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NCAA javelin champ aims to join Duck team

By Jake Berg Emerald Sports Editor

The tradition is at it again. The Oregon women's track team's javelin program has always been strong, and this term, it just got stronger.

Ashley Selman, the **1990** NCAA javelin champion, enrolled at Oregon for spring term and will compete as a Duck next season.

The senior sociology major transferred from USC after training during the summer with Paula Berry, who graduated from Oregon after winning the NCAA championship in the event last spring.

Before deciding to transfer, Selman moved in with Berry in Eugene last September to take a year off from the USC track program. During winter break, the 21-year-old Orange County native was seriously thinking about a permanent change of pace, she said

"After 1 was here for a few months, I started thinking that I didn't want to go back to L.A.," Selman said, "I wanted to get the fire back" that won the 1990 national title

Other factors that influenced Selman's move were the changing of the javelin coaches at USC and the idea of being able to train under Oregon throws coach Sally Harmon.

"Sally is really well known for being a great coach," Selman said. "It sounded like a really good chance to broaden my understanding of the javelin."

Selman said USC recently moved her throws coach to jumps and brought in a new coach, just giving her more reason to want to move. She also said she was tired of practicing by herself

"I just started getting burned out on training alone," Selman said. "I was kind of stuck in a hole there."

The Trojans weren't "real excited" about letting her go, but were "pretty supportive," Selman said.

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Tom Heinonen has seen all of Oregon's great throwers in his 16 years as head coach, and he is just as excited as Selman is about the move.

"She's a really nice kid," Heinonen said of the Trojan school-record holder. "It's great to have a top-level athlete



Ashley Selman

who's also a really strong influence. She adds good attributes to our team."

Selman, whose personal-record throw of 187-9 is the Pac-10's fourth-best and USC's best ever, also adds another All-American name to a program accustomed to them.

Harmon won the national title as a Duck in 1981 when the national championships were not the NCAAs, but the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). The next year, All-American Lynda Hughes set the Oregon school record of 202-3, which Berry came within inches of breaking last year.

Interestingly, Hughes, an Olympic team member in 1984 and 1988, left Oregon after her junior season because of academic reasons. She resurfaced two years later — after a redshirt year and a year for maternity leave — at Arizona, another Pac-10 school.

Other Oregon javelin All-Americans include Roz Rouse, Brooke Allen and Jill Smith, the 1988 NCAA champion. Oregon senior Kim Hyatt followed up Smith's title with two All-American appearances of her own in 1989 and 1990.

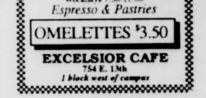
The 1990 season saw Berry rebound from missing the meet her sophomore year as she took second to Selman at the NCAAs. Ironically, Berry returned the favor last season at Hayward when Selman finished second to Berry in the national championships.

Though Hyatt will graduate this year, the future looks as bright for Oregon's javelin program as the past does. With Selman coming in next season, there should be less pressure on Oregon freshmen throwers Kelsey Stellick and Keri Esterbrook, two of the nation's top prep throwers a year ago.

"It gives Keri Esterbrook and Kelsey Stellick another year to mature," Heinonen said.

Selman's year to mature is





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this spring, and she said she just hopes to get healthy enough to do something quite "unique" — win the national championship in javelin for two different schools.

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