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JULY 2018

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**Complete By-Event
Coverage Of The
USATF Champs**

**Noah Lyles Speeds
9.88 & 19.65**

**DeAnna Price
Reclaims AR
In The Hammer**

**Stars Of Tomorrow
Shine At The World Junior
Championships**

**Abderrahmane Samba
Breaks 47 In The
400 Hurdles**

**Noah Lyles
Now A Double
Dash Threat**

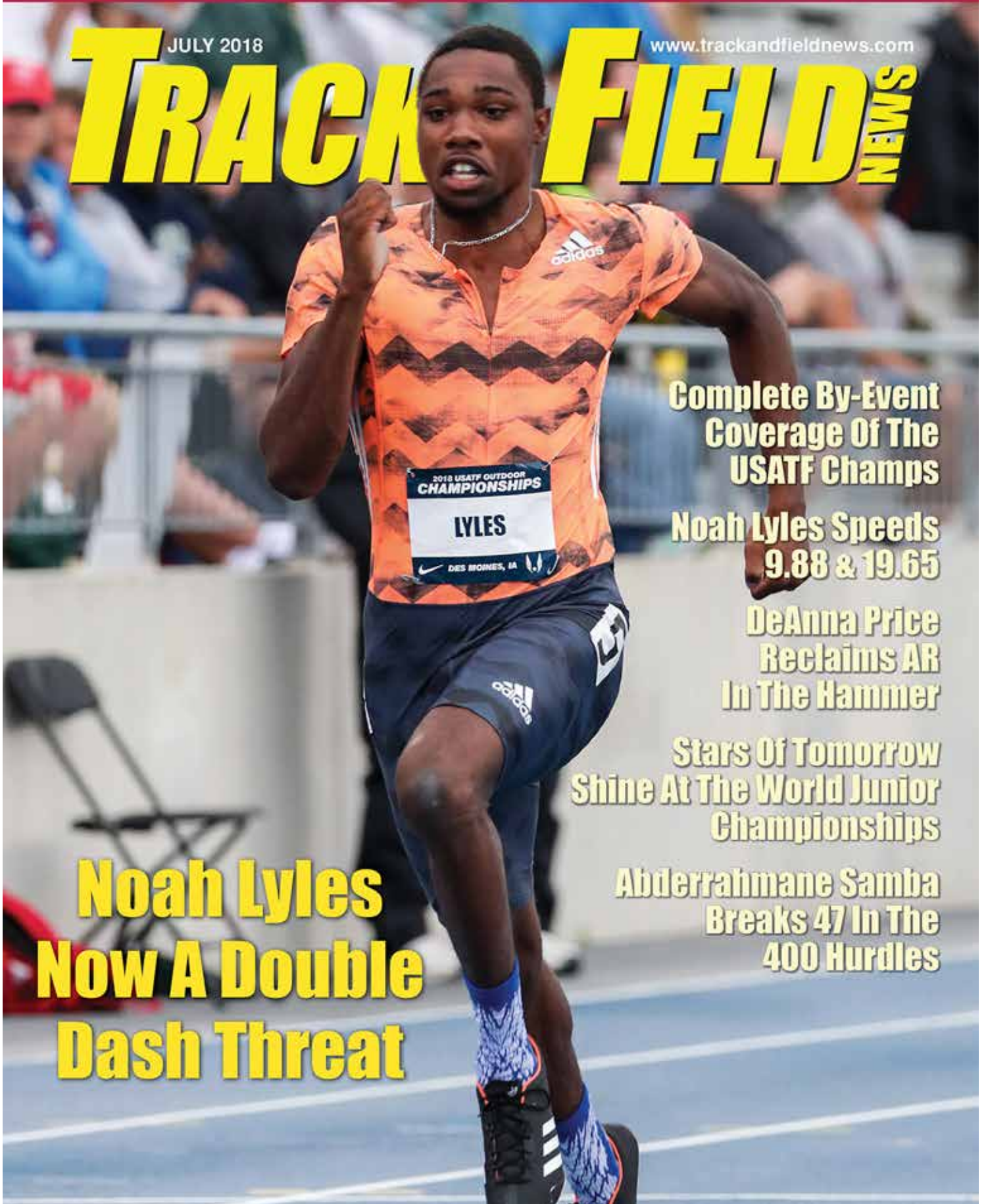


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To reduce the already substantial size of this issue for those who prefer to print out *T&FN*, we have omitted results (agate) in this PDF.

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From The Editor – Maybe You CAN Tell The Players Without A Program

July 2018 | by E. Garry Hill |



It wasn't a headline of man bites dog attention-getting, perhaps, but on June 20 our home page's "Today's Top Headlines" section had one of the most personally satisfying postings of recent years when we were able to say, "Hooray! NCAA To Implement New Rules On Uniform Colors." That was a link to [this release by the NCAA](http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/news/uniform-rule-recommended-track-and-field?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed+UstfcccaFromTheWire+USTFCCA+From+the+Wire) ([http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/news/uniform-rule-](http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/news/uniform-rule-recommended-track-and-field?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed+UstfcccaFromTheWire+USTFCCA+From+the+Wire)

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[utm_campaign=Feed+UstfcccaFromTheWire+USTFCCA+From+the+Wire](http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/news/uniform-rule-recommended-track-and-field?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed+UstfcccaFromTheWire+USTFCCA+From+the+Wire)),

which proposed a new rule about uniformity of uniforms. Sounds redundant, perhaps, but it's not. My column of July '05 was titled, "Would it be too much to ask to have a uniform uniform-policy?"

At the risk of boring you with material from a dozen-plus years ago, here's (in part) what I said then, after a great NCAA Championships:

ENOUGH OF THIS RUBIK'S CUBE STUFF! Is there a fan out there that doesn't want an end to this madness of athletes in uniforms that don't represent the meaning of the word? "Uniform" means "the same." And for good reason. So you can tell one athlete/team from another...

Let's talk about the offenders du jour: the colleges. It pains me to pick on Kerron Clement, because he was probably the most exciting and enjoyable of all to watch in Sacramento. It's always incredible to be privileged to watch a true superstar in the making. We thought he was so impressive that we made him our poster boy for the month. But he's also the poster boy for everything that's wrong in the (not-so) uniform department.

In that big center spread (pp. 32-33), you'll find him in a black uniform. Très chic. Turn to p. 18 and there he is in a white uniform. While you're on that spread, look at p. 19 to catch him in blue. But hey, that's not all. Go back a page to 17 and check out Clement's teammate, Josh Walker. Is he in black? No. Is he in white? No. So he must be in blue. No—he's in orange! The Florida team must have a special position known as Uniform Manager. This is the style-conscious dude who chooses who wears what in what race, and packs the 22 extra bags all this finery requires.

I blame pro ball teams, who started this "third jersey" silliness so they could market even more stuff to their fans. Or simply decided that black made them look "tougher." Well excuse me, but when I go to a meet I expect to see Florida easily identifiable as the guys in some combination of orange & blue, their official colors.

The NCAA does mandate that relay teams wear the same uniforms during a race, but other than that, all bets are off. Hey, I don't want to see the boys from Indy go nutso on regulations like the HS Federation and penalize people for non-matching underwear or wearing a necklace, but how about at least an official-colors rule? And while you're at it, how about a regulation that all teammates in the same race have to wear the same uniforms?

How goofy was it to watch that incredible men's 200 final, knowing that teammates Wallace Spearmon and Tyson Gay were going to be threatening the 20-second barrier just two lanes apart, and to discover that they weren't even wearing the same outfits? Spearmon was white-over-red, Gay was all-red. What does that do for fan enjoyment?...

Bottom line—the way it's going, you can't even tell the players with a program.

Thus my delight at that June 20 headline, although the proposed rules don't go as far as I'd like. If it's a single-color body suit it has to be "the primary color of the team," which is good. The fact that on any given day everybody also has to be wearing the same basic color is also good. What's not great—at least as currently written—is that that basic color isn't mandated to be a school color, leaving the door open to people racing in hues that nobody associates with

the institution. That just doesn't make sense to me.

But all in all, a win is a win, and this will be one for the most neglected demographic in our sport: the fans.

Meanwhile, On The International Front

Fans of the international circuit have for years had a uniform gripe as well: too many people wearing the same uniform, making it exceedingly difficult to tell who's who. The clamor on this reached such a level a few years back that the IAAF was motivated to create a special blue-ribbon task force to look into the problem. I was privileged to join IAAF Council members, meet directors, TV experts, members of the Athletes' Commission and apparel-company reps for a dialogue on the subject in Marrakech at the '14 Continental Cup.

The good news there was that 2 days of serious back and forth by all the stakeholders was very enlightening, at least in terms of everyone having a better idea of the problems faced by those having to deal with confusing presentation and also the problem that the shoe giants have with outfitting their international stars.

The bad news is that the summation of what we accomplished was scheduled to pass through multiple layers of bureaucracy. And somewhere there it resides today, as 4 years down the road not another word has been said. I understand that with the Diack scandal and then the Russian problem tossing things completely upside down in Monaco that some lesser projects may have been backburnered, but c'mon... 4 years of silence?

And the fans wait, and wait... oh, never mind that was a city a few miles up the road, Casablanca. ▫

2018 USATF Championships – Clues For Years To Come

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Who'll let the dogs out at the World Champs Trials next July? This year's nationals dropped hints. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Des Moines, Iowa, June 21-24—For a USATF Championships in the quadrennial “off-year” you have to throw out the formchart. Without Olympic or World Champs team berths on the line, *T&FN* declines to even play the predictions game in what is often a reset season for veteran athletes.

What we did instead at Drake was expect surprises and the athletes supplied them along with a loaded quiver of tantalizing clues as to who the headliners could be in the 3 international championship seasons ahead. In this category put Noah Lyles and Ronnie Baker (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-100-lyles-running-with-the-big-dogs/>), new worthy rivals to absent Justin Gatlin and Christian Coleman in the men's 100, and Aleia Hobbs (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-100-hobbs-repeats-her-ncaa-dominance/>), whose winning smile bespoke eager anticipation of soon

challenging Tori Bowie in the women's century.

In the women's 400, with Allyson Felix not in town and world champ Phyllis Francis contesting the 200, first-year post-collegian Shakima Wimbley dropped a revelatory lap (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-400-wimbley-joins-the-sub-50-club/>). The 110 hurdles, while the times into a headwind for the final were unremarkable, suggested Devon Allen isn't ceding anything to Florida super-frosh Grant Holloway (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-110-hurdles-finishes-dont-get-much-closer/>), and a rivalry may be rising up.

These Nationals also capped a spring and early summer of promise in a couple of events where U.S. athletes historically have never been at the forefront. When was the last time the USATF Championships arrived with a U.S. woman triple jumper and hammer thrower leading the world lists? Never in the era of their being WR events. And this time the TJ was a firecracker of a duel (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-triple-jump-orji-vs-franklin-round-8/>) ending in a third title for Keturah Orji (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/keturah-orji-is-a-student-of-her-event/>), and in the hammer DeAnna Price lofted the ball to a new American Record (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-hammer-price-recaptures-the-american-record/>).

In the men's throws (with all the long ones contested outside the stadium) the shot upset the formchart if there had been one as Darrell Hill aced out Ryan Crouser (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-shot-hill-stakes-his-claim-for-greatness/>), and the discus result, a PR improvement of close to 10 feet by lefty Reggie Jagers, opened some eyes (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/the-winds-of-good-fortune-favored-reggie-jagers/>).

13 athletes defended titles successfully: Ameer Webb, Evan Jager, Paul Chelimo, Sam Kendrick, Ajee' Wilson, Emma Coburn, Shelby Houlihan (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/shelby-houlihan-deadly-when-the-sprinting-starts/>), Molly Huddle, Keni Harrison, Maria Michta-Coffey, Vashti Cunningham, Sandi Morris, Kara Winger.

And in the men's middle distance races returns to the fore were the rule: Clayton Murphy bouncing back from injury at last year's meet in a sizzling

[negative-split 800 \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-800-a-rare-negative-split-win/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-800-a-rare-negative-split-win/) and Olympic 1500 champ [Matthew Centrowitz once more the master tactician \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-1500-no-off-year-for-centro/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-mens-1500-no-off-year-for-centro/) after a slip to 2nd in '17.

For Iowa locals, the biggest draw looked to be [the women's 1500 pitting native daughters Jenny Simpson and Houlihan \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-1500-houlihan-starts-her-double/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-1500-houlihan-starts-her-double/), whose win last year was in the 5000. Their war on the final lap was fierce until Houlihan, an erstwhile Iowa prep 400 champ, found another gear in the final stretch and snipped Simpson's string of consecutive titles at 5.

The largest crowd of the four days showed for Houlihan–Simpson. How large? Who knows? No attendance figures were released and the entire backstretch was mostly empty all meet long. Weather on the last day—a possible thunderstorm forecast that did materialize and delayed the meet's conclusion for 3 hours—was likely a factor. Minimal signage for the meet around town could not have assisted. An informal poll of hotel shuttle and Uber drivers by this writer showed most either had no idea a meet was being held or thought this might be the Drake Relays.

In promotional terms, the off-year nationals is the membership fee for the club of sites who'd like to host in a Worlds or Olympic Trials year. Des Moines earned that honor for next year—and will run off the show in late July, to jibe better with Doha's late September/early October World Champs hosting. Expect weather somewhere on the steambath/inferno spectrum, not an inappropriate test kitchen before Doha.

Minor complaint—no, not really, it's a detail worth getting right: there were extended periods of time when absolutely nothing was happening on the track and the scoreboard just displayed the event logo, rather than field event updates. In-progress updates appeared on the board once or twice but mostly not at all. Why not fix that?

All in all, though, well done, Des Moines. See you next July.

USATF Men's 100 – Lyles Running With The Big Dogs

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



And in the photos-can-be-deceiving department, note that Noah Lyles actually beat Ronnie Baker by 0.02. (VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN)

Coming 10 months after the first World Champs 1-2 in the century for the U.S. since '01, the 100 was bound to be a story of new blood in the event and an indicator of its direction leading into the WC and Olympic seasons ahead. The sense the final would be a signpost clash tingled under gray cloud cover far more palpably than it had before either of the last two off-year 100s in '14 & '10.

London gold and silver men Justin Gatlin (pacing his 36-year-old body as he looks to keep it going for 2 more years) and World Indoor 60 gold medalist Christian Coleman (hamstring injury) passed on the meet. Last year's surprising 3rd-placer Christopher Belcher had not run a 100 this year, had no races at all since mid-April and was also absent.

That left '14 (and '09) winner Mike Rodgers, the U.S. list leader at 9.92 and 33 years old, facing the hot hand on the DL circuit, Ronnie Baker, NCAA champ Cameron Burrell and 20-year-old 200 savant Noah Lyles two weeks on from a 9.93 PR in Kingston, Jamaica.

Also on the start list was Isiah Young, whose 9.96 heat and 9.92 final at a low-key meet in Florida 2 weeks earlier led his résumé of 5 wind-legal sub 10.00s in the last 5 seasons. Collegians Jaylen Bacon (9.97) and Kendal Williams (9.99) rounded out the list of entrants with sub-10 times this year.

Baker won heat I easily in 10.00 and then Young sprinted 9.93w. In the third, Rodgers laid down a 9.89 world leader ahead of a 9.93 =PR for Burrell but then called it a meet, eschewing the semis. The final heat went to Lyles at 9.92w.

The next day's semis pointed to a Baker/Lyles matchup. In the first, TCU alum Baker at 9.94 led Burrell (10.00). The second brought a smashing statement from Lyles, a 9.89 PR to equal Rodgers' world lead and make him the =No. 12 American ever. Young (10.01) and Williams (10.02) were next on the other side of 10-flat.

For the final, roughly 90 minutes later, Lyles coach Lance Brauman told his student, "I'm giving you the all clear to go all out."

The sprinter's reaction was exultant: "It's on!"

But Baker had scorched a wind-aided 9.78 at the Pre Classic and the Kentucky native's dragster start was expected as a formidable force Lyles would have to overcome. When the field assembled for the final under leaden clouds, Bacon (10.09 heat, 10.12 semi) failed to appear in his lane 8 slot.

Lyles bounced high with a single semi-jumping jack to loosen up behind his blocks, shook out his arms and legs, and then they settled in. Attention centered on the track: Baker in lane 3, Lyles in 4, Burrell in 5, Young in 6.

At the gun the expected broke out: Baker stormed away hard, as did Burrell and in lane 1 Jeff Demps, former NFL running back and '12 Olympic relayist. Lyles, to be fair, was in the thick through the first few steps but by 10m Baker was gapping the field. By 60, though, Lyles was rolling even with Burrell, who also had a challenge to his right from Young. Crucially, Lyles had narrowed Baker's advantage. With a full head of steam over the final 30, Lyles inched up on Baker, and in the last 10 his legs ate the margin with each step. In the 5m before the line Lyles burst ahead with an elegant lean and sewed up a 9.88–9.90 win, the times PRs for both.

Out in lane 7, Williams leaned with his last two strides and collared Young, both timed in 10.00 with the Georgia sprinter 0.006 ahead in the race for 3rd. Burrell in 5th clocked 10.04.

World leader, USATF champion, Lyles was now a 100 man, and he cut loose with a joyful dance—"I don't know the name of it," he said noting its hops and kick moves are famous from the video game *Fortnite*. Then Lyles bowed toward the stands.

[He allowed later that patience when he fell behind early was invaluable \(click to read more\). \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/noah-lyles-busts-new-moves-in-des-moines/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/noah-lyles-busts-new-moves-in-des-moines/)

"I didn't think that my first USATF championship was going to be [as] a 100 gold medalist," he said. "I thought it was going to be always the 200, so to come out here and win the 100 made me very happy. I'm proving, one, that I'm not just a 200 runner, and two, that I'm out here with the big dogs and I'm trying to be just as great as them."

USATF Men's 200 – Rain Made Webb's Defense Easier

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



Clearly, first came Ameer Webb; then it was all up to the camera in the half-lapper. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

USATF Men's 200 – Rain Made Webb's Defense Easier

There's no sugar-coating this one. When the 3-hour rain delay caused Michael Norman to bypass the half-lap final, that changed everything.

Defending champ Ameer Webb had won the first heat at 20.39, while Norman ran an eased-up 20.46 to win the third, still wearing his USC singlet despite his recent go-pro announcement. In the semis, Webb captured the first with a season-best 20.13, helped by a 1.5 wind. Norman took the second, again greatly eased up, in a 20.35 into an 0.6.

The chatter before the final was not about who would win but focused almost entirely about how fast Norman might go. The Trojan superstar has a legal best of 20.06, but every indication—from a windy 19.84 to a 43.61 world leader at 400 to an undefeated season—points to a monster 200 in the offing.

Instead, the 27-year-old Webb lined up in lane 4 with an empty lane to his right. He said he had seen Norman packing up several hours earlier. His thought? "It just got easy!" His own decision: "I didn't come all the way to Des Moines, Iowa, not to run."

A sharp start put Webb, last year's World Champs 5th-placer, in the lead immediately, with the next best turn coming from Texas Tech's unheralded Andrew Hudson in lane 6. Journeyman sprinter Justin Walker, in his first USATF 200 final ever, also ran a great curve but lost a stride as soon as they hit the straight. Facing a 1.9 wind, the race came down to Webb's strength. He powered away from the field to win by a solid 4m in 20.47.

Kansas State's Terrell Smith, who had never made an NCAA or USATF final before, forced his way past the crowd on the straight to take runner-up honors in 20.74. Hudson barely edged Walker for 3rd, both timed in 20.80 (an 0.002 margin) and Arkansas's Kenzo Cotton nipped Amir James of Northwestern Louisiana as both ran 20.82s (an 0.001 gap).

For Webb, who had surgery on a torn labrum in his hip just 9 months earlier, a win's a win even if it was the slowest time since '01. He added that he had been looking forward to the matchup with Norman, whom he had beaten handily in their only previous meeting, the '16 OT: "I really was. I was hoping he would show up. He's running real fast and I like to run against the best. It kind of took away from the victory a little bit. There were still a lot of good athletes out there. But it definitely made it easier."

USATF Men's 400 – Surprise Win For An NCAA 7th-Placer

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Houston's Kahmari Montgomery stepped up big-time, scoring the final's only PR. (MIKE SCOTT)

In a year without World Championships or Olympic berths on the line, favorites can be hard to pick. This was so in the 1-lapper and Houston's Kahmari Montgomery, just 7th at the NCAA, took it upon himself to essay a surprise. In a final with just two returners from the '17 USATF clash in Sacramento, the 20-year-old junior transfer from Missouri ran down fellow first-time outdoor finalist Paul Dedewo in the last 40m of the homestretch for a 44.58–44.64 PR win.

Dedewo, 27, an Altis-trained '11 graduate of Div. III City College of New York, broke 45 for the first time in April and in 9 days in late May/early June put together a string of 44.58 (Rome), 44.50 (Hengelo) and 44.56 (Chorzów). With CR setter Michael Norman and defending champ Fred Kerley passing on this event, that left Tennessee senior Nathon Strother (44.34 at the SEC) as the fastest entrant on paper. But at the NCAA Strother had been knocked out in the semis, leaving Dedewo, if anyone, the best-guess pick to win.

The heats and semis offered few hints—and a slough of lane DQs. NCAA 4th-placer Mar'yea Harris and Brycen Spratling were flagged out from heat IV. Then the first of the two semis, won by Dedewo in 45.03 over Strother (45.10) saw Vernon Norwood, Michael Berry and Rashard Clark pulled for violations. Michael Cherry, the '17 NCAA 3rd-placer for LSU, won semi II in 44.87 from Montgomery (45.11).

An intriguing sidebar to the proceedings had been Christian Taylor's entry in a stated quest to better 45. The triple jump star's closest attempt had been an oh-so-close PR 45.07 in early June, and here he turned 45.74 in his heat and 45.95 in his semi. It was minorly ironic that the latter time was faster than Josephus Lyles' 45.99, but the brother of sprint star Noah advanced and Taylor did not because the three DQed racers had been in Lyles' semi.

Montgomery, in hindsight, came to the final perhaps a tad underrated. With a more evenly paced NCAA final, he might have finished significantly higher than 7th. He had run 44.91 at Mt. SAC, a 43.38(!) anchor leg on Houston's 4x4 at the Penn Relays, and 44.92 in his NCAA semi, but his start in Eugene was aggressive. In the rain-dampened collegiate title race Montgomery reached 200 in 20.9, about even with eventual runner-up Akeem Bloomfield and in front of Michael Norman, and appeared to pay a price for his haste.

Drawing lane 6 here as in Eugene, Montgomery reached 200 in about 21.6, trailing Cherry and Dedewo in 4 and 5. This trio reached 300 with Dedewo a half-step ahead, and Cherry and Montgomery more or less equal along with Arkansas junior Obi Igbokwe in lane 7. As Igbokwe dropped back, Cherry could make no headway against Dedewo's margin, but Montgomery hoovered it up with an 11.8 split on the run-in. He drew even with 40 or 50m left to run and in the last 35m forged ahead to a foot-and-a-half advantage at the line. Cherry just managed to repel a notable stretch charge by Strother, who at 300 had been 6th and not close to Lyles in 5th. Nonetheless, the Vol ended up short of the former Tiger in 3rd, 44.85–44.89.

“Coming off [the NCAA], I did lose a little confidence because I was expected to do a little better than I did,” Montgomery said. “But like I said, my fight never ended, my drive never finished and I’m not stopping until I can. This whole season was just a huge learning process. Picking off of my freshman year [in which he reached the NCAA semis and placed 2nd at USATF Juniors and 5th at the World Juniors] and then having a bad season last year, this year I really had nothing to lose. In a new environment, new coaches, new team, new everything, it felt like a fresh start, which is something that I really needed to better me and my future. And Houston was obviously the best way to go so I’m here.”

Montgomery said he did make an adjustment between the two June title meets, to “just trust my process and run my own race.”

USATF Men’s 800 – A Rare Negative-Split Win

July 2018 | by Mark Cullen |



Clayton Murphy ran a second lap an amazing 2.57 seconds faster than the first. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Clayton Murphy’s absence from the world stage didn’t last long. The 2016 Olympic bronze medalist used a searing second circuit to win the national title

in decisive fashion at 1:46.50. In recording a massively negative-split race at 54.54/51.97, he became only the fourth of this millennium's 19 winners to do so, following Nick Symmonds in '11 (52.16/52.01) and David Krummenacker in '03 (53.1/52.4) & '02 (54.05/53.19). Obviously, none of the other three had such a wide disparity in laps.

The 23-year-old Akron alum started the final notably faster than is his wont; he sprinted to the front to establish position and then ran shoulder to shoulder with BYU's Abraham Alvarado for the second half of the first lap, passed in a pedestrian 54.54. Then Murphy spun the unanswerable 51.97. Boom! He was especially sharp in the last 150m as he sprinted away from NCAA champ/yearly list leader Isaiah Harris and veteran Erik Sowinski, who finished 2nd (1:47.11) and 3rd (1:47.76).

Murphy and Harris had tangled at the top of the final curve when Harris tried to move inside and ahead. "He tried to come in and I just fought him off," said Murphy, still sounding determined after the race. "I just wasn't giving up my spot to him."

"It's good," he said of returning to the top. "Getting back to where I was in 2016, getting back to that form and that focus I had... this sets me up well for the rest of the summer to get over to Europe, run fast, and compete."

Sowinski led every step of the way in both his heat and semi, but said that what worked in the second round did not suggest a tactic for the final. "I ran the same way last year and it didn't pay off for me. With guys like Isaiah and Clayton, those guys are so strong that I need to have a lot of room with 100m to go."

Murphy was the master of each round... even when he finished 2nd to Harris in the semis. "He went hard and it was a good move and it kind of caught me off guard a little bit," he said of the collegian's strong finish, "but it's all about making the final. I'm still not at the top of my game, but I'm at a pretty good point right now, so it's all about getting ready for Sunday."

After his win he said, "It's been a hard road. It's been a lot of hard workouts and a lot of hard days and trying to be as patient as possible. Alberto [Salazar] has really brought me along the right way and there's been a lot of trust in each other, a lot of trust in the training, and in the process so far. I try to look at that big picture—everything is building-building-building—and this is another rung in the ladder on the way back to the top. It's a really good step in the right direction."

USATF Men's 1500 – No Off Year For Centro

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Not a Trials? Not a problem for Matthew Centrowitz, who valued title No. 5. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

All résumés are not created equal. So it was that the central question to be answered was whether Olympic champion Matthew Centrowitz, winner of four USATF titles since '11, would bounce back to the top after placing 2nd last year.

Might Robby Andrews strike again? He had acquitted himself fairly well in a 1500 in Oslo, placing 2nd in 3:36.05. The defending champion's heat here, though, did not go well and he placed 6th (3:43.89), 0.41 behind winner Pat Casey and not among the time-advancers. Centro had controlled a highly tactical heat I to win from collegian Robert Domanic and Colby Alexander. All the time qualifiers came from heat II, won by Eric Jenkins (3:40.63) from 20-year-old Drew Hunter (3:40.68) and Craig Engels (3:40.69), just ahead of last year's 3rd-placer, Johnny Gregorek (3:40.79).

In the final Centrowitz took up early position in front but nobody wanted to make it fast from the get-go, and on the first homestretch Hunter moved up from the ruck to take the lead. With collegian Sam Prakel on his shoulder Hunter, the young miler who signed with adidas straight out of high school, passed 400 in 63.4 and 800 in 2:07.7. From there Jenkins moved to inject some pace. He led most of the next 300m to the bell before which Prakel passed him—with Centro sticking close, on the inside of lane 2 and safely protected from sliding into a box.

Prakel hit the 1200 in 3:03.4, having turned lap 3 in 55.7 and setting up a mass sprint to the finish. Centrowitz, taking no chances, moved up and to his shoulder by the middle of the straight. Also chasing well were Izaic Yorks and Jenkins. As the chase got hot, Duck senior Prakel, 6th at the NCAA, would not roll over. Not until 10m into the homestretch did Centro get past. Yorks rolled by Prakel a few yards later. Jenkins almost swallowed by the a large gaggle of pursuers with 100 to run, surged up in the last 25 for 3rd.

Centrowitz, his visage calm until the end when he raised his arms as punctuation, finished up front in 3:43.37 to Yorks' 3:43.63. With closing splits of 53.58, 26.9 and 13.2, he also ran his last 2 laps in 1:50.63; in his Rio win that figure was 1:49.8. The zip is returning to his legs. Jenkins' 3:43.74 held at bay Casey (3:43.84), fastest in the field over the last 100, which he covered in 12.8. It was truly a mass finish; Prakel wound up 7th.

"Excitement, joy," said Centro of his emotions. "I don't take these national titles for granted—even with an off year and no World Championships or Olympics to qualify for. I think I was notified, or I was at least aware of, last year that 5 [titles] would have tied Steve Scott's record, and that was something kind of in my mind last year that was a little disappointing so coming back this year is something I still had in the back of my head and definitely wanted to tie. I think at this point in my career I just want to keep checking off boxes to leave my mark, I guess, in the 1500 in U.S."

Yo, Matthew, good news! Sorta. You've still got a mark to shoot for. Scott actually won 6 titles in the 1977–86 period. One might call that the "modern era" record. Before that Canadian George Orton—back when foreigners could enter the meet—won 6 in the period 1892–00. And Joie Ray won 8 between 1915 and '23, the last 7 in a row.

Centro is tied at five U.S. titles with Glenn Cunningham (all but one 1933–38), no slouch by any stretch in his era.

USATF Men's Steeple – Jager Runs His Streak To 7

July 2018 | by David Woods |



Evan Jager tied Henry Marsh for the most consecutive steeple wins in meet history. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Everyone watching knew Evan Jager was going to win. Everyone running knew Evan Jager was going to win. Evan Jager surely knew Evan Jager was going to win.

But that's not what he thought, though, even after years of invincibility. He did extend his streak of national steeple titles to a record-tying 7, but with anxiety. "I had some pretty good nerves going to the first time, and then held that through 20 minutes past the original start time," the 29-year-old Illinois native said. "Started coming back down. It was just different. I think my nerves popped up much closer to the race time than I originally would have. I don't think it really affected me that much other than getting up twice, basically. I was able to stay focused mentally. Body probably actually felt better because I'd done two warmups and I was really loose and really warmed up."

Just before the race was to begin, the Sunday storm's 3-hour delay hit. When action did resume, the steeple pace was neither fast nor dawdling, but the Bowerman TC star can beat a domestic field under any tactics. In the end he broke his own Drake Stadium record with a time of 8:20.10, pulling away from Hillary Bor (8:22.58), Andy Bayer (8:24.66), Stanley Kebenei (8:28.39) and Jordan Mann (8:28.55) with a 59.68 last lap.

Jager has now won every U.S. title since '12, matching Henry Marsh's streak 1981–87 (Marsh also won in '78 & '79 for 9 wins overall). The delay was just another barrier to clear for the Olympic bronze medalist and AR holder. "I was ready to run at 1:00, 2:00, whenever. It didn't matter," he said. "If they had wanted to bring us back tomorrow, that was fine with me. I would have run whenever."

For Bayer, 3rd was his best-ever at a Nationals. Unfortunately, a spot in the Olympics or World Championships was not on the line. The Indiana alum has finished 4th on 4 occasions: in the 1500 at the '12 Olympic Trials, and in the steeple in '15, '16 & '17. It was at Des Moines in '12 where he won an NCAA title in the 1500. He is hoping to be in PR shape by the end of summer. "I wouldn't say I felt good until the last two weeks," Bayer said. "I just had a lot of things going on personally that I would say are really positive things. But it's just a hard year to be fully into it in an off year."

