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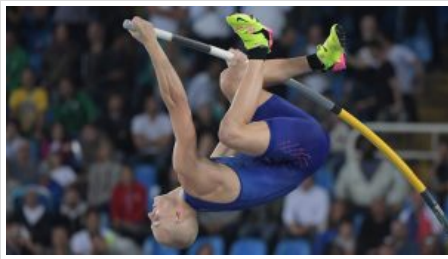
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Former Rebel Kendricks Claims Pole Vault Bronze at Rio Olympics

Third Ole Miss track athlete to medal at Olympic Games

AUGUST 16, 2016 BY JOEY JONES

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Aug 15, 2016; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Sam Kendricks (USA) in the men's pole vault final during track and field competition in the Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games at Estadio Olimpico Joao Havelange. Mandatory Credit: Kirby Lee-USA TODAY Sports

RIO DE JANEIRO – It was a special Monday night in Brazil for **University of Mississippi** alumnus Sam Kendricks, who captured a bronze medal in the men's pole vault at the 2016 Olympic Games.

In a dramatic competition that came down to three final vaulters, Kendricks rose to the occasion by clearing 5.85 meters (19-2.25) on his first try. He had three very close attempts at 5.93 m/19-5.5, while Brazil's Thiago Braz da Silva claimed gold with an Olympic record mark of 6.03 m and defending champion Renaud Lavillenie of France won silver with a clearance

at 5.98 m.

Kendricks is the first American man to win an Olympic medal in the pole vault since 2004, and he's the third **Ole Miss track and field** representative to medal at the Olympics. Brittney Reese, who will compete Tuesday, was the women's long jump gold medalist in 2012. Tony Dees was the silver medalist in the 110-meter hurdles in 1992.

Before Monday's competition began, Kendricks dedicated his performance to the six Oxford citizens who died in a plane crash over the weekend, and the children and families they left behind. By many accounts, his performance in Rio was a healing balm the town of Oxford needed after such a tragic occurrence.

The hundreds of fans that watched him from the Square in his hometown of Oxford cheered him on with fervor as each bar was raised a bit higher. He is the first Olympian from the small town in which he grew up, graduated from both high school and college, and still lives and trains.

Kendricks was lauded by NBC commentators and across the social media landscape for his great sportsmanship and class, as he was seen congratulating his opponents and cheering for each competitor throughout the night.

"I know that the Olympics is like a high tide, it raises all boats and it brings the best out of all of us," Kendricks said. "I was so happy to watch my friend Thiago (Braz) set his personal best in his home country in front of his home crowd, and I think that I thrived off of that as well."

"I did not set a personal best but I attempted it. I missed it very close three times, so I cannot be ashamed of my effort. I'm very proud of my bronze medal, what me and my coach (father and Ole Miss alumnus Scott Kendricks) and my family have achieved. This particular competition was a lot of fun for me – I knew all of the competitors by name, they're all good friends of mine. We've traveled together and have competed together many times. We even trade victories very often."

It's been an impressive rise to international prominence for Kendricks, who was a two-time NCAA champion and two-time SEC champion in three seasons at Ole Miss. Since turning pro, he has won five U.S. pole vault titles, set a U.S. Olympic Trials record earlier this summer, was ninth at last year's IAAF World Championships and runner-up at this year's IAAF World Indoor Championships in March.

Another former Rebel also competed and advanced on Monday. Nigeria's Antwon Hicks ran a 13.70 in his heat of the 110-meter hurdles to move on to Tuesday's semifinals.

Hicks and Reese will both compete Tuesday, as Reese will begin her gold medal defense with the women's long jump qualifying round.

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OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

On Sunday night, one of Kendricks' former Ole Miss teammates, Ricky Robertson, represented Team USA in the men's high jump qualifying and placed 17th with a clearance at 2.26 m/7-5. The top 15 qualifiers advanced to the final.

For complete coverage of Ole Miss in the 2016 Olympics, visit <http://www.RebsInRio.com>.

For more information on Ole Miss Track & Field, follow the Rebels on Twitter ([@OleMissTrack](#)), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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