

Thursday, May 30, 2002

NCAA Championships

UO pole vaulter Holliday finishes third at NAAs

■ With a six-point finish, Becky Holliday becomes the highest scoring Oregon athlete in the pole vault since Niki Reed took fifth in 1999

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

In the 2001 NCAA Championships at Hayward Field, Oregon finished a disappointing 60th place with only two overall points, both supplied by Sarah Malone's seventh place finish in the javelin.

Becky Holliday just took care of the 2002 version for the Oregon women's track and field team.

The Oregon junior, in her first season competing for head coach Tom Heinonen's squad, placed third Wednesday at the 2002 NCAA Championships in the pole vault. The finish earned Oregon six points, good enough to triple last year's total.

And the squad still has four more athletes to go. Holliday, whose top height this season was 14 feet, 1 and 1/4 inches, finished her day in Baton Rouge, La., at a disappointing 13-05 1/4.

However, with the top finisher — UCLA's Tracy O'Hara — winning at a height of 13-09.25, it was not the best of days for the pole vault contingent down in the Bayou.

"I had a bad day on the wrong day," Holliday said in a telephone interview Wednesday evening, clearly disappointed with her finish. "I felt great. It was just that my rhythm was totally off. I just did not feel good on the runway."

The transfer from Clackamas Community College passed at heights of 12-03.50 and 12-09.50 before clearing 13-01.50 on her first try.

She missed her first two tries at 13-05.25, but cleared it on her final attempt. However, that would be the last time Holliday would clear the bar in an Oregon uniform this season. She missed three tries at 13-09.25, a height that would have tied her with O'Hara for the top spot.

Liberty's Andrea Wildrick missed her attempt at 13-09.25 in a playoff against O'Hara, thus Wildrick finished in second place.

"I just had much better expectations for myself," Holliday said. "I just think I put too much pressure on myself."

If there was a silver lining, though, it was that O'Hara, and not Arizona's Amy Linnen took the title. O'Hara, has now won two NCAA titles — her first coming in 2000 — while Linnen, a sophomore at Arizona, failed to earn a height.

"I was really happy for her," Holliday said of O'Hara, a close friend. "I'm glad she won it in her senior year."

Next season, Holliday will be that senior looking for the title. She will also be the second-ranked pole

NCAA Women's Standings (After Day 1)

1. UCLA	15
2. Clemson	10
3. N.C. State	10
4. Nebraska	8
4. Liberty	8
4. Colorado	8
4. South Florida	8
8. Oregon	6
8. Idaho State	6
8. Yale	6

vaulter in the NCAA.

"I guess I'm looking forward to next year," she said.

