

KARIS HOWELL



Kevin Calame Emerald

Oregon's Karis Howell never imagined she'd be a thrower. At least not until her sophomore year of high school, when someone suggested she try the javelin.

"It was kind of a fluke thing," the redshirt junior said. "I was always a sprinter and a hurdler. I did volleyball and basketball. And then people started saying, 'Why don't you throw the javelin?' And I was like, 'I'm not a thrower. Why would I throw things?'"

Well, to win. Howell achieved All-American status and won the

Pacific-10 Conference as a freshman in 1997-98. Injury sidelined her until this season, but that time off gave her the opportunity to polish her fundamentals and reenergize for this season.

"I definitely looked forward to this year, about being back and just having fun with throwing," Howell said. "I think that's the biggest thing about it, not stressing too much."

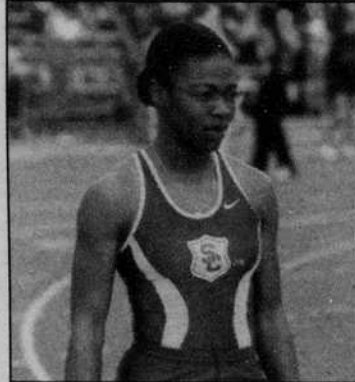
Healthy once again, the Vancouver native hasn't seemed to sweat much this season. She's the Pac-10 leading javelin thrower with a throw of 166 feet, 4 inches — five

feet further than her next closest competitor. Moreover, Howell is the only non-UCLA representative to hold that top-billing in a field event heading into this weekend's championship meet.

"I hadn't really thought about it like that, but I guess it's kind of nice," said Howell, noting she'll have to fend off the advances by last season's champ, Seilala Sua of UCLA.

Also nice is having three teammates join her in action. In addition to Howell, Oregon boasts the sixth, eighth and 11th-best javelin throwers in the conference. -M.S.

ANGELA WILLIAMS



Courtesy of UCL

Because she was busy watching TV when the phone rang eight years ago, Angela Williams tossed the receiver to her father instead of answering it herself. So when Johnny Williams answered, his surprise at who was on the other line left him stumbling through a short conversation with that person — who happened to be the fastest woman in the world.

Florence Griffith Joyner told Johnny that she would like to meet the then-12-year-old Williams, and that she wanted to give Williams some advice and encouragement. Flo Jo even wanted to make some special outfits for her.

"She said she wanted me to

break records when I got older," Williams said in a 1999 Los Angeles Times article. "I was excited." Jackie Joyner-Kersey and Gail Devers also embraced the up-and-coming star.

Angela became the first high school girl to break the 11-second barrier with a wind-aided 10.98. She's now a 20-year-old sophomore at Southern California, is currently the Pacific-10 Conference's top 100-meter runner (11.03 seconds) and third-best in the 200 (23.32). She won the 100 at last season's NCAA Championships. And the 5-foot, 2-inch speedster is hoping to make this summer's Olympic team. Never in-

timidated, Angela has adopted a fun-loving approach similar to her mentors:

"As long as I'm on top, I'm proud." -M.S.

DARNESHA GRIFFITH



Courtesy of UCLA

UCLA's Darnesha Griffith knows a little something about success.

Her aunts are the late Florence Griffith Joyner and Jackie Joyner-Kersey. But beyond Darnesha's genetics, the sophomore's jumping prowess can be linked her work ethic. But that too can be traced to her familial surroundings. In high school, Darnesha

lived with Al Joyner and Flo Jo, with whom she used to go on runs. She's even been through some of Al's legendary high-powered workouts.

That's likely why as a Trabuco Hills senior in 1998, Darnesha was able to so adeptly make use of a one-time California Southern Section ruling that allowed her to compete in two meets on one day. In a matter of hours, she leapt to second place in the long jump with a leap of 18-8 at the Arcadia Invitational after first winning the county championships with a jump of 18-2.

Darnesha is focused on the high jump. And it's paid off. Her mark of 5-10 3/4 earned her first place at the U.S. Junior meet last year. And she's ranked first in the Pac-10 in her event with 6 feet, 3/4 inches heading into this weekend's championships. -M.S.

ERI MACDONALD



Azle Malinao-Aharez Emerald

"Eddie would go."

So it was no shock when a few years ago, members of Hawaii's growing track and field community began donning shirts that read, "Eri would go."

Eri Macdonald, a freshman from Honolulu, is the sixth-best 800-meter runner (2:08.62) in the Pacific-10 Conference and one of the Ducks' top young guns.

