Burton’s bid falls short at Olympic Trials

Evergreen graduate does not advance to hammer finals

By GREG JAYNE
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EUGENE — Kate Burton chalked up her Olympic Trials performance Thursday in a lack of communication.

“She’s an attractive woman, but your body reacts to a totally different way,” the Van- cover native said after falling to advance out of qualifying in the women’s hammer throw.

“My brain was feeling great. My legs felt heavy. They just didn’t feel connected.”

Burton, a graduate of Evergreen High School and Clark College, was competing in her first national championships.

The University of Wyoming senior qualified for the Trials at Hayward Field this spring, then won the Western Athletic Conference championship.

She was one of 24 women to reach the Olympic Trials, and was ranked 19th in the event.

Throwing in the first of two flights, Burton finished 12th among 12 competitors with a top mark of 194 feet, 6 inches. She stood in 12th after a first-round mark of 187.11, intentionally scratched following a poor throw in the second round, and unleashed her best throw in the final round.

Jessica Cosby led the 12 qualifiers for Saturday’s final with a mark of 225-8 on her only throw of the day.

Burton had qualified for Olympic Trials with a throw of 209-8 in May at the Foothill Invitational in Laramie, Wyo. That beat her previous best by 12 feet and gave her a ticket to Eugene.

Burton had no expectations of making the Olympic team, but she saw the Trials as a learning experience for possible future national championship meets. She has completed her collegiate eligibility, but has a year remaining before earning a degree in mechanical engineering while deciding whether to continue competing.

“Since I know that I’m not going to make it to Beijing, I look at this as a practice,” she said.

“It turns out this was a bad practice.”

Still, the experience was a positive one.

“It’s hard to say that you competed at the Olympic Trials and have it be a negative,” Burton said. “I just have to keep in mind I’m one of 24 girls to get here.”