



JAMIE SHEVON
NIETO NIETO



2X Olympians and Newlyweds



This amazing couple has shown the true power of love when their lives changed in the spring of 2016 when JAMIE NIETO, 2x Time Olympic High Jumper had a training accident that left him paralyzed from the neck down. At this time SHEVON STODDART, 2x Time Jamaican Olympic Hurdler was Jamie Nieto's girlfriend and the couple's life saving love has help them overcome unimaginable odds.

Jamie was told that he would never walk again, but he defied his doctor's predictions to walk his wife-to-be 150 steps down the aisle at their emotional wedding ceremony. Now as Jamie continues his road to recovery to 100%, the newlyweds are focused on living out their dreams in the world of entertainment.







Former Olympian Overcomes Paralysis To Walk Down The Aisle

by ZANA NAJJAR | Mon, Jul 24, 2017 12:23 PM



AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

Jamie Nieto has set the bar.

He was once a high jumper that cleared 7 feet 8 inches at the 2004 Olympics but more recently all he wanted to do was to walk with his new wife at their wedding.

The 40-year-old, who took home 6th place at the 2012 Olympics, married Jamaican hurdler **Shevon Stoddart** on July 22nd and was able to walk her from the altar to the door—about 130 feet.

"It's a monumental day so I think I need to do monumental things," Nieto told the [Los Angeles Times](#). Nieto's progress and rehabilitation has moved quickly despite the fact that some doctors were claiming he would not be able to walk again.

Nieto has said in the past that Stoddart stood by him every step of the way through his recovery from feeding him to helping him get dressed in the morning. "As I get better and better, she has to do less and less," he told [AP](#) earlier this month when he first expressed the desire to be able to walk at his own wedding. "She's done so much for me."

The former Olympian was involved in an accident in April 2016 that left his hands and feet paralyzed. His signature move after events was a simple backflip but when teaching it to other athletes, he wasn't quite able to stick the landing.

Paralyzed ex-Olympic high jumper Jamie Nieto walks wife down aisle

Associated Press

Jul 23, 2017

EL CAJON, Calif. -- Step by halting step, former Olympic high jumper [Jamie Nieto](#) made good on his vow to walk wife Shevon down the aisle after their wedding and out the door to a waiting limousine.

It was roughly 130 steps, with a stop halfway down the aisle of the small church to kiss his bride for a gaggle of photographers.

No cane, no walker. Just Nieto holding his wife's left hand for support.

The two-time Olympian fulfilled his vow Saturday, 15 months after he suffered a spinal cord injury on a misjudged backflip that left him partially paralyzed, with no feeling in his hands or feet. Doctors didn't know whether he'd walk again.

Nieto, 40, was determined to defy his doctors and make it all the way down the aisle.



Fifteen months after he suffered a spinal cord injury on a misjudged backflip that left him partially paralyzed, two-time Olympic high jumper Jamie Nieto made good on his vow to walk his wife down the aisle after their wedding. AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

"It's a monumental day, so I think I need to do monumental things," Nieto said before the ceremony while sitting with his groomsman in the office of Bishop Donnie McGriff just off the sanctuary of the Greater Christ Temple Apostolic Church in this city just east of San Diego.

"I'm definitely blessed and super happy to be here. I've worked really hard to get to this point, and I think it's just the first step to many more in my recovery."

Nieto proposed to [Shevon Stoddart](#), a hurdler, while in a wheelchair six months after The Backflip. It used to be his signature move after big events.

On April 23, 2016, the maneuver went seriously wrong for Nieto, who cleared 7 feet, 8 inches to finish fourth at the 2004 Olympics. He was coaching some jumpers in the Los Angeles area when he showed them his backflip expertise. His first attempt was a little off, so he asked for another try. He pushed off with one foot on the artificial turf, and it slipped, forcing him straight back instead of into a somersault. The full weight of his body crashed on his neck.

He was flown by helicopter to a hospital and had surgery to fuse a disk in his neck. When he awoke, he could only shrug his shoulders and flex his quadriceps muscles.

The high jumper who finished sixth at the 2012 London Games spent 12 days in intensive care and two months at an inpatient rehab facility before returning home. He has been rehabbing hard for several months, determined to walk his new wife out of the church.

Before the wedding, Nieto entered the church using a walker. There was a cane on the altar just in case he needed it during the ceremony. He didn't.

Paralyzed high jumper overcomes injury to walk down the aisle at his wedding



Jamie Nieto and his bride, Shevon, walk together after marrying at the Greater Christ Temple Apostolic Church. (Robert Gauthier / Los Angeles Times)

By **Associated Press**

JULY 23, 2017, 9:15 AM

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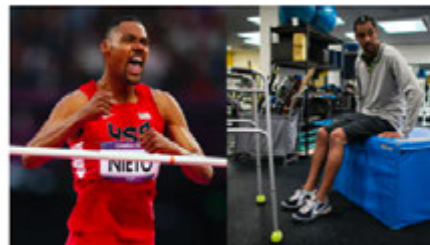
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Nieto proposed to the former Shevon Stoddart, a hurdler, while in a wheelchair six months after *The Backflip*. It used to be his signature move after big events.

