

# Pole vaulter has cleared height of Olympic qualifying, wants more

By Kevin Warneke

Glen Loontjer can rest assured. He now knows that he qualified for the Olympic track and field trials in Los Angeles, June 16 through 24.

According to Loontjer, the Olympic standard for pole vaulting is set in meters and is a fraction over 17-8½ and a fraction under 17-8¾. On April 14, Loontjer cleared 17-8¾ at the Louisiana State University Invitational. That's when the question arose whether he had qualified.

But Loontjer erased all doubt when he cleared 17-9 at the Kansas Relays last weekend.

"I think that I had pretty well qualified, now there's no doubt," he said. "It's a nice thing to get out of the way."

But now that he has met the qualifying standard, Loontjer said, he wants more.

"I should have had 18 feet," he said. "I was over it three times but fell on it."

Even if he should clear 18 feet before the trials, Loontjer said he will still be an underdog. But this can work to his advantage, he said.

"I don't have any pressure on me," he said. "The only pressure I'll have is the pressure I put on myself."

"Track and Field is not picking me to make the Olympic team."

Loontjer said he must be realistic and not expect

to make the team.

"I'm not a world class vaulter yet," he said.

Loontjer said his first worry will be to make the starting height. He said it should start somewhere around 17-6.

"It'll be the highest starting height I've ever had," he said. "It'll be a chore just to make that."

But Loontjer said he doesn't plan on being left out of the elite class of vaulters forever.

Loontjer said he plans to move up his grip 5 inches which should have pleasing results.

"It changes the angles in the vault and should increase velocity," he said. "But basically it makes you go higher."

Loontjer said he hasn't reached his potential as a vaulter, doesn't know when he will and isn't really worried about it.

Nebraska assistant men's track coach Steve Rainbolt agreed. He said that most pole vaulters don't hit their peak until they reach the mid-20s.

Rainbolt also said that should Loontjer decide to continue vaulting, he might eventually go 19 feet.

Loontjer said he would like to hit 18 feet this year and 18-6 in the future. He said that he is considering being a graduate assistant coach for Nebraska's track team. This would allow him to continue training, he said.

As the Olympic Trials approach, Loontjer said he is happy for the opportunity to compete and the chance to spend some time in California.

## Blanford...

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"I'll be 24 in 1988 and I should be in peak condition," she said.

Track and Field News ranked her as having an outside chance at making the '84 Olympic team. Blanford said that she feels no pressure to perform well at the trials.

"I think most of the pressure is on the favorites," she said. The (Stephanie) Hightowers and the (Candy) Youngs are supposed to make the team, so I'll be able to just concentrate on my running and do my best."

Blanford said while Nebraska's winter weather is not ideally suited to track, it does have its advantages.

"The weather here forces me to work indoors and I love the indoor season," she said. "It gets me excited and ready for outside competition. By working out indoors, I also don't burn out in the summer like some runners do."

The first round of the Olympic trials will be June 14 at the Olympic Stadium in Los Angeles, a track that Blanford is

acclimated with.

"I participated in an international meet and we ran on the Olympic track," she said. "It's a great track and I can't wait to get back there and run on it again," she said.

Before running in the Olympic trials, Blanford will finish the season with the Husker team. Blanford said that she can feel herself improving and that the pressure from being a Husker aids her performance.

"Everyone tries to nail us," she said. "Teams like to go after us because we've done so well. There's a lot of pressure on us, but it's a good pressure. We know what we have to do — we know what it takes to be champions."

Nebraska Coach Gary Pepin said that Blanford has a legitimate chance at making the Olympic team.

"Obviously her making the team or not is going to depend on how well she runs on that particular day, but she has the capabilities to make it," Pepin said.

## Rec Scoreboard

(Sportsmanship ratings in parentheses)

Men's Soccer

Fraternities A

Delta Tau Delta (4.0) 6, Acacia (4.2) 1.

Phi Kappa Psi (3.2) 5, Sigma Nu (3.0) 0.

Lambda Chi Alpha (2.7) 2, Beta Theta Pi (2.5) 1.

Fraternities B/C

Phi Kappa Psi C (3.0) 4, Triangle (2.7) 1.

Sigma Alpha Mu C def. Delta Upsilon B by forfeit.

Alpha Tau Omega C (2.7) 4, Sigma Alpha Epsilon C (3.5) 0.

Delta Tau Delta C (4.8) 3, Phi Delta Theta (4.8) 0.

Alpha Tau Omega C (4.3) 2, Tau Kappa Epsilon B (3.6) 0.

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Screening and interviews for the program will be held Sunday, April 29th in room 402 of the City Union at the following times: 1:30, 4:00 and 7:30. Those interested should expect the screening and interviewing to last 2 hours. They should also bring material to write with and arrive promptly.



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