophenones, Akin said, may result from sunscreen use. These ingredients also are often found as additives in many over-the-counter products.

The report also advised consumers to avoid sunscreens with fragrances, dyes and

insect repellents, which may cause allergies and reproductive problems.

Sunscreens with certain fragrances and dyes can cause allergic reactions, said Akin, and cause reactions generally not any more problematic than allergens found in other household products.

"It's something that we are commonly exposed to in our environment," Akin said. "It just happens to be in sunscreens as well."

After reading sunscreen labels, the study advised, buy sunscreen products with an SPF of 30 or higher, and look for products with at least 7 percent zinc oxide or titanium dioxide for broad-spectrum protection.

Several Texas Tech students who were exposed to the sun at a local swimming pool on Thursday were asked if they were wearing sunscreen. Of the six, one said she was.

Most participants said they do not wear sunscreen because they do not get burned and because they want to get a tan, which they believed sunscreen prevented.

Elaine Garcia, a senior Human Development and Family Studies major from Lubbock, said buying sunscreen can be a costly investment because she has to purchase the more expensive brands to get quality protection.

Hailey Short, a senior business major from Lubbock, said she wears sunscreen protect her skin from becoming "leathered" at a young age.

"I wear it because I don't want to have a wrinkly chest whenever I am old," said Short. "That's my main reason."

Caution should be taken when spending time outdoors in the summer, Akin said. The best thing one can do is limit their exposure to the sun.

"It is important to be smart," said Akin, "and do things that are reasonable."

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Harrington amongst best in golf, goes back-to-back in British Open

SOUTHPORT, England (AP) — Padraig Harrington and Greg Norman strolled away from the 18th green at Royal Birkdale, all even at two major championships apiece.

Then, they headed off in different directions.

Harrington had to reclaim the claret jug and ponder his growing stature within the sport. He's gone back-to-back in the British Open, but doesn't intend to stop there.

"I didn't realize I'd get another major so quickly," the Irishman said

Sunday evening, savoring a four-stroke victory in golf's oldest championship.

But, he was quick to add, "I WAS confident it would happen again."

Norman never saw this one coming. At 53, he got an improbable chance to rekindle the glory that supposedly passed him by years ago. Now, he can get back to his honeymoon with tennis great Chris Evert and return to being a part-time hacker.

Of course, it sure would have been nice to rewrite the ending to

his underachieving legacy.

"I can walk away from here being disappointed," Norman said, having shot a 7-over 77 to toss away a two-shot lead in the final round. "But I can walk away from here with my head held high."

While Norman was fading away, Harrington smashed a pair of fairway metals into the par 5s that carried him to a 32 on the back nine of blustery Royal Birkdale and made him Europe's first player in more than a century to win the Open two years in a row.

"Obviously, winning a major puts you in a special club," said Harrington, who closed like a champion with a 69 to win by four shots over Ian Poulter, with Norman another stroke back. "Winning two of them puts you in a new club altogether."

Harrington moved up to No. 3 in the world rankings, his highest spot, trailing only Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson. It's lofty company, but he doesn't feel out of place.

One of the hardest workers on tour, he's crafted a schedule that focuses mainly on the majors. He'd like to contend in half of those each year, "Then all you need to do is maybe hit one out of four of those and you're winning one every second year. That's a pretty high rate for us mere mortals."

By mere mortals, Harrington was referring to everyone not named Tiger. Woods, who sat out the Open to recover from knee surgery, is in a league of his own. But the likable Irishman is

sure feeling more confident about his place in the second flight.

"I've matured as a player," Harrington said. "I trust my game more, and I definitely have more confidence in my swing."

Playing in the final group with Norman, Harrington certainly understood the significance of what the Shark was trying to accomplish. He won the Open twice in his prime, at Turnberry in 1986 and Royal St. George's in '93, but it had been a decade since his last victory. He would have easily been the oldest major winner, besting the record set by 48-year-old Julius Boros at the 1968 PGA Championship.

Throw into the mix that Norman is best remembered as the worst closer in major tournament history, a player of enormous talent who never figured out how to finish things off. Sunday was the eighth time he's gone to the final round with a lead.

He's now 1-7.

"I did say to him coming down 18 that I was sorry it wasn't his story that was going to be told," Harrington said. "But I wanted to win myself. In this game, you have to take your chances when you get them."

Especially when you're playing with an ailing wrist and weren't even sure you'd be able to finish the tournament, much less win it.

Harrington shook off the pain from a practice mishap the previous weekend and came through with the shot of his life at the par-5 17th. After teeing off with a 5-wood, he was still 249 yards from the hole. He could have played it safe, but that might have given Norman — still clinging to hope — the possibility of a two-shot swing with an eagle.

Harrington again went with the 5-wood, his favorite club in the bag, and took aim at a funky green that looks as if it might have been borrowed from a putt-putt course. He rocketed a low shot that stayed below the howling gusts, the ball skidding onto the green and rolling right up next to the flag. All he had to do was knock in a 5-foot putt for an eagle of his own.

Game, set, match.

