

# THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

## DECA Newsletter

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## EATON IN NCAA THREE-PEAT

### 8457 Sets PR & Meet Record

**Hello Again....**Oregon's popular Ashton Eaton left little doubt about his quest for a record 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive NCAA decathlon title today. From the opening gun to a final 1500m sprint he certified himself as the best collegiate decathlete....ever. From the moment he blasted a meet and collegiate record 13.68 110m hurdles at 10:05 am to the moment he fell just one second short of a CR score in the 1500m, the 22 year old senior from Bend ruled the collegiate decathlon field at the 21<sup>st</sup> NCAA decathlon competition at his home track in Eugene. Consider: his 8457 effort (under some very difficult conditions at times) surpassed his PR by 147 points; was his 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive 8000+ effort, was the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest collegiate score ever (missing Trey Hardee's record by a scant 8 points); was a meet record by nearly 200 points; made him the 9<sup>th</sup> highest US performer all-time; and represented an unprecedented 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive NCAA title. Whew! It was quite a performance. Here's what happened.



**41<sup>st</sup> NCAA Decathlon**  
**Hayward Field, U of Oregon**  
**Eugene, Oregon**  
**June 10-11, 2010**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Day**

**110 m Hurdles:** [10:00 am]

There was no rain on day two but boy was it chilly, in the mid-50's by race time. 23 returned and were grouped into 8(!) races with alternate lanes. Without too much



Every one of the 11,900 fans at Hayward Field understood Ashton Eaton's "O" gesture at the completion of his 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive decathlon title.

editorializing, this is a mistake. I fully understand there may be occasion to leave empty lanes in hurdle races. But it should not happen in a championship meet. More than 3 athletes should compete in each section. With only 3 athletes running in non-adjacent lanes some sections can end up being mere time trials. Only the excellent seeding here precluded much of that happening. But 2010 is not 1972...tracks are wider, hurdlers better, and in championship meets this should not happen. One major issue is time. Running 8 hurdle races takes, on average, about 35 minutes. Waiting 35 minutes after you've been mustered and readied to run helps no one. Enough. And in spite of my diatribe the hurdle races in Eugene were terrific.

Cal's Mike Morrison won the initial race in 14.93, a tick off a lifetime best. The second race drew most of the attention since Eaton had drawn lane 6. He raced to an immediate lead, hit a single hurdle, and with approximately 450 fans in attendance, danced in at 13.68, a new collegiate and meet mark. Robert Robinson/Cal State-Northridge and Nick Adcock/Missouri virtually dead-heated one hurdle length back.



13.68 seconds says it all.....1/100<sup>th</sup> off a second off Dan O'Brien's American record.

### Ashton Eaton 110m Hurdle splits:

	Eaton	
	Touchdown	split
1 <sup>st</sup> hurdle	2.38	2.38
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3.50	1.12
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.61	1.11
4 <sup>th</sup>	5.61	1.00
5 <sup>th</sup>	6.70	1.09
6 <sup>th</sup>	7.68	0.98
7 <sup>th</sup>	8.73	1.05
8 <sup>th</sup>	9.86	1.13
9 <sup>th</sup>	11.06	1.20
10 <sup>th</sup>	12.06	1.00
Final time	13.68	1.62



Touchdowns (lead foot hitting ground after each hurdle) and subsequent splits were hand timed by the author from the infield. Final time is auto and official.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> race was captured by Portland State's Nick Trubachik in 15.12 and the 4<sup>th</sup> by Dan Kinsey in 15.36. Both would fashion terrific 2<sup>nd</sup> day scores (Kinsey 3931!).

Oregon's Marshall Ackley outlegged A&M's Trinity Otto to win the 5<sup>th</sup> race in a near PR 14.86 seconds. The 6<sup>th</sup> race proved tragic. Leading at the 8<sup>th</sup> hurdle Washington's Jeremy Taiwo just could not get his lead leg up in time and went crashing to the track suffering multiple cuts, bruises, scrapes and a concussion. The fall was so violent that he was unconscious for 4 minutes and was able to leave the track (for the local hospital) after eleven minutes. On his way to a huge PR score, he'll be out of commission for the remainder of 2010. Later he observed that "it hurts more to just sit and watch the meet." Kansas State's Moritz Cleve went on to win the race in 14.53. Mateo Sossah won the 7<sup>th</sup> race in 14.83 and Missouri's Lars Rise the 8<sup>th</sup>

in 15.09. The event took 33 minutes. And it was chilly.

