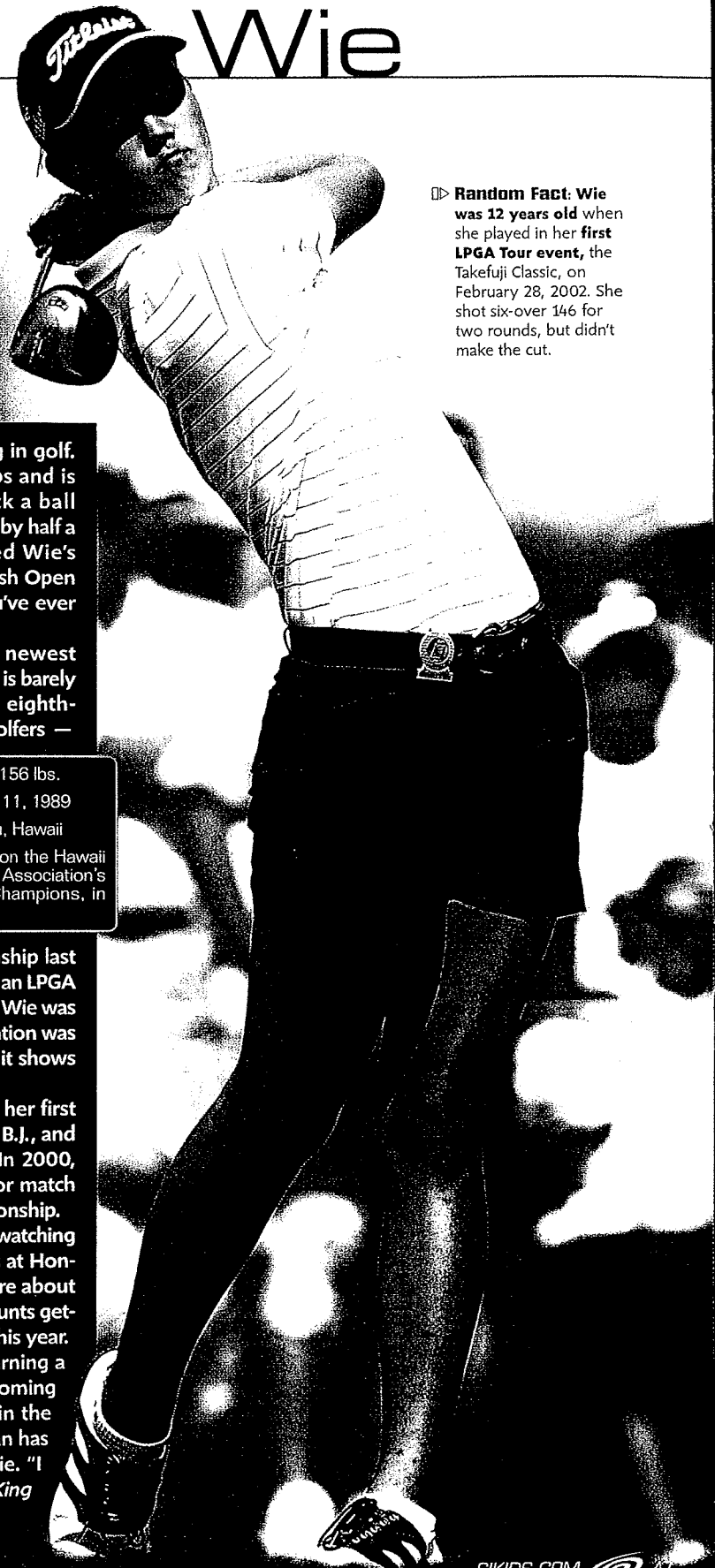


ON OUR RADAR

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# Michelle Wie

## Tee-rific Teen



▶ **Random Fact:** Wie was 12 years old when she played in her first LPGA Tour event, the Takefuji Classic, on February 28, 2002. She shot six-over 146 for two rounds, but didn't make the cut.

**T**here is nothing small about the next big thing in golf. Michelle Wie [wee] stands 6' tall in flip-flops and is a well-muscled 156 pounds. She can smack a ball 280 yards, outdistancing the average female pro golfer by half a football field. PGA player Tom Lehman compared Wie's powerful swing to that of Ernie Els, the defending British Open men's champion. "[Her swing] is the scariest thing you've ever seen," says PGA veteran Fred Couples.

But the most jaw-dropping statistic about golf's newest sensation is her age. Wie is just 13 years old. Though she is barely old enough to compete on golf's junior circuit, the eighth-grader from Hawaii is already playing against the best golfers — male and female — in the world.

