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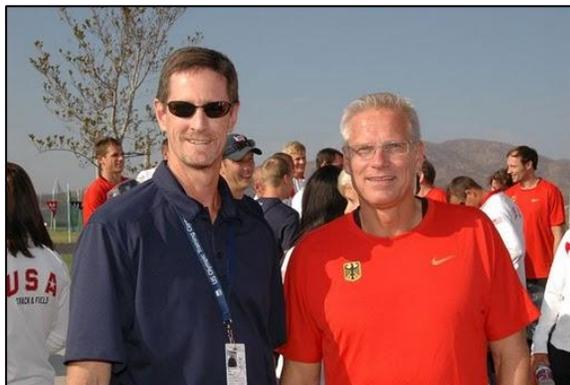
SIMON HECHLER WINS THORPE CUP German Team Upsets Americans

Hello Again....It was going to be oh, so close. The USA team had stormed back during day two of the Thorpe Cup to overcome a 307 point first day deficit. By the end of the 8th event, the pole vault, Team USA was back in to the lead by 65 points. Yet there was a stretch of a few minutes during the early heights of the pole vault that proved decisive.

In the south pit sturdy thrower Mattias Prey, 23, the '07 European Junior champ, was struggling with a pair of misses at his opening height of 4.01m/13-1 ³/₄. On the adjoining north pit American Mat Clark, 24, the Drake Relays winner, was also having his troubles at his opening height of 4.31m/14-1 ³/₄. In the space of just a few minutes the fate of the team competition was decided as Prey scraped over to save a good score while Clark nudged the bar off to negate one. Prey eventually finished 4th with a fine 7827 total, a figure which certainly would have been superseded by Clark who, in spite of a severe ankle sprain during the 400m, was fashioning a PR score, somewhere above 7900.

To compound matters Miller Moss, 23, the NCAA and USA bronze medalist, had all 3 jav tosses land outside the right sector line, and the team battle was *a fait accompli*.

The American team could not overcome a pair of zeros and the Germans had an 870 point victory. The total team scores were still terrific. Germany averaged 7774 points while the USA total would have been good enough to win four earlier Thorpe Cups. It was a heckuva meet. In spite of some presentation problems (lack of seating and I



Interim CEO of USATF Mike McNees (left) congratulates Claus Marek (right), winning coach of Germany's Team Zehnkampf.

can verify that the sound system was woeful), and the naïve placement of athletes in lanes, sections, and pits (how could the best vaulter be placed in the pit with the poorer vaulters and how could the fastest 400m runner be placed in the slowest seeded 400 section?) this meet should be returned to the USOC Training Center in Chula Vista because it has too many things going for it, not the least of which are good weather/winds, great facilities and a professional staff. Yet the meet needs to learn the administration and protocol of a CE Team competition. Here is what happened on day 2 of the 18th Thorpe Cup.



**18th Thorpe Cup
USA vs Germany Team Decathlon
USOC Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, CA
August 13-14, 2011**

110 m Hurdles: [noon]

Good weather and nice tail winds greeted the 14 returnees including Mat Clark who had limped away after an ankle injury curtailed his 400m performance the previous evening. He had the track on crutches. But he was back on day two and the medical staff gave him the ok to compete. He promptly ran a hurdle PR (mostly unnoticed since it was 15.55 seconds) in the first section, a race won by Germany's Steffen Fricke in a PR 14.79. In the second race guest Ryan Harlan, prepping for Daegu, led thru 4 barriers but was caught by Miller Moss who went on to clock a nice 14.34, 7/100^{ths} ahead of teammate Nick Adcock. Quick Matt Johnson, a 22 year old junior at Sam Houston State U, was clocked at 14.48 for 3rd as Harlan faded to 5th.

The Yank team ran well enough to halve the German team lead to 152 points.
After Six: Hech 5097, Fric 5033, Moss 4966, Adco 4965.
Team Score: Germany 24,499; USA 24,347: - 152.



Nick Adcock (l) used a 125-9 discus toss to stay in contention.

Discus: [12:46 – 1:35 pm]

Both teams and 3 guests were formed into a single group. Athletes threw from the northeast corner on the adjacent field with a right quartering wind. A crowd of 150 meandered over to watch under hot conditions.

