

Sports

A look at Vanderbilt athletics

Measuring Up

Josie Hahn, All-American, is every inch a winner. By NELSON BRYAN

FRESH PAIR OF SOCKS? CHECK. Ponytail adjusted? Check. Shoes tied tight? Check. All systems are go. Ignition. Thrusters engaged, Josie Hahn hurtles off the launching pad, soars skyward and, for a brief moment, slips the surly bonds of Earth. Vanderbilt, we have liftoff. As she settles back to Earth on touchdown, the All-American has broken the Vanderbilt high-jump record—her own—clearing the bar at 6 feet.

Hahn, who stands less than 5 feet 6 inches tall, has distinguished herself as a high jumper and multi-event standout. In 2004 she broke Commodore high-jump marks in five separate competitions, extending both indoor and outdoor school records to 6 feet. She also set new records in the multi-event pentathlon and heptathlon, and used a fifth school record in the javelin to earn the SEC individual heptathlon title.

“Josie is remarkably talented, but quite unique size-wise in her premier events,” says Lori Shepard, Vanderbilt’s track and field coach. “But what she lacks in size, she makes up in heart.”

In the process, she earned NCAA All-American honors indoors in the pentathlon and outdoors in the heptathlon and earned a tryout

for the U.S. Olympic team. She was named Vanderbilt’s Female Athlete of the Year and was chosen the Female Amateur Athlete of the Year by the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame. “My goal last year had been just to make it to the Olympic trials,” she says. “It was a very emotional roller coaster just trying to get there. It was an awesome experience to be around such great athletes. I didn’t perform as well as I’d hoped”—she placed 20th overall in the heptathlon—“but my goal was to make it there, so I was really excited to be there.”

Hahn sees the high jump, javelin and 800-meter run as her best events but is careful not



Coach Shepard’s persistence paid off with Hahn’s performance.

to think ahead in multi-event competition. “I try to take each event individually because if you think of the 800, at the very end of the heptathlon, you’re going to psych yourself out for the rest of it,” she says. “I think about how every inch counts. Even if you do mess up in the high jump, you have so many other events to make it up in.

You have to approach each event individually. You don’t want to give up any points by missing half an inch in high jump or a fourth of an inch in long jump. It’s more like maximizing everything you can get out of each event.”

As part of her regimen, Hahn goes for a

morning jog before settling in for breakfast. “When I’m running, I have a fast song stuck in my head, just any random song, at a fast speed, as fast as my legs will go.” She says she’s not superstitious, but admits that she does change her socks before each event. “I redo my ponytail before each high jump. I don’t know why. But I do it even if it’s not messed up. I tighten my shoes. I keep retightening my shoes all the time in the high jump, too. I jump as high as I can. If I miss, I’m thinking, ‘It’s the shoes, gotta tighten the shoes.’”

Hahn, a senior from Clinton, Tenn., chose Vanderbilt over Clemson, Auburn, Colorado, and other more track-specific schools.

“At first, the only thing I knew about Vanderbilt was that it was a really good academic school,” she says. “My high school coach kept telling me, ‘The Vanderbilt coach is calling me. She’s really persistent. She really wants you to come for a visit.’ I was pretty convinced I wanted to go to Colorado, but my mom kept dropping hints that she didn’t want me to go far away. She’d leave notes around the house—‘Somebody told me that Vanderbilt has a really good premedical program’—little things like that. I thought about it, prayed about it, and decided this would be the best place for me, academically and athletically.”

Her major is interdisciplinary neuroscience with a biology bias. Her intention is to become an orthodontist or pediatric dentist. “I worked for a pediatric dentist in Clarksville [Tenn.] a couple of summers ago and really enjoyed it,”

continued on page 84



UCS

VANDERBILT



COMMODORES

Vandy in the NFL: Chavous and Winborn Win Courage Awards

Former Commodores Corey Chavous and Jamie Winborn have been selected as recipients of the prestigious Ed Block Courage Award. Each was chosen for the award by his teammates.

Chavous is a safety in his third season with the Minnesota Vikings. He was an All-Pro pick last year and two-time Pro Bowler for the Vikings. Off the field, he is the Vikings' team spokesman for the Ronald McDonald House and "Kids Voting Minnesota" campaign. He also participates in quarterback Daunte Culpepper's African-American Adoption Agency Holiday Party.

Winborn is a linebacker with the San Francisco 49ers and ranks among the team's leaders in tackles and sacks. Off the field he has made the community of the Bay Area a priority. In December 2003 he underwent sur-

gery for a neck injury and returned to the team after six months of rehabilitation.

Proceeds from the awards banquet after the season benefit the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation's Courage House National Support Network. A Courage House is a facility that provides support and quality care for abused children and their families. Ed Block was the former head athletic trainer for the Baltimore Colts and a respected humanitarian.

