

## OWENS, WILLIAMS, EHRHARDT 8130, 8112, 8066 at Bryan Clay Meet !

**Hello Again.....** The Bryan Clay decathlon at his alma mater, Azusa Pacific, was a game changer for any number of reasons. First, the size of the meet was eye-opening, attracting a total of seventy entries necessitating four sections. Sixty four started and fifty completed all ten events. Several elite athletes were also on hand for individual events including last year's winner, Zach Ziemek. In fact the women's side the field was so large that five heptathlon groups were necessary in their heptathlon. Azusa handled the crowds. From elite to developmental with aplomb.

Yet it was not quantity that caught the eye. The quality of the performances was significant here. By the time the sun set over the nearby San Gabriel Canyon and Mountains this meet had fashioned the seasons first three 8000 point scores and twenty-two 7000 performances from its fifty finishers. The Clay meet was an Easter gift.

There was Tim Ehrhardt, three days past his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday (Addison, IL), coming off his USA indoor title and in his initial year with the Santa Barbara Track Club, running the 1500 forceably to improve his PR score to 8066. Notable bests in the hurdles and 1500m. Yet this was good just for third place in the elite (group #4) section.

There was Stanford senior Harrison Williams, a week past his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday (Memphis), just off his NCAA indoor title, improving his own career best to 8112 (an 80 point improvement without a single event



USC freshman Ayden Owens (18, Wexford, PA) celebrates his 8130 performance at Azusa becoming the youngest American over '8.'

best). Yet this was good for only the runner-up spot.

The most arresting tale was the 8 (!) event PR performance by USC freshman Ayden Owens (18, Wexford, PA), a month shy of his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, who became the youngest American citizen to ever score over 8000 points.....a remarkable 8130 winning score. Not only was it his first '8,' it was his first decathlon with international implements. He owned a 7354 junior score from 2018.

Owens, who represents Puerto Rico internationally, was 6<sup>th</sup> at the NCAA indoor meet. He used speed (10.43 sprint) and hurdle skills (13.91) to run up a significant lead.



Stanford's Harrison Williams (l) and Tim Ehrhardt of the SBTC (r) improved on career best scores with 8000+ performances.

Ehrhardt (5.30m/17-4½) and Williams (5.10m/16-8¾) cut into his lead during the vault with Williams actually holding a marginal advantage after 8 events. Owens held a ten-point margin (7378-7368) with one event remaining and held off the Stanford senior. Owens becomes the 83<sup>rd</sup> USA citizen over 8000 and the trio of 8's at Azusa brings the American total to 434 on he current tables (see insert).



Houston Baptist soph Denim Rogers (l) and German Maximilian Vollmer, (r) an Oregon freshman both fashioned NCAA I qualifying marks at Azusa.

Also notable was the fourth place finisher, 20 years old Oregon freshman Maximilian Vollmer (Ulm, Germany) whose 7840 score is notable in NCAA circles. Comebacking Hunter Price (ex Colorado State) was 9<sup>th</sup> at 7422. He scored 7996 at the same meet two years ago. A number of athletes were at Azusa to do individual events. Zach Ziemek posted six solid marks, mostly in the field. Extraordinary was the open discus mark of Grenada's Lindon Victor.....55.87m/183-3, PR. Yikes!

### How many times have Americans Scored over 8000?

It's complicated. There have been six sets of IAAF scoring tables since 1912. The following table demonstrates the number of times 8000 has been surpassed on that particular set of tables and the highest American score recorded on same:

IAAF tables	#of 8000s	top score	athlete	year
1912	1	8412.955	Jim Thorpe	1912
1912B ('20)	5	8462.435	Jim Bausch	1932
1934	1	8052	Bob Mathias	1950
1950/52	6	8709	Phil Mulkey	1961
1962	84	8617	Bruce Jenner	1976
1985	434	9045	Ashton Eaton	2015
Total 8's	531	on all tables combined.....		

Fast improving Denim Rogers, a junior at Houston Baptist (San Antonio), won Group #3 with a 7504 career best. UCSB senior Tyler Nelson captured Group #2 at 7254 and the novice division (Group #1) was won by California freshman Hakim McMorris at 7033.

At the University of Virginia Challenge in Charlottesville vet Jack Flood and Michigan State junior Nick Guerrant (beloe left) were in a tight struggle until the former vault nh'd. Guerrant's winning total of 7632 included improved hurdle skills (14.50).



In significant battle of small college recent indoor champs Central's Will Daniels (D-III) (middle left)

eschewed the Kansas Relays (runner-up in 2018) for Doane's Dutcher Invt and came away with a whopping 400 point PR score (7195) in a battle with Doane's Levi Sudbeck, the NAIA indoor maestro.

The past week delivered everything that was expected (19 meets, 26 7k efforts). We'll have a quiet up-coming week where the Drake Relays will be featured before conference chsampionships takeover.