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TRACK & FIELD NEWS

**Who Made T&FN's
2020 Podiums?**

**2020's MVPs:
Mondo Duplantis
& Yulimar Rojas**

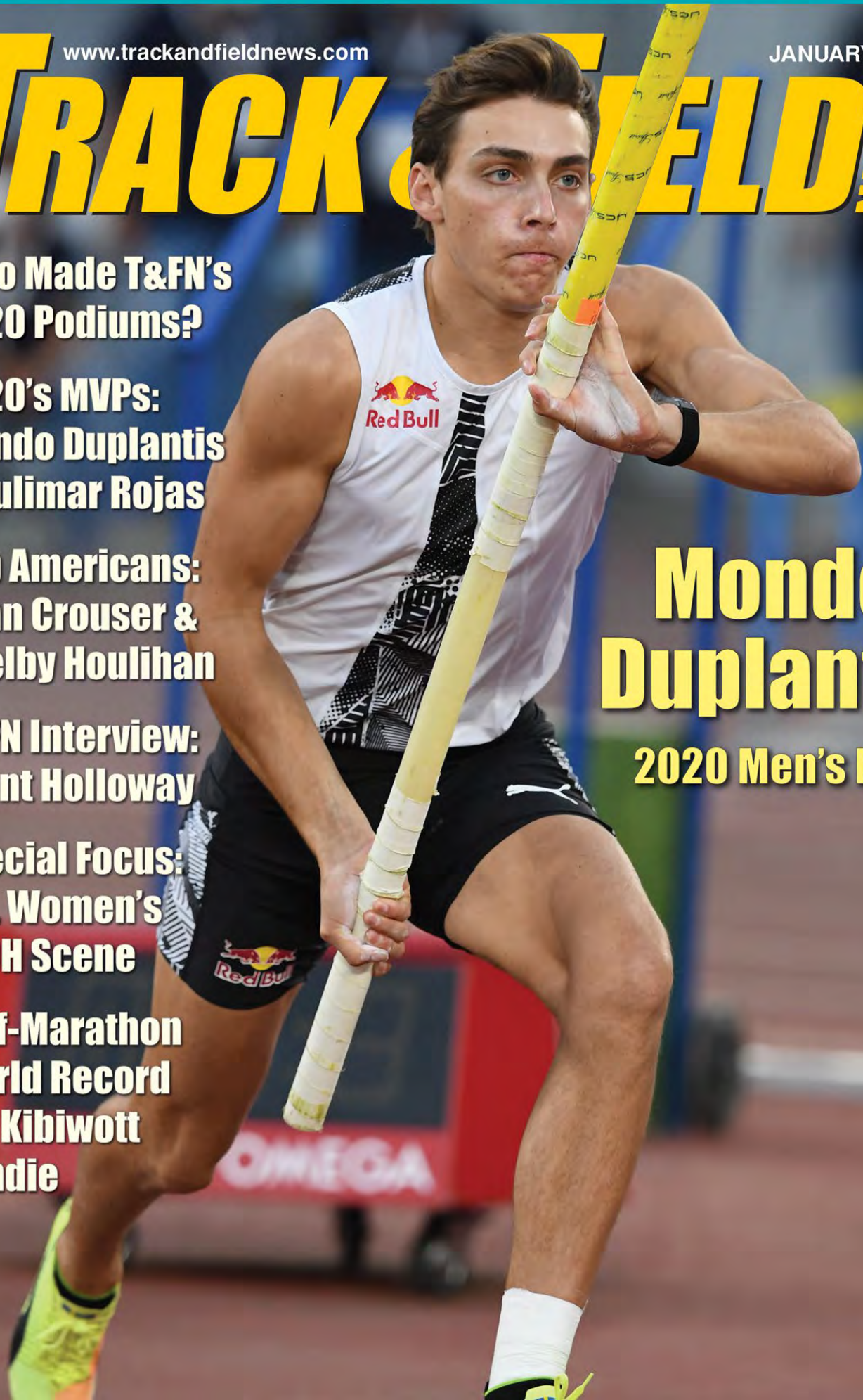
**Top Americans:
Ryan Crouser &
Shelby Houlihan**

**T&FN Interview:
Grant Holloway**

**Special Focus:
U.S. Women's
100H Scene**

**Half-Marathon
World Record
For Kibiwott
Kandie**

**Mondo
Duplantis**
2020 Men's MVP





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 **NewYork-
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FROM THE EDITOR

— What? There's No 2020 World Rankings?!

IT'S SAD BUT TRUE. As our '20 coverage ends with this issue, for the first time since the 1946 season you won't find the definitive World Rankings which have gone such a long way towards defining who we are.

A 73-year string of Top 10s, kaput!

Hardly the kind of thing I was looking for as a Christmas present. One not only for my selfish self, but also for all you loyal readers. Through the years, our surveys have consistently shown that there's no issue you like better than the Annual Edition, with its recapping of the year's goings-on.

With that in mind—and safe in the knowledge that even in a year as gutted as 2020 was there was no shortage of high-end athletes doing amazing things (even without high-tech shoes or pacing lights)—we wanted somehow still to honor those athletes without diminishing the historical value of World Rankings places.

So, rather than our traditional 10-deeps, in the following pages you'll discover that we have created "Podiums" for each of the 44 standard categories. Instead of enumerating the top 10 performers, we have instead tabbed the best 3 as Gold, Silver & Bronze winners.

As explained in our intro to the Podium winners, "Sure, we could have cobbled together Rankings at something less than 10 deep, but the parameters just wouldn't have been the same."

We also explain, "Given the immense difference between the circumstances under which these awards were made compared to the traditional World Rankings, we won't be listing this year's people in our historical compilations."

You may find that last to be a harsh judgment, and it's not one we made easily, but we think doing it this way will provide a better view of the history of the sport. We didn't want to get into the business of handing out "participation trophies," although in some places we had no choice but to come close.

To give you an idea of just how severely the relevant numbers were impacted, the women's 400H is the poster child for an event where '20 bore little resemblance to recent reality.

Harken back to '19 (a year in which U.S. runners were World Ranked 1-2-3-7-10), when the 4 fastest runners of the year were all Americans: Dalilah Muhammad 52.16, Sydney McLaughlin 52.23, Ashley Spencer 53.11, Shamier Little 53.73.

None of that quartet ran the event this year, one in which there was a single sub-54 runner (53.79 as the world leader) and only 4 cracked 55. This year's fastest American ran 58.83, good for No. 115 (!) on the yearly world list.

For a shocking U.S. men's number, check out the farthest outdoor long jump mark of the year: 25-6¼ (7.78). People were jumping that far almost 100 years ago. For another, let us cite the world men's high jump, where the list leader of 7-7¾ (2.33) was last that low way back in '83.

The numbers don't lie.

How About The Year's Best Athletes?

You may also note a change in nomenclature for our choices as the year's top performers. For the first time since '59 ('74 on the women's side) there are no superduperstars tabbed as "Athlete Of The Year."

Instead—just as was foreshadowed in the November/December issue with our tagging of the year's top high schoolers—you'll instead find MVPs (Most Valuable Performers). And following the MVP choices, rather than our traditional charting of vote-getters, in order, just a small handful of Honorable Mentions are highlighted.

As with the Rankings, this change in nomenclature was part of our effort to keep things in historical perspective. There simply weren't enough people of either sex to fill out a Top 10 that could remotely compare with its predecessors.

Having said that, I'd be totally remiss if I didn't clarify that Mondo's year compares favorably with any vault season that ever went before it. Indeed, you'll have to search far and wide to find seasons in any event which compare.

His season alone makes for a perfect present under the tree, but the best part is that in the Olympic year to come we'll all need bigger trees under which to find more of the great gifts our wonderful sport never fails to bring us.

Stay safe! Mask up! Get vaccinated when your turn in the queue comes up. (This public service message brought to you by the pre-T&FN gh, who a half-century ago was a Bacteriology & Public Health major.) □

Track & Field News
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Founded by Bert & Cordner Nelson

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T&FN's 2020 Podium Choices

VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN



The Olympic podiums remained empty this year, so we stepped in to fill the void.

IF THERE WAS ONE PLACE that track's biggest stars dreamt of being in the summer of 2020, it was on the podium in Tokyo. C19 ruined all that of course. Olympic glory and much more went away as the whole track season was largely a loss for most. Not just for athletes, but also for fans, meet promoters, anybody/anything with a vested interest in track & field.

Among the casualties: T&FN's Annual World Rankings, with which we have been entertaining fans since Cordner Nelson first analyzed the '47 season. We wish we could have done it again this year, but we couldn't.

Sure, we could have cobbled together Rankings at something less than 10 deep, but the parameters just wouldn't have been the same.

However, we knew that there had been enough high-end activity out there that we needed to have some kind of formal recognition. What better way, we decided, than to hand out "podium" awards?

So for each of the 22 standard events for each sex we have selected Gold, Silver & Bronze awards for the '20 season. If there were no Amer-

icans as part of the Podium, one was appended, at least in events where a national-class mark was put up.

Given the immense difference between the circumstances under which these awards were made compared to the traditional World Rankings, we won't be listing this year's people in our historical compilations.

These awards are based on our traditional World Rankings criteria, which in order of importance are Honors Won, Win-Loss Record & Sequence Of Marks.

With no international championships and a greatly reduced Diamond League season, the Honors category was virtually nonexistent. Still, performing well in a DL meet was important. Less importance was attached to Continental Tour meets, but they counted more than in regular years. Indoor competition also carried significantly more weight than it usually does.

Similarly, in many cases head-to-head meetings among the big players just didn't happen, so that category was less of a factor.

As an overall result, putting up big marks—

in a normal year by far the least-important part of our protocol—took on far more importance than usual.

Our World Rankings/Podium Panel—a wide-ranging bunch representing four different nationalities—likes to maintain a low profile, but credit (blame?) should be given where it is due. The current team is Jonathan Berenbom, Garry Hill, Richard Hymans, Dave Johnson & Nejat Kök. Credit is also due to Glen McMicken & Shawn Price for U.S. analyses and Bob Bowman, Jack Mortland & Pierce O'Callaghan for walk work.

For each of our 3 "medalists" you'll find their complete seasonal record. Subscribers to the digital version will receive a bonus of having an extra column of data (a column that won't fit in print versions) listing all of the athletes to whom the medalist lost in any given competition.

Abbreviations you'll find in the seasonal records: h = heat; sf = semifinal; (A) = altitude over 1000m, which is listed in affected events only; i = mark made indoors. □

— T&FN's 2020 World Men's Track Podiums —

100 METERS

Among the major players there were only 3 undefeated runners—Norman, Bromell & Simbine—and they were 3 of the 4 sub-10 performers. Andre De Grasse was the fourth, but he had losses to slower runners in losing both his races... List leader Norman had nothing to back up his single fast time so can claim no better than silver behind the well-exposed Simbine.

Gold — Akani Simbine (South Africa)		
10.01(A)	1)Pretoria	3/14
(9.91Ah, 10.03Asf)		
10.19	1)Marseille	9/03
(10.31h)		
10.17	1)Rovereto	9/08
10.02	1)Bellinzona	9/15
9.96	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Silver — Michael Norman (US)		
9.86	1)AP Ranch High Performance I	7/20
Bronze — Trayvon Bromell (US)		
10.04	1h)Montverde	7/04
9.90	1h)Clermont	7/24
9.87w	1)Montverde	8/10
(9.99h)		

200 METERS

The half-lapper was very straightforward, as list leader Lyles—the only one to break 20 twice—gave Bednarek his only loss. The undefeated Gardiner was the third of the year's 3 sub-20 runners, running in a different Clermont section than the two Americans.

The Lyles brothers went 1–2 in the Monaco Diamond League 200, Noah with a year-leading 19.76.

Gold — Noah Lyles (US)

19.94	1)Clermont	7/25
19.76	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
20.13	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19

Silver — Kenny Bednarek (US)

20.06	1)Montverde	7/04
20.30	1)AP Ranch High Performance II	7/23
20.19	2)Clermont	7/25
19.80	1)Montverde	8/10

Bronze — Steven Gardiner (Bahamas)

19.96	1B)Clermont	7/25
20.19	1)American Track League IV	8/01

400 METERS

There was no creative way to get around the simplistic “analysis” that the list order of Robinson/Cherry/Warholm was the only way to go. Missouri high schooler Robinson was just 18 and has another year to go in the Junior (U20) ranks.

Gold — Justin Robinson (US)

44.91	1) American Track League VII	8/15
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Silver — Michael Cherry (US)

45.43	1)Prairie View	8/06
44.98	2)American Track League VII	8/15

Bronze — Karsten Warholm (Norway)

45.05	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
45.56	1)Oslo	10/05
(45.97i)		



800 METERS

List leader Brazier had 3 of the year's 4 sub-1:44 clockings and added a pair of DL wins to boot making him an easy choice. Fellow American Bryce Hoppel (1:43.23) had the fourth sub-1:44, but his overall season wasn't as good as that of Cheruiyot or Giles.

Gold – Donavan Brazier (US)		
1:43.84	1)Newberg	7/31
1:43.15	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
1:43.76	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
(1:44.22i)		
Silver – Ferguson Cheruiyot (Kenya)		
1:45.48	8)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
1:45.11	4)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
1:45.34	1)Chorzów	8/25
1:44.34	1)Marseille	9/03
1:45.30	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
1:44.82	1)Rovereto	9/08
1:44.16	1)Doha Diamond League	9/25
1:44.78	1)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Bronze – Elliot Giles (Great Britain)		
1:45.46	2)Sollentuna	8/10
1:45.18	1)Bydgoszcz	8/19
1:44.68	2)Marseille	9/03
1:45.51	6)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
1:44.75	2)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
1:44.56	2)Doha Diamond League	9/25
(1:47.40i, 1:47.76i)		

1500 METERS

The top spot was decided by solid head-to-head competition, with the undefeated Cheruiyot beating Ingebrigtsen 2–0. The young Norwegian didn't lose

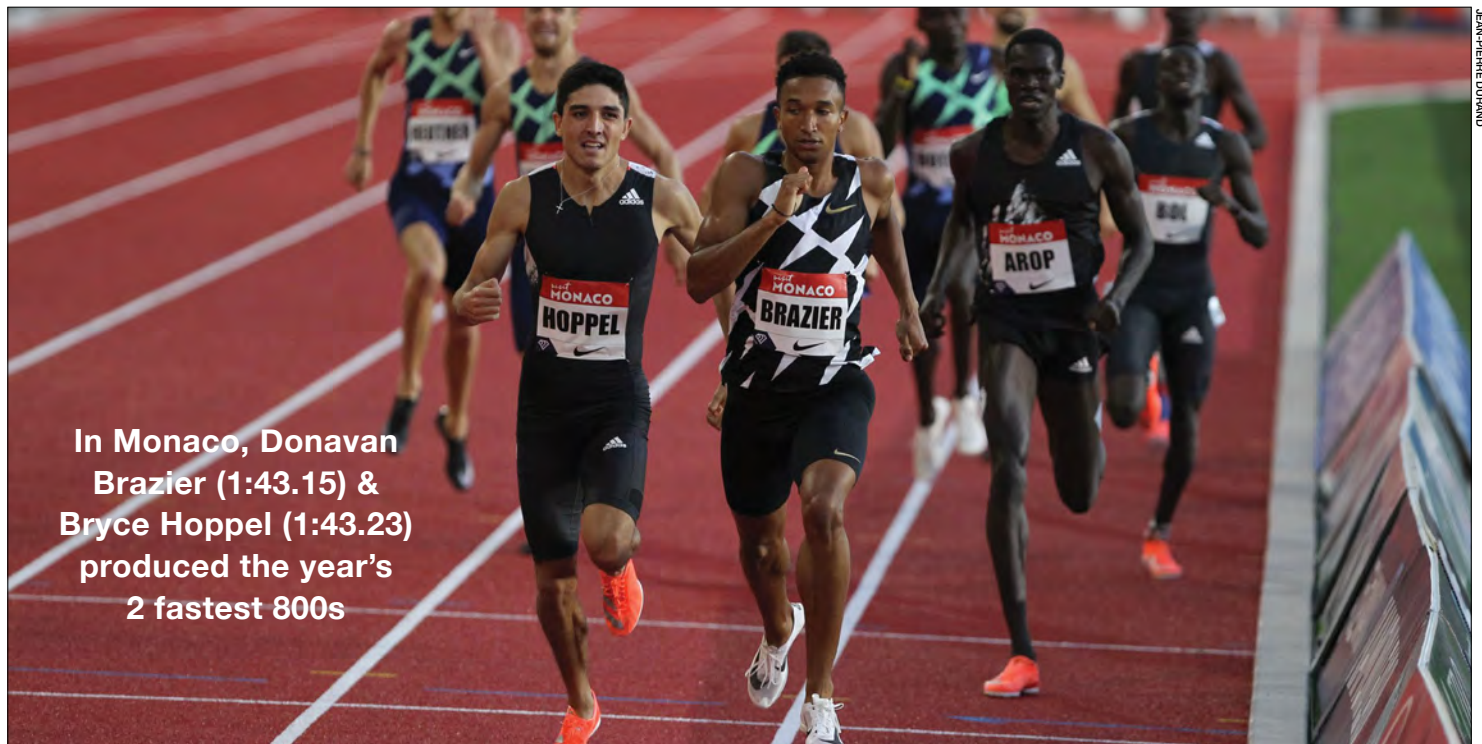
to anyone else. McSweyn's seasonal best wasn't as fast as Jake Wightman's Monaco race, but the Aussie had four solid races and is a clear Bronze.

Gold – Timothy Cheruiyot (Kenya)		
3:28.45	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
3:30.25	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
3:34.31(A)	1)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Silver – Jakob Ingebrigtsen (Norway)		
3:28.68	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
3:30.74	2)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
3:30.69	1)Brussels Diamond League	9/04
3:33.92	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
3:33.93	1)Norwegian Champs	9/19
Bronze – Stewart McSweyn (Australia)		
3:31.48	3)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
3:34.25	3)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
3:32.17	1)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
3:30.51	1)Doha Diamond League	9/25
Top American – Craig Engels		

STEEPLE

Monaco was the only major DL meet of the year, and El Bakkali's list-leading win earned him No. 1. Bett was 2nd in Monaco and was then 2nd by 0.03 in the Keino meet to edge Kibiwot for the Silver spot.

Gold – Soufiane El Bakkali (Morocco)		
8:08.04	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
Silver – Leonard Bett (Kenya)		
8:08.78	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
8:17.63(A)	2)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Bronze – Abraham Kibiwot (Kenya)		
8:17.60(A)	1)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Top American – no national-class times recorded		



In Monaco, Donavan Brazier (1:43.15) & Bryce Hoppel (1:43.23) produced the year's 2 fastest 800s



DANIEL MEUMANN

Double event-leader Joshua Cheptegei twice got to pose with World Record indicator boards.

5000 METERS

With no really significant head-to-head matches to choose from, the year's three fastest take all the medals in list order, headed by World Record setter Cheptegei.

Gold – Joshua Cheptegei (Uganda)		
12:35.36	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
Silver – Jacob Kiplimo (Uganda)		
12:48.63	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
Bronze – Selemon Barega (Ethiopia)		
12:49.08	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
Top American – Lopez Lomong		

10,000 METERS

Like the 5000, it's the top 3 on the yearly list, but unlike the shorter distance the Silver and Bronze performers had multiple significant races. The most significant race, of course, was Cheptegei's WR.

Gold – Joshua Cheptegei (Uganda)		
26:11.00	1)Valencia	10/07
Silver – Richard Yator (Kenya)		
27:49.35	3)Abashiri	7/15
27:01.42	1)Kumagaya	9/19
27:01.74	1)Yokohama	11/14
Bronze – Nicholas Kimeli (Kenya)		
26:58.97	1)Leiden	9/19
27:12.98	2)Valencia	10/07
Top American – Eric Jenkins		

110 HURDLES

The undefeated Ortega was the clear choice for gold, with the busy Pozzi and Belocian taking the other two spots, the latter edging out breakthrough American Aaron Mallett.

Gold – Orlando Ortega (Spa)		
13.11	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
13.21	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
13.25	1)Chorzów	8/25
13.15	1)Marseille	9/03
Silver – Andy Pozzi (Great Britain)		
13.48	1)Rieti	7/04
(13.44h)		
13.30	1)Savona	7/16
13.36	1)Trieste	8/01
13.17	1)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
(13.25h)		
13.14	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
13.60	6)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
13.31	2)Rovereto	9/08
13.15	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Bronze – Wilhem Belocian (France)		
13.38	2)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
(13.57h)		
13.18	3)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
13.34	4)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
13.27	2)Marseille	9/03
13.20	1)French Champs	9/13
(13.29h)		
13.32	1)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
13.49	4)Rome Diamond League	9/17
dq	–)Doha Diamond League	9/25
Top American – Aaron Mallett		



Karsten Warholm won 3 DL races and produced the No. 2 time ever

400 HURDLES

The '19 AOY was even better in '20, with his top-4 average improving from 47.16 to 47.03. With neither Rai Benjamin nor Abderrahmane Samba running the event there was then a huge drop to Vaillant and Mägi.

Gold—Karsten Warholm (Nor)		
47.10	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
46.87	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
47.62	1)Ostrava WCT	9/08
47.08	1)Berlin WCT	9/13
47.07	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
48.23	1)Norwegian Ch	9/20
Silver—Ludvy Vaillant (Fra)		
50.37	3)Turku WCT	8/11
49.35	4)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
49.18	3)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
49.14	2)Ostrava WCT	9/08
49.22	1)Bellinzona	9/15
48.69	2)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Bronze—Rasmus Mägi (Est)		
50.01	2)Turku WCT	8/11

49.23	3)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
50.18	2)Székesfehérvár WCT	8/19
49.40	4)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
49.79	2)Rovereto	9/08
49.32	1)Šamorín	9/11
49.22	2)Berlin WCT	9/13
48.72	3)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Top American – David Kendziera		

MARATHON

Tokyo winner Legesse held down the top spot for most of the year but ended up in the Bronze position after losing to Chebet & Cherono in Valencia.

Gold – Evans Chebet (Kenya)		
2:07:29	1)Lake Biwa	3/08
2:03:00	1)Valencia	12/06
Silver – Lawrence Cherono (Kenya)		
2:03:04	2)Valencia	12/06
Bronze – Berhanu Legesse (Ethiopia)		
2:04:15	1)Tokyo	3/02
2:03:16	3)Valencia	12/06
Top American – Galen Rupp		

20K WALK

Yamanishi's 2-minute win over Ikeda & Karlström early in the year pulled things into perspective.

Gold – Toshikazu Yamanishi (Japan)		
1:17:36	1)Kobe	2/16
Silver – Koki Ikeda (Japan)		
1:19:07	2)Japanese Champs	2/16
1:18:22	1)Nomi	3/15
Bronze – Perseus Karlström (Sweden)		
1:21:57	1)Adelaide	2/09
1:19:34	3)Japanese Champs	2/16
1:20:58	1)Alytus	9/18
1:19:43	1)Podébrady	10/10
Top American – Emmanuel Corvera		

50K WALK

In a very slow year, Tóth, Cheparev & Sharipov were the only three to break through the 3:45 barrier.

Gold – Matej Tóth (Slovakia)		
3:41:15	1)Dudince	10/24
Silver – Dementiy Cheparev (Russia)		
3:43:29	1)Russian Champs	9/05
Bronze – Sergey Sharipov (Russia)		
3:43:46	2)Russian Champs	9/05
Top American – Andreas Gustafsson		

— T&FN's 2020 World Men's Field Podiums —

HIGH JUMP

Gravity seemed to be working against the high jumpers, as the yearly leader of 7-7¼ (2.33) by 6 different men was the lowest apex since '83. All three of our podium members were among that group.

Gold — Ilya Ivanyuk (Russia)

2.23 7-3¼i	1)Moscow	2/01
2.33 7-7¼i	1)Russian Indoor	2/26
2.28 7-5¼i	2)Moscow	3/03
2.15 7-½	1)Bryansk	8/14
2.30 7-6½	1)Bryansk	8/29
2.24 7-4¼	1)Russian Champs	9/10

Silver — Tom Gale (Great Britain)

2.28 7-5¼i	1)Cardiff	1/25
2.30 7-6½i	1)Třinec	2/02
2.33 7-7¼i	1)Hustopeče	2/08
2.31 7-7i	3)Banská Bystrica	2/11
2.27 7-5¼i	1)Great Britain Indoor	2/23

Bronze — Maksim Nedasekau (Belarus)

2.20 7-2½i	10)Hustopeče	2/08
2.25 7-4½i	=7)Banská Bystrica	2/11
2.30 7-6½	1)Belarus Champs	7/31
2.33 7-7¼	1)Minsk	8/14
2.24 7-4¼	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
2.25 7-4½	1)Šamorín	9/11

Top American — JuVaughn Harrison

POLE VAULT

World MVP Duplantis put up one of the greatest seasons in vault history. He was 8-0 against Silver winner Kendricks and 3-0 over Lisek. Kendricks was also 3-0 over Lisek, making the podium order rather straightforward.

Gold — Mondo Duplantis (Sweden)

6.18 20-3¼i	1)Glasgow World Indoor Tour	2/15
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(Mondo's complete season—including series—appears in his MVP story)

Silver — Sam Kendricks (US)

5.80 19-¼i	1)Cottbus	1/29
5.50 18-½i	9)Karlsruhe	1/31
5.80 19-¼i	2)Düsseldorf	2/04
6.01 19-8½i	1)Rouen	2/08
5.80 19-¼i	1)Łódź	2/11
5.75 18-10¼i	2)Glasgow World Indoor Tour	2/15
5.90 19-4¼i	2)Liévin World Indoor Tour	2/19
5.87 19-3i	3)Clermont-Ferrand	2/23
5.80 19-¼i	1)Ulsteinvik	2/28
5.81 19-¾	exh)Zürich Diamond League	7/09
5.81 19-¾	1)Leverkusen	8/16
5.80 19-¾	1)Bydgoszcz	8/19

5.53 18-1¼	3)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
5.82 19-1	1)Chorzów	8/25
6.02 19-9	2)Lausanne Diamond League	9/02
5.72 18-9¼	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
5.64 18-6	3)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
5.57 18-3¼	6)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
5.82 19-1	2)Doha Diamond League	9/25

Bronze — Piotr Lisek (Poland)

5.60 18-4½	1)Warsaw	6/25
5.35 17-6½	5)Gothenburg	7/04
5.62 18-5¼	3)Karlstad	7/08
5.66 18-6¾	exh)Zürich Diamond League	7/09
5.70 18-8¼	1)Warsaw	7/16
5.61 18-4¾	2)Zweibrücken	7/25
5.72 18-9¼	1)Sopot	8/01
5.90 19-4¼	1)Szczecin	8/16
5.65 18-6½	1)Międzyzdroje	8/17
5.80 19-¼	2)Bydgoszcz	8/19
5.82 19-1	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
5.80 19-¼	1)Dessau	9/08
5.72 18-9¼	1)Poznań	9/11
5.82 19-1	2)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13

Top high jumper Ilya Ivanyuk was one of 7 men who shared the yearly list lead at a modest 7-7¼.





LONG JUMP

Echevarría's season was a brief one, but it was also clearly the best in a season almost completely devoid of meaningful head-to-head matchups. Huang beat Wang 3-1 to earn the Silver position.

Gold – Juan Miguel Echevarría (Cuba)		
8.41 27-7¼i	1)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21
8.08 26-6¼i	1)Ulsteinvik	2/28
8.25 27-¾	1)Cuban Champs	3/22
Silver – Changzhou Huang (China)		
7.87 25-10i	3)Metz	2/09
7.86 25-9½i	6)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21
7.68 25-2½i	5)Spanish Indoor	2/29
nm	-)Chengdu	4/11
7.72 25-4	1)Chengdu	5/15
8.03 26-4¼	1)Beijing	5/30
8.18 26-10	1)Beijing	8/01
8.28 27-2	1)Nanjing	9/04
8.33 27-4	2)Chinese Champs	9/15
Bronze – Jianan Wang (China)		
7.88 25-10¼	2)Beijing	5/30
8.14 26-8½	2)Beijing	8/01
8.08 26-6¼	3)Nanjing	9/04
8.36 27-5¼	1)Chinese Champs	9/15
Top American – Rayvon Grey		

TRIPLE JUMP

Zango and Taylor split in their two meetings, but the Burkinabé had a better set of marks and lost to no one else, while the American had an uncharacteristic loss to a minor player.

Yearly list leader Hugues Fabrice Zango scored a big head-to-head win over Christian Taylor.

Gold – Hugues Fabrice Zango (Burkina Faso)		
17.77 58-3¾i	1)Paris	2/02
17.51 57-5½i	1)Liévin World Indoor Tour	2/19
17.31 56-9½i	1)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21
17.29 56-8¾i	1)French Indoor	3/01
17.43 57-2¼	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
17.11 56-1¾	1)Pierre-Bénite	8/28
17.42 57-2	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
17.33 56-10¼w	1)French Champs	9/12
(16.86)		
Silver – Christian Taylor (US)		
16.75 54-11½	1)Montverde	7/04
17.27 56-8 w	exh)Zürich Diamond League	7/09
17.13 56-2½	1)Austrian Champs	8/15
17.34 56-10¼	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
17.46 57-3½	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
16.53 54-2¾	2)Šamorín	9/11
17.57 57-7¾	1)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
Bronze – Andy Díaz (Cuba)		
17.29 56-8¾	1)Havana	2/08
17.19 56-4¾	1)Havana	2/13
17.12 56-2	1)Camagüey	2/22
17.30 56-9¼	1)Cuban Champs	3/21

SHOT

This is one event where there was enough activity to have considered doing a traditional Top 10. The undefeated Crouser was firmly in control of the gold, while Haratyk beat Mihaljević 3–0 for the Silver spot.