*After One: Eato 5516, Otto 5114, Moss 5015, Morr 4869.*

**Discus:** [11:04 am and 12:07 pm]

About 900 spectators (I had plenty of time to count) watched two sections under breezy and warming conditions (mid-60s.). Section #1 (lower seeded throwers) was won by Morrison in 39.73m/130-4 in round #1. When rangy and talented Miller Moss/Clemson, fouled for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time in round three, he also tossed away a terrific score. He protested immediately but the replays showed conclusively that the circle foul came late, on the reverse. Appeal denied. To his credit he hunkered down and completed the meet.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> flight Rice's Philip Adam opened with a major PR (42.39m/139-0) on the very first toss. Rise opened with a nice 45.69m/149-11 but Kinsey responded immediately with a 47.96m/157-3 rocket that had the crowd on its feet. Eaton opened with a tentative 39.27m/128-10 effort, then improved in round #2 with 41.71m/136-10. Kinsey's PR in round #3 won the event at 48.89m/160-5. The final thrower, Swede Bjorn Johansson/Akron, lost a big toss due to a circle foul.

*After Two: Eato 6215, Otto 5781, Rise 5535, Morr 5528.*

**Pole Vault:** [1:15 pm]

The day, although breezy, had turned into a postcard. There was an immediate bit of drama in flight #(south pit) where Duck Marshall Ackley opened the event at 4.30m/14-1¼. On his plant he felt a ‘pop’ in his left hamstring and a hush came over the 3000 fans as he lay in the pit, face down. Having recorded near PRs in the day’s first two events and with his best three events remaining it appeared he’d top the USA national qualifier of 7500 points and score a team point or two for Oregon. An aborted attempt at 4.40m/14-5 ¼ seemed to be the last the crowd would see of him. Yet one has to know Marshall. He refused to drop out, eschewed medical treatment and advice and insisted on staying on the infield. I must say that a pall seemed to settle over the event and the normally raucous crowd was, well, respectful.

Eaton opened at 4.50m/14-9 successfully then took 3 attempts to clear 4.70m/15-5. He just appeared out of rhythm and would go no higher. The chances for a new collegiate record were slipping away even though Ashton had a lock on the gold medal. His lead was nearly 500 points. Carolina’s Dan Keller and Cal’s Mike Morrison won the event 90 minutes later at 4.90m/16-¾, the lowest winning height for this meet in a decade. For some reason the pizzazz, like a deflated balloon, went out of the event.

In Flight #2 (north pit) Sean Smith/UConn equaled his PR of 4.20m/13-9 ¼ and a surging Nick Trubachik, who may have brought most of Estacada, Oregon with him to Eugene, PR’d at 4.40m/14-5¼. But the results were well below expectations for the remainder of the field and the competition abruptly ended when neither Moritz Cleve of Kansas State nor Lars Rise/Missouri could negotiate 4.70m/15-5.

*After Three: Eato 7034, Otto 654, Morr 6438, Rise 6325.*

**Javelin:** [4:10 pm]

The crowd grew to “sellout” (11,972) but a good deal of the javelin competition got lost within the remainder of the meet. In the first flight (lowers seeded throwers) a pair of Big-10ers, Dave Grzesiak /Wisconsin and Frank Shotwell/Michigan managed PR’s (53.52m/175-7 and 52.82m/ 173-4) in round #3. Nick Adcock won the group with a 54.07m/177-4 effort and Eaton scared his PR with a 52.41m/171-10 effort.



**Trinity Otto(l) and Mike Morrison (r) produced a tight battle for 2<sup>nd</sup>.**



The second group saw another PR by Trubachik (62.45m/204-11) and another by surging Dan Kinsey/Akron (62.03m/203-6). Boise’s Kurt Felix won the group at 63.00m/206-8. And.....Marshall Ackley reappeared, limping yet throwing and managed a respectable 51.25m/168-2 from what was, essentially, a stand. He refused to quit.

*After Four: Eato 7658, Morr 7159, Otto 7141, Rise 6990.*

**1500 meters:** [6:15 pm]

Meet referee Rex Harvey, no stranger to decathlons at Hayward Field, adroitly determined that only a single race was necessary since it would promote a more competitive setting and the danger of having athletes trip mover one another was virtually nil given the speed in which most decathletes run the event. It was a good choice. When the 22 (including Marshall Ackley) went to the line at 6:16 pm everyone at Hayward understood that Ashton had a lock on the win and the 18 year old meet record of Brian Brophy/Tennessee. What was at stake was Trey Hardee’s 8465 collegiate mark and a 70 second per lap pace would do it for him.

