



NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Micah Davis goes into the qualifying round of the steeplechase at the NCAA Track and Field Championships ranked 11th in the nation. Davis finished 13th last season but earned All-American honors.

NCAAs: Buciariski competing in second meet

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If the NCAA Indoor Championships are any indication, junior Piotr Buciariski could find himself in good shape when the pole vault concludes this evening.

Buciariski cleared 18 feet, 2 1/2 inches to finish third at the NCAA Indoor meet in March.

He recorded his outdoor best, also 18-2 1/2, at the Oregon Twilight on May 15.

Buciariski enters the NCAAs as one of the top-ranked competitors. Jacob Davis of Texas is ranked first with a mark of 19-4 1/2 that he set in April, followed by Louisiana State's Russ Buller, Arizona's Dominic Johnson, Ten-

nessee's Russ Johnson and UCLA's Scott Slover, who have all gone 18-6 1/2. Buciariski is next and is tied with Purdue's Randy Miller.

Experience will be on Buciariski's side as the 1997 Pac-10 champion will be participating in his second NCAA meet. Last season, he placed eighth with a vault of 17-2 3/4 that earned him All-American honors.

"Piotr is a tough competitor, and he knows how to handle varying conditions that you have to do to make adjustments to get over the bar," said Oregon head coach Bill Dellinger.

The only other member of the Oregon men's team competing to-

day is Micah Davis, who will take part in qualifying for the steeplechase.

Micah Davis, the Pac-10 champion in that event, goes into the meet ranked 11th with a time of 8:43.37. Arkansas' Matt Kerr is ranked first with a time of 8:32.05.

Although he missed the finals of the steeplechase at last season's NCAA Championships, Micah Davis earned All-American honors as one of the top eight Americans. He finished 13th overall, just missing the 12-man cut for the finals.

Gregg Bleakney rounds out the Oregon lineup, but he will be off until the triple jump gets underway Saturday.

Maybe only McGwire can stop McGwire

Major league home run leader Mark McGwire hurt his back during a game with the Padres

By Bernie Wilson
The Associated Press

If anything stops Mark McGwire from breaking Roger Maris' home run record, it probably won't be NL pitching, but rather McGwire's body.

McGwire, who leads the major leagues with 27 homers, was struck with lower back spasms when he went after a changeup from San Diego left-hander Sterling Hitchcock in the first inning Monday night.

He sent a dribbler down the first-base line, was thrown out and walked off under his own power, finished for the night.

The St. Louis first baseman said he expects to miss a three-game series at Los Angeles that started Tuesday night.

"Zippo," he said to reporters at Dodger Stadium on Tuesday when asked about his chances of playing or taking batting practice before the weekend.

"There's nothing I can do about [the back spasms]," McGwire said. "I haven't played here since 1988 [in the World Series], I was looking forward to playing here."

"There's nothing I can do, I have to do what's best for me."

I've got four [more] months to play and that's really about it."

McGwire did say he was encouraged and hoped to play in San Francisco this weekend. Before batting practice Tuesday night, he did some light stretching with his teammates.

"It's nothing to be concerned about. It probably won't be more than a few games," McGwire said after Monday night's game in San Diego, downplaying the injury

just as he downplays his fearsome power surge that has him on pace to shatter Maris' record of 61 homers in 1961.

"I took an awkward swing and I felt a twinge," he said. "I know my back like the back of my hand. I'm not going to push it. I've dealt with it every year since '89. I won't miss many games. I've done it worse."

McGwire said he ran to first base because "I wanted to believe I didn't do it."

Fans won't be the only ones wondering if the injury-prone McGwire will hold up as he pursues Maris' record.

McGwire missed more than 300 games because of foot, heel, back and rib injuries from 1992-96. He last had back troubles in spring training 1997, when he had a cortisone shot.



Mark Alan A Return Engagement

Singer/songwriter Mark Alan returns to the Collier House for a FREE performance this Today, 9 p.m. to midnight.

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"An artist who is resourceful enough to surpass the limitations of the single-guitar medium and carry a show with the vigor one might expect from a full band." L.A. Village View

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