

# THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

## DECA Newsletter

Volume XXXVIII

Number 11

March (3), 2013

## LAZAS OVER CATO in THRILLER NCAA Goes Down to Final Moments

**Hello Again....** It went down to the last few steps of the 1000 meters before the 2013 NCAA men's indoor heptathlon was decided. So close was this one that the crowd of 600+ (and this announcer) had to wait for the final tally to be displayed on the Tyson Center scoreboard. A few seconds after a climatic 1000m final it read

Kevin Lazas	Arkansas	6175
Jay Cato	Wisconsin	6165

Lazas, a 5-11 junior from Brentwood, TN, recorded 5 career marks in the first six events but could not shake Cato, a 6-3 junior from Crete, IL on day two. Lazas took a 50 point margin to the ultimate 1k race and ran strongly until the final lap. On the final lap Cato ran with purpose and finished in a marginal PR 2:45.26 while Lazas struggled off the final turn, was running in sand with 40 meter remaining. He just did manage to pitch forward and fall over the finish line (2:49.00) to hang on for the victory. Yet with 20 meters remaining it was far from certain that he would even finish.

The final scores were career bests for both and delighted the large contingents from both universities.

In retrospect this may have been a turning point year for collegians. USA national indoor champ Gunnar Nixon withdrawing from school an defending NCAA champ Curtis Beach/Duke red-shirting the door was open for last year's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers from Nampa (Cato and Lazas)



Kevin Lazas, 20, (left) a junior at Arkansas and here leading Garret Scantling and Maicel Uibo of Georgia, ran his way to the NCAA crown in a dramatic 1000m finish.

to step up and step up they did. In a ding-dong battle at Randall Tyson Center in Fayetteville the pair of juniors had a partisan crowd on its feet during the final event.

Only 3 of last year's top ten finishers returned. But there were numerous talented new faces.... bulky German Johannes Hock of Texas, quick Georgia soph Garrett Scantling, talented Estonian Maicel Uibo, springy Badger soph Zach ('Double Z'), Ziemek and thin Andy Lillejord of North Dakota St. All were new to this meet and all turned in impressive scores.

And all are non-seniors and will likely greet the returning Beach in 2014 when this meet is in his home town of Albuquerque.

Here's what happened.

**10<sup>th</sup> NCAA D-I Indoor  
Heptathlon Championships  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR  
March 8-9, 2013**



**60 m Hurdles:** [11:00- 11:15 am]

All 16 contestants returned and were grouped into sections of 4 using non-adjacent lanes... a silly and antiquated procedure that should be abolished. It's a procedure used nowhere else in the track world. The reasons for separating runners with empty lanes no longer exist. Stop this nonsense!

Regardless, these races were FAST. Hock, 20 years old from Cologne, Germany, captured the initial race in a career best 8.25 seconds over Montana State's Jeff Mohl who also PR'd at 8.31.

In the second section Lazas, in lane 1, was matched with Oregon's Dakotah Keys in lane 7. They ran stride for stride, dipped at the finish, recorded identical times, both incidentally, PRs. Keys got the photo nod. Unnoticed was rangy Double Z in 3<sup>rd</sup> who missed his career best by one hundredth of a second.

Jay Cato ran smoothly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> race and his winning 7.95 clocking shaved all but 19 points out of Lazas' first day 98 point margin. Montana's Austin Emry PR'd here at 8.17 seconds. When asked what his previous lifetime best was, he chimed, "I haven't a clue."

Three more PR'd in the fourth race, with Scantling managing 8.10, UNI's Ethan Miller 8.24 and Uibo getting 8.28. Fully one half of the entire field raced to new lifetime bests. At this point there were just over 300 spectators.

*After Five: Laza 4364, Cato 4345, Scan 4280, Hock 4192.*

**Pole Vault:** [11:55 am - 2:35 pm]

As good as the hurdles were in firing up scores, the vault was hotter. When the bar reached 5.00m/16-4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> nine of the original 16 were still in the action, an abnormally high



**Jay Cato/Wisconsin managed a PR 5.30m/17-4 1/2 yet lost 31 points to Kevin Lazas who cleared one bar higher.**

figure. Seven went to 5.10m/16-8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, a number rarely seen even at a world championship meets or at Götzis. Lazas, who opened at 5.00m passed here but Cato and double Z had no problem, and then Scantling, Lillejord and Uibo all negotiated the bar in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round... PR's for both Georgians. Lazas, Cato and Ziemek cleared 5.20m/17-<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, a career best for the latter.

