

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

DECA Newsletter

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'15 RANKINGS, '16 Q STANDARDS

1st Week of Olympic Year Underway

Hello Again....Our initial newsletter of the year offers a synopsis of the 2015 T&F News World and U.S. decathlon rankings. No surprises here as Ashton Eaton finds himself atop both lists. I have also provided a summary of the qualifying criteria for all of the year's championship meets, indoors and out. I offer a scenario of the selection/invitation process for the IAAF world indoor heptathlon field since the criteria are confusingly written and open to various interpretations. It can be puzzling since some of the potential invitees are either banned, indoor inactive or are US college studnets with other obligations while another set of high grade athletes run afoul of the 'no more than one per nation'/per list rule. Read on.

Our 'Event Schedule' section on the home page is now essentially complete for 2016 meets, with the exception of Junior Olympic and 'Last Chance' qualifier meets. Because this is an Olympic year there may be more last chance qualifiers in the works. In 2015 there were five leading up to the USA champs:

5/22-23 Chula Vista Elite II, OTC, Chula Vista, CA
5/30-31 Texas Greatest Athlete, StMarks Sch, Dallas, TX
5/30-31 Mount Sac JC Open HS, Walnut, CA
6/5-6 USATF JO/Open Decathlon, NDSU, Fargo, ND
6/12-13 SBTC Last Chance Qualifier, Westmont College.

For additional meets, corrections and news of any more last chance meets please contact me (Frank.Zarnowski@Dartmouth.edu) and I'll make necessary adjustments.

Keeping track of all USA indoor and outdoor CEs has become challenging. A generation ago (say before 1980) there were virtually no indoor affairs and only a couple dozen decathlons. In 2016 we will have more than 400 American meets with @2200 active decathletes at the open, college and prep levels. 400 meets!!!

Items of interest...the first three stories on the most recent *Tracklite* deal with CEers: [<https://trackelite.wordpress.com/>]

2015 Decathlon Rankings

[from Track and Field News]

World

- 1...Ashton Eaton
2. Damian Warner
3. Trey Hardee
4. Rico Freimuth
5. Ilya Shkureniov
6. Kai Kazmirek
7. Michael Schrader
8. Labbi Bourrada
9. Willem Coertzen
10. Kurt Felix

USA

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----------|
| USA | Ashton Eaton | OreTC |
| CAN | Trey Hardee | Nike |
| USA | Jeremy Taiwo | CVeTC |
| GER | Zach Ziemek | unat/Wisc |
| RUS | Dakota Keys | Oregon |
| GER | Garrett Scantling | Georgia |
| GER | Harrison Williams | Stanford |
| ALG | Thomas FitzSimons | SBTC |
| RSA | Mike Morgan | Buffalo |
| GRN | Tom Erhardt | MichSt |

Indoor IAAF field May be Problematic.

The selection criteria for the IAAF indoor CE fields are

not entirely clear and one has to make a number of assumptions about what the criteria actually mean. Here are the problems. As is implied by the rules a number of lists will be



used to select a 12 man field. Yet the first criteria does not mention the use of a list and that criteria presents a peculiar problem. The order of the criteria *imply* the order of the lists used.

OK, the first person selected is the winner of the 2015 IAAF CE Challenge. But since the winner is Ilya Shkurenkov of the now banned Russian federation does this imply that the CE Challenge runner-up will replace Shkurenkov? The criteria do not state a use of lists here. But if a list is used Michael Schrader of Germany would be the replacement. The problem here is that Schrader does not compete indoors. He has never contested an indoor heptathlon. If he turns down the invitation then the 3rd place Challenge finisher was Canadian Damian Warner who has already announced that he will NOT compete indoors favoring preparation for the Olympic season. Confused yet? Do we go to the 4th place Challenge finisher, 33 year old South African Will Coertzen who also never competed indoors! Oleksiy Kasyanov/Ukraine was 5th.

