

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

DECA Newsletter

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FELIX SPEARS NCAA CROWN

Nixon with American Junior Record

Hello Again... Kurt Felix, 23, a Boise State senior from St Davids, Grenada, put up 10 solid marks at the 43rd NCAA D-I decathlon and had such a significant lead after nine events that he waltzed thru the 1500 meters. The Des Moines affair was redemption of sorts for Felix who had dropped out of the NCAA indoor heptathlon held on his home track of Nampa, Idaho. Here it was different. He held a 10 point first day lead, fell to 3rd after the vault but regained it during the javelin with a winning 69.36m/227-7 spear and then was just content to keep a wary eye on his competitors but was unpressed in the 1500 meters. His 8062 final tally was a PR by 90 points, His next competition will be the London Games in August.

Felix led a 1-2-4-6-8-9 foreign decathlete finish in what is certain to be a controversial issue among college coaches in the year to come. Sweden alone had its entire European Championship aggregation here, Seven foreign athletes were entered and six placed in the top 9.

The young Arkansas pair of Kevin Lazas and Gunnar Nixon both came up with career best scores in 3rd and 5th respectively. The battle for the 2nd-3rd and 4th spots was exceedingly close. Here is the day two action.



**43rd NCAA D-I
Drake University
Des Moines, IA
June 6-7, 2012**

Day Two:



Kurt Felix of Boise State, 23, St Davids, GRN won the NCAA I decathlon crown with 8062 points.

110m Hurdles: [11:30- 11:45 am]

The temps were in the high 70s on Thursday morning but no stiff breezes ala yesterday. Running again from south to north, Frenchman Romain Martin, a junior at Texas-Arlington immediately served notice that he would be reckoned with. His winning 14.60 clocking in the first of 5 races was just 0.09 seconds off a career best.

Wisconsin's Dave Grzesiak won the second race as all section were conducted with runners in alternate lanes, an outmoded practice that the NCAA will eventually have to get over. Heath Nickles/Ohio State outleaned Lazas in the 3rd race as the later PR'd in 15.12 to Nickles 15.08.

The 4th (and top seeded section) was captured by Chilean Gonzalo Barroilhet/ Florida State in a well controlled 14.04 over Wisconsin's Jay Cato. Arkansas senior Terry Prentice was 3rd in 14.33.

The final race was won by smooth striding Gunnar Nixon as he outlegged Nebraska's Bjorn Barrefors and Petter Olson of Texas in a blanket finish, 14.51-14.54-14.58. For Nixon, 19, the youngest athlete in the field, it was the first day two step on the way to an American Junior record and pushed him into the overall lead.

After Six: Nixø 5087, Feli 5035, Barr 4959, Hube 4939, Murp 4916.

Discus: [12:30- 1:58 pm]

The event slowed to a crawl as athletes from two different vault sections made up the discus groups, The seeding procedure can be forgone here to move the meet along but Rex



Seasonal leader (8067 points) Isaac Murphy, Texas, was 7th at the NCAAs with 7818 points.

Harvey's (decathlon coordinator) suggestion was ignored and the event dragggggggged. With only a single throwing circle the meet could have been moved along with different discus and javelin sections, but wasn't. And so the athletes slogged thru two groups of the discus. For several athletes it took over four hours in which time they competed in a single event.

In fact the time schedule and sections could have been vastly improved using Harvey's suggestions. By the end of the day the athletes were on the field, on average, an

hour longer than was necessary to conduct the meet within the rules.

The first discus group was won by Tomas Kirielius of Kansas State. The Lithuanian junior spun 43.93m/144-1. Felix captured Group 2 with a 2nd round PR 41.51m/136-3 effort to regain the lead.

After Seven: Feli 5730, Barr 5686, Nixø 5680, Hube 5621, Murp 5594.

Pole Vault: [2:30-4:10 pm]

Prentice in Group #2 and Grzesiak in Group #1 were no height victims.

In Group #2, the east pit-- the designation would have made more sense had we called it south—Marcus Nilsson, 21, a UCLA soph from Malmo, Sweden and Jeff Mohl, 20, the Big Sky champ from Montana State, ruled. Both managed 4.80m/15-9. Yet the real story in the group was the 4.60m/15-1 3rd attempt PR clearance by Felix which put him, given his skill in the succeeding event, in the driver's seat.



Gonzalo Barroilhet, 25, Santiago, Chile, won the vault at Drake at 5.30m/17-4 ½ but was stymied at the MR 5.40m



In Group #1(the top seeded section), the vaulting was particularly good as six were still at it at 5.00m/16-4¾. Four managed 5.10m/16-8¾: Lazas, Barroilhet, Cato and Northern Iowa's Dan Gooris. The later three all got over 5.20m/17-¾, and Barroilhet cleared 5.30m/17-4½ on his first attempt. The effort moved him into 2nd place (he was 13th at the break), just four points behind Barrefors. For a moment

this became a tongue-tying Barroilhet and Barrefors exercise. The former had a trio of close efforts at a meet record 5.40m/17-8½.