Carolina veteran Mateo Sossah (himself 500 points down on last year's 8k score) set the early pace and Eaton ran comfortably in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> for the first lap. At 400m he was 72, 2 seconds off the pace and he slipped further back on laps 2 and 3. But the Duck faithful would not let up and the legendary stomping in the west grandstand was deafening. Ashton picked up the pace at the bell as he and the tall Frenchman began to race. Down the back straight they flew, side by side, stride for stride. The roar was deafening. As they came off the final turn, with legendary coach Bill Bowerman watching, Ashton pulled wide and went by...in a dead sprint, hoping against hope that he could reach the finish in under 4:20.74. He couldn't, and just missed a PR. But no matter. This was Eugene where the effort is as important as the clock. He missed the CR by 1 second, BUT, not a soul cared. It was an electric moment no one would soon forget. He had won a 3<sup>rd</sup> straight NCAA crown

Eaton 1500m pace chart			
Laps	even pace	actual split	+/-
300m (3 laps to go)	51	51.8	-0.8 secs
400m (1 lap)	70	72	-2
700m (2 laps to go)	2:02	2:05	-3
800m (2 laps)	2:20	2:24	-4
1100m (1 lap to go)	3:12	3:18	-6
1200m (3 laps)	3:30	3:35	-5
1500m (finish)	4:20	4:21	-1

Athletes streamed in...also benefiting from the competition and crowd. Otto, with team points at stake, PR'd as did Dan Kinsey.

But the 1500 meters was far from over. The scene was eerily reminiscent of the Orville Peterson 1500m episode at the 1984 US Olympic Trials at the Los Angeles Coliseum. *The Register Guard's* George Schroeder captured the moment:

*"But almost three minutes later, another Oregon senior dragged himself across the finish line to an entirely different kind of noise, It was not a roar so much as an embrace.*

*Ackley probably shouldn't have been on the track. He wasn't going to win or even score a point for the Ducks...he could barely walk. But, with two events left he wouldn't walk away.*

*I'm not gonna not finish he told assistant coach Harry Marra. So Ackley avoided the team doctor the rest of the day...and he ran the 1500 meters. Well, he really didn't run. He jogged, He shuffled. Sometimes he hopped. "It hurt," Ackley said, "every step of the way."*

*The fans began to cheer, and didn't stop. Ackley said it helped carry him around the track, if ever so slowly. And then something else happened.*

*A clap-clap-clap-clap-clap started in the West grandstand, then spread. The entire last lap, the entire crowd clapped in rhythm.*

*Grimacing the whole way, fighting back tears, Ackley limped finally home.*

*"A terrible way to end it," Oregon coach Vin Lananna said. "But a great way to end, because it tells everybody what it meant to him."*

*Yeah, it was awesome. And, really, it was the best moment of the day---"I loved every second of it," Ackley said—because everybody seemed to understand its meaning.*

*The final event of Ackley's career, that slow, painful slog?*

*It felt like a victory lap.*



Marshall Ackley could do nothing but shuffle for 3 ¾ laps, yet his 7:04 1500m clocking earned him 63 points and 11,900 hearts.

**Marshall Ackley could only shuffle and drag an injured leg in the final event. It was both painful to watch and heart-warming.**

*After Five: Eato 8457, Morr 7801, Otto 7724, Rise 7671.*

## RESULTS:



### 6/10-11 NCAA Div I National Champs, U of Oregon Hayward Field, Eugene, OR

8457	Eaton, Ashton/Oregon	10.37+0.5
790+1.1	1260 202 46.28 13.68+1.6 4171 470 5241	4:21.85
7801	Morrison, Mike/California	11.00+0.5
724+0.8	1200 199 48.63 14.93+1.2 3973 490 5887	4:41.39
7724	Otto, TrinityTexas A&M	10.74+0.5
752+0.8	1457 196 48.92 15.04+1.6 4014 450 5079	4:53.43