Last February, Wie was 43rd against 191 pro and amateur male golfers in the Hawaii Pearl Open. This September, at the Boise Open, she'll become the first female golfer to play on the PGA Tour's developmental circuit. Wie has also received invitations to six LPGA

**Height:** 6' **Weight:** 156 lbs.  
**Birth Date:** October 11, 1989  
**Birthplace:** Honolulu, Hawaii  
**Accomplishments:** Won the Hawaii State Junior Golf Association's Tournament of Champions, in 2001 and 2002

tournaments this year. At the Kraft Nabisco Championship last March, she became the youngest golfer to make the cut in an LPGA event. After finishing ninth overall, with an even-par 288, Wie was mobbed by reporters and autograph seekers. "The attention was a little crazy, but I was really excited," she says. "I hope it shows how much practice pays off."

Wie has been perfecting her game since she struck her first golf ball, at age 4. At age 9, she was beating her father, B.J., and her mother, Bo, a former Korean amateur champion. In 2000, Wie became the youngest golfer (age 10) to qualify for match play at the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship.

Between practicing golf (about 30 hours a week) and watching her favorite TV show (*Smallville*), Wie earns mostly A's at Honolulu's Punahou School. "I play and travel a lot, but I care about the same things as most kids my age," says Wie, who counts getting her braces off on May 23 as one of her highlights this year.

Wie's dreams are as far-reaching as her tee shots: earning a scholarship to Stanford (Tiger Woods's alma mater), becoming the world's Number 1 female golfer, and competing in the Masters at Augusta National — a course that no woman has ever played. "I'm not looking to prove a point," says Wie. "I just want to play the best there is."

