

NEW YEAR OPENS IN 30 MINUTES

Santa Barbara Hosts Thoreson Memorial

Hello Again..... The present generation of USA athletes haven't known Dave Thoreson. The lanky Santa Barbara school teacher was as much regarded as a national level decathlete in the 60's and 70s as for his enthusiasm, energy and ingenuity. Dave was fun to be around and this weekend a current crop of multi-eventers got a taste of his imagination. At the urging of his wife and friends, Westmont College and the Santa Barbara Track Club exhibited one of Dave's inventions---the 30 minute decathlon. And oh what fun it was....both to renew old acquaintances and to watch the frenetic action of decathletes operating under a ticking clock.

Dave Thoreson (1941-2018) died in Santa Barbara last October at age 79. Dave's wife Janie and friends decided to do something that would preserve his memory. And what better way to remember than to to display on of Dave's brainchilds...a full decathlon in 30 minutes.....sort of like a two hour movie set at hyper-speed.

Two time NCAA indoor heptathlon champ Curtis Beach made the trip to Santa Barbara to test his 30 minute skills and came away with the US #2 score all-time, 6242 points. Beach raged thru the first 4 events in 8 minutes and then took a break before posting an easy looking 53.26 400m. At this point he was 69 points up on John Warkentin's AR pace (3421 to 3352). Curtis fell behind pace during the hurdles and a pair of misses at 4.40m/14-5¼, after an initial 3.65m/11-11¼ clearance doomed the record attempt.



Dave Thoreson, 1941-2018

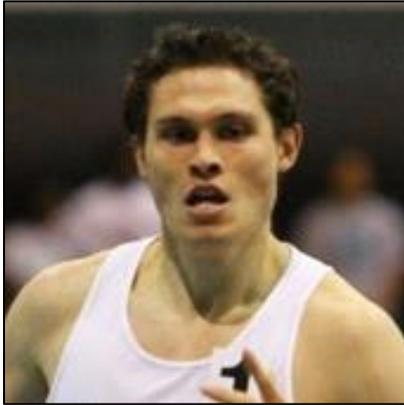
Regardless he

offered a glimpse of his notable endurance skills for the 250 (!) spectators by running a conservatively paced 4:34.09 1500m, an event record by almost 40 seconds! The final tally was 6242 points (or 208 points per minute).

SBTC's Thomas FitSimons was 2nd here in a seven man field with a 5824 score while 33 year old Sharon Day Monroe end with a women's record 4707 score sans a mark in the vault.

The Westmont affair received a break from the weatherman....in a week of frequent rain, the meet went off in sunny conditions and 70 degree temps. The rain resumed a day later.





Curtis Beach won the Thoreson 30 minute decathlon at Westmont with 6242 points.

One can hope that the Thoreson 30 minute dec becomes an annual affair. More than 250 spectators, including many of Dave's family, training partners and contemporaries were on hand and kudos go to John Warkentin for spearheading this event. Now 72, John was the 1970 national AAU champion and, after Beach's try, still holds the American AR at 6526 points (6747 on the '62 tables). He set the mark at UCSB in 1977.

30 MINUTE DECATHLON RECORDS

WR 6600	Sepp Zielbauer/AUT	1977 (6854='62)
[10.8h 645 1489 188 57.2h 15.8h 4000 417 5760 5:48.0h]		
AR 6526	John Warkentin/Strider	47 (6747='62)
UCSB, Santa Barbara 8/ /77		
[11.2h 630 1407 192 58.2h 15.3h 4604 396 5960 6:00.3h]		
5989	Dave Thoreson's initial Record	233 ('62 tables)
Striders UCSB, Santa Barbara 8/14/71		
[11.3 663 1102 196 57.9h 16.5h 3872 401 5132 6:16.0]		

OBIT- DAVE THORESON

Born in Valley City, ND (May 16, 1941) Dave was initially coached by Jim Klein at Westmont (in pre NAIA/NCAAB decathlon days) and later by Sam Adams. He had an extensive deca career od over 40 meets. He lived and worked in Santa Barbara and was a frequent training partner of '68

Olympic champion Bill Toomey. Dave's first career dec happened to be the 1960 US Olympic Trials. He talked his way in by substituting a softball performance for a javelin mark on the entry blank. He was 5 times nationally ranked and finished as high as second (1967) at the national AAU meet. Dave was the 1967 Pan American Games bronze medalist and competed in 4 US Olympic Trials. Off the track he was frequently a Hollywood stuntman appearing in numerous Disney films including *Black Beard's Ghost* and *The World's Greatest Athlete*.