Super-Stoked 5th-Placer

No one was more into his steeple finish than out-of-nowhere Jordan Mann, who scored the only PR in the final placing 5th. He spoke non-stop for almost 10 minutes afterward and rified on everything from his Midwest roots and mediocre college career to anime and being a black Jew. "I was like, 'NACAC year! Let's go!'" he said. "I'm going to get a U.S. kit."

Making the NACAC team would be an achievement for Mann, who ran for Brown and spent a grad transfer year at Providence. He was a 9:34 two-miler at his St. Louis high school and finished dead last—95th out of 95—in the '12 Heps XC. He said he continues to run with "a chip on my shoulder," and he has dropped his PR 4 times this year.

"I guarantee no one here is as happy as me," he said. Mann, 25, trains in Providence, and said he works 25 hours a week in a Jewish center

at Brown. He lowered his mile best to 3:58.94 indoors in February.

If this nationals race did not change his life, the '16 East Regional did. He ran 8:38.28 for a 14-second OR and qualified for the NCAA, where he was 7th in his semi. So he decided to chase a steeplechase dream. "I was just trying to beat guys," he said. "I had no idea what times I was running."

USATF Men's 5000 – Chelimo Continues American Dominance

July 2018 | by Bob Hersh |



Paul Chelimo hasn't lost a track race to an American since the end of the '16 season.

(KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Paul Chelimo was the clear favorite, and for good reason. Since the end of the '16 season, he had not lost a track race to an American. His victories in that time span included 3 indoor USATF titles (at 3 different distances) and last year's outdoor 5000. As expected, he successfully defended his title in Des Moines and he did so with apparent ease, almost toying with the field.

He took the lead on the first backstretch and then, on the second lap, picked up the pace. "I'm really, really confident with my kick," he said later, "but no

matter what, you don't want to take the risk. I wanted to take the sting out of those guys a bit and see what they could do and what they could do with the moves and everything and see who was strong enough to react to the moves."

By the third lap, the field had strung out and the only runner to stay within a second of the leader was Tommy Curtin, who finished 6th last year. That turned out not to be so wise; after a lap of chasing Chelimo, Curtin fell off the pace and he dropped out of the race with less than 4 laps remaining.

After a few more fast circuits, Chelimo settled into a more relaxed pace and allowed U.S. Army teammate Emanuel Bor to take the lead for a couple of laps. With the slower pace, the field closed the gap, and with 4 laps to go, the top 13 were separated by less than 2 seconds, with Chelimo back in the lead. There was still a closely-bunched pack of 9 with 2 to go, when Sam Parsons moved from near the back of that pack to take the lead briefly.

But Chelimo was having none of that. He quickly retook the lead and never relinquished it. With a lap remaining Ryan Hill, Hassan Mead and Riley Masters passed Parsons. Hill, Mead, Masters and Bor remained in contention as Chelimo picked up the pace on the last lap, but coming off the final turn, Chelimo (13:29.47) unleashed a monster kick and the others couldn't respond, with Hill (13:29.67) being closest. Said the winner, the 27-year-old former Kenyan, "With 2 laps to go, I knew it was going to be a kickers' race. I tried as much as I could to save for the last 200."

Chelimo, who has a PR of 13:03.90, said that his next goals are to break 13:00 for the first time and to break Bernard Lagat's AR of 12:53.60. His plan is to "just get a race, get good pacers, me and a couple of guys, and just go for it as much as I can, and see what's gonna happen."

USATF Men's 10K – Lomong Extends His Range

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



You have to go back many a decade to find a winner of such diverse distances as Lopez Lomong. (MIKE SCOTT)

In one sense the 10K won by Lopez Lomong rang familiar for our time. The 33-year-old's 28:58.38 winning mark was slow like last year's winner by Hassan Mead (29:01.44). And by another measure Lomong's victory was evocative of a long gone era as the Bowerman TC veteran became only the second past 1500/mile champion to add a 10,000 title to his collection, following in the spike marks of Joie Ray in... 1928!

Lomong won the metric mile in '09 and '10—after a 3rd-place showing in '08, in which season he also placed 5th in the 800 for the second year in a row—and with his swift-kicking display here to win from Rio 10K Olympian Shadrack Kipchirchir (28:59.67) staked a claim to both range and longevity. An appropriate new challenge will be to match Ray in the latter of these categories. A 3-time Olympian and mile WR setter, Ray won the first of his 8

national mile titles in '16, 12 years before his 10K victory. He also won the long track race, a 5-miler, in '16. Ray had predecessors too. In 1888–91 Thomas Conneff won a pair of mile crowns and four 5M titles. Before Conneff, Edward Carter won nationals mile/5M doubles in 1886 and '87.

Distance runners tend not to come to Des Moines in late June seeking fast times, and although heat wasn't much of a factor at the start (Lomong wore arm warmers), the field dawdled out behind Ben Bruce's 72.87 first lap and stuck to lap times above 70 for the first half. On laps 14 & 15, Kipchirchir threw in some pace—64.49 followed by 65.56—to lead a 4-man breakaway, including Lomong, Brooks Beast Garrett Heath and Elkanah Kibet of the U.S. Army squad.

The tempo drifted back up to 70s and 71s for the next 5 go-rounds, so at the end of a 67 circuit with 4 laps left 6 ran in the front group headed by Tinman Elite's Reed Fischer. Matt McClintock ran in front of Kibet in 5th. When lap 24 went in 68 seconds, there was only one more in which to settle the score. At the bell Kipchirchir led Lomong, Fischer, Heath and Kibet with just 0.41 separating the quintet.

The rush for home commenced, Kipchirchir and Lomong busted free from the rest entering the backstretch and with a drum corps beating a tattoo, Kipchirchir, the Kenyan-born former U.S. Army star who had placed 2nd the last two years, led and Lomong chased. Lomong swung wide off the turn and finally found some miler's speed to get past Kipchirchir some 50m from home. With one glance over his shoulder, he opened his margin to about 7m at the end, having covered his last 100 in 12.0 to Kipchirchir's 13.4. Last laps: 54.15 and 55.55. Behind Kipchirchir's 28:59.67, his training mate Kibet was 3rd in 29:05.51 in front of Fischer's 29:06.81.

Said the winner, "I didn't win the USA championship in the 800, but I came so close, but 15 and 10, this is good. It's a good thing and I'm just going to continue doing it. Next season is going to be a new block to see on my training log, and we'll see how that is going." He added, "We'll maybe do a few things here and there and tweak and go for it, just go out and put the USA jersey on again."

USATF Men's 110 Hurdles – Finishes Don't Get Much Closer

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



Was it Grant Holloway or Devon Allen for the win? Camera said the latter by 0.002. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

"#Beast."

That's what frequent tweeter Grant Holloway (@Flamingoo_) called Devon Allen (@DevonAllen13) after the latter's stunning hurdle win.

In 4th place at hurdle 4, it seemed likely that Allen was on his way to an also-ran finish in the rain-delayed race in a race that the undefeated Holloway had dominated from the start. Holloway, with a smiley face drawn on his palm to remind him to get back to having fun after a too-serious NCAA meet, started best and hurdled cleanly in lane 5, his closest pursuer Jarret Eaton.

Running 3rd on the damp track was Aries Merritt, sandwiched in lane 4 between Holloway and Allen in lane 3. Allen pulled even with Merritt by hurdle

5 and edged past him after they cleared hurdle 6, despite hitting that hurdle. By hurdle 7, Holloway's lead over Allen still looked convincing, with the Florida star touching down while Allen was still on the upward ascent. Any upset, if it were to happen, looked like it would come from Eaton, who had pulled to within a few inches of Holloway by the seventh barrier. Allen hit No. 8 while Holloway stayed clean with Eaton keeping the pressure up. At 9 it was all Holloway and Eaton.

Then hurdle 10 happened. Holloway didn't hit, but he appeared to lose momentum while in the air. At touchdown, his margin over Eaton had shrunk noticeably and suddenly Allen was in the mix as well. Holloway still had a grip on the lead a foot or two from the finish. Allen, though, leaned best. In a dip that tricked the human eye, he put his left shoulder across the line just 0.002 ahead of Holloway's right. Official times for both were 13.46s with Eaton (13.51) just barely holding off Merritt (13.52). Florida State frosh Trey Cunningham impressed with his 13.71 for 5th after battling the whole distance with Nebraska senior Antoine Lloyd, who PRed with his 13.46 semi but hit a half-dozen hurdles en route to his 13.72 final. Defending champ Aleec Harris ended up 7th.

Of the rain, the winner said, "It was a big delay, 3½ hours. Everybody did it, but it's not ideal for a fast time." He revealed that he and Holloway are also regular video game rivals, playing several times a week. The relationship goes back to Holloway's recruiting visit to Oregon when Allen was his campus tour guide. "He's a phenomenal athlete," said Allen. "Maybe I'm lucky that he's not coming out pro this year, so I can avoid him for a little bit."

Looking ahead, the 23-year-old Allen, who also won in '14 & '16, said he will go back to experimenting with a 7-stride first-hurdle approach in Europe, as he had been at the start of the season: "Keep being aggressive, keep competing well and just keep doing my thing." And with a new house to make payments on, he added, "I'll just be having fun and making some money. I need to pay some bills."

Said Holloway, for whom this was the final race of the season, "Sometimes God does things to humble you. For me to lose to my big brother, it doesn't get better than that."

USATF Men's 400 Hurdles – Looks Can Be Deceiving

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |

Kenny
Selmon
didn't
look
like a
long-
hurdles



An uninspired semi relegated eventual winner Kenny Selmon to the far outside lane. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Kenny Selmon didn't look like a long-hurdles favorite. The North Carolina senior had had a great collegiate season, topped off by a 48.12 PR runner-up finish at the NCAA. But when he finished 4th in his semi here at 49.30, he looked very much like another tired collegian running one meet too many. "My prelims did not go how I wanted them to," he admitted.

Others fared well in the heats. TJ Holmes led the first round at 49.10, with Khallifa Rosser (49.55) the only other under 50. In the semis, Holmes (49.00) again led. Olympian Byron Robinson looked strong at 49.04, Taylor McLaughlin, who had PRed at 49.26 in the heats, lowered his lifetime best again with a 49.10 and Khallifah Rosser got close to PR territory with his 49.12. Selmon, however, barely made it through, with his 49.30 getting him the last qualifying spot by 0.11 and landing him lane 8.

In the final, with McLaughlin MIA, unretired Bershawn Jackson got out fastest in lane 2, followed by Holmes and Robinson. Selmon trailed in last at the first hurdle. Holmes blitzed the backstretch, moving into the lead ahead of NCAA 3rd-placer David Kendziera and Rosser, as Selmon improved to 4th. Coming off the turn, Holmes still owned a solid lead, though Selmon had pulled even with Kendziera and Rosser at the ninth hurdle.

The run-in would prove crucial. Selmon maintained his form and flew over the tenth hurdle ahead of Holmes, as Kendziera lost ground dramatically. At the finish, Selmon crossed in his second-fastest time ever, 48.21, some 2m clear of Holmes (48.51) with Rosser claiming 3rd in a PR 48.65. The veteran Jackson, now 35, came back to tag Kendziera for 4th, 49.14–49.58.

"I knew I had the option today, I could either continue to have bad races or be a national champion," said the 21-year-old victor. "I knew that all I needed to do was execute my race plan, and I'm very proud of my race." Selmon, who missed last year's meet to do an internship, concluded, "I've been waiting 4 years for this. I'm just excited to end my Tar Heel career as a national champion."

USATF Men's 20K Walk – Round & Round They Go

July 2018 | by Elliott Denman |



Nick Christie needed to circle the track 50 times to score his PR win. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

The 20,000-meter racewalk (meaning a 50-lap track race) hadn't been held at Nationals since the last stop at Drake 5 years ago. And that edition of the event had to endure a 4-plus-hour rain delay that left the competitors flustered and flummoxed. The ensuing meets saw the event held as a 20-kilometer event on adjacent roadways. Track's purists insist that track races always be labeled with meters while road events be properly described in kilometers... err... Ks.

Road or track, it didn't really matter to 26-year-old Nick Christie. He led this one from start to finish, every single centimeter, clocking a PR 1:24:53.4. After the great Drake deluge of '13, and often intense Iowa heat, the contestants came prepared to deal with anything the weather gods might deliver. But instead of adversity, they got to race in near-perfect, coolish and slightly drizzly conditions.

Then again, Drake Stadium was virtually empty by their 8:40 p.m. start time. Asked to estimate the semblance of a crowd, "The number I got was 43," said Martin Smith, racewalker and fan from Cedar Rapids. The concession stands were closed and the public restrooms were closed by then, too. The athletes and their families and devotees in the stands soldiered on regardless.

Christie—reeling off his laps in virtual 1:43/1:44ish precision, broke clear from the starting gun and was never challenged. Fellow Southern Californian Emmanuel Corvera, who'd scored an upset win in this event last year, was eventually lapped but held on for 2nd in 1:27:47.2. A solid 3rd throughout was Cornerstone alum John Cody Risch, half a lap back of Corvera, in 1:28:29.5. Christie's clocking was more than a PR: it was the best at Nationals (track or road) since Trevor Barron's 1:23.00.1 in '12. Beyond that, it also "justified"—or simply wrapped up—his own version of a national Triple Crown: indoor 3000, road 50K, now track 20,000. "It was about a 2:00 PB for me and I'm really just getting started," said Christie, once he caught his breath. "I'm going up to the NACAC 20K race in Toronto in August and I really think I can compete with these guys."

He's obviously over the virus that hit him in China—walking the IAAF Team Championship in May—which forced him out of the 50 after 32K. "I was spitting blood and had a lot of problems. So we decided to stop right there and not destroy my season," he said. "I'm fine now; I'm really focused. I'm pretty optimistic. Although it was first National win at 20, this one represented his 11th national title at all distances.

USATF Men's High Jump – “Anything Can Happen”

July 2018 | by Bob Hersh |



Jeron Robinson had words of wisdom after his upset high jump win. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Kansas State alum Erik Kynard was aiming for his fifth outdoor title, after winning his fifth consecutive indoor crown in March. The '12 Olympic silver medalist hadn't lost to an American this year and was the clear favorite. However “in the high jump, anything can happen.” Those words were uttered by Jeron Robinson after he upset Kynard to win his first national title.

The early jumping was uneventful. Kynard was never worse than tied for the lead after each of the first five heights. He was the sole leader after clearing 7-5¾ (2.28), having no misses at that point. Robinson stood 3rd behind Kynard and Trey Culver, the latter setting an outdoor PR.

The bar was then raised to 7-7 (2.31). Kynard missed twice and Robinson equaled his PR for the second time this year by clearing that height on his second try. Kynard passed his last attempt and the bar went to 7-8 (2.34). The favorite's one effort at that height was a disaster. He ran under the bar and ended up lying on the mat for several minutes in obvious pain. When he was

able to leave, he had to be helped to his feet and needed assistance in proceeding to the athletes' bench. He seemed to be hopping and not putting any weight on his left foot. He did not return to the infield and was not on the podium for the medal ceremony.

A few days later, Kynard posted a picture on Instagram showing him on crutches wearing a large medical boot on that member. "The body is a delicate and plastic instrument," he said, adding hashtags that included #needavacation and #fckthisboot.

The 27-year-old Robinson, a former NCAA Div. II champion while at Texas A&M-Kingsville, was naturally elated by his victory. "I'm excited," he said. "I don't know how I'm going to sleep tonight." Asked if he was going for a PR this summer, he replied "I'm always going for a PR."

USATF Men's Pole Vault – Continuing A Streak That Began In 2014

July 2018 | by Becca Gillespy Peter |



Sam Kendrick was his typical no-miss self as he won his fifth national title in a row.

(KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Sam Kendricks continued his dominance of the men's vault with his fifth straight national title, clearing a seasonal best 19-2¼ (5.85), a Drake Stadium record. That made him only the third ever—following two legends of the event—to win 5 titles in a row. Bob Richards did it 1948–52 and Dutch Warmerdam pulled off the feat 1940–1944 (2 of the Richards wins were shared titles, back in the no-tiebreak days). Kendricks is just 25; Richards was 26 when his string ended, Warmerdam 29.

The winner employed his usual strategy of attempting every height and succeeded in clearing each of the 7 with military precision until the bar reached 19-4¼ (5.90) and he finally missed three times.

Although the 22-man field was a bit larger than normal, Kendricks embraced his role as a leader in the event, noting that it is important to give the younger vaulters experience at that level, saying, "This is a place for young jumpers to cut their teeth. To really shine and see the upper level because I might not jump against these guys all year until we come here. It's time for the older guys to be really put to the test. To show the younger generation what it takes and what it looks like if you want to represent the USA."

Kendricks also praised the local officials for correctly predicting that the wind would change directions. While the contestants generally warmed up into a headwind, the wind shifted when the bar went up and it was mostly a tailwind during the competition.

Outdoor U.S. list leader Chris Nilsen, wrapping up his soph year at South Dakota, was the runner-up with a clearance of 19-¼ (5.80), improving a spot on last year's finish. The 20-year-old was fresh off an NCAA title, and a year of major life changes that included getting married and becoming a father. He said the changes in lifestyle helped him learn better time management and the importance of sleep.

Third place finisher Cole Walsh was the surprise performer of the day, breaking his PR 3 times by clearing 18-6½ (5.65), 18-8¼ (5.70) and 18-10¼ (5.75). Walsh noted after the meet that he had only cleared 18-4½ (5.60) for the first time three weeks prior. He credited his coach, '00 Olympic gold medalist Nick Hysong, for his success, explaining that they worked hard to take advantage of the speed and strength he had developed at Oregon, and fine tune the movements to translate it into higher pole vaulting.

Indoor champion Scott Houston finished 4th with an equal season best of 18-8¼ (5.70), while 5th-place finisher Andrew Irwin cleared the same bar as Houston, but on his second attempt versus Houston's first.

USATF Men's Long Jump – The Odds Were On The Evens

July 2018 | by Dave Johnson |



Jeff Henderson has won the last 3 even-year long jump titles. (ERROL ANDERSON/THE SPORTING IMAGE)

Even-numbered years have been kind to Jeff Henderson. Here he won his third national title, following '14 & '16. The Olympic gold medalist's best jump, a first-round 26-7 (8.10), came on a day which featured shifting winds for the preliminary rounds, followed by the lightning delay which preceded the final 3 rounds.

The oddity was the paucity of fouls in the prelims (2 among the 9 finalists) even though each round of each flight saw both headwinds and tailwinds. The final three rounds saw nothing but tailwinds, but by then the competition had been delayed so much that only 6th-placer Mike Hartfield improved his best

mark from the prelims.

Rodney Ruffin held down 1st after the first flight with a jump of 25-10¾ (7.89). That led until Henderson popped his winning 26-7 to conclude the first round of the second flight. The second round saw Ruffin surpassed in short order by Damarcus Simpson at 26-2¾ (7.99), NCAA champ Zach Bazile at 26-6¼ (8.08) and Marquis Dendy at 26-1¾ (7.97). In round 3, Charles Brown briefly moved to 4th with his 26-1¾, to equal Dendy's best but holding a better second jump. Dendy responded with his best effort, 26-4½ (8.04), the last of only three jumps surpassing 8m for the field.

And then came the delay... which expanded... as the storm lingered. When the final three rounds began, Henderson led and chose to pass all three jumps. Bazile, in 2nd, fouled his fourth-rounder, then passed his final two, and 3rd-placer Dendy managed a 25-1¾ (7.66), passed his fifth jump and fouled his last.

The 29-year-old Henderson became the meet's first winner with a sub-27 jump since '06.

USATF Men's Triple Jump – Another Nationals, Another PR

July 2018 | by Dave Johnson |



Donald Scott notched a PR for the third time in the last 4 USATF meets. (MIKE SCOTT)

Donald Scott pulled off an upset victory with a final round PR of 57-0 (17.37), winning his first national outdoor title. His previous best, 56-7¼ (17.25) came in taking 3rd at last year's meet. He previously won the '17 Indoor... with a PR.

This win thumped a trio of recent World Rankers—Chris Benard, Chris Carter, Omar Craddock—as well as Christian Taylor, who was attempting what proved to be an impossible 400/TJ double. And with Will Claye having called an end to jumping in May, the door to a U.S. crown had been thrown wide open.

Craddock, jumping second in the second flight, took the lead on his first-round jump with a 54-5½ (16.60) effort. Taylor, jumping eighth, passed his first attempt, as he had just finished a 5th-place 400 semi barely more than 5:00 earlier. In round 2, Matthew O'Neal jumped 55-2¾ (16.83), but Benard topped that with 56-10 (17.32) to take the lead. Taylor, now 20 minutes removed from his 400m race, started down the runway but found himself not ready to jump and ran through the board.

Round 3 saw little notable action except for a cautious attempt by Scott, who landed at 54-9¼ (16.69) after having fouled his first two attempts. "I had some complications in the prelims," he said later. "I had to take a safe jump on my third jump. I was running; I had to slow up because I thought I was going to foul, but I popped a qualifying mark and made it to the finals."

Taylor, realizing the futility of his situation, passed his third jump and the field moved on to the final three rounds with Benard still leading. Scott was the only jumper to improve in round 4, leaping 56-6¾ (17.24) to move past Carter's second-round 55-9 (16.99) into 2nd.

In round 5, Craddock improved to 54-7½ (16.65), but it placed him only 6th and would serve as his best of the day. Scott barely fouled on what appeared to be the best jump of the competition, and KeAndre Bates moved to 4th with a 55-7½ (16.95) leap. Benard fouled, but still led.

Scott, jumping fourth, popped his 57-0 winner just after the 100 had finished and the crowd was still buzzing in amazement at the closing speed of Noah Lyles. Scott then watched as Bates also improved with a PR 56-3¾ (17.16), short of Scott but enough to move to 3rd. Neither O'Neal nor Carter could improve, and when Benard fouled the title belonged to Scott.

Scott, a 26-year-old Eastern Michigan alum, said, "I know that I still have a lot left in me. I'm still a young jumper. I just had to be myself and find my rhythm."

USATF Men's Shot – Hill Stakes His Claim For Greatness

July 2018 | by Dave Johnson |



Darrell Hill's trophy shelf just added his first ever USATF title outdoors. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Darrell Hill won his first national outdoor crown, giving him one of the major credentials he needed to feel he belonged in the company of America's best shot men. This year's indoor titlist and the reigning Diamond League champion, Hill upended one of the strongest fields in the meet.

Josh Freeman led after the first flight's opening round with a throw of 65-2¼ (19.87), which remained the leading mark until his third-round 67-0 (20.42). Two-time World Indoor champion Ryan Whiting took the lead midway through the first round of the second flight, reaching 67-11¾ (20.72). Hill, throwing immediately after Whiting, responded with a 66-8½ (20.33) put to move into 3rd. In round 2, Olympic silver medalist Joe Kovacs took the lead with a 68-½ (20.74) effort. The Rio gold medalist, Ryan Crouser, then stepped into the ring and upped the ante to 68-10½ (20.99). Whiting improved his best to 68-2½

(20.79), but moving to 2nd ahead of Kovacs. Hill followed with a foul.

Curt Jensen, looking to break into this select company, took the bait and punched the ball out to 68-5¼ (20.86), moving into the runner-up position. Fouls for Kovacs and Crouser changed nothing, and they were followed by Whiting, who failed to improve. Hill throwing last among the major contenders, improved to 67-3½ (20.51), but was now standing only 5th.

As the fourth thrower for the final three rounds, Hill hit the first 70-footer of the day, reaching 70-1 (21.36). The pressure now applied, the trio of Kovacs, Whiting and the favored Crouser achieved only one fair throw and no improvement over the final three rounds. Meanwhile, Hill upped his lead to 70-9¼ (21.57) in stanza 5, and then watched to see if anyone could catch him. No one did in that round, and in the final sequence Kovacs had a fair put—but not his best of the day—Whiting fouled, and Jensen improved by a centimeter to 68-5¾ (20.87) to stay 3rd. The always-dangerous Crouser fouled for a fifth time, guaranteeing Hill a joyous win.

The 24-year-old Penn State alum fouled his final attempt, and said, “You can’t consider yourself one of the great shot putters in the U.S. if you never win a U.S. championship. Wins don’t come easy against these guys and I’m just thankful.”

USATF Men's Discus – An Ill Wind That Blew Everybody Good

July 2018 | by Roy Conrad |



Nationals conditions gave Reggie Jagers a chance to overcome his left-handed disadvantage. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

The winds that came with the final day's storm didn't do favors for athletes in many events (e.g., see men's long jump), but the men's discus throwers weren't among the afflicted. Indeed, the results had a time-warp quality to them harkening back to Nationals results of bygone decades. The first 8 all broke 200ft (c61m). That hadn't happened since '96. The first 4 were all over 210 (c64m). That hadn't happened since '89. And the winner was over 225 (68.58) for the first time since John Powell set the MR of 233-9 (71.26) in '84.

After his PR 225-1 (68.61), winner Reggie Jagers of the Iron Wood TC said, "I just love being a guy that no one's talking about, coming out here and breaking a record." Record? Yes, farthest throw ever by a left-hander.

You might think that's an arcane stat which should matter only to hardcore

numbers geeks, but it's a factoid which takes on added significance in the discus, an event where the wind can wreak havoc with southpaws. Keeping the physics as simple as possible: because of the way the discus is spinning, the longest discus throws come when there's a quartering headwind from your dominant side. And that's usually the right. When a strong right-hander wind hits a lefty discus the plate can flutter to earth like a Sopwith Camel after an encounter with the Red Baron.

So Jagers frequently operates at a disadvantage.

(<https://trackandfieldnews.com/the-winds-of-good-fortune-favored-reggie-jagers/>) Today he didn't, and he made the most of it. But funny thing, as those mass numbers show, the righties were making some hay as well. As Jagers explained it, "The wind was swirling so much that everyone had at least one throw with perfect wind."

At the end of the first round, yearly list leader Sam Mattis held the lead at 214-8 (65.45) with Jagers next at 208-5 (63.54). Two-time defender Mason Finley had fouled. Neither Mattis nor Jagers improved in the second round, but Finley moved into 2nd with a 214-1 (65.27). Round 3 was good stuff, with Mattis improving his lead to 217-7 (66.32), but 4 throwers later Jagers unleashed a PR 219-7 (66.92) to move into the top spot. Round 4 found Jagers fouling, with Finley improving to 215-9 (65.77) and Mattis keeping the pressure on at 216-6 (66.00).

The fifth stanza was another biggie with Finley reaching a seasonal best—and No. 3 throw of his career—at 220-0 (67.06). He was now in the lead... briefly. Mattis fouled and that brought Jagers back into the ring. Boom! The left-handed WR. The final round was anticlimactic, but the few fans who chose the plate-spinners over track action had received a special treat.

Said Jagers, "I was just disappointed that the big throw hadn't come out all year and I just stayed focused and I knew good things will eventually happen. So I just came in ready. I knew in my heart, I've done 69, at least during practice, so I knew coming up to that meet, there's a lot of big throws in there, we can really do something special. So me throwing 68.61 at the meet and breaking my old facility record from Drake Relays 5 weeks prior, it wasn't a shock to me. It was just, with all the hard work, it finally came out as more of a relief that I felt."

USATF Men's Hammer – So Far And Yet So Close

July 2018 | by Mark Cullen |



Rudy Winkler won a competition so tight that the first 5 were separated by about the length of a hammer. (VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN)

For having to throw a 16-pound implement as far as 242-0 (73.76) to determine a national champion, these results were exceedingly close.

Rutgers' Rudy Winkler won his second hammer title by just 21 inches (54cm) over defending champion Alex Young. Not to be outdone, Young's fifth-round 240-3 (73.22) was a mere 6 inches (13cm) farther than Sean Donnelly's 239-9 (73.09) opener. And Donnelly's bronze? He won it by a scant inch (3cm). The difference between Daniel Roberts in 4th and Conor McCullough in 5th? Just 3 inches (8cm). Less than a meter separated the top 5.

Donnelly led after each of the first two rounds while Winkler vaulted from 5th to 1st with his third-round winner. Young scared the entire field with his fifth-round heave, which placed him securely in 2nd.

Said the soft-spoken Winkler, "I'm a little bit more aggressive than I used to be and a little bit stronger. It's coming together slowly and my training is amazing right now. It's just going to take some time for me to get used to that in competition."

Winkler, who is pursuing a Masters of business & science with a focus on cyber security, is looking forward to a busy competitive schedule this summer. Said the national champion of his goals for a summer with no OG or WC, "I just want to keep training, keep competing, and get close to a personal best."

"It was a good competition," said Young. "We're always trying to push each other."

Donnelly agreed. "We're all under 25 and it's good for the future of U.S. hammer that we're all going to be pushing each other. It's a good day to throw far and congrats to Rudy for putting it together." The next day he said, "I feel OK about it now. Immediately after the competition I was a little disappointed. I could have done better but I learned a lot yesterday about how to compete and how to respond." Moving forward, he will be "focusing more on my own process rather than focusing on the result."

Donnelly's fifth-round foul threaded the needle of the protective netting and sailed left onto a neighboring street where it bounced and hit a parked car. While there was much relief that no one was injured, and while campus police had the area cordoned off for the women's hammer the next day, this was a distressing event.

"I apologize to whoever's car I hit and I'm just glad no one got hurt," said Donnelly.

USATF Men's Javelin – A Bulldog Kind Of Year

July 2018 | by Roy Conrad |



Curtis Thompson's win gave Mississippi State alums both the NCAA and USATF jav titles.
(MIKE SCOTT)

Mississippi State scored a rare 1-2 in the NCAA spear event (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/ncaa-mens-javelin-peters-leads-mississippi-state-1-2/>), and that was without '16 collegiate champion Curtis Thompson, who redshirted this year while rehabbing from injury. The 22-year-old New Jersey native—sans his foreign-nationality teammates—made his '18 debut in Des Moines and it was a winning one.

"I came in with the plan to compete and try to win like any other time," he said. "But I was really looking to get back out there pain-free and just do all I did the whole year in practices to let it pay off."

Thompson took the lead in the first round at 244-7 (74.55) and never trailed. He extended his lead with a second effort of 248-7 (75.77), but eventual

runner-up Capers Williamson made it interesting in the third stanza by coming within inches with a 248-4 (75.71) that would end up his best. Defending champ Riley Dolezal mounted his best challenge in round 4, coming close to the top pair at 246-5 (75.10), but that was as far as he would throw. Thompson responded with his best of the day, 249-3 (75.99). Yearly list leader Michael Shuey was almost 20ft shy of that mark with 239-3 (72.93) in 4th.

The winning distance was the shortest in meet history since the introduction of the new-spec implement back in '86, but Thompson was pleased with the win. "It feels good; feels good to know that all the things I've been doing this whole year are starting to pay off," he said. "Since there were no really big meets this year it was just a good idea not to push through any pain that I was dealing with last year. I started to train smarter, not harder."

USATF Men's Decathlon – The Changing Of The Guard

July 2018 | by Glen McMicken |



After 7 years of Eaton or Hardee, a new name appeared at the top: Zach Ziemek. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

After 7 years of Ashton Eaton and Trey Hardee taking turns sitting in the catbird seat, a new era in U.S. championship 10-eventing dawned with a trip

to the end of the alphabet as Zach Ziemek won his first national title in convincing fashion by 275 points with an 8294.

Double Z, as he has been christened by multis guru Frank Zarnowski, only trailed once during the event, and he produced a big PR in the discus to pull away from runner-up Solomon Simmons after 7 events. A rash of DQs, including two in the 400, knocked out some contenders for podium spots, but it was always only a tussle between Wisconsin grad Ziemek—whose best NCAA finish was a silver in '16—and Simmons, who was 6th behind Ziemek that year for Eastern Michigan.

The 100 results mostly went according to form, but the long jump was hampered by consistent headwinds that kept anyone from surpassing 24-feet. Tied with Ziemek after 2 events, Simmons took the lead by 24 with a shot best of 46-11 (14.30) on his sole legal effort, but Ziemek came back in the high jump to clear 6-7½ (2.01) and take advantage of Simmons' weakest event.