Gold – Ryan Crouser (US)		
22.19 72-9¼i	1)Millrose Games	2/08
22.60 74-1¼i	1)USATF Indoor	2/15
21.87 71-9	1)American Track League I	7/11
22.91 75-2	1)Marietta	7/18
22.56 74-¼	1)Blue Oval	8/25
22.72 74-6½	1B). “	8/29
22.70 74-5¾	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
22.43 73-7¼	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
22.74 74-7¼	1)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/14
22.59 74-1½	1)Belgrade	9/17
22.78 74-9i	1)K-State Winter Invitational	12/04
Silver – Michał Haratyk (Poland)		
21.50 70-6½i	2)Toruń World Indoor Tour	2/08
20.95 68-8¾i	2)Łódź	2/11
21.24 69-8¼i	1)Polish Indoor	3/01
20.54 67-4¾	2)Warsaw	6/18

20.12 66-¼	2)Chorzów	6/20
21.26 69-9	1)Warsaw	7/02
21.45 70-4½	1)Spała	8/08
21.57 70-9¼	1)Szczecin	8/16
21.61 70-10¼	1)Bydgoszcz	8/19
20.64 67-8¾	1)Oleśnica	8/22
21.88 71-9½	1)Chorzów	8/25
20.64 67-8¾	1)Polish Champs	8/30
21.78 71-5½	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
21.65 71-½	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
21.55 70-8½	1)Poznań	9/11
Bronze – Filip Mihaljević (Croatia) (21.69)		
21.52 70-7¼i	1)Düsseldorf	2/04
21.42 70-3½i	3)Toruń World Indoor Tour	2/08
21.74 71-4i	1)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21
21.84 71-8i	1)Belgrade	2/27
21.69 71-2	1)Split	3/07
20.61 67-7½	1)Split	6/13
21.58 70-9¾	1)Croatian Champs	8/08
21.35 70-½	2)Bydgoszcz	8/19
21.59 70-10	2)Chorzów	8/25



Top putter Ryan Crouser rang up an incredible sequence of marks

DISCUS

The platter pushers were even busier than the shot putters, with Baltoscandia filling the podium. The busy Ståhl—the year's only 70m performer—won 18 of 20 meets for an easy Gold.

Gold – Daniel Ståhl (Sweden)

65.92 216-3	1)Oslo Diamond League	6/11
6f	–)Södertälje	6/14
70.25 230-5	1)Helsingborg	6/21
64.92 213-0	1)Bottnaryd	6/27
66.55 218-4	1)Hasselby	7/04
68.10 223-5	1)Karlstad	7/08
68.72 225-5	1)Växjö	7/12
68.48 224-8	1)Kuortane	8/01
68.10 223-5	1)Gothenburg	8/06
71.37 234-2	1)Sollentuna	8/10
69.23 227-1	1)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
68.74 225-6	1)Swedish Champs	8/15
67.31 220-10	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
69.17 226-11	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
69.20 227-0	1)v Finland	9/05
67.28 220-9	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
66.42 217-11	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
65.89 216-2	2)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
68.87 225-11	1)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
68.54 224-10	multi)Hasselby	9/17

Silver – Andrius Gudžius (Lithuania)

65.81 215-11	1)Birtonas	6/25
67.08 220-1	1)Kaunas	6/29
68.68 225-4	1)Klaipeda	7/08
67.83 222-6	1)Vilnius	7/13
67.88 222-8	1)Vilnius	7/21
68.16 223-7	1)Lithuanian Champs	8/07
66.39 217-9	2)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
68.41 224-5	1)Ogre	8/15
67.08 220-1	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
66.80 219-2	3)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
64.45 211-5	3)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
64.88 212-10	3)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
66.72 218-11	1)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
68.22 223-10	2)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15

Bronze – Simon Pettersson (Sweden)

62.87 206-3	1)Växjö	3/21
66.93 219-7	1)Växjö	4/10
64.54 211-9	2)Oslo Diamond League	6/11
61.66 202-3	1)Södertälje	6/14
67.10 220-2	2)Helsingborg	6/21
63.63 208-9	2)Bottnaryd	6/27

59.31 194-7	1)Uppsala	7/02
66.32 217-7	2)Hasselby	7/04
66.90 219-6	2)Karlstad	7/08
66.78 219-1	2)Vaxjö	7/12
63.75 209-2	1)Malmö	7/19
66.11 216-10	2)Kuortane	8/01
65.28 214-2	2)Gothenburg	8/06
66.51 218-2	2)Sollentuna	8/10
63.13 207-1	5)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
64.73 212-4	2)Swedish Champs	8/15
65.70 215-7	3)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
67.72 222-2	2)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
65.37 214-5	1)Örbyhus	9/01
63.79 209-3	2)v Finland	9/05
65.90 216-2	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
65.78 215-10	4)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
66.30 217-6	3)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
67.02 219-10	multi)Hasselby	9/17

Top American – Niklas Arrhenius

The year's only 230-foot thrower, discus No. 1 Daniel Ståhl had a pair of such marks.



JIRO MOCHIZUKU/IMAGE OF SPORT

HAMMER

Winkler led the yearly list, but was devoid of major competition. Ordering the best Euros was easy: Nowicki was 2–0 against Halász and 4–2 over Fajdek. In turn Halász was 2–0 against Fajdek.

Gold – Wojciech Nowicki (Poland)

78.52 257-7	1)Chorzów	6/20
78.50 257-6	1)Spała	8/08
78.07 256-1	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
80.09 262-9	1)Chorzów	8/25
80.28 263-5	1)Polish Champs	8/28
78.88 258-9	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
75.14 246-6	2)Poznań	9/11

Silver – Bence Halász (Hungary)

74.2 243-5	1)Szombathely	2/22
76.66 251-6	1)Szombathely	3/07
76.35 250-6	1)Szombathely	3/21
77.13 253-0	1)Szombathely	5/23
78.86 258-9	1)Szombathely	6/06
78.79 258-6	1)Szombathely	7/04
78.43 257-3	1)Pardubice	7/22
78.55 257-8	1)Szombathely	7/25
79.88 262-1	1)Hungarian Champs	8/09
78.00 255-11	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
78.18 256-6	2)Chorzów	8/25
74.59 244-8	1)Székesfehérvár	9/05
78.69 258-2	1)Budapest	9/13

Bronze – Paweł Fajdek (Poland)

76.77 251-10	2)Spała	8/08
76.08 249-7	4)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
77.83 255-4	1)Chorzów	8/22
78.05 256-1	3)Chorzów	8/25
78.61 257-11	2)Polish Champs	8/28
79.81 261-10	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
78.06 256-1	1)Poznań	9/11
78.62 257-11	1)Łódź	9/16

Top American – Rudy Winkler

JAVELIN

Vetter fouled out of his first meet, then put up 9 high-quality wins in a row. The best of them moved him to No. 2 on the all-time world list. He ended up with the year's 8 farthest throws.

Gold – Johannes Vetter (Germany)

3f1	–)Zweibrücken	7/25
86.94 285-3	1)Kuortane	8/01
87.36 286-7	1)German Champs	8/09
91.49 300-2	1)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
84.30 276-7	1)Leverkusen	8/16

90.86 298-1	1)Chorzów	8/25
84.03 275-8	1)Offenburg	8/29
97.76 320-9	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
86.17 282-8	1)Dessau	9/08
87.26 286-3	1)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13

Silver – Kim Amb (Sweden)

82.96 272-2	1)Södertälje	6/14
82.29 269-11	1)Bottnaryd	6/28
82.41 270-4	1)Hässelby	7/04
81.48 267-4	1)Karlstad	7/08
83.41 273-8	1)Bålsta	7/18
86.49 283-9	1)Zweibrücken	7/25
85.68 281-1	2)Kuortane	8/01
81.38 267-0	5)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
83.60 274-3	1)Swedish Champs	8/14
78.97 259-1	2)Offenburg	8/29

Bronze – Marcin Krukowski (Poland)

82.85 271-10	1)Kielce	6/20
80.75 264-11	1)Warsaw	6/27
79.66 261-4	1)Spała	8/08
87.07 285-8	1)Sopot	8/13
83.37 273-6	1)Bydgoszcz	8/19
73.84 242-3	1)Olesnica	8/22
82.17 269-7	3)Chorzów	8/25
83.51 273-11	1)Polish Champs	8/29
84.62 277-7	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
83.27 273-2	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
82.31 270-0	3)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
80.72 264-10	1)Suwalki	9/23

Top American – Riley Dolezal

DECATHLON

All of top-end action came as the final days of the year ticked off the clock. Mayer got his Tokyo qualifier in his first complete 10-eventer since his WR in September of '18. Moloney's Aussie Record beats out the busy dos Santos's triumvirate of scores.

Gold – Kevin Mayer (France)

8552	1)Réunion	12/19
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Silver – Ash Moloney (Australia)

8492	1)Brisbane	12/20
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Bronze – Felipe dos Santos (Brazil)

7932	1)São Bernardo do Campo	2/29
8014	1)Bragança Paulista	10/31
8364	1)São Paulo	12/12

Top American – Chris Helwick

Stay Safe!



T&FN'S 2020 Men's MVP — Mondo Duplantis

Unfortunately, few were able to see Mondo Duplantis put up his MVP season in person.

WITH A SEASON UNMATCHED in quality and quantity, Mondo Duplantis was an overwhelming choice as our 2020 Men's Most Valuable Performer. The Swedish vault star went undefeated in 16 competitions, twice raised the absolute World Record, ultimately reaching 20-3¼ (6.18) and also claiming the highest outdoor mark ever.

His MVP season, which included the year's 5 highest jumps and 9 of 10 (all clearances in a series are on first attempt unless noted otherwise):

Honorable Mention

Overall, our 31-member international panel made it clear that Duplantis was their No.1 choice. Three other standouts also received strong mention. Alphabetically:

Joshua Cheptegei

Uganda's emerging superstar set World Records at the ages of both 23 (12:35.36 in the 5000) and 24 (26:11.00 in the 10,000). Those were his only track races of the year. He also had a pair of road races that weren't considered part of the voting, as our protocol has long been only to consider road events that are part of the OG/WC program.

Ryan Crouser

The year's overall top American completely rewrote the books on shot put consistency, making 74-footers commonplace. His best of 75-2 (22.91) moved him to =No. 2 on the all-time list. He was undefeated in 10 outings.

Karsten Warholm

The Norwegian star gave Kevin Young's venerable WR in the 400H its closest scare yet, running 46.87 as part of a big double in Stockholm. Undefeated in 6 meets, he also produced 3 other races in the all-time top 10. Finally, he was also the year's third-fastest in the flat 400. □

Mark	Meet	Date
6.00 19-8¼i	1)Düsseldorf World Indoor Tour	2/04
(17-8½, 18-2½, 18-8¼ [2], 19-¼, 19-4¼, 19-6¼, 19-8¼ [2], 20-2¾ [xxx]) (5.40, 5.55, 5.70 [2], 5.80, 5.90, 5.95, 6.00 [2], 6.17 [xxx])		
6.17 20-2¾i	1)Toruń World Indoor Tour	2/08
(18-1¼, 18-9¼, 19-5, 19-8½, 20-2¾ [2]) (5.52, 5.72, 5.92, 6.01, 6.17 [2])		
6.18 20-3¼i	1)Glasgow World Indoor Tour	2/15
(18-½, 18-10¼ [2], 19-2, 19-8¼, 20-3¼) (5.50, 5.75 [2], 5.84, 6.00, 6.18)		
6.07 19-11i	1)Liévin World Indoor Tour	2/19
(18-4½, 19-¼, 19-4¼, 19-11, 20-3¾ [xxx]) (5.60, 5.80, 5.90, 6.07, 6.19 [xxx])		
6.01 19-8½i	1)Clermont-Ferrand	2/23
(18-6½, 19-3, 19-8½, 20-3¾ [xxx]) (5.65, 5.87, 6.01, 6.19 [xxx])		
5.86 19-2¾	1)Oslo Diamond League	6/11
(18-1, 18-4¾ [2], 18-8¾, 19-¾, 19-2¾ [3], 19-8½ [xxx]) (5.51, 5.61 [2], 5.71, 5.81, 5.86 [3], 6.01 [xxx])		
5.94 19-5¾	1)Gothenburg	7/04
(17-6½, 18-½, 18-4¾, 18-8¼ [2], 19-2¼, 19-5¾ [3], 19-8¼ [xxx]) (5.35, 5.50, 5.60, 5.70 [2], 5.85, 5.94 [3], 6.00 [xxx])		
5.72 18-9¼	1)Karlstad	7/08
(18-1¼ [3], 18-9¼ [3], 19-¾ [ppp]) (5.52 [3], 5.72 [3], 5.81 [ppp])		
6.00 19-8¼	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
(18-4½, 18-8¼ [3], 19-¼, 19-8¼ [3], 20-2 [xxx]) (5.60, 5.70 [3], 5.80, 6.00 [3], 6.15 [xxx])		
5.63 18-5½	1)Swedish Championships	8/16
(17-5¾, 18-1¾, 18-5½) (5.33, 5.53, 5.63, 5.81 [xxx])		
6.01 19-8½	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
(18-1¼, 18-9½, 19-1½, 19-8½, 20-2 [xxx]) (5.53, 5.73, 5.83, 6.01, 6.15 [xxx])		
6.07 20-2	1)Lausanne Diamond League	9/02
(18-5¼, 19-1, 19-3, 19-5, 19-7, 19-9, 19-11, 20-2 [xpp]) (5.62, 5.82, 5.87, 5.92, 5.97, 6.02, 6.07, 6.15 [xpp])		
6.00 19-8¼	1)Brussels Diamond League	9/04
(18-½, 18-8¼, 19-¼, 19-8¼, 20-2 [xxx]) (5.50, 5.70, 5.80, 6.00, 6.15 [xxx])		
5.91 19-4¾	1)Berlin World Tour	9/13
(18-3¼, 19-1 [x], 19-4¾ [2], 20-2 [xxx]) (5.57, 5.82 [x], 5.91 [2], 6.15 [xxx])		
6.15 20-2	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
(17-10½, 18-8¼, 19-¼, 19-2¼ [2], 19-8¼, 20-2 [2]) (5.45, 5.70, 5.80, 5.85 [2], 6.00, 6.15 [2])		
5.82 19-1	1)Doha Diamond League	9/25
(17-11, 18-8¾, 19-1, 19-5 [xpp], 19-8¼ [x]) (5.46, 5.71, 5.82, 5.92 [xpp], 6.00 [x])		

Mondo Duplantis Figures He Still Has Many Years To Go

JEAN-PIERRE DURAND



Why Mondo is likely to be around for a long time to come: all his '20 heroics came as a mere 20-year-old.

by Sieg Lindstrom

A YEAR TO REMEMBER. 2020 full-stop qualifies—mostly because we'd all love to wake up and learn we dreamed it. Mondo Duplantis, however, an easy winner in the voting for our Men's MVP, gifted every fan with intoxicating World Record visuals and memories worth holding on to forever.

Ask the man who turned 21 in November what he cherishes as his 2020 highlight of highlights and he answers with a rapidity befitting his shooting star rise over the past four seasons. Let's pause and savor those memories for a second: high school 19-footer in '17 and then 19-10¼ (6.05) prep in '18, improving at such a rate his school boy standard is higher than the 19-8¼ (6.00) Collegiate Record he set as an LSU Tiger at the '19 SEC Championships.

Mondo's fave 2020 record? Easy question from where he sits. "I would say it has to be the first one," he says, "because I think it was just the most special and, you know, maybe will always be the most special World Record. 'Cause it was just the first one, it always will

be the first one and, you know, just going from not World Record holder to World Record holder in just a matter of seconds. It was just a crazy feeling 'cause it's something that I've wanted my entire life. To actually happen, it's surreal."

"Roll the tape" of Mondo's 20-2¾ (6.17) flight in Toruń and you'll trust his answer, not that there's any reason to doubt it.

"I definitely felt good," he says of the day on which he clipped Renaud Lavillenie's run as recordman at a week short of 6 years. "I felt like I was in shape do something crazy, but at the same time it wasn't like I woke up and I was like, 'Oh yeah, I'm breaking the World Record today.' 'Cause I didn't really know what the World Record was 'cause I'd never done it. So I still kind of felt like everything had to be completely perfect.

"And I mean, there were things that I thought weren't perfect in the first jump that I had in the day. I was like, 'If I want to jump something really high like the record, I'm gonna have to get some things figured out.' It wasn't like right from the beginning I just already knew. But I had a couple of jumps towards the end, 5.92 [19-5] and then 6.01 [19-8½], and then I went,

'Yeah, I think I have a good shot.'"

In the offing his shot resembled a breakaway dunk, 9–10 inches of hip clearance, heck maybe a foot (25–30cm), and similar when a week later in Glasgow he added another half-inch (20-3¼/6.18). Plus remarkable consistency, no losses in '20.

"No, I don't think it was that technical," he says when asked if some change in his vault brought his first undefeated season in the elite ranks. "I think it was more just I was entering my first full professional season and I started to change a few things in the way that I went about my training and my recovery and started taking things a little more serious, trying to act a little bit more like a pro about things, you know, because I am grown now.

"So I just thought that if I was going to make a career out of this, then I should probably be pretty invested in it. So I think it was just a matter of a lot of little things that came together and I just started trying to improve on everything that I can do just as an athlete and that just kind of built up to some good results."

His WRs in February came before loudly supportive arena crowds, a species that would

forced into hibernation for outdoor meets by the pandemic. Nonetheless, in mid-September in Rome's immense-yet-empty Olympic Stadium, Duplantis supplanted Sergey Bubka as the highest-ever outdoor vaulter after 27 years with his 20-2 (6.15) clearance on second try.

Trying to make anything happen outdoors "was tough in the beginning," Mondo admits, "because it was hard to come by a good place to train. I was kind of just doing stuff in my parents' backyard. But I mean, when the meets started to get postponed, the Olympics and stuff, I knew that the outdoor season wasn't going to have a big championship, so I wasn't as stressed out about everything. It wasn't like now the season was that important because I knew that me and a lot of other people kind of had trouble training and didn't have the right facilities to get in our best shape.

"So as far as competing in those [summer] meets, it was tough in the beginning, especially when I started getting back into competing again, 'cause I was just kinda a little rusty from like two months off of not being able to do World Record [preparation] kind of stuff. But yeah, I started to figure out a nice little rhythm toward the end and I was able to make that jump at 6.15, so that was good."

He doesn't find the vault superstardom he has developed to be a distraction. "I still have a lot of personal goals that I want to achieve," he explains, "and you know, for me I've always loved pole vaulting, I've always loved the challenge of it and the challenge of just always trying to push the limits to see how high you can go. And you know, no matter how high I've jumped, even now, I still have that feeling, which

is wanting to keep trying to strive to get better. So for me it hasn't changed yet. I still have the love for what I'm doing and I just want to try to keep trying to get better at it."

As his friend and rival world champion Sam Kendricks, once summed it up, Duplantis has "got Swedish citizenship but he's an American boy, he grew up in Louisiana." For the travel-restricted pandemic season of '20, he trained for a good chunk of the summer in mother Helena's Scandinavian homeland—at one point she ferried his poles all the way to Rome and back by car—and got a sense of what Swedish fans think of him.

Is his rock star status higher in Sweden or down on the bayou? "Definitely Sweden," he again answers quickly. "Yeah, it's quite easily Sweden. But I mean it's just different, it's just strange, because I mean people here in Louisiana, it's not that easy for them to watch my competitions when I'm competing in Europe and whatnot. So they don't really know what's going on other than if I make a post on my social media or something like that. But in Sweden it's always on the national television all the time so it's pretty easy for everybody to follow. There's so many people that are in tune on exactly what's going on.

"It's not like people don't know me in Louisiana. It's like people will stop me and say stuff but they just have no idea what's going on. It's like, 'Hey, have you competed in the Olympics yet?' I'm like, 'No, it actually got postponed.' They just don't know what's going on. But in Sweden they can tell you the 6-meters that I jumped in the last meet where it was and where my next meet is.

"Like I'll come back from a meet in like Belgium, I just jumped 6-meters, and I come back to Sweden and I'm eating in a restaurant and this guy comes to talk to me asking what I think about 6.15 [the world outdoor best he eventually hit in Rome]. And I told him I think I have a good shot at it. I was like, 'Wow, he really knows his stuff.' And he wasn't even a track guy either, he just said he just watches all my meets. I'm thinking, 'Wow!'"

After his '20 performances, seemingly every track guy or gal on the planet has an opinion about how high Mondo can ultimately go. Does he?

"No, not really," he says. "I mean, I think that I can jump higher, of course. I always think there's room to improve. But I think for now after getting the World Record I want to jump higher and I want to break my World Records, of course, but the main focus is the championship meets, trying to get the World Championships gold medal and the Olympic gold medal."

Bubka stuck around for 16 seasons after his first WR in '84 and set his last global standard 9 years after that first one. Lavillenie now has 12 seasons in since he first scaled elite heights. Does Duplantis see himself, too, catapulting to 20-foot-plus elevations a decade or more in the future?

"Yeah. I mean I want to," he says. "As long as I'm jumping good and I'm healthy and I still like what I'm doing then I'll continue to jump. I don't know how long that is. I mean, it's just different for everybody. But I want to jump for a long time and I'll try to make sure I can figure out the way to put me in the best situation to make that be able to happen." □

Mondo's favorite record came in Torun, Poland: "Just going from not World Record holder to World Record holder in just a matter of seconds. It was just a crazy feeling."



JEAN-PIERRE DURAND

— T&FN's 2020 World Women's Track Podiums —

100 METERS

The top three were all undefeated, with Thompson-Herah's two DL wins (and series of marks) making her a clear choice for Gold. Fellow Jamaican Fraser-Pryce gets the edge over top American Richardson based on quality of marks.

Gold – Elaine Thompson-Herah (Jamaica)		
11.19	1)Kingston	7/18
10.73w	1)Kingston	7/25
11.41	1C)Kingston	8/08
10.88	1F) "	"
10.92	1B)Kingston	8/22
10.85	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
10.87	1)Doha Diamond League	9/25
Silver – Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce (Jamaica)		
11.00	1)Kingston	7/11
11.28	1)Kingston	8/08
10.87	1E) "	"
10.86	1)Kingston	8/22
Bronze – Sha'Carri Richardson (US)		
11.05	1)Montverde	7/04
(10.94wh)	1h)Clermont	7/24
11.56w	1)AP Ranch High Performance I	7/20
10.79w	1)AP Ranch High Performance II	7/23
10.83w	1)Montverde	8/10
(10.95h)		

200 METERS

The important action was in Florida, where list leader Miller-Uibo beat Irby 2-1, and had the year's only sub-22 performance. In turn, Irby beat Richardson in their only meeting, so the group who raced in Montverde on July 4th ordered themselves fairly cleanly.

Gold – Shaunae Miller-Uibo (Bahamas)		
22.61	1)Montverde	7/04
21.98	1)Clermont	7/25
dnf	-)Drake Blue Oval	8/29
Silver – Lynna Irby (US)		
23.06	2)Montverde	7/04
22.47	3)Clermont	7/25
22.55	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
22.52w	1)Drake Blue Oval	8/29
Bronze – Sha'Carri Richardson (US)		
23.14	3)Montverde	7/04
22.73	1)AP Ranch High Performance II	7/23
22.00	1)Montverde	8/10

400 METERS

This was a difficult event with solo-racers Irby and Miller-Uibo clearly faster than third-fastest Klaver. Lieke Klaver's 50.98 Rome DL win came against lesser lights and she was 0-2 to Jonathas, who thus takes Bronze.

Gold – Lynna Irby (US)		
50.50	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
Silver – Shaunae Miller-Uibo (Bahamas)		
50.52	1)Montverde	7/04
Bronze – Wadeline Jonathas (US)		
51.40	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
52.09	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
51.94	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
51.23	1)Chorzów	8/25
(51.71i, 51.93i, 51.32Ai, 52.54Ai)		

GIANCARLO COLOMBO/PHOTO RUN



Elaine Thompson-Herah's list-leading 10.85 came in winning the Rome DL



The first of Laura Muir's 3 sub-4s came in Stockholm

JIP MOCHIZUKI/IMAGE OF SPORT

800 METERS

Reekie had one bad outing, but her 4 solid ones were enough to make her the clear winner. Kipyegon had only a single outing (her Monaco time is en route in a 1000) but it was the year's fastest. Nice breakthrough by Hynne.

Gold – Jemma Reekie (Great Britain)		
1:59.52	1)Trieste	8/01
1:59.68	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
1:58.63	1)Chorzów	8/25
1:58.87	4)Bellinzona	9/15
1:59.76	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
(1:57.91i, 2:00.34i)		
Silver – Faith Kipyegon (Kenya)		
1:59.7	–)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
1:57.68	1)Doha Diamond League	9/25
Bronze – Hedda Hynne (Norway)		
2:03.54	2)Espoo	6/27
2:03.63	4)Lucerne	7/03
2:03.71	1)Karlstad	7/08
2:00.72	2)Bern	7/24
1:59.94	3)Trieste	8/01
2:01.44	3)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
1:59.57	1)Trondheim	8/29
1:59.15	1)Rovereto	9/08
1:58.10	1)Bellinzona	9/15
2:00.24	2)Rome Diamond League	9/17
2:03.64	1)Norwegian Champs	9/20
(2:01.08h)		
(2:04.79i, 2:03.53i)		
Top American – Ajee' Wilson		

1500 METERS

Gold was an easy choice, with list leader Muir going 3-for-3 in the sub-4:00 department, all in significant races. As in the 800, Kipyegon had only a single race, but it was a significant win so she gets Silver again.

Gold – Laura Muir (Great Britain)		
3:57.86	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
3:58.24	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
3:57.40	1)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
Silver – Faith Kipyegon (Kenya)		
3:59.05	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
Bronze – Laura Weightman (Great Britain)		
4:01.62	2)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
4:09.76	1)British Champs	9/05
(4:17.01h)		
4:01.96	2)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
4:00.09	2)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
Top American – Karissa Schweizer		

STEEPLE

The Kenyan pair of Jepkemoi and Chepkoech split their two meetings, but the former's came in a more important meet, so she gets the Gold.

Gold – Hyvin Jepkemoi (Kenya)		
9:06.14	1)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
9:34.07(A)	2)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Silver – Beatrice Chepkoech (Kenya)		
9:10.07	2)Berlin Continental Tour	9/13
9:29.05(A)	1)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Bronze – Yekaterina Ivonina (Russia)		
9:16.84	1)Russian Champs	9/09
Top American – Victoria Gerlach		

5000 METERS

Sure, Gidey claimed the World Record, but our Rankings have always rewarded competitive wins over fast times and Obiri solidly beat the Ethiopian in their head-to-head matchup. Houlihan broke the American Record.

Gold – Hellen Obiri (Kenya)		
14:22.12	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
15:06.36(A)	1)Nairobi Continental Tour	10/03
Silver – Letesenbet Gidey (Ethiopia)		
14:26.57	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
14:06.62	1)Valencia	10/07
Bronze – Shelby Houlihan (US)		
14:23.92	1)Portland	7/10

10,000 METERS

With none of the top contenders running more than a single race it came down to simply matching the yearly list, where Hassan dominated.

Gold – Sifan Hassan (Netherlands)		
29:36.67	1)Hengelo	10/10
Silver – Rosemary Wanjiru (Kenya)		
30:38.18	1)Abashiri	7/15
Bronze – Tsehay Gemechu (Ethiopia)		
30:57.73	2)Hengelo	10/10
Top American – Kellyn Taylor		

100 HURDLES

With none of the top Americans in the game, there were new faces at the top. Visser lost only a single race against 8 wins, with 3 of those coming against Bogliolo. The Italian lost only to Visser.

Gold – Nadine Visser (Netherlands)		
12.99	1)Arnhem	7/04
(12.90h)		
12.95	1)Arnhem	7/18
(13.03h)		
12.68	1)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
(12.87h)		
12.85	1)Leverkusen	8/16
(12.97h)		
12.68	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
13.10	1)Netherlands Champs	8/30
(12.97h)		
12.95	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
12.79	1)Bellinzona	9/15
12.72	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Silver – Luminosa Bogliolo (Italy)		
12.93	1)Rieti	7/04
(12.93h)		
12.86w	1)Savona	7/16
12.91	1)Trieste	8/01

GIANCARLO COLOMBO/PHOTO RUN



Nadine Visser capped her status as the year's best high hurdler with a win in the Rome DL.

12.79	2)Turku Continental Tour	8/11
(12.93h)		
12.88	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
13.02	1)Italian Champs	8/29
(13.04h)		
12.90	1)Rovereto	9/08
12.82	2)Bellinzona	9/15
12.83	2)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Bronze – Elvira Herman (Belarus)		
12.73	1)Minsk	6/25
(12.81h)		
12.80	1)Brest	7/16
12.87	1)Belarusian Champs	8/01
(13.04h)	2)Marseille	9/03
12.96	3)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
13.02	3)Chorzów	8/25
13.13	2)Marseille	9/03
12.87	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
12.85	1)Dessau	9/08
(12.94h)		
Top American – Payton Chadwick		



Femke Bol was the year's only sub-54 performer, and she did it twice

JIP MOCHIZUKI/IMAGE OF SPORT

400 HURDLES

Gold and silver were obvious, as the undefeated Bol beat Ryzhkova 3–0, and in turn the Ukrainian lost only to Bol. Bol had the year's 4 fastest times, and 6 of the top 7. Like the 100H, the powerful Americans were absent.

Gold – Femke Bol (Netherlands)

54.47	1)Arnhem	7/04
53.79	1)Arnhem	7/18
54.67	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
54.68	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
54.33	1)Bellinzona	9/15
53.90	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17

Silver – Anna Ryzhkova (Ukraine)

55.86	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
55.19	2)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
55.21	1)Šamorín	9/11
54.54	2)Rome Diamond League	9/17

Bronze – Viktoriya Tkachuk (Ukraine)

55.60	1)Ukrainian Champs	8/30
(56.23h)		
55.15	3)Bellinzona	9/15
54.93	3)Rome Diamond League	9/17
55.58	1Balkan Champs	9/19

Top American – Deonca Bookman

MARATHON

Jepchirchir, Salpeter & Dibaba were 1-2-3 on the yearly lists, each winning a major race.

