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▲ NCAA TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Success: Injury couldn't stop Davis

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But that didn't stop Davis from running. On a normal week, Davis does doubles, running in the morning and evening. The first week back from surgery, he did abbreviated workouts. But ever since he has gone full speed ahead.

"If I sat around for three weeks and then the season was over, it wouldn't be settled inside," Davis said. "For me, if I did everything I could and the knee injury happened again, well that is out of my hands and I can sit back and say 'Well, I did this, and now the season is gone.'"

The season, however, isn't gone. But — give or take a little — the injury is.

"Right now it comes and goes," he said. "I feel it in the morning sometimes. The biggest thing is when my leg is at a full 90 degrees. Like when I am driving a car, at that angle, I will get out of the car and go 'Oh no.' But I can push it with my hand and release it. Then it is good to go, and I can go for days again."

According to Davis, mental toughness is the key to coming back from an injury.

"You can't be a lame horse; you can't always be thinking about your knee," he said. "You have to step out and start preparing for your race and try to get back to the things you normally did in the first place. That is basically what I try to do."

"I think the biggest thing when you are coming back is not physical so much, it is mental. That is what grinds you. Halfway through a race when you are hurting, it is usually upstairs. You have to think yourself out of it or think you love it."

And Davis did just that at the Pacific-10 Conference Championship meet last weekend, loving every minute of his 29:29.8, second place finish in the 10,000.

"You have to love that you are going to run the 10,000," Davis said. "I liked what happened with my race. It was the first time that I felt like 'Yeah,



ANDREW BRACKENSICK/emerald
Matt Davis and teammate Kari Keska will provide Oregon with strength in the distances.

I actually raced it.' I felt like I had control in the race. That is a definitely a positive going into the NCAA's.

"That was the first race that I zoned out. You don't hear the crowd, you are just focused on what you are doing. That brought me the confidence that I know I can race at NCAA's. When I line up at NCAA, what I can do is try 110 percent that day and give my best. I will be fine with it, no matter what the outcome is, knowing I gave 110 percent."

And knowing Davis, he will love every minute of it.

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