

"I know what it's like to live without hope, to live with pain and with failure. I want to pass on to others what one person did for me."

GENE FAZIO
MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR

Saving players' futures

MCC instructor helps football stars qualify or regain eligibility

By **BOB MORAN**
TRIBUNE

You've probably had the same thought.

Gene Fazio, an English instructor at Mesa Community College, often wondered how football players who struggle in the classroom can master a thick, complicated playbook.



Gene Fazio

"All these guys are intelligent," he maintains. "They couldn't lack intelligence and master what they do on the football field."

That belief led Fazio to begin working with academically deficient athletes, which is part of a larger goal of improving literacy in the Valley.

Fazio has been instrumental in helping several well-known Valley football players either qualify for an athletic scholarship or regain their eligibility after falling behind in their schoolwork.

Among the 30 athletes he's worked with since 1988 are former Arizona State quarterback Michael Johnson, Dobson High School alumnus Toby Wright, Tempe High graduate Lynzell Jackson, current ASU linebacker DeAndre Johnson of Phoenix South Mountain High and

Mercury remain focused

By **BRAD FALDUTO**
TRIBUNE

John Shumate has a message for anyone who gave up on the young Phoenix Mercury after they started the season so poorly.

"You can't be a fair-weather fan," said Shumate, the Mercury's first-year coach. "In our country, we always get so used to everything being instant

Mercury at Fever

When: 5 p.m. today
Where: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis
TV/radio: None/ESPN (860 AM)
Records: Phoenix 3-11; Indiana 7-6

gratification, so if it doesn't work right away, then we kind of give up on it and we

go to the next thing. These ladies have some special qualities. We still have some things that we have to add. They just fight, fight, fight, and they are getting better."

Actually, Shumate has been saying all of that since the season opened May 22. He finally got some credibility on Saturday when the Mercury went into Detroit and pulled off a 68-65 upset of the Shock, who entered

the game with the best record in the WNBA.

The victory — the Mercury's first on the road this season against six losses and only their second in their last 29 road games — gave the 3-11 Mercury something to celebrate in a season mostly void of victory parties. The Mercury, though, had to quickly end

SEE MERCURY • PAGE C9



YOUNG DREAMS: Sydney Burlison, a 13-year-old from Carmel Valley, Calif., is one of several teenagers competing in this weekend's U.S. Women's Open in North Plains, Ore.

JOHN GRESS,
THE
ASSOCIATED
PRESS

Look out for teenage drivers

Open loaded with young girls with sweet swings

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NORTH PLAINS, Ore. • At any other major championship, Sydney Burlison would look out of place. She fits right in at the U.S. Women's Open.

The 13-year-old girl with big dreams, wide eyes and a full set of braces just finished the seventh grade at All Saints

As the sun tried to fight through low clouds hanging over Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club, Burlison took her place on the practice range Tuesday, just down the row from defending champion Juli Inkster, 43, who has a daughter the same age.

Sure, Burlison is the youngest player in the 156-woman field, but only by nine days over Michelle Wie of Honolulu.

And remember Morgan Pressel from Boca Raton, Fla.?

Two years ago, she became the youngest qualifier in U.S. Women's Open history and

year as a 15-year-old, only this time she's old news.

"Teenagers are taking over the most prestigious tournament in women's golf."

Burlison, Wie and Pressel are among 14 teens on parade at Pumpkin Ridge, the most anyone from the U.S. Golf Association can recall. No one knows because for years the USGA only asked for the handicap, not the age.

If it's a record, it might not last long.

"I think you're going to see it every year," said Cristie



TENNIS

STEP CLOSER: Venus and Serena Williams each win to advance to the Wimbledon semifinals. **CB**

FOOTBALL

HONOR: Former Arizona Cardinal Pat Tillman and his brother Kevin, who left pro sports careers to serve their country in the Army at wartime, have been named recipients of the Arthur Ashe Courage Award. **C2**

COLLEGES

DENIED: Washington athletic director Barbara Hedges rejects football coach Rick Neuheisel's appeal to keep his job. **CB**

Scoreboard

Baseball/C6-7

National League
Colorado 7, Arizona 4
N.Y. Mets 7, Montreal 6
Philadelphia 4, Chicago Cubs 3
Cincinnati 5, Pittsburgh 3
Florida 20, Atlanta 1
San Francisco 5, St. Louis 1
Houston 6, Milwaukee 5 (10)
San Diego 7, Los Angeles 1

American League

Detroit 5, Toronto 0
Kansas City 6, Cleveland 3
Chi White Sox 6, Minnesota 1
Baltimore 7, N.Y. Yankees 3
Tampa Bay 4, Boston 3 (11)
Anaheim 7, Texas 5
Oakland 3, Seattle 2 (11)

U.S. Women's Open

When: Thursday-Sunday
Where: Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club, North Plains, Ore.
TV: ESPN (Thursday-Friday, 1-5 p.m.) and Ch. 12 (Saturday, 1-4 p.m.; Sunday Noon-4 p.m.)
Purse: \$3.1 million

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