Related



Olympic high jumper paralyzed by freak injury now hopes to walk aisle at wedding

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Jamie Nieto prays with his groomsman, led by Bishop Donnie McGriff minutes before marrying Shevon Stoddart. (Robert Gauthier / Los Angeles Times)

OLYMPICS

Watch: Paralyzed Olympian Jamie Nieto Walks at Wedding

CHRIS CHAVEZ AND JEREMY WOO

Saturday July 22nd, 2017

In April 2016, two-time Olympic high jumper Jamie Nieto was coaching high jump at USC when he suffered a freak injury that left him partially paralyzed from the neck down.

After surgery and months of rehabilitation, Nieto planned to walk down the aisle at his wedding in July, [according](#) a June article by the *Los Angeles Times*.

On Saturday, he made it happen.



Ramon Galindo
@RamonGalindoNBC

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Olympian Jamie Nieto walks to his wedding after being paralyzed

11:39 AM - Jul 22, 2017

14 240 896

Nieto was injured while attempting a backflip in practice and landing on his head. He underwent surgery to fuse a disk in his neck and then began [updating his fans with videos](#) of his progress on social media. Olympic teammate Lolo Jones also established a fund that raised more than \$80,000 for his recovery and medical expenses.

Doctors originally said he would regain up to 30% of his full body function after the injury.



NEWS

Paralyzed ex-Olympian Jamie Nieto defies the odds by walking on his wedding day

Joyce Chen TODAY

Jul. 23, 2017 at 10:48 AM

Former Olympian Jamie Nieto was driven by the power of his love and a promise he made to his bride, Jamaican hurdler Shevon Stoddart, to do the impossible on his wedding day Saturday: walk.



Nieto walks down the aisle with his bride.

The two-time Olympic high jumper was severely injured following a backflip accident in April 2016. He suffered a spinal cord injury that left him partially paralyzed.



Paralyzed former high jumper Jamie Nieto walks his bride down the aisle

PLAY VIDEO - 0:34

Despite doctors' uncertainty whether Nieto, 40, would ever walk again, he recently told [The Associated Press](#) that "there was never a doubt" in his mind that he will one day make a full recovery.



"I feel like it's not fast enough. I want to be better tomorrow," he said. "I'm built for speed, not for going slow. But I'm working on being the best walker I can be."

And on Saturday, Nieto did indeed make his way on his own two feet inside the Christ Temple Apostolic Church in east San Diego, holding onto a loved one as he shuffled to the altar. Gathered friends and family erupted into applause and tears.



Ramon Galindo @RamonGalindoNBC

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Olympian Jamie Nieto walks to his wedding after being paralyzed

11:39 AM - Jul 22, 2017

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His blushing bride, 34-year-old Stoddart, then made her way down the aisle while singing Celine Dion's ballad "Because You Loved Me" to a beaming Nieto. They exchanged vows before their loved ones, not a dry eye in the pews.



AP



Injured Olympian defies doctors to walk for his wedding

By PAT GRAHAM
Jul. 05, 2017

On good days, American high jumper Jamie Nieto can shuffle 130 steps without a cane or walker.

It's an important distance — about the length from the altar to the church door. His vow: Make it all the way, under his own power, when he's married on July 22.

The two-time Olympian is recovering from a [spinal cord injury](#) he suffered on a misjudged backflip in April 2006. The accident initially left him with no feeling in his hands and feet. Walking? Doctors couldn't predict if he would take more than a few steps — or any at all.

"People keep saying my recovery is really fast," said the 40-year-old Nieto, who lives in Los Angeles. "I feel like it's not fast enough. I want to be better tomorrow. I'm built for speed, not for going slow. But I'm working on being the best walker I can be."



Jamie Nieto does squats on a board in his apartment ahead of his July wedding.

Nieto proposed to Jamaican hurdler [Shevon Stoddart](#) while in a wheelchair, six months after The Backflip. It used to be his signature move after big events.

On [April 23, 2006](#), the maneuver went seriously wrong for the high jumper who once cleared 7 feet, 8 inches to finish fourth at the 2004 Olympics. He was coaching some jumpers when he showed them his backflip expertise. His first attempt was a little off, and he asked for another try.

This time, he pushed off with one foot on the artificial turf and it slipped, forcing him straight back instead of into a somersault. The full weight of his body crashed on his neck.

"I couldn't really feel anything. I was stuck there. I was like, 'Oh shoot, I hurt myself pretty bad,'" recalled Nieto. "I had the athletes call 911."