After Eight: Barr 6596, Gonz 6592, Feli 6520, Laza 6480, Nixo 6470.

Javelin: [5:30 and 6:30-701 pm]

In Group #1 Martin's 64.16m/210-6 career best moved him into contention. Barroilhet speared 54.85m/179-11 to hold into the overall clubhouse lead for the first group, Thomas FitzSimons/Mt St Mary's also PR'd here at 55.77m/182-11.

Yet it was action of Group #2 that decided this meet. This was Felix's specialty and he did not disappoint, although he hardly took a warm-up toss. Needing just 60.31m/197-10 to move back to the overall lead he chucked 62.57m/205-3 in round #1, 68.54m/224-10 in round #2 and a near PR 69.36m/227-7in round #3 to sew up the gold medal. Pac-12 champ Dakotah Keys/Oregon made some noise here with a nice 61.37m/201-4 toss. Everything after 1st place was up for grabs now but Felix had already put this one away.

After Nine: Feli 7400, Gonz 7253, Mart 7233, Laza 7219, Barr 7191.

1500m: [7:50 pm]

No better testament can be found for running the entire field in a single race than the 1500 meters here at Drake. The large field rationale is simply to give the decathletes someone to run with in those middle laps where they so often appear to be treading water. Inexperienced middle distance runners need company and a large field provides a competitive environment. And so it was that 20 went to the starting line at Drake and, when the dust settled, 12 recorded lifetime bests. 60% of the field PR'd.

Although there was an early breakaway led by Thomas FitzSimons, Marcus Nilsson and Isaac Murphy the real story was in the peloton where the pack raced for place. Only 6 ½ seconds separated places 2-3-4 (Barroilhet, Martin and Lazas), and they spent 3¾ laps jockeying, surging and sprinting to the line. In

the end Martin moved to 2nd by a single point over Lazas (7956-7955) with Barroilhet another 3 points back. And all three recorded lifetime best 1500m clockings. So too did six (!) others in the 4:27 to 4:42 range. Jay Cato, for example, cut off 13 seconds from his lifetime best.

Almost overlooked was the race up front, won by FitzSimons in a fine 4:1081, with Nilsson (4:18.01) and Murphy (4:21.01) also getting career bests. This year featured no Detmer-Beach-Klechlike performance, but it has become clear that we are in new decathlon era where decathletes no longer can afford to dawdle in the final event. In all a dozen had PRs here! And two others were close. As for Kurt Felix, he just kept a wary eye on his competition and did not drift too far in arrears. His final clocking was modest 4:42.93, but it was all that he needed for the title. The 3000 Iowa spectators were appreciative

A note to meet directors/referees...run them all together. The timing system can certainly handle the numbers. To the Drake organazzi, well done.

After Ten: Feli 8062, Mart 7956, Laza 7955, Gonz 7952, Nixo 7892.

Nixon -7892 new American Junior Record

Overlooked in the wild finish was the final score posted by 19 year old Gunnar Nixon, the Arkansas freshman from Edmond, OK. He too PR'd in the 1500m (4:30.41) and had another career best in the hurdles. His final 7892 score broke the official AmJrR of 7703 by teammate Kevin Lazas ('11 SEC) and the unofficial higher 7802, also by Lazas at the '11 NAAs that was negated b/c of a 3 day meet.

The mark by Nixon also qualified him for the US Olympic Trials but he has indicated that he'll compete at the USA Jr champs a week earlier hoping for a spot on the World Junior team. He turned 19 in January.





Results:

