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Ready, Set: Promising Track Season Begins SPU Could Boast Strongest Women's Team In 10 Years

Indoor meets outdoor. As the indoor track & field season builds to a climax, the outdoor campaign will soon get underway. Seattle Pacific University, with perhaps its most potent women's squad of the last 10 years, will drive across town Mar. 2 for the University of Washington's Husky Last Chance Qualifier Mar. 2 at the Dempsey Indoor facility. The sole purpose will be to lay the groundwork of a drive toward a top-five finish at the NCAA Division II Championships outdoors come May. The Falcons' first scored meet and exclusively outdoor action is Mar. 9 at the Salzman Invitational.

Loaded to the gills. Not since 1992, when the women accounted for three NCAA individual titles and took fourth overall, has SPU begun a spring with so many hot prospects. Coach **Jack Hoyt** not only returns the nucleus of his back-to-back conference champions but has five past All-America athletes in the fold. Seattle Pacific was a runaway winner of the Pacific West Conference in 2000 and 2001 (12 event winners), tied for ninth in nation a year ago and it figures to be the overwhelming favorite to claim the inaugural Great Northwest Athletic Conference crown. Meanwhile, the men's program hopes to improve on its sixth-place conference finish and get its first national qualifier in four years.

We three queens. Hoyt has three women who have the potential win the GNAC crown on their own and possibly score over 40 points at the NCAAs. **Stephanie Huffman** (Sr., Brush Prairie, Wa./Prairie) was the conference athlete of the year as a junior, winning the javelin and long jump and taking second in the high jump and 100-meter hurdles. She has finished second and fourth in the national heptathlon and was also third in the javelin last season. **Rachel Ross** (Sr., Kennewick, Wa./Kennewick) is a six-time conference champion in cross country, 800m and 1500m, and ranks No. 3 all-time in the 800 at SPU. She ran to a pair of top-five NCAA finishes as a junior. Last year Huffman and Ross were SPU co-athletes of the year. Now, add to that duo another do-everything, multi-talent in **Laura Widman** (Jr., Colfax, Wa./Colfax), the top scorer in the conference and NCAA silver medalist in the 2000 heptathlon. Widman, No. 4 all-time in the heptathlon, was one of two All-America injury redshirts for 2001 and also elected to redshirt during the 2002 indoor campaign.

Super sophomores. The pipeline of championship prospects should keep on pumping long after Ross, Huffman and Widman are gone, thanks to some strong sophomores. **Ally Studer** (So., Redmond, Wa./Redmond) broke the school pole vault record (12-2) in her first month and went on to take fifth in Div. II. **Jennifer Pyeatt** (So., Graham, Wa./Bethel) was the frosh phenom of 2000, qualifying for nationals in the 400 hurdles in her first race and later bolting to victory in both hurdles at conference and placing eighth nationally. Pyeatt stands No. 3 all-time on both hurdles. She missed the 2001 season with a back injury. On the men's side, intermediate hurdler **Paul Mach** (So., Seattle, Wa./King's) is coming off a conference title in his first season and ranks No. 3 all-time. **Nathanael Castle** (Sr., Gooding, Id.) is coming off a strong cross country season in which he became the first SPU male to qualify for the NCAA Championships. He ranks No. 5 all-time in the 1500. Back to the women, **Jamie Witt** (So., Folsom, Ca./Folsom) hit provisional qualifying marks in the 3000 and 5000 as a freshman only to opt out of the meet due to injury. Now she's coming off a stellar cross country season.

2002 TRACK & FIELD

SPU Quick Facts

Coach—Jack Hoyt, 3rd year
Assistant—Doris Heritage
Assistant—Juli Van Pelt
Assistant—Algerian Hart

This Week's Schedule

Sat., Mar. 2, 9:30 a.m.
Husky Last Chance Qualifier
Dempsey Indoor, Seattle, Wa.

