

SEASON OUTLOOK

Art Venegas' Bruins return after an impressive 2004 season in which UCLA captured back-to-back NCAA West Region team titles and its first Pac-10 Championship in six years and first under Venegas. The Bruins return five All-Americans, 14 regional qualifiers, and a strong freshmen contingent that will strive for a third consecutive West Region Championship and back-to-back Pac-10 titles.

RETURNING NCAA SCORERS AND QUALIFIERS

Eleven of the 16 NCAA outdoor qualifiers from the 2004 season return - seniors Ben Aragon, Tony Golston, Yoo Kim, Jon Rankin, Denye' Versher, and Jonathan Williams; juniors Matt Bruno, Craig Everhart, Jake Knight and Jeremy Silverman, and sophomore Brandon Johnson.

Leading the way this year is 2004 Olympian and Korean National record holder in the pole vault Yoo Kim. Kim earned All-American honors in 2004 at the NCAA Championships, finishing second with a new national record of 18-4.50. It was the second All-American honor for Kim. He also earned All-Region and All-Pac-10 honors after finishing second at both events.

Johnson, Williams, Versher and Everhart picked up their first All-American honors as members of the 1600m relay team (3:06.63) that finished seventh at the NCAA Championships. All four sprinters also competed in individual events during preliminary races at the NCAA outdoors. Everhart finished 11th overall (46.20, 2nd in his heat) in the 400m, Johnson was 17th overall (51.24, 4th in his heat) in the 400m hurdles, Versher was 21st overall (46.97, 4th in his heat) in the 400m, and Williams was 11th overall (50.83, 2nd in his heat,) in the 400m hurdles.

Rankin and Aragon both competed in the 1500m with Rankin finishing 13th overall (3:47.75, 6th in his heat) and Aragon placing 16th overall (3:48.10, 9th in his heat). Knight, Golston, and Bruno, who were in the first NCAA Championships, competed in the shot put, 110m hurdles and 100m respectively. Knight finished 16th overall (59-3.50, 8th in his flight), while Bruno finished 24th overall (10.57, 9th in his heat). Golston also finished 24th overall (14.11, eighth in his heat). Silverman, competing in his second NCAA's in the shot put, finished 14th overall (59-6.75, 8th in his flight).

RETURNING NCAA WEST REGION QUALIFIERS

The Bruins return 14 NCAA Regional qualifiers from last year's championship team - seniors Ben Aragon (1500m), Mario Bassani (4x100m), Tony Golston (110mH), Yoo Kim (pole vault), Jon Rankin (1500m), Denye' Versher (400m) and Jonathan Williams (400mH); juniors Matt Bruno (100m), Craig Everhart (400m), Jake Knight (SP, HT), Mike Landers (pole vault), Dave Murphy (pole vault) and Jeremy Silverman (SP, DT) and sophomore Brandon Johnson (400mH).

SPRINTS AND HURDLES

Coach Tony Veney's group returns every runner from last year's team. Led by seniors Tony Golston, Denye' Versher and Jonathan Williams, juniors Matt Bruno and Craig Everhart, and sophomore Brandon Johnson, this group looks to return to the NCAA Outdoor Championships.

Golston finished 24th at the NCAA outdoor in the 110m hurdles (14.11) and earned All-Region (13.86) and All-Pac-10 (13.79) honors after finishing second at both events. He ran a personal-best 13.69 in the first meet of the season and tied that mark in the USC-UCLA dual meet. Jonathan Williams also

earned All-Region (personal-best, 50.14) and All-Pac-10 (50.22) honors after finishing second in both meets in the 400m hurdles. He finished 11th at the NCAA outdoors in 50.83.

Johnson returns after an impressive freshman season and summer in which he competed at the NCAA's in the 400m hurdles (17th, 51.24), won Junior Nationals, earning All-American honors (49.59), and won a gold and silver medal at the World Junior Championships. He ran a lifetime-best as well as the No. 4 all-time world junior mark (3rd fastest performer all-time) to win silver in the 400m hurdles (48.62) and was a member of the gold medal winning and record-breaking U.S. 4x400m relay (3:01.90, 45.2 split).