Gold – Peres Jepchirchir (Kenya)

2:17:16	1)Valencia	12/06
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Silver – Lonah Chemtai Salpeter (Israel)

2:17:45	1)Tokyo	3/02
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Bronze – Brigid Kosgei (Kenya)

2:18:58	1)London	10/04
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Top American – Sara Hall

20K WALK

Khasanova & Kagramanova were the year's only 1:26 performers, so they take the first two spots ahead of Chinese champ Liu.

Gold – Elvira Khasanova (Russia)

1:26:43	1)Sochi	2/17
1:27:45	1)Russian Champs	9/05

Silver – Reykhan Kagramanova (Russia)

1:26:50	2)Sochi	2/17
1:28:32	2)Russian Champs	9/05

Bronze – Hong Liu (China)

1:27:48	1)Chinese Champs	9/20
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Top American – Amberly Melendez

50K WALK

The Russian pair was way ahead of the rest of the world, with the Bronze spot going to Juárez.

Gold – Yelena Lashmanova (Russia)

3:50:42	1)Russian Champs	9/05
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Silver – Margarita Nikiforova (Russia)

3:59:56	2)Russian Champs	9/05
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Bronze – Mar Juárez (Spa)

4:15:46	1)Spanish Champs	2/16
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Top American – Robyn Stevens

— T&FN's 2020 World Women's Field Podiums —

HIGH JUMP

Despite being confined to in-country competition, Lasitskene was a clear Gold winner, going undefeated and putting up the year's two highest jumps. In a Ukrainian battle for Silver, Mahuchikh topped Levchenko 5-3.

Gold — Mariya Lasitskene (Russia)		
2.04 6-8¼i	1)Moscow	2/01
2.05 6-8¾i	1)Moscow	2/09
2.00 6-6¾i	1)Russian Indoor	2/25
1.92 6-3½	1)Russian Champs	9/11
1.97 6-5½	1)Sochi	9/19
Silver — Yaroslava Mahuchikh (Ukraine)		
2.01 6-7i	1)L'viv	1/18
1.98 6-6i	1)Cottbus	1/29
2.02 6-7½i	1)Karlsruhe	1/31
1.96 6-5i	1)Banská Bystrica	2/11
1.93 6-4i	1)Glasgow World Indoor Tour	2/15
2.01 6-7i	1)Ukrainian Indoor	2/21
1.96 6-5i	1)Ulsteinvik	2/28
1.98 6-6	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
1.97 6-5½	2)Bydgoszcz	8/19

2.00 6-6¾	1)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
1.96 6-5	2)Dessau	9/08
1.95 6-4¾	2)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Bronze — Yuliya Levchenko (Ukraine)		
2.00 6-6¾i	1)Kyiv	1/11
1.96 6-5i	2)Cottbus	1/29
1.99 6-6¼i	2)Karlsruhe	1/31
1.93 6-4i	3)Banská Bystrica	2/11
1.98 6-6	2)Monaco Diamond League	8/14
2.00 6-6¾	1)Bydgoszcz	8/19
1.98 6-6	2)Stockholm Diamond League	8/23
1.92 6-3½	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
1.96 6-5	1)Dessau	9/08
1.93 6-4	1)Zagreb Continental Tour	9/15
1.98 6-6	1)Rome Diamond League	9/17
Top American — Vashti Cunningham		

Top-rated Mariya Lasitskene had the world's highest jump for the fourth year in a row.



GIANCARLO COLOMBO/PHOTO RUN



Sandi Morris produced her highest vault of the year at an opportune time, winning the USATF Indoor title for the third time

KEVIN MORRIS

POLE VAULT

It was a close call between Morris and Sidorova. Both were undefeated at 8-0, but Morris had a good collection of wins over other top competitors while Sidorova had none. That gave the American a narrow edge over the list-leading Russian. Nageotte was the only outdoor 16-footer.

Gold – Sandi Morris (US)

4.91 16-1¼i	1)Millrose G	2/08
4.90 16-¾i(A)	1)USATF Indoor	2/15
4.83 15-10i	1)Liévin World Indoor Tour	2/19
4.80 15-9i	1)Clermont-Ferrand	2/23
4.66 15-3½	1)Zürich Diamond League	7/09
4.81 15-9¼	1)Acadia Invitational	7/15
4.70 15-5	1)American Track League VIII	8/22
4.65 15-3	1)Drake Blue Oval	8/29

Silver – Anzhelika Sidorova (Russia)

4.80 15-9i	1)Moscow	1/27
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4.86 15-11¼i	1)Moscow	2/09
4.92 16-1¼i	1)Russian Indoor	2/25
4.95 16-2¾i	1)Moscow	2/29
4.80 15-9	1)Moscow	8/16
4.70 15-5	1)Moscow	8/23
4.75 15-7	1)Bryansk	8/30
4.70 15-5	1)Russian Champs	9/08

Bronze – Katie Nageotte (US)

4.40 14-5¼i(A)	=3)Pole Vault Summit	1/17
4.70 15-5	1)American Track League I	7/11
4.81 15-9¼	2)Acadia Invitational	7/15
4.83 15-10	1)Marietta	7/18
4.71 15-5½	1)Mooresville	7/21
4.92 16-1¼	1)American Track League IV	8/01
5.72 18-9¼	1)Sopot	8/01

LONG JUMP

Bekh-Romanchuk won two DL meets, had the best series of marks, and beat list leader Mihambo 2-1 to take the top spot. Busy Swede Sagnia lost only to Bekh-Romanchuk.

Gold – Maryna Bekh-Romanchuk (Ukraine)			
6.92 22-8½i	1)Karlsruhe		1/31
6.96 22-10i	1)Toruń World Indoor Tour		2/08
6.90 22-7¾i	1)Glasgow World Indoor Tour		2/15
6.90 22-7¾i	1)Liévin World Indoor Tour		2/19
6.76 22-2¼	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour		8/19
6.85 22-5¾	1)Stockholm Diamond League		8/23
6.78 22-3	1)Chorzów		8/25
6.81 22-4¼	1)Ukrainian Champs		8/29
(6.47q)			
6.82 22-4½	2)Innsbruck		9/05
6.85 22-5¾	2)Dessau		9/08
6.87 22-6½	1)Berlin Continental Tour		9/13
6.91 22-8	1)Doha Diamond League		9/25
Silver – Malaika Mihambo (Germany)			
6.83 22-5i	2)Karlsruhe		1/31
7.07 23-2½i	1)Berlin		2/14
6.77 22-2½i	1)German Indoor		2/23
6.71 22-¼	1)German Champs		8/09
7.03 23-¾	1)Dessau		9/08
6.77 22-2½	2)Berlin Continental Tour		9/13
Bronze – Khaddi Sagnia (Sweden)			
6.67 21-10¾i	1)Växjö		1/18
6.72 22-¾i	3)Karlsruhe		1/31
6.53 21-5½i	2)Glasgow World Indoor Tour		2/15
6.57 21-6¾i	1)Swedish Indoor		2/22
6.81 22-4¼	1)Mölnådal		6/18
6.64 21-9½	1)Gothenburg		7/04
6.76 22-2¼	1)Karlstad		7/08
6.49 21-3½	1)Gothenburg		8/06
6.44 21-1½	1)Sollentuna		8/10
6.72 22-¾	1)Swedish Champs		8/15
(6.74q)			
6.83 22-5	2)Stockholm Diamond League		8/23
6.75 22-1¾w	1)Gothenburg		8/29
(6.62)			
6.62 21-8¾	1)v Finland		9/06
6.92 22-8½	1)Zagreb Continental Tour		9/15
6.85 22-5¾	2)Doha Diamond League		9/25
Top American – Quanesha Burks			

TRIPLE JUMP

As World MVP Rojas was obviously tops here. Not only was she the only 50-footer (15.24), she was also the only one over 49 (14.94), and only one

VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN



Maryna Bekh-Romanchuk dominated the World Indoor Tour, then won both DL meets outdoors.

other—Tori Franklin with her indoor AR 48-½/15.43—even topped 48.

Gold – Yulimar Rojas (Venezuela)		
15.03 49-3¾i	1)Metz	2/09
(Rojas's complete season—including series—appears in her MVP story)		
Silver – Liadagmis Povea (Cuba)		
14.78 48-6w	1)Havana	2/08
(14.55)		
14.49 47-6½	1)Havana	2/13
14.52 47-7¾i	2)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21
14.45 47-5	1)Cuban Champs	3/21
Bronze – Yekaterina Koneva (Russia)		
14.00 45-11¼i	2)Moscow	2/09
14.13 46-4¾i	2)Russian Indoor	2/27
14.75 48-4¾w	1)Bryansk	8/30
(12.34)		
14.74 48-4½w	1)Russian Champs	9/11
14.56 47-9¼	1)Sochi	9/20
Top American – Tori Franklin		

SHOT

Gong tops our yearly ratings for the fourth year in a row despite having the most minimalist competition imaginable, just 2 meets. It was a close call over the busy Dongmo. Top American Ealey opened with a couple of bad meets.

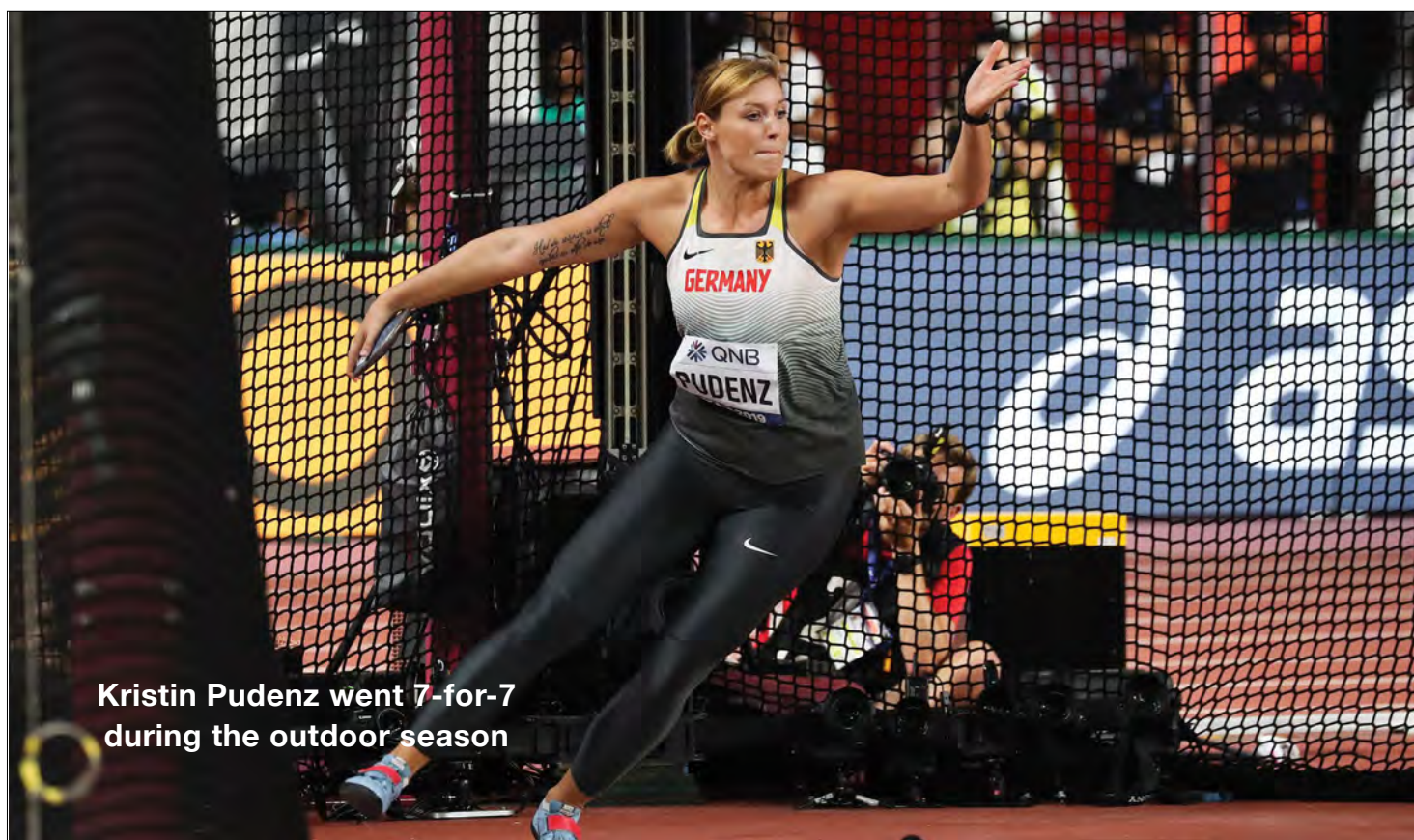
Gold – Lijiao Gong (China)		
19.70 64-7¾i	1)Beijing	3/14
19.53 64-1	1)Shijiazhuang	8/23
Silver – Auriole Dongmo (Portugal)		
17.16 56-3¾i	1)Lisbon	1/12
18.02 59-1½i	1)Pombal	1/25
18.31 60-1i	1)Rochlitz	2/02
17.60 57-9i	1)Pombal	2/08
17.79 58-4½i	2)Sätra	2/11
18.08 59-4i	1)Braga	2/23
18.37 60-3¾i	1)Portuguese Indoor	2/29
18.82 61-9	1)Leiria	6/20
19.27 63-2¾	1)Leiria	6/24
18.04 59-2¼	1)Lisbon	7/18
18.92 62-1	1)Lisbon	8/01
19.53 64-1	1) Portuguese Champs	8/08
18.42 60-5¼	1)Leiria	8/09
18.85 61-10¼	1)Thum	8/22
18.33 60-1¾	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
18.42 60-5¼	1)Ostrava Continental Tour	9/08
Bronze – Chase Ealey (US)		
18.22 59-9½i	3)Iowa City	1/17
17.75 58-3i	3)New York City	1/25

18.36 60-3i	1)National Open	2/01
18.99 62-3¾i	1)USATF Indoor	2/14
19.41 63-8¼	1)Iron Wood Invitational	8/01
18.91 62-½	1)Kutztown	8/07

DISCUS

Allman claimed the American Record—and the yearly list leader—on her first throw of the season, but with that being her only meet couldn't rate higher than Bronze. It was close for the top spot, with Pudenz's longer season giving her the nod over Pérez.

Gold – Kristin Pudenz (Germany)		
58.98 193-6i	4)Berlin	2/14
63.96 209-10	1)Neubrandenburg	5/27
64.92 213-0	1)Potsdam	6/19
62.62 205-5	1)Halle	7/15
65.58 215-2	1)Schönebeck	7/24
62.30 204-5	1)German Champs	8/09
62.52 205-1	1)Halle	8/15
60.67 199-0	1)Thum	8/22
Silver – Yaimé Pérez (Cuba)		
64.13 210-4	1)Havana	2/08
64.12 210-4	1)Havana	2/14
63.80 209-4	1)Havana	2/21
61.46 201-8	2)Santiago	2/28
60.73 199-3	1)Havana	3/07
64.76 212-5	1)Cuban Champs	3/20
Bronze – Valarie Allman (US)		
70.15 230-2	1)Iron Wood Invitational	8/01



VINCE OTOLINO/PHOTO FIN

Kristin Pudenz went 7-for-7 during the outdoor season

HAMMER

Tavernier not only had the best sequence of marks, she was also undefeated, including beating Kopron 2–0 and list leader Malyshik 1–0. The French star won both Continental Tour titles.

Gold – Alexandra Tavernier (France)		
74.94 245-10	1)Vénissieux	7/11
73.09 239-9	1)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
74.12 243-2	1)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
72.76 238-8	1)French Champs	9/13
75.23 246-10	1)Kladno	9/16
74.22 243-6	1)Barcelona	9/22
Silver – Malwina Kopron (Poland)		
71.88 235-10	1)Kielce	8/02
74.18 243-4	1)Spała	8/08
72.68 238-5	2)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
73.43 240-11	1)Chorzów	8/25
70.94 232-9	2)Polish Champs	8/28
72.37 237-5	2)Chorzów Continental Tour	9/06
72.48 237-9	1)Poznań	9/11
74.13 243-2	1)Puławy	9/19
73.70 241-9	1)Lublin	9/26
Bronze – Hanna Malyshik (Belarus)		
75.45 247-6	1)Minsk	2/20
73.00 239-6	1)Brest	7/16
68.92 226-1	2)Belarusian Champs	7/31
70.59 231-7	3)Székesfehérvár Continental Tour	8/19
Top American – Gwen Berry		

JAVELIN

Sorting out the top spot here was a real Lu-Liu. Liu beat Lu for the Chinese title, but she had only one other meet to bolster her case, while Lu had 4 other wins. Khaladovich was the best of the Europeans.

Gold – Huihui Lu (China)		
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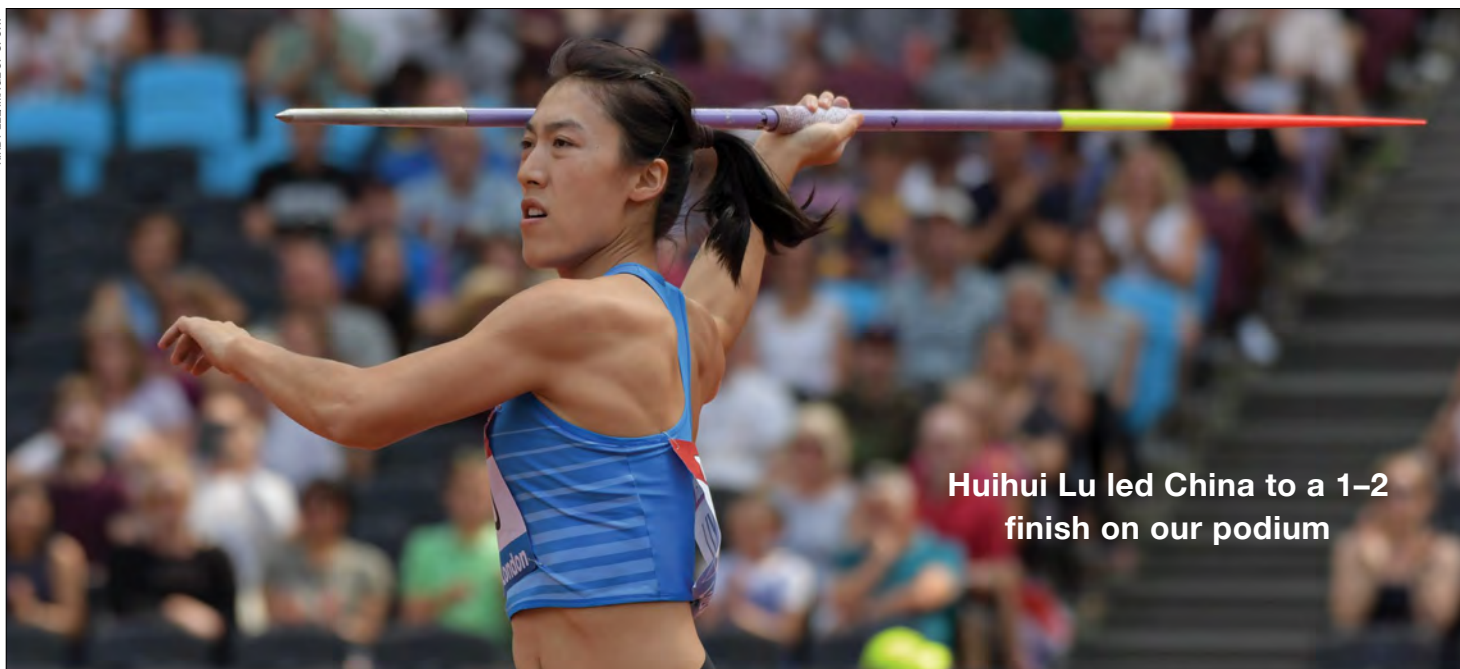
64.21 210-8i	1)Beijing	4/24
64.34 211-1i	1)Beijing	5/29
67.61 221-10	1)Beijing	6/30
66.27 217-5	1)Beijing	8/07
65.70 215-7	2)Chinese Champs	9/15
Silver – Shiyong Liu (China)		
66.14 217-0	1)Beijing	6/27
67.29 220-9	1)Chinese Champs	9/15
Bronze – Tatsiana Khaladovich (Belarus)		
67.17 220-4	1)Minsk	2/20
63.80 209-4	1)Brest	6/12
60.61 198-10	1)Minsk	6/25
64.33 211-0	1)Brest	7/16
66.85 219-4	1)Belarusian Champs	8/01
Top American – Kara Winger		

HEPTATHLON

The yearly list was confirmed as world leader Dadic also had the year's best backup score and is thus a solid Gold choice. Shukh likewise had a pair of good totals to rate ahead of Schäfer.

Gold – Ivona Dadic (Austria)		
6235	1)Amstetten	7/23
6419	1)Götztis	8/29
Silver – Alina Shukh (Ukraine)		
6386	1)Luts'k	8/15
6215	1)Ukrainian Champs	8/29
5940	1)Balkan Champs	8/29
Bronze – Carolin Schäfer (Germany)		
6319	1)German Champs	8/23
8014	1)Bragança Paulista	10/31
8364	1)São Paulo	12/12
Top American – No national-class scores		

KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT



Huihui Lu led China to a 1–2 finish on our podium

T&FN'S 2020 Women's MVP — Yulimar Rojas



A 50-7½ bound gave Yulimar Rojas the indoor World Record in the triple jump and missed the absolute best by just 2¾ inches.

HER CAMPAIGN WAS SHORT, but triple jumper Yulimar Rojas made the most of it, winning twice each indoors and out and easily being selected as our Most Valuable Performer of the year on the women's side.

In early February the 24-year-old Venezuelan (now 25) became member No. 8 of the indoor 15-meter club with her PR 49-3¾ (15.03). So when she came to the Spanish capital for the final World Indoor Tour meet of the year, World Record buzz was in the air. She didn't disappoint, reaching 50-7½ (15.43) to eclipse the 50-4¾ (15.36) undercover standard set by Russia's Tatyana Lebedeva in '04.

"I'm over the moon; I can't believe I'm the World Recordholder," she said. "I want to get home and cry. I need to cry to release the adrenaline I have right now."

The record came on her final try of the day. She had sandwiched a second-round 48-¾ (14.65) with a pair of fouls before scaring the WR with a 50-2 (15.29) bounce in round 4. "When I managed 15.29 so easily in the fourth round, I thought the record was definitely in my legs," she said. The record jump was an absolute PR by 2cm and left her just shy of the absolute WR of 50-10¼ (15.50) set by Ukraine's Inessa Kravets in '95.

Outdoors, Rojas won with a modest distance at the Monaco DL, then finished off by recording the only outdoor 48-foot mark of the year.

Her MVP season, which included the year's 7 farthest jumps:

Mark	Meet	Date	Series
15.03 49-3¾i	1)Metz	2/09	(f, 49-¼, 48-11, f, f, 49-3¾) (f, 14.94, 14.91, f, f, 15.03)
15.43 50-7½i	1)Madrid World Indoor Tour	2/21	(f, 48-¾, f, 50-2, f, 50-7½) (f, 14.65, f, 15.29, f, 15.43)
14.27 46-10	1)Monaco Diamond League	8/14	(f, 46-¾, f, 46-10, f, f) (f, 14.04, f, 14.27, f, f)
14.71 48-3¾	1)Castellón	9/05	(f, 47-5¾, 47-3¾, 44-8¼, f, 48-3¾) (f, 14.47, 14.42, 13.62, f, 14.71).

Honorable Mention

Overall, our 28-member international panel had no trouble in selecting Rojas as the MVP, although 5 different women were tabbed as No. 1. Behind Rojas, a trio of standouts got enough support to earn Honorable Mention status. Alphabetically:

Sifan Hassan

The Dutch distance star, 27, cruised to the No. 3 clocking ever in the 10,000, 29:36.67. She also raised the WR in the rarely run 1-Hour to 18,930m. Her 5000 best of 14:37.85 put her No. 6 on the yearly list...

Hellen Obiri

She wasn't as fast as WR setter Letesenbet

Gidey in the 5000, but the 30-year-old Kenyan was rated as our top performer in that event, having trounced the Ethiopian by almost 5 seconds in the Monaco DL. She also won the Doha DL 3000 in a list-leading 8:22.54...

Elaine Thompson-Herah

In a year dominated by distance running, the 28-year-old Jamaican provided the most speed. She went undefeated in the 100, breaking 10.9 on 3 occasions, topped by a 10.85 win in the Rome DL. At 22.19 she was also the year's third-fastest half-lap performer...

Also getting some support from our selectors were WR setters Gidey & Yelena Lashmanova (50W), miler Laura Muir and long hurdler Femke Bol. □

T&FN's 2020 U.S. MVPs — Ryan Crouser & Shelby Houlihan



Ryan Crouser had one of the greatest shot put seasons ever seen.

Shelby Houlihan claimed a new American Record in the 5000.

Choosing our top Americans of the 2020 season was very easy on the men's side, but not so much so on the women's.

Men's MVP: Ryan Crouser

A recipient of Honorable Mention honors in the World MVP section, the planet's top putter banged out long throw after long throw, raising the record for most 74-footers in a single year from 4 to an unreal 14. In a campaign in which his margin over No. 2 on the yearly list was just over 3ft (2.98m), the undefeated Crouser had the year's 37 farthest throws (and a boggling 46 farthest among Americans).

Honorable Mention status to Donovan Brazier (800), Sam Kendricks (PV), Noah Lyles (200) & Christian Taylor (TJ).

Women's MVP: Shelby Houlihan

There was no obviously dominant U.S. woman, but Houlihan had the best set of credentials. In the big-wins department she again kicked her way to a 1500/3000 double at the USATF Indoor Championships. Marks-wise she destroyed her own American Record in the 5000 by more than 10 seconds with her 14:23.92.

Honorable mention status to Valarie Allman (DT), Lynna Irby (200/400), Sandi Morris (PV), Sha'Carri Richardson (100/200) & Karissa Schweizer (3000/5000). □

Focus On The U.S. Women's 100 Hurdles Scene

VICTOR SALES/PHOTO RUN



The U.S. women—(l-r): Kristi Castlin, Brianna McNeal & Nia Ali—swept the Rio medals in '16 and Team USA looks ready for another big haul.

by Jeff Hollobaugh

WE HEAR THE PHRASE all the time: the toughest team to make. Perhaps the U.S. women's 100 hurdlers should copyright the line.

Consider this: American timber-toppers have grabbed an astounding 30 of the 50 World Rankings spots open in the last 5 years (see sidebar). They swept the medals at the Rio Olympics and at the two Worlds since then have taken half the podium spots. Of the 25 fastest in world history, 12 are now Americans.

How does a podium hopeful deal with the lining up week in and week out against the world's best? Says Keni Harrison, "You can't think too much about your competitors and what they're doing. All you can do is worry about yourself."

The WR holder adds that the intense competition could bring fans some very special moments in the coming year. Whether it's her or someone else, she doesn't think her 12.20 is long for this world.

"I think that you guys will see a faster time," she says of the mark she set in the last Olym-

pic year. "There are still small things that can make somebody go faster. 12.20 can definitely be broken. Not sure how fast, but I think it can be broken."

The World Rankers

The ones to watch closely in the coming battle for Team USA spots are the proven quantities, the active Americans who have already notched World Rankings in the event. Eight women make that grade, enough to fill the lanes on a typical track. Let's look at them in PR order:

Keni Harrison, 12.20

The World Record holder has been ranked No. 1 in the world for four years straight. Fired up by her silver in Doha—her first ever international outdoor podium, the '15 NCAA champ for Kentucky is more confident than ever in her mental game at age 28.

Brianna McNeal, 12.26

The reigning Olympic champion set an American Record with her best, back in '13, but she remains a potent force. Now 29, the Clemson alum has World Ranked 6 times, and as recently as '18 earned the No. 2 global spot.

Nia Ali, 12.34

The Rio silver medalist, Ali would seem primed to go after another Olympic bauble at age 32. After winning in Doha with her PR, she told us, "You know, it could be the last time I ever have a big performance like this, so I have to make sure that I'm doing everything I can in my power to be able to get on that team for Tokyo."

Sharika Nelvis, 12.34

A WC finalist in '15—she set her PR in the first round at USATF that year—Nelvis has made the Rankings top 5 in 4 of the last 5 years. In '19, the now-30-year-old Nelvis took some knocks but closed with a win at the Europe vs USA match.

Dawn Harper-Nelson 12.37

The '08 Olympic gold medalist retired to have a child in '18 but couldn't stay away from the sport. "I knew she was going to come back," says friend Nelvis. She will be 37 at the Trials, but absolutely no one is counting her out, even if her best came in the '12 Olympic final, where she earned silver.

Queen Claye, 12.43

Formerly Harrison, the 7-time World Ranker is 32 now and her best of 12.43 came in '13, but

she showed up big at USATF in '19, placing 5th. Like many, she did not race at all in '20 but she is training hard to improve on her 4th-place finish at the last Trials.

Kristi Castlin, 12.50

The '16 bronze medalist, Castlin has World Ranked 4 times, but not since '17. The 32-year-old is not out of the game, though. A low-key '18 led to a '19 campaign that ended with her 7th-place finish at USATF in a season's best 12.86. Her success in the last Trials—2nd with her PR—solidly confirmed her big-meet peaking ability.

Christina Clemons, 12.54

The Ohio State alum—a brightly shining prospect in '12 when she won the NCAA and placed 5th at the Trials—suffered a devastating injury the following year. Years went into her rebuild and she has now made the Rankings three years straight. At 30 she says she is more than hungry after the deferment of much of her career.

The Next Tier

In the last 6 years, two other Americans have made the World Rankings, but Jasmin Stowers is recently retired and Lolo Jones is back to concentrating on the bobsled.

Tiffani McReynolds

The Baylor veteran, now 29, hit a PR 12.72 in '19 and may be ready to finally bust into the U.S. Rankings. She finished 3rd in the USATF Indoor in '20.

Amber Hughes

The 26-year-old Tennessee State alum made a big jump in '19, taking her PR from 13.12 to 12.74. Can she do it again? No races in '20, but she told a reporter, "My coach and I, we're on a mission. We have a few things to fix, and we're just going to go at it."