His PR score of 7632 (on the '62 tables) converts to 7487 on today's '85 tables. His career bests included: 100m – 10.90; long jump---7.53m/24-8½; shot put 11.98m/39-3½; high jump --2.09m/6-10¼-straddle; 400m—49.7; 110mH-15.1; discus—45.92m/150-7; pole vault—4.57m/15-0; javelin—58.24m/ 191-1; 1500m---4:28.3. He finished 32 of 40 career meets.

His single 30 minutes decathlon netted a 6233 score (5989 '85 tables) in 1971.

It was Dave's personality and friendliness that one remembers. His inventiveness was as legendary as it was wacky. In attempt to qualify for the '72 Trials Dave wanted to run the 1500m on a straight stretch of Highway 101 near Santa Maria, with a prevailing wind. A wind-aided 1500m! Only Dave could imagine that.

He went so far as calling Yale coach Bob Geigengack for permission. Gieg, then an octgenerian, was chair of the AAU Rules Committee and would have had to approve this 'innovation.' As Dave related it to me later, the call went something like this:

Bob: Hello

Dave: Bob, it's Dave Thoreson in Santa Barbara.

Bob: Yes Dave. By the way, what time is it ther in Santa Barbara?

Dave: Oh, its only 8:30 in the evening.
 Bob: What can I do for you Dave?
 Dave: Bob, is it legal to run the 1500 meters on a straightway?
 Bob: You have a staight track of 1500 meters?
 Dave: No, but we have a pretty level highway in route 101.
 Bob:
 Dave: And we can measure it accurately?
 Bob:
 Dave: and we could get an engineer to certify that's it's level.
 Bob: Dave, the event has to be run on a track, either of cinders or a synthetic surface.
 Dave: You mean like Tartan.
 Bob: Yep
 Dave: (thinking)
 Bob: Dave, still there?
 Dave: OK, OK, how about this. How about if I get a slice of Tartan and cut out pieces the shape of my shoes.....and then I glue them to the bottom of my shoes.
 Bob:
 Dave: I'd be running on Tartan, right?
 Bob: No.
 Dave: I'd be running on Tartan, right? And we could do it for the 400 as well, right?
 Bob: Goodnight Dave.

Dave taught 34 years at La Colina Junior High School and invented the Thoresen Fitness Obstacle Course which can still be found at Santa Barbara area schools. He also invented an exercise bycycle for the physically challenged known as the Hardy Walker.

The affair at Westmont, Dave's alma mater, was all fun. It was classic Dave Thoreson and became a forum for telling 'Thoreson stories.' For example Dave once suggested that the entire decathlon be contested on the Santa Barbara beaches but his 'Beach Decathlon,' running all events in barefoot, never got any traction. Perhaps Curtis Beach could try that one too.

Lets make this an annual affair.



Dave like to show off his stunt skills and this phot appeared in *Sports Illustrated*.

And finally, for the numerically minded, here are the up-to-date individual American Records for the 30 Minute decathlon:

100 m	11.2h	John Warkentin 1977
Long Jump	6.70m/21-11 ¾	Curtis Beach 2019
Shot Put	14.07m/46-2	John Warkentin 1977
High Jump	1.96m/6-5	Dave Thoreson 1971
400m	53.26	Crutis Beach 2019
110mH	15.3h	John Warkentin 1977
Discus	46.04m/151-0	John Warkentin 1977
Pole Vault	4.01m/13-1¾	John Warkentin 1977
Javelin	59.60m/195-7	John Warkentin 1977
1500m	4:34.09	Curtis Beach 2019
1 st Day	3421 pts	Curtis Beach 2019
2 nd Day	3164 pts	John Warkentin 1977
Score	6526	John Warkentin 1977