Everhart finished ninth in the 400m at the 2004 US Olympic Trials last July and placed 11th at the NCAA Championships (46.20). During the summer, Everhart competed for the U.S. at the NACAC Under-23 Championships, placing fourth in the 400m and ran the opening leg of the gold medal winning 4x400m relay. He won the West Region in a personal-best 44.89 and finished third at Pac-10 (45.19), to earn All-Region and All-Conference honors. Bruno returns after finishing 24th at the NCAA outdoors in the 100m (10.57w). He finished third at the West Region (10.51) and eighth at the Pac-10 (10.54).

Freshmen Kevin Ahlstrom, Matthew Rueter, and James Rhoades will look to make an immediate impact on the sprint side.

Ahlstrom comes to UCLA with top times of 37.38 in the 300m hurdles and 49.22 in the 400m. He was the Sunset League Champion in the 300m hurdles, finished third in CIF, third in the Master's Meet, and seventh at the State Meet. Rueter, a jumper and sprinter, comes to Westwood with top marks of 14.01 in the 110m hurdles, and 48.4 in the 300m hurdles. He was the CIF Champion in the 110m hurdles and won the 110m hurdles at the Arcadia Invitational. Rhoades has a top 200m time of 21.9 and a top 400m mark of 48.08. He was a two-time League Champion in the 200m, League Champion in the 400m and was the CIF San Diego Section Champion in the 400m.

DISTANCES

NCAA qualifiers Ben Aragon and Jon Rankin, along with fellow junior Erik Emilsson, will look to lead the harrier group this season.

Both Aragon and Rankin competed in the 1500 at the NCAA outdoor, with Aragon finishing 16th (3:48.10) and Rankin placing 13th (3:47.75). Aragon finished fourth at the West Region (3:45.37) and earned All-Conference honors, placing third in a season-best time of 3:43.45 at the Pac-10. Aragon also won the 800m at the Pac-10 Championships with a personal best 1:48.45. During the indoor season, he competed at the NCAA Championships in the mile, finishing 11th overall (4:04.42). Rankin placed fifth at the West Region (3:46.02) and fourth at Pac-10 (3:44.53) in the 1500m. He ran a personal-best 3:43.10 at the USC dual meet to win the 1500m. Rankin also finished second in the 800m at the Pac-10 in a season-best time of 1:48.45.

Emilsson returns after being granted a medical redshirt year for a shoulder injury that required surgery. Two years ago, Emilsson was the Bruins' top steeplechaser with a time of 8:50.32. He also competed at the 2003 NCAA outdoor, finishing 24th overall in 8:56.59.

Junior Martel Munguia, sophomore Micky Cobrin and redshirt freshman Austin Ramos add depth to the distance

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corps. Last season, Cobrin recorded bests of 1:52.13 in the 800m and 3:53.48 in the 1500m. Both Munguia and Ramos redshirted last season. During his redshirt year, Munguia recorded personal bests in the 800m (1:48.76) and the 1500m (3:48.98). Munguia competed for Mexico during the summer and finished fifth at the NACAC Under-23 Track and Field Championships in the 800m (1:51.33). Ramos, as a high school runner, finished fifth in the 3200m in 9:00.31 at the 2003 CA State Meet.

Incoming freshmen Mike Haddan and Kyle Shackleton will look to make an immediate impact for the Bruins. Haddan was ranked No. 1 in the state in the 800m (1:51.50) and finished third overall at the State Meet (1:53.03). He also placed second in the State Division II CC Championships (15:08) and competed at the World Junior Championships. Kyle Shackleton was ranked No. 6 in the state in the 3200m (9:05.36) and finished fifth in the State meet (9:17.03). In cross country, he was ranked as the No. 7 runner in the state.

POLE VAULT

Last season was another successful year for Anthony Curran's pole vaulting group and 2005. The Bruins lost Pat Luke, an NCAA competitor to graduation, but return standout vaulter senior Yoo Kim. Kim was a 2004 Olympian, NCAA All-American and currently holds the Korean National Record. Last season, Kim placed second at the NCAA Championships (18-4.50), breaking his own Korean National Record and moving him to No. 3 all-time at UCLA. Kim also finished second at Pac-10 (17-7.25) and West Region (17-7). Sophomores Mike Landers and Dave Murphy return to add depth. Both Landers and Murphy last season were regional qualifiers with identical marks of 17-0.50. Landers finished seventh at Pac-10 (16-11.50), while Murphy finished ninth (16-11.50).