Ryan Harlan opened with a PR 45.42m/149-0, Ashton Eaton rushed his toss managing 43.30m/142-1 and Tre Hardee landed a 45.48m/149-2 line drive. Among the scorers Mattias Prey immediately PR'd at 49.46m/162-3. In round #2 Mat Clark PR's at 43.62m/143-0, Harlan PR'd again at 46.04m/151-0, and Eaton soon followed (in one of the best 'slow to fast movements I've seen) at a career best 46.15m/151-5. Hardee too improved to 49.34m/161-10.

There were a trio of stories in the final round. Of the open competitors, Eaton again PR's with a nifty 47.36m/155-4 toss and Hardee's toss wound up two feet outside the right sector line past 51 meters. Dan Kinsey came thru with a fine 46.56m/152-6 'safety toss' after a pair of fouls. And Prey raise his career best again to win at 50.88m/166-10. This was one fine event. The Team Zehnkampf lead bulged to 359 points and appeared insurmountable.

After Seven: Hech 6845, Prey 5748, Fric 5740, Adco 5595.
Team Scores: Germany 28,097; USA 27,738; - 359

Pole Vault: [2:30 – 3:53 pm]

The meet's turning point has been explained earlier.

Decathlon rules require that the bars be raised by ten cm increments, so there are ten possible sets of heights. The bars were naively set at each ten cm ending in "1" because the meet record ended in "0." Look, *this is only an appropriate procedure if anyone has even a remote chance at the meet record*, which, in this case, was 5.30m/17-4½. No one did.



Vault action at the '11 Thorpe Cup.

But what the funny sounding “ones” did do is allow many to attack their career bests, which invariably ended in “zero.” (Note: an earlier in the year study found that 80% of all decathlon meets use the ‘zero’ option, 15% use the “5” option and all other ending digits make up the rest.

Five got PRs: Simon Hechler (4.61m), Max Gilde (4.51m), Lars-Niklas Heinke (4.81m), Mark Jellison (4.81m/15-9¼) and Dan Kinsey (4.91m/16-1¼). Hardee won the event at 5.01m/16-5¼, passed 5.11m/16-9¼, and had a huge but unsuccessful attempt at 5.21m/17-1.

Remarkably, the American team, in spite of Clark’s NH, vaulted so well that they literally vaulted back into the team lead and found themselves with a 65 point lead with two events remaining. Matt Johnson and Miller Moss moved into 3rd and 4th places respectively. 102 attempts, 42 clearances.

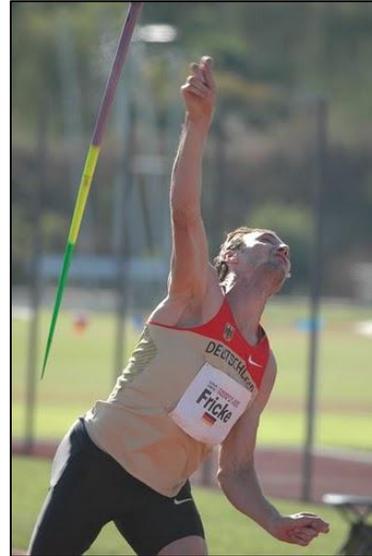
After Eight: Hech 6638, Prey 6424, John 6403, Moss 6377.

Team Scores: USA 31,738, Germany 31,708; diff: +65.

Javelin: [4:55 – 5:30 pm]

The forlorn story of this event was that Miller Moss, who had recently moved from Clemson to Austin, Texas to train with Trey Hardee, had made strides in his javelin technique. Rarely even a 50 meter thrower (PR just 51.70m/169-7) he was just getting the hang of it. When his 3rd consecutive effort landed outside the right sector line (well past

50m incidentally) he was despondent and the team battle was over. Joe Detmer PR’d at 57.20m/187-8, as did a trio of Germans: Gilde, Fricke and Spinner who won the event



Steffen Fricke (left) was one of 3 Germans to PR in the javelin, here getting 58.33/191-4.

at a nifty 6839/221-1. The venue was changed at the last minute to take advantage of the wind, still headed west to east, the same direction as was appropriate for the sprints, hurdles, long jump and vault.. Why this was not ready beforehand is quizzical? Anyone who hangs around Claus Marek knew this was going to be requested. So the meet was delayed while officials readied the west to east javelin approach.

After Nine: Germany 35,491; USA 34,717; -774 points.

