

# THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

## DECA Newsletter

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## TAIWO OVER MAHLER at USAs Conference Champs Season Underway

**Hello Again:** As the indoor season heats up again the 33<sup>rd</sup> USA Nationals is in the books and the collegiate conference season is in full swing. At the Albuquerque Convention Center only a tiny field contested the 33<sup>rd</sup> USA Nationals. The USA nationals drew 14 entries (all were accepted), but only 9 declared and six showed up at the 60m starting line. '15 champ Jeremy Taiwo had all he could handle from former Longhorn star Wolf Mahler and when the New Mexico dust cleared his margin of victory was a scant 12 points, 5935 to 5923.

Taiwo managed a winning 2.10m/6-10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> high jump to close the gap on last year's collegiate winner Devon Williams, 3252 to 3216 at the break. Albuquerque native and 2016 winner Curtis Beach declared but did not start.

Williams won the first two events (6.86 and 7.32m/24-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>) and Jack Flood (22, Blue Point, NY), last year's indoor and out D-III champ while at Cortland St, NY won the shot with a PR 14.71m/48-<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> put and then placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the high jump at 2.04m/6-8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>. Steady Wolf Mahler led Flood by a point (3160-3159) after day one.

On Day two Williams predictably was supreme in the 60m hurdles clocking a meet record 7.79 seconds. He erased the 28 year old marks coheld by Vernon George and Eric Reid of 7.83 seconds set in Baton Rouge in 1990. The vault proved decisive. Flood managed a career best 4.55m/14-11 to continue on PR pace. But when Williams



28 year old Jeremy Taiwo, Renton, WA, won his second national indoor crown by holding off a fast improving Wolf Mahler.

could do not better than 4.65m/15-3 the door was open for Taiwo and Mahler, both of whom relied on this event. Quickly they skied 4.75m/15-7, 4.85m/15-121 and 4.95m/16-2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> at which point Williams' margin over Taiwo was 45 and over Mahler 99 points. Both remaining vaulters also sported significant middle distance skills so this shaped up to be a barn burner.

Wolf cleared 5.05m/16-6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> on his first try but Jeremy missed his first attempt but was clear on his second with a career best. Whew. At this point Taiwo trailed Williams by just 14 points (equivalent to a little over 1 second in the 1000m) and was 54 up on Mahler. The bar went to 5.15m/16-10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (not, incidentally, close to the meet record..... remember Paul Terek). Yikes ! Wolf over!! But no cigar for Taiwo. This meant we had a

virtual 3 way tie for the lead with only 37 (just over 3 seconds on the 1k tables) points separating all 3 with one event remaining. The differential between Taiwo and Mahler was just 23 points (2 seconds). A clearance at the next bar, 5.25m/17-2¾, would have moved Mahler to within 7 points of the overall lead. But at 1:00pm he missed and the athletes had an elongated rest period. Whew.

Both Mahler (PR 2:33.32) and Taiwo (PR 2:30.85 in '15) had reputations to protect in the final event and it was not hard to guess how this race would unfold....its was a Mutt and Jeff affair (Taiwo at 6-5 and Mahler 5-11). Jeremy pushed the early pace and waited .....the Wolf who has slightly better leg speed, to pounce.

Devon Cornelius of Central Missouri set the early pace leading at 400 in 67 seconds flat. Taiwo took over but with two laps remaining Mahler was in full sprint with Taiwo digging. The Texas grad and former USA junior champ needed two seconds but never had more than one and it finished just like that....Mahler a single second ahead and 12 points behind on the scoreboard.....5935 to 5923 (PR). Both covered the final lap in 28+ seconds.

Taiwo claims back the title he won in 2015 in Roxbury. Now he will wait and see if he gets the at large selection for the IAAF Worlds. The former D-IIIers, Flood (5562) a Cornelius (5370) both ended with career bests.

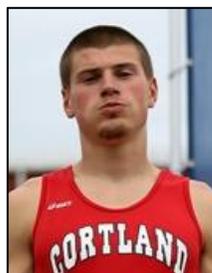
### **RESULTS:**

#### **33<sup>rd</sup> USA National Champs, Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM**

5935	Taiwo, Jeremy/NYAC	7.15 710 1275 210 8.19 505 2:41.36
5923	Mahler, Wolf/unat	6.99 724 1307 192 8.18 515 2:40:43
5842	Williams, Devon/Chula Vista E	6.86 732 1392 189 7.79 465 2:51.43
5562	Flood, Jack/unat	7.28 678 1471 204 8.26 455 2:55.29
5478	Bahner, Austin/SBTC	6.99 703 1328 186 8.65 475 2:51.61
5370	Cornelius, Devon/C Missouri	7.12 688 1258 192 8.33 425 2:48.24
6s,6f.		



In other **Friday/Saturday** (2/16-17) action Kennesaw soph Paris Williams easily captured the Atlantic Sun Conference affair in Lynchburg, VA with a 5167 score. The Great Plains meet (GPAC) at Doane witnessed local Levi Sudbeck'20 a surprise winner, 53 digits shy of 5k. Central Washington frosh Braydon Maier won the D-II GNAC in Nampa as teammate and favorite Kodiak Landis dnf'd. James Phillips, a junior at Concordia (OR) led convincingly by 200 points after the first day but could not hold off Maier.



Jack Flood (left) got a PR 5562 score to place 4<sup>th</sup> in Albuquerque. Devon Williams (right) was 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5842.

In **Saturday/Sunday** (2/17-18) action,



Scott Filip, Rice senior (left) solidified his NCAA spot with a Conf USA win in Birmingham. George Mason senior John Seals (right) was not as lucky vault 'nh'ing' at the Atlantic Ten affair in Fairfax, VA.

George Mason senior John Seals came a cropper in his favorite event, the high jump. A 7 footer, Seals, appeared headed back to the NCAAs after 3 events, managed only

1.98m/6-6 (pass at 2.01m/6-7¼ and 3 misses at 2.04m/6-8¼). He still led the Atlantic Ten heptathlon in with a 3088 score at the break, but a subsequent vault 'nh' ruined any NCAA qualifying chances. UMass junior Jonathan Collins won with 5214.

Scott Filip blew away a good field at Conf USA in Birmingham running up a gaudy 3315 total. On day two he cruised to a 5725 total with plenty in the tank.

Lehigh senior Trevor Knowles has just as easy a time of it at Bucknell while claiming the Patriot League title at 5313.

At present the # 16 NCAA-I score is Knowles' 5596 which is not likely to hold up under the final week of NCAA I qualifying coming up. We find 37 (Yikes!!) Conference championship meets are on tap this coming week.....37!.....and suspect the qualifying lists will be rewritten.