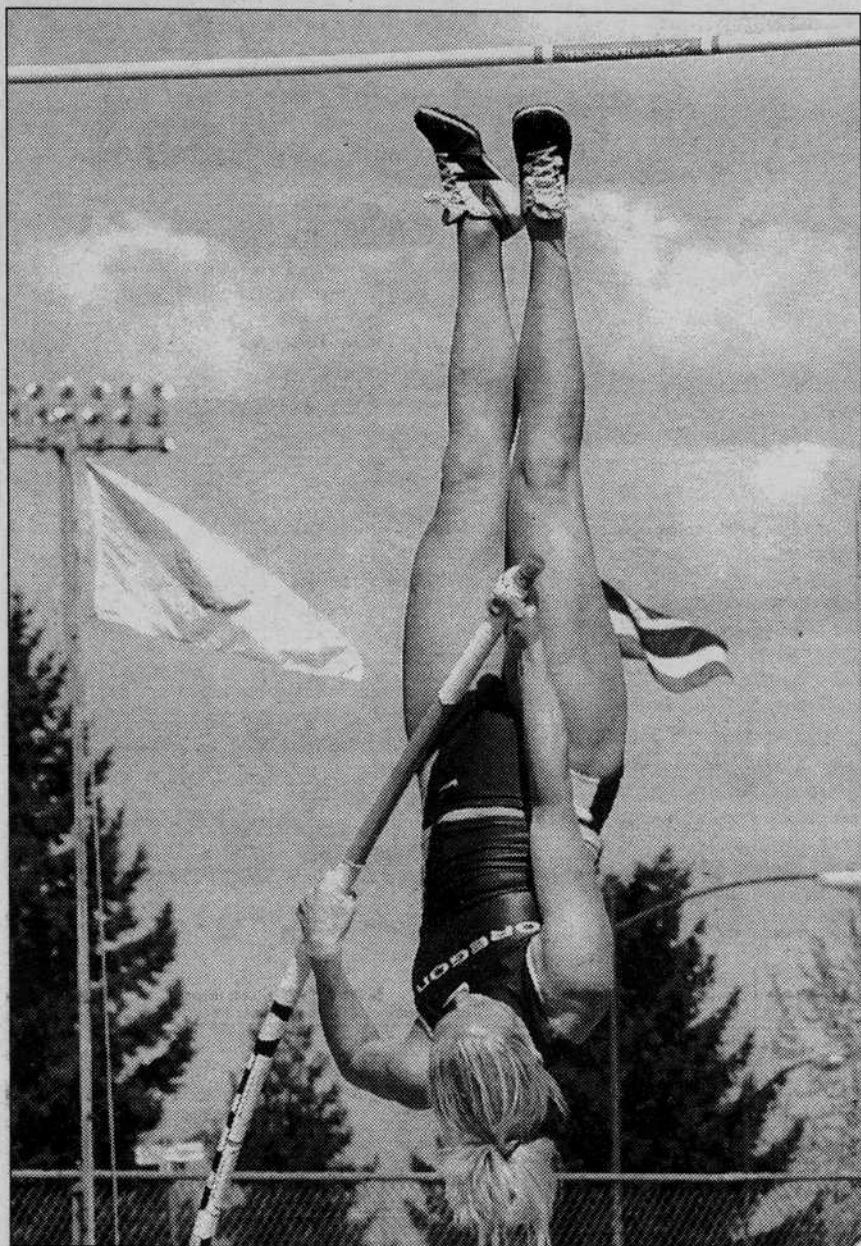
Ducks' Javelin trio next up

With Holliday already coming through with a third-place performance, Oregon's attention now turns to the javelin.

Sophomore Sarah Malone and freshmen Elisa Crumley and Roslyn Lundeen head to the Baton Rouge, all ranked in the top 12 in the nation.

While Malone is used to the big-time spotlight that is placed on the NCAA Championships, Crumley and Lundeen will be experiencing it firsthand for the first time. But that doesn't necessarily mean they will wilt under the intense scrutiny.

Turn to NCAA, page 14



Becky Holliday, shown here at the Pac-10 Championships in Pullman, Wash., earned Oregon six points at the NCAA Championships when she placed third in the pole vault.

Oregon men miss marks on first day of NCAA Championships

■ Simon Kimata fails to advance in the 800, while Adam Kriz can't break the top 10 in the hammer

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon men's track team entered the NCAA Championships with high hopes, but at least some of those hopes came crashing to the ground with the weight of a hammer on Wednesday.

Only two Ducks were in action at the first day of the national meet, and both of those athletes suffered disappointment. Simon Kimata, ranked third in the 800-meter race heading into the NAAs, finished fourth in his preliminary heat on Wednesday and missed the finals. Adam Kriz had slightly lower expectations — he was ranked 13th in the hammer heading into the meet — but he threw short of his personal best and finished 14th.

"Through the competition I was up for it, I was relaxed, I wasn't nervous," Kriz said. "I was throwing it as far as I could, it just wasn't going anywhere."

But the biggest disappointment on Wednesday belonged to Kimata. The senior was hampered by injury that kept him out of the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and NCAA meet in 2001, then he came back strong this season. He ran a personal best of 1:46.65 in March, then won the Pac-10 title in 1:48.35.