Workmanlike 400s put Ziemek (49.99) at 4169 after the first day, and Simmons (49.22) at 4094. Stanford's Harrison Williams, who crashed out of the NCAA decathlon with a DQ in the 110H after a stellar 4311 first day, made up ground on the two leaders with his 48.16, ranking 3rd by 2 points over Tim Ehrhardt of Michigan State, who had the top clocking at 47.91. Steven Bastien and Alex Bloom, who were both in the top 6 following the HJ, came a cropper in the 1-lapper with lane violations and dropped out of contention.

As Day 2 dawned, Williams inched closer with a 14.13 in the hurdles, coming within 45 points of Ziemek, but then the leader tacked on almost 5ft to his lifetime best in the discus with a 167-0 (50.90) bomb that was more than 100 points better than anyone else in the field.

Sporting a 142-point margin before the vault, Ziemek matched Ehrhardt's 17-6½ (5.30) clearance and his lead ballooned to more than 300 with 2 events remaining. All that was required from there was a pair of steady performances in the javelin and 1500, and that is precisely what Ziemek produced. He had the fourth-best throw at 185-6, and then cantered to a 4:47.38 in 11th to seal his maiden victory. Simmons became American No. 81 to top 8000, tallying a PR 8019, with Williams taking bronze at 7878.

"Having all the guys all together joking around, having fun, you don't get inside your own head or get discouraged or anything," the 25-year-old Ziemek said. "They're there to pick you up and it makes it a lot more fun and easier to do a dec."

USATF Women's 100 – Hobbs Repeats Her NCAA Dominance

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Whether it was cold or hot, Aleia Hobbs was the fastest in both nationals this year. (MIKE SCOTT)

After splashing to a runaway victory down the dash straight in a downpour at the NCAA, Aleia Hobbs had to be considered the favorite to win here as well. With world champion Tori Bowie, the U.S. No. 1 Ranker the last 4 years, skipping the meet, the LSU senior's path was cleared, and she took it to her first USATF crown in 10.91, making her only the fourth NCAA/USATF doubler in event history (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/women-year-ncaa-usatf-doubles/>).

Along the way several rivals revealed unforeseen form. Hobbs led off in heat I with a 10.97 clocking—her sixth wind-legal sub-11 of the year—from Tiger teammate Mikiah Brisco (11.13), the '17 NCAA champion. No great surprise there. In heat II, 25-year-old Kentucky alum Dezerea Bryant, never before a USATF 100 finalist but the '12 U.S. Junior champ, knocked out a 10.99, an 0.01

improvement on her PR from the '15 nationals. Behind Bryant came Tennessee's Shania Collins (11.10), one of two others in the field with sub-11 clockings this year, and '17 runner-up Deajah Stevens (11.18). Heat IV, blown by a 3.0mps wind, saw a 10.91w win from Ashley Henderson from Jenna Prandini's 10.95w. San Diego State junior Henderson had turned her first sub-11 in April but didn't qualify for the NCAA century.

Rio 200 Olympian Prandini, also 25, broke the barrier 5 times in '15 (best of 10.92), while at Oregon, and '16, but struggled last season with a stress-fractured foot. She showed her return was real the next day taking semi I in 11.00 from Henderson's 11.03. Semi II was all about Hobbs, with a 10.89w clocking pushed by a 2.2 wind, in front of Brisco (11.04w) and Bryant (11.07w).

A trio of top contenders seemed to have shaken out and for the final they lined up in the central corridors: Henderson in lane 3, Prandini in 4, Hobbs in 5 (in LSU yellow singlet over purple shorts with Brisco kitted identically to her right). Hobbs started with the biggest bang, although the pair to her left, Brisco and Texas A&M Aaliyah Brown in 2 also acquitted themselves well. By 40m Hobbs was drawing clear and by 60 Prandini and Henderson found separation from the rest as well.

Hobbs's form as she held her lead looked the stuff of technique clinics but for a nearly imperceptible hitch 9m from the line. "I just kind of stumbled at that time," she said. "I was like, 'Alright, you gotta finish running.' So that's what that was."

Hobbs surely finished running, the 10.91 her seventh time of the season in the 10.90s (plus three windies, two of those under 10.9).

At 80m Henderson got a lead of inches over Prandini in the race for 2nd, and she held it over the line to notch a 10.96 PR to Prandini's 10.98. Brisco placed 4th (11.10) from Brown (11.13).

Undefeated in 100s all season, Hobbs said, "Every race I went into I was very confident I could execute the race and I didn't panic at all. So I think that's what got me." Having run her final race in Tiger colors—"I may shed a couple tears"—she reflected on the NCAA/USATF championships pairing that capped her senior campaign after soph year knee surgery and her low-altitude Collegiate Record, 10.85, in '17. The deluge dumping on her NCAA race "was

horrible,” she said, “but Coach [Dennis] Shaver said it was the same in every lane, so in that respect we had some pretty decent weather here. So I had to execute the race.”

Asked about the absent world champion, Hobbs said, “That’s Tori Bowie so I would love to race against her. I know it’s coming soon so I’m looking forward to it.”

USATF Women’s 200 – Prandini Channeling Her Old Self

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



The point of the spear was clear in the half-lapper: Jenna Prandini. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Jenna Prandini is back. After struggling all last year with a stress fracture in her foot, in the semis she produced her fastest half-lapper in 3 years, then followed up with her first national title. This came 2 days after she had clocked 10.98—her fastest century in 2 years—to take 3rd in the 100 final.

The 25-year-old Oregon alum hit the fastest time in the 200 heats at 22.48. The next day she produced a U.S.-leading 22.22 second-rounder, just 0.02 off her PR from her breakout '15 when she won this meet and then made it to the World Championships semis. Behind her was '17 NCAA champ Kyra Jefferson, who clocked 22.48. In the other semi, Iowa’s Brittany Brown and 400 world champ Phyllis Francis each clocked 22.42s. Defending champ Deajah Stevens made it to the semis, but didn’t show up for her race.

That set up the final on a wet track after the 3-hour rain delay: Prandini in 5,

with Jefferson to her left and Francis to her right. Prandini got out well, making up the stagger on Francis in the first 50. In 2nd coming off the turn was Shania Collins of Tennessee, faintly ahead of a trio battling for 3rd; Kyra Jefferson, Jeneba Tarmoh & Ariana Washington.

Prandini carried her furious momentum onto the straight unchallenged into a 1.0 wind. Jefferson emerged from the crowd to hold onto 2nd until Francis reached her top speed and passed her 20m from the finish. For Prandini, it was the first win at any event in more than a year. Her 22.62—the slowest winner since '97—topped Francis (22.83) and Jefferson (22.89) handily. Collins edged Brown for 4th by 0.007 as both clocked 23.08.

Said the winner, "That's all we wanted out of this meet; to just get some rounds in and get some good runs in so that can kind of lead my way into summer and get me set up for the next 3 years. This season was completely an unknown for me. I took it real slow and just made sure I was healthy. I put full faith in what my coach was telling me to do. To come away with a win is really exciting."

She added, "I worked really hard to get to this point. It just makes me really confident going into summer races and knowing what I can do in a full season being healthy again."

USATF Women's 400 – Wimbley Joins The Sub-50 Club

July 2018 | by David Woods |



The rest of the field was already out of it when Shakima Wimbley hit the homestretch.

(KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

A relative newcomer and an all-but-forgotten veteran made breakthroughs in the 1-lap final. Miami alum Shakima Wimbley went under 50 for the first time, clocking 49.52 to tie Bahamian training partner Shaunae Miller-Uibo for the yearly world lead. Jessica Beard, whose PR had been stuck at 50.56 since '09 until she ran 50.52 in Kingston in May, had her second lifetime best of the year in taking 2nd at 50.08. Kendall Ellis, coming off an epic 4x4 anchor for USC at the NCAA, was 3rd in 50.37 with World Indoor gold medalist Courtney Okolo 4th at 50.65.

Beard was out fastest in lane 4, soon making up the stagger on Okolo (5) & Ellis (6). Wimbley (3) was 0.1 ahead of Beard at halfway (23.6–23.7) and kept building her lead through the curve. She had an 0.6 margin with 100 to go and while Beard clawed back a 10th of that it wasn't nearly enough.

Said the 23-year-old Wimbley, who moved to No. 7 on the all-time U.S. list, “I was in total shock. You put that time on your vision board, but you don’t expect that to happen so quickly. That’s my first year out of college, so that was a far-fetched goal for me. To get it now, it’s just amazing. I can’t really explain it.”

One way to explain it: She is in the training group with Miller-Uibo, coached by Lance Brauman in Clermont, Florida. Wimbley’s college career featured an NCAA title indoors and an outdoor runner-up finish a year ago. And she won silver behind Okolo at March’s indoor Worlds. Her pre-’18 PR was 50.36 in finishing 5th at last year’s USATF. That earned her a spot in the 4×4 pool at the World Championships, which turned into a gold medal after she ran the third leg in the final.

She said it has been motivating to be around Miller-Uibo, the Rio gold medalist, and that she felt a breakthrough coming. She recalls saying, “‘You know, Shaunae, if I train with you and we do this every day, I’m going to try to execute this in a meet.’ As of now, I’m just in shock. Did I really just do this?”

The 29-year-old Beard was back at the site of her NCAA title from ’11, when she also ran an NCAA record split of 49.13 for Texas A&M. “I usually live in lane 2 when we have a final, or lane 8 and 1,” she said. “I wanted to give myself an opportunity to get a preferred lane this time to do just enough for an opportunity to win or set a career best. I didn’t feel Shakima through the curve until she ran up beside me. Being a competitor, my first thought was to go with her, but I remember my coaches telling me to run my race and go at my spot. So, I was mindful of that. I’ve been working on my finish a lot, along with my start. When I set my race up I put myself in a good position.”

The field was missing Sydney McLaughlin (who pulled out at the last minute), WC gold medalist Phyllis Francis (who instead cast her lot in the 200), NCAA champion Lynna Irby (who announced after the NCAA that she was shutting it down) and mega-medalist Allyson Felix (who is going through a less-than-stellar campaign so far).

Given all that, it is extraordinary how much depth the United States has in the women’s 400. Said Wimbley, “I just feel like it’s going to be a great future for all of us.” She also said young sprinters are following Felix and Sanya Richards-Ross in “continuing that greatness.”

USATF Women's 800 – Wilson Leads A Quick Parade

July 2018 | by Bob Hersh |



Ajeé' Wilson didn't score a PR, but nearly everybody behind her did as 5 broke 2:00. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Four Americans had broken 2:00 this year before the Nationals, and 6 others who entered the 2-lapper in Des Moines came in with season's bests under 2:01. This promised to be a close, fast race, and it did not disappoint as 5 of the first 7 scored PRs. The clear favorite, of course, was American Record holder Ajeé' Wilson, who had not lost to an American since '16. She won her heat and her semi and then successfully defended her title with apparent ease.

In the final, Olivia Baker took the lead on the first turn but Wilson and her training partner, Charlene Lipsey, overtook the Stanford senior before the 200 mark. On the first homestretch, Wilson stayed in front, with Lipsey just outside of her taking the lead very briefly as they passed the 400 in 58.82, a step ahead of Ce'Aira Brown and Baker.

That quartet continued to lead coming off the final turn. In the homestretch, Wilson pulled away from the field to win comfortably in 1:58.18. Former NCAA champ Raevyn Rogers made a big move from the rear pack and passed Brown

on the outside 20m before the finish line to take 2nd as each PRed, in 1:58.57 and 1:58.65. Kaela Edwards (1:59.68 PR) also ran well in the homestretch to overtake a fading Lipsey (1:59.95) for 4th. The 6th- and 7th-placers, Baker (2:00.08) and Hanna Green (2:00.09), also notched lifetime bests.

Reviewing the race, Wilson said that after finding herself in the lead after the first turn, “I just wanted to stay there and relax.” In the last 120, she said, “It was just about finishing hard. I heard the rest of the field coming. I wasn’t sure how close they were, but I heard the announcer saying that Raevyn was making a move and I’m like: ‘I gotta make sure it’s not on me.’”

Rogers, who remained in Eugene after her last year of eligibility at Oregon in ‘17, is now coached by Derek Thompson, who also coaches Wilson and Lipsey. She was pleased with her finishing kick. She said, “I remember my coach saying, ‘Make sure you have enough for the last 50.’ This race really taught me the importance of finishing.”

USATF Women’s 1500 – Houlihan Starts Her Double

July 2018 | by Dave Hunter |



The first of two brilliant closing laps in Des Moines took Shelby Houlihan only 57.66 seconds. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

In what turned out to be a battle between two lowans, emerging middle distance star Shelby Houlihan defeated future Hall Of Famer Jenny Simpson. For the former Arizona Stater, it was her first national outdoor title at 1500 meters. And her victory denied the venerable Simpson from notching what would have been her fifth crown.

In the heats, 30 hopefuls vied for the 12 spots for the final 2 days later. Taking control early, Simpson looked strong up front in winning in 4:07.67, the fastest clocking of the day. With an energized finishing kick, former WC 800 medalist Brenda Martinez (4:10.51) prevailed in a more spirited second-section skirmish. Houlihan (4:14.79), who came back to race in her home state having captured 5 national titles in the past 16 months, displayed a powerful finish over the final furlong to complete a 59.32 last lap and win heat III.

In a final conducted under warm, dry and still conditions, Under Armour's Rachel Schneider quickly went to the front of the tightly bunched field; 700m of casual running ensued. With 2 laps remaining the leader was Dana Giordano while the heavy hitters bided their time near the back of the crowded field.

Nervously eyeing one another, all of the runners, running laps barely under 70 seconds, were bracing for what they knew would be a furious finish. As the pace accelerated over the penultimate lap, the favorites jockeyed for position and at the bell a quartet of top contenders—Kate Grace, Martinez, Simpson, and Houlihan—were elbow-to-elbow, spread across the track, and separated by only 0.15.

On the final circuit, Olympic 800 finalist Grace struck first, quickly accelerating on the backstretch, her long stride giving her a sizable lead while her pursuers struggled to cover the Yalie's powerful move. In the ensuing frenzy near the end of the backstretch, the BAA's Lauren Johnson ran up on Martinez as the two got tangled amidst the traffic. Both went down. And while Johnson quickly rose to finish the race, Martinez was down for many minutes before being golf-carted out of the stadium.

Meanwhile, the battle up front raged on. Avoiding the backstretch tumble, Simpson (who was already past the scene of the accident) and Houlihan (lucky she didn't get snared as she ran past Martinez) were at last in full flight on the curve and in pursuit of Grace, who was beginning to wobble coming into the homestretch. The pursuing duo flew by Grace at the top of the homestretch as the fans awaited a final sprint showdown between the two favorites. It was

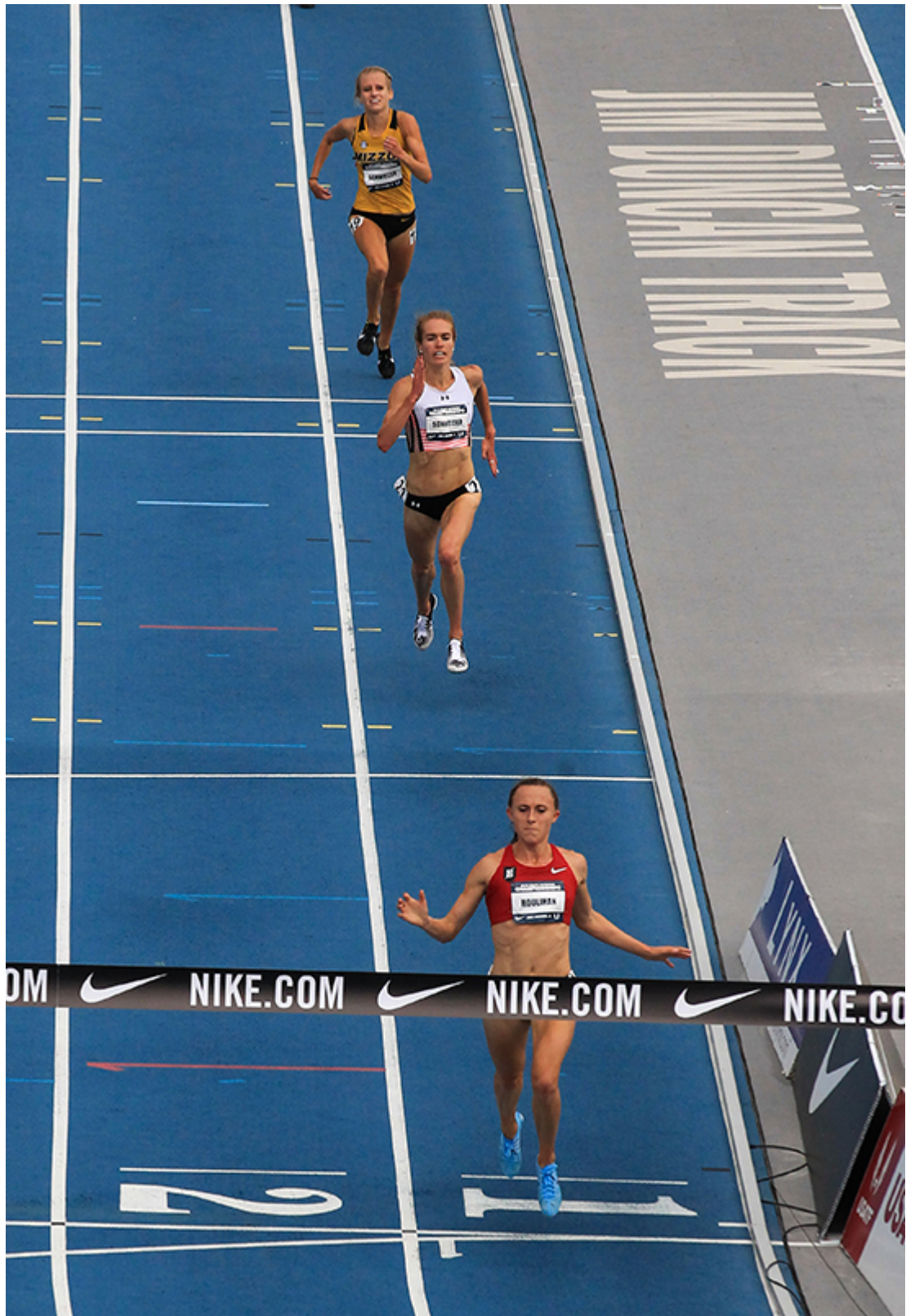
short lived. Finding a winning gear, Houlihan simply powered away from a straining Simpson to complete the final lap in an eye-popping 57.66 and capture the crown in 4:05.48. Simpson (4:06.21) and Grace (4:07.04) followed, both breaking 60 on the run for home but nonetheless losing ground to a renowned big kicker (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/shelby-houlihan-deadly-when-the-sprinting-starts/>).

Undoubtedly disappointed, Simpson was nothing but gracious as she noted how her Hawkeye State square-off with Houlihan provided a special patina to the final. “You’re really close to everyone so everyone felt the thrill,” explained Simpson in citing the Drake Stadium intimacy. “And they had more than one person to root for. That made a difference. I had family here. People were rooting for me and for Shelby and for other people in the field.”

Before heading off to cool down, recover, and get ready for the next day’s 5000 final, an animated Houlihan—whose winning time of 3:59.06 in the Pre Classic remains the yearly American leader—took a moment to reveal what her home-state victory meant to her. “That was really up towards the top,” declared the happy champion. “I feel like I’ve come down a few times for the Drake Relays and stuff and I couldn’t place as well as I wanted to. So to come out here in front of my home crowd and my family and [to do well] is pretty cool.”

USATF Women's 5000 – Houlihan Finishes Her Double

July 2018 | by Dave Hunter |



Another brilliant last lap by Shelby Houlihan brought her a successful double as she stretched out the field. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Patiently waiting to strike at just the right time, Shelby Houlihan, as she had in the 1500 the preceding day, once again ran down a fellow Hawkeye on the final lap to successfully defend her 5000 title and complete her third Nationals distance double in the last 16 months.

With threatening storm clouds looming in the distance, the race got underway as 22 runners responded to the starter's pistol. Maya Weigel and Katrina Coogan jumped out to set a modest opening pace. With the tempo still restrained, new leader Cally Macumber split the first kilometer in 3:08 with Houlihan back in the pack in 12th. With just over 6 laps remaining Anna Rohrer charged to the front to pick up the tempo, passing 3K in 9:33.10. With the Notre Dame star increasing the pace, the always-alert Houlihan left the mid-pack crowd and smoothly worked her way up to 5th to stay within striking distance.

The racing began in earnest with 3 laps remaining as Karissa Schweitzer, the newly crowned NCAA 10K champ, accelerated to the front with the hopes of tiring the field's big kickers. With the race now on, defending champ Houlihan—the biggest of kickers—quickly moved up into 2nd, covering the new pro's move. Although Iowa native Schweitzer continued to up the tempo for the 2 laps leading up to the bell, the former Missouri star proved unable to shake the frisky Houlihan, who was now sensing yet another double could be within her grasp. Just steps behind the two frontrunners at the bell were Rachel Schneider and yearly list leader Lauren Paquette.

With 230m left, Houlihan erupted and roared by Schweitzer into the lead. Coming off the final curve and with the race well in hand, she accelerated one final time to make doubly sure the gold would be hers. Crossing the line first in 15:31.03 after a 62.85 last lap, Houlihan captured her seventh national title. Aided by a strong final circuit, Schneider (15:32.71) got up for 2nd, Schweitzer [15:34.31] hung on for the final podium spot, while Paquette [15:36.83] claimed 4th.

Afterwards, the medalists offered insights on the race's endgame. Schweitzer provided a candid slice of realism on her long-drive strategy: "I realized I had all these kickers behind me and just knew I had to take it down because that would give me the best shot and really make it more of an honest race."

Runner-up Schneider, doubling back from the 1500 as did the winner, explained her race plan: "We wanted to run as relaxed as possible to save as much energy early on and see what we had at the end. I felt like I did a really good job with that. I stayed in contact with the front and I felt really, really good. So I got up on Shelby's shoulder with about 400 to go and with 100 to go I still felt good." And with a sheepish smile she added, "But Shelby put that kick in, things kind of happened, and I settled for 2nd."

Now with consecutive victories in the national outdoor 5000, the champion seemed truly dazed after once again notching a double. "I don't know if it has really hit me yet," she exclaimed. "I did set out to try to win both. But it was awesome that I was able to do that." Sporting French-braided hair and clutching two loaves of French bread, she shared with the media how she saw the competition unfold: "I felt good throughout the race and I knew I had a lot left with about 800m left. But my coach [Jerry Schumacher] told me just before the race to just wait until 400 at least before I take the lead. And even then I didn't think I could wait until like 200m to go."

Before heading off to be with her family, she was asked where that kick came from. "Somewhere deep down!" she answered.

USATF Women's Steeple – Coburn Captures Crown No. 7

July 2018 | by Dave Hunter |



Emma Coburn's collection of 7 wins includes the last 5 in a row. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Surely one of the most enduring images of the '17 campaign has been the instantly classic WC photo of joyful steeplechase winner Emma Coburn crossing the finish line with a disbelieving Courtney Frerichs just steps behind. In what looked like an encore performance of the last year's London final, Coburn and Frerichs recreated that stirring image by again finishing 1-2 in the USATF final.

The London gold and silver medalists had breezed through the heats. The never-threatened Coburn jogged 9:48.79 to win the first section by 35m and Frerichs clocked 9:42.02 to cross first by 10m in the more competitive second section.

The final, conducted under warm, dry, and still conditions, got underway with

Kentucky's Katy Kunc bolting out to an early 25m lead. Nobody panicked. The field, with Coburn and Frerichs nestled in 2nd and 4th, caught up with the eventual 9th-place finisher after a kilometer. In the fourth lap, Coburn eased into the lead while Frerichs moved up into 2nd shortly after the 2-kilo mark as the duo separated from the other competitors. The final two laps resembled an Ali/Frazier title fight: Coburn, the smoother hurdler, would stretch out her slight lead by powering over the barriers while the former New Mexico star—who never assumed the lead—would claw back before the next one.

Coburn was just steps ahead of Frerichs at the bell, but over the final circuit the Colorado alum, with extra gears left, displayed the grit that had allowed her to win this national championship 6 previous times. Deftly turning the screw on the backstretch the AR holder kept stretching her lead and her aggressive clearance over the final water jump was the final dagger. With a final lap of 64.44, Coburn notched national title No. 7 (5 in a row) with a 9:17.70. Frerichs, racing the final lap in 65.20, was a strong 2nd in 9:18.69, her second-fastest time ever. Oiselle's Mel Lawrence was well back in 3rd, but scored the only PR of the race, 9:33.30.

After the race Coburn revealed her approach, which anticipated all circumstances and left nothing to chance. "I was trying to be relaxed, trying to run my own race," said the Olympic bronze medalist. "I know that Courtney is very skilled. I know that in any given race there can be trips and falls and surprise performances from people so I was really just trying to focus on running a race that matched my skills given the conditions, given that it may be warm, may be a little windy, and with no rabbits. I was trying to make a race plan that really benefited my skill set."

The 27-year-old Coburn, who has repeatedly stated that breaking 9:00 is one of her major '18 goals, is now off to the Diamond League, where she'll once again face off against the rest of the world's best.

USATF Women's 10,000 – Huddle Had A Kick

July 2018 | by Dan Lilot |



The Boston Marathon didn't rob Molly Huddle's legs of all their pop. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Leading up to the meet, one could be forgiven for predicting two things for the longest run on the track: the weather would be oppressive and top athletes would stay away. Neither came to pass. Despite a relatively early 7:00pm start time, 80 minutes earlier than the '13 edition, the weather was about as accommodating as it gets at the start of the Midwest summer.

Molly Huddle looked no worse for the wear just over 9 weeks after a frozen 13th at the Boston Marathon, as she led all but a half a circuit of the 25-lap race. After a cautious opening lap, the Notre Dame alum took over and proceeded to crank out a steady diet of 77-second circuits, passing halfway in 16:18, with more than half the field still in contact, if strung out single file.

"I just think if you're strong you need to tire people out," said the winner of the previous three titles. "Otherwise there's too many people there at the end. It's a tried-and-true strategy; if you just do the work you'll whittle it down. I was hoping some of my marathon strength would still be in there and that I'd be

strong enough to do that and a 10K by myself. I felt pretty comfortable.”

No one seemed eager to test Huddle’s post-marathon legs, and the 33-year-old began pushing in earnest with 4 laps remaining. A 73.1 lap quickly whittled the challengers down to 3: Olympian Marielle Hall, ’17 World Champs 10K team member Emily Sisson, and Stephanie Bruce, who was coming off the London Marathon two months prior.

Huddle continued to press on the accelerator, with a 71.8 lap shedding Sisson and Bruce. Hall began to yo-yo a bit as well, but still loomed dangerously, her finishing speed a sharp weapon if she could maintain contact. But Huddle’s 68.98 penultimate circuit did enough damage to soften up Hall for the final blow, a torrid 64.52 final lap that gave Huddle a comfortable 31:52.32–31:56.68 win, making her the first ever to win four consecutive titles. Bruce managed to outkick Sisson 32:05.05–32:06.31 for 3rd.

“I didn’t think I’d have that kind of speed,” said Huddle of the kick she pulled out. “So I think maybe my last race brought me on. That painful Mini 10K [the New York City road race 3 weeks before, which Huddle called “a grind” after placing 3rd in 32:25] kind of got my legs going so, yeah, I was surprised by the last lap. I was hoping I could run like a 66 so that was better than I thought.”

USATF Women's 100 Hurdles – Pushing It In Every Round

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



Keni Harrison was so dominant that at times she seemed alone on the track. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Keni Harrison made her intent clear from the very beginning, blasting a 12.46 in the heats to establish her dominance over the hurdle field, running a full two 10ths faster than anyone else. Hitting a fast rhythm early is what she did to win at the World Indoor and it's exactly what she did here. It's exactly how she has prepared to run championship rounds with coach Edrick Floréal. (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/edrick-floreal-in-charge-at-hurdles-central/>) "I've got to be able to go out from the start and put a fast one down," she explained. "The more I do that, it just builds my confidence. I only know one mode and that's just all-out."

Harrison never dismissed her competition, saying "Everyone on the line wants it and everyone on the line can get it, so it's just who wants it more and who has what it takes to cross the line first."

She led the semis as well, at 12.60, with Christina Manning (12.66w) also looking sharp. Jasmin Stowers was the last qualifier at 13.07 but withdrew from the final, so only 7 braced for the start: Harrison in 5, with Manning to her left and Queen Harrison to her right. Under sunny skies with a mild breeze blowing in their faces, the blast of the gun launched the field toward the first hurdle. K. Harrison and Manning reached it simultaneously, with Sharika Nelvis and super-vet Dawn Harper Nelson—running in her last USATF meet at age 34—also out well.

Manning kept the pressure on, running step for step with Harrison and even touching down from hurdle 4 a fraction ahead of the WR holder. That's when Harrison shifted into overdrive, inexorably carving out a lead as her technique fired faster and faster. By hurdle 7 she had clearly moved to the fore. By the next hurdle, she owned the race.

"I was just focused on my lane," said Harrison. "I could feel them coming up and I just tried to tap into another gear and run hard and finish strong." Behind her, Manning held her form and absolutely needed to in order to hold off the strong second half that Nelvis produced.

By the time Harrison dipped at the finish, she had a 2-meter lead. She clocked 12.46, but into a 1.4 wind, a performance far superior to her first round, which had an 0.8 boost. Manning held on for 2nd in 12.65, just ahead of Nelvis (12.68). Queen Harrison grabbed 4th in 12.76, with Harper Nelson running a swansong 12.93. In 6th came 400H world champ Kori Carter, her 13.11 far off her first round 12.78. (*Continues*)

For the victor, whose 0.21 margin of victory was the meet's largest since Lolo Jones put up an 0.29 in '08, it was one more successful step in getting ready for the global championships of the next three years. "The more I'm able to come here and run under pressure, having a target on my back and still being able to come across the line first, it's definitely building my confidence," she said, adding, "To run in a negative wind and to run 12.4, that definitely says that I'm in really good shape."

USATF Women's 400 Hurdles – Little Remained Alert & Calm

July 2018 | by David Woods |



Shamier Little struck when leader Georganne Moline had a problem at the last hurdle.
(KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Shamier Little consistently wears a bright bow in her hair. She would like her performance to be as consistent.

The Texas A&M alum won her second national long-hurdle title, taking advantage of Georganne Moline's late stumble and surging to victory. Little's time of 53.61—her best since a PR 52.75 in finishing 2nd in last year's historically deep race—made her No. 2 on the yearly world list behind Sydney McLaughlin. "I'm really proud of my finish and how I executed the race," Little said.

Moline led coming into the straightaway, although Little was closing before the final hurdle. Moline rolled an ankle coming off that barrier, staggered briefly, and that allowed Little to pull away. It was bitterly disappointing for

Moline, who at 28 is having perhaps her best season since surprisingly finishing 5th at the '12 Olympics. "I've tried to win another title since college," she said tearfully after holding on for 2nd in 54.12. "I know I'm ready to run really, really fast. That's why we have a race. Sometimes it goes in your favor; sometimes it doesn't."

Coincidentally, Moline was back on the blue oval where she stumbled and did not make the NCAA final, also in '12. Cassandra Tate, the NCAA champion that year and WC bronze medalist behind Little in '15, was 3rd in 55.00. LSU's Kymer Payne was fourth in 55.54, just 0.04 off her PR from more than a year ago.