Ex-Vandy Stars Qualify for LPGA

Former Vanderbilt All-American golfers Nicki Cutler and Courtney Wood have earned non-exempt status at the LPGA's Qualifying School in Daytona Beach, Fla. Non-exempt players are eligible for the LPGA tour if open slots are available in a given event's field and they make the first-round cut.

They played their way into the "Q School" after performing well on the Futures Tour. "I

am very proud of Nicki and Courtney as they are the first representatives of our program to make the LPGA Tour," says women's golf coach Martha Freitag.

The pair likely will split their playing time in 2005 between the LPGA Tour and the Futures Tour. "The top five members of the Futures Tour automatically receive an LPGA card," Cutler explains, "so it will take some thought to determine how to divide our time between the two tours."

Cutler resides in Phoenix while Wood returns to Nashville in the off season.

In Memorium: Kwane Doster

Kwane Doster, a junior running back and kick-return specialist on the football team, died Dec. 26, 2004, of injuries sustained in a shooting in his hometown of Tampa, Fla. One of the team's most popular players, the 21-year-old was a three-year letter winner and recipient of the 2002 Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Year Award.

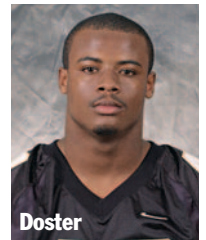
"We are shocked and heartbroken," said Coach Bobby Johnson in a prepared statement. "Kwane's death is a terrible and tragic loss to our Vanderbilt family."

A contingent of Vanderbilt athletes, coaches and friends flew to Tampa for a memorial service Dec. 31. The same day, a suspect was arrested and charged with first-degree murder for Doster's death and two counts of attempted murder against Doster's companions.

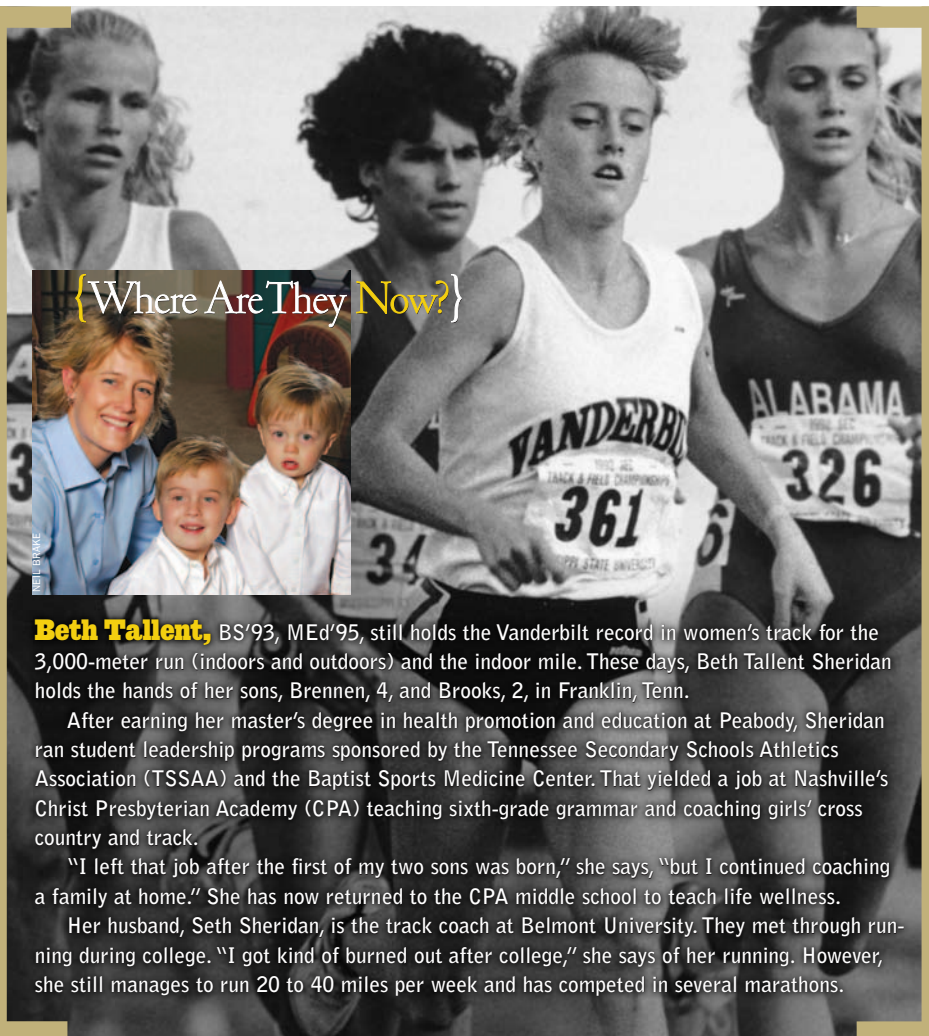
Doster was the first Vanderbilt player recognized as SEC Freshman of the Year, after setting a team record of 798 rushing yards. He also earned Freshman All-America honors from various publications. A human and organizational development major, he had 1,621 career rushing yards and ranked third all-time at Vanderbilt with 1,759 kick-return yards.

