

# THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

## DECA Newsletter

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## MORRISON, BEACH, MOSS SHINE ...in 3 day, rain delayed NCAA



**Hello Again...**The focus of day two at the 42<sup>nd</sup> NCAA decathlon in Des Moines, IA, was the weather. Severe thunderstorms struck central Iowa over night accompanied by heavy rain. The rain was intermittent all morning and played havoc with a noon start time for the 110m hurdles. Lightning strikes in the region were frequent so at 11:30 am the meet went into 'rain delay.' By 11:40 it was pouring! Every computer in Duncan Stadium was tuned to weather radar maps. The decathlon never did finish on the second day as scheduled as severe weather played havoc with the Des Moines area and for safety reasons (lots of lightening!) it was completed on Friday morning (a 3 day meet). When the dust settled Cal senior Mike Morrison had a well deserved 8118 PR victory becoming the 4<sup>th</sup> athletes in Cal history to win this meet. His current coach, Ed Miller, was the first, in 1976. His school record mark erased Chris Huffins from the Cal record books.

Morrison, 23, Chesapeake, VA, survived a dramatic last event attempt by Duke freshman Curtis Beach to seize the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual NCAA decathlon crown. Beach electrified a small crowd on Friday morning with the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest 1500m on record, 3:59.13 and came within 34 points of the win. And Clemson senior Miller Moss endured a coaching decision that required him to run the 4x400 relay 5 minutes before the 1500 meters costing him a chance at 8000 points. This was one fine meet and much of the credit goes to meet referee Rex Harvey who stewarded the



California's Mike Morrison, Chesapeake, VA, became the 4<sup>th</sup> bear to capture the NCAA decathlon. The first, Ed Miller, won in 1976 and then coached the other three.

athletes over 3(!) days of violent weather. Here's what happened:

**NCAA I Champs**  
**Jim Duncan Stadium**  
**Drake University**  
**Des Moines, IA**  
**June 8-9, 2011**



**110m hurdles:** [2:00-2:33 pm]

After a 2 hour rain delay the event started at 2 pm. and the track was still wet. I have never been a fan of the NCAA procedure of running the hurdle race in non adjacent lanes. The 24 athletes were drawn into 8(!) sections (all using only lanes 2,4 and 6) and, although the seeding was excellent, it made for a verrrrry long event with little presentation value. It took 33 minutes to get

thru all 8 races. The order of the races themselves was also random (I prefer the IAAF practice of running slowest to fastest). The first race featured Washington's Jeremy Taiwo, Ca's Mike Morrison and Florida's Gray Horn, all contenders. Horn took over after the 5<sup>th</sup> hurdle and raced to a 14.32 clocking while Morrison nipped Taiwo at the tape for 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The featured (top seeded) section was next and had 1<sup>st</sup> day leader Miller Moss/Clemson, who had a seasonal best of 13.81. Run into a 0.4mps headwind, Moss, nevertheless continued his hot pace just edging David Klech 14.10 to 14.11. Warhorse Mo Cleve was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 14.55.



**Clemson's Miller Moss led until the javelin and here ran a terrific 14.10 hurdle race.**

Georgia's Tommy Barrineau won the 3<sup>rd</sup> race (15.29) and Isaac Murphy/Texas posted a huge PR (14.65 with +1.0 mps wind) to capture the 4<sup>th</sup> race.

The question in the 5<sup>th</sup> section was whether the weather would cool off hot Curtis Beach of Duke. It didn't and he ran a fine 14.76, one tenth behind Carolina's Mateo Sossah.

The 6<sup>th</sup> race was a virtual dead heat illustrating the advantage of seeding. Romain Martin, (by virtue of his lanky frame, edged Cornell's Nick Huber and Matt Johnson of Sam Houston State... 14.94-14.98-14.99. The seeding was terrific.

Air Force cadet Noah Palicia withdrew overnight leaving only two

competitors in the 7<sup>th</sup> race. This is one of the real disadvantages of running non-adjacent lanes.....and Lars Rise was lonely in his 15.23 win. The final section went to 18 year old Arkansas frosh Kevin Lazas in a PR 15.29, and it appeared he was well on his way in upping his own American junior record. Michael Ayers/Georgia struggled here, clocking just 15.57 and fell from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> overall.