Payton Chadwick

The former Arkansas heptathlete, 25, is focusing on the hurdles as a pro. Her best is 12.70 from her runner-up finish at the '19 SEC meet. Last summer she dodged COVID to go after an international campaign. She came away with 2 wins and a U.S.-leading 12.78 on the season.

Taliyah Brooks

Chadwick's former Razorback teammate also seems to have left the heptathlon behind (her PR is 6099). In September she hit a 12.86 PR in Doha.

Gabriele Cunningham

The '20 USATF Indoor champion, now 22, had barely gotten started on her pro career when the shutdown came. At NC State, she did double duty in the sprints and hurdles and ran bests of 11.21, 23.04 and 12.99.

U.S. Dominance Of The Women's 100H World Rankings

In an amazing show of power, the U.S. has been all over the World Rankings in the women's 100H for years now. Not since '07 have Americans failed to take at least half of the spots in each year's Top 10. Overall, 9 different U.S. hurdlers—Nia Ali, Kristi Castlin, Christina Clemons, Dawn Harper Nelson, Keni Harrison, Queen Claye, Brianna McNeal, Sharika Nelvis & the now-retired Jasmin Stowers—have captured 30 of the 50 available spots in the last 5 Rankings. That includes all the No. 1s, 3 No. 2s & all the No. 3s. A charting of their places:

	Harrison	Ali	Nelvis	Clemons	McNeal	Claye	Stowers	Castlin	DHN
2019	1	3	5	6	10	—	—	—	—
2018	1	—	3	5	2	10	—	—	—
2017	1	9	3	4	—	—	5	10	6
2016	1	4	—	—	2	8	7	3	5
2015	8	—	2	—	4	6	3	—	1

Anna Cockrell

All though her eventual meal ticket may well be the 400H, where she has won NCAA and World Junior titles, Cockrell has already run 12.69 and placed 5th in the NCAA. At 23, she has one outdoor season left at USC.

The Youth Movement

The technical demands of the event reward experience. As Harper Nelson says, "The huge blessing of the hurdles is that often it is a maturing event. You don't see a lot of people coming out of high school saying, 'Oh I ran 12.3 in the hurdles.' There's always something to learn."

Still, there are some quick studies coming up on the horizon. With hardly any domestic racing opportunities in the event during '20, a fan can't see who has been making progress. A number come to mind—some of them already very accomplished, while others are new to the big stage.

Chanel Brissett

The NCAA champion indoors and out in '19 for USC, Brissett, 21, blistered a 12.52 in taking the outdoor title. The time makes her No. 6 all-time among collegians. She graduated in three years and is now an MBA student at Texas, where she has two more seasons of outdoor eligibility. She is working with hurdle guru Edrick Floréal, who coaches WR holder Harrison among others.

Tonea Marshall

LSU's Marshall, 22, still has one outdoor season of NCAA eligibility and is looking like she could make a dent on the pro scene when she debuts there. In '19, she tied her best NCAA finish ever at 6th, but along the way she ran the 7 fastest races of her career, topped by a 12.57 at altitude.

Cortney Jones

Another 3-year graduate, Jones will spend

her last season of eligibility at Arizona State after winning the ACC and placing 6th at NCAAs for Florida State in '19. At 21, her best of 12.72 puts her in good company.

Tia Jones

Now 20, the former Georgia prep star set national class records as a frosh, soph and junior. Heavily recruited by colleges (the 12.84 PR and the World Junior gold helped), she instead turned pro. Some solid performances have followed (12.86 in '19), but at nationals that year she got stuck in the heats.

Alexis Duncan

Tennessee's Duncan, 22, has two more seasons of outdoor eligibility. She ran 12.79 as a frosh for the Vols and 12.79 in '19, but has yet to make an NCAA final.

Grace Stark

Florida's Stark, 19, hasn't run an outdoor race since high school, where she clocked 13.16 and won the Youth Olympics gold in '18. She made headlines indoors for the Gators in '20 by breaking the World Junior Record for the 60H twice at the SEC.

Fans in other countries might look at the U.S. hurdle scene and see an embarrassment of riches. One suspects American hurdlers are fine with that. In our conversations, not one complained about the toughness of the competition.

Harper Nelson, the most experienced of all, mentions her thoughts went she went off to college at UCLA 18 years ago and realized the competition she would be facing: "I wanted to be the greatest hurdler to ever live. That meant trying to win everything in sight and getting a World Record. I realized even more that, 'Oh, this is going to be a fight that I never imagined.' I still want the same things, but to get them, there are so many good hurdlers. Oh my god, I have to go through all of them, you know?" ☐

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Keni Harrison Looking For Championships Golds

MIKE SCOTT



She has racked up an impressive 14 Diamond League wins, but Keni Harrison is pointing towards her first major international gold.

by Jeff Hollobaugh

THE WORLD RECORD HOLDER in the 100H is one to count her blessings. Keni Harrison, after four straight No. 1s in the T&FN World Rankings, 2016–19, admits she herself is stunned by it: “It’s just insane to even think that I’m [No.1] because the hurdles, you know, anyone can go out there and take it. I was just blessed that I was able to come with the fourth time to be No. 1.”

Harrison, who has always stayed on the humble side of the street, admits that her thankfulness was forged in a large part by her experiences in ‘16. Picked as the favorite for the Olympic Trials after her American Record 12.24 at the Prefontaine Classic, the Kentucky alum had an off day and finished 6th.

“Sometimes we don’t understand when things don’t go the way we want, but you have to keep your faith in that moment,” she says. “I was so angry with myself. ‘God, why me?’—that type of thing. I threw a pity party for a little bit.

“My coach had to tell me, ‘Keni, you need to go and pray and ask God what He wants

you to do and what are you going to do from here on out?’”

The focus on faith clearly worked out for Harrison. She traveled to Britain for her next meet two weeks later and blistered a World Record 12.20.

“I would definitely say it’s my proudest moment,” she says. “Because I got the World Record, but more so that I got back up. To have a defeat two weeks before [after] only having one goal for that year, which was to make the Olympic team. To not accomplish a goal but then forcing yourself to get back up and get back out there. That did a lot for me personally.”

At the close of that momentous year, she had no Olympic medal, but took consolation in a WR plaque and the first of her No. 1s.

Her next campaign sparkled as well, with a list-leading 12.28 and an undefeated string that lasted until the World Championships, where her 12.74 landed her in 4th. While it was good for another No. 1 ranking, missing the podium burned.

She and coach Edrick Floréal, focused on what they saw as the challenge—bringing Harrison’s everyday game to the big meet.

As the winner of 14 career Diamond League

aces explains it, “It’s just not making meets bigger than what they are. If I could run every meet just like it’s a Diamond League meet, it would be easy. The way I go into a Diamond League and the way I go into a championship are two different things sometimes.

“That’s something that I’ve learned over the years, I’ve got to tell myself to calm down, you have one goal and that’s to come across the finish line first. Don’t think of the meet itself and everyone around you. Just keep doing what you’re doing. That’s something that I’m learning to do a better job at over the years.

“I’m a lot more confident. Just talking to my sports psych and working on going out there and running fast all the time.”

It showed in her last full campaign, 2019. Another undefeated streak led to the national title (12.44). In Doha, she finished 2nd to teammate Nia Ali, but she made the podium, finally.

“That was huge for myself and my coach,” she says. “That’s something that I know I had the possibility of doing. It’s just that year I finally was able to put my mental game to the test. I’ve been working hard on controlling my nerves and anxiety and just pressing myself. It was a good year for me.”

She was ready for another go at the Olympics. Indoors in '20, she led the world with her 7.80 over the 60s. Outdoors Harrison—along with the rest of the world—had to rethink everything when the pandemic struck.

"It was tough," she admits. "From the beginning, I didn't want to believe it. Once reality did sink in that this is happening, [I realized] this is bigger than myself. I was going to try to find things to keep me motivated to go to training. Once I found my routine, I think I was able to finally deal with it on better terms."

Floréal's pro group, unable to use the facilities at the University of Texas, eventually found a high school track that they used for several months. Since September, they've been back at their usual haunts, wearing masks in the weightroom and getting COVID testing every week.

"We're just trying to play things the way that it is, just doing what we can to stay safe and get our workouts in."

Obviously, the summer was different than any Harrison had experienced before. "It's hard going to practice every single day and not knowing where you're at. When you run in a track meet, you're able to say, this is where I'm at. But coach Flo found ways for us to stay in shape and be competitive, just competing with my training partners.



"I worked a lot this summer on my sprint mechanics. To be a great hurdler, you've gotta have great mechanics. That's something that in the season it's really hard to focus on because I'm just running the 100 hurdles."

She calls it the "positive side of quaran-

ting—I worked on something that I needed to work on."

The frustrating part was not racing. "Races... you get to see how fast you're going. You get to see all the hard work you've been putting in. So it was tough."

Rather than head to Europe for the late circuit, Floréal and his athletes decided to stay home, a decision that was based on the calendar lineup for the next 5 years, a stretch that—tentatively at least—features a Worlds or Olympics every summer.

"We needed to take some time off. It's going to be intense the next couple of years. I feel like I'm at the peak of my years," says Harrison, who recently turned 28. "I want to really give my best those next couple of years. It's going to be taxing on my body. You need to rest and let your body heal up when you have the chance."

As for her long-term plans, Harrison says, "If my body is still going, I definitely want to keep going. I just want to run until my body can't run fast anymore. I think I'll know when that time is, but right now I feel better than I ever have. And everything is really starting to click even more than in 2016, just how I approach things mentally and physically.

"I'm understanding the hurdles better and better. I'm only getting wiser in the event, if that makes sense. Every year I just become better. □

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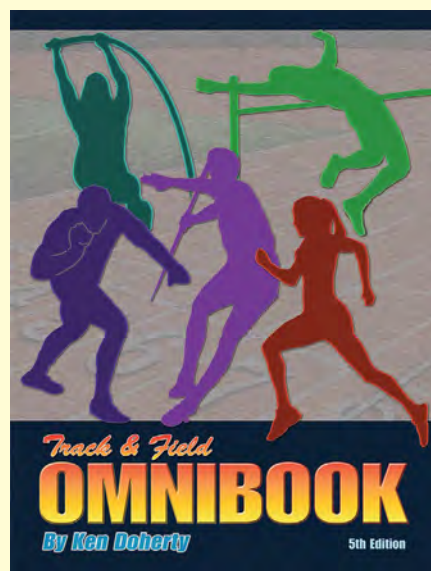
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Brianna McNeal Ready To Defend Her Olympic Title

KEVIN MORRIS



“Very devastated” is how Brianna McNeal characterizes her false-starting out of the heats at the ’19 World Championships.

by Jeff Hollobaugh

WORLD CHAMPION, OLYMPIC CHAMPION. With résumé lines like that, Brianna McNeal—one might think at a superficial glance—would never lack for confidence.

Yet the 100H arguably features the toughest competition of any event in making Team USA for Tokyo. One need look no farther than the last Olympics, where the Clemson alum led a dominating American medal sweep.

Yet ’13 WC gold medalist McNeal, who has experienced the best and the worst of what this sport can offer, says that her mental game is—and must be—her main focus in fighting her way back to the podium. So when Tokyo was postponed for a year, it rattled her initially.

“I was very emotional about it,” she admits. “I was heartbroken a bit, because you make certain sacrifices in your life for a moment, and to be told that it’s not going to happen for a year, it kind of was a bit stressful.

“I was training well and I was very fit and I was looking forward to having that season. But although it may be delayed, it’s not denied. All I can do is see the silver lining and take advantage of the opportunity to be able to prepare more.”

Should all go according to plan, Tokyo will be the culmination of a comeback of sorts, as McNeal, still celebrating her Olympic gold, got slammed by a suspension just a few months after her return from Brazil.

It was a whereabouts suspension—three strikes she’s out—only the last two carried with

them a cruel irony. For one she was in Miami to take part in “Brianna Rollins Day” and a parade in her honor. The third strike came when she met President Obama in the White House. She admitted she forgot to update her whereabouts in the system; she took full responsibility for the screwup.

The standard 2-year penalty was cut to 1, with the USADA report calling her “a brilliant athlete who is not charged or suspected of using banned substances of any kind.”

Still, McNeal couldn’t compete in 2017, missing the chance to go into the World Championships as a favorite. She also surely missed out on much of the earnings that would normally come to the Olympic champion.

The next season she came back hard, hitting 12.38, her third-best time ever. In a sterling campaign she captured 4 Diamond League wins and ranked No. 2 in the world behind national champ Keni Harrison.

The ’19 season, however, played out differently. “I had a lot of mixed feelings about that year,” she says. “I felt like I was doing everything that I needed to be at the top of my game, but it wasn’t working out for me like that. I had a lot of personal things going on and I didn’t realize how much it spilled out over my career.

“I learned that although I could be training my butt off every day, doing everything I need to do, eating right, getting my weight and my body together as a whole, but if I don’t have the mental or even my spiritual in order, everything just doesn’t work.

“We’re three-dimensional beings. If all things aren’t working together or cohesive,

then it just shows. And as you saw at the World Championships, I clearly wasn’t in the right mental capacity to compete in 2019, unfortunately.”

After placing 3rd at USATF in 12.61, McNeal only competed once more before Doha, taking 6th in the Birmingham DL. Then, at Worlds, she false-started out of her heat.

“I was very devastated,” she says. “I was heartbroken because I did feel like I had prepared well enough to be on the podium, but to lose focus for just a millisecond was devastating.

“But it just wasn’t meant for me, it wasn’t meant to be, you know? I believe that all things that are for you are for you. I felt like that day—that moment, that year—it just wasn’t mine.”

Yet at age 29, McNeal is coming back for more. “I learn from experience and try to grow from it. Life wasn’t easy for me growing up. Going through adversity when you’re young, it just becomes a norm. I continue to be optimistic about everything and try to stay strong and understand that all things are working out for my good, even when

I don’t understand them.

“God gives his toughest battles to the strongest soldier and I guess I could say that I’m one of his strongest soldiers.”

Working with longtime coach Lawrence Johnson, McNeal has so far been able to stick to her training schedule through the pandemic, training in a park 5 days a week and lifting 3 days. “Those things did not change for me. [The pandemic restrictions] were more about the socialization, but I’m not a social butterfly, so I wasn’t affected too much by it.”

The routine helped her deal with the many other stresses that 2020 brought. “I always felt like track was my sanctuary,” she explains. “It’s a place where I can unwind and let go of all my worries and stress. I’m pretty blessed that I have the opportunity to run track as my career and it gives me safe haven.”

To get back to the top, McNeal feels her mission is clear: “I need to be continuously training my mind, strengthening my spirituality, and also just training hard. That has gotten me to great places. Just mastering my craft every day by giving it my best, that will hopefully put me back on top of the podium.”

She pauses for a moment and adds, “Also, I think that reestablishing my confidence and rebuilding my confidence in myself... I’ve been through so much, sometimes I can doubt myself. I can get a bit low, and just building that trust in the whole process will help me make it to the next Olympics.

“I honestly wake up and go to practice and look forward to it, even though it’s sometimes very hard. When I get through those hard days, it makes me feel good and feel like I’ve gotten better.” □

A Comeback for Dawn Harper Nelson Delayed



MARK SHERMAN

If Dawn Harper Nelson makes it to Tokyo, it'll be 13 years after her Beijing gold instead of 12.

by Jeff Hollobaugh

BEIJING OLYMPICS 100H CHAMP Dawn Harper Nelson had set her big comeback for 2020. “I envisioned how it was going to go, you know, the whole announcement,” she says. “And then my first track meet, it was going to be, like, ‘Yay, she’s back!’”

Then the pandemic came to town with other plans.

It hit the veteran hurdler hard. “Literally having to switch my mind to just training and it feels like there’s no reason for it,” she says. “You’re at practice about to die and do this 400 and there’s no results. You get no results anytime. I remember specifically sitting in my living room and just saying, ‘I’m just going to cry right now.’”

For Harper Nelson, who retired in 2018 to have a baby, staying away from the sport simply turned out not to be an option: “Every day I was like, ‘Omigosh, I want to run! I need to be hurdling something.’ I mean, during my whole pregnancy, I would still go and work out. As the baby got bigger and my tummy got bigger, I felt like this huge glob sitting on the couch and the only time I would feel like myself was when I would go to track practice. I felt light on my feet when I was out there.”

Harper-Nelson would drive to the track at her alma mater, East St. Louis High, and line up with athletes half her age: “If they were doing a fast sprint, I remember saying, ‘I can take you out for the first 50m and after that I’m slowing down and I’m jogging.’ Just that feeling of the adrenaline rushing and feeling like my body still is mine. I was like, ‘I can’t, I don’t want to walk away.’”

That’s why the ‘08 gold medalist is back in the hurdle wars. At age 36 (37 in May), she can’t imagine herself living away from them. And

now she has another reason to dive back in, her daughter Harper, now 19 months old.

“I am someone that’s already very meticulous with how I plan my day, but OMG, with her thrown in the bunch, it has sent everything into overdrive. You can get so caught up doing all these mommy things for 30 minutes and an hour has gone by and you were supposed to prepare for track practice. And you have not. Now I have to write out absolutely everything I need to do the night before.

“But then, she also has made me realize this is something I truly want, the fact that I’m fighting so hard to be on this podium. It is hard to juggle it all. And being with her makes me realize mommy loves track & field because in order for me to split my time from her means that I definitely still have a passion for it. It’s also wonderful because when the weather is beautiful, she comes to practice with me.”

Occasionally there are rough days, even with a baby she describes as “such an easy child.” She explains, “Every blue moon, she’s like, ‘You know what? I think you need an extra challenge in your day.’”

“And that’s very challenging. I just have to stop and take a breath because it literally could feel like the world is spinning when she just doesn’t want to cooperate. You’re just like, ‘Oh my God, I can’t do it today.’ As in, I just need to not go to practice. And it’s like, you can’t do that. The day has to go on.”

Now coached by her husband, Alonzo Nelson—she met him when they were both running track in the 8th grade—Harper Nelson has reaped some benefits from pandemic training. “Everything was shut down: the track I was using, the gym I was using.” The couple ended up using soccer fields for many of her workouts. “We realized

it was actually saving a lot of wear and tear on the body, the pounding and extra aches and pains.”

Next season, the two plan to incorporate turf training again, even if the tracks are open. They also are in the process of building a basement weightroom.

“I remember an article I saw on Gail Devers,” says Harper Nelson. “Obviously, we’ve all heard quality over quantity, but she was saying she didn’t train as many days, but the days she did had to be absolute quality. That’s really where I am right now. Instead of feeling like, ‘When you won the gold, it looked exactly like this,’ and it’s like, ‘Yeah, that was how many, *em* years ago?’”

“I’ve learned so much, and I can really read my body now. That’s a huge benefit to me.”

Sometimes it seems a lifetime ago that Harper Nelson, then a 24-year-old in her second year out of UCLA, blitzed a then-PR of 12.54 to win the gold medal in Beijing’s National Stadium.

The memory remains crystal clear. “Dealing with the knee surgery of [February] 2008 and all the tears, but believing within those tears that I could be on the podium. Before the gun goes off, you have this moment of—literally—all of your dreams are at that white line down there. I remember thinking, ‘You’ve done everything you could possibly do. The last thing you can do is run your heart out for 12 seconds.’”

“When the gun goes off there’s this crazy panic: you’re just screaming, you comprehend what you’re doing—but you don’t, because you’re doing everything so quickly. Crossing the line is the validation of all the sacrifices. You’re in shock, you see a lot of people’s hopes and dreams. Everyone goes to the Olympics wishing they could be on the podium, but there are only three.”

She could have called it quits that very day and her career would be an object of envy forever. Instead, she forged on. A World bronze in ‘11, an Olympic silver in ‘12 (in a PR 12.37), a World silver in ‘17, and 9 World Rankings, topped by No. 1s in 2014 & ‘15.

“Track & field is so beautiful, but so terrible because every year it’s something else to go after,” she continues. “Every year, you feel the pressure of proving yourself. You can win the Olympics the year before and the next year it’s like, ‘Oh the defending champion, can she win the World Championships, can she defend at the Diamond League race?’ And so you feel, ‘I have to prove myself again.’”

“You know what you have, but there is still a part for yourself to prove it to yourself again. I hate to even say that, but that’s something that I feel I’ve been burdened with, this beautiful, terrible thing of wanting to prove yourself.”

After all of these years, she absolutely knows what it takes. “I have to listen to my body. I am very hard on myself. You know, 8, 12 years ago, 5 days [of training] looked like this. This is what it should be, but I know I have a different body. When I have my aches and pains, I want to push through because I know I need to put in 4 days or 5 days. And it’s like, ‘No Dawn, what you have to do is be smart.’ You have to listen to your body. You have to eat right. And when you get the opportunity to step on the track, you have to absolutely kill it.” □

Sharika Nelvis Keeps On Moving Forward

KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT



“There’s been a lot of moments when I’ve been disappointed,” says Sharika Nelvis, “but I’ve always bounced back.”

by Jeff Hollobaugh

THE PANDEMIC HAS BROUGHT Sharika Nelvis back to Jonesboro, Arkansas, where years before as one of Arkansas State’s Red Wolves, she delivered NCAA hurdle titles indoors and out in ‘14, as well as earning the Honda Sports Award as the nation’s top collegiate women’s trackster.

“We were in Alabama,” she explains, “training for the 2020 season, and then everything started closing down. We were fortunate enough that we were practicing at a high school that didn’t have a gate. As far as track workouts, we didn’t miss out on that, but we couldn’t get in the gym.”

Will Williams, Nelvis’s boyfriend and coach (and himself an athlete of note, having won the ‘18 NCAA long jump title for Texas A&M), landed the jumps coach position at Arkansas State, and the two moved to a better training environment.

“We have facilities available to us. We have a whole garage gym, so it’s a lot easier now,” says Nelvis, now a volunteer assistant on head coach Jim Patchell’s staff. Is it nice to wear the team colors again? She quickly clarifies with a laugh: “I always wore the colors.”

For all athletes, the past year has been a difficult one, and the 30-year-old Nelvis is no exception. “A lot of times I don’t look at the news because it’s always negative things. Even on social media, there’s so much negative stuff. So I really just stay in a positive mindset: be aware, but stay positive about all the things that are going on right now.”

Her outdoor season consisted of a lone European meet in mid-August that she’d rather forget: “I traveled overseas, which was weird because we were waiting and we never knew what was going to be going on. It was just silent—no one knew.” Finally, arrangements were made to compete in Hungary’s Gyulai Memorial. “My coach was like, ‘Go ahead, you have nothing to lose.’”

A 13.09 for 6th was not exactly what Nelvis had been hoping for. “I was very disappointed,” she admits. “I can win and run a slow time, but when I lose and run a slow time, I’m just like, ‘Agh!’ I’m aware of the season we’ve had and it just hit me a little harder than normal. I was like, ‘Dang. I shouldn’t have come over here.’”

“My agent had to talk me into going to a second meet because I was pissed. I’m like, ‘I’m not going.’ My coach was like, ‘I mean, we’re already over here and you might as well.’ I was like, ‘OK.’ But you know when you’re not into it, any small thing I’m like, ‘Oh there’s my cue!’”

“So we had travel difficulties and I was like, ‘You know what, don’t even worry about it. I’m going to go home.’ It was hard, but I was just like, ‘This isn’t who you are. So just get over it.’ I know what I’m capable of doing and so we’re just moving forward.”

Moving forward is something Nelvis has done her whole life. She had a childhood marked by tragedy, losing both parents before she was 8. “I don’t know,” she says. “I just stay in my own little world. Stuff happens, you’ve just got to keep pushing, you’ve got to keep pushing it all the time. That’s what I did and that’s what I’m doing and that’s why I look at hurdling as, ‘Listen,

it’s just not my time.’ Everything happens for a reason and so when it’s my time, I’ll know.”

She loves to laugh and laughs often; it’s just who she is. She recounts the story of a college friend: “I told him both my parents are dead, and he’s like, ‘You don’t act like it.’ And I’m like, ‘How does somebody act like that?’ I mean, I guess, but no, I’m a happy person.”

Nelvis has ranked in the top 5 in the world 5 of the last 5 years. In high school she ran a modest 14.03 for Northside of Memphis. At Arkansas State she blossomed working with Patchell, hitting a best of 12.71 in ‘14 and taking the NCAA crown in 12.52w that year.

The move to the pros, she says, wasn’t nearly as hard as the transition from high school to college: “The big difference was coming to college and finding out, ‘Oh, there are greater people here. There are faster people than me!’ But by the time I got to the professional level, it was just like, ‘OK.’”

That first year in the big leagues went well. She rocked a 12.34 PR in the heats at USATF, won two Diamond League meets and made the finals at the Worlds in Beijing. She finished No. 2 in the World Rankings.

The next year she took her knocks and finished 5th in the Olympic Trials. Solid seasons in ‘17 and ‘18 came through consistency in what is one of the most competitive events on the track. Then in ‘19 she repeated as USATF Indoor champion, but outdoors finished 4th at the nationals, narrowly missing the Doha team with her 12.66.

“Like any other athlete would feel, I was disappointed,” she says. “There’s been a lot of moments when I’ve been disappointed, but I’ve always bounced back because when it’s my time, it’s going to be my time.”

She closed out the season with a win in the U.S. vs Europe meet and a No. 5 World Ranking.

Now she is preparing for the Olympic year all over again. “We’re basically sticking to our usual schedule,” she says, even including the occasional early season mile run. “I had three weeks where I had to run, just once a week. It was not, it was not pretty at all, but I got through each time, so that was a good thing. But it was not something I would want to do ever,” she says with a laugh.

Looking ahead to the Trials, she analyzes what she needs to do to give the best chance of making it to Tokyo, explaining, “It’s definitely tough. Honestly, you just gotta let loose. You gotta stop thinking, because I’m an overthinker. If I’m just thinking, ‘I need to do this, I need to do that,’ I’m gonna mess myself up. So it’s just like, you have to stop thinking, run and have fun. That’s what it all boils down to for me. Let it happen, don’t try to force it.” □

Christina Clemons Had A Long Road Back

KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT



Christina Clemons hopes the third time is the charm at the Olympic Trials.

by Jeff Hollobaugh

IT EATS AWAY AT Christina Clemons sometimes, just like it would for any driven athlete: Eugene, June 23, 2012, the finals of the Olympic Trials 100H.

The field lined up dominated by veterans: Dawn Harper Nelson, then 28. Kellie Wells, 29, Lolo Jones 30, Ginnie Crawford 28, Michelle Perry 33... And then there were the young'uns: Clemons at 22, Brianna McNeal (then Rollins) at 20, Nia Ali 23. Clemons crossed the line in 5th, behind four of the vets, ahead of McNeal and Ali.

The future beckoned brightly to the Ohio State star (née Christina Manning), who 2 weeks earlier had capped her collegiate career with an NCAA win.

But '13, scheduled to be her first full season in the pros, brought with it devastation in the form of a ruptured Achilles. What might have easily been a career-ending injury cost her dearly, as it took 4 years to get back to hurdling fast and pain-free.

By '16, although still struggling she made it to the OT semis, where she bowed out with a 13.15. Later that day she watched the final as McNeal won and Ali placed 3rd, with Kristi Castlin sandwiched in between.

"It's crazy to me," Clemons admits. "I can't help it, but every time I think about it, I feel like that was supposed to be me."

The winner of 5 Big 10 titles while a Buckeye, the Maryland native had won the NCAA hurdles indoors and out in '12 and clocked a PR 12.68. She ranked No. 7 in the U.S.

The next winter, she blew out her Achilles: "That right there took 4 years. That's a huge chunk of my career, you know. Track & field is short-lived." She admits she probably wouldn't

have made it through without the support of her college coaches, Karen Dennis and Joel Brown.

"They played a huge role. I was able to stay there and get my treatment and rehab. I remember the first time that I tried to come back and run. My coach had to remind me what I'm coming from and that it's going to take time.

"I had never been injured before. I never even had a charley horse before. This was something, a 'career-ending injury' to someone who didn't know what that meant.

"The doctor said, 'You ruptured your Achilles.' My coach, I looked over at her, she was in tears. And I'm just like, 'OK, when can I run?' I was so ignorant to the injury itself. It was a good thing for me too [in coming back], because it was like, 'I'm not doing enough, I'm not fast enough, I'm not strong enough.'"

The rebuilding of both her tendon and her confidence took a long time. In '14 she only managed two outdoor meets, hitting just 13.61. The next year, she clocked 13.04 in April but a mid-season setback kept her out of the USATF meet. In '16 she got down to 12.87 and made it back into the U.S. Rankings at No. 10 after 3 years away.

"In '17," she says, "I was 100% healthy and ready to go." She placed 3rd in the USATF indoors and out, 5th in the World Championships and ran a PR 12.54. She ranked No. 4 globally.

The following season brought silver at the World Indoor and she was runner-up outdoors at USATF, putting together a No. 5 World Ranking.

Then came '19, a year for which she says she has mixed feelings. "It was bittersweet," she explains. "I was having one of the best seasons as far as competing and how I felt and everything. I went into [USATF] completely confident, with no doubt whatsoever. If anybody would've told me I

wouldn't make that team, I would have laughed.

"But you can't say 'guarantee' with track. You can't say 'guarantee' with hurdles especially."

At hurdle 6, Clemons was in 3rd, on the team, but she smashed No. 7. "At that point I knew it was a wrap," she says. "I don't compete at a level where I can do that, where I can make a mistake like that and come back from it that far in the race."

Bouncing back from that 8th-place finish wasn't easy: "I felt defeated. That's probably the first time where I felt almost depressed from a competition. I wasn't talking to anyone. I didn't want to be around anyone except for my husband. It was just tough going to practice. I was going through the motions. I feel like I've been very resilient through all that I've been through, but for some reason this one hit me really hard."

But over the winter she got over it. "Short-term memory with track is what they tell us," she says. "You have to have that short-term memory because if you hold on to it, it will mess you up, which is what happened to me in '19. It messed me up for the rest of the season."

She came into '20 "full-throttle," heading to Europe for a big indoor season, scoring wins in Paris, Düsseldorf and Madrid and ending up second-fastest on the yearly 60H list. "If I had not run indoors," she says, "I wouldn't have competed this year at all, so I'm glad to have done that."