But at the NCAA meet, Kimata's

NCAA Results

(After Day 1)

800-meter preliminaries, Heat 2

1. Jonathan Johnson, Texas Tech, 1:46.55*
2. Sam Burley, Pennsylvania, 1:46.88*
3. Marc Sylvester, Tennessee, 1:47.00*
4. Simon Kimata, Oregon, 1:48.17

Hammer finals

1. Andras Haklits, Georgia, 253-8
2. Libor Charfreitag, SMU, 252-7
3. Carey Ryan, DePaul, 225-3
14. Adam Kriz, Oregon, 200-7

*made finals

1:48.17 only earned him fourth in a fast heat. The top two athletes from each heat advanced, and then the next two fastest from all the heats combined. Kimata ended up 11th in the rankings, missing the finals by only 0.25 seconds.

"It was very humid out there," Kimata said. "I had nothing to do except push hard."

Kriz also said the heat got him a little bit. But on Wednesday night, Kriz still couldn't put a finger on why he couldn't crack the hammer's top 10.

"It's still too fresh," said Kriz, a junior. "Probably next week I'll be able to tell you (how it happened). Hopefully it's a good learning experience that I can

build on for next year."

Kriz's best throw on Wednesday was his third, which went 200 feet, 7 inches. At the Pac-10 meet two weeks ago, Kriz threw 210-7 to win the conference title. If he had uncorked that kind of throw Wednesday, Kriz would have finished eighth.

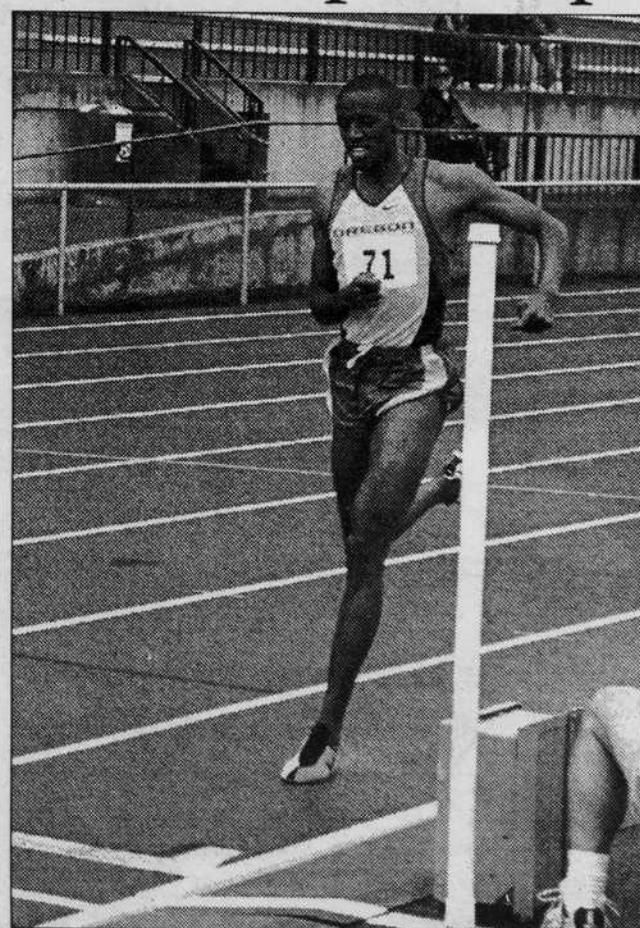
"It's another big meet, and the more big meets you go to, the better you do in the next big meet," Kriz said. "It's good to get that experience under my belt, and hopefully next year I'll be in a better position coming in, but I'll be more relaxed because I know what's going on here."

Today, three more Ducks will try to redeem Kimata's and Kriz' performances. Nick Bakke was the last javelin thrower to make the NCAA meet, so he has nothing to lose in this afternoon's javelin competition.

Two other Ducks will have higher expectations. Micah Harris, ranked ninth in the 110 hurdles, needs to finish high in today's preliminary heat in order to advance to Friday's semifinal and Saturday's final. Oregon sophomore Jason Hartmann will be one of the last athletes to compete today when he takes the track for the 10,000 this evening. Hartmann is ranked 10th in his event.

Looking ahead to Friday's action, Billy Pappas will be in action in the first five decathlon events, and Harris could be in action if he advances in the hurdles.

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Simon Kimata wasn't alone at the finish line at the NCAA Championships 800-meter race. He finished fourth in his heat.