

O'Brien, Albright to compete at nationals



University of Kansas senior Colleen O'Brien and junior Jake Albright will compete in the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships beginning today in Eugene, Oregon. Both athletes are graduates of Louisburg High School.

Colleen O'Brien and Jake Albright are about to embark on the most important track meet of their careers.

Beginning today, O'Brien and Albright will compete in the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships for the Kansas Jayhawks in their respective events. The two Louisburg High School alums are two of 11 Jayhawks traveling to Eugene, Ore. for the national meet.

Albright qualified for nationals in the pole vault on May 30 at the regional meet in Austin, Tex. Albright finished ninth and did so in a pressure packed situation.

On his final attempt, the Kansas junior cleared 17 feet, 6.5 inches to earn a spot in the national meet. The clearance was also a personal-best for Albright.

Albright and fellow Jayhawk vaulter Nick Meyer will hit the runway at 6 p.m. today.

As for O'Brien, the Jayhawk senior finished fifth in the high jump at regionals on May 29. O'Brien cleared 5-11.5 to finish fifth overall thanks to a strong final attempt.

She cleared 5-11.5 on her first attempt which put her into fifth place and secured her a spot for nationals. O'Brien needed just three attempts to get over her first two heights of the day, but things would get a little tense.

The top 12 in each event qualify for nationals, and with 14 competitors left, O'Brien was facing elimination at 5-10. On her third attempt, O'Brien was able to clear the bar to keep her season alive.

O'Brien has posted a clearance of 5-10.25 or better in each of her last five outings. She will also become the first Jayhawks to compete in the high jump at the NCAA Outdoor Championships since 1994.

Earlier in the season, O'Brien soared over the bar at 6-0.75 at the Kansas Relays in April to become just the third Jayhawk woman in history to clear six feet.

She will compete in the high jump at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday in Eugene.