

Ex-Duck's daughter signs with UO track

■ The Ducks continue bolstering their team with the addition of another prep recruit, one with Oregon ties

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Usually, when the Oregon women's track and field team shows around a new recruit, everyone wants to know where they're from. Or they ask them their personal best in the event they're participating in.



But in the case of Clarice Hayward-Lee, the Ducks' newest addition in the triple jump announced Wednesday, maybe all everyone wanted to know was how many points her dad scored in 1974.

Hayward-Lee is the daughter of Oregon men's basketball legend Ron Lee. The Bellevue, Wash., native may turn some Duck heads of her own on the Oregon track next year.

Hayward-Lee won the Washington 4A triple jump title last season with a leap of 38 feet, 6 1/4 inches,

then took second in the high jump with a jump of 5-5. She was fifth in the triple jump her junior year at Newport High School.

"Clarice has a lot of potential to develop into a national-class triple jumper, and possibly a high jumper as well," Oregon sprints and jumps coach Mark Stream said. "She's very athletic and has her best years ahead of her."

Hayward-Lee could fill a hole in the Ducks' field unit, which has been without a consistent triple jumper this season. Sophomore Deborah Lee has been the only Duck to focus solely on the event, and failed to make the Pacific-10 Conference standard of 39-4 1/2 this season. High jumper Rachael Kriz came the closest to that mark.

Hayward-Lee will draw a lot of attention because of her father. Ron Lee was part of the "Kamikaze Kids," with current men's basketball head coach Ernie Kent, in the mid-70s. Lee holds the Oregon record for scoring, and is second all-time in points per game. He was a three-time all-American.

Hayward-Lee is the fifth top recruit signed by Oregon for the 2001-02 season.



Niki Reed was an all-around prep athlete, lettering in volleyball, softball and track, and earned all-state honors in swimming.

Reed

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Half of Eugene comes to meets. This helps.

And, unless Speight can make the NCAAs this weekend, Reed will be the only Oregon participant in the NCAA pole vault.

"People who live in Eugene always come to meets," Reed said. "Just being able to vault here is

amazing."

As the end of the season is approaching, Reed may need to make the most of her situation right now. Life at Oregon hasn't always been peachy, and if she encounters more twists in the future, the vault of Reed's career may not turn out just right.

There were the knee injuries that hampered her last season. There were the busted poles at successive meets this season that forced her to move down to smaller poles and lower heights. And there's the mental aspect of vaulting that has always pushed Reed to go one notch higher, and sometimes one notch lower.

"Ninety percent of vaulting is mental," Reed said.

Then there is the case of Elstrom. The senior was an all-American last season, but recurring injuries forced her to essentially sit out her senior sea-

son. Elstrom has been vaulting, but with short poles at short heights. Because of the athletic meat grinder that is pole vaulting, Reed could follow Elstrom next year if her knee problems come back.

But if Elstrom's words are a guide, Reed should have success, right here, right now.

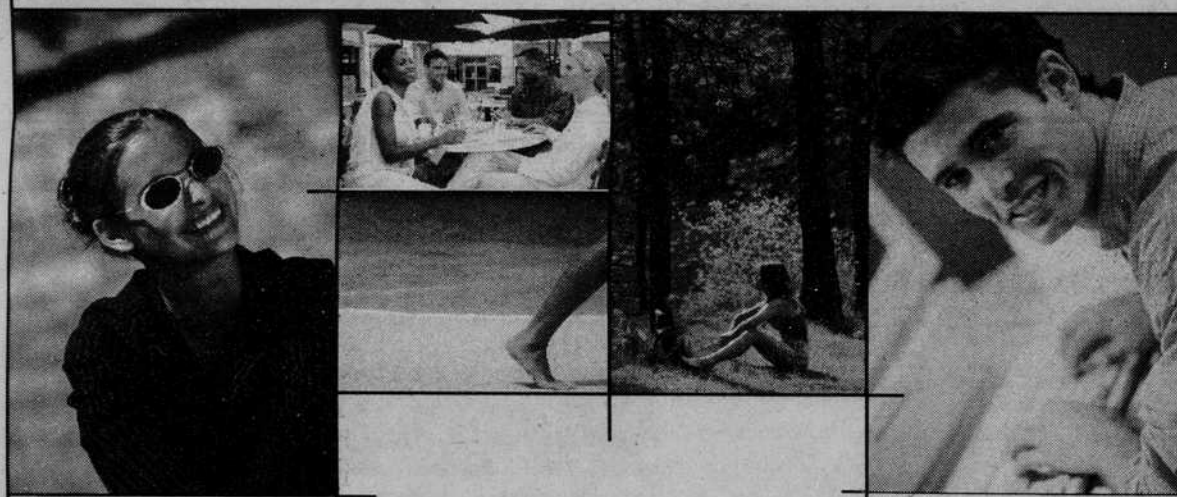
"Niki's always done well at big meets in the past," Elstrom said. "She's able to put behind her whatever has happened before the meet."

Even Reed herself recognizes that clutch mentality.

"I love beating people equal to or better than me," Reed said. "There will be a lot of talented girls [in the postseason], but I'm just going to try my hardest and see what happens."

For Niki Reed, now is the time to go over the bar.

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Smith

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sion about who the next coach is going to be," Muscatell said. "We've talked about that, and I told them that people other than ourselves are in control of that. We need to concentrate on the things we can control right now."

Muscatell, an Oregon assistant the last two years who has become a team favorite as the primary recruiter, said he has not decided if he will apply for the head coaching job.

"As I have said all along, the deadline is May 21 and I plan to make my decision before then," Muscatell said. "It certainly would be my desire [to remain at Oregon

in some form], but Moos has made it clear that the new coach will decide that. I'd like to be around."

Muscatell also said that he and some of the players met with Smith during her two-day visit to campus.

"[Smith] has a great depth of feeling having played here," Muscatell said. "All coaches hold out that hope to return to their roots. She clearly is excited about the possibility."

The Ducks return nine letterwinners next year, including 2000 Pacific-10 Conference Player of the Year Shaquala Williams, who missed the entire 2000-01 season with an injured knee.

This year's recruiting class of six prep standouts is considered by many to be one of the best in the nation.

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