

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

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CATO WINS USAs

Wiechman (NAIA), SEAY (JUCO) Also National Champs

Hello Again....Jay Cato (26, Crete, IL) won the 32nd USA national indoor heptathlon at the Convention Center in Albuquerque. When his roommate and defending champ, Curtis Beach, withdrew early in the week, Cato, the 2013 NCAA I indoor heptathlon runner-up was the beneficiary, and he had a clear path to the title. But it would not be easy.

On day one ex-Wichita State star Austin Bahner held a 205 point lead over Cato and a diluted field of nine others after just three events (2488-2283) with ex Princeton star Thomas Hopkins/SBTC sandwiched in between. But Cato's high jump superiority (he jumped 2.11m/6-11 here, well off hi 2.20m/7-2½ best) made up 245 points on Bahner (1.84m/6-½) and moved him to a 40 point lead at the break, 3180-3149.

On day two Cato captured the first section in a nifty 8.04 seconds barely edging Hopkins. Bahner was an easy winner in the second race but his winning time of 8.31, a significant PR, gave up 67 points and the Wisconsin grad found himself 107 up with Hopkins another 114 back.

Cato added another 30 with a 5.05/16-6¾ clearance, one bar higher than Bahner and the penultimate margin stood at 138 points. Hopkins fell to 5th overall managing but 3.85m/12-7½.

In the final event Iowa State's Taylor Sanderson jumped to an immediate lead and led the field thru 3 laps before Thomas FitzSimons/SBTC and teammate Hopkins jumped him, both passing 800 meters in 2:08. Hopkins was strongest in the stretch and he



26 year old Jay Cato, Crete, IL, won the 32nd USA indoor heptathlon in Albuquerque with a 5738 effort.

won in 2:37.56 to move back to 3rd overall. Bahner and Cato stayed well off the pace (5 seconds back at 400m and 12/13 behind after 800m) but at this point the medals had already been determined. Cato's winning score (5738) was 138 shy of his runner-up score from a year earlier in Crete, NE. Bahner was 2nd at 5640 and Hopkins 3rd with 5417.

There were but 5 meets during the 1st weekend in March but three were national championship affairs. At the NAIA (March 2-3) meet in Johnson City, TN, Concordia (NE) senior Lucas Wiechman (21, Pilger, NE) led



Vet Austin Bahner(left) was USA runner-up while Liberty senior Zach Davis (right) won the IC4A title.

from start to finish. His 8.47 hurdles and 4.60m/15-1 vault clearance sealed the deal over 16 others and he coasted to victory while his margin was 125 points. Vanguard soph Winston Lawson (Santa Ana, CA) (4987) and Oregon Tech junior Seth Gretz (4776) were the other medalists.

A day later speedy Jared Seay (Ankeny, IA) a soph at Iowa Central Community College, a former prep football standout, had an essay time claiming the National Junior College crown in Pittsburg, KS. Seay's solid 5413 score was almost 200 points better than that of freshman Connor Williamson of Arizona's Paradise Valley JC (5240). Mesa (AZ) soph Xavier Johnson was third (4895). Seay moved up from 4th place a year earlier.

Two other meets were held March 3-4. In Boaston Liberty senior Zach Davis (21, Sparta, NJ) took control of the sixteen man IC4A meet early, used a 14.05m/4601 shot and 2.10m./6-10³/₄) high jump to build an insurmountable lead and then coasted to a 5259 score. 105 points back was junior Nick Fofana from across town's Northeastern U. Fofana finished just three points up on Davis' freshman teammate Markus Ballengee.

The NCAA Divs I, II and III are scheduled for the upcoming week.



The NAIA champs in Johnson City, TN, found Lucas Wiechman, a senior at Concordia (NE) (left) and Winston Lawson, a soph at Vanguard (CA) go 1-2.