

Javelin

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Is the group impressive? Definitely. But are these four surprising? Certainly not.

Coming into the season, Oregon had a solid backbone of talent with Malone and Weingarten. In addition to Weingarten's finish at the NCAA's last season, Malone took seventh after finishing second in the Pac-10 Tournament.

With Lundeen, a native of Victoria, British Columbia, and Crumley coming in, expectations were not high. Sure, the Ducks had two of the Pac-10's best in tow already, but with freshmen, it's always hard to tell how well they will do.

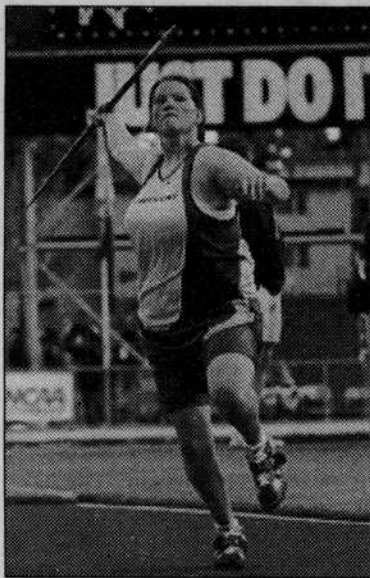
Not anymore. Best of all, the four are like a family. Each is different, but yet, still has that special competitive fire that has made the squad one of the best.

"The freshmen just fit together so well," Lundeen said. "Then to have Charyl and Sarah, it's just like a family out there. You need that support, and because you need that support, you are also expected to be supportive of others."

Support has been an important factor in this season's success. Malone and Crumley are both from Oregon and are used to the state and its many quirks. Weingarten hails from Grand Forks, N.D., and Lundeen isn't even from the same country.

Weingarten has adapted to the Eugene lifestyle, but for Lundeen, it's an ongoing process.

"I guess the biggest adjustment, not necessarily climate-wise," she said, "has been the hype involved



Adam Amato Emerald

Sarah Malone, seen here at last season's NCAA Championships at Hayward Field, is currently No. 2 in the country with a throw of 179-foot-2-inches.

in the sports here. When I was back home, we were just happy to have 20 to 30 parents in the stands. I talked to Elisa, and the Pac-10 Championships is something that she's been striving for all her life. I just don't know what it means yet."

What it means, in layperson's terms, is that the Ducks are primed and ready for the Pac-10. Each has qualified to visit the Palouse, and all four have already thrown the javelin far enough to earn NCAA provisional marks. Malone and Crumley have also earned NCAA automatic marks, ensuring their visit to Louisiana.

These honors are one thing, but to be called the best foursome in Oregon history is a whole other story.

Javelin four

Charyl Weingarten • Jr.
Grand Forks, N.D.
Top Throw: 155-1
(NCAA provisional mark)
National Rank: 24th

Sarah Malone • Soph.
Newberg, Ore.
Top Throw: 179-2
(NCAA automatic mark)
National Rank: Second

Elisa Crumley • Fr.
Hillsboro, Ore.
Top Throw: 169-7
(NCAA automatic mark)
National Rank: Fifth

Roslyn Lundeen • Fr.
Victoria, British Columbia
Top Throw: 166-11
(NCAA provisional mark)
National Rank: Ninth

Hayward Field has seen its fair share of javelin throwers. Lynda Hughes holds the all-time mark of 202-foot-3 inches, set in 1982. Paula Berry is right behind Hughes, competing with passion in the early 1990s.

The current Duck foursome even has one of the best to learn from. Oregon assistant coach Sally Harmon overlooks the team's throwers, and is third all-time on the Ducks' javelin list.

"Just to be put in the category as the best that has come through Oregon, seeing as who has already been here, is a huge honor," Malone said. "Most of (Oregon's former athletes) have been Olympians or gone through Olympic trials."

"If you hear the word 'Oregon,' then 'javelin' is going to come up. But if you hear 'javelin,' then 'Oregon' is going to come up. For some

reason, Oregon just produces awesome javelin throwers."

Producing javelin throwers is one thing, but maintaining a level of competition that is the best in the country is something that takes work. Fortunately for Heinonen, these Ducks are competitive.

