

"I didn't need motivation. I needed a real owner. ... I needed a real owner like Micky Arison."

Miami center Shaquille O'Neal after Jerry Buss said he needed to move to be motivated to lose weight

In my opinion



JON ROETMAN
ROUGHING THE PASSER

Stewart must earn his carries next season

When Jonathan Stewart officially became a member of the Oregon football team on Feb. 2, Duck fans were overcome by visions of a Heisman Trophy and a shot at a national championship.

After all, the Ducks had landed what many thought was the nation's top running back recruit. The mere sight of the young man brings with it thoughts of football glory. At 5-foot-10 and 220-pounds, Stewart is a mountain of muscle that rushed for 7,757 yards and scored 95 touchdowns during a glorified prep career at Timberline High School in Lacey, Wash.

He rushed for 2,301 yards and 32 touchdowns during his senior year alone, was all-state three years in a row and could have played for any school in the nation.

Translation: He isn't coming to Eugene to sit on the bench.

While I agree it's a head coach's job to put his best talent on the field, I don't think Mike Bellotti should hand Stewart the starting job — or even the second running back spot — when he arrives in the fall.

The Ducks already have a solid group of running backs that should make Stewart earn every carry he gets during the 2005 season. Rising senior Terrence Whitehead transformed himself into an All-Pacific-10 Conference back last season, amassing 1,144 yards. The Los Angeles native will take over the school's all-time rushing lead from Derek Loville if he equals that total in 2005.

While lacking ideal speed, Whitehead gained the respect of his teammates and coaches by grinding out tough yards between the tackles. He was also the Ducks' second-leading pass catcher with 44 receptions for 405 yards.

Not bad for an athlete who originally came here to play safety.

An off-season ankle surgery limited Whitehead's participation during spring drills, but when he did see the field, the 5-foot-10, 220-pounder was more than solid. He should be Oregon's unquestioned starter come fall, no matter how good Stewart turns out to be.

Terrell Jackson also proved to be a quality back during spring drills. Ranked as one of the top 15 running backs in the country by SuperPrep in 2004, Jackson redshirted last year and figured to be Oregon's running back of the future.

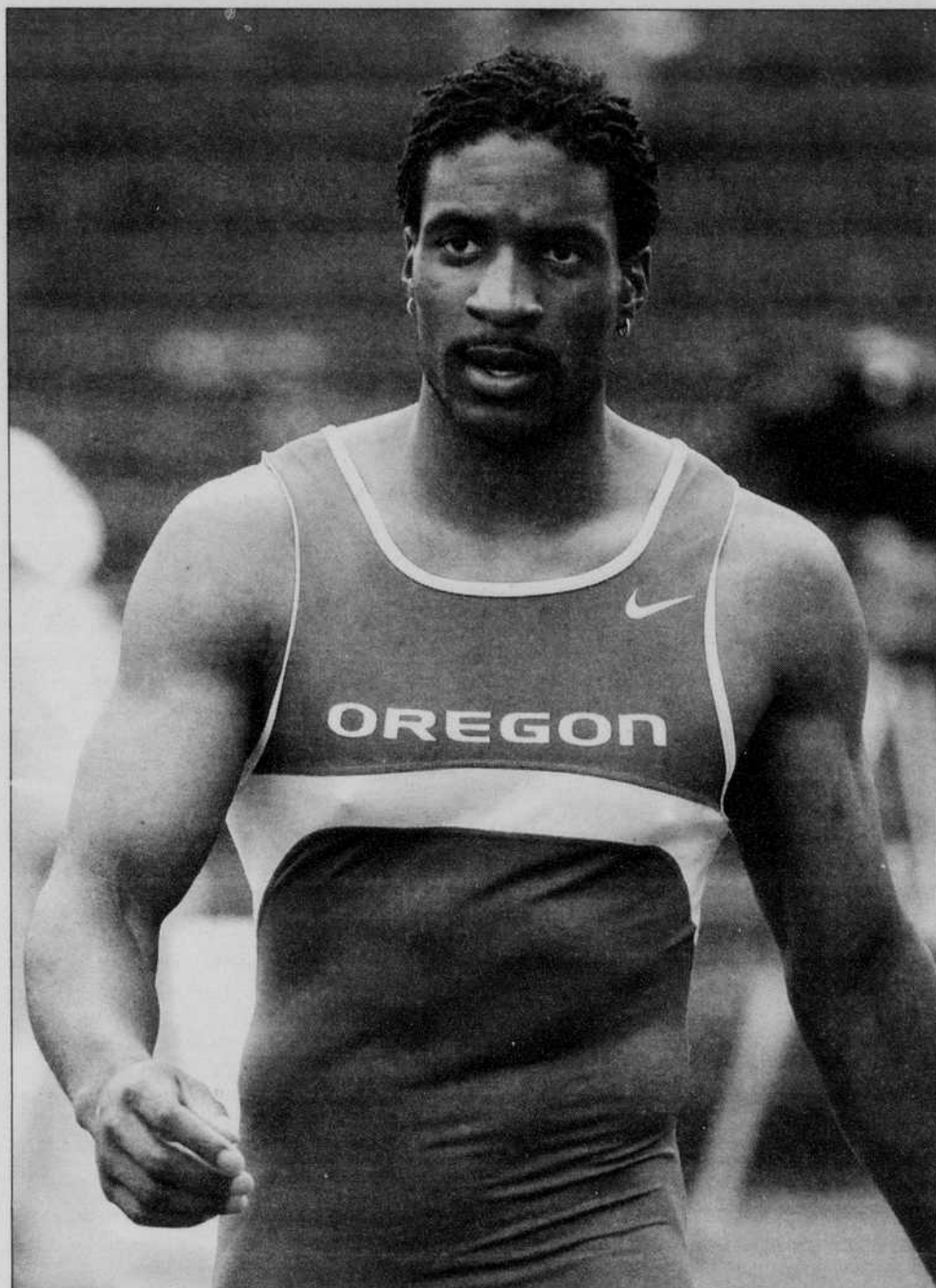
At 5-foot-9 and 196 pounds, the Moreno Valley, Calif., native showed an explosive burst and the power to run between the tackles. His 10-yard touchdown run during Oregon's spring game, during which he made at least three people miss, showed he was for real. But with the addition of Stewart, Jackson's place in Oregon's plans is unknown.

