

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION DECA Newsletter

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2013 Gotzis Preview Eaton Withdraws

Hello Again....The calm before the storm. Let's hope for no storm(s) this weekend. At Gotzis, Austria the news is twofold. First, world record holder Ashton Eaton has pulled out in favor of resting an aggravated calf tendon last week in favor of the USA nationals in mid June. Here is the story, via Curtis Anderson of the *Eugene Register-Guard*, May 21.

Reigning Olympic gold medalist and world record-holder in the decathlon Ashton Eaton has withdrawn from the Hypo Meeting — the second leg of the IAAF combined events challenge — in Götzis, Austria, this weekend.

Eaton, 25, who broke the world record with 9,039 points at the U.S. Olympic Trials at Hayward Field last June, will not compete at the prestigious event after recently suffering a minor leg injury.

Eaton's coach, Harry Marra, said he didn't want to risk any further problems heading into the U.S. Outdoor Track & Field



The scene at Mosle Stadium, Götzis, at 2:00 pm, Thursday, May 23, 2013...overcast, cloudy. Gunnar Nixon in lane 2.



Championships, June 20-24, at Drake Stadium in Des Moines. It's the qualifying meet for the 2013 World Championships in Moscow.

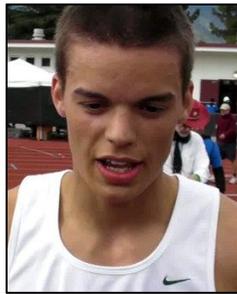
The injury, which Marra described as "kind of like a strain" of a tendon behind his knee, happened during a high jump workout about 10 days ago.

"Ashton put his foot down on one jump and felt something behind his knee grab a little bit, kind of like a strain," Marra said. "He could have gone on, but we stopped and had it checked out. Little by little, it got better, but the bottom line is this: Any time you go into a decathlon, your body gets beat up, even if you're 100 percent healthy.

"I couldn't take the chance that it could get irritated and prevent him from doing nationals and not make the World Championship team. He has a lot more to lose than gain. That's why we pulled the plug."

Eaton was looking forward to making his first appearance at the famed Austrian meet as the headline performer. He's in top form this season, having already set personal bests in the 200 (20.76 seconds), 400 (45.64), shot put (50 feet, 6 1/4 inches) and javelin (218-8). Eaton and his fiancée, Canadian Olympian Brienne Theisen, both competed in the shot put at the Atlanta Grand Prix meet last Friday as a final tune-up for Götzis. They were scheduled to fly to Austria the next day, but Marra woke up in the middle of the night with a strong feeling that Eaton should not make the trip.

"My gut told me he should not go," Marra said. "If you go into (a decathlon) with a sore



Veteran Jake Arnold (left) and newcomer Gunnar Nixon (right) will make up the USA contingent in Götzis,

tendon and irritate it more, it could turn into chronic tendinitis. I've seen it before ...

"He's disappointed. We all are, but this is one of those decision points in life. Götzis is the best meet in the world relative to the multi-events for a variety of reasons, but if he goes on and wins at worlds, nobody will remember what happened at Götzis."

As for Theisen, who has a personal record of 6,440 points in the heptathlon, Marra said she's "upbeat and looking good."

The Hypo Meeting decathlon and heptathlon will be contested on Saturday and Sunday.



Ashton Eaton has proven he can compete at a world class level in the rain. The 2013 edition of the world's best decathlon won't have Eaton this year, but they will have the rain.

The USA contingent, sans recovering Trey Hardee who injured an ankle in April, will have veteran Jake Arnold, whose 8253 career best came here in 2010 when he was 4th, and 2012 IAAF world junior kingpin Gunnar Nixon, contesting his initial major international with the big guys' implements. This was to have been Eaton's initial try at Mosle Stadium, site of three previous world records (Guido Kratschmer, Daley Thompson, Roman Sebrle).

Competition kicks off at 11:40 am Saturday (100m) and will finish by 6:00 pm. On Sunday the first hurdle section goes off at 10:05 (with the local church bells chiming in) and the entire affair is likely to be completed by 6-6:30 pm. Remember, there is a 6 hour difference between Austria and the east coast of the US.

Ironically the top four from London a year ago are all injured (Eaton, Hardee, Leonel Suarez/CUB and Hans van

Alphen/BEL) so this will be an opportunity to observe the next wave of decathletes...Russians, Italians, Frenchman Kevin Mayer, and the youngster from Oklahoma.

The second story is the weather. I've been here for a day and the forecast for Saturday is rain with a high temp of 54° F. A little warmer and clearing on Sunday. Keep your fingers crossed.