

Sports Editor:  
Peter Hockaday  
peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com

**Best bet**  
NBA Playoffs:  
Lakers at Minnesota, Game 5  
6:30 p.m., TNT

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

## Williams', Acevedo's situations harm UO

This past weekend saw all sorts of activity for a number of Oregon athletes.

You had Onterrio Smith, George Wrihster and Keenan Howry learn where they were going in the NFL. There was also Shaquala Williams getting the nod from Cleveland in the WNBA Draft, and unfortunately for the volleyball team, Dariam Acevedo had to announce she was leaving the team for financial reasons.

The situations of the latter two deserve some sort of discussion on the state of Oregon athletics.

First, there's Williams, the former star point guard for Oregon women's basketball. Who knows what she did that warranted a suspension, and ultimately, a dismissal from the team?

Of course, she does and so does head coach Bev Smith. But neither has publicly disclosed what the circumstances were, so everyone out there is left to rely on their own imaginations.

Had Williams not been kicked off the team, or had the two maybe said what was happening, the Portland native's selection could have added to the hype the Duck programs received over the weekend.

Instead, it was just another Friday at the Casanova Center. Williams had a small press conference, attended by a half-dozen members of the Eugene media.

In other words, it seemed to be a non-descript day for one of Oregon's best players in recent memory. It shouldn't have been that way.

If either of the two had told of Williams' negative actions at the start of the year, or whatever it was, there could have been a peace surrounding the program. Smith and Williams would have gone their separate ways — which they did — but instead it followed the team the rest of the season.

Now, Williams is forced to show that what she did or didn't do doesn't make her a bad person or a bad player. She has to win back her detractors and prove she can become Oregon's greatest woman athlete.

Next, you have Acevedo and a situation that rivals some of the worst in Oregon history.

The offensive star for the volleyball team was a key component in a season that ended 1-17 in Pacific-10 Conference play. The scary thing is that was an improvement from the year before, a season in which the Ducks finished 0-18 in conference play.

Now, obviously, there is a trend shaping up for the Ducks, especially after five players defected from the team in January. Acevedo said that had nothing to do with her decision,

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**Hank Hager**  
Behind the dish

## Vaulters pair up off the track

Junior Kirsten Riley and redshirt senior Niki McEwen both enjoy serious relationships with UO athletes

### Women's track and field notes

**Jesse Thomas**  
Sports Reporter

For junior Kirsten Riley, life can be just as busy off the track as on it.

Riley, a third-year pole vaulter, held a bridal shower on Sunday with her track friends to celebrate her upcoming marriage in July. The Eugene native would not disclose any of the gifts presented at the bridal shower.

"It was a time to come together and be spoiled," Riley said.

The 21-year-old will marry sophomore Luke Larwin, a wrestler for Oregon, in July.

"We understand each other," Riley said. "Maybe some college couples struggle, but we understand the demands of school and sports."

Riley and Larwin were engaged after about a year of seeing one another, and even early in the relationship, Riley said she knew that marriage was in their future.

Even with the stresses of an upcoming marriage, Riley has continued to excel on the track. She ranks third all-time at Oregon and has successfully cleared 13 feet, 3 1/2 inches this season. Riley was an NCAA provisional qualifier and Pacific-10 conference scorer in 2002.

As Riley's happy day lies ahead, redshirt senior Niki McEwen has had the time to enjoy the early days of marriage. McEwen was married to Duck defensive line starter Seth McEwen last summer.

"In a way, it's easier that we live together," McEwen said of balancing track and field and a marriage. "I really enjoy being married. It's like living with your best friend."

The former Niki Reed and McEwen were engaged and married all within a year. McEwen said that it isn't as difficult as one might think to juggle a marriage, track and field and school all at the same time.

"He does a lot of homework and cooks the dinner," she said. "I don't really do so much homework."

McEwen said her husband does all the little things around the house, such as walking their two dogs and cleaning up while she is in the heart of track season.

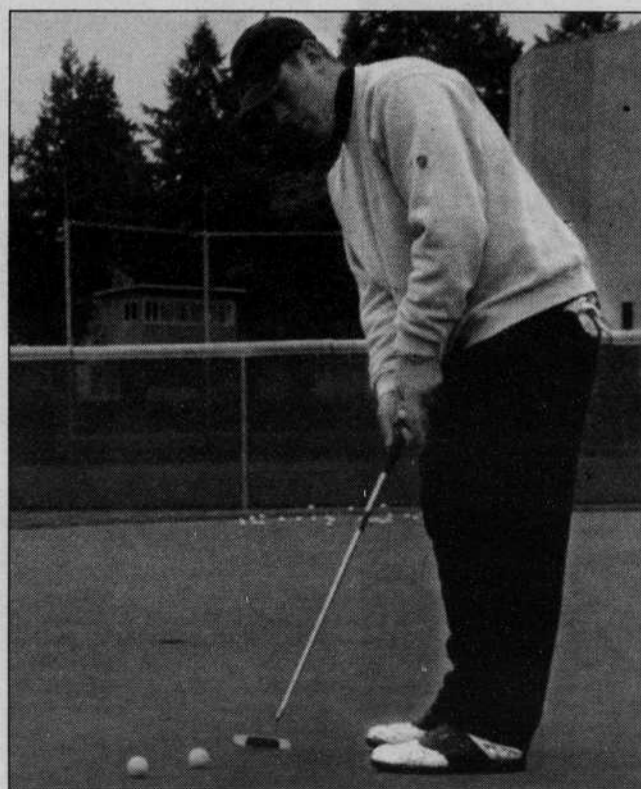
### How the Ducks stack up

In the April 20 release of Pac-10 Conference outdoor track and field bests, Oregon still dominates in field events.

In the pole vault category, redshirt senior Becky Holliday and McEwen rank first and third, respectively. Holliday holds the top position by a narrow 1/4-inch margin over Arizona's Amy Linnen.

The Duck javelin duo of sophomores Elisa Crumley and Roslyn Lundeen hold the second and third positions with

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John Ellis is tied for 12th and leads the Ducks at the Pac-10s.



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Junior pole vaulter Kirsten Riley is planning to marry Oregon wrestler Luke Larwin in July.

## Ducks open Pac-10 tourney in fifth place

Senior John Ellis' consistent play paces Oregon in the opening round of the Pac-10 Championships

### Men's golf

**Scott Archer**  
Freelance Sports Reporter

In arguably its most important tournament of the year, the Oregon men's golf team is receiving consistent play from its veterans and rookies alike, putting the team in prime position for a big finish in the concluding weeks of its 2002-03 season.

Oregon currently sits in sixth place at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships, hosted by No. 11 UCLA at the par-72, 6,736-yard Oakmont Country Club course in Glendale, Calif. The Ducks shot a two-round team total 34-over-par 754 in the tournament's opening two rounds.

As has been the pattern much of the season, senior John Ellis led the Ducks on Monday, opening the first round with a 3-over-par 75, then proceeding to shoot an even-par 72. His score was good enough to tie Ellis with USC's Ben Hayes and Chris Nallen of Arizona at No. 12 overall.

The Ducks also received strong performances from senior Chris Carnahan and freshman Gregg LaVoie, who both shot 6-over for the day, tying each other at 25th overall. LaVoie rebounded from a less-than-stellar opening round, in which he shot a 6-over 78 but followed up in the second round with an even-par round to finish tied with Carnahan.

Redshirt freshman Kyle Johnson sits tied for 33rd overall with Arizona's Andrew Medley, who both shot 9-over rounds. Rounding out the scoring for the Ducks was junior Mike Sica, who sits on the heels of Duck teammate Johnson at

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