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Sports briefs

Women's track transfers among nation's best

In the most recent edition of Track and Field News, the Oregon women's track and field team's group of newcomers was tabbed among the nation's best by the sport's leading publication.

The Duck women were among six honorable mention choices just outside of the top five nationally, and more importantly, have since added two high-profile newcomers for the indoor season — transfers Becky Holliday (pole vault) and Mary Murphy (high jump).

In her indoor debut earlier this month, Holliday met the NCAA automatic qualifying mark and tied the school record of 13-5 1/4 in the Pole Vault Summit and ranks third among collegians in 2002. The Sparks, Nev., native joins the Ducks after a breakthrough season on the national scene in 2001.

Holliday raised her personal best to 14-4 in the national championships — good enough to rank her seventh in the nation at season's end and second among collegians. Later in the summer, she fin-

ished fifth (14-1 1/4) in the U.S. Outdoor Championships in June at Hayward Field in Eugene, and eighth (13-0) in the World University Games in Beijing, China. She also flexed her versatility in the conference championships last year adding points in the 200 (third, 25.5), 400 (second, 56.2), 4x100 (second) and 4x400 relays (second).

"After competing here several times (last year), Hayward Field was a big attraction to me," Holliday said, "especially after doing well here at the U.S. nationals. The crowd was so great and so into it, I'm excited to experience that again."

Murphy owns a high jump best of 5-8 and joins a unit that already returns two top-12 Pac-10 finishers from last season. The Sherwood, Ore., native could also see future work in the heptathlon after scoring in the 2001 NWAACC Championships in the 200 (fifth), 400 (third), high jump (first, 5-7), long jump (fourth, 17-4), triple jump (fourth, high 34), 4x100 (second) and 4x400 (first).

Among the Ducks' freshman class of newcomers to be honored by the publication was prep All-

America throwers Elisa Crumley (javelin, 164-0) from Hillsboro, Ore., and Katie McKeever of Woodland, Calif., (shot put 45-3 1/4, discus 162-3), triple jumper Clarice Hayward-Lee (39-1 1/2) from Bellevue, Wash., javelin thrower Roslyn Lundeen (161-9) from Victoria, British Columbia, and middle distance runner Sara Schaaf of Klamath Falls, Ore., (800 - 2:12.91).

— From staff and wire reports

Soccer team one of most improved

Soccer Buzz magazine recognized Oregon as one of the nation's most improved soccer programs from 2000 to 2001.

The Ducks improved their record to 8-8-2 last season, which was tied for the sixth-best increase in wins out of 278 Division I teams. It marked Oregon's best record since it added the sport in 1996.

"I'm glad to see continued improvement and we're looking to grow even further," seventh-year Oregon coach Bill Steffen said.

The country's most improved team was Campbell, which went from 4-12-1 to 13-6.

— From staff and wire reports

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are you proud to be a Duck?

20.6% or 1 of every 5 people feel the campus climate is racist.

23.9% or almost 1 of every 4 people feel the campus climate is sexist.

33.3% or almost 1 of every 3 people feel the campus climate is homophobic.

In 2001 the University participated in a survey regarding underrepresented populations.

Lead researcher Dr. Sue Rankin will provide a forum to hear information regarding the initial significance of the report on

Wednesday, January 30th, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.
EMU Ben Linder Room.

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Women's

continued from page 5

"I think we're doing really well," senior guard Edniesha Curry said. "Our chemistry is coming together, we're starting to find our rhythm on offense, and we're really starting to click."

Smith said the team has a "new look" from its early season woes.

"Offensively and defensively, we have some chemistry, we have understanding of how we need to play in certain situations, and we have a flow," she said. "We've improved in areas that, in the beginning, people thought we weren't very strong."

Continued improvement could make Oregon a dangerous team down the stretch, especially with home-court advantage in the Pac-10 Tournament.

Offense — Grade: B+

Rebound. Push the ball. Score. It sounds simple, but hasn't always been for the Ducks this season.

Entering the season without a true inside presence was a clear weakness as opponents concentrated their defense on Oregon's talented backcourt. Still, the backcourt tandem of Shaquala Williams and Curry have paced the Ducks this season, averaging a combined 29 points per game.

And the recent emergence of



Adam Amato Emerald

Senior Edniesha Curry has been instrumental to Oregon's 7-4 Pac-10 record this year.

post players Cathrine Kraayeveld and Andrea Bills has given the Ducks more options and the guards more open looks.

Defense — Grade: C+

It's all about Eddie, the Energizer bunny.

Typically, fans only rise to their feet after a sweet behind-the-back pass or a deep three at the buzzer. But not at McArthur Court. Curry, a speedy 5-foot-6 guard, gets the crowd going with her uncanny defensive prowess, harassing opposing point guards and forcing turnovers.

Rebounding, the biggest question mark at the beginning of the season, "has certainly come a long, long way," Smith said. The Ducks, in fact, are even with their opponents in rebounding margin.

While the defense has been a sticking point all year, it may be doing the most improving — and continues to do so. By the end of the season, this could be the team's best asset.

The guards — Grade: B

On pure potential, Oregon's starting backcourt is probably the best in the Pac-10.

Since Pac-10 play began, Williams leads the league with 18.4 points per game and has showed the same form that made her the 2000 Pac-10 Player of the Year.

And Curry's quickness and floor leadership has added another dimension to the Oregon attack — on both ends of the court.

Simply put, if the Ducks need a bucket, Curry and Williams are eager to take control and are capable of scoring on anyone.

Senior sharpshooter Jamie Craighead has struggled in Oregon's new up-tempo game, but has found her long-range shot of late.

The posts — Grade: B-

The Ducks' inside game, by far, has been the biggest surprise of the season.

Replacing 6-foot-5 Jenny Mowe and 6-foot-3 Angelina Wolvert, both WNBA draft picks, was no easy task.

Seniors Alyssa Fredrick and Ndidi Unaka opened the season as the starters in the paint, but have since moved to the bench.

In the last month, sophomore Kraayeveld and freshman Bills have taken over the starting roles — and they've both given Academy Award-winning presentations of late.

Since jumping into the starting lineup on Dec. 29, Kraayeveld has averaged 10.8 points and 9.5 rebounds per game and her 1.82 blocks a game leads the Pac-10.

Bills is averaging 8.3 points and 5.8 rebounds during conference play.

"They've been a huge help in the Pac-10s," Curry said. "Having an inside presence opens it up more for our guards with dribble penetration and three-point shots."

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