### **Moss, Beach Hurdle touchdowns**

	Moss	split	Beach	split
1 <sup>st</sup> hurdle	2.46		2.68	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3.68	1.22	3.89	1.21
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.89	1.21	5.02	1.13
4 <sup>th</sup>	5.90	1.01	6.10	1.08
5 <sup>th</sup>	6.95	1.05	7.33	1.23
6 <sup>th</sup>	8.05	1.10	8.44	1.11
7 <sup>th</sup>	9.16	1.11	9.58	1.14
8 <sup>th</sup>	10.26	1.10	10.78	1.20
9 <sup>th</sup>	11.33	1.07	11.92	1.14
10 <sup>th</sup>	12.54	1.21	13.20	1.28
Finish	14.10	1.56	14.76	1.56

*After Six: Moss 5233, Beac 5085, Horn 5057, Morr 5051*

**Discus:** [3:07 – 4:06 pm]

The two previously flights were combined and athletes had to wade thru wet grass to get to the South cage. That dragged a lot of water into the throwing circle causing some slipping in round one. Conditions were so slippery that only 3 attempts (out of 23) even surpassed 40 meters and seven fouls were recorded. Beach slipped badly on his first effort and his plate floated just 30.10m/98-9. David Klech was not so lucky and he simply slid out of the circle.

The circle began to dry out by round #2. Ayers (41.04m/134-8) scared his PR. Matt Johnson took his time in round #2 and gunned a 45.68m/149-0 toss, but still well below his best. Moss's 39.08m/128-2, 5 feet under his best, was significant.

Morrison nailed 41.82m/137-2, a career best in round #3 to place himself

squarely in the gold medal hunt, while Moss fouled. Klech was the victim of a controversial call losing a fine throw. The event was won on the very last toss, by Swede Bjorn



Missouri's determined Lars Rise completed a fine collegiate career placing 4<sup>th</sup> with a PR 7942. Johansson/Akron, who PR'd with a 48.24m/158-3 effort. In all, 17 fouls of the 69 attempts.

*After Seven: Moss 5879, Morr 5753, Beach 5710, Horn 5663.*

**Pole Vault:** [5:42 – 7:14 pm]

The weather had cleared enough that officials decided to vault outside. The top vaulters were grouped into Flight #2, the South pit where Tommy Barrineau immediately no heighted.

Horn and Moss both equaled career bests at 4.90m/16- $\frac{3}{4}$  and Morrison managed 5.00m/16- $\frac{4}{4}$ . The pit was won by Ayers at 5:10m/16- $\frac{8}{4}$  amid changing wind direction.

Vaulting in the north pit took much longer and the competition was won by Johansson again at 4.90m/16- $\frac{3}{4}$ . Yet the story here was the 20 year old Beach who came to des Moines with a career best of 4.70m/15-5. He calmly made 4.50m, 4.60m, 4.70m and a PR 4.80m/15-9, all on first attempts. He too was in the gold medal hunt. In all, 13 different bars, 179 attempts and 69 clearances. Moss's lead was down to 96 points.

*After Eight: Moss 6759, Morr 6663, Ayer 6578, Beach 6559.*

**Javelin:**[7:50 – 8:25 pm Thurs //

10:30 – 10:52 am Fri]

Given forecasts of an impending thunderstorm officials moved the javelin smarty hoping to finish the event before the rains came. The athletes cooperated and the event progressed quickly but luck ran out. With Lars Rise leading at 61.90m/203-1 the event was halfway completed when lightning strikes were seen close by and meet officials shut down the meet, sending athletes, coaches and officials to the adjacent field house and spectators to nearby dormitories. By this time Morrison (60.47m/198-4) had moved past Moss (48.91m/163-5) and into the lead. Beach recorded a career best at 48.42m/158-11 then passed his final 2 tries.

The rain and lightening was as impressive as the decathlon competition and seemed to let up on occasion and then return with a vengeance. At 11:00 pm, after 2½ hours of waiting for the weather to clear (it never did) everyone was sent home and the meet resumed the next morning.

Neither Moss nor Morrison improved on Friday morning but Missouri senior Lars Rise did, first at 65.60m/215-3 and then ended the event with a 68.12m/223-5 strike to improve his scoring chances.

*After Nine: Morr 7408, Moss 7345, Ayer 7272, Rise 7205.*

**1500 meters:** [11:30 am]

A "crowd" of approximately 400 watched the resumption of the 4x400m relays and was aghast when Miller Moss was required to run the anchor for the Clemson team at 11:24 pm. He strided thru a 51.2 last lap and continued around the corner to the head of the backstretch where the decathletes were mustering for the 1500m. He had exactly 5 minutes to rest before the gun off again and this coaching decision travesty cost him a chance at 8000 points. Moss is so talented that 8000 will come, soon and often, but it was the first time (and hopefully last) that I ever saw someone run a 51.2 quarter 5 minutes before his 1500m!!! Can you imagine.