Shevon Stoddart tries on a tiera while getting her wedding dress fitted

Soon, it was 23 steps. Then 53, 80 and now 130 for their wedding at a church in San Diego.

Stoddart's response? Go for 200.

"I keep pushing him forward," said Stoddart, who was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and moved to Uniondale, New York, as a kid. "After he (walks down the aisle), I'm going to be like, 'OK, now jog. Now run.' I continue to push him so he can be the best he can be."



Shevon Stoddart, left, watches as her fiancé, Jamie Nieto, gets his tuxedo fitted ahead of their July wedding.

Before his injury, Nieto wrote screenplays and appeared in movies, such as the film "[Baseball's Last Hero](#) : 21 Clemence Stories" in which [he played](#) Pittsburgh Pirates great Roberto Clemente. He continues that work, finishing a script for an episode of the TV show "Family Time" and making a cameo in a soap opera, where he plays the role of a doctor.

Nieto also is 10 chapters into a book about his recovery that he hopes to turn into a film. He already has the leading actor picked out — himself.

"I don't see why not? I plan to be 100 percent again," Nieto said. "I don't think there will be any dry eyes in the theater."

'I could still feel my body but I couldn't move': Former US Olympic high jumper paralyzed attempting to do a backflip explains how he is lucky to be alive in emotional video from his hospital bed

- Jamie Nieto, 39, was paralyzed in a freak training accident Saturday
- In a video from hospital Wednesday he explained how he fell doing a backflip and landed on his head, with a disc in his neck hitting a nerve
- He faces at least six months of rehabilitation just to walk
- However he canceled his health insurance previously to save money
- Friend and fellow athlete Lolo Jones is raising money for him

By DAILYMAIL.COM REPORTER

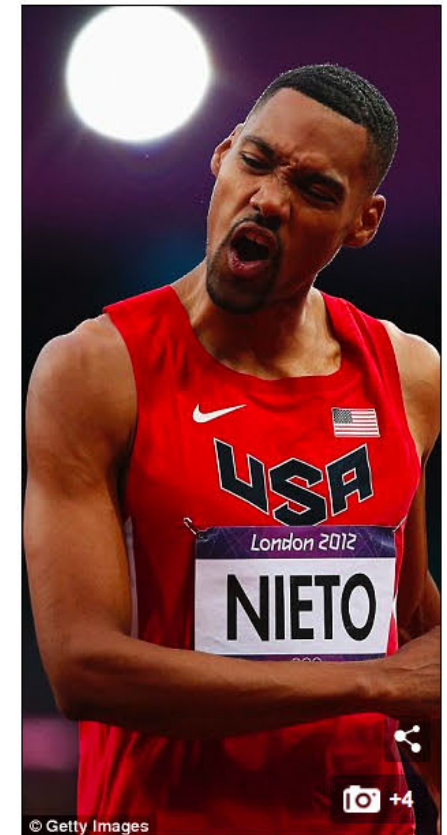
PUBLISHED: 17:14 EDT, 28 April 2016 | UPDATED: 19:03 EDT, 28 April 2016

Former US Olympic high jumper Jamie Nieto, who was paralyzed in a training accident at the weekend, has spoken from his hospital bed, thanking God that he is alive.

The 39-year-old was working with would-be Olympians at Azusa Pacific University in California when he landed on his head during a backflip on Saturday, suffering a severe spinal injury.

Now he has released a video from hospital explaining what happened, how he is lucky to be alive, and thanking everyone for supporting him.

'I was in a training accident and I hit my head doing a flip. I slipped doing a flip. And my disc in my neck slipped and hit a nerve, and it paralyzed me,' Nieto says in the [clip](#).



Before his accident, Nieto canceled his health insurance to financial hardship. He now faces months of expensive rehabilitation

Towards the end of the video Nieto becomes emotional, thanking everyone for their messages of support.

He also gives a special mention to fellow athlete Lolo Jones has set up a fundraising campaign for the injured star on [Athlete Biz](#).

The accident was so bad that he had to be flown directly to USC Medical Center by helicopter, [TMZ](#) reported.

'We were very close to losing him at one stage,' his manager Paul Doyle told [TMZ](#), 'but thankfully the MRI came back with no broken neck and the spinal cord remained intact.'

The athlete was suffering financial difficulties before his accident - so much so that he canceled his own health insurance to save cash - his challenges are even greater.

‘Please, God. Don’t let me be paralyzed.’ Olympian Nieto sets high bar: Walk the aisle

BY JOE DAVIDSON
jdavidson@sacbee.com

JULY 14, 2017 6:00 AM

CLAREMONT — Jamie Nieto opened the passenger door of his black SUV, slid his lanky 6-foot-4 frame to the edge of the seat, exhaled and studied his old friend: the walker.

