

Women's track peaking in time for Mt. SAC

■ The Ducks are on the move to California as some of their key athletes hit their top form

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Oregon senior pole vaulter Karina Elstrom should have stopped vaulting a while ago.

After she injured her back last season, doctors told her that vaulting over a 12-foot bar was the worst thing she could possibly do.

But Elstrom had other plans entirely.

"I want to make it to Pac-10s and see what happens from there," Elstrom said.

For Elstrom, an All-American in 1999 before injuring her back toward the end of last season, the Pac-10s are not out of the question, and neither are the NCAA Championships at Hayward Field on May 30-June 2. After she and her coaches thought her career might be over, Elstrom vaulted a season-best 11-5 3/4 on Saturday for the Ducks women's track and field team.

"I'm working my way up," Elstrom said. "I'm using a short approach and short poles right now."

Elstrom is part of a pole-vaulting crew that has been a pleasant surprise for Oregon head coach Tom Heinonen this season. Junior Niki Reed became the first Oregon athlete to officially qualify for the NCAAs at the Washington Dual meet Saturday, while freshman Kirsten Riley and senior Holly Speight both jumped 11-9 3/4. It was a season best by 10 inches for Riley.

"The vaulters were terrific today," Heinonen said after Saturday's meet.

Both Elstrom and Reed have said they think Speight will make the NCAAs, while Riley has a chance as well.

"Everybody's doing really well right now," Elstrom said. "Part of the reason I wanted to come back this year was because of the other girls."

All the vaulters will compete at

the Oregon Invitational in two weeks, while Reed will face some of the nation's best at the Mt. SAC Relays in California this weekend.

Throwin' hard, throwin' long

In what has become a familiar pattern for the women's track team, the Oregon throwing unit made big news at the Washington Dual last weekend... again.

Senior Maureen Morrison threw a season-best 181 feet in the hammer, while sophomore Mary Etter led the Ducks with wins in the discus and shot put.

"Last year I felt like I peaked too early," Morrison said. "This year I don't want to make that mistake, so my emphasis right now is on improving about five feet at every meet."

Morrison's hammer throw was less than two feet short of an NCAA Provisional mark and may have marked the senior's return to top form. Morrison holds the school record in the hammer at 186-6, and made the NCAA Provisional list last year.

"My expectations are really high," Morrison said. "My ultimate goal is to get to nationals."

Morrison leads a group of throwers that rivals the pole vaulters in dominance and teamwork.

