

Jones Keeps Top Form During Hunter Ordeal

Marion Jones stayed alive in her chase for five golds by advancing in the 200 and long jump Wednesday.

The Associated Press

SYDNEY, Australia — As the Aussies like to say: "No Worries."

Marion Jones looked as good as ever in her first day back on the Olympic track since it was announced her husband had tested positive for the steroid nandrolone.

She breezed through the first two rounds of the 200 meters Wednesday, then bettered the automatic qualifying mark in the long jump, her weakest event, with a leap of 22 feet, 3 inches.

"It's been difficult, but I think having my family here and then just having total support and getting several phone calls from people back home, overall, I think the support has just been incredible," Jones said. "I think that's the reason I'm able to get through it."

Far from the serious woman who made a brief statement in support of her husband, shot putter C.J. Hunter, at a packed news conference in a downtown Sydney hotel on Tuesday, this Marion Jones was the smiling, gracious one everyone remembered. "This is where I love to be," Jones said, "to be out there in front of the fans, in front of the lights. It kind of gets my mind off everything."

In the morning session, she easily won her first 200 heat in 22.75 seconds. She was second in her second-round heat Wednesday night but obviously was slowing down at the finish. The runner who beat her, Melinda Gainsford-Taylor of Australia, had to go full tilt to win.

The biggest relief for Jones came Wednesday night in the long jump. She flirted with disaster in the U.S. trials in Sacramento, Calif., where her gold-medal quest almost came to a premature conclusion.

In Sacramento, she fouled the first two times in the qualifying before finally making it on her last attempt. At the World Championships last year in Seville, Spain, she had a similar close call before winding up with the bronze medal.

"As you all know, I've had difficulty in the past in my qualifying jumps in Seville and Sacramento," Jones said, "so to come out this evening and pop a qualifying jump on my first, I'm pleased with that."

She admitted she hardly knew how to react to the big first jump.

Olympic Medals				
	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
United States	29	15	25	69
Russia	18	17	21	56
China	24	14	15	53
Australia	13	21	14	48
Germany	8	11	17	36

SOURCE: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"I was like 'What?' I turned around just expecting a red flag," she said with a laugh, "but no worries at all."

USA Baseball Upsets Cuba for Gold

With a U.S. flag hanging behind the bench and Hall of Fame manager Tom Lasorda cheering from the dugout, a team of recent draft choices and major league castoffs beat mighty Cuba 4-0 Wednesday.

They might not be big-leaguers, but they played like them in their country's biggest Olympic game.

No one had ever done this to Cuba, the Big Red Machine of international baseball. The Cubans didn't get a run off Ben Sheets, one year removed from being Milwaukee's first-round draft choice.

Sheets pitched a three-hitter — only one Cuban made it as far as second base — then raised his arms and slid to his knees in celebration after Neill's catch closed it out.

"Cuba is supposed to be the best baseball team in the world," shortstop Adam Everett said. "We just proved we are when it counts."

The United States got started in the first inning, when Mike Neill hit a solo homer.

Young later added a bases-loaded single, and catcher Pat Borders had a run-scoring double.

The hits put the upset on the right hand of Sheets, who got 16 groundball outs.

USA 1 Game Away in Women's Hoops

Lisa Leslie gave the U.S. women's basketball team just what it needed to win its lowest-scoring game in Olympics history.

The 6-foot-5 center hit three jump shots from 15 feet and beyond early in the second half to help the United States shake off Slovakia 58-43 in an ugly game Wednesday and move into the semifinals of the Olympic tournament.

The United States will be in the gold medal game with one more victory. But to get there, they'll have to win a rematch with pesky South Korea on Friday.

South Korea, which advanced with a 68-59 victory over France, gave the United States fits in the first game of the preliminary round. The Americans led by only five points in the second half before winning 89-75.