Ashley Spencer, the Rio bronze medalist, tripped over the third hurdle and fell. She banged her left knee and jammed her right thumb but, inexplicably, did not break any of her long fingernails. "It happens. That's the risk you taking being a 400m hurdler," said Spencer, whose last fall was also here, at the '16 Drake Relays. "I felt good going into the race. I was ready to run fast."

Little has been a force for so long that is easy to forget she is still just 23. Her previous title was in '15, when she went on to win WC silver. She celebrated with a BOB dance and explained she had "just a lot going on" this year without going into specifics. She is healthy and "not an injury-prone type of athlete," she said. She said her coach's mantra was that she be both alert and calm; not so easily done.

"Especially me. My attention span is like a goldfish," Little said. "So I'm in the race, and I'm just like 'arms, hurdle, arms, hurdle, feet in.' That's what's getting me through it. I'm glad that I'm thinking that more. It really helped my race." She said her summer goal is consistency, not following a good race with a bad one. After winning NCAA titles in '14, '15 & '16, she failed to make finals at the '16 Olympic Trials or '17 World Championships.

As for new pro McLaughlin, she was entered in the 400, but after warming up felt tightness in her quadriceps and elected to withdraw.

USATF Women's 20K Walk – Yet Another Title For Michta-Coffey

July 2018 | by Elliott Denman |



**The overall number of USATF crowns claimed by Maria Michta-Coffey is now at 42.
(MIKE SCOTT)**

Maria Michta-Coffey's numbers were in golden alignment. Digitally diagnosed, 32, 42, 50, 426 and 1352159 told the story of her resounding triumph. Competing a day before her 32nd birthday, she racked up her National title win No. 42, blazing her 50 laps—adorned in bib number 426—with a clocking of 1 hour, 35 minutes and 21.59 seconds (officially 1:35:21.6).

Reeling off her laps at an impeccable pace, the veteran Long Islander, perhaps the most academically accomplished competitor on the premises, as the holder of a doctorate in microbiology, built early leads that only grew wider as the evening race proceeded. All but 5 of those laps were under 2:00.

Only Katie Burnett, the peripatetic Californian who attended four high schools and has called Arizona, Pennsylvania New York and Washington her state of residence at different times, was able to stay within a reasonable distance of the leader.

Somewhere around the race's 14,000m mark, and still a lap behind, it even seemed that Burnett was gradually closing the gap. But MMC responded to the possible challenge and went on to win her eighth National 20 title—on track or road—by a comfortable margin. Her only recent-year loss in this event was to fellow New Yorker Miranda Melville 2 years ago, but Melville sat this one out, still recuperating from a virus acquired at May's World Team Championship in China.

Burnett hung on for 2nd in 1:37:56.0, while 3rd went to Robyn Stevens, the Californian who'd been a hot prospect in the Junior ranks before disappearing from the sport for 10 years. Her long sabbatical over ("I finally realized how much I missed the sport") Stevens is back in the thick of the action and clocked a promising 1:40:29.0.

When Michta won her first National title—winning the 40K in '07—she hardly envisioned where it would lead. "And I didn't really go to that race expecting to win it, or even finish it," she remembered. "But I had a big lead at 30K and Gary [Westerfield, her coach] said, 'You might as well finish this thing.'" Well, she did finish it and win it and one good thing has led to another... and another... and lots more. She has been to the last two Olympics, every recent World Championships, Pan-Am Games and Pan-Am Cup, and a wide assortment of other biggies, with travels and adventures through the wide world of sports. National crown No. 41—at the 5K road distance—came just 12 days before Des Moines, in Framingham, Mass., a town best known as a way station on the Boston Marathon route.

The morning after her big win she said, "I love this sport and want to continue in it as long as I can. But we [she and husband Joe Coffey] also want to start a family. "So....we'll just see about those things." Professionally, she is "Dr. Michta," and now teaching at Suffolk Community College. Soon, she'll start additional studies, working on her physician's assistant plans.

Next up for all the leaders will be August's NACAC Championship 20K in Toronto. But what about the 50K, now an official IAAF event on the program for the 2019 World Championships in Qatar, and (its exponents fervently hope), the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games? "No, no, I don't think so," she said. "I'll just leave that to Katie and the other ladies."

USATF Women's High Jump – Another Title For Cunningham

July 2018 | by Kevin Saylor |



She's only 20, but Vashti Cunningham already has 5 national titles overall. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Favored Vashti Cunningham survived an early scare to win her second consecutive outdoor title (to go with 3 consecutive indoor ones).

A field of 13 started the competition at 5-10 (1.78), all clearing save

Cunningham and Olympian Inika McPherson, who both passed. However, the subsequent height, 6-0 (1.83), reduced the initial field of 13 virtually in half, to 7. Cunningham had an uncharacteristic miss before clearing. How uncharacteristic? She had never missed at the height in her entire professional career. After a discussion with her father/coach, she adjusted her marks, then made 4 consecutive attempts, not missing again until 6-4¾ (1.95), her winning jump.

Along with Cunningham, 4 others cleared the third height, 6-1¼ (1.86), including fellow Team USA members McPherson and Liz Patterson, together with Logan Boss and Zarriea Willis. Boss (jumping for the first time since March) and McPherson shared the lead, with Cunningham hampered by her early miss.

6-2¼ (1.89) was a height too high for Boss and Willis, while Indoor runner-up Inika McPherson, flawless to that point, required 3 attempts. Both Cunningham and '17 runner-up Patterson sailed over on first attempt. The lead thus shifted to Patterson and Cunningham.

With the top 3 determined, the bar was raised to 6-3½ (1.92). Cunningham had her third consecutive first attempt clearance, to take sole possession of the lead, but McPherson needed 2 attempts, and Patterson bowed out.

With the title on the line at 6-4¾ (1.95), McPherson and Cunningham went head-to-head. Cunningham produced the only clearance, on her final attempt, to claim the title and up her yearly U.S. outdoor lead. Still only 20, she reflected on the past year: "I feel like I've just become more comfortable with myself and grown in the area of mental maturity and strength."

Cunningham has another adversary: "My goal, of course, is to break the 2-meter [6-6¾] barrier, which seems to be just like not my best friend. We seem to be a little bit of rivals, but I'm going to come back and whip that, eventually." It has been 6 years since an American has joined the exclusive 2m club. Cunningham, stuck at 1.99 (6-6) since winning the '16 indoor at that height, is ready to become member No. 9.

USATF Women's Pole Vault – Only Mother Nature Could Beat Morris

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



Who knows how high Sandi Morris might have vaulted had not the storm gotten in the way?
(KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

The chart says it all. After a miss on her opening jump, Sandi Morris was simply perfect.

The World Indoor champion came in at 14-11 (4.55), while 9-time winner Jenn Suhr opted to wait until 15-1 (4.60), skipping the first 3 heights. Despite getting her hips far above, Morris hit with her arm and missed a bar that leader Kristen Hixson had already made. Katie Nageotte also missed her first attempt.

Both would make their second attempts. At 15-1, Nageotte passed to watch Suhr clear big on her first, with Morris following. Hixson then opted to pass as well. Nageotte put herself into the lead with first-attempt clearance at 15-3

(4.65). Suhr passed, and Morris went over on her first, again achieving massive altitude over the bar. Hixson would miss three times to finish 4th at 14-11.

At 15-5 (4.70), it got real. Nageotte missed. Suhr missed. Morris cleared to take over sole possession of the lead. Nageotte managed a third-attempt clearance, but with the pressure on, Suhr was unable to get over the bar and would end up 3rd at 15-1. With the bar raised to 15-7 (4.75), Nageotte missed her first. Morris cleared hers. Nageotte passed her remaining attempts.

The bar moved to 15-9 (4.80). Nageotte, with two tries remaining, missed. Morris showed nerves of steel and cleared. With one shot left, Nageotte passed. Officials raised the bar to 15-11 (5.85) now keeping an eye over their shoulders at the approaching storm. Nageotte took her one remaining shot and missed.

That left Morris with a decision. Facing an evening flight and a meet that risked going into overtime, she asked that the bar be moved to a 16-2½ (4.94), a height that would gain her the yearly outdoor world lead (she owns the absolute lead with her indoor 16-2¾/4.95). "One person was telling me, 'Go ahead and go!' So I'm rushing, grabbing my pole and I did sneak in one jump at that world lead but I wasn't able to take my next two," she said. The storm stopped her as the stadium was evacuated. "It's a little frustrating," she admitted, "but whatever happens happens and it was out of my control. "I was feeling really strong but I had to shut it down. I just needed to make a couple of tweaks and push the standards back," she explained. "I was jumping really well. My technique and everything felt great today." No one could stop the storm that is Sandi Morris at age 25. "I've been on a roll," she said. "I've had no disappointing days this year. I've had a really great year and I think that I've got even bigger things in the bag for the year."

On her way to the airport, she was thrilled at nabbing her second outdoor title. "I'm glad I didn't get rained on," she said, adding with a laugh, "And I'm really glad I didn't get struck by lightning."

USATF Women's Long Jump – Familiar Faces Absent

July 2018 | by Bob Hersh |



Sha'Keela Saunders made the most of an unfriendly headwind. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

There was a lot of talk before and during the meet about the “off year” being a down one for the Nationals. Perhaps in no other event was there more truth to this than the women’s long jump.

For one thing, multiple World Championships gold medalists Brittney Reese and Tianna Bartoletta—who had taken turns winning the last 4 USATF titles and 9 of the last 10—didn’t compete, the former calling her season quits after a win in Poland in May and the latter just being off-form. With ’13 winner Janay DeLoach having recently retired, it was guaranteed that there would be a new champion this year.

The winner turned out to be Sha'Keela Saunders, with her second-round leap of 21-5½ (6.54). Quanesha Burks moved up to 21-4¾ (6.52) on her fifth try to

take the silver. Last year, Saunders and Burks had finished 3rd/4th behind Bartoletta and Reese. Both Saunders and Burks were former NCAA champions, for Kentucky and Alabama, and both have represented Team USA internationally, Saunders at last year's Worlds and Burks at this year's World Indoor. Heptathlete Kendell Williams finished 3rd, just 1½ inches (4cm) behind Burks as only four broke 21-feet.

The winning distance was the shortest in these championships since '02 (another "down year"). This was at least partly due to the fact that the prevailing winds were negative, often significantly so. (Saunders's best jump had a headwind of 2.2mps and Burks's best was into a 2.5.)

"Last year's performance was better in distance, but I got the win this time," said the 24-year-old Saunders. "I'm excited about that. I'm just so happy and you know the next two championship years are very important to make teams so hopefully I can repeat that. I tore my hamstring in February," she added, "so I couldn't compete indoors, but I'm glad that I got that out of the way in my first season post-collegiate so I know how to deal with that now. I'm back, I'm healthy and I'm excited to continue my season."

USATF Women's Triple Jump – Orji vs. Franklin, Round 8

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Keturah Orji has now met Tori Franklin 8 times, and has never lost. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Nothing grabs spectator attention like a duel. Not in the sun in the case of Tori Franklin (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/tori-franklin-finds-triple-jump-magic-in-a-new-coach/>) vs. Keturah Orji (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/another-collegiate-tj-record-for-keturah-orji/>), the two longest-bombing women triple jumpers the U.S. sport has ever seen, the only pair who have reached 48-plus territory, operating above 14.70 in metric terms. Here AR holder Franklin and Rio 4th-placer Orji met under gray skies with a few lingering damp spots on the runway.

Didn't matter. In the only in-stadium field event of the first day they both bounded beyond the previous meet record, Tiombé Hurd's 47-5 (14.45) from '04, and put on a show in which their final order hung in the balance up to the measurement of the competition's penultimate leap. It's good fun, indeed, to at last have a world-class domestic rivalry in the event.

The competition's first-round jumps promulgated some fake news. The outsized ruler placed next to the pit for a rough visual hint about distances

was misaligned. Orji noticed when, sixth in the order, she took her first jump, measured officially at 47- $\frac{3}{4}$ (14.34). While it was nearly 5ft longer than the best of the 3 fair jumps before it (despite a takeoff some 7 inches short of the plasticine), "I was a little bit confused," she said, "because they had the board measurements wrong so it looked like I had jumped 49 feet but the [indicator] wasn't in the right place so I thought I jumped farther than 14.30 and I was like, 'What's going on?' And my coach told me the board wasn't in the right place.

"So I just regrouped in my mindset because my whole warmup was not as far as I thought it was. I regrouped my mindset and then went out and tried to extend my hop. Because usually when my hop is big everything else falls into it."

Three jumpers later Imani Oliver launched a long hop despite taking off with her toe just short of the board and reached 44- $\frac{6}{4}$ (13.57) to grab 2nd. Franklin, with a large white bow adorning her luxuriant head of hair, took the runway as No. 11 in the order after an intervening jump fouled by Lynnika Pitts. Her motivation to give her predecessor as AR holder a contest in their first meeting since Mt. SAC's win by Orji could not be doubted. Franklin danced, hands on hips, then shouted to the crowd and clapped hands above her head exhorting audible support. With a final chest thump, she started her run. Good speed, takeoff foot fair and square on the board, legs lifting high through the first two phases of the jump, wind blowing 0.4mps at her back.

Franklin twisted to her right on impact with the sand but the effort was a good one. Athlete and spectators all knew it. Meet-record good, 47- $\frac{6}{4}$ (14.48). She bounced out of the pit with a smile and threw in quick dance moves before the measurement appeared as she walked back toward the waiting area.

In frame 2, Orji fouled and Olympian Andrea Geubelle moved to 4th at 43- $10\frac{3}{4}$ (13.38) and Princeton alum Oliver, takeoff toeing just the edge of the board, improved her hold on 3rd (44- $10\frac{1}{4}$ /13.67). Franklin's 46- $7\frac{1}{4}$ w (14.20) second try, aided by a 2.7 wind, got most of the board but appeared to shed inertia before the last flight phase toward the sand.

On to round 3—the decider, as it turned out. This time Orji hand-clapped above her head to raise the crowd, ran dynamically off the board, which her toe caught maybe an inch of, skipped through her phases and tucked well on

landing followed by a rightward roll. The jump looked like a new leader and was by more than 4 inches: 47-10½ (14.59), another meet record.

Geubelle strengthened her grip on 4th (44-1½/13.45), Oliver did the same in 3rd (45-3½/13.80), and then Lynnika Pitts skipped from 5th past Geubelle with a 44-4w (13.51) effort. Franklin's fourth-jump timing was less than what it had been, like her distance: 46-4w (14.12).

Reordered for the finals, Franklin fouled her 4th and so did Orji. Nobody else improved in the round, but in frame 5 Oliver soared past 46-0 and 14 meters for the first time with a 2.8 wind helping her span 46-8w (14.22), the longest-ever 3rd-place jump at nationals. The round brought no improvement for Franklin (44-6¼w/13.57) or Orji (46-3¼w/14.10). Pitts had bettered her distance with 44-7w (13.59).

Franklin retreated to the center of the infield by herself, crouched on the grass and prepared for her last shot. "I was gathering all the energy from the meet," she said, "all of my energy, and centering it so I could rally for a big one." She got one, having screamed to the crowd for some noise before her run. Hitting all but 2-3 inches of the board and with a 3.8 wind behind her, she zipped through her phases for her best of the day. She popped out of the pit and waited hands on hips for the measurement: 47-7¾w (14.52), 2¾ inches short of victory. Franklin bowed to the stands.

On her last, Orji attacked her run, fouled just into the plasticine, ran out of her jump and clapped her hands above her head, the winner for a third straight year with the third-longest jump of her career and second-best this season. "This one is a little bit better," said the winner, rating it against her previous title comps, "because I was definitely pushed to win it. I'm happy that I was able to respond to the competition. It wasn't really strange," to be pressed by a rival, "just because I've competed in Rio and World Indoors twice. So it wasn't strange but it's nice to have someone there pushing you."

Mixing it up tightly with Orji as she never has before in a championships felt for Franklin "a little different internally because when I go on the big stages with people I don't see very often, it's just like I'm going out there, I'm competing, doing the best I can. But I have seen [Orji] around a lot, it's always kinda been like bip, bip..." Here Franklin mimes with her hands that until this spring Orji was at a higher level. "So it's a different type of energy but it's definitely a good energy. It's exciting."

USATF Women's Shot – A Rare Pair For Ewen

July 2018 | by Roy Conrad |



Maggie Ewen joined Laura Gerraughty (North Carolina '04) as an NCAA/USATF double shot winner. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

She didn't get the NCAA SP/DT/HT triple that she wanted, but versatile throwing machine Maggie Ewen nonetheless added another interesting combo to her honors list, winning an NCAA/USATF shot double. She was one of 3 women to do it this year, joining Alia Hobbs in the 100 and Keturah Orji in the TJ.

The USATF win, which made her only the second ever to score the pairing, didn't come easily, as Ewen produced the second-longest put of her career, 63-3½ (19.29) but needed most of that to end up on top of the podium as a new version of Jessica Ramsey was unveiled. Ramsey, a 27-year-old Western Kentucky alum, hadn't even thrown the shot at the USATF Outdoor since '15 and had produced only a single 60-foot put in her whole career (60-5¼/18.42). Her seasonal best coming in was just 59-5¾ (18.13).

The first round was a revelation, even though the day before she had shown improved hammer skills, taking 5th with a PR 231-0 (70.41). Throwing in a striking magenta top as the No. 6 thrower in the second flight, the Florida

native spun all the way from No. 29 on the all-time U.S. list to No. 12, reaching 63-1¼ (19.23). She wouldn't reach 60 again, but she nonetheless came close to winning as a foul-prone Raven Saunders opened at 61-5¾ (18.74) and never improved. That mark would earn her 3rd.

As for Ewen, her first-round 58-10¼ (17.94), left her only 4th, behind Ramsey, defending champ Saunders and Monique Riddick (59-8½/18.20). Ewen quickly jumped into the runner-up spot with her second-round 62-7¾ (19.09), but heading into round 5 she was still stuck there. But not for long as she got her biggie, and when Ramsey couldn't respond the title was hers.

"It feels great," she said. "We've been wanting to compete against these women all year and this was such an amazing field, so I'm just so happy that I did what I did today. When you know you have that level of competition, it either brings out the best in you or the worst in you, and I think today brought out the best of what I had."

USATF Women's Discus – Second Verse, Not The Same As The First

July 2018 | by Roy Conrad |



The last 3 throws were familiar to Valarie Allman, but oh, so much better than the NCAA's.

(KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

"I was having a little bit of flashback," admitted Valarie Allman after experiencing a déjà vu moment before claiming her first national title. It was easy for her to remember the NCAA two weeks earlier, where she had claimed the lead in the second round and stayed on top as the stanzas unfolded. She had still held the lead with two throwers to go, but watched first one, then the other, pass her, knocking her to 2nd and then 3rd. Even with the advantage of the competition's final throw she couldn't improve.

On her second throw here she had moved from 2nd to 1st with a 201-11 (61.55) toss that in the end would have been good enough to win. But she wasn't done, extending her yearly American leader to 208-6 (63.55), the third-farthest throw of her career.

But she wasn't home free yet. There she was, with two throwers to go—both of them collegians—remembering the Hayward horror. Lauluga Tausaga-Collins of Iowa raised some tingles with the longest toss of her career, but at 198-11 (60.65) it wasn't close to unseating the leader.

Then there was one, but it was one to be feared. Maggie Ewen had moved past Gia Lewis-Smallwood (198-9/60.58) from 3rd into 2nd in round 5 with a fling of 200-6 (61.13). The same Maggie Ewen who had beaten Allman not only at the NCAA, but also at the Pac-12 and seemed to have her number. But not this day, and Allman became the first collegian to win this title since UCLA's Seilala Sua in '00.

Long frustrated by the injuries, the 23-year-old Colorado native said, "Today was the first day that I truly felt like myself; that I was really able to be a competitor rather than have some sort of thoughts in the back of my mind. As an athlete that's what you want, to be able to go in hungry."

USATF Women's Hammer – Price Recaptures The American Record

July 2018 | by Mark Cullen |



The all-time American best is back in the hands of DeAnna Price. (MIKE SCOTT)

The women's hammer throw stole the show on Saturday as DeAnna Price spun an American Record 256-3 (78.12) on her fifth throw. The toss also vaulted her to No. 4 on the all-time world list and back to the top of the yearly international chart.

It has been quite a season for U.S. women's hammering, as Price and Berry have been trading the national record. Entering the season, AR stood at Berry's 251-10 (76.77) from last year. Now it's more than a meter farther, with [Price reaching 254-9 \(77.65\) on June 2](https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/breaking-hammer-american-record-to-deanna-price/) and [Berry reclaiming it at 255-2 \(77.78\) on June 8](https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/american-record-gwen-berry-reclaims-the-hammer-standard/) before Price took it back here.

Price dominated the event from the start, though it may not have seemed so at the end of the first three rounds. While her first throw of 242-2 (73.81) would have won the competition, the next two were fouls, and she acknowledged she was having trouble finding her rhythm, saying, "Today I was having trouble feeling connected as usual, but finally on that one throw I was feeling connected. I knew it was a good throw and I was immediately overjoyed."

Price's "connection" began in round 4 when she unleashed the No. 7 throw in U.S. history, 250-6 (76.35). Then came the record and she finished off with the No. 6 performance, 252-8 (77.01).

The podium positions were settled in the first two rounds. Berry won silver with her second-round 239-5 (72.99) and Brooke Anderson took the bronze with her 236-9 (72.17) opener. Amanda Bingson, another former AR holder, was injured in warmups when a hammer landed on her foot. She left the ring limping and did not compete.

Once the top three had established themselves, the field seemed to press. Berry was off her game and after her second throw, she turned to the crowd and said somewhat sarcastically, "Had to keep one in." Afterwards, she said, "My warmups were pretty easy; they were about 72-73m." But in the competition, "I was trying too hard and went back to bad habits."

As for how she in the No. 5 position all-time and Price in 4 is being received in Europe, Berry smiled and said, "They're watching."

Price echoed Berry's comments, saying, "Right now Gwen and I are No. 1 and No. 2, but never underestimate the European girls; never."

Price credits her coach/fiancé, JC Lambert, for holding her to a higher standard. "He's been doing a fantastic job and he doesn't hold any punches," she said. "He says, 'You're going to do this and you're going to do this right.'"

What really worked for her? “I got ticked,” she said of her second- and third-round fouls. “I got really ticked... and then I attacked it on my fourth-round throw.” After her last throw, Price stepped out of the ring, leaned on her knees, and wept. “It’s just everything you worked for,” she said. “Right now I feel confident in what I’m doing.”

Berry offered a succinct summary of the meet. “It took a while for everybody to find their rhythm... but once DeAnna found her rhythm, she went crazy!”

On a day when many in the field were perhaps overthinking their throws, Price reminded herself, “Do what you do best and just throw the damn thing!”

USATF Women’s Javelin – A Brand-New Year For Kara Winger

July 2018 | by Mark Cullen |



A new technical coach is the key to Kara Winger’s consistency. (MIKE SCOTT)

Kara Winger won national title No. 8 on her first throw of the competition. But it’s her last throw that will be remembered. On a rainy and blustery day the Washington native took the lead in the first round at 186-7 (56.89) and was never headed. For good measure, she nailed her final throw at a list-leading 206-3 (62.88) to turn what would have been a modest margin of victory—just

over a meter—into an overwhelming one of 20-9 (6.34). It was the eleventh consecutive USATF podium for the 32-year-old AR holder, who set the mark here in the '10 meet.

Avionne Allgood of Florida, this year's SEC champion who finished 6th at the NCAA, threw her season's best by almost a meter on her opening throw of 185-6 (56.54) to secure the 2nd spot.

Allgood, 24, who back in '11 set a HS Record while finishing 4th at USATF, announced that she has joined the Army and its WCAP program. This is "...one of the steps I have to take to meet my goals," she said. "It means a lot to have been accepted into the program and I'm thankful that I have the opportunity." Allgood said she has put years of injury frustration behind her. "I always tell people that when I had surgery I got a fresh arm because I'm pain-free and I'm ready to rock."

Ariana Ince, whose 183-7 (55.97) fourth-round throw captured 3rd, found her performance to be "underwhelming," as it was well off her seasonal best 195-3 (59.52). "I didn't notice the wind that much," she said. "It seemed to die down every time I threw." Still, she said, "It is good to know I can still be in the top 3 on a bad day."

Winger noted the consistency of her results this year. "This is my fourth competition of 2018 and a season's best today, but all of them have been over 60m [196-10]. I had three 61m-plus throws in my second competition of the year." She attributes her re-found consistency in part to her new technical coach, Dana Lyon, a 2-time NCAA champion for Air Force. With Lyon teamed with Winger's longtime strength coach Jamie Myers, Winger has a stronger coaching team, fresh eyes on her technique, and a new perspective.

"I said to myself, 'If I'm going to get what I want out of this career, something has to change. This year is brand new,'" said the super veteran. "It's really fun; it's rejuvenating, it's better for my body overall, so I feel like I have a lot more control over my throw. The teamwork I have with Jamie and Dana has been... so much what I needed. I was very frustrated last season. To feel like I can drop a javelin 60m again, it just brings me so much joy."

USATF Women's Heptathlon – The Smart Money Was On Bougard

July 2018 | by Glen McMicken |



Erica Bougard easily lived up to her billing as the overwhelming favorite. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

Erica Bougard was one of the safest bets of the meet, coming in with a nearly 600-point advantage over her closest competitor. After a win at Florence and a PR 6725 to take 3rd at Götzis, the 24-year-old Mississippi State product had her eyes set on capturing her first national outdoor title.

Showing the same form that scored her a big PR in the 100H in Austria, Bougard was dominant in Des Moines, clocking 12.96 to take a 55-point lead over Alex Gochenour as the only one to crack the 13-second barrier. She added to that margin in the high jump with a relatively subpar 6-½ (1.84) clearance, while Gochenour endured a near disaster in the form of a third-attempt make at 5-3 (1.60) that dropped her to 12th in the standings.

Gochenour roared back in the shot, blasting a 48-8 (14.83) to add almost a

foot to her lifetime best and move back to fourth overall. An even bigger PR by Annie Kunz, who added 18 inches to her previous best, elevated her to 2nd behind Bougard after 3 events, 136 points adrift. Unmatchable speed propelled Bougard to a 23.67 in the 200 to close out the first day with 3866, putting her 250 points ahead of Lindsay Schwartz, with Kunz 3rd another 7 back.

Threatening weather awaited the field coming into Day 2, and Gochenour made the best of swirling winds to uncork a PR 20-4¼ (6.20) into a 1.4 breeze to win the long jump. Bougard managed a 19-9½ (6.03) in the second round, 2ft below the PR she set at Götzis, as only 3 surpassed 6m (19-8¼). That cut her lead over Gochenour to 227, and Riley Cooks edged into 3rd overall.

Needing only a fair throw in the javelin to virtually assure herself of victory, Bougard had one legal toss of 132-3 (40.31) to up her score to 5398. Texas senior Ashtin Zamzow dominated the competition with a 166-0 (50.60) in the third round that was more than 25ft better than the next finisher and moved her up 7 spots to 4th behind Gochenour and Cooks.

Going to the front from the gun in the climactic 800, Bougard dragged the field through 400 in 63.18, and then held off challenges from Allison Reaser and Schwartz to win in 2:11.08 and end up with 6347 points. Schwartz notched a PR 2:11.91 behind Reaser's 2:11.26, but her season-best 5933 couldn't catch Gochenour (6003), who was the only other finisher over 6000. PRs went to Zamzow (5853) in 6th and Cooks (5825) in 8th.

"I'm exhausted; it's my third heptathlon of the year," Bougard said. "I wanted my score to be better, but I am just happy to get the win. The first day was really rough for me and got my spirits down a bit. My second day was better, and I finished strong. I knew I had enough to win, so I focused on technique."

Paris Diamond League – The Samba Beat Goes On

July 2018 | by Mike Rowbottom |



Abderrahmane Samba became second man in hurdling's sub-47 club. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Paris, France, June 30—Should Kevin Young be concerned that his 400H World Record is in imminent danger? Answer—yes. The only question now appears to be who will get there first.

[Rai Benjamin's extraordinary 47.02 clocking at the NCAA \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/ncaa-mens-400-hurdles-a-stunning-collegiate-record-for-benjamin/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/ncaa-mens-400-hurdles-a-stunning-collegiate-record-for-benjamin/), which put him level with legendary Ed Moses at No. 2 on the all-time list, has now been bettered by the firecracker talent of Qatar's Aderrahmane Samba, who become only the second man under 47 as he finished the Paris Diamond League race, slightly demented, in 46.98, just 0.20 off the time Young set in winning the Barcelona Olympic title in '92.

Benjamin was also in action on a muggy evening in the perfectly sized Charléty Stadium—but over 200m, where he and his USC training partner Michael Norman used the non-DL half-lapper to ideal effect as each earned legal sub-20 PRs, the latter winning in 19.84 and Benjamin—who apparently doesn't plan any more 400H races until next season—clocking 19.99.

There was, too, a defiant 800 performance from Caster Semenya, about to face off with the IAAF over their plans to reimpose and monitor maximum permissible testosterone levels for some women's events, as she improved her African Record to 1:54.25 to go to No. 4 on the all-time list.

Meanwhile Ronnie Baker joined Noah Lyles, who beat him at USATF, at the top of this season's world 100 list with a personal best of 9.88.

But it was the 22-year-old Samba—born in the northwestern African state of Mauritania—who demanded top billing in the French capital. On a night when the temperature remained above 30C (86F), the meeting lived up to this year's tagline—Fast In Paris—with a succession of performances that fully entertained a large if not capacity crowd buzzing from France's dramatic 4-3 World Cup win over Argentina. In his wake, Samba left the defending DL champion, Kyron McMaster of the British Virgin Isles, who took 2nd in an NR 47.54, and a dejected looking world champion, Karsten Warholm, 3rd in 48.06.

Knock-Knock-Knockin' On Kevin's Door

Kevin Young still holds the World Record in the 400H, but his hold is getting rather tenuous. The all-time Top 10 (top 4, to be more precise) has 2 new members this year as Stéphan Diagana got the boot from Rai Benjamin, and now Abderrahmane Samba has now displaced Bershawn Jackson. The all-time top 10 (as of July 01):

| Time | Athlete | Date |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 46.78 | Kevin Young (US) | 8/06/92 |
| 46.98 | Abderrahmane Samba (Qatar) | 6/30/18 |
| 47.02 | Edwin Moses (US) | 8/31/83 |
| | Rai Benjamin (Antigua) | 6/08/18 |
| 47.10 | Samuel Matete (Zambia) | 8/07/91 |
| 47.19 | Andre Phillips (US) | 9/25/88 |
| 47.23 | Amadou Bâ (Senegal) | 9/25/88 |
| 47.24 | Kerron Clement (US) | 6/26/05 |
| 47.25 | Félix Sánchez (Dominican Republic) | 8/29/03 |
| | Angelo Taylor (US) | 8/18/08 |

(credit for the list's creative headline to Message Board regular "boond")

Warholm, beaten on three previous occasions by his contemporary, had promised he would stick to his usual tactic of storming away from the start and did so. But McMaster, a lane inside him, had drawn level as they got into the final bend, and as the field moved into the straight the Norwegian was already a pale and fading force, stumbling a little after clearing the final hurdle, as Samba, a lane inside McMaster, came romping through to win.

This was Samba's fifth consecutive DL victory of the season in a year in which run his PR has come down from 48.31(A). He improved that to 47.90(A) early in the year, then ripped off his awesome DL sequence: 47.57 NR at Doha, 47.48 NR at Rome, 47.60 at Oslo & 47.41 NR at Stockholm before this latest, and largest, leap forwards.

"I said it even before—I want to become the fastest man in the world and I work hard to achieve it," Samba said. "It definitely didn't feel like an under-47 seconds race today. I made a small mistake at the start, lost my balance on the first hurdle, so I did not expect to run so fast. But it feels great to be the second-fastest man in history. The World Record is getting close but I just want to improve step by step and to run fast. I improved my technique since last year and who knows, maybe I can be one second faster next year."