Team consensus is that Malone is the best bowler of the group, a title that is put to the test on Mondays when the track team gathers for a little fun and games. Weingarten, on the other hand, is considered the best golfer of the group. But it is a title that had to be earned.

"We're all very, very competitive," Malone said. "We make a competition out of everything we do. We're a very competitive group and we don't like to lose."

"We push each other in practice all the time," Weingarten said.

Few may have been able to foresee the Ducks' success this season, but those who have been involved with the sport may not be surprised.

They were all successful in high school before putting on the Oregon green and yellow.

"We're just loaded with talent," Malone said. "Charyl is a five-time state champion from North Dakota, I won the state championship my senior year, Elisa won her state championship her senior year, and Roslyn is a three-time Island champion."

Coming here, Crumley and Lundeen expected to do well. But neither could have imagined throwing the spear farther than 160-feet and potentially qualifying for one of the top tournaments in the world.

"I didn't know what to expect coming in, in terms of my performance," Crumley said. "I just knew

that, well, I came here to do what I've done for four years in high school. It's the same thing, just in a different place and different jersey."

The Ducks have done it with style this season. They have done it with determination and hard work. They've even done it through harsh conditions — they've also had to do it through injury.

Lundeen tweaked her elbow earlier this season, and although she will compete at the Oregon Invitational this weekend, she is not back to where she'd like to be.

Still, Lundeen is in good position to up her top throw by two feet, which would be good enough for an NCAA automatic mark.

"I've made Pac-10s and I've made NCAAs, and as antsy as I am to start throwing again, seeing as my season started off so well, I'm looking to do well at Pac-10s and NCAAs," she said. "If it means waiting until then, I'll wait until then."

Same goes for Malone. Last week in Southern California, she slightly injured her Achilles heel, something she called an "overuse" injury.

For some, the ability to compete at Hayward Field is a surreal possibility. To be successful at a high level, for some, is an impossible dream. But for the Oregon four, that dream is very real.

"To be an athlete, you have to have some sort of quality that drives you to be better," Malone said. "Every day, we walk out here to Hayward Field, and there are still some days when I can't believe I'm here."

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 26). If your work seems overwhelming, take on a good partner. A careful strategist would be perfect - somebody who shares your commonsense approach. First, make sure the money's coming in. Then, get somebody sharp to help you spend it.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) - Today is a 7 - You and your partner need to talk about finances. Come up with a master plan so that you'll know how to allocate your funds. This coming weekend will be excellent for buying and selling.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) - Today is a 7 - Your workday is intense, but communication is fine. The nonverbal kind, anyway. Schedule private time this evening with a person who really understands. It won't matter whether you can find the right words.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) - Today is an 8 - You're in the mood for love, and you should be doing pretty well. When you get to flirting, you're hard to resist. But this isn't all fun and games. Tonight, face some tough questions together.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) - Today is a 7 - With a few yards of fabric, a few balls of yarn, some scissors and maybe some glue, you can create wonders. Turn your home into a love nest to share with your sweetheart this weekend. Flowers help.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Today is a 7 - You have a friend who's good at fixing things. You also have some grand ideas. Put the two of them together this weekend and fine-tune your domestic environment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Today is a 7 - Gather up as much as you can get. There's no doubt you've earned every penny. If it's still not enough, look around. What should you learn next?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Today is a 7 - Earlier is better for getting your ideas across. Less talk and more action is required later. Don't make promises you can't keep.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Today is a 7 - There sure are a lot of outrageous claims out there. You don't need hype; you need good value. Ask around. You can find the item or service you want at a price you can afford.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Today is a 7 - There's a lot of information, but is it true, or is it gossip? Here's a clue: The people who really know what's going on aren't saying much. Watch them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Today is a 7 - Finish collecting the money you're owed, or whatever other goodies are coming your way. Then, set aside a nice chunk of time for partying with your friends. You've earned it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Today is a 7 - Travel and romance both look good, though the latter could be difficult during business hours. You're attracting attention from important people. Maintain decorum!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) - Today is a 6 - Put your affairs in order. Return phone messages pay bills. The more you get done now, the further you'll get this weekend. Plan your itinerary carefully, and give yourself plenty of time. There will be delays.

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