

THE DECATHLON ASSOCIATION

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8's ABOUND

Owens, Price, Flood Reach Milestone, Big 10 Sparkles

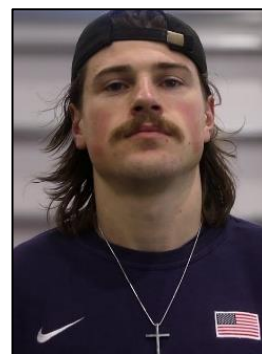
Hello Again... If you thought the first few days of the final "College Conference Weekend" was something (read: Kyle Garland's 8196 SEC win), then how about the final two days (May 14-15!). Wow. The Big Ten meet in Champaign, IL was spectacular and new 8000-point scores landed on scoresheets from Azusa, CA to Mount Olive, NC.

First, the college scene. Few college meets were ever so deep as the Big Ten affair where speedy Michigan soph Ayden Owens (21, Pittsburgh, PA) led from the opening gun and won by nearly 400 points. His running events were among the best ever (10.40 46.78 13.98 4:23.57... Hello!) and field events solid. He ended with a PR the 2nd best collegiate seasonal score 8238.

Yet that was hardly the whole story in Champaign. Iowa's Will Daniels ('19 D-III winner while at Central, IA) and freshman Austin West both PR'd with 7864 and 7805 respectively. So deep was the Big Ten field that nine exceeded 7300! At least 6 conference participants will be in Eugene for the NCAA nationals.

And there was plenty of additional D-I league action. German freshman Leo Neugebauer of Texas handled Oklahoma State Estonian Kristo Simulask, 7793 to 7391, at the Big 12 meet in Manhattan, KS. At the Southland meet in Houston Scott Boon, a junior from the Netherlands, raised his career best to 7602 to become a D-I qualifier. On the east coast there was plenty of action in Connecticut. UConn senior Jordan Torney upped his PR to 7492 and ended the weekend as the D-I's 24th and final qualifier (a score almost identical to the 2019 final qualifier), At the New England champs in New Britain, CT Rhode Island junior Drew Nealey prevailed (6960).

The most consequential meet was held at USC,



Top: Ayden Owens/Michigan and Will Daniels/Iowa (r) went 1-2 at the Big Ten. Middle: Hunter Price (l) and Jack Flood (r) had identical 8k scores; Bottom: Saginaw's Sam Black (l) and Austin West (Iowa) posted 7800+ PRs.



where German soph Max Vollmer won predictably capturing the Pac-12 crown while cruising to a 7638 score. Washington freshman Oliver Thorner was runner-up at 7388 but the real drama surrounded Cal junior Hakim McMorris (Santa Ana, CA) who seemed to have a significant score (76+) well in hand before a vault 'nh' (PR 4.35m/14-3¼). Yet he soldiered on and place 3rd overall with a 6938 total.

And there were non-college affairs that turned heads. Former Cougar Jackson Walker won the BYU Invt at 7437. At Azusa's Twilight Multi come-backing vet Hunter Price (26, Arvado, CO), the '17 NCAA D-I indoor runner-up from Colorado State, finally surpassed "8" with a 8035 win after a nice tussle with Mitch Modin. 3000 miles away, at Mount Olive, NC, ex D-III champ Jack Flood (25, Blue Point, NY) from Cortland State turned away Saginaw Valley's Sam Black (Pickney, MI), 8035 to 7807, career bests for both. Neither effort was totally unexpected, and Black's was a 800 point PR improvement and the leading D-II total.

Whew! In just two days in May.

A Correction....

In yesterday's Newsletter I listed the 7302 score by Tyl Woelber/Augustana, as a D-III effort. I had the wrong Augustana (in SD) which competes at the D-II level. Augustana College (IL) is a D-III institution. Apologies.