

Former UM Track Star Brittney Reese Qualifies for Olympic Medal Round

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NBC to broadcast finals Friday

{rokbox title=|Are You Ready? :: Brittney Reese, Olympic Long Jumper| thumb=|images/rokbox/thumbs/reese180.jpg| size=|640 320| text=|Click here to see my movie|}images/rokbox/reese.mov{/rokbox}

Click image to view Brittney Reese video

OXFORD, Miss. — Former University of Mississippi All-American long jumper Brittney Reese strengthened her quest for an Olympic medal as she won the qualifying round of the long jump from National Stadium at the 2008 Summer Olympics Tuesday with a distance of 22-06.50 to advance into Friday's final round.

Reese defeated her closest competition by three full inches as Maurren Higa Maggi of Brazil finished in second place with a distance of 22-03.50. Competitors advanced to the finals with a mark of 22-01.75 or better or a top-12 finish.

"Brittney had a great qualifying round," UM head coach Joe Walker said. "Many people had problems adjusting to the fast runway, but Brittney had a good warm-up and had a very good first jump despite it being a foul. A lot of people would have gone into panic mode with the Olympic pressure and all, but we adjusted her steps and she came down and hit a really nice jump that was an automatic qualifier."

"Now she just has to let the adrenaline settle, take a day off, have a light workout and then try to take care of business in the final," he said. "I have always said that not only is she a talented athlete, but she has the poise under pressure that is so essential to being a champion. I am so proud of her!"

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Watch video package on Brittney Reese.

Friday's finals are slated to begin at 6:20 p.m., but are to air on NBC and NBC HD during the 7-11 p.m. time slot.

A Gulfport native, Reese is a four time SEC long jump champion and two time NCAA long jump champion. She has been ranked as the top American long jumper all year.

The long jump has been part of modern Olympic competition since the inception of the games in 1896. The 2008 games in China mark the 80th anniversary that women have been allowed to compete in the long jump at the Olympic level.

[Read more from Walker's blog](#)

[Learn more about Reese](#)