

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

DECA Newsletter

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BIG SCORES FROM SMALL COLLEGES

Götzis Next

Hello Again....for once all the charts and prognosticators were right on the money. All the season leaders and defending champions came through winning small college national titles on the weekend reserved just for them. NCAA Div II and III, NAIA and JUCO have had center stage May 21-22 for their championships and no decathlon favorite disappointed.

Defending champs Camille Vandendreissche/Abilene Christian, Jonathan Hilton/Oklahoma Baptist and Kurt Felix/Central Arizona, at D-II, NAIA and JUCO, were all successful in pulling off the repeat. As a matter of fact, Vandendreissche's 7664 effort in San Angelo, marked a 3rd consecutive D-II accolade.

At the present we have not received any news of last chance qualifying meets for D-I athletes, so the next major news will come from the Austrian Alps where Trey Hardee and Jake Arnold are scheduled to start at the Hypo-Bank meeting in Götzis, and the low key international, NACAC (*North American-Central America- Caribbean*) CEs, in Havana where a trio of Yank veterans are scheduled to compete. In the latter Paul Terek, Chris Boyles and Chris Randolph will be in the field which will *not*, incidentally, include Yordani Garcia and Yunior Diaz who will be, yep, you guessed it, at the major IAAF international in Götzis.

For Hardee, it will be his season opener and first meet since Beijing last

August. Arnold is coming off a win (7994) in Desanzano two weeks ago.

5/21-22 NCAA D-II, San Angelo, TX



Abilene Christian's Camille Vandendreissche, 24, Paris, FRA, won a 3rd consecutive D-II crown in San Angelo.

A field of 13 started under sunny skies in the West Texas town of San Angelo. Ryan McWilliams, 23, a senior from Alpine, Texas looked keen on upsetting two time and indoor heptathlon champion Camille Vandendreissche (6-9!) of rival Abilene Christian. McWilliams led at the break by 94 (4036 pts) but Vandy's 2nd day skills prevailed and he took the lead during the discus (a PR 45.97m/150-9 and then put the meet away with a 4.90m/16-3/4 vault. Vandy and McWilliams both PR'd: 7674 and 7297 respectively. Adams State football punter Wayne Durham recovered on day two and nipped Bemidji's Zac Preble 7086 to 7085 for the bronze medal. The top nine finishers all PR'd in a



deceptively deep meet.

Angelo State senior Ryan McWilliams was right at home at the D-II affair, netting a PR 7297 score for the silver medal.

May 21-22 NAIA, Edwardsville, IL



Oklahoma Baptist senior Jon Hilton defended his NAIA crown in Illinois.



Jonathan Hilton, a senior at Oklahoma Baptist University in Oklahoma City may be the best small school national class decathlete no one has heard of. His OBU website bio says simply:

“Jonathan Hilton, Sr, Buhler, KS.”

Yet within the NAIA, a group of 300+ smaller college and universities, Hilton reigns supreme as its best all-around athlete. He followed a 2008 national decathlon win with a victory at the '09 indoor heptathlon, and then defended his 10-event title in Edwardsville over the past weekend with a PR 7233 effort. Hilton used a consistent second day to thwart Azusa's surprising soph Casey Stevick who PR'd with 6863. As a matter of fact five of the top 7 PR'd in Edwardsville.

The NAIA blows hot and cold in talent, but over the years, has produced some of America's best collegiate decathletes, for example: Bruce Jenner/Graceland, Jeff Bennett/Okla Christian, Dave Johnson and Bryan Clay/Azusa Pacific. Hilton may not be in that class but the 6-2 senior could compete at any collegiate level.

May 21-22, NCAA-III, Marietta, OH



Linfield's Josh Lovell moved from 3rd a year ago and posted a PR 7080 to win the D-III crown in Marietta.

Junior Josh Lovell led the field by just 7 points after 4 events at the D-III meet in Marietta, OH. But the final 6 events was a massacre. Mark by mark he extended his lead over the 16 man field so that it grew to 262 points with an event remaining. At the end he had posted a PR 7080 effort, 223 better than that of his twin, Jeremy whose 6857 was also a lifetime best.



The pair, Josh (left) and Jeremy (right), 6-2, are identical twins from Columbia River High School in Vancouver, WA

There has been significant improvement at the D-III level in recent years (here 11 >6500). In Marietta the top 12 PR'd (shows what can happen when it does not rain/snow). Central (IA) football star Kurtis Brondyke (r) raised some eyebrows with a 6809 5th place performance in his 3rd career multi.



May 21-22 National JUCO, Hutchinson, KS



Busy Grenada native Kurt Felix won a 2nd JUCO crown, with a 7027 score

A sophomore at Central Arizona College, by way of Grenada, was told by his coach (7 year veteran Al Shirley) “to come out, take it easy and just do enough to win.” Felix was also entered in the long, triple and high jumps and was trying to conserve energy. But win he did. The Boise State recruit had an easy time in Hutchinson, KS at the national JUCO meet and regardless, got a PR 7027 score. Jordan Coffman, South Plains, was 209 back.

As we got to post, Felix had places 3rd in the TJ (15.22m/49-11¼) and was awaiting the long and high jumps.

Addendum: a correction to last week's Newsletter which stated that Ashton Eaton was the first Pac-10 back-to-back decathlon winner since. In fact, Jake Arnold/Arizona, won titles in 2006 (7691) and 2007 (7755).