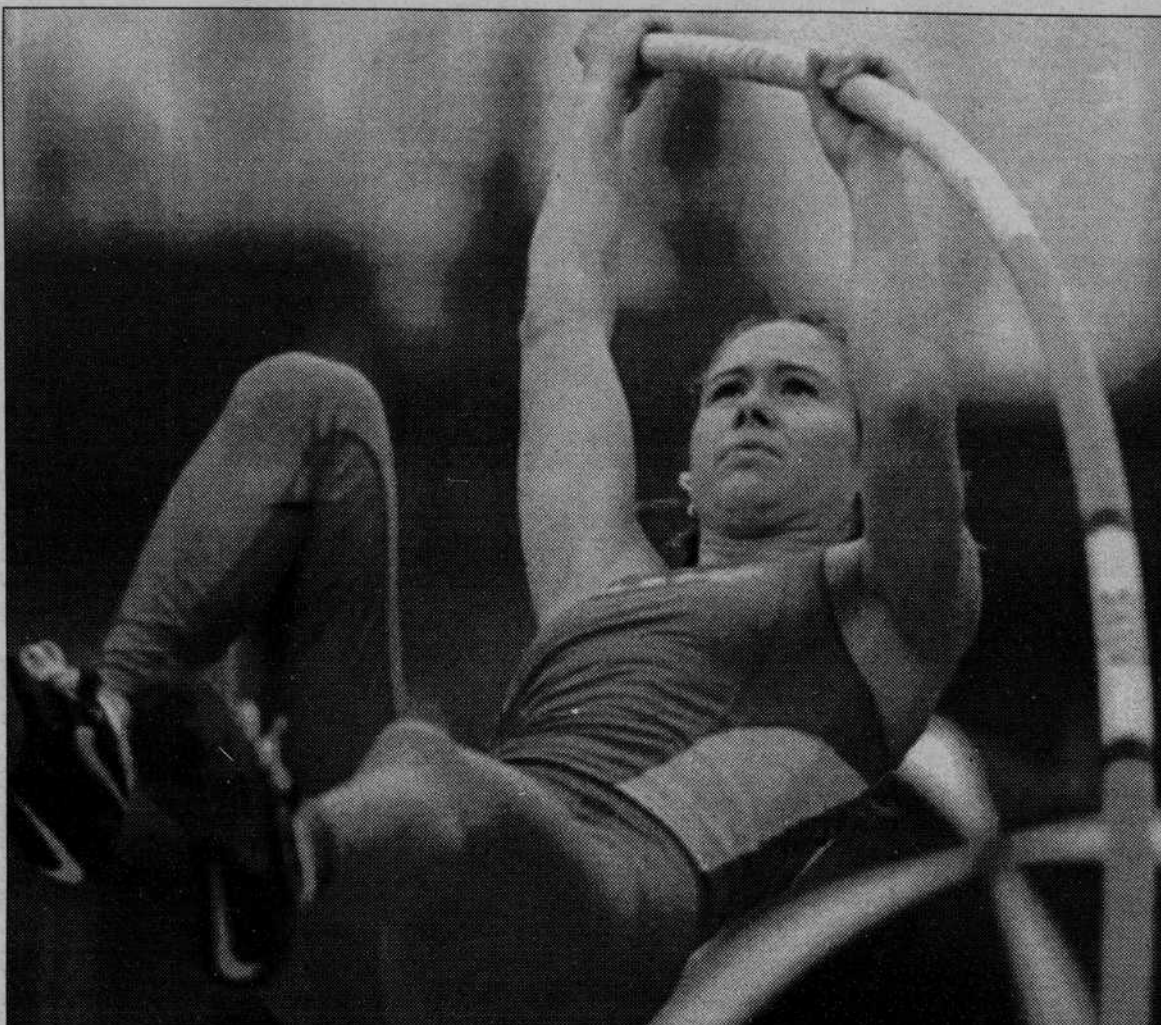
"There's some pride in being an Oregon thrower, because we're such a strong team," Morrison said. "There isn't a lot of politics, or a lot of drama. Instead of looking at it as an individual sport, we look at it as a team sport."

SAC: Silly, All-over Craziiness

Oregon will travel to the Mt. SAC Relays this weekend. Sort of.

The Ducks will send athletes to the Azusa Pacific Heptathlon at Pomona-Pitzer University and the Long Beach State All-Comers meet, all in Southern California.

One thing should remain constant all weekend: The Ducks will see some of their toughest competition of the season.



Senior Karina Elstrom has returned from a back injury to give the already-deep Oregon vaulting squad an extra threat.

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"This [event] was for the team, next weekend is for the individual," Heinonen said Saturday after the Washington Dual.

This weekend's meets will be a far cry from the organized competition from last weekend. The Ducks will spread themselves over three meets in four days, and some athletes will compete in more than one meet.

"It's going to be pretty wild," said Morrison, who will compete in two different meets. "It's going to take a lot of extra endurance."

Outdoor Program hosts film festival

■ An international film competition on mountain culture and recreation will take place tonight on campus

By Inge Scheve
for the Emerald

The Banff Mountain Film Festival, featuring the cream of the crop within mountain environment, mountain culture, mountain sports and wildlife pictures, is playing at 150 Columbia at 7 p.m. tonight.

Although this is the 25th annual mountain film tour, it's the fourth time the Oregon Outdoor Program has sponsored the event.

Because the festival is celebrating 25 years of mountain films, this year's tour will feature selected gems from previous festivals as well as the best of this year's festival, said Dan Geiger, Outdoor Program coordinator.

The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour presents the best

of the film festival, from short films to longer pieces, most of which will never be shown in theaters or on television, according to Geiger. The types of activities that the films will focus on include rock climbing, paragliding, whitewater rafting, kayaking and mountain biking.

"There is really something for everyone," said Geiger, noting that the festival tour is not just for hardcore kayakers and outdoor freaks. "This is the event of the year if you like outdoor sports."

The event is one night only, and then the tour moves on to Bend. However, Geiger promises that the tour will be back next year.

Tickets typically sell out the night of the show and are \$7 for Oregon students and Oregon Outdoor Program members (\$8 on the day of the show) and \$9 for the general public (\$10 at the door). For more information, call 346-4365.

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