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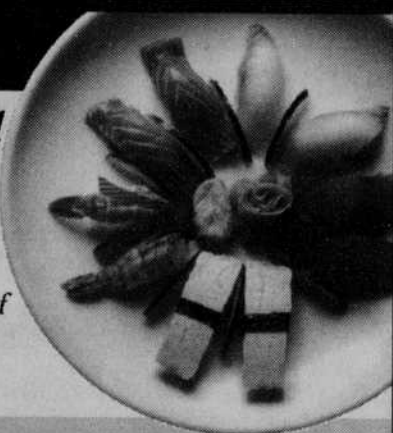
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**LARWIN**

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vaulter Emily Enders, a freshman, knew the training would be tough entering her first year at Oregon. But she didn't plan on it being as difficult as it is after almost a year practicing with Larwin.

"I think the biggest thing is that she pushes herself so hard that it makes you want to work hard," Enders said. "You don't want to fall behind and try to keep up with her."

Enders, though, credits her elder teammate for helping her and being there for support whenever she needs it.

"She's a great mentor, and I look up to her," Enders said. "It doesn't really seem like an age difference between us because we just hit it off — she's a really great friend. She always has something funny to say."

Larwin, who has a "blunt" and "sarcastic" personality, loves to joke around during practice, according to Enders. Reciting lines from Larwin's favorite movie, "Dumb and Dumber," has become a staple between the two while they train.

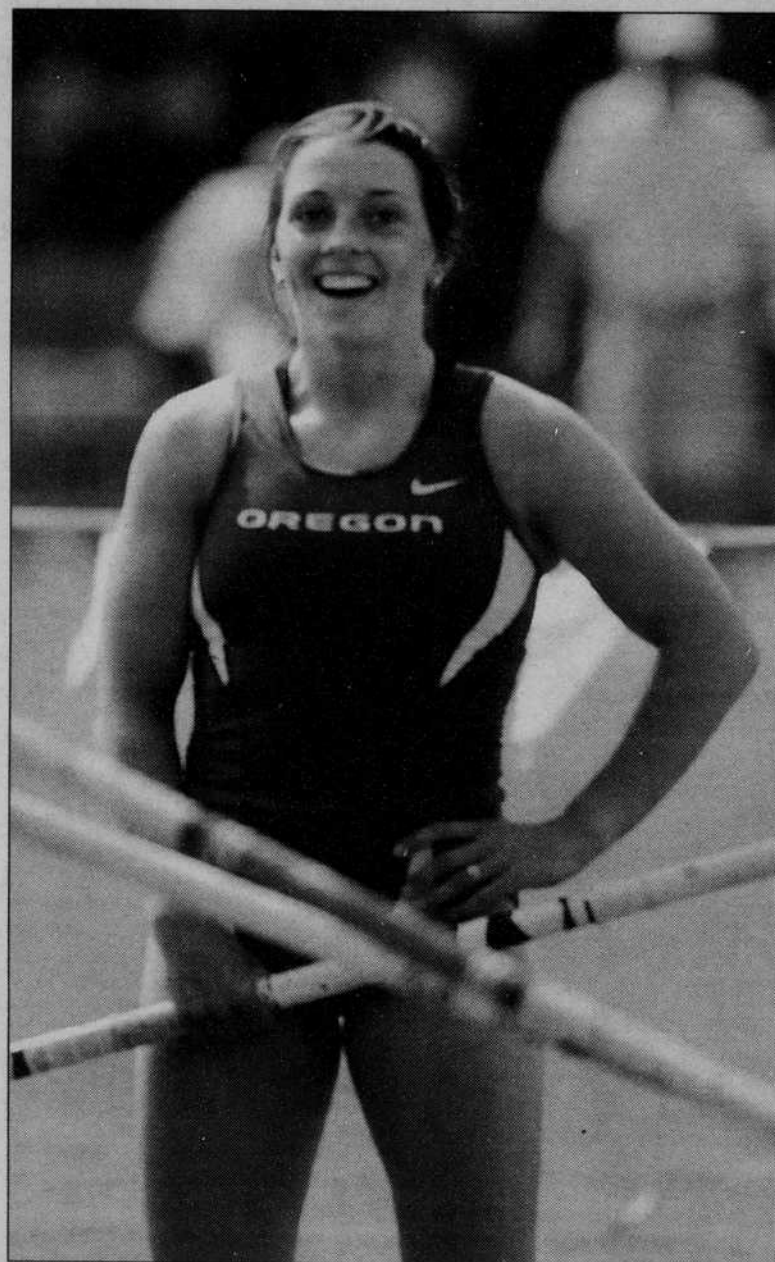
"She's seen the movie a million times and she knows every single line," Enders said.

When a meet approaches, however, Larwin becomes serious and focused on the task ahead. She has a routine that usually includes eating steak the night before a competition. She also does a lot of mental exercises right before her event.

"I go through a process in my head, just thinking about things technically," Larwin said. "I do a lot of visualizing. When you get in a routine, if something works, then you tend to think, 'Well, it worked last time.'"

That mindset has given her success throughout her four-year career at Oregon. She ranks third all-time in Oregon history in the pole vault with a personal record of 13-3 1/2 achieved two years ago. She rates right behind former NCAA champion Becky Holliday, who holds Oregon's all-time record at 14-8. Last year, Larwin qualified for the NCAA Indoor Championships, where she finished in the top 25 at regionals.

Off the track, Larwin is happily married to current Oregon wrestler Luke Larwin. They met through a member of



Erik R. Bishoff Photographer

Kirsten Larwin (formerly Riley) married Oregon wrestler Luke Larwin in July.

the wrestling team and starting dating during her sophomore year. Last July, the two tied the knot.

As her last season at Oregon winds down, Larwin said she is privileged to represent Oregon and to practice and compete at historic Hayward Field.

"It is the nicest place to jump that there is," Larwin said. "Especially when you get the home crowd and hear everybody cheering. The best is when you go over the bar and you hear them cheer."

She also contemplates what could have been if she didn't injure her back in high school. But as she looks back, she feels lucky she had the opportunity to compete in another sport, she said.

"I thought any hope of college sports was definitely over," Larwin said. "But things change, and I'm a Duck. There's no better place to be."

Contact the sports reporter at alextam@dailyemerald.com.

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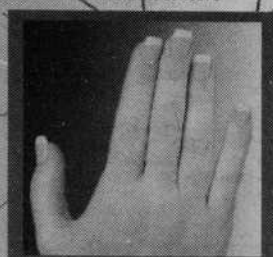
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