Semenya ran a race of brutal simplicity, leading from gun to tape to finish clear of Burundi's Rio silver medalist Francine Niyonsaba, who clocked a season's best of 1:55.86 ahead of Ajee' Wilson (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/tfn-interview-ajee-wilson/>), who ran 1:57.11.



Caster Semenya cranked out the No. 4 women's 800 performance ever. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

"In Oslo we were not very happy about the pace so I said 'No pace this time,'" Semenya explained. "See what you can get out of it. But 1:54.25... I did not expect that."

In the men's 2-lapper, Kenyan Ferguson Cheruiyot negative-split a 1:43.73 (52.0/51.7). Back in 4th, new pro Isaiah Harris of Penn State improved his yearly U.S. lead to a PR 1:44.42.

In the men's vault, world champion Sam Kendricks needed to draw on all his reserves to hold off the youthful challenge of the pole vault's rising force, Sweden's 18-year-old Mondo Duplantis. The Louisiana high schooler did some big-league passing before clearing 19-4¼ (5.90) on his third attempt—a height which eventually did in the determined challenge of local hero Renaud Lavillennie—to stay competitive. For Duplantis, the mark was =No. 4 on the all-time World Junior list. Kendricks won with 19-6½ (5.96), the best cleared so far this season, as the first 5 cleared 19-2 (5.84) or better.

Double world champion Mariya Lasitskene, unbeaten in her previous 44 high jump competitions, had welcomed the presence of Belgium's world and

Olympic heptathlon champion Nafi Thiam, who set a personal best of 6-7 (2.01) earlier this month. But once that had been made clear, the Russian moved ruthlessly in pursuit of win No. 45, winning the competition with a clearance of 6-6¾ (2.00) and skipping on to clear a list leading and meeting record of 6-8¼ (2.04) before taking three unsuccessful attempts at 6-9¾ (2.08). Thiam was a highly respectable runner-up at 6-5½ (1.97), beating Ukraine's world silver medalist Yuliya Levchenko, who also cleared that height, on countback.

The women's steeplechase produced another memorable piece of running as Kenya's Beatrice Chepkoech held off the challenge of her 19-year-old compatriot Celliphine Chespol over the final lap to win in a PR 8:59.36. The fastest run this season, the time moved Chepkoech to No. 4 on the all-time list. Young Chespol held on well to record the No. 2 Junior time ever, 9:01.82.

Salwa Naser of Bahrain joined Samba as an Asian Record-breaker on the night as she won the 400 in smooth and economical fashion in a PR 49.55, way clear of the nearest challenger, Jessica Beard, who recorded 50.39.

Meanwhile, nobody has yet worked out how to beat Kenya's world 1500 silver medalist Timothy Cheruiyot this season. He produced another consummately controlled performance to win in the fastest time seen so far this year, 3:29.71.

World Junior Championships Men – An Improbable 100 Winner

July 2018 | by Steven Mills |



Lalu Mohammad Zohri upset the favored American pair in the 100. (JIRO MOCHIZUKI/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Tampere, Finland, July 10-15—With nearly 250 million inhabitants across a vast archipelago, Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world, but even the most assiduous followers of the sport would be hard pressed to name a single world-class athlete—past or present—from that country.

But all of a sudden, Indonesia has a global champion in one of the sport's blue-riband events. Lalu Mohammad Zohri upset the favored Americans from lane 8 in the 100 final on the second day of the World Junior (U20) Championships, winning the title in an NJR 10.18 from Anthony Schwartz and Eric Harrison who were both timed at 10.22 for silver and bronze.

Zohri, who is advised by Harry Marra—most recently Ashton Eaton's mentor—after he struck up a working relationship with the Indonesian Federation in

'16, doesn't officially graduate out of the Junior ranks until 2020 but the 18-year-old has been slingshotted to stardom ahead of next month's Senior Asian Games which will take place on home soil in Jakarta.

With Asian sprinting very much on the rise, the quality of opposition is expected to be a step up for Zohri. He is likely to cross paths with the Chinese duo of Bingtian Su and Zhenye Xie who have both broken the 10-second barrier this season.

Overall, this wasn't a vintage championships for the U.S. in terms of titles won and it wasn't until the very last event of the penultimate day of competition that Team USA won its first title. The sprinters combined brilliantly to win the 4×1 for the sixth successive time in 38.88 (the No. 4 Junior time ever) from Jamaica (38.96).

Despite for many years being their watertight event in major competitions, the Americans fumbled the baton on the first changeover in the 4×4 final. After retrieving the stick they did well to rally back into medal contention but an invigorated Italian squad were away and clear, powering to the title in 3:04.05 to eclipse the ratified 37-year-old European Record of 3:04.57 set by East Germany at the '81 Euro Juniors.

And Thomas Schönlebe's longstanding European Junior Record in the 400 was almost eclipsed by Jonathan Sacoor who looks set to extend Belgium's fine recent tradition in the one-lap event into the next decade. Sacoor, who is coached by Jacques Borlée and trains alongside the Borlée brothers, made up a seemingly insurmountable gap on Jamaica's pre-race favorite Christopher Taylor who was unbeaten across all distances this year—heats and semis included—prior to the final. After easing through the preliminary rounds, Taylor went out much harder in the final and still had a clear lead coming off the final bend before tying up dramatically, allowing Sacoor to come through on his inside in a huge lifetime best of 45.03—just 0.02 shy of Schönlebe's mark—with Taylor 2nd in 45.38. Sacoor, who hadn't broken 46 prior to this meet, will only contest the relay at the European Championships in Berlin next month. On the relay here he produced the fastest splits of the meet, a 44.56 anchor in the heats and a 44.7 second leg in the final.

Kenyans performed brilliantly on the track, taking a sweep of titles on the flat

from the 800 up to the 10,000. The championships began with a phenomenal front running display from 18-year-old Rhonex Kipruto who further embellished his burgeoning reputation by winning the 25-lap title in a meet record 27:21.08 courtesy of a second half of 13:23.86. George Manangoi, the younger brother of Elijah, then won the 1500 in 3:41.71 to ensure the Manangoi brothers hold all three global 1500 titles—Youth, Junior, Senior—simultaneously before 16-year-old Edward Zakayo won an exciting 5000 in 13:20.16 with a devastating sprint finish.

It was also a good championships for Norwegian wunderkind Jakob Ingebrigtsen who came away with a brace of medals. After silver in the 1500m, the 18-year-old—who has been a fixture at the last two editions of the Pre Classic—won bronze in the 5000 in 13:20.78 to smash the nearly 40-year-old European U20 record. Senior duties await both Zakayo and Ingebrigtsen who will be competing in the African and European Championships next month.

By contrast, Ethiopia could only muster up a bronze in the 10,000 and was run out of medal contention altogether in both the 1500 and 5000—as well as the 800—despite the presence of World Indoor gold medalist Samuel Tefera and reigning 5000 champion Selemon Barega on their team. However Ethiopia's Takele Nigate upset sole Kenyan entrant Leonard Bett for the steeplechase title, 8:25.35–8:25.39. Not since the first edition in '86, when the event was held over 2000m has Kenya been beaten in the steeple although an administrative error halved their chances as just one entrant was declared for the event.

Mondo Duplantis signed off his junior-competition career with a clear-cut gold medal in the pole vault. Still 18, Duplantis won the title with just his second vault of the competition—a first-time clearance at 18-4½ (5.60)—before smashing the meet record with the =No. 9 Junior jump ever, 19-1 (5.82). He then had three attempts at 19-8½ (6.01).

Reigning World Youth champion Jordan A. Diaz also broke the meet record in the triple jump with 56-3¼ (17.15) to win the title by 71 cm, although this effort represented a rather workaday performance from the 17-year-old who extended his world U18 best to 57-1½ (17.41) ahead of the meet. Volker Mai's World U20 Record of 57-5 (17.50) is one of the longest standing in the books but Diaz still has two more full seasons in the Junior ranks to erase that mark

which was set in '85.

There weren't any WJRs set in Tampere but Australia's Ashley Moloney broke two world U20 decathlon bests to win the title in a meet record 8190 ahead of teammate Gary Haasbroek (7798). He clocked 10.51 in the 100 and 46.86 in the 400 although his campaign almost came to an inauspicious end in the second event after two fouls in the long jump. His sprints were spectacular but he also performed above expectations elsewhere.

South Africa's Kyle Blignaut won the shot put by a centimeter with a national record 72-5 (22.07) ahead of Adrian Piperi's AJR of 72-4½ (22.06). That moved them to Nos. 5 & 6 on the all-time world Junior list. Jamaica scored a nice 1-2 in the 110 hurdles with Damion Thomas (13.16) and Orlando Bennett (13.33) taking the spoils.



Briana Williams captured the 100/200 double at age 16. (GIANCARLO COLOMBO/PHOTO RUN)

World Junior Championships Women – Williams Is Jamaica's Latest Sprint Prodigy

July 2018 | by Steven Mills |

Tampere, Finland, July 10-15—Only 4 women have ever completed a short-sprint double at the World Junior Championships; Briana Williams is now the youngest to do so at age 16. Williams, who represents Jamaica, lives and trains in the United States—where she was born—but she is also in part a product of Trinidad: a certain Ato Boldon coaches her. Boldon won the men's double back in '92.

After some eye-catching early-season exploits including a 5th against the seniors over 100m at the Jamaican Championships last month, Williams was in the medal discussion for both the dashes here at the U20 meet, but running against faster athletes—and against athletes up to 3 years her senior—a double was not widely predicted.

In the semis, sub-11 performer Twanisha Terry confirmed herself as the favorite by breaking the meet record with 11.03 (the =No. 7 Junior time ever) but in the final, Williams bulleted out of the blocks and held a narrow lead all the way to the line, winning in 11.16 to the American's 11.19.

But Williams' best performance was reserved for her sixth race of the meet. She had never broken the 23-second barrier before but Williams, who is similar to all-time great Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce in stature and physique, powered off the bend and maintained her form and her speed brilliantly in the homestraight, setting a meet record of 22.50 (the No. 5 prep performance ever) to win by more than a half-second and emulate Veronica Campbell-Brown's exploits of 18 years ago. Williams old best was 23.11.

Williams, who just finished her sophomore year at Northeast High of Oakland Park, Florida, doesn't progress out of the Junior ranks until '22 but she already has aspirations of making Senior teams—and she doesn't just plan to make up the numbers either. "In the future, I want to be the youngest Olympic medalist in Tokyo 2020," she said. "But there are a lot of chances to succeed before then as well."

Williams didn't have the chance to make it a sprint treble as Jamaica was disqualified in the 4×1 heats, as was the United States. Germany claimed the gold in 43.82, while Ireland won its first ever sprint relay medal at global level

with silver in 43.90, moving to No. 9 on the all-time nations list. Team USA had more success in the long relay, claiming gold with the No. 4 Junior time ever, 3:28.74.

The only individual U.S. gold medal of the meet, men or women, came in the 100H—and only just. Tia Jones, who won a bronze medal two years ago at age 15, won the title in 13.01 but she was nearly run down by reigning World Youth (U18) champion Britany Anderson from Jamaica off the final barrier. They shared the same time—even down to the 1000th—but the judges were still able to split them on the photo-finish. “It was a very tight race,” said Jones. “It was nice to get the win but I hoped for a better time. I hit a couple of hurdles in the middle of the race.”

Reigning Youth 400H champion Zeney Van Der Walt of South Africa followed up that title with gold at 55.34. The 7th-placer was Brooke Jaworski, whose 57.57 PR in the semis took the yearly high school lead.

Celliphine Chespol was the only reigning champion from Bydgoszcz two years ago to successfully defend her title, winning the steeplechase title in a meet record 9:12.78, the No. 8 Junior time ever. The 19-year-old Kenyan now owns 8 of the 9 fastest marks ever. Back in 7th, neophyte steepler Alice Hill of Michigan PRed at 9:57.04, moving to No. 5 on the all-time U.S. Junior list.

Great Britain produced another global champion in the heptathlon as Niamh Emerson defeated reigning champion Sarah Lagger of Austria. Only 2 points separated them after the javelin but Emerson ran a PR 2:09.74 in the 800, winning 6253–6225. The anticipated 3-way battle for the 7-event title sadly failed to materialize as Alina Shukh, who won the European U20 title last year at 6381, sustained an injury in the javelin the night before and withdrew from the multi after the warmup to the high jump. The versatile Ukrainian, however, did surprisingly defeat the individual specialists to win the individual spear title with a season’s best of 183-6 (55.95). Kansas high schooler Dana Baker took the bronze with the No. 6 prep mark ever, 180-7 (55.04)

New Zealand also produced another global champion in the shot. Maddison-Lee Wesche (pronounced wish-ee) produced a final-round PR of 56-1 (17.09) to defeat China’s Linru Zhang and Jorinde van Klinken from the Netherlands who each reached 55-11¼ (17.05). Favored American Alyssa Wilson fouled out. The UCLA frosh was entered in 3 throws and while she finished 10th in the discus she capped her week with silver in the hammer with 211-5 (64.45) behind Canada’s Camryn Rogers’ 212-11 (64.90). There was also North

American success of sorts in the discus final as Moldova's 18-year-old Alexandra Emilianov—who trains and studies at Kansas—won the discus with 189-11 (57.89).

The 10K walk was full of PR action, Alegna Gonzalez claiming the gold with a Mexican Record 44:13.88 NR. In 10th, Ohioan Taylor Ewert picked off another American Junior/High School Record, her 45:57.81 crushing the 49:07.52 she set at the USATF Juniors.

Another highlight came on the final day of competition in the triple jump. Bulgaria's Aleksandra Nacheva, 16, improved her lifetime best to 46-6¼ (14.18), an effort which saw the Bulgarian dance onto the track and almost into the path of the finalists in the men's 800.

But for many who attended the championships, the highlight was the bold frontrunning tactics employed by the Japanese duo of Nozomi Tanaka and Yuna Wada in the 3000 final. Making the pace respectable from the gun and taking it in turns to lead, the Japanese duo still led by 8 seconds after 1600m and while the fast-finishing Ethiopian duo of Meselu Kahsay and Tsige Gebreselama reeled in Wada on the last lap, Tanaka fended off the two-pronged Ethiopian counterattack with a sub-66 last lap, winning the title in a PR 8:54.01 from Kahsay (8:56.39), Gebreselama (8:59.20) and Wada (9:00.50). Not since '90 had Japan won a medal in the event.

Rabat Diamond League – Coleman Victorious In Comeback

July 2018 | by Phil Minshull |



Bouncing back well from a bad hamstring, Christian Coleman outlined Ronnie Baker and a fast-closing Noah Lyles. (JEAN-PIERRE DURAND)

Rabat, Morocco, July 13—Christian Coleman bounced back after taking 6 weeks off to rest a sore hammy and beat a top trio of fellow U.S. sprinters to the line in the 100 to emphasize that he’s still in good enough shape to chase some fast times outdoors this summer.

Ronnie Baker was into his running the quickest at the Mohammed VI meet and had a marginal lead at 30m, but Coleman gradually got on level terms before edging out the man who was the World Indoor 60 silver medalist behind him in Birmingham back in March. Both men were given 9.98s (Coleman 9.972, Baker 9.978), running into a slight 0.4 wind, with fast-closing USATF champion Noah Lyles 3rd in 9.99 and Mike Rodgers 4th in 10.01.

“It was a perfect night for me, good race and good time. I couldn’t be happier,” said the indoor 60 WR-holder, who skipped the Oslo and Stockholm DL meets in June after suffering losses to Baker in Eugene and Rome at the end of May.

He added, "I am not so surprised to win in my first race [back], even with such a great field, because I was very fast in practice the last few days. When I was injured, I managed to stay in good condition." Having apparently rehabbed completely, next on Coleman's agenda is getting closer to his 9.82 PR from last year.

He was one of 3 U.S. winners at the only DL meet in Africa and one whose future might be in jeopardy if, as has been rumored, the bloated DL circuit is slimmed down or rejigged in the next year or so.

Christina Manning was the quickest away in the women's 100 hurdles but by the seventh barrier Brianna McNeal and Sharika Nelvis on her outside were alongside her and moving faster. Olympic champ McNeal came through to win her 3rd DL race of the year in an MR 12.51 with Nelvis 2nd in 12.58 and Manning completing a U.S. trifecta in 12.72.

Sam Kendricks made clearing 19-2¾ (5.86) look very easy in sailing over that height with plenty to spare before deciding to call it a day. "I beat the meet record, then I decided to retire. Sometimes victory is enough, and you do not need to jump higher," said the reigning world champ. One of the reasons for Kendricks not attempting anything higher after getting win No. 9 in 13 outings this summer was that he was jumping in London 2 days later. "I will arrive to London only 12 hours before the competition. It's tough, but it's the life of an athlete and I still enjoy it."

Three men got over 19-¼ (5.80) with Poland's '11 world champion Paweł Wojciechowski holding the advantage thanks to a first-time clearance while Kendricks and new Russian find Timur Morgunov went over with their second attempts. However, when the bar went up to the next height, Kendricks cleared on his second attempt and neither of his rivals could match him. Surprisingly, Renaud Lavillenie could do no better than his opening height of 17-10½ (5.45).

Jamaica's 20-year-old NCAA 400 runner-up Akeem Bloomfield impressed in his first ever DL meeting, the Auburn student winning in a meet record of 44.33, the second-best time of his career after his sensational 43.94 in Eugene.

Shaunae Miller-Uibo is no slouch over one lap of the track either but in Rabat the '16 OG 400 winner dropped down to 200. Dina Asher-Smith led into the home straight but the Georgia alum went through the gears in the final 50m and went past U.S. champion Jenna Prandini and then Britain's '16 European gold medalist over the distance. The victory, in a meet record 22.29, continued the Bahamian's unbeaten streak over all distances this season while Asher-Smith was 2nd in 22.40 and Prandini 3rd in 22.60.

Hellen Obiri won an exciting women's 5000 which saw 5 in contention at the bell before the Kenyan '17 WC winner came home in a 14:21.75 WL, the 13th quickest ever. Behind her, Sifan Hassan hung onto Obiri for almost 300m when Obiri hit the front just after the bell and was rewarded with a 14:22.34, breaking her own Dutch NR by almost 20 seconds.

Another Kenyan to produce a world-leading mark in Rabat was 3000 steeplechaser Benjamin Kigen. Concentrating on 800 and 1500 until late in the '17 season and only in his second year on the international circuit, the 25-year-old soldier had advertised that he was now a runner to pay attention to when he won in Eugene in a PR of 8:09.07 and he improved by almost 3 seconds on that time in Rabat winning in 8:06.19. By contrast, compatriot Conseslus Kipruto suffered back problems almost immediately after the gun and the reigning Olympic and world champion finished down in 12th in 8:27.36.

Another London '17 gold medalist who will remember Rabat only for bad reasons was Mariya Lasitskene. The high jumper's impressive 45-meet winning streak, which had stretched back more than 2 years, came to an end when she failed to go higher than 6-2¾ (1.90). "I had no problem, no injuries, it was just a bad day, these things happen," reflected the Russian glumly. Bulgaria's Mirela Demireva found a first-time clearance at 6-4¼ (1.94) sufficient for a surprise victory.

Top marks in the field also came from Colombian tripler Caterine Ibargüen who bounded out to a world-leading 49-1 (14.96) while Magnus Kirt got his third Estonian NR in 6 weeks when he flung his javelin out to 294-5 (89.75).

Caster Semenya's attempt on the long-standing 1000 WR—2:28.98 by Russia's Svetlana Masterkova in '96—unravalled between 500 & 700m but the South African still clocked 2:31.01 to go to No. 6 on the all-time list for the non-championship event.

The World Cup – Team USA Romps

July 2018 | by Roy Conrad |



Paul Dedewo's PR 44.48 was good for a full-second win in the 400. (MARK SHEARMAN)

London, England, July 14-15—It worked.

The first "Athletics World Cup" turned out to be reasonably successful, in spite of many serious obstacles. The meet, a 2-day scored competition matching teams representing 8 nations, was conceived by the British federation and held at the London Olympic Stadium.

The acknowledged obstacles included the scheduling of the meet in the middle of the Diamond League season and, for some teams, proximity to national championships and/or preparations for next month's European Championships. It also was held on the same weekend as the finals of the Wimbledon tennis tournament as well as the World Cup of soccer, a much more popular sport in England.

The scheduling affected the quality of the fields; a number of big-name stars, including some of the top Brits, chose not to compete. Their absence may have affected the meet's attendance, and the conflict with other sporting events certainly did. The stadium was little more than half full on Saturday,

and the Sunday crowd was even smaller. Unseasonably warm weather (with temps as high as 88F) may have kept some people home on Sunday as well.

Nonetheless, those who did attend seemed to enjoy what they saw. For one thing, the timetable had each of the 2 sessions filled with 17 events taking only 3 hours, with the running events in a window of less than 3 hours. That was accomplished by having no race longer than 1500m and by limiting the throws and horizontal jumps to 4 attempts per athlete.

A more important element of the spectator appeal was the emphasis on team competition. Athletes' bibs showed their country, not their name or an arbitrary number. Team standings were regularly updated on the scoreboards, and it was always mentioned that the event winners were scoring "maximum points" for their country. As a result, there were tens of thousands of people sitting in a stadium, virtually every one of whom was cheering for a particular participant in every event, mainly for the Brits.

The impact of all of this was not lost on the athletes. American 800 winner Clayton Murphy said, "To have so many different sporting events happening and still get this big of a crowd is awesome." Queen Harrison, the captain of the winning Team USA, described it as a "great atmosphere." She said that she felt very proud to be a member of the first winning team. "We will really want to come back and win it again next year."

Actually, there appear to be no plans to hold the meet again next year, but renewals in '20 and '22 are being discussed. IAAF President Seb Coe was supportive. "I've been very clear that I want new things to be tried," he said. "They are not always going to work out from the word go but that can't inhibit us. There is a lot of work being done on the calendar and the Diamond League. But while we're working that out, I didn't want the sport just to stop doing creative things. We will figure things out. They've already had interest in this from other cities. But I'm really pleased UK Athletics have taken up the challenge."

One of the issues that future editions may have to deal with is the dominance of the U.S. team. After a rocky start on the first day, the Americans started piling up the points. In the end, in spite of the absence of some of the top U.S. athletes and a few sub-standard performances by those who did compete (including yet another relay disaster), the team race was not close. Team USA ended up with 219 points, 57 points ahead of Poland, which edged the hosts for 2nd. Other teams were missing some of their best athletes, too, but even at full strength, they would probably not have been able to overtake the U.S.

Day 1: Team USA Left It Till Late

The Americans started off slowly, and the first U.S. win didn't come until the last hour of the first day, when Murphy continued his strong comeback season. He took the early lead, then settled into 2nd for most of the race. Poland's Adam Kszczot, this year's World Indoor champion, took the lead going into the final turn and held it until about 40m from the line, when Murphy overtook him. The winning time was 1:46.52, with negative splits of 54.6 and 52.9. Said the winner, "It was fun to get back to the team competition because I sort of miss that from college. I will be back tomorrow to cheer on my teammates."

The remaining three track events of the first evening all went to Americans. Ashley Henderson got out well in the 100. Double Olympic champion Elaine Thompson closed the gap after a slow start, but couldn't catch Henderson, whose winning time of 11.07 was just .02 ahead of the Jamaican.

The women's 4×4 was even closer. After two legs, the U.S. and Jamaica had separated themselves from the field, the two teams almost even at the second handoff. Tiffany James took the lead for Jamaica on the backstretch of the third leg, but Kianna Horton overtook her at the end of the last turn and opened up a lead of a few steps before handing off to anchor Courtney Okolo, the World Indoor champion. Stephanie Ann McPherson, who had won the individual 400 earlier in the evening (with Okolo 5th) steadily closed the gap on Okolo, who moved just wide enough in the homestretch to allow McPherson to challenge her on the inside. The Jamaican was on the verge of victory, but appeared to have dipped prematurely at the finish line, allowing Okolo to claim the win. The U.S. time of 3:24.28 was 0.01 faster than Jamaica's.

The men's 4×1 closed the first-day track events with another U.S. win over Jamaica, as anchor Cameron Burrell, running in lane 8, held off Tyquendo Tracey. The winning time was 38.42; the margin of victory was 0.10.

The final U.S. win of the day came in the high jump, which ended after the conclusion of the last running event. USATF champ Jeron Robinson led the competition at every height after he started jumping at 7-1¾ (2.18). He was the only man to clear 7-6 ½ (2.30); after winning, he missed three times at 7-8 (2.34).

A half-dozen other Americans were runners-up on Day 1. U.S. recordholder Kara Winger's opening javelin throw of 199-3 (60.75) led the competition for

the first three rounds. But on her final attempt, South African recordholder Sunette Viljoen threw 202-4 (61.69) and Winger could not match that. Katie Nageotte was tied for the pole vault lead after jumping at 15-4¼ (4.68), but Britain's Holly Bradshaw then cleared 15-7 (4.75) and relegated a disappointed Nageotte to 2nd.

Two other Americans also came close to victory but were beaten by representatives of Team Poland. Rachel Schneider stayed with the front pack through the first three laps of the 1500 and then took the lead at the 1200 mark, holding it until halfway down the homestretch, when she was passed by Sofia Ennaoui. The winning time was 4:07.66 with Schneider 2nd at 4:08.04. In the men's triple jump, Donald Scott improved to 54-10¾ (16.73) on his final attempt, but fell a centimeter short of Karol Hoffmann's winning jump.

The best individual performance of the first day was turned in by Poland's Anita Włodarczyk, the Olympic and World champion and World Record holder. Her hammer throw of 258-4 (78.74) was the longest in the world this year and was also the only world-leading performance of the two days of competition. "I am really happy to be back competing in London," she said. "The atmosphere is great."

Day 2: Team USA Continues To Roll

On Day 2, the U.S. won 6 more events. Two of them came in the vertical jumps. World champion Sam Kendricks captured the vault easily at 19-1½ (5.83) and then attempted 19-10¼ (6.05), which would have been an American Record. None of his three tries were really close. In the women's high jump, former World Indoor champion Vashti Cunningham, still only 20, outjumped home favorite Morgan Lake, who just turned 21 in May. Cunningham cleared 6-5 (1.96) on her first attempt to clinch the victory.

In the first running event of the evening, Paul Dedewo had a very narrow lead at the halfway mark in the 400. But he ran a strong second turn to take a clear lead, and then ran an even stronger home straight to finish with a PR of 44.48 and a margin of a full second over TCU soph Derrick Mokaleng, representing South Africa. Said Dedewo, "This stadium is amazing. I have heard stories that London is great for track & field and to witness it first hand it's true."

Another 1-lap victory was claimed by hurdler Kenny Selmon. Jamaica's Annsert Whyte led for most of the race, with a clear lead over Selmon and the rest of

the field coming off the final turn. But he started to fade as he approached the final hurdle, which he hit. Selmon held his stride and hit the finish line in 48.97, as Whyte faded to 4th.

In the women's 800, ex-Oregon star Raevyn Rogers, continuing to run well in her first post-collegiate year, was well-positioned throughout the race and had moved into 3rd entering the final turn. At that point, she and Britain's Adelle Tracey broke away from pack, but coming into the final straight, Rogers pulled away from Tracey and ended up with a decisive win in 2:00.20.

The final American victory came in the last event of the program, the men's 4x4, which was a runaway from the outset. The Americans led at every exchange and their time of 2:59.78 was more than 3 seconds faster than runners-up Poland.



The meet's only world-leading mark was Anita Włodarczyk's 258-4 in the hammer.
(MARK SHEARMAN)

Monaco Diamond League – Chepkoech Destroys Steeplechase World Record

July 2018 | by Mike Rowbottom |



Beatrice Chepkoech splashed & dashed her way to an amazing 8:44.32. (GIANCARLO COLOMBO/PHOTO RUN)

Fontvieille, Monaco, July 20—Kenya’s Beatrice Chepkoech took 8 seconds off the steeplechase World Record on a night of steamy heat at the Stade Louis II, clocking 8:44.32, with Courtney Frerichs judging her own efforts to perfection as she took 2nd in an American Record 9:00.85.

With temperatures still above 80 degrees (27C) it was an evening made for extraordinary deeds, particularly on the track, and it didn’t disappoint. Olympic 400 gold medalist Shaunae Miller-Uibo broke 49 seconds for the first time in her career in a compelling duel with Bahrain’s rising 20-year-old phenomenon Salwa Eid Naser, and Noah Lyles floated to another 200 victory in a PR and meet record 19.65.

But Chepkoech's was the crowning performance of the tenth Diamond League meeting of the season as she pushed from gun to tape, moving clear after 1000m before coming home, alone and triumphant. Her mark obliterated that of 8:52.78 set at the '16 Paris DL by Bahrain's Ruth Jebet (named on the same day by the Athletics Integrity Unit among more than 100 athletes and coaches facing disciplinary proceedings for doping offenses). It was the fifth WR set at this gem of a meeting at the business end of the season.

The 27-year-old Chepkoech, who had come into this race with the fastest time of the season, 8:59.36, has never won a major global medal—missing a water jump and having to run back at last year's World Championships hardly helped her chances—but she gave an indication of her sharpness this season by winning silver in the Commonwealth Games 1500.

"I wanted to break the World Record; that was the plan from the beginning of the season," said Kipkoech. "And I was aware the biggest chance would be at Monaco due to weather, crowds and the whole environment. And this plan worked well. I felt strong during the race. I was thinking maybe I can break 8:50 but not at all was I dreaming about 8:44. And this time still could be improved I'm sure. Maybe my next target could be to run under 8:40."

Frerichs finished ahead of Kenya's '15 world champion Hyvin Jepkemoi, who clocked 9:04.41, just ahead of world champion Emma Coburn (9:05.06 for the No. 4 U.S. performance ever), who held the previous AR at 9:02.58. Said Frerichs, "That race was incredible! 8 seconds under the WR, it's such a huge step for the event! I'm so proud of this American Record and what will keep us going is the 9:00 barrier and that's what I'll be aiming for. I have to give so much credit to Emma for making this event what it is now in America."