1500 Meters: [6:05 pm]

A crowd of 350 remained. Attendance on day two had peaked at 460. The event was anti-climatic. Mat Clark, still running on a swollen ankle, led Joe Detmer thru 2 ¾ laps before the Wisconsin grad took over and ran away in 4:18.69. Clark held off Fricke for 2nd, 4:25.77 to 4:25.91. Detmer, by half a step, had seized 2nd from Fricke by a single point. For Detmer his final tally of 7846 represented a measure of satisfaction after being injured (hamstring) for most of the year. And it likely will get him an invite to next year’s US

Olympic Trials which will ceiling the field at 18 athletes. On the 2nd day he moved from 8th to second overall.

Nick Adcock ran up a consistent 7679 score and fast improving Matt Johnson, the lone undergraduate on the USA team, missed hos PR score by just ten points. For Johnson, it ended an elongated season which began in January. Jellison and Kinsey became official 5 man team scorers after the trouble of Clark and Moss.

After Five: Hech 6058, Detm 7846, Fric 7845, Prey 7827.

Team Scores: Germany 38,870; USA 38,000.

Where are the Collegians??

The 2011 USA team in Chula Vista was without many young collegians (including 6 who had scored over 7800 points at the NCAAs), all of whom chose to truncate their season and not to compete at the USA nationals in Eugene. One would hope that down the road more collegians would continue their season into the summer and take advantage of the Thorpe Cup opportunities.

Notes: The winning total for Germany since 2001. The 38k score for Team USA would have been high enough to win 4 previous Thorpe Cups.

Simon Hechler's 8058 total made him the 65th German to have scored over 8000 points. The USA has 67---including the two new ones of 2011, Mike Morrison and Curtis Beach. Those who feel they should not be included in this 8k list because the scores came at the rain-drenched 3 day NCAAs in Des Moines. In reality those performances/scores would have been higher in a two day-good weather meet. They count! The conditions in Des Moines cost them points, not the other way around.



Final Results

8/13-14 18th Thorpe CuP (USA vs Germany), USOC Training Center, Chula Vista, CA

8058 Hechler, Simon/GER 10.62+1.5 767+2.9 1385 192
49.89 14.56+1.5 4409 461 5818 4:35.39
7846w Detmer, Joe/USA 10.95+1.5 738+2.4 1211 192
49.35 15.07+3.1 4028 481 5720 4:18.69

7845w Fricke, Steffen/GER 11.24+2.1 732+2.4 1422 207
49.26 14.79+3.1 4208 401 5833 4:25.91
7827 Prey, Mattias/GER 11.28+1.1 738+2.0 1620 186
51.00 15.05+1.5 5088 421 5887 4:39.78
7679 Adcock, Nick/USA 11.23+1.1 728+0.8 1352 198
48.95 14.41+1.5 3832 461 5132 4:39.58
7675 Johnson, Matt/USA 10.75+1.5 742+2.0 1200 186
50.59 14.48+1.5 4480 471 5845 5:00.39
7581 Gilde, Maximilan/GER 11.25+1.1 744+3.0 1290 192
50.83 14.83+1.5 3879 451 6555 4:54.63
7559w Spinner, Patrick/GER 11.07+1.1 727+2.6 1365 186
50.27 15.13+3.1 3713 441 6739 4:49.09
7465 Jellison, Matt/USA 11.27+2.1 718+1.8 1368 198
52.56 14.60+1.5 4092 481 5040 4:55.91
7341w Kinsey, Dan/USA 11.91+2.1 669+2.3 1506 192
55.55 15.79+3.1 4656 491 6049 4:45.51
7066 Moss, Miller/USA 10.77+1.5 718+2.6 1369 186
48.64 14.34+1.5 3626 471 nm 4:38.67
7054w Clark, Mat/USA 11.06+1.1 749+2.2 1329 201
51.99 15.55+3.1 4363 nm 6085 4:25.77
6782w Heinke, Lars-Niklas/GER 11.01+1.5 687+3.6 1219
186 50.08 15.06+3.1 4101 481 5440 dnf
6703w Margis, Thorsten/GER 10.93+1.5 715+3.6 1455 186
49.95 16.90+3.1 4368 421 5536 dnf
14s,14f.

Team Scores: Germany 38,870; USA 38,000; diff: -870.