

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

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DECATHLON FACED TRIO of ILLS Event Fights Bad Luck, Lethargy, Weather

Hello Again....The decathlon nation won't remember the final week of April, 2013 with much fondness. Only a big score by Kevin Lazas salvaged a week damaged by bad luck, lethargy and bad weather. The major news came from Fayetteville where Miller Moss, 25, Austin, Texas, was testing his fitness and a tender elbow at the Arkansas Invitational in Fayetteville on Sat-Sun. Moss's elbow held up until the javelin where a pair of fouls and a 35.84m/117-7 effort did him in.

Uncertain that his 7712 score from last year's Trials in Eugene will hold up as a USA qualifier, Moss, the 2011 NCAA indoor heptathlon champ while at Clemson, had a 6671 score with two events remaining. He did not finish the 1500m and the final tally was 7053.

Moss was impressive along the way getting lifetime bests in both the shot put (14.85m/48-8³/₄) and vault (5.00m/16-4³/₄). So his fitness and skill levels are high, but the jav elbow is not ready.

Collegiate indoor champ Kevin Lazas of the host school won the affair with a 7537 score, 88 better than Wichita State's Austin Bahner. Both have collegiate conference meets coming up (SEC, the Valley). Their scores from Fayetteville may not hold up as NCAA qualifiers (top 24).

The Arkansas meet ended a week which also saw lethargy, odd results and more bad weather in the mid-west. First, the announcement came from the Penn Relays that their annual event (which dates to the 1920s)



Miller Moss was solid thru the first 8 events in Fayetteville, but his jav elbow gave out.

was cancelled due to lack of interest. It should not come as a surprise since all coaches steer clear of Franklin Field and the accompanying facilities as a very difficult place to achieve competent scores. In recent years winning scores have been under 7000 points. Because of the distance to lower field throwing areas (just short of a one mile), the inconvenience for athletes and spectators having to walk six miles (!!!) during the event (remember... down and back 3x) rankles most. Penn's notice claimed "lack of entries" for the cancellation, the first no Penn meet since it Irv Mondschein returned it to the program in 1973. It used to be that the Penn Relays decathlon was the only game in town. Now, well, there is no game.

Even odder were the large number of what can only be classified as *very small meets* and an even larger number of no meets.

Three decathlons, including a pair of league championships, were limited to a single finisher (in two a single starter). Perhaps I should be happy that some leagues are conducting the ten eventer. Because 16 smaller collegiate leagues conducted their annual outdoor championships this week without a decathlon. 16!



Many other meets soldiered on this week in spite of continued bad weather.

The Drake Relays drew a quality field including 6 national calibre athletes, yet temperatures were soooooo cold that good scores were virtually impossible. Day one saw Drake temps reach a high of 47°(f) and the second day was not much better. 2010 national USA champ Jake Arnold, looking for his USA qualifier, was unable to finish and the title went to defending champ Dan Gooris, UNI, whose effort of 7395 was noteworthy considering the freezing conditions. He won last year with 7624 points.

The spate of April's bad weather (read mid-western flooding, south and southwest tornados, and recent snow all the way from Washington to Maine) has left collegiate qualifying to conference championships and week one of this annual ritual begins next weekend. Hold on.

O yes, we took notice of the Kansas Sate 4x400m relays team, made up of four Wildcat decathletes, who won at the Emporia State mid-week meet...(4/24) in 3:21.54, likely the national leader in decatlhlon 4x4.

4/24 **ESU Mid-week, Emporia, KS** Tomas Kirilius, Devin Dick, Reinis Kregers, Tony Granillo 1st, 3:21.54

I'm unsure if we have a decathlon 'record' for this event. I recall a VISA team running 3:12 in the 1990s.