All-Time Women's Steeple Lists

The Monaco steeple revamped the Top 10 compilations in three categories.

| Time | Athlete | Date |
|------|---------|------|
|------|---------|------|

| World List | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 8:44.32 | Beatrice Chepkoech (Kenya) | 9/20/18 |
| 8:52.78 | Ruth Jebet (Bahrain) | 8/27/16 |
| 8:55.29 | -----Jebet | 8/24/17 |
| 8:58.78 | Celliphine Chespol (Kenya) | 5/26/17 |
| 8:58.81 | Gulnara Galkina (Russia) | 8/17/08 |
| 8:59.36 | -----Chepkoech | 6/30/18 |
| 8:59.75 | -----Jebet | 8/15/16 |
| 8:59.84 | -----Chepkoech | 8/24/17 |
| 8:59.97 | -----Jebet | 5/28/16 |
| 9:00.01 | Hyvin Jepkemoi (Kenya) | 5/28/16 |
| **10 performances by 5 performers** | | |
| 9:00.85 | Courtney Frerichs (US) | 9/20/18 |
| 9:02.58 | Emma Coburn (US) | 8/11/17 |
| 9:03.70 | Norah Tanui (Kenya) | 8/27/17 |
| 9:05.36 | Habiba Ghribi (Tunisia) | 9/11/15 |
| 9:06.57 | Yekaterina Volkova (Russia) | 8/27/07 |

| U.S. List | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| 9:00.85 | Courtney Frerichs (Bowerman TC) | 7/20/18 |
| 9:02.58 | Emma Coburn (New Balance) | 8/11/17 |
| 9:03.77 | -----Frerichs | 8/11/17 |
| 9:05.06 | -----Coburn | 7/20/18 |
| 9:07.63 | -----Coburn | 8/15/16 |
| 9:07.96 | -----Coburn | 5/26/17 |
| 9:08.13 | -----Coburn | 5/31/18 |
| 9:09.70 | -----Coburn | 6/07/18 |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 9:10.19 | -----Coburn | 8/27/16 |
| 9:10.76 | -----Coburn | 5/28/16 |
| **10 performances by 2 performers** | | |
| 9:12.50 | Jenny Simpson (Colorado) | 8/17/09 |
| 9:15.97 | Colleen Quigley (Bowerman TC) | 8/27/17 |
| 9:18.85 | Leah O'Connor (adidas) | 5/28/16 |
| 9:19.48 | Stephanie Garcia (New Balance) | 8/27/16 |
| 9:22.76 | Anna Willard (Nike) | 7/20/08 |
| 9:24.59 | Nicole Bush (New Balance) | 7/19/14 |
| 9:24.84 | Lisa Aguilera (Nike) | 8/27/10 |
| 9:27.59 | Ashley Higginson (Saucony) | 6/28/14 |

| World Junior List | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|
| 8:58.78 | Celliphine Chespol (Kenya) | 5/26/17 |
| 9:01.82 | -----Chespol | 6/30/18 |
| 9:05.14 | -----Chespol | 5/31/18 |
| 9:05.70 | -----Chespol | 5/05/17 |
| 9:07.08 | -----Chespol | 5/13/17 |
| 9:07.54 | -----Chespol | 7/01/17 |
| 9:07.94 | Peruth Chemutai (Kenya) | 7/20/18 |
| 9:10.74 | Winfred Yavi (Bahrain) | 7/20/18 |
| 9:12.05 | -----Chemutai | 7/20/18 |
| 9:12.74 | -----Yavi | 6/30/18 |
| **10 performances by 3 performers** | | |
| 9:20.37 | Birtukan Adamu (Ethiopia) | 5/26/11 |
| 9:20.55 | Ruth Jebet (Bahrain) | 8/28/14 |
| 9:20.65 | Tigist Mekonen (Bahrain) | 7/17/15 |
| 9:22.51 | Almaz Ayana (Ethiopia) | 8/27/10 |

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|----------|
| 9:24.51 | Ruth Bisibori (Kenya) | 10/03/07 |
| 9:25.91 | Roseflina Chepngetich (Kenya) | 8/24/15 |
| 9:26.25 | Nian Liu (China) | 11/02/07 |

The men's steeple was of only marginally less quality and produced the unusual sight of two contestants fighting for the lead over the final lap... neither of whom were Kenyan. Morocco's OG/WC silver medalist Soufiane El Bakkali won in a PR 7:58.15 (good for No. 10 on the all-time world list), with Evan Jager of the U.S. finishing 2nd in a season's best of 8:01.02, not far off his AR of 8:00.45. On this occasion Kenya's OG/WC champion Conseslus Kipruto could only manage 3rd, coming home in 8:09.78.

Miller-Uibo went out fast in the 400, covering her first 100 in 11.8, compared to Naser's 12.3. But by halfway her margin was down to 0.2 (23.5 vs. 23.7), and Naser clawed back another 10th around the curve (36.1 and 36.2). Miller-Uibo was pushed all down the finishing straight in what was her first meeting of the season with the diminutive Nigerian-born Bahraini who won 4 DLs in her absence this season, eventually setting a Bahamian Record of 48.97. Naser's 49.08 took almost half a second off her NR.

SMU's time was the world's first sub-49 since '09, and moved her to No. 10 on the all-time list. "I got this sub-49 I was waiting for," she said, "so I'm very happy, although also very tired. The next goal is to remain consistent at this level and long-term another barrier, 48 seconds."

The men's 200 was all Lyles, who took 0.04 off his PR with a world-leading 19.65, moving him to =No. 8 on the all-time world list. "It was a great race," he said. "I got the same start as I did at Prefontaine and I could feel it; it gives me confidence in what I can do next. Now I'm going to the Birmingham DL and finally Zürich to hopefully get a win."

The men's 1500 also produced running of breathtaking quality as the man who has had a long winning run this season, Kenya's Timothy Cheruiyot, drove to the line in a PR 3:28.41 that improved on his yearly world leader and earned him the No. 7 spot on the all-time list.

The high jump, lacking the injured world champion Mutaz Essa Barshim, nevertheless witnessed a 7-10½ (2.40) clearance as world silver medalist Danil Lysenko rose to the occasion after winning the event with a first-time clearance of 7-7¾ (2.33).

Marie-Josée Ta Lou won the women's 100 in 10.89, clear of her fast-starting compatriot Murielle Houré, the world indoor 60 champion, who clocked 11.01. World and Olympic triple jump champion Christian Taylor beat his Cuban-turned-Portuguese rival Pedro Pablo Pichardo with a best effort of 58-7¼w (17.86).

The meet had kicked off the night before the stadium action with "Shot Among The Yachts," as both sexes competed at a harborside venue. The men's version was one of the deepest ever, Ryan Crouser taking the win at 72-4¼ (22.05).

Heusden-Zolder – American 5K Record For Houlihan

July 2018 | by James Kirby |



Shalane Flanagan did some of the early work before Shelby Houlihan scooted away to a 14:34.45 clocking. (JAMES KIRBY)

Heusden-Zolder, Belgium, July 21—A small city in northwest Belgium may be an unlikely place to break the American 5K Record, but that is exactly what happened as double USATF champion (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/shelby-houlihan-deadly-when-the-sprinting-starts/>) Shelby Houlihan continued her dominating success.

It was a beautiful night to try to take down the national standard of 14:38.92 set by Shannon Rowbury of the Nike Oregon Project 2 years ago. Houlihan and the pace group broke from the field within 200m and after 1400 Flanagan took over. After helping set the pace through the 3000, Flanagan (who held the AR for 3+ years starting in '07) stepped off and Houlihan was left alone to chase the record. With a lap to go she displayed the ferocious kick she is becoming famous for, eclipsing the old mark by more than 4 seconds in 14:34.45. She said, "I have started realizing I can trust my kick whether it's a long race, shorter race, fast or slow."

Progression Of The Women's 5K AR

There have been 12 alterations to the American Record by 9 different athletes since Mary Slaney became the first to break 15:30. And she did more than break it; she crushed it. The progression:

| Record | Athlete | Date |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 14:34.35 | Shelby Houlihan (Bowerman TC) | 7/21/18 |
| 14:38.92 | Shannon Rowbury (Nike Oregon Project) | 9/09/16 |
| 14:42.64 | Molly Huddle (Saucony) | 7/18/14 |
| 14:44.76 | -----Huddle | 8/27/10 |
| 14:44.80 | Shalane Flanagan (Nike) | 4/13/07 |
| 14:45.35 | Regina Jacobs (Nike) | 7/21/00 |
| 14:52.49 | -----Jacobs | 7/04/98 |
| 14:56.04 | Amy Rudolph (Reebok) | 7/08/96 |
| 14:56.07 | Annette Peters (Nike West) | 8/27/93 |
| 15:00.00 | PattiSue Plumer (Nike International) | 7/03/89 |
| 15:06.53 | Mary Slaney (Athletics West) | 6/01/85 |
| 15:08.26 | -----Slaney | 6/05/82 |

Watching the race from the stands was the Bowerman TC coach, Jerry Schumacher, who had plenty to be excited about this night. Schumacher was all smiles, because not only did one of his athletes break an American Record, but he was also able to watch the latest member of his Bowerman team, Karissa Schweizer, the multi NCAA champion from Mizzou. Schweizer had her own recordbreaking night, finishing 3rd behind Molly Huddle—another former holder of the AR—in 15:02.44 setting another PR.

Wrapping up her season, Schweizer is excited and relieved to be joining Houlihan and Flanagan in the Bowerman stables. After her race, wearing a new uniform Schweizer pronounced herself “excited to finally announce that I have signed with Nike and the Bowerman Track Club! Can’t wait to see what the future holds.”

As for Houlihan, she described what is left for her in '18: “I’m heading back to Portland for a week and then back up to altitude until the 1500m Diamond League final in Brussels. After that, my hope is to compete in the 1500 at the Continental Cup and then shut my season down after that. I still have my sights set on that 1500 AR so I’m hoping one of those races will be fast enough to take a crack at that one.”



A 1:42.05 for Emmanuel Korir moved him to No. 6 on the all-time world list. (MARK SHEARMAN)

London Diamond League – Stylish Emmanuel Korir Climbs All-Time 800 List

July 2018 | by Thomas Byrne |

London, England, July 21-22—Emmanuel Korir recorded the world's quickest 800 in 6 years, clocking 1:42.05 to win at the Müller Anniversary Games, as Sifan Hassan won the women's mile with the third-fastest time ever. Those meet records came on a thrilling second day of action in the London Stadium, which also saw world leads by Keni Harrison in the 100H and Mariya Lasitskene in the high jump.

Korir's performance was the most stirring. The London track, after all, had witnessed the WR of David Rudisha in the '12 Olympic final. Slotting behind pacer Bram Som (24.3, 49.87), Korir (24.5, 50.3) wouldn't be passed, going through 600m in 1:16.73. Wycliffe Kinyamal and Clayton Murphy pushed through the final bend, but couldn't respond as the 23-year-old Kenyan pulled away. He maintained his unbeaten season as the clocking put him at No. 6 all-time. His two halves were 50.3 and 51.8.

"I am happy because that is a huge performance for me," said Korir, who also recorded 44.21(A) and 44.52 for 400m last month. "It's important to beat those guys because they're all really strong." Strong indeed: the top 8 were under 1:45; 7 behind Korir posted personal or seasonal bests, including Clayton Murphy, who finished 2nd in a U.S.-leading 1:43.12 (the No. 10 performance in U.S. history). Next was Kinyamal in the same time, then Nijel Amos, the Monaco winner in 1:42.14 just 2 days before, backed that up in 4th (1:43.29).

Watching on was former WR holder—and now IAAF President—Seb Coe, who called the race "brilliant." The same could be said of the women's mile. Hassan, who had broken the European 5000 record 9 days earlier, sat through the first 800 following the high-end pacing of Brenda Martinez (63.30, 63.55 [2:06.85]), but began to move with Hellen Obiri at halfway. The two passed Laura Muir, then Gudaf Tsegay, through the third lap, but Hassan showed the better strength, pulling away steadily through the final 400m to win in a Dutch Record 4:14.71. "It's unbelievable how fast I ran today. I have the endurance and speed but don't normally have the last kick and today I did," she said.

Tsegay, having repassed Obiri, moved to No. 6 on the all-time list with her PR 4:16.14. In all, 11 of the 14 finishers recorded lifetime bests, including a Kenyan Record 4:16.15 for Obiri and PRs for U.S. runners Jenny Simpson

(4:17.30 to scare Mary Slaney's AR of 4:16.71) and Kate Grace (8th in 4:20.70 for No. 4 on the all-time U.S. list).

All-Time Women's Mile Lists

High-level women's mile races are rarely staged, so in comparison with the 1500, the marks aren't quite as good. Here's the all-time top 10s:

| World List | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Time | Athlete | Date |
| 4:12.56 | Svetlana Masterkova (Russia) | 8/14/96 |
| 4:13.31i | Genzebe Dibaba (Ethiopia) | 2/17/16 |
| 4:14.30 | -----Dibaba | 9/06/16 |
| 4:14.71 | Sifan Hassan (Netherlands) | 7/22/18 |
| 4:15.61 | Paula Ivan (Romania) | 7/10/89 |
| 4:15.8 | Natalya Artyomova (Soviet Union) | 8/05/84 |
| 4:16.05 | -----Dibaba | 7/06/17 |
| 4:16.14 | Tudaf Tsegay (Ethiopia) | 7/22/18 |
| 4:16.15 | Hellen Obiri (Kenya) | 7/22/18 |
| 4:16.56 | -----Obiri | 7/09/17 |
| **10 performances by 7 performers** | | |
| 4:16.71 | Mary Slaney (US) | 8/21/85 |
| 4:16.71 | Faith Kipyegon (Kenya) | 9/11/15 |
| 4:17.14i | Doina Melinte (Romania) | 2/09/90 |
| 4:17.25 | Sonia O'Sullivan (Ireland) | 7/22/94 |
| 4:17.30 | Jenny Simpson (US) | 7/22/18 |

| U.S. List | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 4:16.71 | Mary Slaney (Athletics West) | 8/21/85 |
| 4:17.30 | Jenny Simpson (New Balance) | 7/22/18 |
| 4:17.55i | -----Slaney | 2/16/80 |
| 4:18.08 | -----Slaney | 7/09/82 |
| 4:19.18 | -----Slaney | 7/27/85 |
| 4:19.59 | -----Slaney | 8/02/85 |
| 4:19.98 | -----Simpson (New Balance) | 7/09/17 |
| 4:20.34 | Shannon Rowbury (Nike) | 9/07/08 |
| 4:20.5i | -----Slaney | 2/19/82 |
| 4:20.70 | Kate Grace (Nike Oregon Project) | 7/22/18 |
| **10 performances by 4 performers** | | |
| 4:20.93 | Regina Jacobs (Mizuno) | 7/20/98 |
| 4:21.78 | Ruth Wysocki (Brooks) | 9/07/84 |
| 4:22.93 | Suzy Hamilton (Nike) | 7/20/98 |
| 4:23.93 | Sue Addison (Reebok) | 7/15/86 |
| 4:24.11i | Mary Cain (Nike) | 1/24/14 |
| 4:24.14 | Lynn Jennings (Nike International) | 7/14/90 |

The 100H was staged over two rounds. Olympic champion Brianna McNeal (12.41) and WR holder Keni Harrison (12.50) were the heat winners. In the final Harrison got away from McNeal early, and although the latter battled well it was too late to apply significant pressure. Harrison, with good rhythm, closed for a 12.36 world leader. It was her first win in the Diamond League since Doha's season-opener in May. McNeal, who finished 2nd, remained atop the overall DL standings. Sharika Nelvis, fluid after a slow start, recorded a seasonal-best 12.51 to ensure a US 1-2-3.

Another US winner came in the women's 200. Jenna Prandini broke late from sharp-starting Dina Asher-Smith and fast-finishing Marie-Josée Ta Lou, who both faded. The U.S. champion's first DL win was achieved in a PR 22.16. Behind her, USA's Gabrielle Thomas dipped well to claim 2nd in a PR 22.19.

Likewise, the non-scoring men's 1500m was won by USA's Matthew Centrowitz. The Olympic champion won for the first time in a DL meet in 3:35.22 after kicking from the bell, repelling the charge of Australia's Ryan Gregson.

Earlier on the track, American Ce'Aira Brown showed strength to hold off Jamaican Natoya Goule to win the non-scoring 800 in 1:58.57. The women's 400 was won by Stephenie Ann McPherson in 50.31; her fellow Jamaican Akeem Bloomfield won the non-scoring 200 in 19.81, chopping 0.19 seconds from his PR. In the men's non-scoring 110m hurdles, Ronald Levy recorded a seasonal 13.13 to win.

After a streak-ending defeat in Rabat, Mariya Lasitskene returned to her winning ways in the high jump. The world champion matched her yearly world lead of 6-8¼ (2.04) with a first-time clearance, eclipsing surprising Elena Vallortigara. The 26-year-old Italian came in with a PR of 6-5 (1.96), but upped that first to 6-6¾ (2.00), then to 6-7½ (2.02), both on third try. With victory confirmed at 6-8¼, Lasitskene attempted a PR 6-9¾ (2.08); although close with her third effort, a share of No. 2 on the all-time list eluded her.

On an elevated runway, Luvo Manyonga equaled his season's best of 28-1¾ (8.58) to win the long jump. The South African, winner at last week's World Cup, dominated, with a consistent series of 26-9¼, 27-11, 28-0, 28-1¾, 27-8, 27-8 (8.16, 8.51, 8.53, 8.58, 8.43, 8.43). Compatriot Ruswahl Samaai was 2nd with 27-7½ (8.42), while American Jarrion Lawson was 3rd with 27-¾ (8.25), his best mark of the season.

Sandra Perković made light work of the discus, going out to 220-7 (67.24) with her opening throw to win by more than 2½m over Yaimé Pérez. The Croatian fouled her final 5 throws, but is now on a streak of 14 straight victories.

On the opening day, Ronnie Baker prevailed in the men's 100. The co-world leader was fastest in the heats with 9.90, which he matched in the final to win ahead of Briton Zharnel Hughes. On the women's side, 2-time Olympic champion Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce (10.98) won a non-scoring century. The speedy Jamaican dipped under 11 for the first time since giving birth in '17. The USA's Dezerea Bryant was 2nd in 11.04.

USA's Olympic silver medallist Paul Chelimo claimed his first Diamond League victory in the 5000. He recorded a 52-second last lap to out-kick Yomif Kejelcha and win in 13:14.01.

Shamier Little claimed her second consecutive Diamond League win in the 400H. The U.S. champion battled hard with Janieve Russell over the final two barriers, prevailing, as she did in Lausanne with a well-timed dip. "I put my soul into that lean!" said Little, whose time was 53.95. The men's non-DL race was won by world champion Karsten Warholm in a Norwegian Record 47.65.

A battling Sam Kendricks produced enough to beat Renaud Lavillenie in the pole vault. The American's first-time 19-5 (5.92) clearance was crucial, as he had missed bars at the previous three heights. Lavillenie had made those first time but couldn't match the U.S. champion's best, topping out at 19-2¾ (5.86), as did Mondo Duplantis, who was operating under a bit of a handicap. Explained the Louisiana high schooler, "The conditions were good today but I was unfortunate enough not to have my own poles, but fortunate enough to be able to borrow Renaud's poles which were very similar to mine and thank you to him for letting me borrow his poles while I'm competing against him. It took a little bit of time to adjust to but I put together some good jumps at the end and I cannot complain when I'm behind those two."

Abdalelah Haroun set a PR to win the men's 400. The Qatari found conclusive late strength to emerge from the pack and win in 44.07. Paul Dedewo paced his lap well for 2nd in a PR 44.43.

Noah Lyles Busts New Moves In Des Moines

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |

Taking the world lead in the 100 with a PR 9.88 at the USATF Championships put Noah Lyles in a dancing mood under the gray sky above Drake Stadium. And the name of the dance was the... nope, his fancy footwork didn't have a name.

"It's a millennial thing," he says. That and a spontaneous reaction to another milestone surpassed: sub-9.9. Lyles had first breached the barrier with his 9.89 semi to equal Mike Rodgers' day-old world leader from the heats.

Women's 100 winner Aleia Hobbs told journalists in the mixed zone she thought she could give Lyles a run for his money in a dance-off, and suggested she might retire to her hotel room to practice for the challenge, but no one finished ahead of Lyles on the track.

Just over 11 months into his 21st year, and one lap around the sun since a hamstring strain forced him to withdraw from his '17 USATF 200 semi, the Virginia native had made himself the candidate du jour to step into the enormous sprint-doubling void left by Usain Bolt.

While Lyles hasn't yet cemented his claim to the heir's spot—the other contenders are well known—his Des Moines dash bestowed a new descriptor for the first time: world class century threat. Noah Lyles, '17 Diamond League 200 titlist, is now Noah Lyles all-purpose dashman.

Interviewed last fall for [our '18 Super Preview issue](https://trackandfieldnews.com/past-issues/?issuem-pdf-download=2904) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/past-issues/?issuem-pdf-download=2904>), Lyles said, "I feel like I have a lot more to give and with the program I'm in with Coach Lance Brauman, I feel like we can definitely reach that potential." He's off to a super start on the project, with exhibits including his 19.69 Pre 200 win over the '17 WC gold and bronze medalists.

Said Brauman after that outing, "He actually executed the start and then he ran the first part of the turn, which is what he's been working on, and then did a real good job transitioning off and holding it home. That time's pretty quick, to be honest with you. I mean I was pleased with the 19.8 [Lyles' then-PR 19.83 in Doha] a couple weeks ago and figured it would just be a gradual decline



"It's a millennial thing," says Lyles of his no-name victory dance. (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

[toward faster times] from there. But it was a good field, conditions were great, and you know when the conditions are that way you have a chance to run fast and he took advantage of it.”

Between the Pre Classic and Des Moines, Brauman said, would come a 100 test in Kingston: “He’s gonna set it up and run his best. I think he can be a 9.9, 9.8 guy so that’s what he’s working towards.” Lyles was already a 9.8 guy, sorta, one with a powerful wind (4.1 mps) behind the 9.86 he ran in Gainesville in April. At the Racers GP meet in Kingston (June 9), Lyles sprinted 9.93, placing 2nd to the 9.91 PR of long, tall Briton Zharnel Hughes.

In Des Moines he won the blue riband sprint with the race model of a veteran, the type that often carried Carl Lewis across the line in front three decades ago and made Justin Gatlin a world 100 champion for the second time at age 35 last year. Lyles used the entire straight and strode past PRing Ronnie Baker, the preeminent century man on the '18 DL circuit, just before the line. His was a patient win. *(Continues)*

Lyles Joins The Sub-9.9 Club

He improved his PR to 9.88 in the final for a share of No. 9 on the all-time U.S. 100 list, but Noah Lyles had first joined the sub-9.9 club—becoming the 14th American to do so—with a 9.89 in the heats. The members of the club:

| Time | Athlete | Date |
|------|---------------------------------|---------|
| 9.69 | Tyson Gay (adidas) | 9/20/09 |
| 9.74 | Justin Gatlin (Nike) | 5/15/15 |
| 9.79 | Maurice Greene (Nike) | 6/16/99 |
| 9.82 | Christian Coleman (Tennessee) | 6/07/17 |
| 9.84 | Trayvon Bromell (Baylor) | 6/25/15 |
| 9.85 | Leroy Burrell (Santa Monica TC) | 7/06/94 |
| | Mike Rodgers (Nike) | 6/04/11 |
| 9.86 | Carl Lewis (Santa Monica TC) | 8/25/91 |
| 9.88 | Shawn Crawford (Nike) | 6/19/04 |

| | | |
|------|----------------------------|----------------|
| | Walter Dix (Nike) | 8/08/10 |
| | Ryan Bailey (Nike) | 8/29/10 |
| | Noah Lyles (adidas) | 6/22/18 |
| 9.89 | Travis Padgett (Clemson) | 6/28/08 |
| | Doc Patton (adidas) | 6/28/08 |

“I was just getting my butt kicked day after day in the 60,” he says, “and every week I’m seeing the same guys and I’m just getting my butt kicked and I’m just, ‘This is hard!’ It’s hard to take an ‘L,’ you know? And it’s hard when you know that you’re better but you’re not running your own event. All I kept saying in my head was, ‘Getting ready for outdoor, getting ready for outdoor, getting ready for outdoor.’”

“So finally outdoor comes and my times are just dropping, everything’s going well, and I’m like, ‘Alright, we need to really test this. I need to jump in a 100.’ Coming out here just proved that all that persistent nature of just trying to work on my start and running the 60s was really paying off.”

Lyles has successfully flipped the switch. “I believe it came after Doha,” he says, “and right after Boston”—the adidas Boost street meet, where Lyles ran down LSU alum Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake in the last 30m of a straightaway 150, timed in 14.77.

“We went back and I did a few starts, and all of a sudden I felt like it was just clicking. I know I didn’t get the greatest start at Boston but I still felt like my starts were [snaps his fingers] clicking. And my transition was going together and it proved right [at Pre]. Then we went to Jamaica and that just really solidified it for me.” Beyond just physically grooving his race skills, “it” was also belief in what those skills could yield.

Lyles says of his chase after Baker for the first 95-odd meters of the USATF final, “If I would have tried to push I would have jumped out of my whole frame, I would have jumped out of my positions, something would have tried to go faster and pulled on something else. I feel that if you let your body do what it does naturally, it’ll hit, and if it doesn’t hit it wasn’t time.”

The time where Lyles wants it to hit next year will be in late-September/early October at the World Championships in Doha.

After attacking the second half of this summer's Diamond League season starting, he hopes, by making some noise in the Lausanne 200 on July 5, Lyles and Brauman plan an adjusted build-up for what Lyles calls "the looong, looong next year." Phase one of fall training will be conducted Yogi style. "I'm thinking of just acting like a bear and just having a hibernation, a good old-fashioned sleep," he says.

"Me and my coach have talked about it with the group [the members of which include among others brother Josephus (6th in the USATF 400), and two women's 400 stars, USATF winner Shakima Wimbley and Olympic gold medalist Shaunae Miller-Uibo]. We're probably going to take a lot of jogging during a lot of the months. We're probably not going to do any indoor, we're probably just going to keep our rest because the season is so far down there. Especially since after you have that long season, you gotta go straight into the Olympics, so we're probably just going to keep it low."

Following, of course, a new high in the 100.

Shelby Houlihan Deadly When The Sprinting Starts

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



The 1500 field was close to Houlihan at the bell; at the finish, not so much. (MIKE SCOTT)

It was that kick. More than anything. In Des Moines, Shelby Houlihan won national titles Nos. 6 & 7 in the last 15+ months.

But that kick! Twice!

“The huge focus this whole time is just getting to that point where I can be in these fast races and still have the kick,” explained the 25-year-old Arizona State alum. “So it’s finally coming around.”

In a big way. On Saturday she was a close 4th as the 1500 hit the bell, but among those ahead of her was Jenny Simpson, no slouch at last-lap speed. But nobody could match Houlihan’s scintillating 57.66. On Sunday it was the 5000, where she was a close 2nd with a lap to go. Once again she sped away, with a 62.85 closer that was remarkable for the speed she unleashed in the straightaway, covering the last 100 in 12.9, lifting like a sprinter to conclude her double.

For the woman with a fatal kick, the race is a waiting game. Her Bowerman TC coach Jerry Schumacher told her to wait until at least the final 400 before moving to the front. So no matter how good Houlihan felt—and she felt great—she had to hold back.

“I think the biggest thing in my mind is just to stay calm,” she explained. “I’m constantly having these thoughts, like ‘I feel really good, just stay calm.’ It was kind of just random. I was listening to the music a little bit as I was running just to kind of get a rhythm, but I knew going into the last lap that I had a huge kick left. The whole last lap I was just like, ‘Not yet,’ until about 200 to go. In racing, it’s good to have patience in that way to be the last one to show your cards. It’s something I’ve been practicing the last 7 years. I’ve seen other people with huge kicks so I was just hoping that it would be enough to come out with the win.”

Managing the double was not a big thing for the Iowa native. “Usually I recover really well, I take that really seriously,” she said. “As soon as I’m done getting my cooldown, I’m eating right, drinking a lot of water and going to sleep. I’ve been able to come back feeling pretty much like the same each day.”

This wasn’t the first time she’s pulled off a national title double. At the ‘17 Indoor, she won the mile/2M pairing in slow tactical times at altitude a day apart. This winter she did it again, taking the 3000/1500 a day apart, and then producing an 8:50.38/4:11.93 double at the World Indoor over the course of 3

days, with a 1500 heat in the middle. That landed her a 5th (3K) and a 4th in Birmingham and suddenly she could be considered an international threat.

An 8:36.01 indoors at Boston and her first Diamond League win with a smashing 3:59.06 over Laura Muir and Jenny Simpson at the Prefontaine Classic have only underscored her membership among the world's elite.

"That's the big thing with international races," she says. "They're a little more tactical. I think having that kick in my back pocket—if it's a slow race—it's a big advantage for me. We'll see how it works out." As she told T&FN during the winter season, her steady growth as a runner has been a long process: "I really think slowly chipping away, workouts getting harder, getting older, maturing as well, all those things I'm hoping will come together at the right moment and I just have to be patient for it."

Now she heads to Lausanne for another DL 1500 in a summer that will focus on the shorter distance. Her dance card only has one more 5000 currently on it, where she hopes to run in the 14:40s. That is something that only 4 U.S. women—led by Shannon Rowbury's 14:38.72 AR—have ever accomplished.

"I feel like I am focusing on the 5K right now and I've been able to put some really awesome 1500 performances out there," she said. "I think it's mostly just working on that aerobic strength so that I can get to the end of a faster 1500 and still have a 28-second last 200." She adds, "Mostly focusing on getting strong for the 5 has really helped my 1500." And the mental preparation has been crucial, she adds, "Trying to give myself confidence, like 'You belong here, you're good enough to win these races.' "

Of that there's no longer any doubt.



Jeff Hollobaugh is a writer and stat geek who has been associated with *T&FN* in various capacities since 1987. He is the author of *How To Race The Mile*. He lives in Michigan where he can often be found announcing track meets in bad weather.

The Winds Of Good Fortune Favored Reggie Jagers

July 2018 | by Jeff Hollobaugh |



Reggie Jagers ended his Kent State career on a high note with an NCAA runner-up finish last year.

Reggie Jagers had always showed talent at throwing things, so back when he was a high school junior doing winter conditioning for football, he was naturally intrigued when he saw some of his classmates whipping a discus around. "I was always good at projectile throwing anything," he recalls, "so I figured it wouldn't be too hard."

That first year at Solon High School, just outside of Cleveland, he

threw in the 160s. A year later, he hit 188-6 and placed 5th in the Ohio State Meet and 2nd in the USATF Junior Olympics. Then, in his first year at Kent State, he made it to the NCAA, placing 18th and later that summer he won a bronze medal at the Pan-Am Juniors. “When I made my first U.S. team,” he says, “I realized that track would be my bread and butter. That’s why I stopped doing football.”

Jump forward a few years, and NFL scouts visiting the Kent State campus for pro day wondered why the big guy was eating birthday cake just before the 40 trials. “Aren’t you going to get ready? You’re eating cake,” one said to him.

“No man, I do track & field,” he responded.

As a junior, working with throws coach Nathan Fanger, Jagers finished 7th in the NCAA. Last year, he led until the final round, finishing 2nd with a PR 205-1 (62.51). With his move to the pro ranks, Jagers felt very confident about his chances this season. “Coming out of college every year I would get hurt towards the end of the season, recover from injury and then come back and still do pretty well at the NCAA Championships,” he says. “We knew there were good things there, but the timing of things was being affected.”

In January the 6-2/260 (1.88/118) Jagers—with a degree in sports administration (minors in business & marketing)—started working out at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista. “I knew that coming from Cleveland, Ohio, and moving out to Cali that I would have a lot of good weather. I’d be able to combat the southern throwers who would have a full season outside versus me who would have like 3 months outside. So I knew that this would be a breakthrough year alone just from having good weather around me and good training partners. I’ve been throwing 67–69 [220–225ft] in practice since the end of January.”

Jagers guides much of his own program, though he works with John Dagata in Chula Vista. That has been a gradual trust-building process on both sides. After a challenging start, he says, “It became a growing process of me and him learning each other and him instilling trust in me that I can get it done and that I know what I’m talking about.” He explains, “This gets all about body awareness and the proper angles and stuff like that. Americans seem to complicate it and the foreigners seem to make it simple and that’s how they

throw far. We try to make like rocket science. But when you talk to any foreign coach, they say simplify.”

Jagers credits Fanger for putting him on the course to be tuned into his own training: “He instilled in me how to control my own destiny.” But he admits this season has been a struggle at times, “It’s actually been kind of a frustrating year because I basically went 65m every meet this year but three and in those meets it was a very strong right-hand wind.” And therein lies the rub. Jagers is a lefty. Most discus rings are oriented to take advantage of prevailing winds in order to provide advantageous conditions for most throwers, which generally translates to right-handed throwers. And still in all 9 of his outdoor meets to date in ‘18, Jagers has surpassed his PR from the previous year.

Give a thrower like Jagers the occasional helpful wind—as happened on some of the throws in Des Moines, and you might see something even better. Discus fans at nationals not only saw him move to No. 16 ever among U.S. throwers, they also saw the farthest throw in world history for a lefty. His 225-1 (68.61) added a foot to the old best of 224-1 (68.30) set by Sweden’s Stefan Fernholm in ‘87. Now there are just 47 right-handers between Jagers and the ultimate longest throw.