When COVID came calling, Clemons had been training at Alabama State, but that faded, she explains: "It got shut down to where we couldn't use any of the facilities. My husband and I were just trying to find places to train." They ended up in Lawrence, Kansas, where husband Kyle went to school. Along the way, they built their own gym equipment, including a squat rack. That effort has turned into a business venture. "People caught wind of it and we started selling."

The stress of the pandemic also pushed her to release her creative demons via TikTok, where she put together several elaborate videos (multiple roles and costume changes). "It's just fun. I go on there to laugh and I enjoy making people laugh. Especially during a time like this, when there's so much to be stressed about or worried about or even scared, just being able to go into a platform and see people just laughing and making them happy and brightening up days."

Currently Clemons is coached by Alabama State's Garfield Ellenwood and is taking workouts long distance. After the seasons lost with her Achilles, after the disappointment of hurdle 7 in Des Moines in '19, after the pandemic, Clemons wants more than anything to be on the big podium: "It drives my career."

Her husband, former Kansas 400 star Kyle Clemons (they married in '18), has relay golds from the '15 Worlds and '16 Olympics. Christina, closing in on 31, wants bullion of her own, saying, "It's what drives me."

She explains, "I have to challenge myself. I have to push myself beyond limits. I told my coach I want this to be the hardest training I've ever experienced. That's the only way I can go out there and be the best. I have to do what no one else is doing. It comes down to what you do in training when the eyes aren't on you." □

T&FN Interview — Grant Holloway

ANDREW MCCLANAHAN/PHOTO RUN



A do-it-all in high school and as a collegian, Grant Holloway is adjusting to being purely a hurdler.

by Sieg Lindstrom

COMPETING HERE, THERE & EVERYWHERE. That was Grant Holloway's thing for 5 prep and collegiate seasons prior to 2020. Not *everywhere* with respect to locale, but the Virginia native's spike prints ranged all over the sprints/hurdles/jumps spectrum at the meets where he came to play.

From early on, especially indoors on the vibrant East Coast prep circuit, when Holloway played, he scrapped for all the marbles. Certainly this was true of his junior season at Chesapeake's Grassfield High when he captured our HS Boys Indoor Athlete Of The Year honors. At State that year he placed 3rd in the 55, 2nd in the 300, 1st in the 55H, 2nd in the high jump and 1st in the long jump. All that before traveling to the New Balance Indoor Nationals and tearing to a junior-class record in the 60H, the event in which he sped a then-HSR the following season.

You'll well remember where Holloway took his versatility from there: to Mike "Mouse" Holloway's Florida squad, where he powered to six NCAA hurdle titles, indoors & out, in his

three collegiate years before turning pro after '19. As a Gator, he continued to excel all over the ballistic speed universe as the most crucial cog in the scoring machine that netted three NCAA team titles ('17 Outdoor plus the Indoors of '18 & '19) and a trio of runner-up showings for his team. In the tight two days of the '19 Indoor, Holloway won the 60 along with the hurdles (with an American Record 7.35), placed 3rd in the long jump and cranked the fastest leg on Florida's 3rd-place 4x4.

How could he top that? Well, at the Outdoor in Austin, he helped Florida to its Collegiate Record 37.97 in the 4x1, made himself history's first sub-13 collegiate hurdler and ripped a 43.74 anchor on the 4x4. All within just over a mere 2 hours and 20 minutes.

Oh, yes. Four months later Holloway, though a neophyte on the elite pro stage, claimed hurdles gold at the World Championships in Doha—0.05 clear of '15 titlist Sergey Shubenkov in 2nd.

And along came 2020 with its screeching halt to normality a month after Holloway had claimed the yearly 60H world lead at 7.38 just testing his chops in a domestic fixture. For the now adidas-sponsored pro his workload

dropped from 42 individual races and 8 long jump comps in '19 to 9 trips to hurdles start lines in shoulda-been-Olympic-year '20.

Destiny denied. Or delayed. Holloway is primed to explore that question.

In late November we caught up with him by phone in Gainesville, where he is still a student and in the able and trusted coaching hands of Mouse, a distant cousin.

T&FN: *How are things?*

Holloway: Pretty good. Pretty good. I just wrapped up my day. Now I'm over here just relaxing, trying to get some rest in.

T&FN: *Well, then you must be getting the work in.*

Holloway: Right.

T&FN: *I guess I'll start out by asking this. You were an Ironman throughout high school, throughout college, tons of meets, tons of events. And then all of a sudden we get this 2020 year and very limited competition. What was it like to downshift from 60 to zero in that fashion?*

Holloway: It was definitely horrible. It's one of those things where 2020 was just—there was a lot going on this year, you know? There was

Grant Holloway In A Nutshell

Personal

Stanley Grant Holloway was born November 19, 1997, in Chesapeake, Virginia; 6-3/190 (1.905/86); Instagram/Twitter: @flamingoo_

Schools

Grassfield (Chesapeake, Virginia) HS '16; Florida (turned pro after '19 NCAA); now represents adidas

Coaches

Stan Holloway (pre-HS); Leroy Harper & Michael Sauer (HS); Mike Holloway (Florida & pro); Agents: John Regis & Ramon Clay

Major Meets

110H: '16—3)USATF Junior; '17—1)NCAA, 4)USATF; '18—1)NCAA, 2)USATF; '19—1)NCAA, 2)USATF, 1)World Championships

60: '19—1)NCAA

60H: '17—1)NCAA Indoor; '18—1)NCAA Indoor; '19—1)NCAA Indoor

Long Jump: '15—3)USATF Junior; '16—6)USATF Junior; '17—11)NCAA Indoor, 2)NCAA; '18—2)NCAA Indoor, 9)NCAA; '19—3)NCAA Indoor, 12)NCAA

PRs

60—6.50i ('19); **200**—20.66 ('19); **60H**—7.35i AR, CR ('19); **110H**—12.98 CR (10, x A) ('19); **HJ**—7-1/2.16 ('14); **LJ**—26-9³/₈.17 ('18)

Progression

'14—14.11(HS); '15—13.75(HS); '16—13.37(HS); '17—13.39; '18—13.15; '19—12.98; '20—13.19

World/U.S. Rankings

110H: '17—x/4; '18—8/2; '19—2/1

Long Jump: '17—x/9; '18—x/10

nothing that we could do to even fix it. It was just one of those things, but other than that you sit back and you just hold it down.

T&FN: Such a dramatic shift in the routine. Was it tough for you psychologically or did you and Mouse just buckle down with a new plan?

Holloway: Exactly. We kind of just roll with the punches. You know that's all you can do. So then from there we just took it one day at a time. And there were some days where we had to quarantine because people in our group had had the virus, and stuff like that. But other than that we just took it a day at a time and we just hoped and prayed.

T&FN: That's close to home when people in your training group, your friends, have the virus. Has everyone returned to good health?

Holloway: Perfect. Everybody's perfect in the group. So right now we're getting ready for this 2021 season. We don't know what's going to hold, we don't know what's going to happen, and right now in a sense, we're taking it one day at a time.

It's good to have some normalcy back where we can actually train at the school and all that good stuff. But other than that, it's one of the things now where we just sit back, relax and just hope for the best?

T&FN: Is there anything that you and Mouse have kind of made a project to work on with all that time to work and not having to worry about anything close to a full slate of competitions? Was there any particular aspect of your race or fitness levels in certain areas, anything like that you worked on?

Holloway: Definitely. You know, I've always—I

don't want to say always—struggled, but the latter half of my race has always been something I want to work on. So now we kind of just sit back—since we have all this time—and now we're able to work on certain things in our race and my race pattern that otherwise we're not able to work with. So really just taking the time and pulling all of 2020 to really work on the later half of my race.

I was 22 years old [when the year began]. I got a little bit more wiser, a little bit more order in me. Now I'm able to really just sit back and figure out what is wrong, you know, what can I do to get better?

T&FN: That all makes sense. I thought it was interesting that after you won the gold in Doha you said that you went through a brief period in the summer of 2019 where you felt like you had forgotten how to hurdle. You had an NCAA Championships for the ages, won in your Euro Circuit debut at the Gyulai Memorial with 13.16 and then obviously made the Worlds team at the USATF Champs. But then came the Paris Diamond League and a good time, 13.25. But talk about a loaded field! You placed 6th, which could not have boosted your confidence 5 weeks out from the World Championships. What did you mean when you said, "I just literally forgot how to run the hurdles"?

Holloway: Just in a sense that you practice so much but then you just forget what exactly is happening. I still remembered how to hurdle, but it just wasn't what Grant Holloway is used to, you know?

T&FN: What kind of conversations did you and Mouse have that got you into the right mental and

physical space for Doha?

Holloway: Uh, definitely, it was a lot of curse-out sessions and "I don't understand, he doesn't understand what I'm thinking, what I'm feeling." But it came to a point where we just kind of sat back and we both figured out what exactly makes me click. And at the point he kind of just let me "do me." It was like you get to the first hurdle as fast as you can, and then you just be Grant Holloway. So I kinda just took that with a grain of salt and I just let it be. [In the WC final] I just took off, I did my best ability and I just told myself I wanted to be the first one to the first hurdle. And from there I just let it roll.

T&FN: Quick story regarding perspective. You had won your World Champs semi in 13.10. Omar McLeod and Orlando Ortega had won the other semis. Having watched from the stands what you brought out of yourself to win three outdoor NCAA crowns, and even what you did to take two USATF 2nds, with three of those finals in fairly miserable conditions—though the in-stadium weather in Doha was good—I turned to my colleague Jeff Hollobaugh on my left in the press tribune and said something like, "OK, let's see what Holloway can do?" A European friend and colleague sitting to my right blurted, "Holloway?!" I said something like, "Let's see."

Your Doha doubter's perspective as a writer and commentator who spends a lot more time on the Diamond League circuit than Jeff and I get to was perfectly understandable. Nevertheless, you made me look good. Thank you. I just had a feeling after the semi.

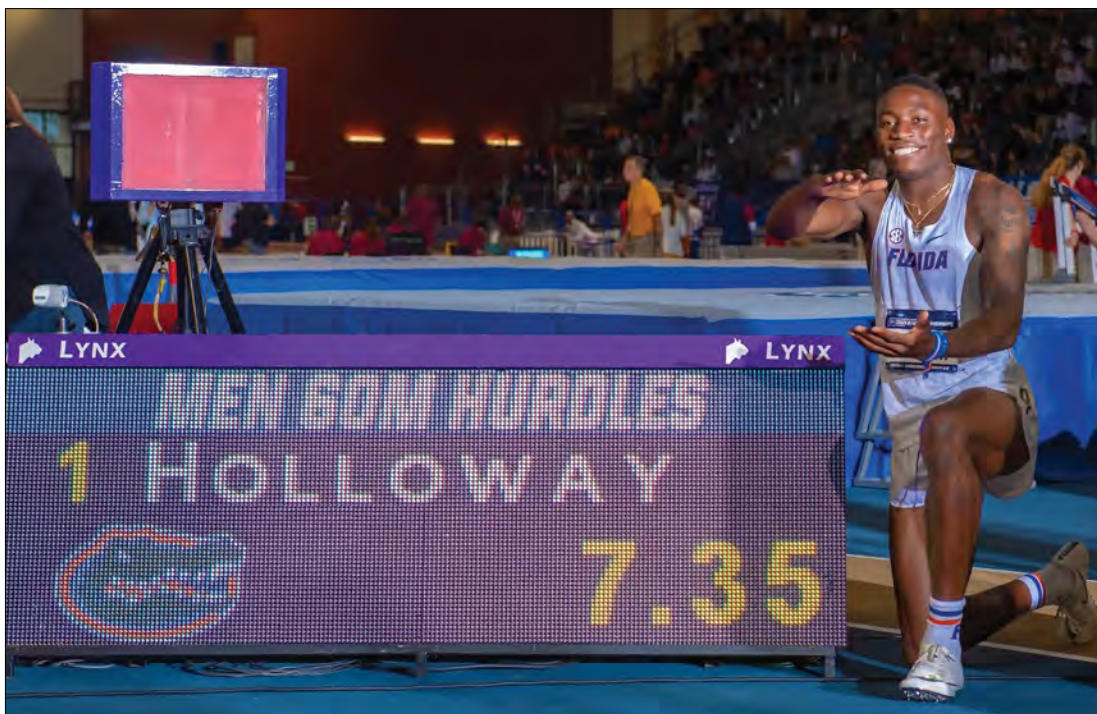
Holloway: You know, these are the things that I love to hear. Only because I firmly and strongly agree that the NCAA meet is a Diamond League in a sense. It's just you're a little bit younger. But I mean honestly, it was up to not just me but everybody in my circle to help me out at that meet. I couldn't have done it without my group, without my team. So my hat goes off—even to people like you saying I'm the favorite and actually telling people who the F that I am. Definitely.

T&FN: U.S. fans have seen you coming for a while. I wrote a story about you in the spring of 2015. You had just clinched T&FN High School Indoor Athlete Of The Year honors with a season that included a junior-class 60H record, 7.59. You already had the soph-class record, you had high jumped 6-11½, and pushed Noah Lyles all the way in a 300 matchup among other eye-opening achievements. Then came your busy, mind-blowing Florida career. After 5 seasons as an ironman, did this unlooked-for almost-off year confer some benefit?

Holloway: Absolutely. Like you said, you've been following me so much throughout my whole career, so you know how much I've been going through. So definitely to have this year off, just this year to recuperate and this year to figure out who I am as a person trying to figure out who is Grant Holloway, has been a wonderful experience. You know, I owe it to my mom, I owe it to my dad about everything going on right now.

T&FN: Your training group, too, I imagine. Who exactly is out there laboring alongside you with Mouse?

Holloway: Yeah, so my training group is full of everybody. We've got [200] Collegiate Record holder Kyra Jefferson, we've got 2-time NCAA [400H] champion Eric Futch and runner-up in



Grant Holloway's brilliant junior campaign at Florida found him becoming the fastest collegian ever both indoors and out.



2016 T.J. Holmes. You got [high hurdler] Eddie Lovett [NCAA runner-up in '13]. You have so many people that are great people and ready to get active about it with you.

T&FN: You had a few races in 2020: One indoor meet where you claimed the 60H world lead for a third consecutive year. Then a couple of domestic outdoor tuneups in July and two Euro appearances 5 days apart in August, Székesfehérvár and the Monaco DL. You ran good times—13.19 and 13.22—but might have gone faster with more meets to find your rhythm. Why did you head home instead?

Holloway: I think I was just trying to do the

bare minimum just to make sure that adidas was happy with me. And then also to make sure that I knew where I was with this year with everything going on. As you know, COVID stopped meets, canceled meets, put-together meets. It was just so—I mean, to open up my season at 7.38 and then COVID hit and then still be able to run 13.1, I think I was in great shape. I think I just wasn't in hurdle shape.

What I mean by that was I just didn't have enough hurdle races under my belt. I had a lot of practices, I had a crap ton of practices, but just not enough reps against people, against great competition—people like Orlando Orte-

ga, Sergey [Shubenkov], Omar [McLeod]. I didn't have nobody next to me. So I think just this year I have to take it as a win. I mean, even though I did get 4th and 2nd [in the Euro races], I still got to see it as a win and then just move forward from it.

T&FN: Did you have ongoing dialog with adidas about their expectations and when they had been met?

Holloway: Yeah, honestly it was just to a point where they wanted me to run some meets. If I was able to run they wanted me to run. So at the end of the day they were happy with me, I was happy with them. I think we came to a compromise on, "OK, we're in a pandemic but then at the same time let's figure out how we can still be able to make money on both our parts."

T&FN: You have said Mouse will decide if you will ever long jump again. Any further developments on that question?

Holloway: [Laughing] No, probably not. Long jump, unless I can make a shit-ton of money with it, is in the books, man. I really wish I could, I had fun with it, but I mainly did it for my team just to make sure everybody was happy.

T&FN: I'm guessing as you approach your first full pro season, an Olympic season, your driving purpose will be to try to establish yourself as a dominant 110 hurdler. What about the future, though? Might you mix in other events, the 100, 200 or even the 400? Fans would probably be intrigued by, say, a "hurdlers 400 clash," Grant Holloway, Karsten Warholm and Rai Benjamin.

Holloway: That would be one for the books. I am definitely open to it. I am definitely excited to even run against those people. But then at the main point, I'm at the point in my life where I want to be the best hurdler in the world. I already proved it on a world level. I want to be able to prove it on the indoor world level and the outdoor Olympic level. And

then once I complete that saga, or that trip, I'll be able to flirt around with other events and figure out what I want to do.

T&FN: I noticed this past weekend you worked with some kids at a USATF Run/Jump/Throw event. Tell me a little about that: fun day?

Holloway: It was absolutely fun, being able to give back to your community and take care of the kids. It's been one of the great experiences. Just with COVID everybody's been in the house doing other things and there's just been a lot of irregular stuff going on. But to have that has been amazing.

How About The 400 For Grant Holloway?

Grant Holloway's versatility is manifest. He U.S.-Ranked in the long jump twice, in 2017 and '18. Before that he claimed top 8 positions on the prep indoor list of '15 in 7 events, including the 500. In '16 he led the prep undercover 500 list at 63.35. At the '19 NCAA Champs he unleashed a 43.74 leg, putting him in the meet's top 10 ever.

But our records show no open 400 time for Holloway. Ever. So we had to ask: when was the last time he ran one?

T&FN: Do you have any optimism regards meaningful change this time?

Holloway: Hmmm. Last time I've run an open 5, it's been a while. The last time I ran an open 4—I couldn't even tell you, boss.

T&FN: So our info is pretty good. [Ed: Not perfect, though. It has been brought to our attention that at the 2013 New Balance Indoor Nationals Holloway won the frosh 400 with a time of 49.18 and later 48.68 outdoors in 2015, possibly his last open quarter.] A 43.74 split might come in handy for the U.S. 4x4 squad at the Olympics next summer. I think you'd need to post an open 400 time to be considered. You wanted to run one in 2020. Is that still on the agenda for '21?

Holloway: Yeah, you gotta have an open mark. Definitely, I'm looking forward to 2021. I think I'm at the point where I'm really looking forward to figuring out where my fitness level is. I feel like I'm in good shape now but it's not even December yet. I think the next best thing is to figure out exactly what is going on [with the still nebulous competition picture], and then from there figure out how I want to do it and just take it from there, just take it from Grant's heart and let it happen.

T&FN: Do you run the kids through drills or what exactly?

Holloway: Just making sure they're just having fun. We did hurdle drills, we did bounding, we did sprint stuff. It's just one of those things where if they were smiling and having fun and able to get out of the house I think it was a win in our book.

T&FN: You have clarified your immediate athletic goals. What about more philosophic aspirations for leaving your mark in this sport and for the sport?

Holloway: I would definitely say just being able to be the best person I can be. There's a lot going on in the world right now. I mean, you have a change of presidents, you have just a lot of stuff going on in general. So really my thing is just to be the best person I can be, no matter if that's on the track or off the track—just figuring out ways to be a better Grant. Making people smile is definitely on my list, but then really just figuring out how, you know, what makes people tick? What makes people smile? What makes people do this or that? So I definitely would say that's what I'm up to now, what I'm trying to do. But then other than that boss, honestly, it's just trying to, be the best person I can be and just figure out how I can smile myself.

T&FN: What is it that has always made you smile about track & field, if I may put it that way?

Holloway: That this sport is evolving. You know, you think about my generation. I was the first person to run sub-13 on the collegiate level. And then you think about people like Noah Lyles, Rai Benjamin, Michael Norman, you've got the next generation coming up and it not just only makes me smile, but, you know, it makes everybody just feel good about everything going on in the world.

T&FN: It certainly brightens my outlook in a difficult time. You mentioned Noah Lyles. As Virginians, you guys were right there in the same prep era as, I don't know, rivals, friends. What was your relationship as high schoolers?

Holloway: I would say we were definitely rivals only because we ran the same event at States, but definitely he's a good friend to me. I mean, I can call him up right now. I can tell them, "Hey, I'm coming to Clermont, let's have a drink" or something like that and he'll definitely be there for me. So, you know, it was just one of the things where you figure out friends and some people stick for you for ages and then some people don't.

T&FN: Noah and Josephus went pro right out of high school. You obviously chose the collegiate option. Can you tell me a little bit about what benefits you feel you gained from having taken that route?

Holloway: I definitely only chose college because it was just something I really wanted to do. I never really once thought I wanted to do something else. I always knew I wanted to go to college. We had different dreams, we had different aspirations, but from there we kind of just chose what we thought was best for us. So it's to the point, you do what's best for you. You gotta be able to live selfishly in that aspect, and you gotta be able to figure out, "OK, this is what I want. This is what I want to do."

T&FN: You turned pro with one collegiate year remaining. Where do you stand academically?

Holloway: Oh, yeah, I'm close. I got another semester just to wrap it all up and then from there I think I'll be able to walk across the University of Florida stage and be happy.

T&FN: I saw that your girlfriend, Katie Chronister—a Gator softball pitcher, by the way—graduated from Florida last December. Was she a year ahead of you in school?

Holloway: Well, she's just absolutely just a bomb. She's just the bomb. She's just super-smart. One of the things where she's just very happy with everything going on, you know. We're the same age, but she's just—the classes that she's taken, the way that she's carrying herself, the way, just everything. And she just flies through and now she's able to graduate a year early.

T&FN: With your busy schedule did you get to see many of her softball games?

Holloway: Yeah. I'm always able to make a softball game, especially if at home. I haven't made it to any away ones, but this year they're able to have them safely and if everything works out well I definitely wanna be able to go to one.

T&FN: So she's still playing for Florida?

Holloway: Yeah. They gave everybody who was affected by COVID an extra year.

T&FN: That's cool. I sorta knew that generally though I don't have a clear picture of exactly what all the various conferences and schools are doing with that extra year.

Holloway: Yeah, exactly. It's good to ask.

T&FN: You mentioned, I think after Doha, that staying calm and not psyching yourself out—maybe psyching yourself out is not the word, but you said staying calm in order to perform to the best of your ability is a skill you are still working to master. What's your strategy for doing that?

Holloway: Just being able to see everything as a blessing, you know. Last year I came, I was 21 years old competing in my first World Championships and I put too much pressure on myself when it was my first Diamond League. It was my first—you know what I mean?

T&FN: Absolutely. Your first step on to the pro stage.

Holloway: Just to be able to go through and say, "Look, you're one of the people that's in the norm and you're able to get out in world and see different things." So really, I kind of just sat back and just realized like, "OK, look, I'm blessed."

T&FN: Yeah. I would say you are, but you've worked hard for it. That's for sure. Any good stories from that first brief foray out on the elite circuit last year? Or this year even though your time in Europe was short this past summer?

Holloway: Not really. I ain't got nothing for you, boss. I kinda just, I'm very plain Jane, I follow the rules, I do what I gotta do. And then from there I just go with the flow.

T&FN: Nothing wrong with taking care of business. At home, then, when you're not training or recovering between sessions what do you do to relax?

Holloway: Right. Yeah. I kinda sit in front of the TV and play the game almost like everybody else. I figure out ways to just get better on the game. And then I like to play with some of the guys and we all just link up, be able to play, have fun.

T&FN: What's your game right now?

Holloway: Right now we're playing Call of Duty Cold War. That's the biggest thing that's out right now. Everybody's on it. I mean, we're all just having a good time figuring out ways to get better. It just came out about two weeks ago so everybody's still trying to figure out the little norm or the tricks to make you win. Right now I've been enjoying it so much and I'm looking forward to continue playing it.

T&FN: Much like hurdling. Any final observations on life or anything I should have asked?

Holloway: You did a great job. I really enjoyed talking. You asked all the questions I pretty much want to talk about, you know? □

Track News Digest

DAVID SHEETS



Jenna Hutchins' fast 5000 gave her not only the national HS Record, but also the Junior & Youth standards.

THAT'S RIGHT, we're writing this in December and in this weirdest of years there's still significant track & field action to talk about, outdoors as well as in.

Jenna Hutchins Claims Prep 5000 Record

Columbia, South Carolina, December 11—Of the handful of distance events on offer at the Five & Dime meet, the most notable moment came from one of the youngest entrants. Jenna Hutchins (Science Hill, Johnson City, Tennessee) paced herself impressively to a 15:34.47 High School Record in the 5000.

The 16-year-old junior followed a rabbit through the 1600 in 4:56 and took the lead a half-lap later. She cruised past 3000 in 9:21.18 and 3200 in 9:59. With a lap to go, she had Mary Cain's '13 outdoor mark of 15:45.56 in the bag, but needed to kick hard to get under Katelyn Tuohy's absolute best of 15:37.12, set indoors in '18.

Hutchins finished with a 70.63 and needed much of that strength to hold off fast-closing pro Annie Rodenfels, who clocked 15:35.18 in 2nd.

Said the new recordholder, "Coming on that last 100 and having the crowd cheer me on and being able to watch that clock, I didn't really know I had the record until right after I crossed the line."

Hutchins also broke Tuohy's American Youth (U18) record and is now No. 3 among

U.S. Juniors (U20) all-time. Though well short of the indoor best of Wisconsin's Sarah Disanza (15:20.57 in '14), she sliced 2.48 off the official outdoor record of Molly Huddle (15:36.95 in '03)

In the men's mile, Victor Palumbo of the Central Park TC became member No. 563 of the U.S. sub-4:00 club, timing 3:58.79. As a statistical aside, note that that makes him the latest-in-the-year inductee of the club ever.

One Last Shot For Crouser

Manhattan, Kansas, December 04-05—Ryan Crouser had already put up one of the great seasons in shot putting history, but when the K-State Winter Invitational rolled around he said, "I really wanted to get a meet in!"

In enquiring about having his client in the indoor meet, Crouser's agent said, "He feels he is in good shape and would like to take a shot at the World Record. Can we get him in?"

In he was, and while he didn't claim the WR, he did produce history's No. 3 undercover mark, 74-1 (22.58), coming up just a hair shy of Randy Barnes's standard of 74-4¼ (22.66). That was throw No. 4 in a series which also featured marks of 71-2¾, 71-10¾, 71-5½, 72-¾, and 72-1 (21.71, 21.91, 21.78, 21.96, 22.58, 21.97).

Kansas State senior Tejaswin Shankar cranked out a nifty pentathlon score of 4343, an Indian Record which moved him to No. 10 on the all-time world list and No. 4 among collegians.

The Track Meet Men: Grijalva & Jenkins

San Juan Capistrano, December 04-05—Northern Arizona's Luis Grijalva may be a man without a country, but he is not a man without skills.

Reportedly, the Guatemalan federation says he's not theirs, even though he was born there, so they won't be counting his 13:16.75 at The Track Meet as a national record. He's lived in the U.S. since he was a baby and while he hopes to be a citizen eventually, right now he's in the "No Olympics for you!" gray area.

On the last few laps of a barnburner 5000 in a pop-up meet where some of America's best distance talents gathered, no one was checking passports. Grijalva blistered his final lap in 57.12 to get past Oregon's Cooper Teare (13:17.13) and Drew Hunter (13:17.55 PR), moving to No. 5 all-time among collegians, with Teare going to No. 8. Two others broke 13:20: Britain's Sam Atkin (13:18.57 PR) and Eric Avila (13:18.68 PR).

"I was happy to just tag along," said Grijalva. "It's been like 8 months since our last race."

The 10,000 the following night was just as revelatory, as Eric Jenkins put an exclamation mark on the fact that he is healthy and training well. In his first 25-lapper in 4 years, Jenkins, 29, proved that he will be a force in the future, clicking off an impressive 27:22.06 that sliced 26 seconds off his best and made him the ninth-fastest American ever.

"Feeling very lucky and grateful for everything to come together," he said.

The Nike Bowerman veteran proved his kick is still crisp, beating a crowd to the line that included Aussie Patrick Tiernan (27:22.55 NR), Edward Cheserek (27:23.58), and Atkin (26:26.58 PR). Joe Klecker impressed with a PR 27:35.57 in 5th, while Iowa State's Wesley Kiptoo made himself the No. 10 collegian ever at 27:37.29.

The Track Meet Men's Results

5000: 1-1. Luis Grijalva' (NnAz-Gua) 13:16.75 NR (5, 5 C);

2. Cooper Teare (Or) 13:17.13 PR (8, 8 C; 2, 2 AmC);

3. Drew Hunter (adiTinE) 13:17.55 PR; 4. Sam Atkin' (GB) 13:18.57 PR; 5. Eric Avila (adi) 13:18.68 PR; 6. Charles Philibert-Thiboutot' (Can) 13:22.44 PR; 7. Sam Parsons' (Ger) 13:32.41; 8. Brian Barraza (adi) 13:33.43 PR.

11-1. Matthew Centrowitz (NikBowTC) 13:32.92; 2. ***Cole Hocker (Or) 13:32.95 PR (6, 7 AJ); 3. Tom Anderson' (GB) 13:34.05 PR; 4. Kasey Knevelbaard (Wesf) 13:34.91 PR; 5. Drew Jordan (unat) 13:39.59 PR; 6. Cameron Griffith' (Aus) 13:39.80 PR.

10,000: 1-1. Eric Jenkins (Nik) 27:22.06 PR (9, x A);

2. Patrick Tiernan' (Aus) 27:22.55 NR; 3. Edward Cheserek' (Ken) 27:23.58 PR; 4. Atkin' 27:26.58 PR; 5. Joe Klecker (OnA) 27:35.57 PR; 6. Wesley Kiptoo' (IaSt) 27:37.29 PR (10, x C); 7. Hillary Bor (Hoka) 27:38.53 PR; 8. Robert Brandt (Gtn) 27:39.20 PR (4, 4 AmC); 9. Frank Lara (TracksmRR) 27:44.65 PR; 10. Connor McMillan (adi) 27:53.17 PR;

11. Girma Mecheso (unat) 28:03.95; 12. Zachery Panning (HansB) 28:04.32 PR; 13. Reid Buchanan (OnMamm) 28:07.62; 14. Alex Masai' (Ken) 28:11.05 PR; 15. Reed Fischer (adi) 28:12.53 PR; 16. Brogan Austin (TinE) 28:18.57 PR; ... dnf—Tyler Day (US).