OK, let's assume either Coertzen or Kasyanov is invited. Then what? The second criteria involves the use of the 2015 world decathlon *list*. (Can you see why it's important to have statisticians?) That list reads:

1.. 9045	Ashton Eaton	USA
2. 8725	Trey Hardee	USA
3. 8678	Damian Warner	CAN
4. 8561	Rico Freimuth	GER
5. 8538	Ilya Shkurenkov	RUS
6. 8469	Kevin Mayer	FRA
7. 8462	Kai Kazmirek	GER
8. 8461	Laabi Bourradi	ALG
9. 8419	Micahel Schrader	GER
10. 8398	Will Coertzen	RSA
11. 8356	Maicel Uibo	EST
12. 8303	Jeremy Taiwo	USA
13. 8302	Kurt Felix	GRN

From this list only one person per nation can be selected. Yikes!!!! That eliminate Trey Hardee who had the world's 2nd best score by a ton! Fair?? Presumably

the following would be selected: Eaton, Freimuth, Mayer, Bourradi and Felix (#13). Warner is inactive. Shkurenkov is banned and Kazmirek and Taiwo would be eliminated on the one per nation rule. Coertzen/Kasyanov has already been selected via first criteria. And Uibo is still a collegian having NCAA obligation a week earlier in Birmingham. A 2nd hept with 5 days rest? Whew! Is it clear yet?

The third criteria uses the current season indoor heptathlon list (as of Feb 29, 2016), selecting the top five, as long as they have not already been selected by the first two guidelines. This makes the 2016 indoor hept season doubly important and would, if I am reading this correctly, set up a terrific USA indoor meet (Feb 26-27) in Crete, NE. where Hardee, Taiwo, Nixon, Beach and others would go head-to-head since the criteria stipulate only two athletes from any one nation will be invited. The top 5 world indoor list could contain several Americans.

Suggestion:

In the past the IAAF selection guidelines worked reasonably well when the size of the field was limited to only 8 athletes. With a field of 12 it is more likely to present complications.

It was never designed to keep some of the best athletes off the starting line. Since a final and 12th athlete may be invited at the discretion of the IAAF may I suggest that it may be in the best interest of the IAAF and the meet itself to suspend (just for this year) the "only two per nation" guideline and, if reasonable, invite a 3rd athlete from one nation. Otherwise a few of the best athletes could be left to watch. Stay tuned. Suspension would give the IAAF to rethink the selection criteria.

A complete table summarizing qualifying standards and windows is provided on the following page.

2016 Qualifying

	<u>Standard/(field size)</u>	<u>qualifying period</u>
Indoor Heptathlon		
IAAF WC	(12*)	dec 2015, hept 2016
USATF	7700dec, 5450 hept	1/1/15 – 2/14/16
NCAA I	Top 16 [5546]	12/1/15 - 3/2/16
NCAA II	Top 14 [5110]	11/29/15 – 3/2/16
NCAA III	Top 15 [4788]	12/1/15 - 3/8/16
NAIA	Top 16 [4468]	season start-- 2/22/26

Outdoor Decathlon

Olympic Games	8100	1/1/15 – 7/3/16
USOT/USATF	7900 (18)	1/1/15 – 6/26/16
USATF Jr	6500,6700 <i>int jr</i> ,6750 <i>hs</i> (16)	1/1/16- 6/12/16
NCAA I	Top 24 [7305]	3/1/16 - 5/18/16
NCAA II	Top 16 [6885]	2/20/16 - 5/11/16
NCAA III	Top 20 [6159]	3/1/16 - 5/16/16
NAIA	Top 16 [6004]	3/6/16 - 5/15/16

[]-Scores in brackets are last qualifier score for 2015

()- figures in parenthesis are desired size fields.

**- World Indoor qualifying-*

Twelve athletes will be invited by the IAAF in the Heptathlon and in the Pentathlon as follows:

- the winner of the 2015 Combined Events Challenge
- the five best athletes from the 2015 Outdoor Lists (as at 31 December 2015), limited to a maximum of one per country
- the five best athletes from the 2016 Indoor Lists (as at 29 February 2016)
- one athlete which may be invited at the discretion of the IAAF

In total no more than two male and two female athletes from any one Member nation will be invited. Upon refusals or cancellations, the invitations shall be extended to the next ranked athletes in the same lists respecting the above conditions.

The Season's First Week



The first week of January saw three indoor heptathlons. The year's first meet, a dual between Montana and Montana State, was captured by State junior Mason Storm, Great Fall, MT with a 4884 score. BYU soph Kevin Neilsen (23, Granite Bay, CA) won in his home field house with an impressive 5549 PR effort. And Purdue U soph Tim Deal (20, Mishawaka, IN) captured a small meet at home scoring 5204 points.

Ten additional meets plus the annual Reno Vault Summit (where Ashton Eaton challenges the big guys) are on tap for the 2nd full week of January.

Brigham Young soph Kevin Neilsen (above) won the BYU Invt with a nice 5549 score.