By Lore Alvar

History, tradition, and championships come to mind when mentioning ASU's golf program. But the golf program's success has been built on and relies heavily upon the international golf scene.

“One of the things with having so many international players is that it really adds to our team chemistry,” ASU’s women’s golf coach Melissa Luellen said. “It really brings them close because they’re so far away that they need each other. They are very supportive of each other on and off the golf course.”

The women’s players and four men’s players on ASU’s respective rosters hail from outside the United States.

But it wasn’t the intention of the Sun Devil coaches to recruit so many international players. They essentially found their own way to this desert oasis that boasts some of the nation’s finest golf courses.

“The courses and facilities are better here than back at home,” said freshman Joelle Timm, who hails from Sweden. “If you’ve ever played golf in the United States, you know that Phoenix and Arizona is a good place to go. Not many colleges have a facility like the one here.”

For any program, much of the effort to develop into a strong team goes into recruiting top-notch players. But unlike many schools, ASU has developed into a school that recruits globally — one aspect that sets it apart from the rest of the crowd.

Both ASU coaches have increased the Sun Devils’ international flavor by touring the annual European Golf Championships. “I’ve developed a lot of good contacts with the international golf scene (in Europe),” ASU men’s golf coach Randy Lein said. “I think I’ve gotten the best of the best out of Europe.”

“A lot of our players who have gone through the program tell either how great it is to play here and that it is a big help when it comes to narrating. Word of mouth, just like in any form of advertising, is the least expensive, but the most effective.”

James Byrne
Banchory, Scotland

Q: How is it having other international players on your team? A: I think it helps a lot. I room with Jesper (Kennegard) and you pretty much go through the same adjustments together — since half of the team is international, I feel more part of the team, which is good.

Q: What’s the one thing you miss most about home? A: I miss my mom’s good home cooking and also sleeping in my bed.

Q: What other schools were you international? A: I also went on recruiting trips to Texas, California and Oklahoma but decided that this was the best fit for me.

Knut Borsheim
Bergen, Norway

Q: How do you choose ASU? A: For me it wasn’t an option to go anywhere else. I had good contact with the coach and had seen a couple of times with the (Norwegian) National Team, so I was a little familiar with him.

Q: How do you start playing golf? A: Started playing when I was 10. I got hurt playing soccer, so I started up golf.

Anna Nordqvist
Eskilstuna, Sweden

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: Moving away from home was the biggest thing. It was a little scary being on my own and I lost some time for me to adjust. But everything since has been pretty smooth.

Q: When did you start playing golf? A: Started playing at 10 because my dad and sister brother played.

Jesper Kennegard
Klippan, Sweden

Q: What are your plans after graduation? A: I want to turn pro one day. I’m not sure which tour (I’ll be playing for, but I plan on playing for at least two years, and want to graduate. Most of all I think it’s a good experience to stay and get the experience.

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: Some of the English words are hard to learn but having a nomencal James Byrne who speaks English helps. We can help out with stuff when I ask him, so that’s good for me.

Tristan Bierenbroodspoot
Loon Op Land, Netherlands

Q: You weren’t playing golf, what else would you be doing? A: I would probably be playing soccer. That was the other sport that I liked when I was little, but I like playing golf. I think the people around me are more unique, and that’s always nicer.

Q: What other escolas were you international? A: The other school I was interested in was Oregon State, but I chose ASU because of the weather and the facilities.

Azahara Muñoz
Malaga, Spain

Q: What’s the one thing you miss most about home? A: I miss the beach. It’s a different kind of home than it is here. In Europe, everything is more social. We do everything together.

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: The first month was really hard. I didn’t speak any English at all and had trouble in class and talking with my teammates. But other than that, it was fine.

By Lore Alvar

Q: How did you choose ASU? A: For me it wasn’t an option to go anywhere else. I had good contact with the coach and had seen a couple of times with the (Norwegian) National Team, so I was a little familiar with him.

Q: How do you start playing golf? A: Started playing when I was 10. I got hurt playing soccer, so I started up golf.

James Byrne
Banchory, Scotland

Q: How is it having other international players on your team? A: I think it helps a lot. I room with Jesper (Kennegard) and you pretty much go through the same adjustments together — since half of the team is international, I feel more part of the team, which is good.

Q: What’s the one thing you miss most about home? A: I miss my mom’s good home cooking and also sleeping in my bed.

Q: What other schools were you international? A: I also went on recruiting trips to Texas, California and Oklahoma but decided that this was the best fit for me.

Knut Borsheim
Bergen, Norway

Q: How do you choose ASU? A: For me it wasn’t an option to go anywhere else. I had good contact with the coach and had seen a couple of times with the (Norwegian) National Team, so I was a little familiar with him.

Q: How do you start playing golf? A: Started playing when I was 10. I got hurt playing soccer, so I started up golf.

Anna Nordqvist
Eskilstuna, Sweden

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: Moving away from home was the biggest thing. It was a little scary being on my own and I lost some time for me to adjust. But everything since has been pretty smooth.

Q: When did you start playing golf? A: Started playing at 10 because my dad and sister brother played.

Jesper Kennegard
Klippan, Sweden

Q: What are your plans after graduation? A: I want to turn pro one day. I’m not sure which tour (I’ll be playing for, but I plan on playing for at least two years, and want to graduate. Most of all I think it’s a good experience to stay and get the experience.

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: Some of the English words are hard to learn but having a nomencal James Byrne who speaks English helps. We can help out with stuff when I ask him, so that’s good for me.

Tristan Bierenbroodspoot
Loon Op Land, Netherlands

Q: You weren’t playing golf, what else would you be doing? A: I would probably be playing soccer. That was the other sport that I liked when I was little, but I like playing golf. I think the people around me are more unique, and that’s always nicer.

Q: What other escolas were you international? A: The other school I was interested in was Oregon State, but I chose ASU because of the weather and the facilities.

Azahara Muñoz
Malaga, Spain

Q: What’s the one thing you miss most about home? A: I miss the beach. It’s a different kind of home than it is here. In Europe, everything is more social. We do everything together.

Q: How was it adjusting to life in America? A: The first month was really hard. I didn’t speak any English at all and had trouble in class and talking with my teammates. But other than that, it was fine.