II-1. Abdihamid Nur (unat) 28:12.06 PR; 2. Sydney Gidabuday (TinE) 28:15.41 PR; 3. John Reniewicz (BellL) 28:15.65 PR; 4. Simon Bedard' (Fra) 28:16.06 PR.

The Track Meet Women: Schneider & Houlihan

San Juan Capistrano, December 04-05—In a year of crazy distance times, the women's 10,000 at The Track Meet was exhibit 99. A dozen women broke 32:00, led by Rachel Schneider's debut 31:09.79, a mark that made the 29-year-old Georgetown alum No. 8 American ever.

Schneider needed every bit of it to get past newly-minted pro Weini Kelati, 2nd in 31:10.08 (an Eritrean NR). Wisconsin alum Alicia Monson finished 3rd (31:10.84 for No. 10 U.S. all-time), followed by Kenyan Sharon Lokedi (31:11.07 PR), Natosha Rogers (31:12.28 PR) and Kellyn Taylor (31:15.65). In this year of major shoe upgrades, results read like Christmas come early, with PRs going to 20 of the first 21 finishers.

"It was a different event for me," said Schneider, who has recovered from a summer Achilles injury. "Definitely one I'm excited to keep trying."

The previous night's 5000—while not the parade of PRs the 25 lapper turned out to be—still provided a solid race, with Nike Bowerman's Shelby Houlihan (15:02.55) and Elise Cranny (15:04.88) dominating. Third went to Emily Lipari (15:17.72 PR) ahead of Dana Giordano (15:18.06 PR).

Said Houlihan, "It was harder than I felt like we wanted it to be, but given it's December and

we're in the middle of training... We just came out here to check that box and get an Olympic standard and did what we needed to."

The Track Meet Women's Results

5000: I-1. Shelby Houlihan (NikBowTC) 15:02.55; 2. Elise Cranny (NikBowTC) 15:04.88; 3. Emily Lipari (adi) 15:17.72 PR; 4. Dana Giordano (BAA) 15:18.06 PR; 5. Laura Galván' (Mex) 15:29.14; 6. Eleanor Fulton (unat) 15:32.98 PR; 7. Kim Conley (NBal) 15:36.05; 8. Heidi See' (Aus) 15:36.68; 9. Roisin Flanagan' (Adams) 15:38.27 PR; 10. Stephanie Garcia (NBal) 15:39.80.

II-1. Allie Schadler (unat) 15:33.47 PR; 2. Sarah Lancaster (Paras) 15:34.28 PR; 3. Grace Barnett (OnMamm) 15:37.60 PR.

10,000: I-1. Rachel Schneider (UArm) 31:09.79 PR (8, x A);

2. Weini Kelati' (Eri) 31:10.08 NR; 3. Alicia Monson (OnA) 31:10.84 PR (10, x A); 4. Sharon Lokedi' (Ken) 31:11.07 PR; 5. Natosha Rogers (HansB) 31:12.28 PR (11, x A); 6. Kellyn Taylor (HokaNAZ) 31:15.65 PR; 7. Danielle Shanahan (HokaNAZ) 31:22.86 PR; 8. Stephanie Bruce (HokaNAZ) 31:24.47 PR; 9. Erika Kemp (BAA) 31:35.63 PR; 10. Elaina Tabb (BAA) 31:45.27 PR;

11. Olivia Pratt (HansB) 31:48.72 PR; 12. Galván' 31:54.63 PR; 13. Lauren Paquette (HokaNAZ) 32:01.25 PR; 14. Maggie Montoya (RRP) 32:06.87 PR; 15. Vanessa Fraser (NikBowTC) 32:09.57 PR; 16. Elly Henes (NCSt) 32:12.06 PR; 17. Gwen Jorgensen (NikBowTC) 32:12.12; 18. Amy Davis (HansB) 32:13.54 PR; 19. Cailie Logue (IaSt) 32:19.37 PR.

II-1. Maria Mettler (AF) 32:09.37 PR (10, x AmC);

2. Carrie Verdon (TBou) 32:09.82 PR; 3. Sam Palmer (unat) 32:11.92 PR; 4. Jess Watychowicz (CSTC) 32:11.93 PR;

5. Fiona O'Keeffe (NM) 32:12.28 PR; 6. Maya Weigel (PenDC) 32:14.23 PR.

Mayer Highlights Rush Of Late Decathlons

High quality 10-event marks simply weren't a thing for the first 11 months of the year, but December was uncommonly entertaining south of the Equator.

Felipe dos Santos kicked things off at the Brazilian Championships in São Paulo on the 12th and 13th, raising the yearly world lead to 8364...

That lasted only a week, until WR holder Kevin Mayer embarked on a quest to get his Olympic qualifier out of the way. To do that he traveled to a special meet set up on the small Indian Ocean island of Réunion on the 18th and 19th.

Looking for an 8350 or better, the 28-year-old Frenchman started solidly with a 4350 first day built on marks of 10.68, 24-3½ (7.40), 53-1¼ (16.20), 6-5½ (1.97) & 48.87. "I'm a little rusty," he told *athle.fr*. "I had a great day with some friends, I had a lot of fun. I'm a little below what I usually do, but it is December, so there's no need to panic."

He picked up 4202 points on Day 2 off marks of 13.54, 165-1 (50.32), 15-3 (4.65), 222-0 (67.66) & 4:47.74 for a world-leading 8552 total.

"I'm relieved," he said. "It takes off a lot of pressure and a burden has been lifted." As a safety valve, he guarded against a deadly no-height in the vault—which had knocked him out of the World Champs in Doha—by opening at 14-3¼ (4.35), more than a meter under his PR.

Mayer, who normally sports a healthy head of tousled hair, showed up shaved bald for the 1500 as a tribute to retiring teammate Gaël Querin...

The final big 10-eventer came a day after Mayer's exploit, as Aussies Ash Moloney and Cedric Dubler turned in PR scores in Brisbane. The 20-year-old Moloney had a 4-PR first day, headed by his 45.82 in the 400, the third fastest time in deca history. He went on to raise the national record to 8492. Behind him, 25-year-old Cedric Dubler raised his best to 8367.

World Youth Girls Javelin Record

Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia, March 07—Yes, March, as this one really fell through the cracks. Way back when, 16-year-old Serbian Adriana Vilagoš tossed the 500g spear out to 225-7 (68.76) for a World Youth (U18) Record. That added a big chunk to the old standard, 216-2 (65.90) set by Elína Tzénggo of Greece in '19. □

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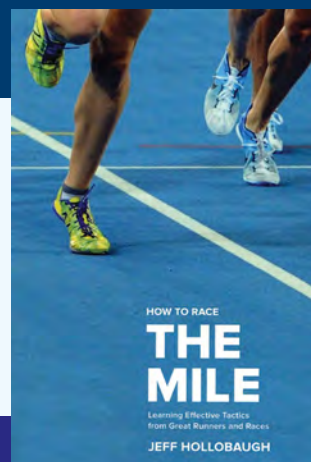
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HOW TO RACE THE MILE

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Jenna Hutchins Emerges As The Fastest HS 5000 Runner Ever

DAVID SHEETS



Still only 16, Jenna Hutchins replaced Katelyn Tuohy as HSR holder by running 15:34.47.

by Tanner Cook

IN A YEAR that has marred track meets, cross country races, major road racing events and most everything else of the sort, Science Hill High School junior Jenna Hutchins has served as a shining example of resilience and perseverance.

Hailing from Johnson City in the northern corner of mountainous East Tennessee, Hutchins has been setting cross country courses and tracks ablaze since August, when she ran the year's fastest 8-lapper, a 9:49.83 that's worth 9:53.26 for 2M, putting her at No. 6 on the all-time list.

Hutchins, who won't turn 17 until March, then went on to establish a symbolic cross country best and a national track record within a 3-week span from November 21 to December 11, breaking standards held by former New York prep great Katelyn Tuohy on both occasions.

The first came in a harrier race (where there

are no records) where she won by 58 seconds to become the first prep ever to break 16:00 in a cross country 5000, traversing the Huntsville, Alabama, course in 15:58.42.

"The cross country one honestly meant a little bit more to me than the others," Hutchins says. "Ever since I was younger, I had a little more experience on the track and I've had to take a couple of steps up in cross country the last few years to be ranked higher than I have been. It was honestly a big surprise to me and it meant more because of that reason."

Hutchins' second effort, winning the women's 5000 at the Five & Dime Athletics Meeting in South Carolina was arguably even better. Her 15:34.47 earned her not only the national HS Record, but also the American Youth (U18) best and American Junior (U20) outdoor standard.

"I was grateful for the opportunity to get to run," says Hutchins, just the ninth high schooler to break 16:00 on the track (see sidebar). "I was originally supposed to go to California and when that one didn't work out, I was a little

worried." (Continued below)

"It's unbelievable and Molly Huddle has been an inspiration of mine ever since I started running," Hutchins says of the woman she succeeded as AJR setter. "I loved following her success and actually on Instagram, she responded to one of the posts and told me 'Congratulations!'"

When looking at the best HS girls of the past decade—runners such as Tuohy, Mary Cain, Alexa Efraimson and Elise Cranny—among their shared attributes is a long, fluid stride with particular attention to a high knee drive.

Hutchins is a little bit different, though. "When I went to a running camp up in New York, they did a lot of testing on stride rate and efficiency," she explains. "We did find that I don't have as much of a knee drive. It is helpful more on the track towards the end of the race because I have an extra burst of speed. Having that quicker and more efficient stride does play a big role."

Her closing speed also sets her apart, and

Science Hill coach Anthony Jones knows something about speed, having been a 10.10 performer himself and a Big 10 century champ for Illinois.

Hutchins likes to train in Brooks, particularly the Hyperion Tempo model this past season, but she wore Nikes in both of her big races: Zoom Victory XC 3 and Matumbo 3.

At an earlier stage in her career, Hutchins balanced running with soccer, being part of an elite youth soccer group when she lived in Texas for 2 years. Playing midfield, her speed was superior to everyone else on the pitch even then.

"[My team] was one of the highest level soccer programs in Austin," Hutchins says. "It's different in terms of competition level because there are so many more teams and more advanced coaching."

Obviously, her talent had been stewing for many years. "Sometimes, my mom and dad would take me over to Indian Trail and we'd just walk the track and that's kind of what intrigued me because I'd see other people running," she says. "My first race that I ever did was the Crazy 8s 300-yard run and I was really nervous. I think I was 6 and I came in 3rd. The adrenaline and rush was so much fun and I was just hooked after that."

Hutchins didn't conclude her frosh track campaign in style, instead finishing last in the Brooks PR Invitational mile. She fell with 600m to go trying to make a move to the outside and get the lead. She still crossed the line in 4:57.64.

"Everyone got packed up and we started out at a slower pace than normal," she says. "When I fell, I knew that was pretty much it for that one."

"The lows are there, but it's all part of the process. It provided me a lot of opportunity to grow and I think it helped me mature a lot as an athlete and person."

The '19 state cross country meet was another low point along her career path.

Hutchins—who was declared the individual winner during her freshman year after the 1st-place finisher was disqualified for going off course—had the lead over halfway through the

The All-Time HS Girls 5000 List

With her new national record, Jenna Hutchins became only the ninth prep ever to break the 16:00 barrier in the 5000. The all-time top 10 (** = soph; * = junior, all others are seniors; i = mark made indoors):

1.	15:34.47	*Jenna Hutchins	(Science Hill, Johnson City, Tennessee)	2020
2.	15:37.12i	**Katelyn Tuohy	(North Rockland, Thiells, New York)	2018
3.	15:45.46	*Mary Cain	(Bronxville, New York)	2013
4.	15:48.91	Emily Sisson	(Parkway Central, Chesterfield, Missouri)	2010
5.	15:50.32	Cayla Hatton	(Phillips, Andover, Massachusetts)	2012
6.	15:52.88	Caitlin Chock	(Granite Bay, California)	2004
7.	15:55.75i	Brie Oakley	(Grandview, Centennial, Colorado)	2017
8.	15:55.94	Wesley Frazier	(Ravenscroft, Raleigh, North Carolina)	2013
9.	15:56.84	Fiona O'Keeffe	(Davis, California)	2016
10.	16:00.4	Cathy Schiro	(Dover, New Hampshire)	1985

'19 competition but ended up 3rd.

"Going into that race, I knew that I wasn't feeling 100%," Hutchins says. "I was not mentally prepared for that race. I knew in the back of my mind that I wasn't feeling well and I let that override the situation. My legs were dead and on top of all of that, I fell at the end."

She continues, "I started working with Joan Hunter out of [Virginia's] Loudoun Valley after my freshman year and that's where I started to take off. She has more knowledge than anyone else. Her son Drew and the whole family has had a lot of success. We were very grateful because it's not every day a coach like that is willing to coach someone."

Hutchins has become fast friends with Bentley Grace, a wheelchair athlete with cerebral palsy who has qualified for the Boston Marathon.

In mid-December, Grace and her family traveled more than three hours from their home in Georgia to South Carolina to watch Hutchins break the 5000 record.

"Having Bentley there meant more to me than the record," Hutchins says. "It just shows

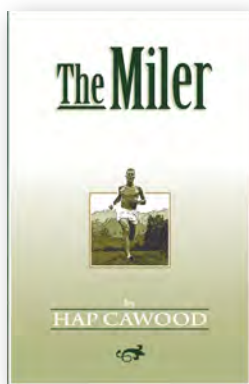
how special the running community is and how there are such great people in the world. She says that they would have driven for days to watch me run. She's very special to me... we exchanged numbers and we text all the time. It's an inspiring moment."

Some have called Hutchins the best athlete ever to come out of Science Hill, which is saying a lot for a high school that has spawned such athletes as '66 Heisman Trophy quarterback Steve Spurrier and current major league pitcher Daniel Norris.

What can be confidently said of Hutchins is that she's Science Hill's most accomplished athlete while still a high schooler.

"I think it's a tremendous honor to have people say that," Hutchins says. "I'm really lucky to have all the support that I do as well. The faculty, staff, friends and family that I have at Science Hill are always cheering me on."

"It's a huge honor to represent them. It not only helps to be a good athlete, but to be a good person off the track as well because I think that's even more important. I'd much rather be a better person than have all the accolades." □



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World Road Digest

NOT TO TAKE ANYTHING AWAY from all the fine athletes involved, but the ongoing late-season crush of fast distance times continues to buttress the question, “How much of it is the shoes?” A synopsis of end-of-year international road goings-on:

Kandie Destroys Half-Marathon WR

Valencia, Spain, December 06—To anybody who gaped over Geoffrey Kamworor’s reduction of the half-marathon World Record by 17 seconds in September of ’19, Kibiwott Kandie’s answer in Valencia (December 6) amounted to a metaphorical, “Here, hold my drink.”

The 24-year-old Kenyan—silver medalist at the World Half-Marathon Champs who came in with three sub-59:00 times on the year—knocked 29 seconds off Kamworor’s 58:02 standard and had to fend off world champion Jacob Kiplimo and two others who might have claimed the WR had Kandie faltered. Behind the winner’s astounding 57:32, Ugandan Kiplimo (57:37) and Kenyans Rhonex Kipruto (57:49) & Alexander Mutiso (57:59) claimed all-time marks Nos. 2–4. Philemon Kiplimo (Kenyan, no relation to Jacob) clocked in at 58:11, history’s No. 6 time.

After Kipruto’s younger brother Brayvin Kosgei set a scorching early pace—13:37 through 5K, 27:25(!) through 10K—6 men hammered on together. 15K went by in 41:10 with 5 still in it and then the following 13:33 split including a Kandie surge to the solo lead in the 18th kilo at last divided the group.

Jacob Kiplimo was far from done and caught up to Kandie around 19K. The world champ briefly took the lead as he motored past 20K in 54:42 (18 seconds under the world best) with Kandie a second back.

Kandie still had go in his legs, though. And how! He passed Kiplimo to cover the last 1097m to the finish in 2:49—61.6 lap pace for 2¾ circuits were he to have been running on a track.

“I was very motivated for this race after losing at the World Half-Marathon,” Kandie said. “At that race, I pushed a lot but Kiplimo won so I said to myself, ‘In Valencia, I have to beat Kiplimo and break the World Record.’”

The contest was also a win for adidas in the “super shoes” arms race. Kandie wore the German firm’s new Adizero Adios Pro, which looks to be every bit as much a performance booster as Nike’s armament.

In her half-marathon debut, Ethiopian track stand-out Genzebe Dibaba, also shod in adidas, won the women’s race in 65:18 from Kenyan Sheila Kiprotich (65:39).

Emily Sisson’s 67:26 in 5th improved her hold on No. 2 on the U.S. all-time list, missing Molly Huddle’s American Record by just a second.

Valencia Half Results

Men—1. Kibiwott Kandie (Ken) 57:32 WR (old WR 58:01 Geoffrey Kamworor [Ken] '19);

2. Jacob Kiplimo (Uga) 57:37 NR (2, 2 W) (54:42—faster than unofficial WR of 55:00); 3. Rhonex Kipruto (Ken) 57:49 PR (3, 3 W); 4. Alexander Mutiso (Ken) 57:59 PR (4, 4 W); 5. Philemon Kiplimo (Ken) 58:11 PR (6, 6 W);

6. Kelvin Kiptum (Ken) 58:42 PR; 7. Bravin Kipkoge (Ken) 59:37 PR; 8. Julien Wanders (Swi) 59:55; 9. Carlos Mayo (Spa) 60:06 PR; 10. Gabriel Gerald Geay (Tan) 60:40.

(leader pace: 13:37, 13:48 [27:25], 13:45 [41:10], 13:32 [54:42], 2:50] (best-ever mark-for-place: 1–6)

Women—1. Genzebe Dibaba (Eth) 65:18 PR (debut); 2. Sheila Kiprotich (Ken) 65:39 PR; 3. Senbere Teferi (Eth) 65:51; 4. Dorcas Tutoek (Ken) 67:18;

5. Emily Sisson (US) 67:26 PR (AL) (2, 2 A).



In a fabulous half-marathon season that finished off with a WR, Kibiwott Kandie began with a win in the RAK race back in February.

Valencia Marathon Rewrites Year Lists

At the Valencia Marathon Evans Chebet and Peres Jepchirchir led a revival of the recent flood of boggling times that had stalled since COVID-19 gripped the world early this year.

On an all-time list basis, Jepchirchir’s 2:17:16, history’s No. 5 performance, topped the bill. Effecting a 6:34 improvement of her PR, the world half-marathon champ ran away from Joyciline Jepkosgei with a knockout 15:53 split in the 35–40K segment. Her margin over ’19 NYC winner Jepkosgei was 1:24 as 4 others also broke 2:20: Helaria Johannes (2:19:52 Namibian Record), Zeineba Yimer (2:19:54), Tigist Girma and Degitu Azimeraw (both 2:19:56).

Chebet, 32, cut 2 minutes from his best as he kicked away to a 4-second win from Kenyan compatriot Lawrence Cherono on the carpet runway to the finish, 2:03:00–2:03:04. Chebet moved to No. 6 on the ATL and the race placed 5 atop the year list: including Berhanu Legesse (2:03:16), Amos Kipruto (2:03:30) and Reuben Kiprop (2:04:12). All set PRs.

Valencia Marathon Results

Men—1. Evans Chebet (Ken) 2:03:00 PR (WL) (6, 7 W); 2. Lawrence Cherono (Ken) 2:03:04 PR (7, 9 W);

3. Berhanu Legesse (Eth) 2:03:16 (x, =13 W); 4. Amos Kipruto (Ken) 2:03:30 PR (11, 15 W); 5. Reuben Kiprop (Ken) 2:04:12 PR; 6. Gelmisa Chalu (Eth) 2:04:53 PR; 7. Abel Kirui (Ken) 2:05:05; 8. Abebe Degefa (Eth) 2:05:15; 9. Leul Gebrselassie (Eth) 2:05:29; 10. Philemon Rono (Ken) 2:05:37; 11. Oqbe Kibrom Ruesom (Eri) 2:05:53 NR; 12. Ayad Lamdassem (Spa) 2:06:35 NR; 13. Felix Kandie (Ken) 2:06:47; 14. Hamid Ben Daoud (Spa) 2:07:03 PR; 15. Abdi Nageeye (Neth) 2:07:09.

(best-ever mark-for-place: =3, 4, 8–15)

Women—1. Peres Jepchirchir (Ken) 2:17:16 PR (WL) (5, 5 W);

2. Joyciline Jepkosgei (Ken) 2:18:40 PR; 3. Helaria Johannes (Nam) 2:19:52 NR; 4. Zeineba Yimer (Eth) 2:19:54; 5. Tigist Girma (Eth) 2:19:56; 6. Degitu Azimeraw (Eth) 2:19:56; 7. Ruti Aga (Eth) 2:20:05; 8. Joan Chelimo (Ken) 2:20:57 PR; 9. Birhane Dibaba (Eth) 2:23:07; 10. Fancy Chemutai (Ken) 2:24:27 PR.

(best-ever mark-for-place: 6–8)

Fast Halves In New Delhi

New Delhi, India, November 29—It’s no accident of nature that blistering road times were once again the story at a major international. This time, the New Delhi Half-Marathon featured the No. 2 women’s performance ever, as Ethiopia’s Yehualaw Yalemzerf scorched a 64:46 for the win over World Champs marathon gold medalist Ruth Chepngetich, who moved into the all-time top 8 with her 65:06.

Yalemzerf, who won the bronze at October’s World Champs Half, didn’t break away till the final 2K “This was more than I expected,” she said. “My plan was to push hard with two kilometers to go and that helped my fast time, and it was also very nice weather.”

Marathon WR holder Brigid Kosgei ran with the lead pack until she limped off to a DNF clutching her leg in the eighth kilo.

A close finish highlighted the men’s contest, with the top 3 within 3 seconds of each other. Amdework Walelegn of Ethiopia edged teammate Andamlak Belihu 58:53–58:54, with Uganda’s Stephen Kissa 3rd in 58:56.

New Delhi Results

Men—1. Amdework Walelegn (Eth) 58:53 PR; 2. Andamlak Belihu (Eth) 58:54 PR; 3. Stephen Kissa (Uga) 58:56 PR; 4. Muktar Edris (Eth) 59:04 PR; 5. Leonard Barsoton (Ken) 59:10; 6. Tesfahun Aknew Guangul (Eth) 59:22 PR; 7. Victor Kiplangat (Uga) 59:26 PR; 8. Shadrack Korir (Ken) 59:51; 9. Abrar Osman (Eri) 60:10; 10. Avinash Sable (Ind) 60:30 NR.

(best-ever mark-for-place: 4–5)

Women—1. Yehualaw Yalemzerf (Eth) 64:46 PR (2, 2 W); 2. Ruth Chepngetich (Ken) 65:06 PR (=8, =9 W);

3. Yeshaneh Ababel (Eth) 65:21; 4. Irene Cheptai (Ken) 66:43 PR; 5. Tsehay Gemechu (Eth) 67:16; 6. Eva Cherono (Ken) 67:18 PR; 7. Nazret Weldu (Eri) 69:47 PR; 8. Mimi Belete (Bhr) 69:50; 9. Gudeta Bekelech (Eth) 69:54. □

U.S. Road Digest

KEIRA D'AMATO has been one of the big U.S. surprises of 2020. After 10 years away from the sport, two kids and a career as a realtor, at 36 she has become one of the country's top distance runners. In her latest exploits she scored an AR for 10M and then staged a marathon breakthrough.

10M American Record For D'Amato

Washington, D.C., November 24—Against a field that could be counted on one hand at a mini-event called the Up Dawg Women's 10M, Keira D'Amato chugged to an American Record for a women-only race, her 51:23 taking down the 52:12 that Janet Bawcom set in '14. (Molly Huddle holds the mixed-race record of 50:52 from '18.)

She handily topped OT Marathon runner-up Molly Seidel (53:36), despite a dizzy spell with a half mile left. "You just kind of calm yourself," she said. "Like, 'OK, I'm running 10M as fast as I can, this isn't going to be easy.' But when I could see the finish line, I just sprinted as fast as my legs could take me."

Up Dawg Results

10M: 1. Keira D'Amato (unat) 51:23 women-only AR (old w-o AR—52:12 Janet Bawcom '14) (inferior to mixed-race AR 50:52 Molly Huddle '18) (5:12, 5:01 [10:13], 5:13 [15:26], 5:16 [20:42], 5:06 [25:48], 5:06 [30:54], 5:08 [36:02], 5:04 [41:06], 5:08 [46:14], 5:09);

2. Molly Seidel (Sauc) 53:36 PR; 3. Emily Durgin (UArm) 54:03 PR; 4. Susanna Sullivan (CAR) 54:22 PR;... dnf—Bethany Sachtleben (unat).

Hall Runs No. 2 U.S. Marathon Ever

Chandler, Arizona, December 20—Sarah Hall produced the fastest marathon of her life (and the No. 2 race in U.S. history) to win The Marathon Project, a bold experiment in a year like no other.

Hall—who in London 10 weeks earlier ran her old best of 2:22:01—crushed a 2:20:32 in an attempt to break Deena Drossin's '06 American Record of 2:19:36. Hall, guided by elite pacemakers, had been on pace for the first half (1:09:38) before losing ground.

"It was a tough race," said the 37-year-old Californian. "I was hoping to run a little faster than that, but it's a good PR and No. 2 all time in the U.S. I should be happy with that. The competitor in me is a little bit like, 'Aw.' I wanted to run faster, but maybe next time."

Kellyn Taylor passed halfway with Hall but slipped back and was caught by Keira D'Amato near 22M. D'Amato took a massive 11-plus minutes off her best with a 2:22:56 to become No. 8 in U.S.



Sara Hall came within 30 seconds of becoming only the second American woman under the marathon's 2:20 barrier.

history. Taylor finished next at 2:25:22, ahead of Emma Bates (2:25:40). The next 19 finishers set PRs, with a total of 12 women under 2:30.

This perfect storm of marathoning took place on a stretch of road with turnarounds at each end to form a perfectly flat 4.26M loop. Zero wind and temps in the high 30s/low 40s (3-6° C) helped, as did, most assuredly, new shoe technology.

The Marathon Project Women's Results

1. Sara Hall (Asics) 2:20:32 PR (AL) (2, 2 A) (1:09:38/1:10:54); 2. Keira D'Amato (unat) 2:22:56 PR (7, 11 A);

3. Kellyn Taylor (HokaNAZ) 2:25:22; 4. Emma Bates (AsicsIdDP) 2:25:40; 5. Natasha Wodak' (Can) 2:26:19 PR; 6. Andrea Ramirez' (Mex) 2:26:34 PR; 7. Paige Stoner (ReebB) 2:28:43 PR; 8. Ursula Sanchez' (Mex) 2:29:11 PR; 9. Sarah Inglis' (GB) 2:29:41 PR; 10. Bria Wetsch (BouU) 2:29:50 PR;

11. Julia Kohnen (HokaNAZ) 2:29:58 PR; 12. Samantha Roecker (SchuyA) 2:29:59 PR; 13. Dakotah Bullen (MnDE) 2:30:38 PR; 14. Alia Gray (RootsRP) 2:30:41 PR; 15. Cristina McKnight (RootsRP) 2:31:23 PR; 16. Brenda Flores' (Mex) 2:32:18 PR; 17. Alexis Zeis (RootsRP) 2:32:40 PR; 18. Beverly Ramos' (PR) 2:33:09 NR; 19. Whitney Macon (Tracksm) 2:33:21 PR; 20. Susanna Sullivan (unat) 2:33:27 PR.

Marathon Project Men: 7 Sub-2:10 Americans

Depth-wise, the men's race through the Gila River Indian Community came off as even more spectacular than the women's, with Syracuse alum Martin Hehir—who balanced his training with working in a COVID ICU as a med school student—becoming No. 7 American all-time at 2:08:59. He led 6 others under 2:10, with 2nd going to Noah Drodgy (2:09:09—No. 9 all-time U.S.),

followed by another former Syracuse runner, Colin Bennie (2:09:38).

Scott Fauble (2:09:42), Ian Butler (2:09:45), Scott Smith (2:09:46) and Mick Iacofano (2:09:55) also broke the 2:10 barrier. Of the 40 men's finishers, 29 set lifetime bests.

It was the deepest marathon in U.S. history. The old standard—4 Americans under 2:10 in the same race—happened at the '12 Olympic Trials.

Hehir, 28, gradually moved up through the tight pack, passing the half in 1:04:29. He did not take control until the final loop, and eventually put together a 10-second win over Drodgy.

"It felt pretty smooth for most of the race," said Hehir, who had finished 6th in this year's Trials race. "The pacing was amazing. It was pretty easy to sit on Frank [Lara] and Mason [Ferlic] and let them do all the work. I started to fall apart in the last couple of miles there, but I was able to hold it together."

The Marathon Project Men's Results

1. Martin Hehir (ReebB) 2:08:59 PR(AL) (7, x A); 2. Noah Drodgy (RootsRP) 2:09:09 PR (9, x A);

3. Colin Bennie (ReebB) 2:09:38 PR; 4. Scott Fauble (HokaNAZ) 2:09:42 PR; 5. Ian Butler (BouH) 2:09:45 PR; 6. Scott Smith (HokaNAZ) 2:09:46 PR; 7. Mick Iacofano (IdDP) 2:09:55 PR; 8. Ben Preisner' (Can) 2:10:17 PR; 9. Nathan Martin (GreatL) 2:11:05 PR; 10. CJ Albertson (Brk) 2:11:18 PR;

11. Emmanuel Roudloff' (Fra) 2:11:20 PR; 12. Colin Mickow (SCTC) 2:11:22 PR; 13. Reid Buchanan (MamTC) 2:11:38 PR; 14. Kevin Lewis (unat) 2:12:02 PR; 15. Cam Levins' (Can) 2:12:15; 16. Tyler Jermann (MnDE) 2:12:40 PR; 17. Rory Linkletter' (Can) 2:12:54 PR; 18. Mike Sayenko (CNW) 2:13:34 PR; 19. Wilkerson Given (AttTC) 2:13:40; 20. Brendan Gregg (HansB) 2:13:49; 21. Shadrack Biwott (HansB) 2:13:51. □

Analysis: The Wavelight Effect

DANIEL MEIJMANN



Letesenbet Gidey had nothing but electronics for company over the last 5 laps when she broke the 5000 World Record in Valencia.

by A. Lennart Julin

IN MANY WAYS 2020 became a lost year for international track & field—but still it turned out an extraordinary record year for one event category: long distance running on the track.