The phrase suits her because she's game for a variety of events, excelling in the 800 and as a member of the 4x400 relay team. And also because she can't ever be counted out.

"I know if she's coming in with 100 or 200 meters to go, she's gonna win," middle distance runner Erinn Gulbrandsen said. "She's so incredibly fast, just has that incredible finish."

Indeed Macdonald, so inconspicuous off the track, has been winning races since high school

with her electrifying kick. "Ever since I've been running I've had a kick, I guess," said Macdonald, whose father broke Steve Prefontaine's American 5,000 record.

This weekend's competition could be a case in point to Macdonald's natural late-charge approach.

"Eri is ready to run well," head coach Tom Heinonen said. "She can make the finals. I think the prelim race will be to her liking because they tend to be big kick races — and she can kick with anybody. She'll be ready to strike."

But of course. As for the shirts? Abrante still has hers.

"I'll show up occasionally to practice with it, and she just blushes because everyone asks 'What's the shirt?' So I just have to explain it." Because it just fits. -M.S.

PAC-10 CHAMPIONSHIPS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TIME	SATURDAY, MAY 20	M/W	EVENT	TIME	SUNDAY, MAY 21	M/W	EVENT
1:00 p.m.	W	W	Long Jump Final	2:00 p.m.	W	W	Discus Final
1:30 p.m.	W	W	Hammer Final	3:00 p.m.	W	W	Triple Jump Final
2:00 p.m.	W	W	Shot Put Final	4:30 p.m.	W	W	Pole Vault Final
2:15 p.m.	W	W	Javelin Final	5:00 p.m.	W	W	Discus Final
3:08 p.m.	W	W	4x100m Relay Final				
3:15 p.m.	W	W	3000m Relay Qualifying				
3:20 p.m.	W	W	1500m Qualifying				
3:45 p.m.	W	W	100m Hurdles Qualifying				
4:00 p.m.	W	W	110m Hurdles Qualifying				
4:15 p.m.	W	W	Hammer Final				
4:30 p.m.	W	W	Shot Put Final				
4:30 p.m.	W	W	400m Qualifying				
4:45 p.m.	W	W	Javelin Final				
5:00 p.m.	W	W	100m Qualifying	5:00 p.m.	W	W	4x100m Relay Final
5:15 p.m.	W	W	800m Qualifying	5:05 p.m.	W	W	1500m Final
5:30 p.m.	W	W	3000m Final	5:10 p.m.	W	W	High Jump Final
6:00 p.m.	W	W	400m Hurdles Qualifying	5:20 p.m.	W	W	100m Hurdles Final
6:15 p.m.	W	W	200m Qualifying	5:30 p.m.	W	W	400m Final
7:00 p.m.	W	W	10,000m Final	5:30 p.m.	W	W	100m Final
7:15 p.m.	W	W		5:47 p.m.	W	W	800m Final
7:55 p.m.	W	W		6:00 p.m.	W	W	400m Hurdles Final
				6:15 p.m.	W	W	200m Final
				6:22 p.m.	W	W	5,000m Final
				6:35 p.m.	W	W	4x400m Relay Final
				6:46 p.m.	W	W	Awards Presentation
				6:51 p.m.	W	W	
				7:20 p.m.	W	W	
				7:52 p.m.	W	W	
				8:15 p.m.	W	W	

JA'WARREN HOOKER



Kevin Calame Emerald

Ja'Warren Hooker knows what it takes to win a Pacific-10 Conference championship.

Heck, the junior multi-sport athlete already owns two such titles. Back in 1998, Hooker swept the 100- and 200-meter titles at the conference meet.

The performance garnered him Pac-10 Male Athlete of the Year honors.

But it was his 1999 campaign that has him craving for this weekend. It was an up-and-down spring for the Ellensburg, Wash., native. He was sidelined until mid-April with a stress

fracture in his left shin and was unable to defend his 1998 NCAA Indoor 55-meter championship he won as a freshman. That was the first NCAA track title the Huskies had won since 1988.

Perseverance is a key word for Hooker, however, as he impressively capped his season at the 1999 Pac-10 meet by finishing third in the 200 and fourth in the 100.

After taking last fall off from football to fully recuperate from his injury, Hooker has exploded this spring. He was recently awarded the Pac-10 Men's Track Athlete of the Week award for the third time this season, but this time it was for annihilating a 10-year old school record in the men's 400 meters at a

clip of 44.91.