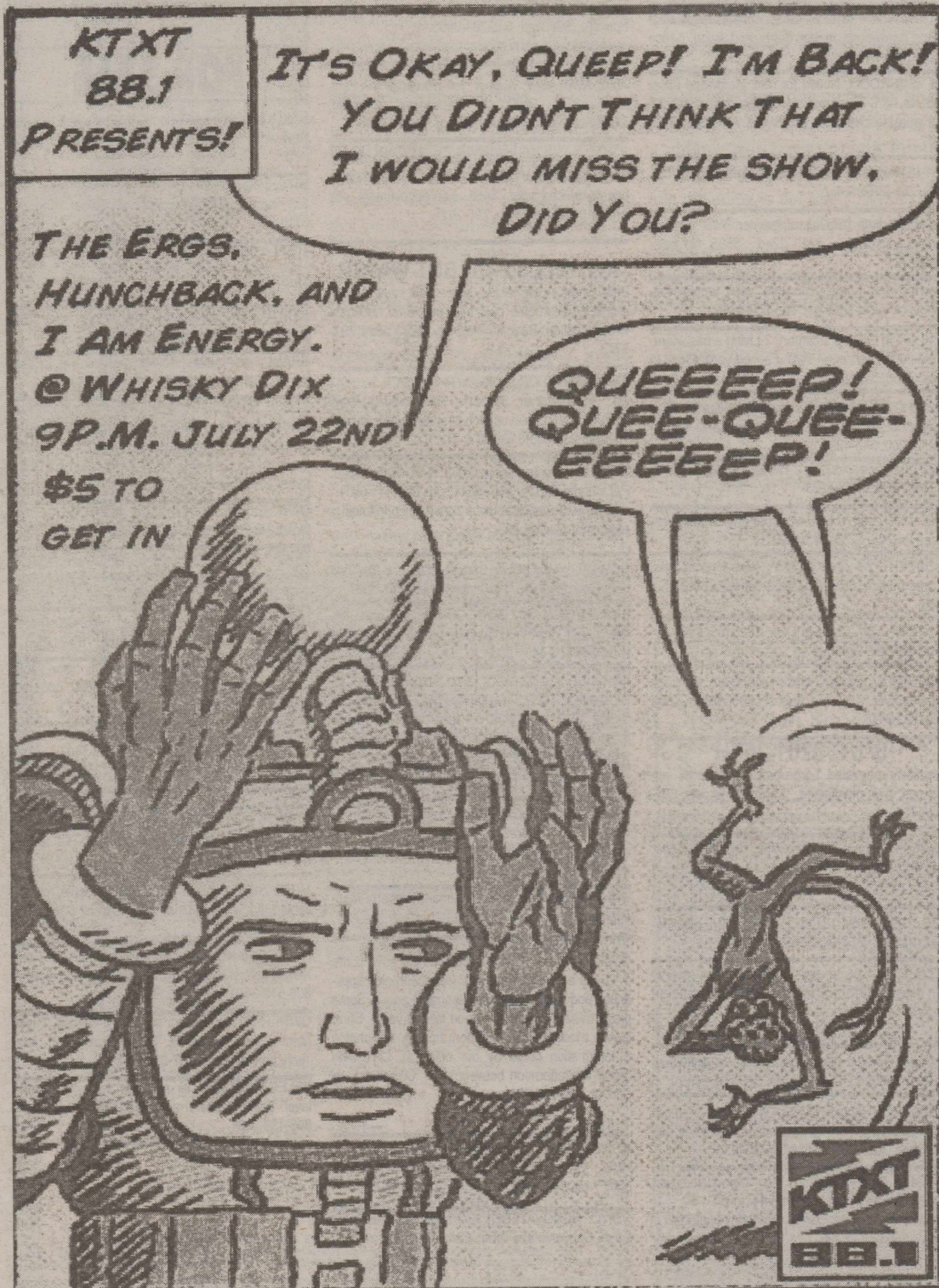
That left Harrington with a nice, leisurely stroll up the 18th green — a striking contrast to his nerve-racking walk on the 72nd hole a year ago at Carnoustie, where he dunked two balls in the Barry Burn and set himself up to join Jean Van de Velde in the chokers hall of fame.

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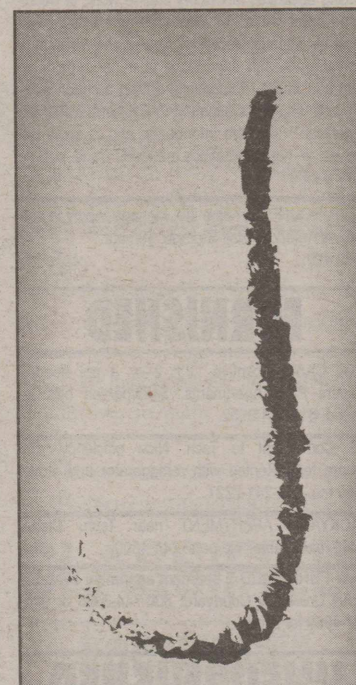
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