7671	Rise, Lars/Missouri-NOR	11.19+0.7
690+0.8	1562 187 50.51 15.09+1.5 4569 460 5514 4:39.81	
7569	Adcock, Nick/Missouri	11.20+0.5
702-1.5	1315 193 49.01 14.36+1.6 3757 450 5407 4:36.30	
7524	Kinsey, Dan/Akron	11.78+1.0
676+2.5	1388 193 53.04 15.36+2.1 4889 470 6203 4:38.41	
7510	Trubachik, Nick/Portland St	11.41+1.0
667+1.3	1361 202 50.03 15.12+1.9 3919 440 6245 4:40.92	
7509	Sossah, Mateo/North Carolina-FRA	11.58+1.0
707+1.8	1315 205 50.33 14.83+1.1 3623 440 5311 4:22.64	
7425	Adam, Philip/Rice	11.14+0.7
685+1.9	14.42 190 50.28 15.58+2.1 4239 450 4937 4:36.06	
7360	Cleve, Moritz/Kansas St-GER	11.16+0.7
681+3.7	13.35 187 49.23 14.53+1.0 3478 460 4915 4:35.57	
7350	Keller, Dan/North Carolina	11.59+1.0
688+2.6	1326 199 50.81 15.30+1.2 3556 490 5311 4:41.31	
7285	Bray, Wesley/Houston	11.22+0.7
689+1.5	1285 187 51.18 15.03+1.2 3935 450 5557 4:44.67	
7275	Felix, Kurt/Boise St-GRN	11.26+0.7
727+2.6	1287 211 50.64 15.31+1.5 3593 340 6300 4:51.65	
7271	Shotwell, Frank/Michigan	11.33+0.7
676+1.8	1279 193 50.5814.91+1.6 4122 440 5282 4:47.69	
7262	Horn, Gray/Florida	11.00+0.5
712+0.9	11.20 193 50.59 14.94+1.1 3972 430 4929 4:40.60	
7193	Grzesiak, Dave/Wisconsin	11.46+1.0
652+0.8	1216 193 50.23 15.27+1.5 3884 450 5352 4:35.14	
7157	Johansson, Bjorn/Akron-SWE	11.50+1.0
640-1.0	1408 181 50.57 15.14+1.9 3799 470 5754 4:54.05	
7148	Robinson, Robert/CSU-Northridge	11.06+0.5
707+1.4	1320 181 49.28 14.35+1.6 3832 430 4457 5:04.05	
7061	Smith, Sean/Connecticut	11.41+1.0
684+2.6	1262 193 51.04 15.26+1.9 3880 420 4651 4:37.63	
6936	Moss, Miller/Clemson	10.78+0.5
713-0.2	1330 196 47.96 14.62+1.0 nm 450 4674 4:49.80	
6650	McGinnis, RJ/Minnesota	11.61+1.0
652+0.9	1400 193 52.34 15.04+1.1 2959 400 4645 4:55.45	
5883	Ackley, Marshall/Oregon	11.21+0.7
686+1.6	1273 187 50.06 14.86+1.6 3684 nh 5125 7:04.56	
dnf	Taiwo, Jeremy/Washington	11.02+0.7
693+1.3	1197 202 48.98 dnf withdrew	
dnf	Holman, Cory/Georgia	11.12+0.5
nm	inj, withdrew	
	24s,22f	

## Quotes:

**Ashton:** “It’s something I never wanted to see end. I wish I could start over. The freshman are lucky they have four more years here.”

*The future...* I don’t know what to expect. I’ve learned so much here. But I just don’t know what to expect. And it won’t be the same when I put on the Oregon uniform. In the end I know I gave it all I had. I had nothing left.

**Vin Lanana,** “you know, I’m not a big emotional guy, but Ashton winning and Marshall finishing...well, that was just spectacular. That act exemplifies all the hard work this class of seniors has put in.”

**Ackley:** “It was my last meet as a Duck so to go out that way was extremely disappointing. But to finish, that’s something I’m proud of. When asked if he would have run the 1500m anywhere else. “Absolutely not. This is where I wanted to finish my career.”

### Concluding Public Tribute to Ashton Eaton

During the Awards ceremony at the 2010 NCAA Div 1 T&F Championships in Eugene, the PA announcer paid a tribute to the 3x NCAA decathlon champion. Here is the text...

*.....and before we introduce the winner, allow a personal observation. With a great career ahead of him we can take a moment and reflect on what we saw here over the past two days.*

*It was nearly 200 years ago that Lord Wellington claimed that major victories and world history were determined on “the playing fields of Eton.” Well, this NCAA meet and Hayward Field have turned into the “playing fields of Ashton Eaton,” who, for the past two days, wrote a little bit of history for himself. Consider:*

*-his record performances in the 100 meters, 400 meters and hurdles;*

*-he became the #9 American scorer all-time;*

*-he set a personal record, a meet record and compiled the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest collegiate score ever;*

*-he posted his 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive 8000 point performance;*

*-he became the first decathlete in the 41 year NCAA history of the event to win three consecutive titles.*

*Ladies and gentlemen- the most versatile athlete in American colleges today is a senior from Bend, ....the winner and 2010 national champion, with a score of 8457 points, please congratulate Ashton Eaton.*

FZ