With Whitehead's proven track record and Jackson's performance during the spring, the duo should enter the fall as the top two backs on the Ducks' depth chart.

If Stewart wants playing time, he should to have to earn it.

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Men's track and field



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Oregon junior hurdler A.K. Ikwuakor has taken the place of former Duck Brandon Holliday in the 400-meter hurdles, finishing with a personal best 50.99 in the 400 hurdles last week at the Drake Relays.

A.K. WHO?

Junior hurdler A.K. Ikwuakor is making a name for himself with two new personal bests this year

BY BRIAN SMITH
SPORTS REPORTER

So far during the 2005 track season, Oregon junior hurdler A.K. Ikwuakor has given the Ducks nothing but solid performances and better-than-respectable times.

But ask any casual Tracktown, USA fan who A.K. Ikwuakor is and "Who?" is the response you will get.

Running behind marquee hurdlers such as former Duck Brandon Holliday and current All-American Eric Mitchum tends to dwarf teammates, and Ikwuakor is no exception.

"Brandon was an awesome guy," Ikwuakor said. "I knew Eric would be focusing on the 110 hurdles and his 400 duties weren't going to be too much (this year), so I knew that Eric could be the 110 guy and I could be the 400 guy and develop from that. I didn't feel like I met my potential from last year and I knew I had to step it up this year."

But by the time Ikwuakor's career is over, the native of Arvada, Colo., will have the chance to surpass Holliday and still, people might ask:

"Who?"

Disappointment at Colorado

A.K. (Akobundu) Ikwuakor transferred to Eugene after his freshman season at Colorado.

Ikwuakor started in Boulder along with his twin brother and sister, Ebbe and O.B., as part of a package deal for the Colorado track and

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Women's track and field

Ducks to have a low showing at Twilight

Some Oregon athletes will use this weekend's meet to help them qualify for upcoming regionals

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

Faithful Oregon track and field fans will not be surprised by the lack of entries running, jumping and throwing for the Ducks at Hayward Field this weekend.

A reduced number of Oregon athletes will compete at the Oregon Twilight on Saturday, typical for Oregon's last regular-season home meet. The first event starts at 3:30 p.m.

The Twilight will give athletes an opportunity to prepare for the quickly approaching Pacific-10 Conference Championships May 7-8 and the NCAA West Regional May 27-28. A significant portion of Oregon's competitors who already own regional qualifying marks opted to rest this weekend.

Senior Sofie Abildtrup is slated to run the 200-meter with the intention of improving her future 400-meter times in the postseason.

"Sofie is doing her's as a tune-up for the 400 — that's the only reason she's running," Oregon assistant coach Rock Light said. "Hardly any of the kids that I coach are competing this weekend."

Duck seniors Clarice Hayward-Lee (triple jump), Maegan Traver (triple jump) and Rachael Kriz-Wallace (high jump) will strive for regional qualifying marks in their respective events.

Oregon senior Katie Kersh, redshirt athlete



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon senior Laura Harmon, who has a regional qualifying mark in the 5,000-meter, will race in the 1,500 at the Oregon Twilight to work on her speed.

Britney Henry and senior Brittany Hinchcliffe are scheduled to throw the hammer and are expected to be the only female throwers competing for the Ducks on Saturday.

"It's going to be a really light week," Oregon throws coach Lance Deal said. "We're just going to be training well (in practice)."

Deal said senior javelin thrower Sarah Malone will not compete in her last Twilight although she had previously expressed interest.

In the distance races, senior Laura Harmon will use the 1,500 to work on her speed and to get another race under her belt, even though she already

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