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MARION JONES
U.S. Olympic Sprinter and Jumper

Stubborn Russell Follows Heart

The parents of UNC freshman Brandon Russell wanted him to go to Stanford, but Russell chose North Carolina instead.

By **BRET STRELOW**
Assistant Sports Editor

Kevin and Karen Russell's oldest son rarely defies his parent's wishes.

His parents have watched him grow for the last 18 years. They simply want what's best for their son.

But Brandon Russell had to make his own call this time.

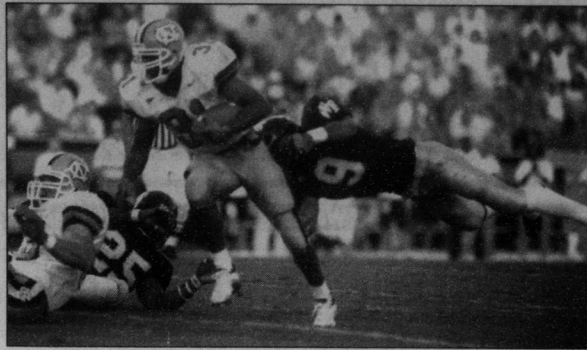
Kevin and Karen knew where they wanted their son to attend college. Sure, Stanford is on the opposite end of the country from Decatur, Ga., but the school's academic tradition made the decision a no-brainer in their minds.

Russell had other plans. Academics were still important, but he also wanted a school with the right social atmosphere, a place where he could feel comfortable.

He dropped hints to let his parents know where he wanted to go. He relied on an implied trust to know he wouldn't disappoint them.

Russell had his heart set on North Carolina from day one.

"I had to be a lot more stubborn than I'm used to having to be," Russell said. "That's what made the recruiting process so difficult. Me and my family have a real good relationship, but this



DTH/MILLER PEARSALL

Freshman tailback Brandon Russell, shown here against Wake Forest on Sept. 9, rushed for a career-high 79 yards on 17 carries against Marshall.

recruiting stuff came through and it just turned my house upside down."

The Tar Heels are sure glad Russell went out of character. UNC entered the season with three unproven freshman tailbacks, yet Russell has emerged from the pack.

Russell has started all four of UNC's games and amassed a career-high 79 yards on 17 carries against Marshall on Saturday.

Russell's parents needed just one game, though, to finally realize their son had made the right choice.

They came to UNC's season opener against Tulsa in Chapel Hill, where they

eased his concern and told him they were happy he went to North Carolina.

"They didn't really give a whole lot of ground, and I didn't give a whole lot of ground," Russell said. "I turned out in the right place."

He became the first true freshman to start at tailback in the season opener since Charlie "Choo-Choo" Justice did it in 1946.

Russell said a dream is unfolding in front of his face every day. As a star at Marist High School, he went and played each game without much thought. The college games he watched on ESPN each Saturday seemed a world away.

Suddenly, he's reached the same playing field.

"The yards definitely come a lot tougher than they did in high school," said Russell, who gained 1,697 of them as a senior.

"The players are a lot bigger. In high school, my size wasn't that big of a concern. Now, everybody is so much bigger than me."

Russell, who is 5-foot-11 and weighs 185 pounds, doesn't get recognized on campus. He looks like a normal student compared to the hefty teammates he strolls around with.

His relatively small stature concerned UNC coach Carl Torbush, who knew Russell was mannerly and intelligent. But Torbush wasn't so sure Russell could hold up against bigger players.

"If you first look at him, you're going to say, 'Boy, he's too nice to start with and not quite physical enough and tough enough to step in and play major college football,'" Torbush said.

Torbush's concerns no longer exist. Russell didn't back down against Florida State. He broke tackles and earned tough yards against Marshall.

Russell sticks to his philosophy that hard work, regardless of the school he attends, will be the key to his success.

Said Russell, "The opportunities that become available to you are created by what you do, not what school you go to."

The Sports Editor can be reached at sports@unc.edu.

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