

Blair takes second at NAAs

By Scott Simonson
Oregon Daily Emerald

Kelly Blair did not repeat as the collegiate heptathlon champion as she finished second to Diane Guthrie of George Mason as the NCAA heptathlon championship concluded Thursday in Boise, Idaho.

Blair finished third in each of the day's three events while Guthrie won the long jump and javelin. Guthrie finished with 6,032 points, compared to 5,877 for Blair.

In other action at the second day of the NCAA championships, Gordon Johnson finished ninth in the second qualifying heat of the men's 1,500 meters. Johnson finished in 3 minutes, 50.55 seconds and did not qualify for Saturday's final in the event.

Karl Keska competed in the first heat of qualifying for the final in the men's 5,000 meters. Keska did not finish the race. No further details were available at press time.

Blair's heptathlon point total was 109 points more than her previous best this season; however, her mark was 161 points below her career best.

Guthrie led Blair by 25 points after the first day's events. Guthrie widened her lead to 176 points with a victory in one of her best events, the long jump.

Neither athlete came within seven inches of their best jump in heptathlon competition. On her last jump, Blair appeared to have a better effort than her mark of 19 feet, 8.25 but she fouled.

"I went for it one the last one because I knew I needed a good jump," Blair said. "Everything went good, the jumping felt good. I just missed the mark."

"That was really hard for me, really disappointing. I knew I had to do well in the long jump. I knew I wasn't out of it, but it got more difficult."

Guthrie bettered her heptathlon personal record

'I'm just reaching my peak now. Last year, I was at my peak at nationals.'

— Kelly Blair
Oregon Track

in the javelin by more than six feet in winning the event. Blair's mark of 141 feet, 4 inches was 15 feet less than her career best. She said afterward she "was probably trying too hard."

To win the competition, Blair would have needed to beat Guthrie by about 16 seconds in the final event of the day, the 800 meters. Blair took third and Guthrie finished 11th, about 5 seconds behind Blair.

"I had a hard time in the running events. I missed a lot of conditioning," Blair said.

"Those events are hard to get a handle on. I'm just reaching my peak now. Last year, I was at my peak at nationals."

In his 1,500 heat, Johnson ran at the back of the pack for the first half of the race; then made his move with about 500 meters left. Johnson tried to find a finishing kick in the final 200 meters but was unsuccessful.

He dropped to his knees after finishing the race and had to be helped off the track.

"I didn't have any energy left coming off the last turn," Johnson said. "I just felt really tired. That kind of sums everything up."

Milena Glusac and Kelsey Stellick are Oregon's remaining competitors at the NCAA meet.

Glusac runs in the final of the women's 3,000 meters Friday evening. Stellick is an entrant in the javelin competition, which takes place Friday afternoon.

Group may announce playoff recommendation

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — It sounds so easy. Just bring the top-rated college football teams together and let them play for the NCAA championship.

But it is very, very tricky. A committee studying ways to set up what many believe would be the most-watched and most lucrative collegiate event ever may not even make its own self-imposed deadline.

By sometime Friday, the 24-member panel was expected to announce a recommendation for the 106 Division I-A schools to vote on at the NCAA convention in January.

But subcommittees have been formed to study revenue distribution, athletes' welfare and the structure of the format itself, and nobody is flatly predicting any recommendation when the committee holds a Friday news conference at the end of its second full meeting.

The committee's options range from enthusiastic support for a specific playoff plan to scrapping the idea altogether to asking for more time to study. The format must be approved at the convention and the deadline for submitting legislation is not until Sept. 1.

A voluminous report issued last month indicated as much as \$62.7 million in "new" money could be realized from an eight-team play-

off. The committee also is studying two-, four- and 16-team formats.

"We're in a learning process, and these important matters should be carefully considered," said Oklahoma athletic director Donnie Duncan, another committee member. "I think with this being the second meeting of the committee, the information process is not complete. At no point has there been any indication from anyone that we would do anything other than take our time and do a very thorough job."

Further complicating the mix is a playoff formula that a majority of Division I-A conference commissioners have proposed.

It would set up a six-team, three-game scenario to include one game on New Year's Eve, one on New Year's night and one Jan. 2. They would seed teams 1 through 6; every third year, each of the three bowls invited to participate would have a 1 vs. 2 matchup.

This would include the Big Eight, Southeastern Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference and the Big East, along with Notre Dame. The bowl coalition would be rolling the dice and gambling that the No. 1 team would not belong to either the Big Ten and Pacific 10, which are tied to the Rose Bowl and lukewarm to any playoff proposal.

Blair, Mack gain academic honors

A pair of Oregon student-athletes, Kelly Blair and Cappy Mack, were named to the District VIII GTE Academic All-America team by the College Sports Information Directors of America.

Blair, a track standout from Prosser, Wash., is a two-time all-American and the 1993 NCAA

heptathlon champion.

The senior who holds a 3.89 grade-point average in business management was honored with a first team spot on the GTE Academic All-America team last year.

She would become Oregon's third athlete ever to receive the honor on more than one occa-

sion if she is selected again this year.

Mack, a senior on the Oregon women's golf team, received her first nomination on the GTE Academic All-America team after twice being named an academic all-American among Division I golfers. Mack has earned a 3.92 GPA in Philosophy.



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