

Crabb

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record and Pac-10-leading time of 4:19.88 at the Mt. SAC Relays.

She'll tell you one of the main reasons for her success is the training she does with former Duck and six-time All-American Marie Davis.

"I'm really happy to have her," Crabb said. "We push each other in different ways. She's more distance-oriented, and I'm more speed-oriented. So with the combination of those two, we really compliment each other."

Instead of practicing with the rest of her teammates, Crabb trains with Davis.

"She's training with Marie because we don't really have anyone who can run with her," Heinonen said. "But she has still stepped forward to be a leader even though she is isolated from the team a lot. She's not separate by her choice but by the situation, and it's worked out."

Still, the youthful Duck runners are appreciative of the leadership Crabb provides.

"Yeah, [she's] supportive," said freshman Eri Macdonald, who was also one of Crabb's cross country teammates.

Macdonald also indicated that Crabb is always there for encouragement and is willing to help out fellow teammates whenever possible.

"They're all great girls," Crabb said. "Because we have so many underclassmen, they look for me to be that leader. And I enjoy it. It's fun."

Crabb admits it is kind of weird to suddenly be the leader of the pack. She can still remember what it was like as the youngster of the team, looking up to Davis.

"I admire Marie for who she is as a person and how she embraces running," Crabb said. "She has a good attitude and is really driven. She's definitely a role model I look up to."

Davis' influence on Crabb is evident.

"What I've learned from her is that in order to succeed you need to set a goal and work toward that," Crabb said. "In the past, I haven't been really good at that."

"But now I am going for it."

Crabb is talking about the prize she has eyed throughout her college career: To be an NCAA All-American.

As she talked of her deep desire to achieve this, she didn't present herself as cocky, but driven.

"It's one thing to want to be an All-American, but it's a whole other thing to say that I'm going to be one," Crabb said. "I have nothing to lose, and I'll be disappointed if I finish my career at Oregon without reaching that status."

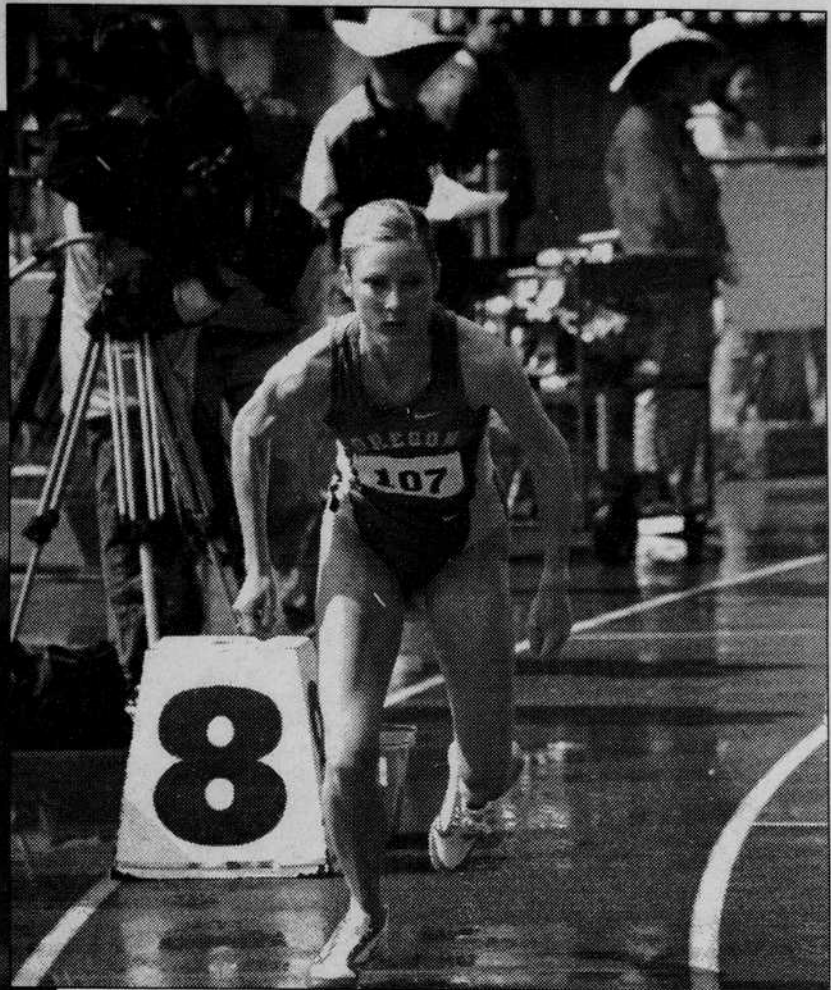
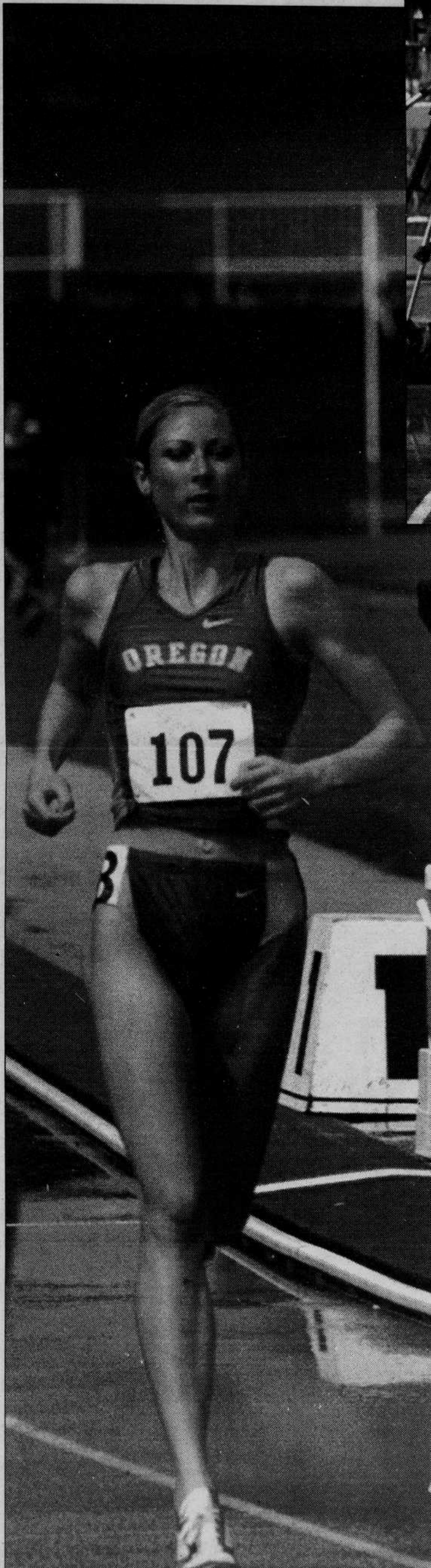
First comes first, however, as the Pac-10 Championships await.

"The dynamics of a track meet at Hayward Field can be paralleled by no other," Crabb said. "I love track. Track is where my heart is."

So the next time you see Crabb running around campus somewhere, you'll know why she is out there. She's out there to fulfill her daily ritual and to be the best runner she can be.

"If I don't get out there and run every day I feel guilty about it," Crabb said. "It's just not a complete day. Some days I'm really into it, and other days it's hard. But like anything you do, it's not always going to be a feast of giggles."

Perhaps. But if she snags a Pac-10 title and earns All-American status at the NCAA Championships in Durham, N.C., on May 31-June 3, she'll be laughing in celebration.




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