Freshman Dustin DeLeo comes to UCLA with a best mark of 16-2, which ranked No. 3 in the state last year. DeLeo won the CIF Division I title (15-9) and tied for first at the Master's Meet (15-8).

JUMPS

The Bruins lost three-time All-American Juane Armon to graduation and will look to junior Demetre Howard and sophomore Chris Merriweather to lead a young jumps squad.

Last season, Howard finished ninth in the triple jump (48-4.50) at the Pac-10 Championships. Howard won the triple jump with a personal-best 49-0.25 at the Bruins' home opener against Cal Poly SLO and CSUF. Merriweather finished 13th at the Pac-10 in the triple jump with a season-best 47-7.75. Against USC, he jumped a season-best 22-5 in the long jump to finish fifth.

Four freshmen come to UCLA with needed depth for the jump squad - Dominique Easterling, Michael Johnson, Matthew Reuter and Joel Tuosto.

Easterling comes to the Bruins as the top triple and high jumper in the state of Oregon. At the Oregon State 3A Championships, he defended his triple and high jump titles and was third in the long jump. He holds the meet record in the triple jump (49-2.50) and has top jumps of 6-8 in the high jump and ?? in the long jump. Johnson hails from Rancho Cucamonga and was ranked No. 3 in the state in the triple jump (49-2). He won the CIF Southern Section Div. I title in the triple jump (49-0.25) and was the runner-up at the State meet with a mark of 50-2.75w (3.7). Reuter, a stand-out hurdler and jumper, comes

to UCLA as the No. 13 ranked high jumper in the state with a top jump of 6-8. Tuosto finished fourth at the CA State Meet in the triple jump with a personal-best jump of 48-10 and comes to UCLA with bests of 24-3 in the long jump and 6-7 in the high jump.

THROWS

After the graduation of stand-out thrower and 10-time All-American Danny Ames, juniors Jake Knight and Jeremy Silverman will step up to lead the throws squad in 2005, bringing NCAA Championship experience and leadership to a young squad.

Last season was a breakout year for Silverman. He competed at the NCAA outdoor in the shot put (finishing 14th, 59-6.75), and at the West Region, Silverman narrowly finished second to teammate Ames (64-3.25) with a personal-best throw of 64-0.50. At the Pac-10, Silverman again placed second to Ames, with a then personal-best toss of 63-6. He also picked up an NCAA provisional qualifier in the indoor shot with a toss of 60-7.75.

Knight returns after a strong sophomore season. He competed at the NCAA outdoor in the shot (16th overall, 59-3.50) and finished eighth at the West Region Championships (58-10.25). At the Pac-10, Knight threw a lifetime-best 61-9.75 to finish sixth. He also had up a lifetime-best in the hammer throw at the Pac-10 (191-8) to finish sixth. During the indoor season, he recorded a best throw of 60-0.25 in the shot.

The Bruins not only lost Ames to graduation, but lost sophomore Brian Ruziecki, a solid shot, disc and hammer thrower to the football team. Ruziecki quit the team in September to walk-on to the football team.

Greg Garza, who redshirted his freshman season, will also add depth to the throws. Garza was the 2003 Mt. SAC high school discus invitational champion, throwing 184-0 and has a personal-best of 191-0.

Three new members of the throws squad will look to make an immediate impact for the team - freshman Boldiszar Kocsor and Vahce Sevajian, and American River JC transfer Andrew Ninow.

Kocsor comes to UCLA as one of the top ranked hammer throwers in the nation (No. 2, 199-1) and shot putters in the state. At the 2004 Junior National Championships, Kocsor earned All-American honors, finishing fourth in the hammer. He won the San Diego Division II shot put title with a lifetime-best throw of 62-11.50 and has a best throw in the discus of 177-6. Sevajian ranked No. 11 in the state in the shot put with a best mark of 59-4.75. He finished seventh in the state meet with a throw of 55-0.50. Ninow, considered one of the top junior college throwers in the state, comes to UCLA with a hammer throw best of 181-1.