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Golf 'jock' is a Scotsman

By Colin Crombie
"Jock" has another meaning now that Ian Stratton is with the Texas A&M Golf Team.
Stratton, 19, was born in Irvine, Scotland and has lived in South Africa for the past 6 years.
"Jock's a Scotsman," he explained, speaking with a South African accent. And in Great Britain, that's what the word means.

Bob Ellis, the Texas A&M golf coach, first heard of Stratton when he met Phil Ritson, the South African golf coach, at the San Diego Junior World Tournament in July of this year.

Ellis picked Stratton because of the South African reputation in golf and because of Ritson's reputation.
"When he (Ritson) recommended someone to me, I listened," Ellis said. As a result, Stratton was awarded a golf scholarship in August and he arrived in College Station on August 19.

"I started playing golf when I was five or six," Stratton said. He won

three regional golf tournaments for his age division in Scotland.

His family then moved to Johannesburg, South Africa, where he improved his talent. After one year there, Stratton was playing for the South African Under-19 Side.

With that team he won the Slazinger Golf Trophy, which he described as the "second most important trophy in South Africa," and several regional (Transvaal) golf tournaments.

Stratton was also successful with the six-member Southern Transvaal under-19 side.

"I played 40 games (match play) for them and was never beaten once," he said. (Match play has an individual, hole by hole scoring, as opposed to stroke play, which is a tally of strokes per hole. Stroke play is used in major tournaments.)

Stratton practices daily on the Texas A&M golf course.

"It's quite an easy course, fairly short, but the wind blows a bit and it can get difficult," he said.

The Fall Conference at Texarkana (Sep. 11, 12 and 13) will be Stratton's first game for Texas A&M if he qualifies. He joins other newcomers Mark Taylor of Illinois, Jay Kent of Texas, and Richard Cromwell of Florida. Taylor has won the National Insurance Youth Classic.

Stratton will also join returning A&M golfers Tim Carlton of Louisiana, all-American Dave Ogryn of Illinois and Doug Ward of Arkansas.

Last year Texas A&M ranked second in Southwest Conference golf and was 11th in the nation.

During the South African winter (summertime in America) the golf courses in the Transvaal province dry up and are hard to play on.

"I'd lost a bit of interest in the game," Stratton said. Then he was awarded the scholarship, which has covered most of his dorm expenses.

Stratton, a freshman majoring in marketing, lives in Cain Hall.
"It is most definitely the best

dorm in the university, possibly the best dorm in the nation," he said. He has had no problems in settling in apart from "the way they speak in Texas," he said.

"America has a good golf program through college," Stratton said. "There's nothing like that in South Africa." He pointed out that the American program produces better senior players.

But "South African juniors are stronger (at golf) than American juniors," he said, and called South Africa a good country for golf.

Stratton is not the only foreign athlete at Texas A&M, but he is the first to play golf. There is a possibility that other foreign golfers may play for Texas A&M.

"There's some that we're keeping our eyes on," Ellis said and he added that the greatest recruiting

tool is a foreign player who is here.

Of the six sports in the Texas A&M Athletic Department, the only other to have had foreign team members. Two South African athletes, Manfred Kohrs and Tom Wheeler, are presently on the team. Two athletes from Ghana, the first and only other foreign athletes.

Freddie Nelson, cross country track coach, said that there is a particular reason for so few foreign athletes at A&M. He added that Texas A&M mainly recruits Texas athletes because there are good athletes here.

"Will there be more athletes at Texas A&M in the future?"

"If we could get good athletes," Nelson said.

Golf Tournament schedule for fall, 1977.

Date	Tournament	Place
Sep. 11, 12, 13	Fall Conference	Texarkana
Sep. 21, 22, 23	All College	Oklahoma City
Oct. 1, 2	Houston	Houston
Oct. 7, 8, 9	River City	Memphis
Oct. 19, 20, 21	L.S.U.	Baton Rouge
Oct. 27, 28, 29	Bill Bass Intercollegiate	Brownsville
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