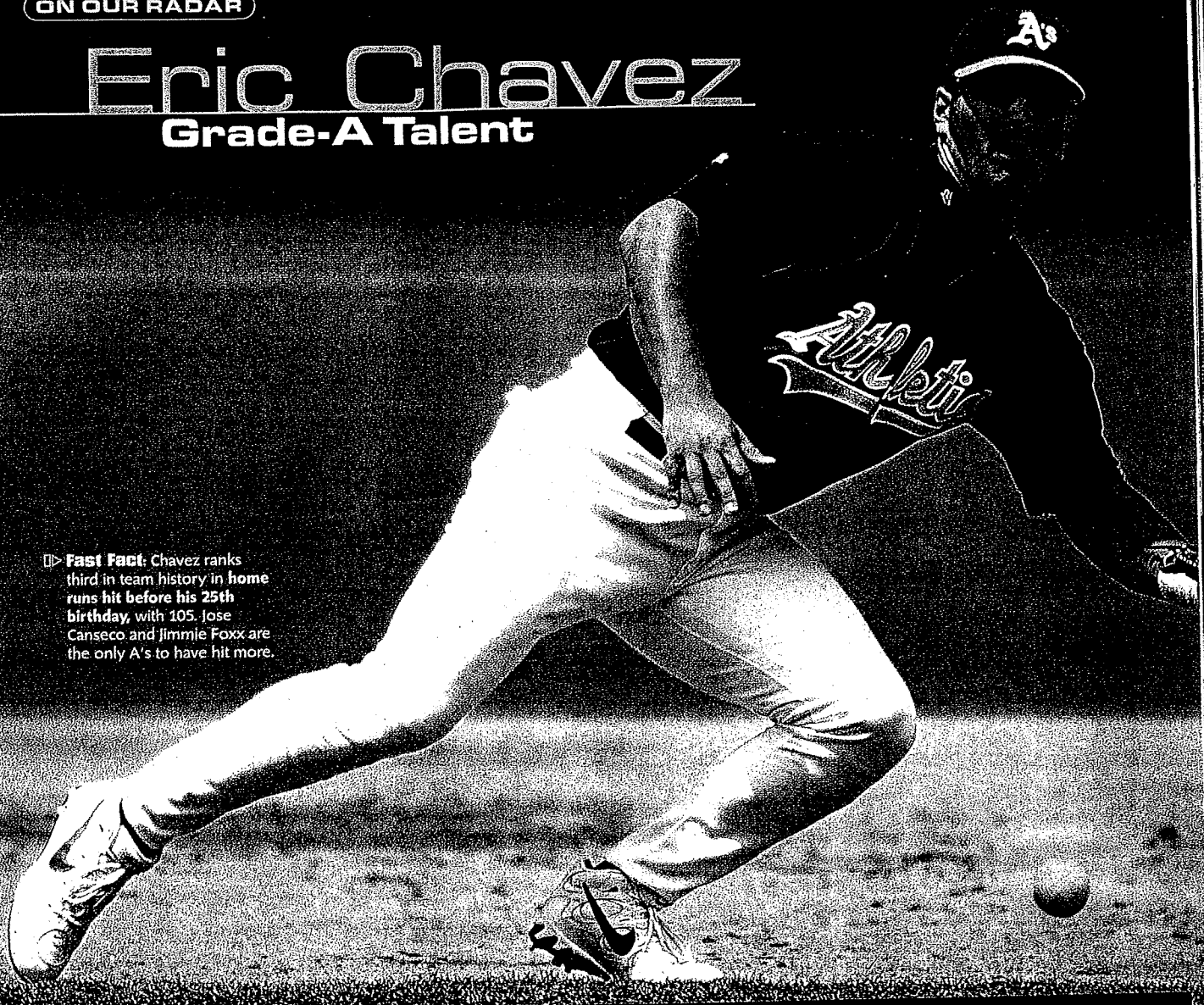
— by Kelley King

ON OUR RADAR

# Eric Chavez

## Grade-A Talent

**Fast Fact:** Chavez ranks third in team history in home runs hit before his 25th birthday, with 105. Jose Canseco and Jimmie Foxx are the only A's to have hit more.



**W**ith power at the plate and flair in the field, third baseman Eric Chavez of the Oakland A's is the complete package. He has averaged 33 homers and 112 RBIs over the past two seasons and won a pair of Gold Glove awards. But all that talent comes with a burden: great expectations. Living up to them can be tough, even for a big leaguer. "This is definitely a job," says Chavez, 25. "Everything is performance-driven up here. When you have success, this game's fun. But [it's] all built on winning."

At first glance, it doesn't look like winning has been a problem. With Chavez manning the "hot corner," the A's have made the playoffs in each of the past three seasons. But over that time they have not made it past the first round. And as good

as Chavez has been, he hears voices saying he could be even better. Oakland general manager Billy Beane has said that Chavez has all the talent of a young Barry Bonds.

The pressure increases every spring because Chavez is usually a slow starter at the plate. His career batting average lurks in the .250's and .260's through the first three months of the season. He was hitting just .252 through June 9 this season.

When he is struggling, he calls on three people. The first two are former high school teammate Eric Munson (now with the Tigers) and former A's star Jason Giambi (now with the Yankees). The third?

"I called my mom the other day and said, 'This is horrible. I'm ready to quit,'" says Chavez. "She has to

put up with me when I get emotional. Really, it's just me venting."

The venting is necessary because Chavez also puts a lot of pressure on himself. "[His] lows are really low and the highs aren't too high," says Oakland ace Barry Zito.

Because of Chavez's combination of drive and talent, the question isn't "Will Eric Chavez be a superstar?" The question is "When?"

The answer could be this summer, when Chavez traditionally heats up at the plate. His career batting average has climbed to .276 in July and to .307 in

August. Come the dog days, the pressure won't be on Chavez. It will be on opposing pitchers.

— by Mark Saxon

Height: 6' 1" Weight: 206 lbs.  
Birth Date: December 7, 1977  
Birthplace: Los Angeles, California  
Accomplishments: Won second straight Gold Glove and set career highs in homers (34), hits (161), and walks (65) in 2002.

**ERIC CHAVEZ + MICHELLE WIE**

1. WHAT POSITION DOES CHAVEZ PLAY?
2. ERIC CHAVEZ HAS NEVER WON A GOLD GLOVE. TRUE OR FALSE.
3. OAKLAND'S GENERAL MANAGER SAYS CHAVEZ HAS THE TALENT OF WHAT YOUNG PLAYER?
4. HOW OLD WAS MICHELLE WHEN SHE PLAYED IN HER FIRST LPGA TOUR?
5. HOW FAR CAN MICHELLE HIT A GOLF BALL?
6. AT WHAT AGE DID MICHELLE HIT A GOLF BALL?
7. WHAT COLLEGE DID MICHELLE EARN A SCHOLARSHIP TO?
8. WHAT COURSE WILL MICHELLE BE COMPETEING AT THAT NO OTHER FEMALE HAS?
9. WHAT PLACE DID MICHELLE FINISH IN AT THE HAWAII PEARL OPEN AGAINST THE MEN?
10. MICHELLE HAS ALREADY MORE WINS THEN TIGGER WOODS IN HER FIRST YEAR. TRUE OR FALSE.