

Greeley aims for Nationals

By Andy Daglas
Opinion Editor

Setting the school record in the javelin throw is a pretty impressive feat for one's collegiate career.

Setting a new record twice more within the space of a month would rank as outstanding.

Doing it with a surgically repaired elbow, well, that's just showing off.

What is Megan Greeley, anyway-bionic?

"No," Greeley laughs. "Far from it. I've got better technique [now], and the help of the trainers to keep healthy."

Greeley was the runner-up in the women's javelin throw last Friday, May 16, at the Conference USA Outdoor Championships. Her mark of 46.26 meters was second to the 48.87 achieved by Tulane's Jelena

Jurlina, but it was good enough to better Greeley's DePaul record in the event by almost a full meter.

She set the previous mark, 45.73 meters, two weeks ago at the Central Collegiate Conference Championships at Western Michigan. That distance eclipsed the school-best 44.91 meters she achieved as a sophomore in 2001.

"It's more of a mental approach than anything," said head track and field coach Gordon Thompson of Greeley's success. "She really, by definition, shouldn't be throwing as far as she is this year."

That's because Greeley, who also competes in the hammer throw, is coming off reconstructive elbow surgery. She tore the ulnar collateral ligament in her throwing arm in three places during practice last year. Doctors had to replace it with a ligament from her wrist.

Instead of having three strong, healthy ligaments in her elbow, now she must throw with only one ligament keeping everything connected.

"[My elbow] gets sore after I throw," Greeley confessed. "And I have to wait a couple of days [before throwing again]."

Despite the seriousness of the injury, Greeley said, "I was throwing again [in competition] two weeks after it happened."

After the surgery, Greeley had to spend several months repairing not only the injury, but the improper throwing motion that caused it as well.

"The reason I hurt it was bad technique," she explained. "I healed in the fall [of 2002], and in the winter I corrected the technique. And it's worked so far."

That may be a bit of an understatement. After all, not every athlete could come back from major surgery and proceed to break records in her event twice in consecutive competitions.

"It feels pretty damn good," Greeley admitted. "It's always nice to be able to break records. If it's your own record, it makes it sweeter."

"She did a great job of rehabbing this summer and fall," Thompson said. "She knows where she wants to go, and she has a great grasp of the event itself. She is the best javelin thrower throughout DePaul."

"It's really impressive," added Carey Ryan, the team's throwers coach. "She's worked really hard. She's got a lot of mental toughness and a lot of discipline."

Ryan should know a thing or two about what it takes to be a win-

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—Megan Greeley



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still get a lot better," he said. "She can still improve her speed down the runway, gain strength around her shoulder and elbow joint."

The next step towards national competition is the Mideast Outdoor Regionals, which will be held next weekend at the Ohio State campus in Columbus. Greeley is ranked eighth out of 24 throwers going into the competition.

"On that day, it's going to be who throws their best [that wins]," Greeley said. "It doesn't matter what's on paper. My arm feels good, so I feel good."

"Right now, it's a matter of keeping up the hard work, tweaking a couple things and making sure she's

ready," offered Ryan. "Make sure she's rested up and feeling good."

Thompson said, "I think she's got a good chance to go a long way."

The top five finishers in each of the four regional competitions—also comprising the West, Midwest and East regions—will advance to the National Outdoor Championships in Sacramento, June 11 to 14. As far as her chances for reaching that plateau are concerned, Greeley and her not-quite-bionic arm are not lacking in confidence.

"I'm going to put whatever I've got into the javelin," Greeley said. "And wherever I go, I'll be happy with it. Because it's going to be far."

Senior javelin thrower Megan Greeley will compete in the NCAA Mideast Regionals this weekend for a chance to compete in Nationals in June. Greeley owns the DePaul record of 46.26 meters, one she set just two weeks ago at the Central Collegiate Conference Championships and previously as a sophomore.

ner. He was an All-American track star at DePaul before joining the team in his current capacity this year. According to him, Greeley's got the stuff to go far.

"If it's something she wanted to keep doing, she could compete nationally," Ryan said. "She hasn't even come close to what she could do. If she focuses on it, she could

be a really good javelin thrower." Thompson agreed. "She can

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