

UCLA Everywhere In Easy Repeat

by Dan Lilot

Fayetteville, March 2-3—After winning her second consecutive NCAA Indoor women's team title, UCLA head coach Jeanette Bolden beamed, "It's track and field. You have to have a balance. I'm glad we showed that."

The Bruins certainly did, picking up points in eight events to amass a comfortable 53½ total, relegating South Carolina (40) to runner-up status for the second year in a row. Arizona and Clemson each scored 30 to tie for 3rd with Arkansas 5th (24).

South Carolina salvaged some pride by blazing a Collegiate Record 3:30.08 in the 4x400 ahead of Texas (3:33.44), which had set the old mark of 3:30.27 in '99. The Gamecocks were paced by open 400 winner (52.37) Demetria Washington (see sidebar), who anchored in a blazing 51.3.

UCLA, already assured of the title, ran 3:35.27 for 5th. "Last year we sort of snuck up on people indoors," said Bolden matter of factly. "But this year we qualified a lot of people earlier, so they knew we were coming."

UCLA expected a strong Gamecock challenge again this year, with host Arkansas also not exactly looking to roll out the red carpet in Southern hospitality. The Bruins won handily in last year's edition, but lost big-time scorers Seilala Sua (shot 1st, weight 2nd) to graduation and Keyon Soley (long jump 1st), who transferred.

UCLA wasted little time in squashing any thoughts of an upset, however, as senior Christina Tolson dominated Friday's shot, winning by more than 2-feet with her 55-9¾ best. Frosh Jessica Cosby launched a huge PR 53-5 for 5th.

Said Tolson, "I can't even express to you how happy I am. It feels wonderful. I knew I had the ability to do it."

Held simultaneously with the shot, the high jump helped the Bruins continue their first day dominance. While Harvard's lanky Estonian, Kärt Siilats, had little trouble clearing 6-¾ to win, diminutive Darnesha Griffith had to jump way over her head to make 6-0, but did so, tying for 4th.

South Carolina picked up solid points in the 200, with Washington (23.39) and Miki Barber (23.41) going 3-4 behind the blazing 22.89 win by Clemson's Cydonie Mothersill.

But Curtis Frye's team hopes took a big hit when soph long jumper Antoinette Wilks, holder of the best collegiate jump coming in,

failed to make the final, won by Houston's Jenny Adams in a fine 21-11.

Said Adams, "The only reason I came here was to win, and I feel the same in the hurdles."

But the Houston senior was a distant 3rd (8.16) in the barrier final behind Donica Merriman of Ohio State and Illinois's Perdita Felicien. The duo ran even until the final barrier, where Felicien caught her trail leg while Merriman ran clean to win 7.95-8.00, giving the Buckeye senior the fastest time ever by an

after two initial fouls, but managed a 43-3 third effort to advance. After two more fouls the senior, sitting in 4th, unleashed a lifetime best 44-2½ to move into 2nd behind the 44-4 win by Arkansas's Gi-Gi Miller, the heptathlon runner-up outdoors last year.

Shakedia Jones, 6th in last year's 60, finished one place better this time for UCLA, clocking 7.40. Jacksonville's Monique Tubbs got the best start of all and maintained her advantage, beating Florida frosh Shavonda



Demetria Washington (r) and Miki Barber (l) figured in most of South Carolina's runner-up points, going 1-3 here in the 400, 3-4 in the 200 and running on the winning 4x4.

American-born collegian.

Bruin senior Michelle Perry rounded out UCLA's 22½-point first day with a 8.25 hurdles effort good enough for 5th.

Reflecting on her squad's first day, Bolden said, "Tolson, with her win in the shot, really set the tone for our team, but the real catalyst was Cosby, just a freshman, scoring points. And Darnesha, just 5-5 and jumping 6-feet, motivated us all."

Saturday offered no relief for those hoping to catch UCLA. In the weight, Tolson improved her premeet best by a yard to 68-9¾ to place an unexpected 2nd behind the 69-10¼ repeat win by SMU's Florence Ezech.

In the triple jump, Bruin Deana Simmons was in danger of not qualifying for the final

Benjamin 7.29-7.31.

Last year, Bruin Tracy O'Hara dominated the vault, setting three Collegiate Records on her way to winning by more than a foot at 14-6. This year she could only manage 13-9¼ for a share of 2nd as she had to watch Georgia's Thórey Elísðóttir break her CR with a 14-7½ clearance, also higher than the outdoor best.

But the Icelandic transfer was not done, as she cleared 14-9½ on her second attempt to move into the world's all-time top 10 before three audacious but unsuccessful attempts at a World Record 15-5½.

"I jumped 4.51 [14-9½] because that is better than the Icelandic national record," said Elísðóttir. "I tried the World Record because I wanted to get used to such a height."