



Catharine Kendall Emerald

Morrison is learning to implement the many intricate techniques of the hammer.

Hammer

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cus. But she persevered and made an appearance in the Pacific-10 Conference Championships.

And in the meantime, she threw the hammer, oh, five times that year.

The ankles were worse the next season and would require more than one surgery. The rugged, grinding nature of the discus made it so painful that Mo began to experiment more with the hammer.

That sophomore season she finished seventh in the Pac-10 in the hammer (168-4) and sixth in the discus (166-9).

"Mo is a neophyte," Harmon says. "She didn't really pick up the hammer until her sophomore year, when she was in atrocious pain trying to learn a new event."

She spent what was supposed to be her junior season unhappily watching the meets with fellow redshirting junior Karis Howell, the Ducks' top javelin thrower. The two were able to comfort each other. And Mo promised herself that she'd make the rest of her career special.

"It was really tough," Mo says. "I'd go to meets and bawl, go home so upset. [But] it was definitely motivational, it made me think, 'I have two years left, so I better make something of it.'"

This is what, besides breaking records, Oregon's finest hammer thrower is doing with her comeback season:

Being a big sis.

"We have 'little sisters' on the team now," Mo explains. "It would have been nice to have as a freshman, to have someone tell you what you should expect."

"[This year's freshmen] are all very innocent. I don't remember being that innocent when I got here. But they're like my little sisters, really. They're so crazy, they're so energetic, they're so hyper."

Mary Etter, one of those oh-so-innocents, clearly appreciates Mo's presence on the team.

"Mo's the biggest punk," Etter joked after the discus competition April 22. "Sometimes I just want to beat her down — no, I love her

to death. She's great."

But it doesn't stop there. This is what else Oregon's top hammer thrower has been doing:

Improving her natural rhythm. Trying to implement all the intricacies of the hammer. And learning the event with Harmon, who was the Ducks' first individual national champion in 1981—in the javelin.

"The whole principle is to get this little mass to rotate faster and faster around you," Harmon elucidates. "If you throw a little extra movement in, it shortens the line of power, the path of the ball and how fast it can gyrate. It's a constant dance, like a polka in a way, something's always flying out and coming back in ... it may look graceful but there are some kinesthetic demands on your middle ear as centrifugal forces pull you out..."

Or as Mo, a biology/psychology student, puts it: "A four-turn, four-beat, heel-toe spin."

And Mo's still persisting. Even after she missed practice for the entire week preceding last Saturday's dual to go home and deal with a family crisis.

"I called Sally that Thursday," Mo says. "And I asked her, 'Will I be able to compete, because I know I've been gone and it won't be fair to other people to take off a week and come back?' And she said, 'We need the points.' So I knew I needed to get my ass in gear."

She set the latest record. And she placed second in the discus.

She's also still enduring the pains in her ankles.

"It's going to be her Achilles heel for life," Harmon says. "But it's also going to be the thing that she draws her strength from."

Coach Harmon and her star thrower are very much on the same page.

"I don't ever think I've had a clear-sailing year," Mo says. "There's always been a couple of things. But that's what makes you work harder. Not only does it make your accomplishments seem greater, but it gives you better self-esteem when you can overcome and still come out looking pretty OK, not too dirty."

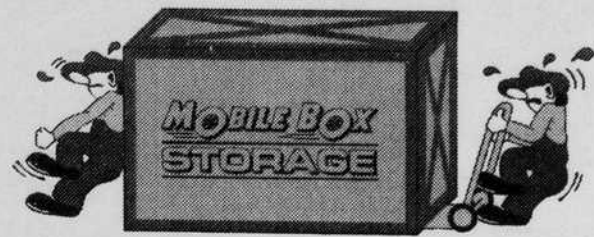
Chances are, she'll do just that starting at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday.

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