**Curtis Beach, Duke's redshirt frosh, electrified the Drake crowd with a near WR 3:59.13 1500m, moving from 6<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> in the process.**

Ironically, 3 others also had a legit chance to score over 8000 for the first time in their respective careers (Morrison needed a time of 4:54; Beach 4:10; Moss 4:44.1 and Ayers 4:32).

The referee Rex Harvey cleverly scheduled a single section. This should be standard procedure for important meets and all 23 started on the backstretch with Moss breathing heavily. The race shaped up exactly as expected with Beach towing Oregon senior David Klech and the field thru in 64 flat for 400.

### Curtis Beach's 1500m splits

3 laps to go:	47.5
400m	64.0
2 laps to go	1:50
800m	2:09
1 lap to go	2:56
1200m	3:15
Finish:	3:59.13



Everyone else took their cue from Curtis and no one dallied. As a matter of fact this was the first race in years where the entire field ran under 5 minutes.

Beach towed David Klech for 800 meters but the Oregon senior could not hold the pressured pace. When Beach passed 1100 meters in 2:56 everyone knew this race was something special. Needing something under 64 seconds to become the 2<sup>nd</sup> ever to break 4 minutes (a score of 7000+ is necessary for this list) he gunned it around the curve and down the back straight. Coming off the turn he was running in sand but no one is better at maintaining form than Curtis and he struggled to the finish keeping an eye on the infield clock. **3:59.13!! Wow!** Robert Baker's WR would survive (but not for long). Beach moved from 6<sup>th</sup> place to 2<sup>nd</sup> because Morrison was not content to just score over 8000 and ran a competent 4:35.35 for the 8118 victory. Beach had made up all but 36 of the 288 point differential after nine events.

Virtually unnoticed was David Klech who in a pre Detmer/Beach era would have stood out. He raced to a 4:06.72 clocking, a time only ever bettered by 3 Americans (Baker, Beach and Detmer) and # 10 on the all-time list. Hardly anyone noticed his race.

Athletes streamed in... Rise, Murphy, Lazas, Huber (by 20 seconds!), FitzSimons and York all PR'd. Ayers could not hold the pace a faltered nut, to his credit Moss tried... and tried... and tried. He was running in sand himself down the final straightaway and his legs nearly buckled. He needed 4:44.13 for an 8k score and.....he.....nearly.....made it.....4:44.71 and the final tally was a tantalizing 7996. Oh so close. Not to worry... Miller is one brave athlete and there may be few times in his future that his scores do not begin with an "8."

### Top Pre-Beach 1500's

3:58.7	Robert Baker	Hi Plains TC/USA Texas R, Austin,4/3/80 [7479]
3:59.13	Curtis Beach	Duke/USA NCAA I, Des Moines 6/10/11 [8084]
4:00.51	Herbert Peter	Germany Bernhausen 7/30/78 [7127]
4:00.8	Vladimir Kuznetsov	USSR Zhitomir 8/25/73 [7028]
4:03.7	John Gamble	Canada Ottawa 8/21/76 [7021]
4:04.1	Dietmat Jentsch	Germany Erfurt 6/16/79 [7416]
4:04.11	Joe Detmer	Wisconsin/USA NCAA I, Sacramento 6/7/07[7963]
4:05.91	Leonid Litvinyenko	USSR Olympic G, Munich,9/8/72[7970]

#### Notes:

I was the PA announcer for the first NCAA I (then known as University Division) in 1970 in the same stadium. Then, as well, we had weather...thunderstorms. Here I was, back in the same spot and mused silently that little had changed in 41 years.

I was dazzled at how well most of the field competed....8 of the first ten produced lifetime best scores in spite of all of the rain and delays. It took a 7838 score here to place! Curtis Beach improved his career best by 541 points. Others, too, were up by several hundred points. Ten scored over 7800 (the most ever). The only weather delay casualty was Arkansas frosh Kevin Lazas, 18, who surpassed his own recent American Junior Record of 7703 by 99 point here. But the 3 day meet will rule out the acknowledgment of the record. Regardless, it was a heckuva' performance. I am sure that all the totals, even thought the final scores may not count for qualifying at say, the IAAF world champs, will be considered just fine for meets like the USA nationals and next year's US Olympic Trials (since we are now within the OT qualifying window). I consider them so b/c I was on the field for 2 days and there was no athlete' advantage of stretching this meet out. In fact these athletes were all at a scoring

disadvantage with all of the weather delays. And the weather, even it is Iowa, is something that cannot be controlled.

The number of athletes with injured elbows is disturbing. A wacky sight during the javelin was tall Jeremy Taiwo, with an injured right elbow, tossing the javelin left handed...he managed 36.19m/118-9.

Kip Janvrin, whose name is synonymous with the Drake Relays decathlon (he won 15 times here between 1987 and 2005) made the award presentations.