Because 2020 provided almost a “Grand Slam” in World Records as new top marks were achieved in the 5000, 10,000 and 1-Hour for men as well as the 5000 and Hour for women. It might even have been a complete set of new records if Sifan Hassan’s 10,000 attempt in Hengelo had not been thwarted by really bad weather.

What makes this record avalanche extra exceptional is the fact that all the previous marks had withstood challenges for quite some time: Tirunesh Dibaba’s 14:11.15 and Dire Tune’s 18,517m since ‘08, Haile Gebrselassie’s 21,285m since ‘07, Kenenisa Bekele’s 26:17.53 since ‘05 and his 12:37.35 since ‘04.

One major answer could be that with no global championship athletes were able to focus wholeheartedly on record chasing. However, that theory is in conflict with the fact that all the standing records mentioned above actually were set in years where there were either Olympic Games (‘04 & ‘08) or World Championships (‘05 and ‘07).

What could then explain why 2020 became such a record year for the distance runners?

The first answer that comes to mind is of course the new shoe technology. There is no doubt that the new shoes give an advantage—because otherwise World Athletics would not have found it necessary to first issue new detailed rules in January and then in July further tighten them for track running.

However, we still don’t really know the magnitude of the advantage the new shoes are

going to have on track running as it wasn’t until this summer that these shoes left the prototype stage and became available on the market.

However, there was also another new tool available to the record hungry long distance runners in ‘20: the Wavelight System, which consists of light emitters positioned along the curb of the oval. These emitters could be programmed to provide a “moving light wave” at any pace asked for.

The idea as such is not at all new (the ITA pro league, for example, used lights as far back as ‘73). However, it still had not previously been used in federation-sanctioned track running for the very simple reason that it was explicitly forbidden in the WA rules (144.3):

“... the following examples shall be considered assistance and are therefore not allowed: (a) Pacing in races by persons not participating in the same race, by athletes lapped or about to be lapped or by any kind of technical device.”

This rule is actually still in force but last year the WA Council added the following paragraph under section 144.4, (Assistance Allowed): “For the purpose of this Rule, the following shall not be considered assistance, and are therefore allowed:

“Electronic lights or similar appliance indicat-

ing progressive times during a race, including of a relevant record.”

As the old rule against “pacing... by any kind of technical device” remains intact it appears that the “moving lights” device was viewed by the decision-makers as mainly a new service for the spectators (on-site and via TV) and not as an assistance of any significance to the athletes.

A new information tool to help spectators better understand and appreciate the efforts of the athletes was also given as the reason for the rule amendment by WA President Sebastian Coe when asked about the new technology at a press conference in October.

Furthermore this view was indirectly echoed by the English-speaking commentators on the international broadcast from the WR meet in Valencia as they discussed whether the athletes during the race really could see the moving lights so well that they could take in and act upon the visual pace information provided (see photo).

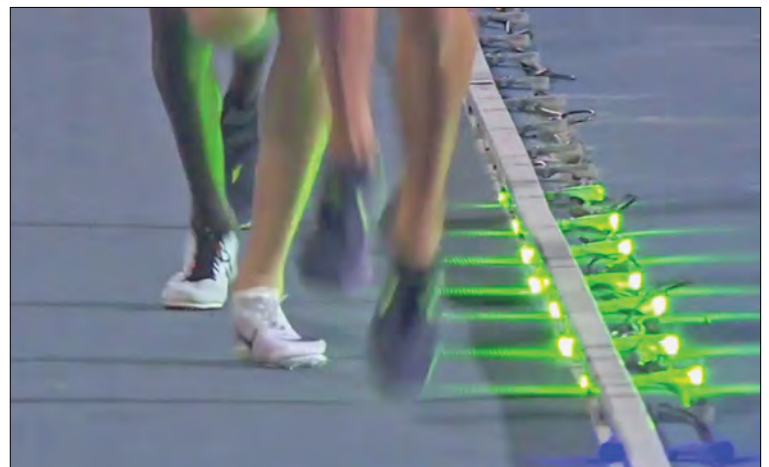
Whether the athletes in Valencia were indeed “assisted”—and if so to which extent—by the moving lights can be analyzed by comparing the splits en route to the old and new records.

Following find a chart listing (almost) all 200-meter splits for Bekele in his 26:17.53 WR and for Cheptegei in his 26:11.00 WR. The splits have mainly been determined by frame-by-frame analysis of the race videos and are accurate to the 10th. A few splits are missing for the simple reason that the official video at those moments didn’t show the record runner.

Please observe that these splits from start to finish are for Bekele and Cheptegei personally, i.e. not for the pacemakers leading in the early stages. So the times are not identical to the official splits issued which were for the leading runner.

Also note that the official splits for Cheptegei’s laps 23 and 24 were simply wrong: the official clock stopped about 1.5 seconds early at 9200m and the erratic 62.92—61.73—63.87 official version for laps 22-23-24 in reality was a well balanced 63.0—63.2—62.4 (Table 1).

The most telling columns are those for the half laps. Cheptegei had 47 out of 50—all but the



Answer to the question whether the athletes could see the lights!

Table 1

	Cheptegei	Bekele	differential	Cheptegei	Bekele	Cheptegei	Bekele
200	32.4	?	—	32.4	?	—	—
400	64.0	62.5	+1.5	31.5	?	64.0	62.5
600	1:35.3	?	—	31.3	?		
800	2:07.0	2:08.2	-1.2	31.7	?	63.0	65.7
1000	2:38.8	2:40.6	-1.8	31.8	32.4		
1200	3:10.0	3:12.5	-2.5	31.2	31.9	63.0	64.3
1400	3:41.5	3:42.1	-0.6	31.5	29.6		
1600	4:12.9	4:13.2	-0.3	31.4	31.1	62.9	60.7
1800	?	?	—	?	?		
2000	5:15.7	5:16.4	-0.7	?	?	62.8	63.2
2200	?	?	—	?	?		
2400	6:18.8	6:19.5	-0.7	?	?	63.1	63.1
2600	6:50.3	6:50.6	-0.3	31.5	31.1		
2800	7:21.9	7:21.8	+0.1	31.6	31.2	63.1	62.3
3000	7:53.4	7:53.3	+0.1	31.5	31.5		
3200	8:24.5	8:24.3	+0.2	31.1	31.0	62.6	62.5
3400	8:55.6	8:55.5	+0.1	31.1	31.2		
3600	9:27.0	9:27.0	0.0	31.4	31.5	62.5	62.7
3800	9:58.6	9:58.3	+0.3	31.6	31.3		
4000	10:30.3	10:30.4	-0.1	31.7	32.1	63.3	63.4
4200	11:01.8	11:01.3	+0.5	31.5	30.9		
4400	11:33.2	11:33.0	+0.2	31.4	31.7	62.9	62.6
4600	12:04.8	12:04.7	+0.1	31.6	31.7		
4800	12:36.3	12:36.7	-0.4	31.5	32.0	63.1	63.7
5000	13:08.0	13:09.4	-1.4	31.7	32.7		
5200	13:39.3	13:39.9	-0.6	31.3	30.5	63.0	63.2
5400	14:10.6	14:11.1	-0.3	31.3	31.2		
5600	14:42.1	14:41.9	+0.2	31.5	30.8	62.8	62.0
5800	15:13.7	15:13.0	+0.7	31.6	31.1		
6000	15:45.1	15:44.7	+0.4	31.4	31.7	63.0	62.8
6200	16:16.7	16:16.6	+0.1	31.6	31.9		
6400	16:48.0	16:48.7	-0.7	31.3	32.1	62.9	64.0
6600	17:19.3	17:20.4	-1.1	31.3	31.7		
6800	17:50.6	17:52.3	-1.7	31.3	31.9	62.6	63.6
7000	18:22.0	18:24.0	-2.0	31.7	31.7		
7200	18:53.5	18:56.7	-3.2	31.5	32.7	62.9	64.4
7400	19:25.1	19:28.3	-3.2	31.6	31.6		
7600	19:56.5	20:00.6	-4.1	31.4	32.3	63.0	63.9
7800	20:28.0	20:32.7	-4.7	31.5	32.1		
8000	20:59.5	21:04.6	-5.1	31.5	31.9	63.0	64.0
8200	21:30.9	21:38.5	-7.6	31.4	33.9		
8400	22:02.4	22:09.0	-6.6	31.5	30.5	62.9	64.4
8600	?	22:40.8		?	31.8		
8800	23:05.4	23:13.1	-7.7	?	32.3	63.0	64.1
9000	23:36.8	23:45.1	-8.3	31.4	32.0		
9200	24:08.6	24:17.1	-8.5	31.8	32.0	63.2	64.0
9400	24:39.7	24:48.5	-8.8	31.1	31.4		
9600	25:11.0	25:20.5	-9.5	31.3	32.0	62.4	63.4
9800	25:41.0	25:49.8	-8.8	30.0	29.3		
10000	26:11.00	26:17.53	-6.53	30.0	27.8	60.0	57.1

first and the last two—at 31-point while Bekele’s portions Nos. 2–48 varied between 29.6 and 33.9.

That’s a pattern that appears counterintuitive as Bekele had experience running at that low-26:00 pace (improved his own WR by less than 3 seconds) while Cheptegei entered completely new territory pacewise (lowered PR by 37 seconds!).

Quite a lot of record setters have over the years been described as “metronomic” runners.

However, if you break down the races into laps or half-laps like above one could always see quite significant variations like those for Bekele above.

As a picture is said to say more than a thousand words a graph illustrating the lap times 1–25 for Cheptegei and Bekele probably is the best way to demonstrate how differently those two record performances came about.

In Graph 1 the 0-line indicates their re-

spective average lap time and the plus-values designate slower laps and the minus-values faster laps (in seconds).

So except for laps 1 and 25 Cheptegei never was more than half a second off his average and actually 19 of 25 laps fell within ± 0.3 of his average. His standard deviation for laps 2–24 was an astonishingly low 0.21.

Bekele, on the other hand, got for example 65.7 on lap 2 and 60.7 on lap 4 and ended up with a standard deviation for laps 2–24 of 1.00 s, i.e. almost 5X larger than Cheptegei’s.

Still, Bekele was just as aware as Cheptegei that the smartest way to set a record is to quickly settle into and then keep an even pace throughout the race. But still he—who indeed had an aura of “the perfectly tuned running machine”—even in his fastest WR race didn’t have any success in keeping a truly even pace.

Why? The simple answer is that also the very best are only humans and keeping running at exactly the same speed is more or less impossible—without assistance. Actually Bekele’s record race followed a very traditional pattern:

A slightly overambitious human pacemaker starts out too fast, then realizes that and slows down a little bit too much. Thus it takes a few laps to settle into the right rhythm. Then at the end of his mission the last pacemaker tires slightly so that when he steps off the track the protagonist actually feels the need to speed up.

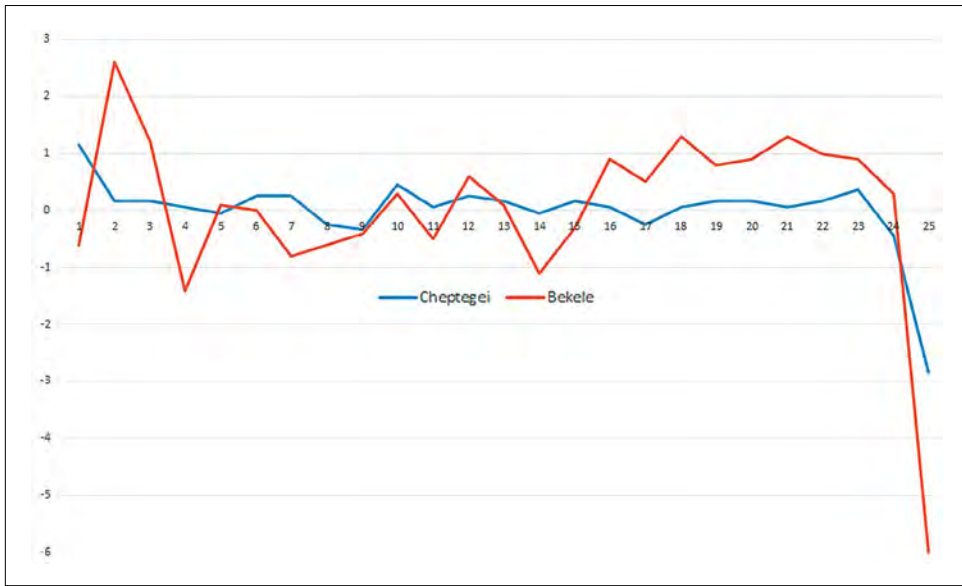
But running alone he after a while—due to increasing tiredness combined with the monotony—begins to slow down gradually until he realizes it is just a couple of laps left which rejuvenates him and he finishes with a last-lap sprint.

You can see this ebb-and-flow-pattern reflected in the variation of the splits for kilometers Nos. 2–9 during the 17 WR runs from Ron Clarke’s 27:39 in ’65 (first to break the 28:00 barrier) to Bekele’s 26:17 in ’05 (Table 2):

It is amazing how similar those spreads were from Clarke to Bekele despite the fact that the list contains 17 records by 14 men and that the record during that 40-year period was lowered

Table 2

athlete	WR	year	fastest/slowest	diff
Clarke	27:39.4	'65	2:43.5/2:50.0	6.5
Viren	27:38.35	'72	2:41.9/2:52.0	10.1
Bedford	27:30.80	'73	2:43.4/2:48.4	5.0
Kimobwa	27:30.47	'77	2:41.7/2:47.3	5.6
Rono	27:22.4	'78	2:42.1/2:51.0	7.9
Mamede	27:13.81	'84	2:41.8/2:46.6	4.8
Barrios	27:08.23	'89	2:41.9/2:45.9	4.0
Chelimo	27:07.91	'93	2:41.1/2:45.1	4.0
Ondieki	26:58.38	'93	2:39.6/2:45.0	5.4
Sigei	26:52.23	'94	2:39.7/2:45.1	5.4
Geb	26:43.53	'95	2:38.2/2:43.0	4.8
Hissou	26:38.08	'96	2:35.5/2:43.1	7.6
Geb	26:31.32	'97	2:37.1/2:40.6	3.5
Tergat	26:27.85	'97	2:36.0/2:40.7	4.7
Geb	26:22.75	'98	2:37.6/2:41.4	3.8
Bekele	26:20.31	'04	2:36.5/2:40.8	4.3
Bekele	26:17.53	'05	2:35.8/2:40.6	4.8
Cheptegei	26:11.00	'20	2:36.9/2:37.7	0.8



Graph 1

by more than 1:20.

If one excludes Viren's record—which was set in a championship final and not in a designated record attempt—the median is 4.8, the minimum 3.4 and the maximum 7.9.

So it was really a completely new paradigm we experienced when Cheptegei ran his 26:11.00 assisted by the previously prohibited moving lights technology: his spread was a mere 0.8—just a sixth of the median for the records set during the preceding 55 years.

Thus it is certainly not an understatement to say that the effect of the new technology on the new world record performance was profound. Rather it constituted what best could be described as a revolution.

Why has moving-light technology had such a revolutionary impact? Doesn't the runner still have to do the fundamental physical job of running the distance at record speed? Of course, but running records has never been just about the physical capabilities; it has always been a test of several other skills.

The crucial ones, if you want to succeed in setting new World Records:

- Daring to venture into the unknown.

- Having the ability to monitor your own pace at every stage of the race and act accordingly. "Am I running fast enough at this stage to get the record but still not so fast that I risk ending up unable to maintain the necessary pace for the whole distance?"

But haven't runners always had the advantage of live feedback on their progress, previously in the form of lap times called out to them?

Of course they could hear from trackside the calls for speeding up or slowing down. But then they still needed to process that information, to exactly determine the amount of acceleration/deceleration needed—and not least to successfully execute those pace changes!

The Part I examples of the previous record-setters clearly showed how tough that really is to achieve on the run, especially while you are moving at a pace bordering the known limits.

The feedback they now receive from the moving lights is something fundamentally different.

- It is continuously "online," not something happening with intervals of about a minute.

- It is visual and analog, not aural and digital.

- It also—without the runner even having to ask—automatically provides the answer to the question about the exact desired pace that ought to be followed.

The advantage of the moving lights therefore heavily influenced the scenario of the race in two fundamental ways:

- The pacemakers. They don't need to have the skill to by themselves find and keep the desired running speed. Instead they are steered right from the gun into the requested pace by a programmed device.

We all know from experience that something called "perfect pacemaking" is an illusion. More often than not it ends up the other way around, i.e. the pace becomes either too fast, too slow or too erratic. Humans are human.

- The recordhunter. When the pacemakers have stepped off the track the runner is still not left alone during the second half with his thoughts and the increasing pain. Instead he

continues to be guided by a device that he in advance knows will guarantee success (i.e., the desired record time).

Thus he won't have to worry about if he is doing enough. So no on-the-run analysis or decision making is necessary, rather the mind can focus completely on the task of keeping up with the lights.

The extraordinary level of assistance the moving lights can provide is even stronger highlighted by the WR 5000 of 14:06.65 set by Letesenbet Gidey the same night in Valencia as Joshua Cheptegei's 10,000. Here is the table comparing Gidey's 200 splits with those of the previous WR, Tirunesh Dibaba's 14:11.15 in Oslo '08. (Table 3)

The differential column tells a true roller-coaster story. Dibaba was ahead by up to 3.5 seconds during the first two kilometers before the tide turned in the third where she rapidly fell far behind. The Gidey advantage continued to grow to almost 10 seconds in the fourth kilo before Dibaba hit a new gear and with a sub-2:10 last 800 ended up just 4.5 seconds behind.

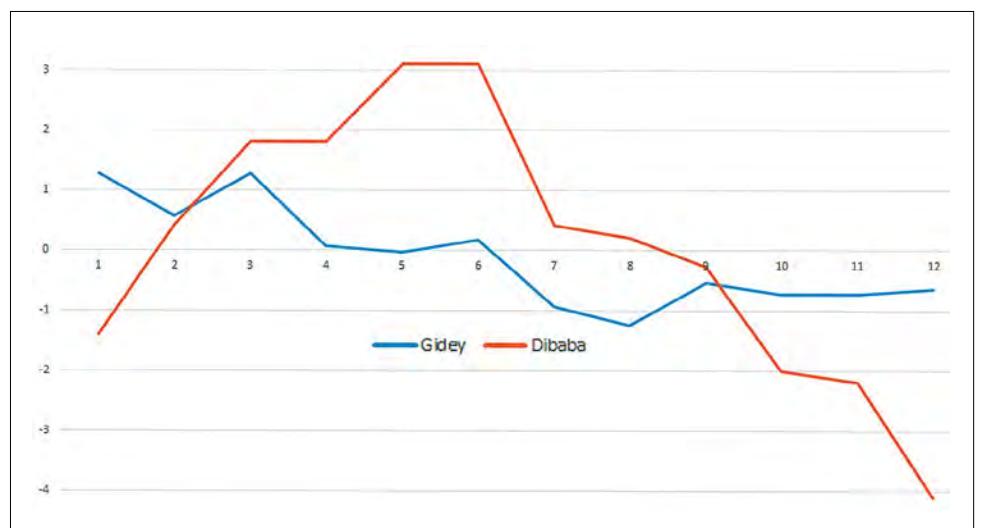
The lap-time graph for this race is even more revealing as to the advantage the moving lights provided to the recordhunter (Graph 2):

Dibaba's pace was even more erratic than Bekele's had been: She had only 3 of 12 laps within ± 1 second of her average while it was the other way around for Gidey: Just 3 of 12 laps outside of ± 1 second of her average.

But the graph also in another way significantly differs from that of the 10,000. While Cheptegei as shown kept the same metronomic pace all through his race Gidey gradually sped up. She actually started out at a pace that was clearly slower than the average needed to break the record. How come?

The answer is that—despite being a kind of pace never before seen in a major record attempt—it was the pace the moving lights were set at according to the wishes made in advance by Gidey! And it was no secret:

Before the race started the TV commentators revealed that Gidey had asked for the device to start out with 3 laps at 69 (i.e. 14:22 pace) followed by 3 at 68 before switching to 67s. The outcome: 3 laps at 68.3–69.0, followed by 3 at 67.7–67.9, followed by 6 at 66.5–67.2.



Graph 2

Table 3

	Gidey	Dibaba	differential	Gidey	Dibaba	Gidey	Dibaba
200	34.4	33.2	+1.2	34.4	33.2		—
400	69.0	66.7	+2.3	34.6	33.5		62.5
600	1:43.4	1:39.9	+3.5	34.4	33.2	69.0	66.7
800	2:17.7	?		34.3	?		65.7
1000	2:51.7	2:48.4	+3.3	34.0	?	68.3	68.5
1200	?	3:23.6		?	35.2		64.3
1400	4:00.7	3:58.3	+2.4	?	34.7	69.0	69.9
1600	4:34.8	4:33.1	+1.7	34.1	34.8		60.7
1800	5:08.5	5:08.2	+0.3	33.7	35.1	67.8	69.9
2000	5:43.0	5:43.9	-0.9	34.5	35.7		63.2
2200	6:17.2	6:19.4	-2.2	34.2	35.5	67.7	71.2
2400	6:50.8	?		33.6	?		63.1
2600	7:25.1	7:30.6	-5.5	34.3	?	67.9	71.2
2800	?	8:04.1		?	33.5		62.3
3000	8:31.9	8:39.1	-7.2	?	35.0	66.8	68.5
3200	9:05.2	9:13.5	-8.3	33.3	34.4		62.5
3400	9:38.4	9:47.4	-9.0	33.2	33.9	66.5	68.3
3600	10:12.0	?		33.6	?		62.7
3800	10:45.6	10:55.2	-9.6	33.6	?	67.2	67.8
4000	11:19.2	11:28.5	-9.3	33.6	33.3		63.4
4200	11:52.6	12:01.3	-8.7	33.4	32.8	67.0	66.1
4400	12:26.1	12:34.5	-8.4	33.5	33.2		62.6
4600	12:59.6	13:07.2	-7.6	33.5	32.7	67.0	65.9
4800	13:33.0	13:38.9	-5.9	33.4	31.7		63.7
5000	14:06.65	14:11.15	-4.5	33.7	32.3	67.1	64.0

This is smoking-gun evidence proving how the moving lights system was used to directly guide the pacemakers as well as Gidey herself and thereby provided a significant and crucial assistance never before available.

Because rather than—as said in the rules—“...indicating progressive times during a race, including of a relevant record”—the system showed the times the recordhunter personally had asked for.

That could be seen as counterproductive if the main purpose really had been to enhance the experience for the spectators/viewers. Because that would have been best achieved if the lights had indeed—as the rule implies—moved at the (average) speed of the existing record.

That would have provided some extra excitement as the spectators/viewers—rather than seeing the athletes just following the lights from start to finish—would have experienced a “record hunt.” Especially so under the provision that Gidey—despite the lack of personalized light assistance—had dared (and managed) to follow the unorthodox pacing plan.

Because then she would have fallen clearly behind in the early stages losing ground on the first laps, being some 2.5 seconds behind halfway, then beginning to reduce the gap but still not catching up with the theoretical even-paced record until after 8½ laps. After that she would have gradually built the 4.5-second cushion she had on the record at the finish.

This example also illustrates that there is no simple answer to the question of what kind of “enhanced spectator experience and excitement” the moving lights actually can and will contribute.

Consider these points:

- In Valencia the sole purpose of the races was for one designated athlete in each event to break the WR. Now both succeeded but if not—i.e. if the protagonist had not been able to keep up with the lights—the technology lap after lap would have signaled “failure” even if the athletic achievement in itself would have been absolutely brilliant.

- As a WR is “the best performance ever” the by far most common outcome of any competition is not breaking the record. If we look at the distance records broken in 2020 they had all stood unchallenged for over a decade. So the extremely exclusive prospect of a successful WR attempt is unlikely to build growing and lasting spectator appeal.

Rather it ought to be the head-to-head competition aspect that we should focus on if we want to promote our sport towards a wider audience. It is the true races that provide excitement because different skills and tactics create different scenarios resulting in different—often surprising—outcomes.

- Would this technology contribute to more exciting head-to-head action? Unfortunately not, as what makes racing exciting is that runners frequently take the initiative along the way by varying the pace with the aim of influencing the final outcome to their own advantage. Such action is not compatible with a preprogrammed one-size-fits-all pace.

Such “interference” would instead probably pacify athletes by discouraging them from the risks/chances connected with taking the initiative along the way. Something similar to what we are used to seeing during the first

three kilometers of a typical Diamond League 5000: all the main contenders are content to just follow the pacemakers and no one is even contemplating rocking the boat during those first 7½ laps.

- The Valencia women’s 5000 pace was tailor-made for one single athlete. If there had been another athlete of similar ability but a slightly different talent profile (i.e., preferring a faster early pace) that athlete would actually have been put at a disadvantage by the moving lights!

Would that have been fair? And if the lights instead had been programmed according to the wishes of the other competitor would that have been fair to Gidey? So with a focus on providing fair competitions, the use of moving lights pacing is questionable.

It is a tool of assistance for events that have the character of solo exhibitions rather than competitive races. But is really more exhibition and less racing the way forward if we want to make our sport more attractive?

Of course the odd WR attempt exhibition can add extra spice—it certainly did in a year like 2020 when there were no championships and almost no opportunities for elite head-to-head encounters—but it is hard to see that as a concept to build a long term viable more attractive sport upon.

Just think about these very likely future scenarios:

Runner X wants to attack Cheptegei’s 26:11.00 and therefore asks for the moving lights to be set at a steady pace of 62.74 per lap—just a 10th of a second faster than Cheptegei’s average. Runner X then before the start *knows* for a fact that if he manages to follow the moving lights from start to finish he is assured to break the record by the small but safe margin of 2.5 seconds.

And if that record attack was successful the next record hunter will of course ask for a 62.64-pace and so on.

Thus no future recordhunter will need to have any race plan other than “Follow the lights!” Also all spectators/viewers will know that the monotonous even-pace-script will be strictly adhered to from the gun and that nothing will happen along the way unless of course the main runner fails to keep up with the lights.

With this electronic pacing the recordhunter won’t need any skilled human pacemakers (so that profession will become redundant)—not even for drafting. Cheptegei demonstrated that in Valencia when he in the first half never stuck to the slipstream position behind the pacemakers.

Instead he most of the time lagged an extra meter or two behind the runner immediately in front of him. Cheptegei’s game plan was to follow the green lights, not to shadow the pacemakers. This was clearly demonstrated by the immediate further widening of the gap back to Cheptegei when the last pacemaker speeded up slightly to move into the blue wave section some meters ahead of the green wave.

So Cheptegei obviously viewed the new electronic device as a more important assistance in his record quest than the traditional human pacemakers. □

Sweden’s A. Lennart Julin has for many years been noted as one of our sport’s premier number crunchers and insightful analysts of what numbers really mean. □

Seb Coe's Pandemic-Year Analysis

SCREENSHOT



The World Athletics President held forth on the 2020 season—challenges, issues and achievements—and plans for 2021.

by Sieg Lindstrom

ON THE MONDAY following WA's annual year-end Awards Program—a virtual affair for broadcast this time due to the pandemic—President Sebastian Coe graciously invited a few journalists who specialize in covering our sport to ask him questions, also by remote, about the challenging year now winding up and the Olympic year ahead. Questions, and answers less so, lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

Coe began with a brief statement:

I guess in March I was really keen to establish four key priorities. One, a very obvious one, was to get the athletes back into training as soon as possible and as safely as possible. Once you got them back into training, you obviously needed to get them back into competition.

We then had to expedite a review of our Olympic qualification system, which we did, and release any changes to the athletes as soon as we possibly could so that they knew where they stood. And you remember there was a slight alteration to that [for road athletes] towards the end of the year.

The third was continuing to—well really through force majeure—to reorganize the global calendar.

It's quite a complex matrix. You don't just lift the Olympic Games out of the landscape and everything else is normal. You know, there's a knock-on effect for up to 2 years—now arguably for 5 years and we'll still see major disruptions over the long haul.

The fourth, I guess, was that through the hand-to-mouth existence of managing an organization through a pandemic, I didn't also want to take our focus away from the strategic direction the sport needed to go in, which is

still the growth period. We had the four years of reform [after Coe's election to the WA Presidency] and steadying the ship.

The second phase that we were just starting at the beginning of the pandemic was really what I've always described as the fun bit, but it was really growing the sport.

And I think that if you look at how we sort of delivered across those four key areas, I'd thus like to touch on four core elements before I sort of throw it open to you. And that was that we did keep the show on the road and we did it in an heroic way from the athletes. You will be very familiar with the content that they were posting under the most extreme of circumstances, but [the athletes] really did focus on what they needed to do to keep their heads and their bodies together for that prolonged period while they were effectively away, often from public facilities, training facilities, and certainly competitions.

And we did an awful lot of the things around our virtual events, the Ultimate Garden Clashes, but also our comms teams here created an awful lot of online content: Fitter With Friends, Be Active.

We had all our member federation information sessions. We've had probably 20 of those. We've had all our federations on at any one stage being brought up to speed. So our consultation, our processes around that, have been phenomenally good. And that's something we really do want to hold on to.

We're focused. Look, you know, often people talk about creativity—and creativity in solving challenges—or solving problems. Halfway through this process, I realized, actually you need to talk to that statement. It's not just about the ability to solve problems. It's about the ability to find the right problems to solve.

I think our sport really did do that, and the right problems to solve for us were, first of all, making sure our finances were in good shape and the HQ was in good shape because if we weren't in good shape, then that would have a knock-on effect to the 214 federations whose destiny sort of sits in large part with us and our ability from the center to continue to help them deliver and develop the sport.

We also needed to keep a steady eye on the organization, and we still do, because it's pretty obvious that we've now gone into the second phase of this pandemic. OK, there's a vaccine on the horizon, but we take nothing for granted at all next year. So we need to remain as prudent as we possibly can be about the organization.