He is survived by his mother, a brother, a sister, an aunt and numerous other relatives.

A memorial fund has been set up for the Doster family by the fathers of three members of the Vanderbilt football squad. Contributions can be made to the Kwane Doster Memorial Fund c/o Cumberland Bank, 5120 Maryland Way, Brentwood, TN 37027.



Doster



{Where Are They Now?}

Beth Tallent, BS'93, MEd'95, still holds the Vanderbilt record in women's track for the 3,000-meter run (indoors and outdoors) and the indoor mile. These days, Beth Tallent Sheridan holds the hands of her sons, Brennen, 4, and Brooks, 2, in Franklin, Tenn.

After earning her master's degree in health promotion and education at Peabody, Sheridan ran student leadership programs sponsored by the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletics Association (TSSAA) and the Baptist Sports Medicine Center. That yielded a job at Nashville's Christ Presbyterian Academy (CPA) teaching sixth-grade grammar and coaching girls' cross country and track.

"I left that job after the first of my two sons was born," she says, "but I continued coaching a family at home." She has now returned to the CPA middle school to teach life wellness.

Her husband, Seth Sheridan, is the track coach at Belmont University. They met through running during college. "I got kind of burned out after college," she says of her running. However, she still manages to run 20 to 40 miles per week and has competed in several marathons.

{Sports Roundup}

Baseball: High Marks in Preseason Polls

Vanderbilt baseball has been recognized as a top-25 team in preseason polls, and two returning players have been named preseason All-Americans. The recognition comes in the wake of last year's remarkable performance, the best in Vanderbilt baseball history.

Baseball America magazine ranked the Commodores as the No. 17 team in the nation in its preseason poll, which marked the first time in the school's history to make the poll. The team also was ranked No. 18 by SEBaseball.com and No. 38 by *Collegiate*



Baseball magazine. Junior second baseman Warner Jones and junior pitcher Ryan Mullins were named to *Baseball America's* Preseason All-America Team, selected by major league scouts.

Vanderbilt finished the 2004 season with the best record in school history, logging a 45-19 overall record (16-14 SEC) on the way to its first-ever appearance in the NCAA Super Regional.

Women's Golf: Brady Wins Third Collegiate Tournament

Sophomore Chris Brady shot a 4-under-par 68 to win the Landfall Tradition Tournament in Wilmington, N.C., last October, her third collegiate-medalist finish. "I have been very pleased

with the play of Chris all fall," says Coach Martha Freitag of the victory. "It was great to see Chris finish her fall with such an outstanding performance."

Brady had won the Texas Betsy Rawls Longhorn Classic and was co-medalist at the Kentucky Wildcat Invitational as a freshman.

Women's Soccer: Players Win SEC Honors

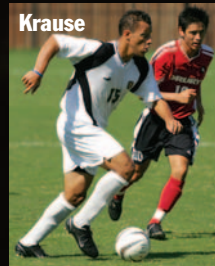
Four members of the women's soccer team were named to the All-SEC team last November. Sophomore goalkeeper Tyler Griffin was named First-Team All-SEC. This was her first season with Vanderbilt after transferring from the University of North Carolina in 2003.

Junior midfielder Meghan Hagib was named All-SEC Second Team, and freshmen Sarah Dennis (forward) and Meredith Kohn (midfielder) were named to the All-Freshman SEC Team.

The women finished the season with a 7-7-5 record.

Men's Soccer: MVC Honors

Two men's soccer players received Missouri Valley Conference honors last November. John



Krause, a junior forward, was named to the MVC All-Conference Second Team. This was his first year with the Commodores, having transferred from Boston College.

Freshman forward Joe Germanese was named Freshman of the Year while being named to the All-Freshman Team.

The Commodores finished the season with a 7-9-1 record, 3-7 in the MVC.

Football: Two Named Freshman All-SEC

Two Vandy newcomers who worked their way into the starting lineup were named to the

fifth annual Southeastern Conference All-Freshman Team following a vote of the conference's 12 coaches.

Jonathan Goff, a red-shirt freshman from Lynn, Mass., was one of five linebackers named to the defensive unit. Hamilton Holliday of Marietta, Ga., was one of five offensive linemen named on the coaches' ballots.

Ashley Eckles, a sophomore on Vanderbilt's equestrian team, practices the jumps aboard Sugar at Hunter's Court Farm in Murfreesboro.



PHOTOS BY NEIL BRAVE