His time is the fifth-fastest time in the world this year, and more important to him, it qualifies him for the U.S. Olympic Trials.

Not too shabby for a wide receiver. -J.S.

STEVE FEIN



Azle Malinao-Aharez Emerald

He has yet to run a 5,000 meters this outdoor season.

But hey, better late than never. Oregon senior Steve Fein, who finished third at the Oregon Twilight mile last Saturday with his first-ever sub-4:00 mile, is one of the Ducks' three wild cards in the 5,000, his marquee event.

He said he's ready. "Conference races are always a little different," Fein said. "I think it's going to come down to the last mile. I plan on being up there, and I think with the speed that I have right now, I have a legitimate shot."

Fein capped off one of the most successful cross country seasons in recent Oregon history with a third-place finish at the NCAA Championships last fall. Sinus complications prevented him from racing most of the outdoor season, but he said he has been training hard the past month.

"Obviously I had a lot of high goals coming into this season." -S.P.

Fein said. "Unfortunately, I've had to alter those goals."

Fein wants to capture an NCAA-qualifying mark in the 5,000. But if all else fails, his effort in the Twilight mile automatically qualified him for the 1,500 at the NCAA Championships.

"It takes a lot of pressure off of the Pac-10s," Fein said. "Our major goal at the Twilight was just to get me back on the track and get my feet wet in a race before the Pac-10s. It was nice to come away with an NCAA qualifier." -S.P.

JASON BONNESS



Kevin Calame Emerald

Oregon's Jason Bonness has raised eyebrows and cheers from Tracktown fans all season long with his explosive high jumping ability.

This weekend, Bonness gets his long-awaited chance to pit himself against other Pacific-10 Conference jumpers.

Bonness began the season ranked No. 4 nationally among returning collegiate high jumpers. The sophomore has lived up to his billing, clearing a season-high 7 feet, 3 inches last Saturday and nearly breaking the Oregon record of 7-5.

His personal best, set last May, is 7-4 1/2. Bonness said that eventually — maybe even this weekend — he will set a new record height for Duck athletes.

Bonness is one of Oregon's few NCAA qualifiers, and he has as good a chance as any to win the Pac-10 high jump title.

The All-American transfer from Northern Iowa finished 10th at the NCAA Championships his freshman season.

Bonness followed first-year Oregon field coach Bill Lawson, Bonness' assistant coach at Northern Iowa, in joining the Ducks. The large number of Eugene track and field fans also allured the Casper, Wyo. native to Oregon.

Bonness and teammate Steve Fein are the Ducks' two qualifiers for the 2000 Olympic Trials to be held in Sacramento, Calif., in July. -S.P.

STANFORD DISTANCE CORPS

In basketball, Stanford boasts the most talented set of twins in the Pacific-10 Conference in big men Jason and Jarron Collins.

And in track, the Cardinal is fortunate to have the most talented set of twins in the nation, seniors Brad and Brent Hauser.

The duo will be on hand this weekend at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships with high expectations. They are twins intent on wins.

But don't expect them to be intimidated by the Hayward Field crowd. On the contrary, Running unattached at the USA Track and

Field Championships on Oregon's track last summer, Brad finished second in the 10,000 (28:24.32). And then, just more than a month ago at the Hayward Relays on April 10, the two played their usual part on the talented group of distance runners who went about their business, dominating the distance medley relay (9 minutes, 44.60 seconds) and the 3,200 meter relay (8:43.67.)

Brad will try to continue his record-setting ways in the 5,000 meter run after setting a Cardinal record with a run of 13:29.71,

good enough for the No. 1 Pac-10 time on the year.

Brent, on the other hand, owns the Pac-10's fastest time this season in the 10,000 meter race with a blistering time of 28:23.37. Although the run was the second-best in Stanford school history, it is the best in the nation among collegiate runners this year.

As if having this sensational duo wasn't enough, the Cardinal distance corps will be headlined by the flamboyant and confident Gabe Jennings, The sophomore from Wisconsin is an admitted perfectionist who didn't think

twice about missing his high school graduation to compete in a meet. Jennings also ran a Pac-10 best this season in the 1,500 meters with a time of 3:37.33. The run not only gave him a Cardinal record, but it was the fastest American time all year in the event.

Obviously, the threesome's seasons will not come to an end this weekend. They have already qualified for the NCAA Championships in Durham, N.C.

And what a show that will be. -J.S.