“That record was definitely good to break,” says Jagers. “Those guys they were so great, those were the only guys that I would watch early on as well. When people are watching me throw, it’s hard for them to see what I do wrong because I’m left-handed. Obviously if I’m my only reference, it’s hard for me to see my imperfections as well, but they’re glaring, and when you switch it over to right-handed view using applications on my phone, it has definitely helped me see the errors of my throwing.”

Given the right-handed nature of the event, Jagers may pose a bigger threat to the podium than he will to the record book. Of his USATF win, he says, “The swirling wind was definitely a good thing. When [right-handers] don’t have a good wind to their liking, they just won’t throw far because mentally they feel like without that great wind they can’t go far. And me being left-handed, I’ve been in deficit winds all my career. So I just know whenever there’s a comparable wind, equal wind or anything like that, I’m definitely going to win. I know when it’s a right-handed wind I’ve just got to throw a little bit harder to get that victory.”

He laughs and adds, “I wish there were wind legal throws in the discus—I would be No. 1 in the world for sure. It’s just crazy how much the wind can affect you. If I’m going against a good right-handed thrower in their wind and I’m still beating them, it just shows that you’ve got to be really locked in and ready to compete at your best, highest level.”

Of course, World Championships and Olympics are held in stadia that typically minimize the effects of discus wind. That’s why the Olympic Record of 229-3 (69.89) and the WC Record of 230-2 (70.17)—both held by Virgilijus Alekna —don’t even crack the all-time top 70 in the event.

That thought encourages Jagers, who is also buoyed when he gets feedback from European coaches who occasionally see him throw at Chula Vista. “Those guys always give me confidence that when I get to those big championship meets I’ll do well,” he says.



Younger brother Phil Jagers finished 7th in Des Moines. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Another motivator for Jagers? His younger brother Phil, who threw for Akron. Born 364 days later, the right-hander with a best of 205-9 (62.71) placed 7th at USATF. "There's a sibling rivalry there," says Reggie. "We've been competing at things our whole lives."

In Des Moines, "I remember I was heading out there because I was in the second flight. He was in the first flight, I hear that he's in the lead of the competition. I'm really surprised, I'm like, 'OK, Phillip, 61m, alright.' It really got me going too because seeing that he was up there, I just wanted to go out there and back him up."

In the end, winning the USATF title was huge for Jagers, especially after his '17 experience finishing 7th with a strained groin muscle. "Five days before the U.S. championships. I'm out there on one leg. I was really disappointed because it took 199-8 (60.87) to make the World Championships team. I was disappointed that I wasn't able to showcase that.

"I feel like your failures make you for the next year as well. So failing last year at the wrong time definitely made me hungry for this year to prove myself to people. People say it's an off year, but I say it's an off year if you don't want to better yourself. Making these big teams, if you're not the No. 1 guy, all the other guys feel like it's an off year. So I made sure I was the No. 1 guy coming in."

Keturah Orji Is A Student Of Her Event

July 2018 | by Sieg Lindstrom |



Coach Petros Kyprianou says of Keturah Orji, “She knows everything and everybody out there that triple jumps far.” (KEVIN MORRIS/PHOTO RUN)

As she faced the scribes and video cameras in Drake’s interview area, Keturah Orji had just finished the domestic season of her life... so far. With a long/triple jump double at the NCAA capping her Georgia career with distinction befitting a 7-time NCAA TJ champion (in and out), she had fought through rain and hail to haul in that last collegiate crown after raising her Collegiate Record at the SEC. Her 20-point haul in Eugene chipped in mightily to the indoor champion Bulldog squad’s 2nd-place finish 1 point behind USC.

Now [in a tense contest she had just tilted successfully against Tori Franklin](https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-triple-jump-orji-vs-franklin-round-8/) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/usatf-womens-triple-jump-orji-vs-franklin-round-8/>), the U.S. event’s new star who had broken Orji’s American Record from the Rio Olympics, jumping past it twice in a meet in May. To win the national title Orji had to uncork her third-longest jump ever. Her triumph

earned her a third straight crown. "I don't think it's personal," Orji said of the duel just completed. "It's just everyone has marks and you go up against them and you try and beat them. It's kind of just like that in most competitions."

Franklin's arrival and readiness to put her all into unseating the U.S. queen, in fact, had Orji smiling. "It's really exciting," she said. "I know a lot of times when I was in high school people would say, 'Oh, the U.S. triple jump isn't strong; it isn't strong, it's weak.' A lot of times people wouldn't come and watch the women's triple jump either so it's nice that they show the NCAA women's triple jump now [on ESPN], and it's like that's where you're competing. We're just looking to bring a lot more attention to it."

Had Franklin passed her on her last attempt—the Michigan State alum was close—she had been ready to fight back. "I didn't know if [Franklin's 47-6½w] was going to be bigger," she said. "I thought it was going to be bigger 'cause the crowd went 'Ooooh!' So I was like, 'OK, I probably have to respond.' But luckily it wasn't so I was able to get the win."

Georgia coach Petros Kyprianou knew Orji would be ready for her first time under pressure from a rival at the Nationals.

"Keturah thrives on competition," he said. "She does change her technique to better when she has better competition. It's like an instinct or a mechanism she has. It kind of kicks in when the pressure is on. It's like the mom lifting the car to save her child, one of those things. She breaks out that super-power and Keturah's super-power is the ability to hit better positions and be able to apply all her speed and all her power in better positions. That's what I'm looking forward to seeing more down the road."

Orji, Kyprianou adds, is also a thorough student of the bounce-three-times discipline: "She's a very coachable athlete, extremely intelligent, very savvy in her event, she knows everybody and she knows who's competing. She knows everything and everybody out there that triple jumps far. She watches videos."

And she is analytical. Her comments when asked how this year's NCAA and USATF wins compared to each other were clipped: "This was definitely more competition and definitely better conditions than Eugene." But her assessment of her technique in Des Moines? A full report: "Not spot-on at all. My hop was not extended out enough so I definitely want to work on that. My

chest was coming forward on a lot of my phases also. That makes me fall in the pit earlier. And on my landings my feet dropped instead of bringing my feet to my chest. So I have a lot to work on.”

To shape Orji’s technique Kyprianou has used Tatyana Lebedeva—the ‘04 Olympic triple jump gold medalist and 3-time world champion—as their model. “Keturah is the American version of Lebedeva, the Russian,” he says. “They’re very similar, they’re very fast. Lebedeva was very fast and she had this nice hop phase where she stretched out very much. Lebedeva was a gymnast when she was little and so was Keturah. So they have the ability to split or open up the hop this much. That’s why Keturah’s technique has changed and become a little more hop-oriented or hop-dominant. It’s about 40%—40/20/40, basically, or 38/22/38 in her three phases as a percentage of the final jump.”

Orji’s arm action in her jump as a prep didn’t fit Kyprianou’s ideal. “So we had to change that and she bought into it,” says the coach. “We put numbers [up as goals]; she loves numbers. And I told her if you do this and this and this on our jumping with a 4-bounds-in-and-jump or your speed bounds or your lifting, if you hit those numbers, those numbers equal to 14.50 or 14.70 [c48ft]. And actually [in ‘16 when Orji set her then-AR 48-3¼/14.71 in Rio] we hit every single number and I kind of credit her ability to adjust and chase those numbers, and obviously her competitiveness. In simple words, that’s a very intelligent triple jumper right there.”

As Kyprianou sees it, Orji’s understanding of her primary event—don’t overlook her 22-4¼ (6.81) long jump PR at the SEC—has deepened vastly over four college years since she twice rated as T&FN’s No. 1 high school All-America for Mt. Olive of Flanders, New Jersey.

“I don’t think she was very knowledgable about any technique in high school because, according to her, her coaches in high school were sprint coaches and didn’t know a lot about the triple jump,” he says. “Her coach actually tried to learn a lot from [technique maven] Boo Schexnayder and all that and tried his hardest. So she was very open. And I was kind of lucky.

“Going back to Maicel Uibo [the multi-eventer who won two NCAA deca titles for Georgia], some of his techniques were really good or good enough or he

knew a lot about it, so it was difficult for him to make changes as quickly as I would like to. So it took 3 or 4 years for him to change all of them, but for Keturah it changed the first semester. She was very, very good in adapting to new techniques and new ideas and some very high-intensity training.”

With her college years behind her, Orji has signed with manager Hawi Keflezighi (Meb’s brother) and has elite aspirations for her pro career.

“She does want to be the first American to jump 15m [49-2½],” Kyprianou says, “and as long as she remains healthy and fixes... We’re still far from perfect, but the closer you get to perfect, the closer you’re going to get to 15m. She’s not as physically imposing as Caterine Ibargüen and Yulimar Rojas, who’s like 6-4 [1.93]. But I can say very confidently Keturah is a better technician than both of them. She just doesn’t have their physical ability. We can overcome that with more speed and better technique and better nutrition and all that. She’s definitely a serious candidate for an Olympic medal.”

Orji’s summer competition schedule will open with London’s World Cup on July 14–15. After that, says Keflezighi, she hopes to long jump in any Diamond League meets she can get into. With Rabat—the only remaining DL besides the final with a triple jump—going off just 2 days before the World Cup, Orji does not plan to TJ again until next season.



Sieg Lindstrom is *Track & Field News's* Managing Editor. He fell in love with the sport as a high school distance runner, and has covered 8 editions of the Olympics and 14 outdoor World Championships. In a feverish effort to brush up his résumé before he was hired, he also attended the '84 Olympics and '87 Worlds as a fan.

T&FN's 39th National Women's Relay Rankings – Purdue Makes History

July 2018 | by Walt Murphy |



Purdue (barely) lost the NCAA 4×4 at the line, but still earned enough points to become our first Big 10 winner ever. (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Purdue turned a nifty trick in '18, becoming the first Big 10 school to win our National Women's Relay Rankings in their 4 decades of existence (yes, Nebraska won the '91 crown, but at that point was a Big 8 member). Coach Lonnie Greene's speedy stick-carrying Boilermakers topped the ratings in the 4×2, were No. 2 in the 4×4, No. 3 in the shuttle hurdles and No. 4 in the sprint medley. It was close, as Purdue edged runner-up Villanova by just a single point, with another 2 back to Oregon, winner the last two years. Adding to Big 10 power, Indiana was next in line.

Purdue was 1 of 3 schools which scored in 4 events, being joined by Indiana and Baylor. Villanova was the only school with pair of wins, topping both the 4×8 and 4×15.

Each event (other than the shuttle hurdles, which was ranked just 5-deep and scored 5-4-3-2-1) was ranked 10-deep and scored 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. The 42 schools/teams which scored points in '18 (with details for those in the top 10):

| Place | School | Score | Events Ranked In |
|--|---------------|--------------|--|
| 1. | Purdue | 29 | 1)4 x 200; 2)4 x 400; 4)Sprint Medley; 3)4 x 110 Hurdles |
| 2. | Villanova | 28 | 1)4 x 800; 1)4 x 1500; 3)Distance Medley |
| 3. | Oregon | 26 | 3)4 x 100; 3)4 x 400; 1)Distance Medley |
| 4. | Indiana | 22 | 4)4 x 800; 3)4 x 1500; 10)Sprint Medley; 5)Distance Medley |
| =5. | Kentucky | 21 | 4)4 x 100; 4)4 x 200; 4)4 x 400 |
| =5. | LSU | 21 | 1)4 x 100; 6)4 x 400; 5)Sprint Medley |
| =5. | Stanford | 21 | 9)4 x 400; 1)Sprint Medley; 2)Distance Medley |
| 8. | Baylor | 20 | 8)4 x 200; 8)4 x 400; 6)4 x 800; 2)Sprint Medley |
| 9. | USC | 19 | 2)4 x 100; 1)4 x 400 |
| 10. | Virginia Tech | 16 | 2)4 x 800; 4)Distance Medley |
| <p>11. tie, Oklahoma State & Texas A&M 15; 13. Clemson 12; 14. tie, Arkansas, Eastern Michigan, Florida, Oklahoma & Tennessee 9; 19. tie, Hoka New Jersey-New York TC, Notre Dame & Texas 8; 22. Penn State 7; 23. Auburn 6; 24. tie, Alabama, Boise State, Georgia Tech & Kansas State 5; 28. tie, UConn, Iowa State, Nebraska & Ohio State 4; 32. Minnesota 3; 33. tie, Bullis HS (Potomac, Maryland), Monmouth, South Carolina & Vanderbilt 2; 37. tie, BYU, Georgetown, Indiana State, Miami, Middle Tennessee State & Penn 1.</p> | | | |

4 x 100

4 x 200

Undefeated LSU was a slam-dunk No. 1, getting back to the position it held in '15 & '16 before surrendering it to Oregon last year... The NCAA champion foursome of Mikiah Brisco, Kortnei Johnson, Rachel Misher & Aleia Hobbs also lowered the Collegiate Record to 42.05 at the SEC and backed that up with the No. 2 time ever, 42.09, in the NCAA semis... Oregon was the NCAA runner-up ahead of USC, but the Trojans had won their two previous meetings and had a superior set of times to take No. 2... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x1progs)

(<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x1progs>).

| | |
|-----|-----------|
| 1. | LSU |
| 2. | USC |
| 3. | Oregon |
| 4. | Kentucky |
| 5. | Auburn |
| 6. | Alabama |
| 7. | Texas A&M |
| 8. | Arkansas |
| 9. | Tennessee |
| 10. | Miami |

4 x 400

Purdue was the only team with a pair of big-meet wins, capturing the Florida & Drake titles, and also the only squad with a pair of sub-1:33 times... Oklahoma was a close No. 2, winning at Penn and losing only to a pro all-star squad at Texas... The No. 3 Longhorns didn't contest the Texas race, but did win the National Relays title, where yearly list leader Kentucky (1:30.76) ended up 3rd... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x2progs) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x2progs>).

| | |
|-----|------------------------------|
| 1. | Purdue |
| 2. | Oklahoma |
| 3. | Texas |
| 4. | Kentucky |
| 5. | Tennessee |
| 6. | Penn State |
| 7. | Nebraska |
| 8. | Baylor |
| 9. | Bullis HS, Potomac, Maryland |
| 10. | Middle Tennessee State |

4 x 800

USC's last-step victory over Purdue to win the NCAA team title will long be remembered as one of the great collegiate relay races of all time. The Trojans also beat the Boilermakers for the indoor 4x4 crown... Purdue had the most sub-3:30 times, 6, with Kentucky's 3:25.99 at the SEC being the year's fastest (making the Wildcats the seventh-fastest school ever)... The 8 NCAA scorers finished 1-8... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x4progs) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x4progs>).

| | |
|-----|------------|
| 1. | USC |
| 2. | Purdue |
| 3. | Oregon |
| 4. | Kentucky |
| 5. | Florida |
| 6. | LSU |
| 7. | Ohio State |
| 8. | Baylor |
| 9. | Stanford |
| 10. | Tennessee |

4 x 1500

Villanova easily repeated as No. 1. The Wildcats won 3 races, including Penn with by far the year's fastest time, 8:19.98 (the eighth-fastest collegiate time ever)... No. 3-rated HOKA was the only club team to score in any event... Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams. [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x8progs) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x8progs>).

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Villanova |
| 2. | Virginia Tech |
| 3. | Hoka New Jersey-New York TC |
| 4. | Indiana |
| 5. | Texas A&M |
| 6. | Baylor |
| 7. | Clemson |
| 8. | Oklahoma State |
| 9. | Monmouth |
| 10. | Penn |

Sprint Medley

List leader Villanova had no trouble earning No. 1 for the third year in a row after winning Penn by a half-dozen seconds. Nicole Hutchinson anchored in 4:17.0... Three meets—Penn, Drake, National Relays—provided all the rankers with all the races held on the same date... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x15progs\).](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x15progs)

| | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1. | Villanova |
| 2. | Oklahoma State |
| 3. | Indiana |
| 4. | Eastern Michigan |
| 5. | Arkansas |
| 6. | Kansas State |
| 7. | Iowa State |
| 8. | Minnesota |
| 9. | Vanderbilt |
| 10. | Georgetown |

Distance Medley

Olivia Baker's 2:00.90 anchor for Stanford at the National Relays propelled the Cardinal to No. 3 on the all-time collegiate list and No. 1 here... Baylor was a solid No. 2 after holding Stanford close at the National Relays and winning at Texas for 2 of the year's 3 fastest times... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#spmedprogs\).](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#spmedprogs)

| | |
|-----|------------|
| 1. | Stanford |
| 2. | Baylor |
| 3. | Clemson |
| 4. | Purdue |
| 5. | LSU |
| 6. | Texas A&M |
| 7. | UConn |
| 8. | Florida |
| 9. | Penn State |
| 10. | Indiana |

Shuttle Hurdles

Oregon (10:51.99) and Stanford (10:52.02) staged a barnburner at the NCAA Indoor, producing the Nos. 9 & 10 collegiate performances ever. Lilli Burdon anchored the Ducks with a 4:33.67, Christina Aragon the Cardinal at 4:33.35... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#dismedprogs)

(<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#dismedprogs>).

| | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1. | Oregon |
| 2. | Stanford |
| 3. | Villanova |
| 4. | Virginia Tech |
| 5. | Indiana |
| 6. | Boise State |
| 7. | Notre Dame |
| 8. | Oklahoma State |
| 9. | Eastern Michigan |
| 10. | BYU |

Georgia Tech became the fifth-fastest school ever with its year-leading 53.16 at the Florida Relays... Notre Dame won Penn and Purdue won Drake... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 5 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x100hprogs)

(<https://trackandfieldnews.com/track-field-news-rankings/womens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x100hprogs>).

| | |
|----|----------------|
| 1. | Georgia Tech |
| 2. | Notre Dame |
| 3. | Purdue |
| 4. | South Carolina |
| 5. | Indiana State |

T&FN's 62nd National Men's Relay Rankings – Florida Best Of The SEC

July 2018 | by Walt Murphy |



Not surprisingly, versatile Grant Holloway was right in the middle of Gator baton efforts.

(KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

As it so often is in all corners of the sport these days, the Southeastern Conference was dominant in our National Men's Relay Rankings, capturing 4 of the first 5 spots, with Florida eking out a narrow 1-point win over defending champ Arkansas for the top spot. It was title No. 4 for the Gators this century, adding to those won in '01, '05, '09 & '14. Mike Holloway's speedy Gainesville gang was 1 of only 3 teams which scored in 4 different events (none of them No. 1s), being joined by Arkansas & Mississippi State. The only squad to earn a pair of No. 1s was third-rated Houston, which captured the 4x1 and 4x2. It was a tough year to do this kind of compilation, with same-weekend staging of the Penn Relays, Drake Relays and the new National Relays serving to spread out the talent and reducing the number of head-to-head

confrontations to help sort things out.

Each event (other than the shuttle hurdles, which was ranked just 5-deep and scored 5-4-3-2-1) was ranked 10-deep and scored 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. The 48 men's schools/teams which scored points in '18 (with details for those in the top 10):

| Place | School | Score | Events Ranked In |
|--|-------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. | Florida | 30 | 4)4 x 100; 3)4 x 200; 4)4 x 400; 3)Sprint Medley |
| 2. | Arkansas | 29 | 3)4 x 100; 4)4 x 200; 6)4 x 400; 2)4 x Mile |
| 3. | Houston | 26 | 1)4 x 100; 1)4 x 200; 5)4 x 400 |
| =4. | LSU | 23 | 5)4 x 100; 2)4 x 200; 3)4 x 400; |
| =4 | Mississippi State | 23 | 6)4 x 200; 3)4 x 800; 6)Sprint Medley; 1)4 x 110H |
| =6. | Texas A&M | 17 | 2)4 x 400; 10)4 x 800; 4)Sprint Medley |
| =6. | Villanova | 17 | 1)4 x Mile; 4)Distance Medley |
| 8. | Texas Tech | 14 | 10)4 x 100; 8)4 x 400; 1)Sprint Medley |
| 9. | Penn State | 13 | 7)4 x 800; 2)Sprint Medley; |
| =10. | USC | 12 | 9)4 x 100; 1)4 x 400 |
| =10. | Virginia Tech | 12 | 9)4 x 800; 1)Distance Medley |
| <p>12. Georgetown 11; 13. Hoka New Jersey-New York TC 10; 14. tie, Atlanta TC, Ohio State & Oregon 9; 17. tie, Indiana, Princeton & Stanford 8; 20. tie, District TC & Texas 7; 22. tie, Clemson, Iona, Kentucky, Middle Tennessee & Notre Dame 6; 27. tie, Adams State, Florida State & Georgia Tech 5; 30. tie, Iowa State, North Carolina A&T, Southern Mississippi, TCU, Tennessee & Utah State 4; 36. tie, Duke, Northwestern Louisiana, Oklahoma State, The Woodlands HS (Texas), UT Arlington & Wisconsin 3; 42. tie, Baylor, Iowa, Navy & Prairie View 2; 46. tie, George Washington, Seven Lakes HS (Katy, Texas) & Shore AC 1.</p> | | | |

4 x 100

4 x 200

Other than an off-day at Mt. SAC when not operating with its big four, Houston was perfect, going 7-for-7, capping things off with a Collegiate Record 38.17 in winning the NCAA title... Runner-up Ohio State came on strongly at the end of the season, putting up 4 straight sub-39 clockings... 2-time defending champ LSU had only a same-time loss to Houston coming into the NCAA, but hopes for a third straight No. 1 evaporated with a DNF in the Eugene semis... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x1progs\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x1progs).

| | |
|-----|------------------------|
| 1. | Houston |
| 2. | Ohio State |
| 3. | Arkansas |
| 4. | Florida |
| 5. | LSU |
| 6. | Florida State |
| 7. | Southern Mississippi |
| 8. | Northwestern Louisiana |
| 9. | USC |
| 10. | Texas Tech |

4 x 400

Consistent Houston ran the two fastest collegiate times of the year—just 0.01 apart—on consecutive weekends early in the outdoor season... Defending No. 1 Arkansas won the inaugural National Relays at home but could earn no higher than No. 4... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x2progs\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x2progs).

| | |
|-----|------------------------------|
| 1. | Houston |
| 2. | LSU |
| 3. | Florida |
| 4. | Arkansas |
| 5. | Middle Tennessee |
| 6. | Mississippi State |
| 7. | Tennessee |
| 8. | The Woodlands HS, Texas |
| 9. | Prairie View |
| 10. | Seven Lakes HS (Katy, Texas) |

4 x 800

USC kept a rather low profile, running only 4 indoor meets and only a pair outside. But when the undercover version ran faster than the accepted World Record and the outdoor foursome ([Ricky Morgan 45.9, Rai Benjamin' 43.6, Zach Shinnick 45.85, Michael Norman 43.62](#) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/norman-benjamin-the-4x4-an-hour-and-a-half-of-trojan-brilliance/>)) clicked for a Collegiate Record it was a done deal... Texas A&M, runner-up at both collegiate nationals, was an easy No. 2, a spot down from last year... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](#) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x4progs>).

| | |
|-----|------------|
| 1. | USC |
| 2. | Texas A&M |
| 3. | LSU |
| 4. | Florida |
| 5. | Houston |
| 6. | Arkansas |
| 7. | TCU |
| 8. | Texas Tech |
| 9. | Baylor |
| 10. | Iowa |

4 x Mile

In an era when actual clubs (as opposed to all-star groups) rarely run relays, this was a big event for the post-collegiate crowd, taking spots 1, 2 & 4, with the New Jersey-New York bunch adding to the crown they won in '14. Their list-leading 7:11.30 claimed a new World Indoor Record... A Penn win gave Mississippi State the honor of being the top school... Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams. [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](#) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x8progs>).

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1. | HOKA NJ-NY TC |
| 2. | Atlanta TC |
| 3. | Mississippi State |
| 4. | District TC |
| 5. | Indiana |
| 6. | Georgia Tech |
| 7. | Penn State |
| 8. | Georgetown |
| 9. | Virginia Tech |
| 10. | Texas A&M |

Sprint Medley

All 10 of the ranked teams came from either Penn or the National Relays. Imagine how nice it would have been to have all 10 of them in one race somewhere... Penn was clearly the faster race, so Villanova gets the nod for No. 1... It's the 13th win for the Wildcats in this event, with Arkansas still the leader at 16... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4xmileprogs\).](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4xmileprogs)

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1. | Villanova |
| 2. | Arkansas |
| 3. | Georgetown |
| 4. | Princeton |
| 5. | Iona |
| 6. | Adams State |
| 7. | Kentucky |
| 8. | Oklahoma State |
| 9. | Texas |
| 10. | George Washington |

Distance Medley

No. 7 a year ago, Texas Tech cranked off the year's best time in beating a solid Texas Relays field (including reigning No. 1 Texas A&M) to earn the top spot... The 10 ranked squads won 6 different meets among them... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#spmedprogs\).](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#spmedprogs)

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1. | Texas Tech |
| 2. | Penn State |
| 3. | Florida |
| 4. | Texas A&M |
| 5. | Clemson |
| 6. | Mississippi State |
| 7. | Iowa State |
| 8. | Duke |
| 9. | Kentucky |
| 10. | Iowa |

Shuttle Hurdles

Mississippi State was a slam-dunk No. 1, producing the year's two fastest times in winning both Florida and Penn... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 5 ranked teams \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x110hprogs\).](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#4x110hprogs)

| | |
|----|-------------------|
| 1. | Mississippi State |
|----|-------------------|

As happens frequently in this event these days, most of the fast running was done in qualifying for the NCAA Indoor: 8 of the year's 10 top times were made at Notre Dame's Wilson Invitational. But Rankings are about more than just running fast and the No. 1 spot goes to undefeated NCAA winner Virginia Tech... The best of the outdoor schools was Penn winner Villanova in No. 4... [Click here to see the complete seasonal records of the 10 ranked teams](https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#dismedprogs) (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/mens-relay-rankings-2018-seasonal-records/#dismedprogs>).

| | |
|-----|---------------|
| 1. | Virginia Tech |
| 2. | Oregon |
| 3. | Stanford |
| 4. | Villanova |
| 5. | Notre Dame |
| 6. | Texas |
| 7. | Utah State |
| 8. | Wisconsin |
| 9. | Indiana |
| 10. | Princeton |

| | |
|----|--------------------|
| 2. | North Carolina A&T |
| 3. | UT Arlington |
| 4. | Navy |
| 5. | Shore AC |

ON YOUR MARKS – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |



Noah Lyles isn't just one of the faster men on the planet; the man also has some serious hops. (VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN)

Clubs Sign College Grads

New Hampshire 1500 star Elinor Purrier has joined Mark Coogan's New Balance Boston group; Karissa Schweizer has joined the Bowerman Track Club and will be trained by Jerry Schumacher; Hoka One One Northern Arizona Elite has signed Erin Clark (Colorado), Grayson Murphy (Utah), Danielle Shanahan (Loyola Marymount) and Alice Wright (New Mexico)...

Though he has turned pro, 800 star Isaiah Harris has confirmed that he will continue training with coach John Gondak at Penn State until he completes his degree next spring...

'12 Olympic long jump gold medalist Greg Rutherford of Britain says he'll turn

to track cycling when he retires...

Even with her 42 national crowns, walker Maria Michta-Coffey is a long way from walking past Ron Laird. The Hall of Fame walker has a huge lead on the male side of the sport with 63 career golds...

To mark 100 years since British women were given the right to vote, the 8 team captains at the London World Cup were all women; the U.S. team was led by, ironically, Queen Harrison...

Kenya's Mercy Chepkorir might have been a podium threat at the World Juniors in the 3000, but a passport screwup—mistakenly listing her as a male—kept her from traveling to Finland...

Track at New Mexico survived after 4 sports were eliminated, but the men's side still took a heavy hit, with cross country going from 16 roster spots to 10 and outdoor track going from 32 to 20...

Former Missouri assistant Carjay Lyles has filed a racial discrimination and retaliation lawsuit against head coach Brett Halter and other MU officials charging a "continuous practice of exhibiting discriminatory and demeaning behavior toward black athletes and staff members."...

Beating The Tokyo Heat

Early starts will be the order of the day for the road events at the sure-to-be-hot '20 Olympics. All will begin at 7 a.m. according to the tentative schedule, except for the 50K walk, which will go off at 6. That's assuming the Games stay on the same dates. With this year's killer heat wave roasting the Japanese capital there has been talk of moving the whole shebang to later in the year...

Will London's World Cup be a mobile affair? The London Telegraph says that China has expressed interest in hosting a '20 version, with the U.S. asking for '22...

Two-time Olympic Trials LJ finalist Mikese Morse, 30, is awaiting trial on murder charges after police say he intentionally ran down a father and two sons who were riding bicycles in Tampa, killing the father and injuring the two

boys. Morse's parents said he has struggled for years with profound mental illness...

Kansas City athletes will get a cold weather boost with the opening of the Hy-Vee Arena this fall. One of its features is a 350m indoor training track...

A 13,000-acre parcel of land in eastern Ohio has been dedicated as Jesse Owens State Park...

With the IAAF no longer having a formal bidding process for the World Championships, the early sites being mentioned for '23 are Budapest and Barcelona. A decision could be made at a late-July Council meeting...

The '19 European Junior (U20) Championships will be hosted by Borås, Sweden...

The Nigerian Championships—scheduled for 3 days—came to a stop on the morning of the second day because of an athlete protest about their treatment, as well as a controversy over federation politics...

Latest plans for the new Eugene track include a 4000-square-foot museum...

Forget the World Marathon Majors. Kenenisa Bekele will run the Amsterdam Marathon in October...

Stat maven Jed Brickner notes that Abderrahmane Samba's 46.98 in the 400H is a new record for lane 5, topping the 47.02s by Edwin Moses and Rai Benjamin...

In June sprinter Andre De Grasse and hurdler Nia Ali became parents to a daughter, Yuri...

Is There Anything Syd Can't Do?

In a recent posting on her Instagram page, Sydney McLaughlin is seen making a 2-handed, no-look backwards basketball shot... while riding a unicycle...



sydneyklaughlin16
270.7k followers

[View Profile](#)



[View More on Instagram](#)

33,424 likes

sydneyklaughlin16 swipe 🏠 don't mind my face lol

[view all 421 comments](#)

5 DAYS AGO

No secret shoes. "In the spirit of universality of athletics," the IAAF has ruled that any and clothes or shoes used in competition must be reasonably available to all. The rule change was probably inspired by the Nike Zoom

Vaporfly 4% shoes that were initially reserved for the company's elite athletes...

But do the hyper-expensive shoes work? A detailed New York Times study suggests that the specialized high-energy-return footwear can indeed produce times 3-4% faster...

Olympic javelin champ Thomas Röhler got to try his hand at being a meet director for the Javelin Festival in Jena. He failed to use that to his advantage and ended up finishing 2nd to Andreas Hoffmann, 290-3 (88.48) to 279-5 (85.17)...

Usain Bolt's dreams of being a pro soccer player got a 6-week extension, thanks to the Central Coast Mariners, a team based near Sydney, Australia, that is giving him a look, although many are suggesting that the sprint great's ongoing dabbling in soccer is merely a publicity stunt...

Tom Bosworth, Commonwealth silver medalist in the 20K walk, says he will challenge Qatar's criminalization of LGBT rights next year in Doha, even though criticizing the Emir carries a 5-year jail sentence...

File this under records we don't keep track of: Frenchman Baptiste Boirie recently rode a skateboard to vault 20-2¾ (6.17), a centimeter higher than Renaud Lavillenie's unwheeled global best. In real life, Boirie is an 18-6½ (5.65) vaulter. Old-timers may recall Steve Smith (the first indoor 18-footer in the vault) vaulting off a skateboard in the '70s, although we can't verify any heights he might have made.