All three got over 5.30m/17-4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, PR's for both Wisconsin Badgers. At a meet and collegiate record 5.40m/17-8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Lazas managed on his 2<sup>nd</sup> and double Z (another PR!) on his 3<sup>rd</sup>, both placing their names in the collegiate and meet record books. At 5.50m/18-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> both had quality attempts but could not clear. The partisan 600 fans gave them a standing 'O.' Whew! What an event, 135 attempts, 56 clearances in 2 hours and 40 minutes, and 14 (!) lifetime best vaults. 14! Vault official should be commended for moving the event along smartly.

The one bar advantage by Lazas pushed his margin over Cato to 50 points, worth 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> seconds on the 1k tables. He would need all of it.

*After Five: Laza 5399, Cato 5349, Scan 5221, Ziem 5172.*

**1000 meters:** [3:10 pm]

Even without a reason to rush, this field got not a second more than 30 minutes rest... something that could have been adjusted because of the length of the vault. As mentioned earlier, Lazas barely finished

the race. And it is a close call as to whether two races were necessary...a balancing act among safety, competitiveness/pace and having non-scorers influence the outcome.

Well, two races were conducted splitting the fields by score after 6 events. The first race was predictable with UCLA's Marcus Nilsson winning in 2:41.88 and Oregon's Dakotah Keys (starting in 9<sup>th</sup> place) giving chase hoping to crack the top eight. Given the scores after six he likely



**Kevin Lazas got a share of the collegiate and meet record (with Paul Terek and Donovan Kilmartin) of 5.40m/17-8 1/2 and had one quality try at an American mark 5.50m/18-1/2.**

belonged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> race since he was only two seconds out of 8<sup>th</sup> (the last award spot).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> race went as expected with Lazas hanging on to Cato, lap after lap until the final 200m when he began to flag. That set up the final dramatic scene of his somersaulting across the line. His 6175 score has only been bettered by a pair of collegians...Ashton Eaton and Trey Hardee...pretty good company. Cato became the #4 all-time collegian and Scantling is the 10<sup>th</sup> collegian over 6000. Wow! And next year 8 of the top 9 return from this field and will face Curtis Beach. I can't wait.

*After Five: Laza 6175, Cato 6165, Scan 6017, Uibo 5975.*

## **FINAL RESULTS:**



**3/8-9 NCAA D-I Champs, Randall Tyson Center, U of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR**

6175	Lazas, Kevin/Arkansas 6.90 755 1500 199 8.27 540 2:49.00
6165	Cato, Jay/Wisconsin 7.08 767 1213 211 7.95 530 2:45.26
6071	Scantling, Garrett/Georgia 7.07 704 1412 211 8.10 510 2:47.07
5975	Uibo, Maicel/Georgia-EST 7.19 736 1364 202 8.28 510 2:39.72
5937	Ziemek, Zach/Wisconsin 7.01 722 1273 205 8.37 540 2:50.06
5873	Hock, Johannes/Texas-GER 7.03 738 1497 190 8.28 490 2:46.92
5793	Lillejord, Andy/N Dakota St 6.98 733 1277 190 8.40 510 2:44.93
5772	Martin, Romain/Tex-Arl-FRA 7.14 697 1412 199 8.23 480 2:44.14
5757	Keys, Dakotah/Oregon 7.14 720 1304 202 8.27 470 2:43.39
5568	McCune, Alex/Akron 7.11 714 1248 184 8.27 500 2:51.00
5559	Mohl, Jeff/Montana St 7.08 692 1205 187 8.31 490 2:44.02
5486	Emory, Austin/Montana 7.16 632 1304 202 8.17 390 2:51.67
5467	Miller, Ethan/N Iowa 7.09 709 1158 199 8.24 440 2:51.24
5386	Dick, Devin/Kansas St 7.35 708 1314 193 8.35 440 2:51.68
5386	Nilsson, Marcus/UCLA 7.37 652 1460 184 8.50 460 2:41.88
5333	Bahner, Austin/Wichita St 7.00 709 1291 190 8.71 440 2:56.57

16s,16f.