Indoor Highlights (to date)

- Dionna Anderson ranks No. 8 among NCAA Div. II qualifiers in the shot put
- Ally Studer is tied for 10th in the pole vault
- Rachel Ross won two races and ranks 15th among Div. II 800m runners

Leading Returnees

- Stephanie Huffman, Heptathlon/Javelin All-America, 1999, 2001
- Rachel Ross, 800/1500 All-America, 1999, 2000, 2001
- Laura Widman, Heptathlon All-America, 1999, 2000
- Ally Studer, Pole vault All-America, 2001
- Jennifer Pyeatt, 100 Hurdles/400 Hurdles All-America, 2000
- Nathanael Castle, 1500/5000 NCAA cross country champs., 2001

2002 Season Schedule

Mar. 2 Husky Last Chance Qualifier
Mar. 8-9 NCAA Indoor Championships
Mar. 9 Salzman Invitational
Mar. 16 Long Beach Classic
M. 21-22 Point Loma Multi-Event
Mar. 23 Aztec Invitational
Mar. 30 Spring Break Open
Apr. 6 Vernacchia Invitational
Apr. 12 Pelluer Invitational
Apr. 13 Northwest Relays
A. 18-19 California Inv. Multi-Event
Apr. 20 Spike Arlt Invitational
A. 25-26 GNAC Multi-Event Champs.
Apr. 27 Oregon Invitational
May 4 GNAC Championships
May 11 Ken Foreman Invitational
M. 23-25 NCAA Championships

The great indoors. Not since 1994 have the Falcons sent qualifiers to the NCAA indoor championships, but with conference and SPU placing renewed emphasis on the winter schedule, Hoyt has submitted three athletes for the national meet in Boston Mar. 8-9. The NCAA will select the field Feb. 26. **Dionna Anderson** (Sr., Lynnwood, Wa./Edmonds-Woodway) is coming off a breakthrough in the shot put. She won the Vandal Invitational last week with a heave of 45 feet, 3 3/4 inches—two feet beyond her previous PR—and the eighth-best throw in Div. II. Studer is tied for 10th on the pole vault provisional list at 11-5 3/4. Ross ranks 15th among provisional qualifiers in the 800 and has won two mile races indoors.

SPU Coaches. Coach Jack Hoyt, 37, has the Falcons on the fast track back to national prominence going into his third season. In his first two seasons, Hoyt was voted conference coach of the year and in 2001 he had the women's program back in the top 10 for the first time in eight years, tying for ninth. He was ideally suited to take charge of the program as a former All-America decathlete at SPU and serving as an assistant to the legendary Ken Foreman for seven years. Doris Heritage, the coach of cross country and track runners from 800 meters up, is a legend in the world of athletics. She is a member of halls of fame for both athletes (one-time world record-holder, two-time Olympian and five-time world cross country champion) and coaches (two Olympic staffs, 53 all-America cross country and track runners at SPU). Juli Van Pelt, former All-America in heptathlon and high jump, returns for her second season on the staff of her alma mater. Algerian Hart, former Long Beach State star, is in his first year as hurdles/sprints coach.

2002 Track & Field Roster

<i>Women's Team</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Yr</i>	<i>Hometown (High School)</i>
Dionna Anderson	Sp	Sr	Lynnwood, Wa. (Edmonds-Woodway/Edmonds CC)
Kirsten Bjork	1500/3000	So	Olympia, Wa. (Black Hills)
Jawea Harder	100H/400H	Sr	Port Townsend, Wa. (Port Townsend)
Ruth Hawkinson	5000/10k	Jr	Roy, Wa. (Yelm)
Stephanie Huffman	Lj/Hep/Jt	Sr	Brush Prairie, Wa. (Prairie)
Lauren Kooy	Dt/Jt/Sp	So	George, Wa. (Quincy)
Sarah Kraybill	400/800	Jr	Seattle, Wa. (Ballard)
Josie Lavin	800	Fr	Bremerton, Wa. (Bremerton)
Brooke Little	400H	So	Lynnwood, Wa. (Lynnwood)
Amanda McClary	200/400	Fr	Shelton, Wa. (Shelton)
Angie Ocampo	400H	Jr	Vancouver, Wa. (Mountain View)
Candy Owens	1500/3000	Fr	Ridgefield, Ct. (Ridgefield)
Jennifer Pyeatt	Hep/400H	So	Graham, Wa. (Bethel)
Morgan Ranta	Lj/Tj	Sr	Kent, Wa. (Kentridge)
Kara Richard	Steeple	Fr	Springbrook, NY (Iroquois)
Mackensie Rogers	Pv	So	Otis Orchards, Wa. (East Valley)
Breanne Rohm	800/1500	Fr	Juneau, Ak. (Juneau-Douglas)
Amber Rose	Tj/Pv	So	Olympia, Wa. (Capital)
Rachel Ross	800/1500	Sr	Kennewick, Wa. (Kennewick)
Nicole Seana	5000/10k	So	Carnation, Wa. (Kamiakin)
Lindsey Stewart	100/200	Jr	Shoreline, Wa. (King's)
Ally Studer	Pv/Lj	So	Redmond, Wa. (Redmond)
Emily Weyers	400	Fr	Stanwood, Wa. (Stanwood)
Laura Widman	Hep/Hj/Lj	Jr	Colfax, Wa. (Colfax)
Leah Wiist	Hep/800	Sr	Spokane, Wa. (Deer Park-Cornell)
Jamie Witt	3000/5000	So	Folsom, Ca. (Folsom)

