

# Track in fine shape for NWAACC championships

By John William Howard  
Sports Editor

In the heat of the sun, Lane Community College's Brandon Nash prepared to make another attempt at the high jump. Teammates and fellow athletes gathered around to watch, clapping in unison as Nash dashed toward the mat. At the last second, the blustery wind gusted, causing Nash to hold off for another try.

Nash went on to win his event by a fair margin in the Southern Region Track and Field Championships hosted by Mt. Hood Community College on Saturday, but he was one of the few who put forth the effort. Nash and the rest of Lane's team came out and dominated regionals as they have for a number of years, with the women winning by 42.5 points and the men running away by 159. That margin, while it seems tellingly insurmountable, doesn't really show the whole story.

"[Lane] is very proud that they've won this meet however many years in a row," said assistant coach Jerret Mantalas, who mentioned that Lane makes a point of trying to win the regional meet every year. "Last year we were second on both sides here, lost to Lane on both sides, and then went to NWAACCs and beat them on both sides."

The meet wasn't entirely



Cairlyn Lewis plunges into the water pit during the women's 3000 meter steeplechase. The event, which Lewis won by a fair margin, combines distance and hurdles to make one of the oddest races in sports.

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lost on Clackamas Community College athletes, some of whom had yet to qualify for the NWAACC championships, making Saturday an important day.

"This is my last chance to qualify, so I'm basically gonna

try to go all out for this one," said Shane Titherington, who competed in the javelin and jumped at his teammate Josh Edens. "If I don't make it, then I'll try my best to support this guy."

Mantalas said that much of

the focus for Clackamas was on preparation for the NWAACC championships, which will be held in Spokane, Wash. on May 21-22. Many of the athletes have already qualified, so they don't need to race again and instead chose to rest and recu-

perate. Athletes that would normally have run in two or three events competed in just one, and many of the throwers threw just once before "scratching" out of the competition.

However despite the relaxed feel of the meet, Clackamas did have a few standout performances. Sophomore Katie Higgins won the women's hammer throw by three and a half meters, and Clackamas took first, second and fourth in the women's javelin event. Caitlyn Lewis finished first in the women's steeple chase in a season best 12:11:25.

Things fared even better on the men's side, as Clackamas took first or second in several events. Kyle Vuksich and Badane Sultessa each took first respectively in the 400 and 800 meter run, while Ryan Adams finished second in the 200 and Saril Paz second in the 110 meter hurdles. Shaun Lemafa won the men's hammer throw for Clackamas, making a it a sweep in the event for the Cougars.

The one thing that all the athletes look to avoid is injury, especially right at the end of the season when things matter the most. Clackamas didn't escape completely unscathed, as they lost decathlete Trent Acree to an ankle injury about halfway through the meet. Mantalas said that he didn't know how bad it was, but that he didn't think it would be too serious long term.



Shelby Grubb jumps from the starting blocks in the 4x100 meter relay. Grubb competed in four events on Saturday.



Taylor Ballard warms up before the pole vaulting event begins. Ballard has the top vault for any of the Clackamas women.



Racing the final leg, Nettie Wayne looks to finish the 4x100 meter relay strong. Clackamas finished second in the event.

## Southern Region Track & Field Championships

### Men's Scores

Rank	School	Score
1	Lane Titans	333
2	Clackamas Cougars	174
3	Mt. Hood Saints	128
4	Clark Penguins	75
5	SW Oregon Lakers	30

### Women's Scores

Rank	School	Score
1	Lane Titans	251.5
2	Mt. Hood Saints	209
3	SW Oregon Lakers	120.5
4	Clackamas Cougars	119
5	Clark Penguins	37