



Sophomore Karina Elstrom makes her second NCAA appearance in the pole vault.

Women

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I've trained for this year is coming down to this weekend."

Seeded 10th in the 3,000, Davis is confident that her experience is a great asset at the NCAA's. Last fall, Davis took ninth place at the cross country NCAA Championships.

Already this spring, Davis won the Pac-10 title in the 3,000.

"Winning the Pac-10's was a great confidence booster," Davis said. "It's too bad the time was slow, but it's nice to know that I can go out there and pull out a win in a big competition."

Knudson did not qualify for the 800, an event in which she won All-American honors two years ago. However, a personal-best effort of 4 minutes, 20.51 seconds at the Oregon Twilight qualified her for the 1,500.

"I think I can run a lot faster than that, so I'm really excited," Knudson said. "Whenever you win with a [personal record], you have to think you can race a little bit faster because you're not really racing against anyone at the finish."

Her first race is Thursday's qualifying run, followed by the

1,500 finals Saturday.

"I'm excited to run a 1,500 against a group of really talented runners," Knudson said. "I'm looking forward to it."

On the other half of the spectrum, pole vaulters Niki Reed, a freshman, and Karina Elstrom, a sophomore, represent the up-and-coming Ducks.

Elstrom traveled to the NCAA's last season as one of four conference entrants and finished 16th in the pole vault.

This season, she has lived up to her high expectations. Elstrom is seeded No. 9 in Saturday's field, and she mirrored her performance down the stretch of last season when she vaulted better than 12 feet in five of her final seven appearances.

Reed was Oregon's most talented newcomer this season and topped off a great year with a second-place finish at the Pac-10 meet on a vault of 12-7 1/2. Entering Saturday's competition, Reed is seeded No. 13.

"I'm excited," Reed said. "I've never been to an NCAA meet, so I just picture it as another track meet."

Men

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brother Matthew, a solid performer in both the 5,000 and 10,000 meters.

Micah Davis was lucky enough to avoid serious injury this season, and for his entire career at Oregon. The only season he missed the national championships was his freshman year.

That humbling experience paved the way for his sophomore year, when Davis was named an All-American as one of the top eight American finishers in the steeplechase.

"My freshman year, getting to the NCAA's was a goal, but I wasn't consistent," Davis said. "As the years have gone by, I've learned how to race the way I know I can."

Davis may have watched and learned, fallen and learned or maybe even listened and learned, but he has also steadily trained to get to his current position. Every

weekday, Davis wakes up and goes on what he calls a "light" four-mile jog. On non-workout days, he runs five to six miles in the afternoon.

In his final season at Oregon, Davis has run his fastest time and is just more than three seconds out of the program's all-time top 10. He was the first Oregon runner to be named Pac-10 Athlete of the Week for his performance at the Adidas Classic, which was the fastest time run by a Duck since 1991.

Now, Davis has one more chance to take all that he has learned and turn it into an NCAA championship.

"It's the national championships," Oregon head coach Martin Smith said. "If you're a national-class athlete, this is what you've been preparing for."

Davis' preparation may have been hampered a bit this season, but Thursday he'll be right on track.

Sports Brief

Supplement may grow breasts, not muscles

CHICAGO — The dietary supplement used by Mark McGwire does nothing to boost men's strength and instead might promote breast enlargement, heart disease and cancer, a study suggests.

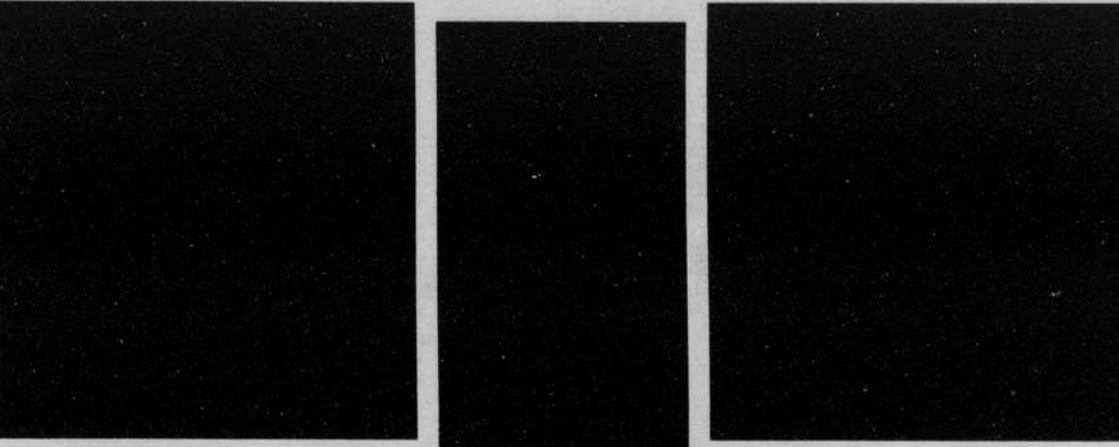
The study, published in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association, compared androstenedione with a dummy pill in 20 men ages 19 to 29 during an eight-week weightlifting program.

The supplement, a steroid, is made of a naturally occurring hormone the body uses in tiny

amounts to make the male hormone testosterone.

Androstenedione supplements contain many times the amount found in the body naturally, and McGwire has said he uses the substance to speed recovery from minor injuries.

— The Associated Press



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