<i>Men's Team</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Yr</i>	<i>Hometown (High School)</i>
Alex Bartholomew-Garcia	5000	Fr	Bellevue, Wa. (Newport)
Nick Berry	400H	Fr	Kealakekua, Hi. (Konawaena)
Clint Bjella	1500/5000	Fr	Everett, Wa. (Everett)
Nathanael Castle	1500/5000	Sr	Gooding, Id. (Gooding)
Neal Fryett	800/1500	Sr	Pullman, Wa. (Logos)
Brian Hunter	100/200/jav	Fr	Duvall, Wa. (Cedarcrest)
Micah Kelley	400H	Fr	Lakewood, Wa. (Clover Park)
Tim LeCount	1500/5000	Fr	Battle Ground, Wa. (Battle Ground)
Aaron Libadisos	1500	Fr	Kailua-Kona, Hi. (Kealakehe)
Brandon Littlefield	Pv	So	Selah, Wa. (Eisenhower)
Paul Mach	400H	So	Seattle, Wa. (King's)
Perry McConnell	5000/10k	Fr	Arlington, Wa. (Lakewood)
Andrew Steiner	Sp/Dt	Jr	Edmonds, Wa. (Sno. Cty. Christian)
Scott Van Hess	800	Jr	Salem, Or. (McKay)

Head Coach: Jack Hoyt
Assistant Coaches: Doris Heritage, Juli Van Pelt, Algerian Hart

2001 NCAA Qualifiers

<i>Athlete</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Place</i>
Stephanie Huffman	Jt	149-10	3rd
Stephanie Huffman	Hep	4898	4th
Rachel Ross	1500	4:35.91	4th
Rachel Ross	800	2:13.90	5th
Ally Studer	Pv	11-9 3/4	5th
Karen Summers	400H	1:01.40	6th
Summers, Bell, Ross	4 x 400	3:54.77	13th
Kraybill			
Cyrena Bell	400	57.90	18th
Sarah Kraybill	800	2:16.81	20th

2001 Season Best Marks

Women's

100—Karen Summers, 12.36 √
200—Cyrena Bell, 25.19 √
400—Cyrena Bell, 57.79 √
800—**Rachel Ross**, 2:08.05 √
1500—**Rachel Ross**, 4:30.71 √
Steeple—
3000—**Jamie Witt**, 10:06.21
5000—**Jamie Witt**, 17:29.62
10,000—**Kirsten Bjork**, 39:49.30
100H—**Huffman/Summers**, 15.00
400H—Karen Summers, 1:01.1 √
4x100—**Stewart-Harder-Summers-Bell**, 47.90 √
4x400—**Bell-Ross-Kraybill-Summers**, 3:47.53 √
Hj—**Harris/Huffman**, 5-5 3/4
Pv—**Ally Studer**, 12-2
Lj—**Morgan Ranta**, 18-3 (**Huffman** 17-11 3/4 √)
Tj—Natalie Dorow, 38-2 √
Sp—**Dionna Anderson**, 43-2 1/2 √
Dt—**Lauren Kooy**, 127-2
Ht—
Jt—**Stephanie Huffman**, 151-4 √
Hep—**Stephanie Huffman**, 4935

Men's

100—Blake Witman, 11.86
200—**Neal Fryett**, 24.62
400—Blake Witman, 51.00
800—**Neal Fryett**, 1:53.95
1500—Kelsey Backen, 3:56.01
Steeple—
5000—**Nathanael Castle**, 15:20.69
10,000—
110H—
400H—**Paul Mach**, 54.69 √
4x100—Shepard, **Littlefield**, Witman, Peterson, 43.82
4x400—Witman, **Fryett**, Sharp, **Mach**, 3:23.19
Hj—
Pv—**Brandon Littlefield**, 13-9 1/4
Lj—Matt Peterson, 21-6 3/4
Tj—
Sp—**Andrew Steiner**, 34-9 3/4
Dt—**Andrew Steiner**, 130-8
Ht—
Jt—
Dec—

Returns in boldface
√ 2001 conference champion