He glared at it for an instant, as if to suggest that he has had just enough of the thing.

For now, the walker is support for legs that do not fully operate, limbs that used to bound him to record heights – and over the occasional parked sedan, showcasing his remarkable athletic ability. This four-time U.S. high jump champion and two-time Olympian from Sacramento is learning to appreciate his legs and body all over again. And to use them again. Arms, legs, all of it, like a baby mastering the crawl, then the walk, then the run, then life’s journey.

Six months ago, it would take Nieto 45 exhaustively painful minutes to walk 50 feet from the car to the front doors of his rehabilitation clinic in Los Angeles County. Now it takes less than five minutes, using the rail to steady himself, with fiancée Shevon Stoddart helping navigate.

He times everything.



Jamie Nieto competes in the high jump at the Mt. SAC Relays in Walnut on April 18, 2004. The four-time U.S. high jump champion and two-time Olympian from Sacramento is learning how to work his body again after becoming paralyzed following a failed back flip.

Randy Pench - Sacramento Bee file

Backflip that changed everything

Nieto’s signature celebration was a backflip. He has done hundreds, if not thousands, of them.

On April 23, 2016, Nieto was coaching jumpers at Azusa Pacific. To show his pupils he still has hops at 39, he attempted a backflip, but caught his foot on liftoff and landed on his head.

The athletes saw Nieto’s body convulse and assumed their gregarious coach was laughing. Nieto always laughs. But this was deadly serious. Nieto did not move. He managed to gasp out, “I ... can’t ... move.”

One athlete called 911. Another raced to grab a Bible to place in Nieto’s hand.

Nieto awoke in a Los Angeles hospital, unsure where he was, why he was there. He only knew that he was suddenly trapped in a body that did not move, did not respond. He could not speak. Only his eyes moved, darting back and forth to study his surroundings, and they struggled to focus with tears welling up.



PARALYZED OLYMPIAN ON ROAD TO RECOVERY



@CNNSport



PARALYZED OLYMPIAN ON ROAD TO RECOVERY

Both Jamie and Shevon Nieto are 2-time Olympic athletes



9:43 PM GMT

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NAS ▲ 5:57

CNN WORLD SPORT



PARALYZED OLYMPIAN ON ROAD TO RECOVERY



SAP ▲ 4:50

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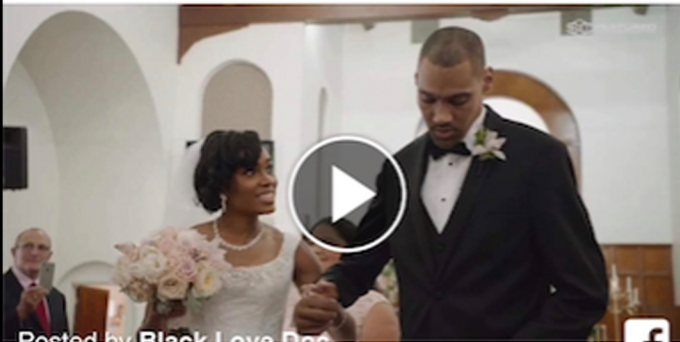


KTLA 5



Shevon Nieto Chose Love Over Her Career. Here's What Happened Next

BL Black Love Team



Posted by Black Love Team

“When you love someone and decide to spend your life as one, your dreams and goals are now shared, so when an injury or hardship comes, it hits you both. But if you focus on your love, you’ll find a way to get through, and, if need be, create new goals together.” – Shevon Nieto

It was to be Shevon Nieto’s third and final Olympics. She was in the best shape of her life and was training harder than ever before to make the 2016 Rio Olympic Team. It was her only focus. Then, just two months before the trials, the unimaginable happened. The love of her life, her then boyfriend, Olympic high jumper and track and field coach Jamie Nieto, was performing his signature move, a somersault. This was a move he had completed hundreds of times before. But this time, his foot slipped. Jamie landed on his head and broke his neck.

Shevon got the call that Jamie was being airlifted to the hospital. At that moment, everything changed. They were told Jamie was paralyzed from the neck down. Shevon would not go on to compete in the Olympic trials, choosing, instead, to stay by his side. But this pivot opened up opportunities for both Shevon and Jamie to realize dreams, some old and some brand new.

The couple told their story in this weekend’s episode of BLACK LOVE entitled In Sickness and In Health. We were struck by Shevon’s decision to change her career to stay near Jamie leading to a return to her first love — music

SN: We met at a track meet in 2010. He asked me were my next meet was. It was at UCLA, and he was competing there, too. We arranged to have dinner, and we’ve been together ever since.



Shevon & Jamie Nieto

America's got *Talent*

After releasing a music video called "Through The Good And The Bad" dedicated to her husband, Shevon's video was soon noticed by America's Got Talent and she was selected to be a contestant for Season 15.