6/6-7 43rd NCAA I Champs, Drake U, Des Moines, IA

8062	Felix, Kurt/Boise St-GRN	10.90+3.0
740-2.4	1308 205 48.77 15.01+1.4 4151 460 6936 4:42.93	
7956	Martin, Romain/UT-Arlington-FRA	11.13+0.4
670-0.9	1338 205 49.08 14.60+1.4 4074 490 6416 4:33.29	
7955	Lazas, Kevin/Arkansas	11.05+0.4
733-0.4	1409 199 51.34 15.12+0.9 4071 510 6009 4:31.03	
7952	Barroilhet, Gonzalo/Florida St-CHI	11.09+0.4
673-1.3	1377 196 49.82 14.04+1.2 4293 530 5485 4:37.04	
7892	Nixon, Gunnar/Arkansas	10.93+3.0
725-1.4	1373 205 48.92 14.51+1.0 3648 460 5612 4:30.41	
7823	Nilsson, Marcus/UCLA-SWE	11.12+3.2
691-0.4	1276 202 49.69 15.24-0.6 4240 480 5645 4:18.01	
7818	Murphy, Isaac/Texas	10.76+0.4
708 0.0	1294 190 48.20 14.66+1.0 4065 480 4877 4:21.01	
7769	Barrefors, Bjorn/Nebraska-SWE	10.93+3.2
726-0.1	1326 199 50.37 14.54+1.0 4306 490 5248 4:56.87	
7746	Olson, Petter/Texas-SWE	11.08+0.4
696-0.7	1251 193 48.45 14.58+1.0 4129 490 5475 4:36.26	
7629	Gooris, Dan/N Iowa	11.31+3.2
636-2.5	1376 193 50.27 15.11-0.6 4265 520 5269 4:27.81	
7616	Huber, Nick/Cornell	10.91+3.0
687-2.3	1406 196 48.15 14.80+1.4 4084 440 4525 4:29.99	
7559	Keys, Dakotah/Oregon	11.14+3.2
677+0.2	1184 199 50.15 15.30-0.6 3724 480 6137 4:30.70	
7547	FitzSimons, Thomas/MtStMarys	11.02+3.0
658-2.0	1212 187 48.70 15.20+0.9 3847 460 5577 4:10.81	
7492	Cato, Japheth/Wisconsin	11.03+0.4
725-0.5	1132 190 47.93 14.17+1.2 3105 520 4381 4:42.67	
7458	Nickles, Heath/Ohio State	11.34+3.2
634-1.8	1416 181 49.88 15.08+0.9 3838 520 5642 4:38.67	
7446	Chaney, Clayton/Rice	11.09+3.0
695-0.5	1318 193 49.78 14.47+1.2 3807 410 5712 4:40.00	
7414	Mohl, Jeff/Montana St	10.99+0.4
661-1.0	1098 199 48.61 15.01+1.4 3575 480 5160 4:33.66	
7033	Kirielius, Tomas/Kansas St-LTH	11.14+3.2
632 0.0	1286 190 49.91 15.53+0.9 4393 390 5946 5:10.20	
6650	Prentice, Terry/Arkansas	10.94+3.0
716-1.0	1242 199 49.84 14.33+1.2 3634 nh 4937 4:58.59	
6614	Grzesiak, Dave/Wisconsin	11.32+3.2
669-0.4	1348 205 49.56 15.08-0.6 3742 nh 4977 4:42.73	
dnf	York, Richard>New Mexico	11.28+0.4
646+0.8	1176 nh withdrew	
dnf	Szmanda, Jack/Minnesota	11.42+3.0
609-3.1	1336 inj withdrew	
dnf	Waruch, Jake/Connecticut	20.82+3.0
inj	withdrew	
dns	Masterson, Derek/UCSB	did not start
24s,20f		

What's Next for the Foreign Collegians?

The half dozen foreign collegians who competed at the NCAAs will have a busy 2012 summer. At the present it appears that:

a...Felix/GRN and Barroilhet/CHI will represent their nations at the London Olympic games in early August.

b...Martin/FRA and the trio of Swedes: Barrefors, Olson and now Nilsson will compete at the European Championships in Helsinki in late June.

DECA CLAN TO GATHER

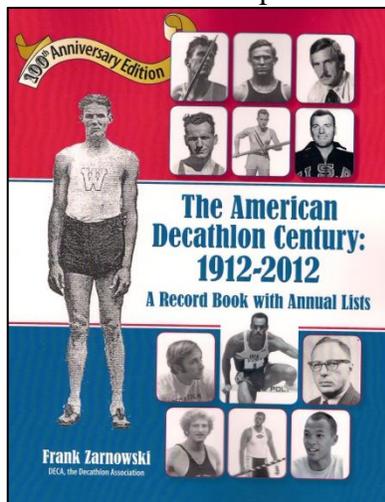
For those former decathletes attending the US Olympic Trials, be reminded that there will be an unofficial gathering of the decathlon nation at noon, June 24, 2012 at the University of Oregon Art (Jordan Schnitzer) Museum. It is located in the middle of the UofO campus, a 3 block walk from Hayward Field.



The Museum will have a display of US decathlon history and be open for the duration of the Trials. June 24 is the day after the decathlon competition at the US Trials so our Olympic team will have been selected. My thinking here is that there will be so many former decathletes and coaches at the Trials that they should get together at least once, if just to tell lies about past success. We should all meet at one time and one place, if only to congratulate the new Olympic team members and raise a toast to 'ol Jim Thorpe. No formal program, just a reunion of sorts.

NEW DECATHLON RECORD BOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE

The American Decathlon Century: 1912-2012, A Record Book with Annual Lists, has just been delivered from the printers. This 100th anniversary edition is the ultimate US decathlon record-



book with very deep annual lists for each year of the past century. An extensive record section and thumbnail photos of 500 USA decathletes is provided. As America celebrates its 100 years of decathlon success, nationally and internationally, you won't want to be without this reference book. If you ever had a historical or statistical question about the US decathletes, it is answered here.

This is the definitive record book, covering every year, every significant US decathlete and every even remotely important US decathlon meet, for a century.

*The American Decathlon Century: 1912-2012,
A Record Book with Annual Lists*

By Frank Zarnowski
528 pages. [8½ x 11]

Published by DECA, The Decathlon Association, 2012
ISBN: 0-9768358-1-9

HOW TO ORDER:

Price: \$40 US
Euro

-for US residents: add \$5.50 for shipping & handling
-for non USA residents, add \$ 10.00 for shipping and handling.

Note: I tried to keep the price down, but the book has over 500 pages and weighs over 5 pounds. 200 copies are available.

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