The NCAA has proposed 2 rules changes which will bring the collegians in line with IAAF regulations: the relay exchange zone will expand to 30m (instead of the 10m acceleration zone followed by a 20m exchange zone); field eventers (other than vaulters) will only have 30 seconds to initiate their attempts instead of a minute...

Figures released by Tokyo organizers say the most expensive sporting tickets—at the high end, that is—for the '20 Games will be for track at ¥130,000. Roughly speaking that's \$1163 or £888 or €993. The most expensive ducats, of course, will be for Opening and Closing: ¥300,000, which is roughly \$2685/£2049/€2294. Start saving now. □

LANDMARKS – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |

Died: Erkki Ahvenniemi, 85; on May 18, in Jyväskylä, Finland. Twice World Ranked twice in the javelin with a high of No. 7 in '57.

Died: Kebede Balcha, 66; on July 10, in Toronto. Silver medalist in the '83 World Champs marathon for Ethiopia. World Ranked twice with a high of No. 5 in '79.

Died: Steve Caminiti, 71; on July 1, in Thousand Oaks, California; of pancreatic cancer. Running for Crespi Carmelite of Encino, he set High School Records twice in one day in '64, tying the 13.7 best for the 120y highs and then clocking 18.1 in the 180y lows (straight). At New Mexico he qualified for the NCAA twice in the 100.

Died: Aleksey Desyatchikov, 85; on June 4. The 4th-placer from the '60 Olympic 10,000, he twice World Ranked with a high of No. 4 in '60. Also ranked No. 8 in the 5K that year.

Died: Pedro Pérez, 66; in July, in Havana. He set a triple jump world record with his 57-1 (17.40) in winning the '71 Pan-Am Games. World-ranked 3 times, topped by his No. 4 in '71.

Hired: Golf executive Sarah Hirshland, as CEO of the USOC. She's the first woman ever to fill that role on a permanent basis.

Died: Bob Redington, 73; on May 23, in Fort Lauderdale. Former Tennessee star won seven SEC titles and finished 4th in the '65 NCAA XC.

Died: Hall of Famer Lindy Remigino, 87; on July 11, in Newington, Connecticut; of pancreatic cancer. Manhattan sprinter who, despite never having won a major championship, upset the field to win the '52 Olympic gold in the 100 and came back for a second gold on the 4×1. He had placed 5th in the NCAA final and ranked No. 1 in the World that season, the only one in which he would earn a World Ranking.

STATUS QUO – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |



For the second year in a row hamstring woes have forced triple Rio medalist Andre De Grasse to cut short his season.

THE LATEST in the aches, pains & eligibility departments, starting with domestic items:

Tianna Bartoletta says that her recent ankle injury turned out to be “just a bone bruise and a really angry deltoid ligament.”

Amanda Bingson had a rough time in Des Moines. One of her warmup throws failed to clear the cage, and bounced back on her, breaking a toe.

Shot putter **Tia Brooks-Wannemacher**, who has suffered from back problems in recent years, announced at the USATF meet that it would be the

last of her career.

Sam Chelanga, former NCAA 5/10/XC champ for Liberty, has announced that he is retiring from competitive running to concentrate on his military career.

Christian Coleman decided not to race in London after feeling a hamstring strain while warming up.

Brooks Beast **Hannah Fields** (2:00.53/4:05.50 PRs) shared on Instagram that she took a step back from competition this spring as she works her way through treatment for an eating disorder.

2-time NCAA long jump champ **Kate Hall** has announced that she will bypass her senior year at Georgia to train for the Worlds and Olympics in her home state of Maine. She expects to turn pro.

Steepler **Dan Huling**, 11 times a U.S. ranker (topped by a No. 1 in '10) has retired at 35.

Erik Kynard injured his left foot in taking 2nd in the USATF high jump.

Gia Lewis-Smallwood recovered from a pinched nerve in her neck just in time to place 4th in the USATF discus.

Sydney McLaughlin withdrew from her USATF hurdles after feeling tightness in her quad while warming up. She is still taking online classes with Kentucky and has said she's not sure where she will be moving yet. She has yet to sign any big shoe deal.

Molly Seidel had hip pain while competing in the USATF 10,000. MRI showed a gap in her pelvis where a fracture had healed badly. In July she had a bone marrow transplant to stimulate proper healing in the area.

X-rays showed no fracture after **Ashley Spencer** fell in the USATF 400H and suffered a swollen knee for weeks afterwards.

Ben True has assured his fans that his absence from the USATF meet was not injury-related: "I'm still racing! I was at my sister's wedding that weekend..."

Family first!" he tweeted.

Arkansas sprinter **Marqueze Washington** finished 7th in the USATF 200 despite pulling up with a hamstring injury. He expects to be back in action later this summer.

And On The International Front...

While attempting a World Record at the Gyulai Memorial **Mutaz Barshim** sprained his ankle, causing ligament damage. After surgery, doctors estimated it would take 3-4 months before the HJ star can begin training again.

Although he still has 2 years of collegiate eligibility, Auburn 400 star, Jamaican **Akeem Bloomfield**, has turned pro.

Bohdan Bondarenko the '13 World champ in the high jump, will likely not compete this season because of a slow recovery from winter knee surgery.

Brazil's Olympic PV champ **Thiago Braz** has been troubled by an injured foot this summer.

Jamaica's veteran sprinter **Veronica Campbell-Brown** has ended her season in order to begin training for '19, when she'll be 37.

Russia's **Anna Chicherova** is now eligible to compete again after a 2-year doping suspension, but the '12 Olympic high jump champ has been told she will have to pay back her prize money to the IAAF first. Though she said in January that she has retired, she now says she's hoping for an installment plan.

Javier Culson, 2-time World 400H runner-up from Puerto Rico, has retired.

At the Canadian Championships Andre De Grasse, felt a slight "grab" in his right hamstring; one that caused enough concern that he ended his season.

World 50K walk champ **Yohann Diniz** has been sidelined by a pelvic stress fracture.

Continuing back problems will force Olympic high jump champ **Derek Drouin** to sit out the '18 season.

This year's world leader in the long jump, **Juan Miguel Echevarría**, scratched from London with an injury.

German decathlete **Rico Freimuth**, having ended his season because of lack of motivation, will be playing for a German soccer club but still plans on going after the '20 Olympic decathlon.

Bahamian quartermiler **Steven Gardiner** may return to competition in August depending on how quickly he recovers from his left hamstring strain.

German javelin thrower **Lars Hamann** had already injured his elbow before falling over a mat in the weightroom, injuring his right foot and killing his hopes of an '18 season.

Zuzana Hejnová, the Czech 400H star, is currently dealing with a knee injury.

Former World Indoor 60 champ Richard Kilty had Achilles surgery in July.

Long jumper **Darya Klishina** is taking a pass on the '18 season to focus on her business studies in the U.S.

German distance runner **Konstanze Klosterhalfen** missed the first half of her season with a knee injury but hopes to run either the 1500 or 5000 at the European Championships.

Kyle Langford, 4th in the World Champs 800 last year, pulled out of the British Champs because of thoracic spinal problems.

Planning ahead: 2-time World champ **Mariya Lasitskene** says she will probably go on maternity leave after the '20 Olympics.

Renaud Lavillenie says he is having some knee issues but that hasn't changed his competition plans.

Christoph Lemaitre, the '16 bronze medalist at 200, tore a hamstring at the Paris DL.

World Indoor shot champ **Anita Márton** of Hungary will probably skip the European Championships to focus on recovering from an injured quad.

Laura Muir experienced some Achilles pain after her mile at the London DL and abandoned plans for an 800/1500 double at the Euros, where she'll now just go for the longer race.

and abandoned plans for an 800/1500 double at the Euros, where she'll now just go for the longer race.

South African sprint sensation **Clarence Munyai**, who delivered a 19.69(A) in March, has ended his season because of slow recovery from an April hamstring injury.

Christine Ohuruogu, the '08 Olympic 400 champ, has retired at age 34, citing "niggling injuries" that have limited her training this season, combined with the demands of law school.

Finland's **Tero Pitkämäki** suffered a torn ACL in his second meet of the season. The 4-time World/OG javelin medalist, now 35, will decide over the winter whether he will come back for '19.

Valeriy Pronkin, who won silver in the London '17 hammer, for Russia has cancelled his season because of shoulder pain.

A shoulder injury has caused 6-time Russian champion javelin thrower **Vera Rebrik** to cancel the rest of her season.

Yulimar Rojas will likely miss the rest of the '18 season. The triple jump world champ has a right ankle injury.

Citing Achilles troubles, Jamaican sprint star **Elaine Thompson** ended her season after the London DL.

Bosnia's **Amel Tuka**, the '15 WC 800 medalist, is currently out with injury.

Germany's **Lena Urbaniak**, who made the finals of the World Indoor shot, has ended her season because of right hip and back problems.

French sprinter Jimmy Vicaut missed the World Cup because of an adductor pain that started at the French Championships.

Warren Weir, '12 bronze medalist in the 200, suffered a grade 2 hamstring tear in April, causing him to end his track season. However, he has opted to play rugby sevens on the Jamaican national team at the Central American & Caribbean Games. □

LAST LAP – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |

Here's this month's collection of generally off-track activities that have gone a long way towards shaping the way the sport is headed:



Vin Lananna has stepped down from a pair of Eugene jobs; will he be stepping back up into his USATF one? (KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT)

Who's Wearing What Hats In Eugene?

A major development in Eugene: in mid-July Vin Lananna resigned as president of TrackTown USA, the organization that staged the last 3 Olympic Trials, as well as the '14 World Juniors and the '16 World Indoor. At the same time, Lananna resigned as chair of the '21 Worlds organizing committee. He told the Eugene Register-Guard that the resignation has nothing to do with ongoing investigations into the bid process for that meet.

Lananna said in a letter that he had been thinking about ways to boost the sport in this country, explaining, "In order to consolidate my efforts and seize this moment, I am stepping aside as President of TrackTown USA and as Chair of the Oregon21 Local Organizing Committee. With the day-to-day operational structure of TrackTown USA and the delivery of Oregon21 in capable hands,

the timing for me to transition my focus to the future of track & field could not be better.”

Kathy Herrmann (née Hayes, the '84 NCAA 10K champ for Oregon) will take over as interim Executive Director of Oregon21, while TrackTown CEO Michael O'Reilly will lead that group. Lananna will retain his position as an Associate AD at Oregon.

Recall that Lananna has been on a USATF Board Of Directors-imposed “temporary administrative leave” from his position as that group’s president since February, reportedly because of perceived conflicts of interest. Are those conflicts now gone? In the wake of Lananna’s announcement, the BOD held a teleconference, presumably to discuss the situation, but no public announcements have been forthcoming.

Coleman Explains His Injury Woes

After a brilliant undercover campaign frosted with multiple WRs in the 60 and a World Indoor gold, Christian Coleman naturally expected a successful first-ever Diamond League season. Instead, a hamstring injury brought him down early in the going. “It was pretty tough mentally,” he told Athletics Weekly leading into the London DL. “It was something I never had to deal with.”

Starting off, he took 2nd at Pre and 4th in Rome. Then he missed 4 key DL races: Oslo, Stockholm, Paris & Lausanne, which was frustrating: “Sitting out and not training, not doing anything, just doing rehab and trying to get that right. Not being able to go full speed in practice, that’s tough mentally, especially in the middle of a season and during a season where you’ve got guys running fast.”

Finally healthy again, he raced and won a very competitive dash in Rabat in 9.98. Had he rushed the recovery? He told AW: “That’s just my competitive spirit. I was scheduled to run all these races this season and even though it didn’t go the way I wanted it to go, I hit a bump in the road, I still wanted to try and come out here and compete. That’s just the type of athlete and competitor that I am. I want to go out there and see where I am against the best in the world and throw my hat in the ring and try to prove that this is why I’m in the conversation of being the fastest guy in the world.”

Alas, the day after calling himself “100% healthy,” he pulled out of the London race when he felt his hamstring grab during warmups.

Reebok Is Back In The Game

Longtime Syracuse coach Chris Fox surprised with a mid-July announcement that had resigned from his collegiate duties, explaining, "I have an opportunity in the professional ranks that I could not refuse." Several days later it was revealed he would be heading up the Reebok Boston TC.

Among the first signees of the club was Canadian Justyn Knight, who won two NCAA titles while at Syracuse. "I obviously know coach Fox well and I'm excited to work with him to develop and hone my skills on the track in the years to come," he said

Also joining the group will be Jamaican Kemoy Campbell, former Penn State steepler Tori Gerlach and Syracuse alum Martin Hehir. Eventually Fox plans to eventually coach 8-10 pros as part of the group, which will be doing much of its training in Charlottesville at the facilities of the University of Virginia.

Syracuse assistant Adam Smith will join Fox in coaching the program, which represents Reebok's first pro running team since the Reebok Enclave group of the '90s. Quipped Fox, "It's not like a real job. It's just something I've done since I was 13, so it's just what I do. It's part of my lifestyle. I want to help runners be good, and we're going to do everything we can together to get there."

What Future For The World Relays?

The Bahamian government has pulled the plug on Nassau's planned hosting of the '19 version of the World Relays. The early July decision came with the new party in charge expressing concern about the costs of hosting—some \$5 million was reportedly spent on the third hosting in '17.

Said Rosamunde Carey, head of the Bahamian federation, "It's very unfortunate that after working so hard to make the Bahamas the destination for the World Relays that we won't be able to host it again." Carey also said that IAAF head Seb Coe had told her he expected a new host would be named within a week, but almost a month has gone by at this writing with no word.

Almost immediately the Jamaicans jumped into the mix, with federation president Warren Blake signaling interest but admitting they would need financial backing from their government to make National Stadium ready.

Now the Australians are also interested, though they wouldn't be using the Commonwealth track at Gold Coast, which was torn up after this year's Games. Said federation head Darren Gocher, "We have reached out to the IAAF to see what it would take. We have also reached out to government to see what interest there is because we would have to have government backing to fund an event of that nature. We needed to know how realistic it was from a government point of view and the feedback was generally positive as it was from the IAAF. They are prepared to be reasonably flexible."

Oiselle Not Happy With Tori Franklin

Not often do athlete/sponsor conflicts become public, but in late June Oiselle CEO Sally Bergesen published her side of a dispute with triple jump revelation Tori Franklin. Oiselle, a women's apparel manufacturer, had given Franklin a small (\$3500) 1-year contract last fall. After her American Record in the spring, Franklin received a performance bonus that wasn't required by the contract. However, a week before USATF, according to Bergesen, Franklin notified Oiselle that she wanted out of the contract so she could accept a better offer.

According to the Oiselle statement, "On one hand we try our hardest to always put the athlete first, but we are also running a business and need the domestic exposure that the USA Championships brings to generate the marketing benefit that allows us to justify the program. We offered to split the difference, that we needed her to honor the contract she signed with us and compete in our uniform for the US Championships, but then we would let her out of the remainder of her contract so she could compete the rest of the summer for the new sponsor—effective July 1.

"Tori, unfortunately, made the decision today with her agent to break her contract with Oiselle, go back on her word, and wear another company's logo at the U.S. Championships. We are shocked, upset, and frankly just sad. How can we justify helping post-graduate athletes who need some time to develop, if the ones who do break through break contracts and give the initial benefit to a competitor?"

The statement concluded, "She was a wonderful athlete to sponsor, and she has a great future. We wish her the best as an athlete. But we hope that everyone realizes that failing to fulfill commitments as a business person on contracts entered into and paid for, is something that hurts the sponsors, future athletes, fans, and the sport."

Franklin responded on Instagram, saying in part, "I am thankful for the opportunity they gave me... I am a woman that prides myself in integrity and I am a woman that prides myself in honoring my commitment, but I am also a woman who knows my worth and expects a sponsor to give me what I give them." She said she had returned the \$3500 sponsorship money.

Meanwhile, At The Corner Of 15th & Agate...

Sweeping aside all actions to delay/halt the project, the University of Oregon didn't tarry in its demolition of Historic Hayward Field.

The NCAA meet ended on Saturday, June 9, and contractors moved quickly on Monday, beginning with the disassembly of the East Grandstand, an affair that attracted a small crowd of spectators who saw the 93-year-old grandstand begin to disappear. The vintage wood from the bleachers is scheduled to be repurposed. Some 10 days later the razing of the grandstand proper began and at the end of the day only rubble remained.

The next week, the West Stand came down. That took longer than the East, because the structure had much more concrete and metal. The last major structure on the demolition list is the Bowerman Family Building, where the locker rooms and treatment facilities were.

The latest step in July was the cutting down of nearly 2 dozen trees along Agate Street. Not all neighbors were thrilled with the move, as some of the city-owned trees dated back 100 years or more. The university said the tree removal was necessary to make access better to the construction site and create a pedestrian plaza. The plan is to replace the trees with 33 new ones at different locations around the new stadium in time for the '21 Worlds.

No date has been given for the start of the actual construction of the new stadium, but TrackTown USA is optimistic enough about the timeline that it is bidding to host the '20 Olympic Trials.

The Latest In The Testosterone Wars

Was there a critical flaw in the '17 study that led to the IAAF's pending new regulations on females with elevated testosterone levels? That's what three researchers maintain in a new paper. The scientists—based in the U.S., Norway and South Africa—got performance data from the original researchers in an effort to replicate their results. While their findings matched the original in some events, they found that bad data corrupted the analysis of the 400, 400H, 800 and 1500.

“Due to the pervasiveness of problematic data,” the researchers asked that the original study be retracted by the authors and the British Journal of Sports Medicine. That didn't happen, though the BJSM published a revised article and took into account the issues raised. The IAAF stuck to its guns, saying, “The IAAF will not be seeking a retraction of the 2017 study. The conclusions remain the same.”

The University of Colorado's Roger Pielke Jr., one of the critical researchers, told the New York Times, “This is an effort at what I would call a do-over, and it's embarrassing and it's not how science is expected to be done. I think this adds considerably more weight to our call for the original paper to be retracted. This is everything but putting up a billboard saying, ‘We really screwed up the data in the original study.’”

It is expected that the CAS will be taking a very close look at the underlying data as it works through the expected challenge to the IAAF rule by Caster Semenya.

IAAF Taking Hard Line On Testosterone Proposal

Seb Coe is standing firm on the IAAF's proposed new regulations to deal with hyperandrogenism in female athletes. In meetings with Athletics South Africa he insisted that the science behind the rule is legitimate and it targets no specific athlete, namely Caster Semenya.

“We need to create competition categories within our sport that ensures that success is determined by talent, dedication and hard work, rather than by other factors that are not considered fair or meaningful, such as the enormous physical advantages that an adult has over a child, or a male athlete has over a female athlete,” said the international federation president.

“We therefore need to come up with a fair solution for intersex/DSD athletes wishing to compete in the female category which is what the new regulations set out to do, based on the evidence the IAAF has gathered about the degree of performance benefit that such intersex/DSD athletes get from their higher levels of circulating testosterone.”

In agreeing to disagree, South African federation head Alexck Skhosana said, “We will support our athletes on the grounds that the regulations discriminate against certain female athletes on the basis of natural physical characteristics and/or sex.”

Both sides say they will abide with whatever ruling CAS makes.

When A Record's Not A Record

Given how sacred such marks should be, it's great that the IAAF exercises such firm control over World Records, but for the poor athletes who come out on the short end of the “technical details” stick, the rules can surely be frustrating. This year has seen quite a collection of potential WRs (and WJRs) get swept into the IAAF dust bin, even though all remain statistically valid and appear on all-time lists.

So far in '18 these have officially failed to pass muster:

- indoor 60:** 6.37 Christian Coleman at Clemson (no false-start blocks), but at least he subsequently ran a 6.34 that was ratified);
- indoor 4×4:** 3:00.77 USC at College Station (team included members from more than one country);
- indoor Junior 1500:** 3:36.05 Samuel Tefera at Val de Reuil (doping test irregularities);
- indoor Junior PV:** 5.83 Mondo Duplantis at Reno 12.1.18 (doping test irregularities, plus illegal pegs);
- Junior PV:** 5.93 Duplantis at Baton Rouge (doping test irregularities);
- women's 20K Walk:** 1:23:39 Yelena Lashmanova at Cheboksary (no international judges) (also unclear if Russians not cleared for international competition under “authorized neutral athlete” proviso are eligible for records);
- women's Junior indoor 400:** 50.52 Sydney McLaughlin at College Station (doping test).

We hasten to note that “doping-test irregularities” should in no way be confused with failing a test or evading a sampling; it simply means a sample

was either not taken or not taken in time. Note also that the IAAF's requirements on timing of a doping test are more strict than USATF's, so it is possible to have a ratified AR that Monaco doesn't accept as a WR.

Pulling Back The Doping Curtain

The IAAF's new Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU)—which replaced/expanded on the federation's anti-doping department in April of '17—is now operating at full speed. In July it released details on 120 ongoing cases, the vast majority involving doping offenses.

Olympic steeplechase champion Ruth Jebet is just one of the 85 cases involving Olympic or WC medalists. Nearly half of all cases involve Russians. Other notables on the list include Kenyans Asbel Kiprop and Viola Jepchumba, as well as Russian Olympic champion high jumper Ivan Ukhov. Austrian agent Robert Wagner—who is being investigated as a result of an undercover drug sting by reporters—is one of 4 functionaries on the list.

Most of the names announced are not “news,” but rather a public accounting of where each case sits in the punishment pipeline. Each major step (<https://www.athleticsintegrity.org/disciplinary-process>) in a doping case will now be made public: provisional suspension, first disciplinary hearing, first hearing decision, appeals & appeal decisions.

Brett Clothier, head of the AIU, said, “We are only at the beginning of our mission to restore the reputation of athletics and there is a lot more work to be done. The current and recent case load reflects the challenge we face as a sport, but also the fact we are willing to take on that challenge and drive cheats out of athletics.”

Of the 120 cases that have now been brought to life, IAAF chief Seb Coe says, “It's too many. But let's be clear, under the old system you wouldn't be asking that question. We wouldn't know the number, we wouldn't know where we were in that process. So it's good that we are transparent about the challenge, we are not skirting the challenge. I'd rather face the embarrassment of facing the question than the genteel decline and obfuscation of the sport.”

RIP: All-Time Great Irena Szewińska

One of the sport's greatest heroes died of cancer in June. In a remarkable career that spanned 5 Olympiads, charter Hall Of Famer Irena Szewińska began as a sprint great but eventually earned T&FN World Rankings in an unparalleled 6 different events.

As 18-year-old Irena Kirszenstein at the '64 Games, she took silver at the 200 and long jump and gold on Poland's 4×1. In '68, she won the 200 and took bronze at 100. In '72, two years after giving birth to her first child, she competed in the 100, 200 and long jump, winning bronze at the half-lap distance. Moving up to the 400 for her fourth Games, she won the 400 in '76, then finished her Olympic career in the Moscow '80 semis of the 400.

In between, she won a 100/200 double (plus 4×1 bronze) at the '74 European Championships, and at the '77 World Cup, she won a 200/400 double, beating the favored East Germans. She set 6 World Records and is the only athlete, man or woman, of the IAAF era, to have held WRs at 100, 200 and 400. Off the track, she served on the IOC from '98 on and the IAAF Council from '05. Her PRs were 11.13, 22.21, 49.29, 56.62 and 21-10¾ (6.67).

T&FN's inaugural Women's Athlete Of The Year remains unmatched in our World Rankings with the most total points, men or women, 342 (Carl Lewis is No. 2 at 332). She can also claim the most total No. 1s by any woman, 16 (Lewis had 18). Her Rankings details:

- 100—12 Rankings 1965–77, topped by No. 1s in '67 & '74;
- 200—15 Rankings 1964–79, with 7 No. 1s 1965–68, '74 & 1976–77;
- 400—6 Rankings 1974–79; with No. 1s 4 times, 1974–77;
- 400H—No. 3 in '77;
- LJ—8 Rankings 1964–72, with No. 1s in 1966–67 & '69;
- Heptathlon—No. 6 in '65.

The Woes Pile Up For De Grasse

The breakout sprint star of '15 & '16, Andre De Grasse has struggled ever since suffering a grade 2 right hamstring strain in the buildup to the '17 Worlds, which he ended up missing. He had hit bests of only 10.15 and 20.46 in a short, winless season going into the Canadian Championships, and after placing 3rd in the 100 he felt his right hamstring grab in a 200 semi and he slowed to a walk.

"I'm not sure what happened," he said. "I think it was just a cramp hopefully. I ran a good 150 and then all of a sudden it just surprised me." But an MRI showed a grade 1 strain in the biceps femoris (upper hamstring); though less serious than his '17 injury, it sufficed to end his season.

In a released statement, De Grasse said, "2018 will always be the year I look back at fondly as the year my daughter came into the world. I believe the issues I've faced these past 12 months have made me hungrier. I will heal quickly from this injury. I will go be with my daughter and focus on being a dad for the next few weeks as I heal, and I will plan to come back stronger than ever."

Previous to the injury De Grasse—who has been training with ALTIS in Arizona—was the subject of rampant speculation after being seen training in Toronto with former mentor Tony Sharpe, sparking reports that he had split with coach Stuart McMillan.

In an email to CBC Sports, Doyle Management, which represents De Grasse, denied the report, saying, "Andre's splitting with Stuart McMillan and the ALTIS training group is complete speculation and unfounded. Andre has been spending more time in Toronto for treatment, sponsor commitments and for his foundation launch."

McMillan, when asked about the reported rift, responded, "That's news to me."

Putting The Uniform Back In Uniform

Starting next year, NCAA tracksters will apparently have to be a bit more worried about what uniforms they're wearing. High schoolers, though, can breathe a bit easier.

The NCAA's T&F Rules Committee has recommended that all members of college track teams start wearing the same uniforms, starting with the 2018–19 school year. All uniforms must be the primary color of the team and have the same school logo on the top part of the garment. The committee says it didn't want to disqualify athletes who violate this proposed rule, but they also want to make it clear that competition will not be delayed for athletes who break the rule.

"If the event is set to go off at 1 o'clock, and you're not compliant, then you aren't competing in that event," said Dan Rose, committee chair and associate athletics director at Coast Guard. "The success of this uniform rule will be shared governance between coaches and meet management."

This ruling needs to be confirmed by an NCAA oversight panel in August. It can't come soon enough for T&FN editor E. Garry Hill, [who has railed on the topic before \(https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/from-the-editor-maybe-you-can-tell-the-players-without-a-program/\)](https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/from-the-editor-maybe-you-can-tell-the-players-without-a-program/).

Meanwhile, the national HS federation has eased up on the long-confusing rules surrounding undergarments. Now any visible garment—from t-shirts to leggings—underneath the school's official uniform will be considered a foundation garment, and as such is not subject to restrictions on color or logo rules. Now prep officials can concentrate on officiating and stop worrying so much about fashion issues. □

FOR THE RECORD – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |

Record alterations reported since the June issue (<https://trackandfieldnews.com/article/for-the-record-june-2018/>). W = World; A = American; J = Junior (U20); Y = Youth (U18); HS = High School; l-a = low-altitude; ¶ = conditions for ratification not suitable.

| MEN ABSOLUTE TRACK | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------|--|----------------------------|------------|
| Jr110H | 12.99 | =WJ | Damion Thomas (Jamaica) | Kingston, Jamaica | June 23 |
| MEN ABSOLUTE FIELD | | | | | |
| JrSP | 22.06 72-4½ | AJ | Tripp Piperi (Texas) | Tampere, Finland | July 10 |
| YHT | 87.82 288-1 | WY | Myhaylo Kokhan (Ukraine) | Győr, Hungary | July 07 |
| MEN WALKS | | | | | |
| 20W | 1:17:25 | WJ¶ | Sergey Shirobokov (Russia) | Cheboksary, Russia | June 09 |
| WOMEN ABSOLUTE TRACK | | | | | |
| St | 8:44.32 | W | Beatrice Chepkoech (Kenya) | Fontvieille, Monaco | July 20 |
| | 9:00.85 | A | Courtney Frerichs (Bowerman TC) | Fontvieille, Monaco | July 20 |
| 5000 | 14:34.45 | A | Shelby Houlihan (Bowerman TC) | Heusden-Zolder, Belgium | July 21 |
| 4 x 100H | 54.67 | HS | Western Branch, Chesapeake, Virginia | Greensboro, North Carolina | June 16 |
| (Shadajah Ballard, Jazmine Tilmon, Adriana Shockley, Na'tajah Ballard) | | | | | |
| WOMEN ABSOLUTE FIELD | | | | | |
| HT | 78.12 256-3 | A | DeAnna Price (New York AC) | Des Moines, Iowa | June 23 |
| Hept | 5660 | l-a HS | Anna Hall (Valor, Highlands Ranch, Colorado) | Bloomington, Indiana | June 16-17 |
| (14.10, 1.82/5-11½, 11.04/36-2¾, 24.54 [3494], 5.68/18-7¾, 34.24/112-4, 2:17.65 [2166]) | | | | | |
| YHept | 6221 | WY | María Vicente (Spain) | Győr, Hungary | July 05-06 |
| (13.25, 1.72/5-7¾, 13.77/45-2¼, 23.78 [3747], 6.37/20-10¾, 43.28/142-0, 2:23.29[2474]) | | | | | |
| WOMEN WALKS | | | | | |
| 10,000W | 49:07.52 | AJ, HS | Taylor Ewert (Beavercreek, Ohio) | Bloomington, Indiana | June 17 |
| | 45:57.81 | AJ, HS | Taylor Ewert (Beavercreek, Ohio) | Tampere, Finland | July 14 |
| 20W | 1:23:39 | W¶ | Yelena Lashmanova (Russia) | Cheboksary, Russia | June 09 |

CALENDAR – July

July 2018 | by T&FN |

| Diamond League | |
|-----------------------|--|
| August | |
| 18 | Müller Grand Prix; Birmingham, England |
| 30 | Weltklasse; Zürich, Switzerland |
| 31 | Van Damme Memorial; Brussels, Belgium |

| Other Internationals | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| July | |
| 27–03 | Central American & Caribbean Games; Barranquilla, Columbia |
| 28 | Savo Games; Lapinlahti, Finland |
| August | |
| 07–12 | European Championships; Berlin, Germany |
| 10–12 | NACAC Championships; Toronto, Ontario |
| 18 | Grand Prix; Göteborg, Sweden |
| 22 | Skolimowska Memorial; Chorzów, Poland |
| 24 | Citta della Quercia; Rovereto, Italy |
| 31–01 | Sweden vs. Finland; Tampere, Finland |
| September | |
| 02 | Invitational; Padua, Italy |
| | ISATF IWC; Berlin, Germany |
| 04 | IWC; Zagreb, Serbia |
| 05 | DécaNation; Sotteville, France |
| 07–09 | National Championships; Pescara, Italy |
| 08 | Great North CityGames; Gateshead, England |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 08-09 | Continental Cup; Ostrava, Czech Republic |
| 15-16 | Décaster Multis; Talence, France |
| October | |
| 11-17 | Youth Olympics; Buenos Aires, Argentina |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| U.S. Road Circuit | |
| † = USATF Champs race | |
| July | |
| 28 | Bix 7M; Davenport, Iowa |
| August | |
| 19 | Falmouth 7.1M; Falmouth, Massachusetts |
| 25 | Crim 10M; Flint, Michigan |
| September | |
| 03 | New Haven 20K; New Haven, Connecticut † |
| 16 | Half-Marathon; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| | CVS Downtown 5K; Providence, Rhode Island |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Marathons | |
| September | |
| 02 | Beijing, China |
| 16 | BMW World Marathon Major; Berlin, Germany |
| | Sydney, Australia |
| October | |
| 07 | Bank of America World Marathon Major; Chicago, Illinois |
| | Twin Cities; Minneapolis, Minnesota † |
| 14 | Eindhoven, Netherlands |
| 21 | Amsterdam, Netherlands |
| | Toronto, Ontario |