There was, in a sense, some redemption going on in the 1500 meters. Maybe only I recall that 39 years ago burly Russian Leonid Litvinyenko used a dramatic 4:05.91 at the Munich Olympic Games to deprive former Drake winner and favorite Jeff Bennett/Oklahoma Christian of an Olympic medal. Bennett had been mistakenly placed in the wrong 1500m section and was not given the opportunity to race with the leaders in Munich. It narrowly cost him a medal. Beach's performance at Drake Stadium removed the Soviet as the highest scorer ever with a fast 1500m time.



### Final Results:

#### 6/8-9-10 42<sup>nd</sup> NCAA I Champs, Drake U, Des Moines, IA

8118	Morrison, Mike/California	10.66+2.8	752+0.8
	1300 187 48.06 14.48+1.8	4182 5006047	4:35.35
8084	Beach, Curtis/Duke	10.78+1.6	736-1.1
	1208 202 46.90 14.76+0.4	3807 480 480	3:59.13
7996	Moss, Miller/Clemson	10.58+2.8	724+1.6
	1359 199 47.23 14.10-0.4	3908 490 4981	4:44.71
7942	Rise, Lars/Missouri	11.16+1.8	706+0.1
	1565 193 49.77 15.23 0.0	4095 460 6812	4:31.23
7914	Horn, Gray/Florida	10.71+2.8	743+1.4
	1261 199 49.42 14.32+1.8	3713 490 5232	4:2945
7903	Ayers, Michael/Georgia	10.66+2.8	754-0.8
	1329 196 49.58 15.57 0.0	4104 510 5705	4:48.04
7870	Sossah, Mateo/North Carolina	11.38+1.8	720+1.5
	1300 205 49.40 14.66+0.4	4024 470 5605	4:19.72
7838	Cleve, Moritz/Kansas St	10.94+1/8	678+0.6
	1441 190 48.41 14.55-0.4	4178 470 5609	4:30.46
7806	Murphy, Isaac/Texas	10.57+2.8	722+1.0
	1254 184 48.28 14.65+1.0	4218 4605253	4:26.49
7802	Lazas, Kevin/Arkansas	10.96+1.6	739+1.7
	1315 196 50.58 15.29 0-0	4046 490 5878	4:36.34
7727	Martin, Romain/Tex-Arlington	10.91+2.8	717+0.1

1325 199 49.48 14.94+0.5 3858 470 5896 4:46.00  
 7651 Barrefors, Bjorn/Nebraska 11.04+1.8 730+1.6  
 1358 202 50.10 14.57+1.0 4080 480 4433 4:46.28  
 7586 Huber, Nick/Cornell 11.12+1.6 659+1.9  
 1366 196 48.68 14.98+0.5 4132 470 4875 4:28.96  
 7546 Johnson, Matt/Sam Houston St 10.67+2.8 689+2.3  
 1284 187 49.64 14.99+0.5 4568 460 5387 4:56.50  
 7517 Taiwo, Jeremy/Washington 11.27+1.6 716+1.1  
 1297 208 48.64 14.49+1.8 4180 480 3619 4:34.99  
 7469 Klech, David/Oregon 10.94+2.8 722+1.2  
 1071 205 48.06 14.11-0.4 3040 430 3750 4:06.72  
 7449 Johansson, Bjorn/Akron 11.37+1.8 669+1.9  
 1404 181 50.72 15.44 0.0 4824 490 5677 4:56.70  
 7374 Armstrong, Nick/Long Beach St 11.22+1.8 676  
 +1.1 1391199 50.43 15.21+1.0 4520 430 5123  
 4:54.96  
 7364 FitzSimons, Thomas/Mt St Marys 11.07+1.8  
 677+0.5 1139 181 49.11 15.07+0.4 3899 460 4968  
 4:16.04  
 7343 Greaves, Kenny/Texas 11.33+1.8 652+1.5  
 1291 190 48.58 15.80 0.0 3929 490 4630 4:25.23  
 7253 Adam, Philip/Rice 11.17+1.6 654+1.4  
 1368 193 49.66 15.32-1.1 3908 430 5068 4:39.10  
 7229 York, Richard/New Mexico 10.99+1.6 678+0.6  
 1131 193 49.20 15.95-1.1 3640 400 6159 4:31.07  
 6675 Barrineau, Tommy/Georgia 11.12+1.6 667+0.8  
 1272 202 49.52 15.29-1.1 3749 nh 5577 4:37.97  
 3145 Palacia, Noah/Air Force 11.64+1.8 576+0.7  
 1143 184 53.65 withdrew  
 24s,23f.