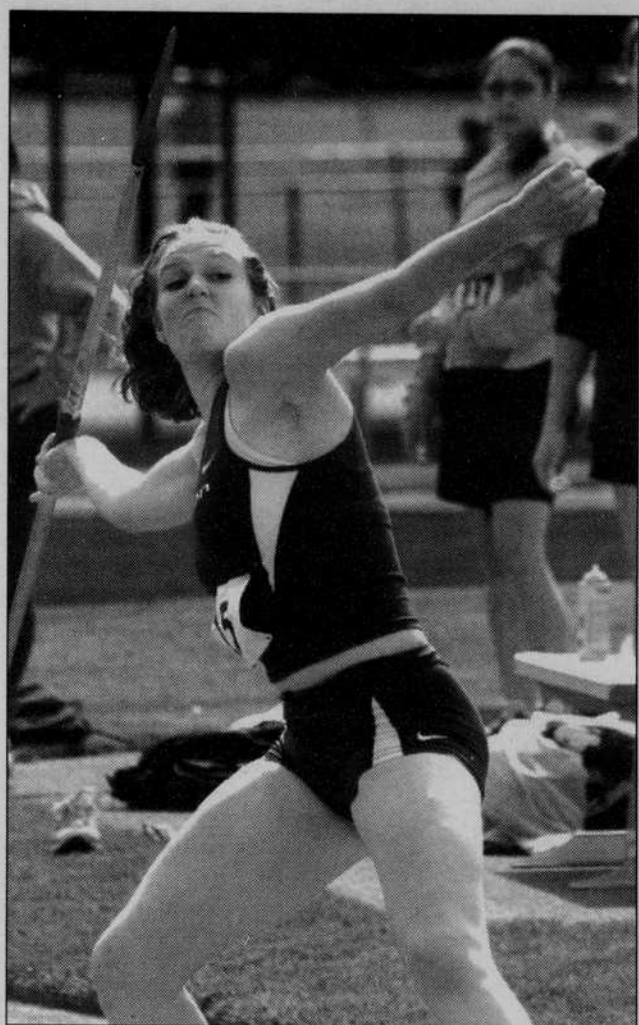


# Thowers face tough competition in Texas meet



Junior Rachel Kriz is one of eight Oregon throwers competing in the Texas Relays. Erik R. Bishoff Photographer

Eight Oregon women throwers, led by Sarah Malone, head to the Texas Relays meet beginning today

By Alex Tam  
Sports Reporter

Many of the nation's best track and field athletes will gather to participate in one of the most nationally recognized track meets.

The Oregon women's track and field team will send its throwers unit to the 77th-annual Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays held at Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin, Texas. The meet begins today.

The country's top high school and collegiate athletes, along with former Olympians such as 1996 gold medalist sprinter Chryste Gaines, will compete at the meet. Gaines told TexasSports.com that the experience of the Texas Relays is great as fans in the Lone Star State are very knowledgeable about track and field.

"There aren't very many meets in the world like this," Gaines told TexasSports.com. "To run here in front of this crowd is amazing and gives you so much energy."

The Ducks hope to learn from the

experience in a stadium that will host the 2004 NCAA Championships in two months. One of those hoping to make it to the national championships is redshirt junior and All-American javelin thrower Sarah Malone. Malone is already a two-time NCAA qualifier and holds the school record for the javelin event with a mark of 179-2.

Another notable Duck entering the field is junior Bree Fuqua, a transfer after three seasons at Wisconsin, where she holds the school's indoor and outdoor shot-put record. In her first year at Oregon, she has already proved herself to be one of the team's top athletes.

Fuqua began her Oregon career two weeks ago at the Oregon Preview meet, where she posted Pacific-10 Conference and regional qualifying marks in the shot put and discus. Fuqua, a Poison, Mont., native, earned marks of 48-10 3/4 in the shot put and 160-6 in the discus. Her personal best of 51-3 1/2 in the shot put already ranks her second all-time in the history of the program.

Along with Fuqua, senior Jill Hoxmeier will also compete in the discus on Friday. Hoxmeier returns as the squad's top discus and hammer thrower from last season. She is ranked 12th among Pac-10 returnees in the discus based on her mark of 151-9 in 2003. Her personal best of 162-8 in the hammer places her

eighth all-time in Oregon history.

The fourth-year Duck said that every meet is important to her from here on out as she winds down her career at Oregon.

"Because this is my last year, I really just want to go out every meet and throw like it's my last meet," Hoxmeier said. "I want to give it all I have and not hold anything back."

Sophomore Megan Kriz, a transfer from Portland State, is another of the eight Ducks participating at the meet. She made her Oregon debut at Hayward Field two weeks ago in the hammer throw and posted a mark of 171-7. That throw puts her fifth all-time in Oregon history in the hammer.

The women throwers are under new leadership and guidance headed by four-time Olympian and assistant coach Lance Deal. A new philosophy emphasizing both track and especially field events is being seen as the main difference this year.

University junior and middle distance runner Laura Harmon said she has noticed the change with the transition to the new coaching staff led by men's head coach Martin Smith.

"The coaches are maybe a little bit more intense than last year, which is a good thing," Harmon said. "It's just a lot different."

Contact the sports reporter at alextam@dailyemerald.com.

# Men's track sends 12 to face top national challengers

The Oregon men's track team heads to Texas for one of the year's biggest meets

By Jon Roetman  
Sports Reporter

The Oregon men's track and field team is ready to face its first big challenge of the outdoor season.

The Ducks sent 12 participants to Austin, Texas, today for the 77th-annual Texas Relays.

The meet runs through Saturday and will feature some of the top talents from around the country, including former Olympians and high school standouts.

## MEN'S TRACK

American is one of four pole vaulters who will compete for the Ducks. Skipper took second at the NCAA indoor

finale (18-feet 4 1/2-inches) but is looking to rebound from a disappointing performance two weeks ago at the Oregon Preview, where he failed to clear 18 feet.

All-American Trevor Woods will also compete in the pole vault. The senior from Coos Bay placed third at the NCAA Indoors as a sophomore in 2002.

Redshirt sophomore Jon Derby and redshirt freshman David Moore round out the pole vaulters for Oregon. Derby recorded a personal best

of 16-6 3/4 at last year's Oregon Twilight, while Moore's best (16-8 3/4) came in 2003 as a USA Junior Championships Qualifier.

Leading the way on the track will be Brandon Holliday in the 400 hurdles. The former Pacific-10 Conference 400-hurdle champion started the 2004 outdoor campaign with a bang, placing first at the Oregon Preview (51.89 seconds).

Also on the track will be sophomores Eric Mitchum and A.K. Ikwuakor. Both will compete in the 110

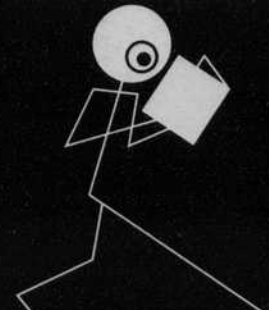
and 400 hurdles. Mitchum garnered All-American status at the 2004 NCAA Indoor Championships, finishing sixth (7.74) in the 60 hurdles. The Calumet City, Ill., native also took first in the 110 hurdles with a windy 13.91w (w2.5) during his 2004 outdoor debut at the Oregon Preview.

Ikwuakor started the outdoor campaign strong with a pair of runner-up finishes in the 110 (14.66) and 400 (52.93) hurdles at the Oregon Preview.

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