

# THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

## DECA Newsletter

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## BREEZY TEXAS RELAYS

### Nixon's 7524 Breaks Prep Record

**Hello Again.....**April's 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend brought big (and very windy) scores in Texas and a new high school record at the Arcadia (CA) prep meet.

Let's tackle the Texas Relays first. The winds were so favorable in Austin on April 5/6 that the top 11 finishers achieved career best scores, some by as much as 600 points. Seven will likely benefit with NCAA I qualifications. Using the new IAAF wind guidelines for records, every score in Texas was wind-aided. Cal senior Mike Morrison rode the breezes to a 118 point PR 7921, turning back, among others, 7 in-state collegians. His sprint (10.65), long jump (7.41m/24-3¾) and hurdles (14.72) were all lifetime bests. The 2010 NCAA runner-up stamped himself as one of June's favorites.

54 points back was Texas-Arlington's new French soph, Romain Martin, who had made a splash at the NCAA indoor affair. Matt Johnston, Sam Houston State (7686), Texas' Issac Murphy (7681), Thomas Fitzsimons of Mt St Mary's (7607), Wesley Bray of Houston (7571), Kenny Greaves of Texas (7454) all recorded eye-opening PR totals. Murphy added 670 points to his PR, Martin 600+, Johnson 400, and so on. When Murphy opened the meet with a 10.47 (+3.6mps) dash the table was set. Indeed, ten athletes PR'd in the dash alone.

Given the spectacular depth improvement of collegiate CEventers during the recently concluded indoor season, it may



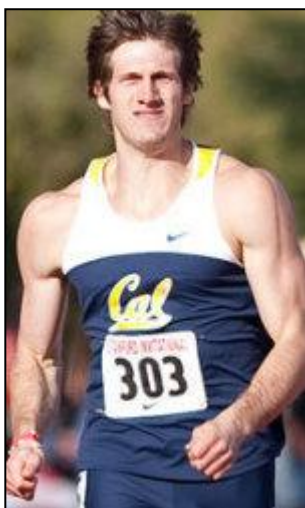
**Gunnar Nixon, (left) a 6-3 Oklahoma prep senior, removed Curtis Beach as the prep record holder with international implements.**



take as much as 7450 points to gain entry to the NCAA outdoor meet in Des Moines. Only two other meets netted 7k efforts. UCLA's Dominic Giovannoni won the Rafer Johnson/JJK meet at UCLA's Drake Stadium with a 7192 total. And Sam Schur posted a PR 7292 mark at the Mid-Major Challenge on his home track, Hornet Stadium at Sacramento St. In all past seasons a like score would earn a trip to the D-I nationals. That's very doubtful this season.

The weekend's real story came at the Arcadia (CA) prep decathlon where tall (6-3) and talented Gunnar (pronounced 'gunner') Nixon, Santa Fe HS, Edmond, OK, went after a pair of Curtis Beach's prep records. A year ago his winning 7573 was eye-opening. Meet

organizers, ala Beach's '09 record assault at the Great SouthWest meet, willingly arranged to have Nixon, a senior, also take 3 shot and disc tosses with the international weights and run a set of 42' hurdles. Specifically Nixon, an Arkansas signee, was after two high school records held by Beach:



Cal senior Mike Morrison, Chesapeake, VA, (left), notched up his PR score to 7921 on the way to a Texas Relays victory.



7909 score with prep implements and 7466 point total with the international ones. Now here is where it gets complicated. During the long jump his 7.36m/24-1¾ was aided by a 4.4mps gust and had to be discounted for record purposes. For the record challenge his 2<sup>nd</sup> best leap, 7.14m/23-5¼, with a 1.4mps wind, had to be used. Now, on to the next event where it gets even more complicated. With seasonal practice throws, using the 12 lb ball, exceeding 50', he promptly fouled three times ruining any chance at the prep record with the lighter implements. His 16lb effort netted a nice 12.14m/39-10 so the challenge to Beach's 7466 was still on. Gunnar followed with a disappointing 2.02m/6-7½ high jump, 4 inches lower than his '10 Arcadia meet, mark and 5 inches (2.15m/7-½) PR. No matter, he blasted a career best 48.37 to end day one with a 4075 international score. But he still trailed the prep competition. Gunnar started day #2 with a 14.35 '39 inch hurdle victory, then followed with a 14.60 '42 mark, winning both races. He was cavalier

about his prep discus but got 35.38m/116-1 2kg discus. And, even though his own vaulting poles had not arrived, he just missed a PR on lighter sticks, getting 4.40m/14-5. Not only was the record chase on, but he also had a chance to even win the prep meet in spite of a 1<sup>st</sup> day zero.

A solid 52.00m/170-7 allowed him to coast in the final event. "I could have run a lot faster, if needed," he would say later. His 4:39.64 clocking gave him *three* final scores. With prep implements his 7036 score was enough to win the meet over Kevin Neilsen's 6928. His 7577 total was wind aided, but nonetheless, qualified him (provisional standard) for the USA *senior* champs. And his 7524 was a new national high school record with legal wind. What an effort.

#### Gunnar Nixon's Winning Score(s) at Arcadia:

7036	winning prep score, hs implements
7577 <sub>w</sub>	wind aided international score
7524	new record with int implements

Nixon revealed that he'll tackle the record using high school implements at May's Great Southwest meet in Albuquerque. Afterword, it is uncertain whether he'll compete in the USA junior or senior nationals in Eugene.



UCLA grad and 1960 Olympic champ Rafer Johnson (left) congratulates Dominic Gionvannoni, a UCLA soph (right) at Ducky Drake Stadium.