I think the third area here is that our resilience within the organization and beyond the organization with our relationships has really stood us in good stead.

I know for many the reform process—necessary and critical as it was given what I inherited in 2015 and which the sport had to struggle with—it's now pretty obvious that those reforms, painful and difficult as they were, have allowed us to be even stronger at this point.

What do I mean by that? The way we hire people, the decisions we make, the way we make those decisions, the processes, and the structures that sit behind that has actually given us a much securer footing to manage our way through the last few months. And particularly in the fact that all those stakeholders—whether they're the commercial partners or broadcasters or internally our member federations, our area associations, our executive boards, all our structures—we are working so much closer and more collaboratively than we've ever done.

And there's a great deal of trust in that space that when we do make a decision, it's a decision that is properly consulted on, and it's a decision that then is delivered and we're able to practically deliver it over the short haul.

And then the final area I'd like to talk about is, I guess, leadership and communication and how we've managed the sport through the pandemic. You know, it is my mantra that you don't communicate less in a crisis, you communicate more, you communicate more often, you communicate more liberally and you have to communicate more openly about what you're doing. And I think that communication has been met by a level of creativity that's been widely accepted and actually applauded outside of the sport over the course of the year.

And it's just worth remembering that throughout the course of this year, dealing with all the other things that we've had to, we've still launched a strategic plan that gives internal directions to the sport for the next 4 years. We have a world plan that is now in its creation, which will give the global blueprint. We released our first set of financial accounts and published the 10-year sustainability strategy.

And we quickly created health and safety criteria around keeping our athletes, meets and officials safe. And we delivered a World Championships [the Half-Marathons] against

probably one of the most complicated landscapes that we've ever had to deliver a championships.

I'm proud, I think the sport has led from the front. I think it's led from the top, and we're not afraid to make decisions—or sometimes challenge previous decisions in the light of current experience. I suppose on occasion we change decisions if we don't achieve what we set out to achieve, so that in a way is where I've got to.

For me the high point, one of the high points of the year, was the World Championships in Gdynia and getting that complexity across the line.

But I do have to say that if you'd said to me, certainly in April and certainly in May, that we would have had an awards program—OK, virtual, not face to face—celebrating anything at the end of this year, I think most people would have taken pretty good odds.

But we've had jaw-dropping performances from our athletes, we've had 8 Diamond Leagues and a whole cluster of Gold, Silver, and Bronze Continental Tours. We've had some major road races, including a World Championships and the awards program broadcast on Saturday night was really in its way, quintessentially, testament to the way the athletes and our coaches and our member federations and the sport have weathered that storm.

And I think we weathered it better than any Olympic sport. Probably I think only football is up there with us in the way that we have kept our sport front and center. So that's sort of how I would park the bus at this moment with a few weeks to go before the end of the year. In a year of massive uncertainty and disruption, there may still be adaptation and change that is forced upon us, but I think we're in good shape for next year. The organization is stronger than it's ever been. And I think the sport internally and externally is more emotionally connected than it's ever been. So that's where I'd leave it.

T&FN: Apologies for leading with a question that may sound like it has some negative spin. My intent is positive. Last week World Athletics announced the Diamond League format for 2021, including a return to a full 32-event slate. The hearts of many athletes and fans are gladdened. What would you say, though, to those who suggest the decision to cut events just a year ago was a failure of afthought, and that the decision to reverse it after just a partial [8-meet] DL schedule in 2020 supports that criticism? Something must have been amiss for the cut to have been reversed so quickly. What assurances can you offer for more careful consideration in the future? Athletes' dreams and livelihoods were at stake here.

Coe: I actually don't agree with a lot of the basis of that question, and I don't agree with it because I've never been somebody that hasn't been prepared to consult and discuss in the light of changing circumstance. I think that's what makes us a good organization. I think that's what makes us good leaders.

You know, the 120 minutes [DL meet timeframe] is a really good example. We looked at this in the early phases. Some of the broadcasters were very keen that we had a more intense, higher-paced event. Much of the work that we set out to do was to address some quite deep-seated issues. Those deep-seated issues haven't just disappeared.

But what has happened is that we have had

the opportunity because of the type of disruption, the type of truncated year [we've had in 2020]. It's not just been the athletes that have been off the roller coaster of competitions, it's many of our internal teams, it's many of the meeting directors in Diamond League, it's many of the broadcasters.

So, given that we did actually ultimately have a little bit more time on our hands, I wanted this year to be the opportunity to sit and review all sorts of things—and why not do that across Diamond League? And we've approached that in a very conciliatory, very open way, and I'm absolutely delighted that we've reached a really good consensus.

But it still does not in any way obviate the need to go on driving change. And we're not as brave as we should be here, and we need to be that. All the changes that I've talked about that we've done internally in the sport—the reforms, the safety and structures, the virtual events—we still, when it comes to changes around the field of play, have very, very strong conservative elements in our sport.

And I don't need lectures from anybody about the primacy of the athletes in that process. I, you know, in large part made my career and reputation as much on 1-day meetings and World Records as I did in winning major championships so I'm acutely conscious that the livelihood of our athletes is based in large part on the 1-day season. That is why I'm absolutely messianic about making sure those 1-day meetings are as good as they possibly can. No gray areas here. They have to be the best that is on at that moment in athletics. And up [until] some of the changes that we talked about and the process that I helped lead Diamond League through to get to where we are, that seriously wasn't the case.

So it's really important that we go on doing that because it's ultimately the athletes and their ability to build their profile around great one-day meetings—and not just half the 1-day meetings that are great. That's why, of course, Continental Tour was so important. Continental Tour, again, was the opportunity to put the bellows under 1-day meetings [that were] beginning to wither on the vine. And we now have a whole clutch of 1-day meetings that we didn't have a year and a half ago. So look, if the accusation is that I've spent the last year consulting and being able to get to change in light of some of the difficult experiences and circumstances we've had, I stand guilty.

Coe was asked if recent advances in shoe technology have made it impossible to compare distance marks on the road to those of the past. "Or is that more the inevitable march of time?" The questioner further asked if Coe is worried that "some athletes may still have an advantage based on their shoes, or that one or two brands might be superior to the others, or that some athletes might respond to this new technology better than other athletes?"

Coe: Look, the challenge you've got here is an age-old challenge, and there's nothing revolutionary or particularly revelatory about what I'm about to say. The challenge has always historically in our sport been the balance, the tradeoff, between technical innovation and development and codifications. And you know, I actually think if I jump to one element of

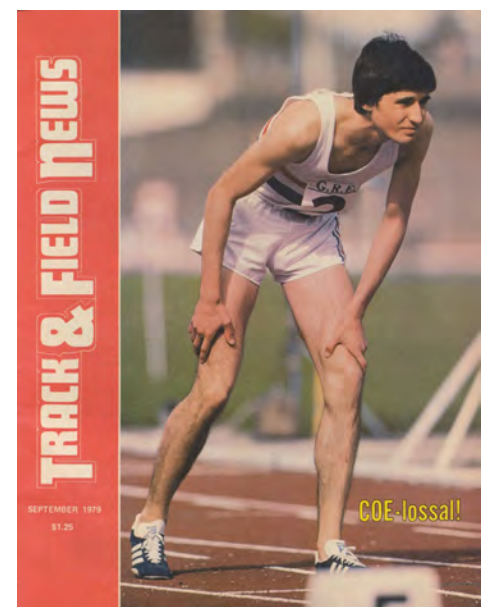
your question, I think we've got that balance about right.

It's been a tough year. It's been a tough year for everybody, but often we have to remember it's been a tough year for the shoe manufacturers, as well. You know, there's been a lack of competition out there for a lot of the testing [of new shoes]. And I would say to your specific question about whether, you know, whether we're sort of comparing apples and oranges, I actually think one of the issues this year that for me has been very clear—and I know this from my own experience as an athlete—is that a lot of the very high-quality performances that we were celebrating, particularly in the Award Show on Saturday night—had in large part been inspired by athletes who were just so goddamn pleased to get back into competition.

You know, I lost a year, over a year in the lead-up, effectively, to the '84 Games. I know what I felt like when I got back onto the track at the beginning of '84. Yeah, undercooked and without enough petrol. I was just so pleased. My instinct is in large part what has happened is the athletes have had a year [after] they've actually had their bodies screaming at them mentally and physically for the last four or five years where they've actually come off that roller coaster, they have mastered lockdown and this really difficult period wonderfully well, and they come back and they'd just been so excited about being back into combat.

I was in the stadium in Monaco for the first Diamond League. You know, it wasn't just Cheptegei's performance that night that was top drawer. You just saw it right across the board, across different disciplines, track and field.

So my instinct here is, Yeah, look, you know, shoe technology is with us and it always will be. We have to maintain rules and codifications. And again, going back to the question that Sieg asked about having some space and some time to put some process into some of these issues, these issues have been there for a long time. In



The first T&FN cover appearance for athlete Coe out of four in his brilliant career was on the September '79 issue.



Coe didn't mention but surely knows Peter Snell also set his first mile WR on a grass track.

a way the horse bolted the stable many, many years ago. What we've managed to do this year, if anything, is sort of still chase it around the paddock, but we have at least been able to put a structure around this that has allowed us to start a process and start checking, for instance, some of the shoes that are out there. We've never been in a position to do that. We'd never checked the spec on a prototype; now we do. So I think there is more system in there.

Have we arrived finally at where we're going to? The answer to that has to be no because [of an] advance in technology, particularly in the investment that the shoe companies want to put in. But if you look across the last few events, we've had a pretty reasonable cross section of shoe brands with athletes on that podium.

Coe was asked what the prospects are for Russian authorized neutral athletes (ANA) being allowed to compete in 2021.

Coe: You know, we have a very clear roadmap for reinstatement. We have a President that has just been elected to RuSAF. The journey to reinstatement is monitored and in large part driven by the [WA] Task Force, which has done an outstandingly good job, and I see no reason to deviate from that. And it's very clear. We will await, at some stage in March, the full reinstatement proposal, and when we've received it, we will then review the ANA status, but not until that is done. We are going to stick with this process right the way through. I do actually believe that we can continue to move in the right direction.

The last few months, openly, from the point where we got to towards the end of last year and around our last Council meeting in July

have been frustrating, but I am optimistic that a new leadership does really understand the need for change.

And without that change, we will not budge from the position that we're currently in. And we owe it to the clean athletes to make sure that they can deliver the review in a timely way and that the review has got content.

Coe was asked about his fall visit to Tokyo to check in on Olympic Games preparations. What was his impression of the facilities and national stadiums? Was there anything that he was struck by, or impressed with, in terms of the facilities and preparation?

Coe: I was struck by everything, and really bowled over by everything from the facilities. I obviously had a conducted tour around the Olympic Stadium. Looks terrific. I was really impressed with the way that it's been constructed and some of the issues around sustainability and the building that matters to us now much more than it probably has in the past as a sport.

My visit to Tokyo wasn't the first visit of our teams from World Athletics. [Director] Stéphane Bermon and the Health & Science teams and our course-building teams were in Sapporo in August to look at venues and also advise on the management of intense heat that we still may confront—and also to talk about delivering events with an eye on outbreak prevention. All that was really important, but my visit was, as you can realize, very tight. It was truncated, but the visit to the stadium was really impressive. I know that some of our teams went up to Sapporo as well, so they were very clear about what they needed up there and working in partnership with the local authorities.

And I was also very, very pleased to have good time with President Mori and Governor Koike and the Olympic Minister and the Sports Minister and [04 Olympic hammer gold medalist Koji Murofushi], of course, who's moved from Director of Sport to the Sports Commission.

I guess what I was struck by was just the cast-iron determination to deliver these Games. Yes, they may be altered, yes, they may be adapted, but the determination to deliver an Olympic Games next year. And I came back and was able to report with, with confidence to our Council just a few days ago that that was exactly what I found. So yes, I was very impressed.

A followup question noted that a recent survey found some 60% of Japanese feel reluctant about the Olympics hosting. What does Coe make of that?

Coe: Well, look, I was a politician before I started doing all this type of stuff. You know, it's really important for the public to have confidence in the leadership of an organization that is delivering something that is so high profile in a country. And I felt that it was important for the No.1 Olympic sport to be the first sport.

In fact, we were the first organized sporting organization of any description to go to Tokyo to spend time with the Organizing Committee, and the central purpose of that was not just to be comforted by what we were seeing and being told, but also to offer our support in doing anything that we could do to help make those Games, certainly in athletics terms. And if the Games are successful athletically, they're going to be a successful Games. So we felt we had a responsibility to show solidarity with the people

of Japan and the governments of Japan and all the organizations that are delivering the sport. We recognize that under really very, very difficult circumstances they're doing a very good job.

T&FN: As you look back over the ordeal of the lengthy unfolding of the Russian doping scandal and the years that preceded it, what assurances can you offer that World Athletics will be more proactive in recognizing warning signs of possible malfeasance wherever it may arise among member federations or athletes?

Coe: Well, see, the big difference, of course, is we now have the Athletics Integrity Unit [AIU] that was a centerpiece in my reforms. The Athletics Integrity Unit are a really important bridgehead to exactly that concept that you're talking about. And I don't need to focus entirely on Russia here. It is really important across a whole range of issues that have the ability from time to time to derail our sport and cause reputational damage that we have the right systems and the right processes in place.

And also the right partnerships because the Athletics Integrity Unit is not just a sort of well-funded global policeman in our sport. It does also create educational programs. It sits alongside many federations who are desperately keen to be helped out of whatever situation that they're confronting. And I know that they work.

You could speak to any number of federations that are very grateful that behind the scenes the AIU and World Athletics has just sat quietly without headlines behind them, helping them restructure their own organizations to meet those challenges.

So in simple answer to that question, you've got somebody now in charge of a sport that really does understand the need to have the right government structures in place because those governance structures allow us to do a whole host of things that are transparent and clear and open. But it also allows us to sit alongside federations as partners in helping them understand the complexity of that journey. And particularly when they're crying out for help occasionally.

Coe was asked what metrics the Diamond League used to determine its just announced "Final 3" format for 2021? "Because most of the feedback, at least on Twitter, was pretty negative, especially from the athletes. Also, will this format be used in the Olympics or 2022 World Championships?"

Coe: No, they're not to be used in the Olympics or the World Championships, and they're not actually even going to be used in the Diamond League Final. So I'm not much moved by what was on Twitter. I'm actually much more comforted by the discussions that the Diamond League board have had with our Athletes Commission and the athletes association around the need to support our field events and particularly the jumps.

For a number of years both as a competitor and latterly as an administrator, I've got very good friends in field events who have always complained about the scheduling of field events, particularly the jumps, making sure that they've always got into the broadcast window, making sure that they're done in a way that grabs that share that they are deserving of within that broadcast window.

And I think that the Final 3 format is a good thing. I think it provides a climax to those jumps.

And I'm really, really pleased that the athletes in consultation with the Diamond League board and the broadcasters have almost unanimously supported that because I was on those calls as well. And I'm really delighted that the athletes are prepared to see how it goes.

And again, it takes me back to Sieg's question. It then gives us an opportunity to properly monitor that over the course of the year and get the feedback from the athletes. But it was very clear to me that there does need be reform in our sport. And I think field events, done properly, can actually be presented in a much better way so that we don't have a 2-tier sport.

Back on the topic of the controversial distance shoes and spikes. Does Coe see a credibility problem with records set in the new footwear? "Is it possible to compare the new Cheptegei records with the former Bekele records?"

Coe: Let me answer that question by trying to put this into some kind of historical perspective here. Look, if we're going to go back into the history of World Records, we are really looking at World Records and permanently changing circumstances. You know, World Records were set on—I still marvel at somebody like Rudolf Harbig back in 1936, 1937 running 1:46 and bits on a cinder track. I still marvel at the fact that Peter Snell ran around 1:44 and bits in Wanganui on a grass track.

I still marvel at the fact that we had people like Ron Hill running significantly under 2:10 [in the marathon] in shoes that had little more than cardboard support in them. So, you know, everywhere you look records have developed and they've often developed alongside technological change.

And look, I will say there are some records out there that we're still looking at and they're records that probably wouldn't stand a great deal of scrutiny had we had an Athletics Integrity Unit around 35, 40, 50 years ago.

So I think that of course we value our World Records. We're not a sport where they get sort of thrown around like confetti. It is important that when a World Record gets broken, that it is broken as a result of outstanding jaw-dropping athletic talents.

And I'm still of the belief that in large part that is why we're seeing those records. I do also think this year has been a very different type of year. Athletes have managed to just get a little bit more fuel in their minds and in their bodies, again, some really good respite, and the ability to sort of regroup.

So look, I'm not sitting here thinking that this is a really dangerous period. I think these World Records are still in the nature of that evolutionary change. And some of it is technology, yes. And some of it is just because the athletes have had some rest and are training really well again.

And the good athletes that came into 2020 with that background during the winter months are the athletes that have gone on at the end of the year, even with the temporary hiatus at the beginning of the season.

T&FN: Returning to the new Diamond League field events Final 3 format, I completely appreciate the effort to innovate, raise the pace and make things easier to follow. But what happens if, say, either Christian Taylor or Will Claye—to pick two who could do it—sets a World Record before those final three rounds and then has three fouls in the final three rounds? Now we're left with explaining to fans and potential fans, "Yeah, well he broke the World Record—but he didn't win." There are issues here. Perhaps the new format is harder to understand for the casual fan?

Coe: I don't think communication is the biggest challenge. I think the biggest challenge is making sure that we haven't got field events that are dying. You know, I've sat down for too long with too many broadcasters and too many

meeting directors that are just basically saying to me that this is moving in the wrong direction.

And I'm the president of the sport of track and field. I'm not the president of just track. I'm not the president for just running. I do have a responsibility to make sure, whether it's popular or not, that field events when I come to move on and we have a new generation of leadership in place, that they're not looking at a scorched earth policy around field events. Or worse than that, we just do nothing and they wither on the vine. That is not what I want. So it is absolutely crucial that we do that. So if that means communicating what it is we're trying to do...

Look, I'm not a field eventer and I will never claim to be. And I do also understand that the beauty of our sport is you come to our sport with different mentalities. You've got distance runners and you've got sprinters and you've got throwers and you've got jumpers, but I would remind you from the humble observations of a track guy that you don't sit at the end of a championship 800 meters and go, "Guys, I know I didn't really perform that well in the 800, but goodness me, why don't you take into consideration what I did in round 1 or round 2," you know? You perform at the moment when it is maximally important to perform.

So within those balances, I think this is worth trying. And if at the end of the year, it's clearly and palpably not something that we should be continuing with, we've lost nothing next year in doing that. It's not going to be in the Olympic format. It's not in the World Championships. It's not even in the Final of the Diamond League. I think we have to start somewhere.

And I'm very pleased that Christian and the jumpers have said they're prepared to give that a go. And they should have confidence in me to be able to back up what I say now, which is if this isn't working, we will, of course review it. □

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HERE'S THE LATEST in the aches, pains & eligibility departments.

VICTOR SAILER/PHOTO RUN



OT marathon winner Aliphine Tuliamuk is due to deliver in January, but is forging ahead with plans to run in Tokyo.

Meanwhile, in the maternity ward: **Almaz Ayana**, the Olympic gold medalist and WR holder at 10,000, gave birth to a boy in late November.

OT Marathon winner **Aliphine Tuliamuk** is pregnant, with a child due in January. She Instagrammed, "we planned this knowing that we would have 6+ months to get ready for Tokyo Olympics!"

2-time Olympic champion **Meseret Defar** of Ethiopia recently gave birth.

Marina Arzamasova of Belarus, the '15 World champ at 800, has been banned for 4 years after testing positive for ligandrol, an anabolic drug.

British walker **Tom Bosworth** contracted C19 in March and was only able to resume light training in July.

Triple jumper **Omar Craddock** has been provisionally suspended by the AIU after a series of whereabouts failures.

Recent 10M American Record setter **Keira D'Amato** had hoped to make a splash at The Track Meet in December, but took a rain check after a bout with food poisoning. "This sucks. But I'm human," she said on Instagram.

Fedrick Dacres, the silver medalist in the Doha discus, fell in his bathroom and tore a ligament in his hand. "They are saying that I

can be out for 3–6 months, but based on that, I still have time to get back. I just have to work harder than everybody else."

Two-time discus World Ranker **Andressa De Morais** has been banned for 4 years after testing positive for a type of selective androgen receptor modulator, similar to a steroid.

Britain's **Tom Gale**, high jump co-world leader at 7-7 $\frac{3}{4}$ (2.33) this year, has not jumped since February. He had knee surgery over the summer.

Spanish Olympian **Trihas Gebre**, a 31:35 road performer, has been stranded in the war-torn Tigray region of Ethiopia where she was born. After taking refuge with a family in the mountains she told her coach that she is starving but still alive.

South Carolina's NCAA 400H champion **Quincy Hall** has turned pro, but will keep training in Columbia for the '21 season. "It's been a long journey and I'm still fighting," he tweeted.

Hoka NAZ Elite runner **Nick Hauger** recently went public about his diagnosis with C19, blogging, "Everything my doctor had read showed that I needed to halt all physical activity until my symptoms of a tight chest and cough had subsided additionally, I would need

to wait a full 2 weeks after those symptoms disappeared to return to running. On top of all this she was concerned that the virus may have affected my heart and lungs."

Hurdler **Lolo Jones** has returned to bobsledding, making the national bobsled team for the fifth time. The 2-time track Olympian opted not to focus on the hurdles because "that would give me a little bit more time if things are not operational for Summer Olympics. I'm putting basically all of my eggs in the Winter Olympics because I feel like by 2022 we'll have a handle on the situation."

Swiss sprinter **Mujinga Kambundji** will miss the indoor season after sustaining a metatarsal fracture in her right foot during training at the end of November. "It feels a lot better and it's healing well," she says.

German **Melat Keljeta**, the runner-up at the World Half-Marathon, had hoped to make a splash at the Valencia Marathon but had to pull out with illness.

'17 World 1500 champ **Elijah Manangoi** has been suspended for 2 years for whereabouts failures. "It seems simple but a slight mistake can be costly at the end," he said. "I'm a clean athlete, and I will be back on track and win right." His suspension ends December 22, 2021, when he'll be 29.

Manteo Mitchell, silver medalist in the '12 long relay, is also trying bobsled, but says he will still go for a track Olympic berth. Of his first go in a sled he says, "It's like being in a dryer and being a pair of tennis shoes. Nothing but shoes, just blunk, blunk, blunk, blunk."

Yumi Hattori, who won the Fukuoka Marathon in '18, withdrew from this year's race with a calf injury.

Doping/Whereabouts Bans

4 years—**Marina Arzamasova** (Belarus, 800), **Andressa De Morais** (Brazil, discus), **Viktoriya Khapilina** (Russia, distance), **Tebogo Mamathu** (South Africa, sprints);

2 years—**Elijah Manangoi** (Kenya, 1500). □

KIRBY LEE/IMAGE OF SPORT



Unlike the robust crowds usually scene at Arkansas, athletes at the '21 NCAA Indoor will be performing in front of an empty house.

THE NCAA INDOOR will be missing a crucial element: fans. Pandemic safety protocols that will be in place at Arkansas on March 12–13 will also restrict athletes to specific areas of the venue and once an event is completed, participants will have to leave the building...

No spectators will be allowed at the **NCAA XC Championships** (Oklahoma State, March 15) either...

When the Bowerman TC women ran 16:27.02 in the 4 x 1500 over the summer (*T&FN, September/October*), it was history's fastest time, but we noted at the time, "The intrasquad nature of the competition will probably prevent official ratification." Color us wrong: given the circumstances of the pandemic year, that stricture wasn't enforced by both USATF and WA, so it was ratified as a WR and AR...

Great Britain's **Sam Atkin**, 27, was impressive in running a PR 13:18.57 at The Track Meet and coming back the next day for another lifetime best, 27:26.58, in the 10,000. Back in '16 he set PRs of 13:57.28 and 29:44.33 for NAIA school Lewis & Clark. Trivia note: his twin sister is Miss Great Britain...

Mississippi senator Roger Wicker named Olympic champion **Brittney Reese** to the Commission on the State of the U.S. Olympics and

Paralympics, the body the Senate has formed to look at reforms to the Olympic movement...

Human Rights Watch is urging the IOC not to consider **China's '32 Olympic bid** until the nation addresses concerns about internment camps it has apparently established for its Uighur Muslims...

The Olympics are not out as far as **Christian Coleman** is concerned. The reigning world 100 champ has appealed to CAS in regards to his 2-year ban for whereabouts violations...

NBC will remain WA's U.S. network of choice after signing a 10-year contract extension that runs through '29...

As rare as the standing long jump is these days, the standing triple jump is an even more elusive beast, having last been staged in the Olympics in 1904. Jamaica's **Clive Pullen**, a former NCAA Indoor champ for Arkansas, raised eyebrows recently with a 36-4¾ (11.09) performance. The World Record? We're really not sure...

In early December President Trump signed the **Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act**, which would impose criminal sanctions of people involved with international doping fraud. The bill, which requires restitution for victims, has been opposed by WADA, which takes issue

with the its authorization extending beyond U.S. borders...

Team USA will soon be debuting its **Athlete Marketing Program**, an online platform for athletes to enhance their marketing and earning potential...

With the disputed reelection of Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko—and resulting protests and violence—WA head Seb Coe has instructed the Risk Committee to assess the situation and determine whether the **Race Walking Team Championships**, set for April '22 in Minsk, should still be held there...

Elsewhere in Belarus, Andrei Krauchanka, the '08 Olympic decathlon silver medalist, was arrested and jailed for 10 days for participating in protests against Lukashenko. He says he was beaten while in government custody...

Former Notre Dame star **Anna Rohrer** has joined up with the BAA High Performance team...

Hillary Bor, the reigning USATF steeplechase champion, has signed with Hoka One One...

Arkansas star **Taylor Werner**, NCAA 5000 runner-up, has turned pro early. She had one season of track eligibility left...

Former New Mexico star **Weini Kelati** has signed with Under Armour and is now part of

the Dark Sky Distance team, coached by Stephen Haas and Shayla Houlihan in Flagstaff...

Canadian decathlete **Damian Warner** has had to scramble to find a winter training facility. He now reports that he has gotten permission to use one side of a hockey arena: "Time was running out to find a place."...

Shot putter **Raven Saunders** is now a graduate assistant coach at West Alabama...

Longtime Michigan State head **Walt Drenth** has retired...

Former WA Council member **Ahmad Al Kamali** has been banned for 6 months and fined 5000 Euros for bribing African delegates with watches in an attempt to get their votes for a Council seat.

Steve Bartold, longtime coach at St. Johns and Yale, died at 85 from complications of Parkinson's Disease...

Tommy Lister died from C19 at age 62. The actor had been the '82 Div. II shot champ for Cal State LA...

India has announced that its Olympic athletes will get the first shot at a C19 vaccine when it becomes available to the nation...

Mo Farah's decision to appear in a British reality TV show has caused some controversy—fans got angry when he mistook Scotland for Wales in one episode—however the distance legend will be pocketing \$400,000 for his TV work...

Faith Kipyegon says soon it will be time to leave the 1500. where she has won Olympic and World golds, and move to the 5000: "I seek new challenges in my career."

Connecticut has moved to specifically ban all road races because of the pandemic. In a number of other states, such events are basically banned under the public gathering limitations...

The Big East and MAAC have joined the Ivy League in **canceled winter sports**, including indoor track...

UMKC has suspended cross country and track, among other sports, "due to the financial implications of COVID 19"...

California's **CCAA conference**, which includes a number of Div. II powerhouses, has canceled all sports for the 1920–21 school year...

French triple jumper **Benjamin Compaoré**, the World Indoor bronze medalist from '16, has been given a 6-month suspended prison sentence after being found guilty of violence against his partner...

On the list of nations with the **most current drug suspensions** (per the AIU), Russia leads at 90, followed by Kenya (64), India (48), China (37) and Turkey (31). The United States lags at No. 10 (20)...

Steepler **Consensus Kipruto** has been charged with having intercourse with a 15-year-old girl Kenya. He has pleaded not guilty and is out on bond...

British hurdler **Cindy Ofili** has married and will be competing next year under the name Sember...

Italy has issued a postage stamp to honor former 200 great **Pietro Mennea** on the anniversary of his '80 Olympic win...

The '24 **European Championships** have been awarded to Rome...

The NCAA's Div. I Council has granted a **blanket waiver** that allows for immediate eli-

WA Moves 2 Major Championships

Nanjing's hosting of the World Indoor Championships has been moved yet again. The Chinese city was originally slated to host the meet in March of this year, but when C19 struck it was delayed a year, to March of '21. Postponement has struck again, but this time it will be 2 years, moving Nanjing to March of '23. Meanwhile, Belgrade 2022 is now slated to go on as originally planned...

When Australian travel restrictions kicked in, WA also had to move the next World XC Champs, originally targeted for March of '21, to March of '22. Bathurst remains the host...

The USATF XC Championships has been indefinitely postponed...

Delayed '21 marathons include Düsseldorf (to 10/24), Los Angeles (to May 23), Paris (to October 17) & Rotterdam (to October 24)...

In a major cancellation, there will be no Millrose Games in '21, ending a streak that began way back in 1908...

Other cancellations for '21: NYC Half-Marathon, Dubai Marathon, Reno's Pole Vault Summit, Beijing Marathon, Canada's Jerome Indoor...

The losses of the PV Summit and Millrose will have a major effect on the prep under-cover scene, as will the non-staging of Idaho's Simplot Games, the New York State Meet and the FasTrak/NSAF Southern Indoor Challenge. Outdoors, both the Florida and Florida State Relays will go on sans high schoolers.

gibility for all transfers in all sports this year...

A new mile prodigy? **Marcus Reilly** (Northbridge, Massachusetts) ran a 4:12.77 mile in November, a national age-14 record. Age-group data from other nations is hard to be sure of, but it's also the best known world-wide...

Because of the pandemic, German jumper **Malaika Mihambo** has not come to America to train with Carl Lewis as planned.

Bermuda-born **Jake Smith** broke the Welsh record at the World Half-Marathon Champs only 4 days after becoming eligible to represent Wales in Commonwealth competition. A few weeks later he switched his allegiance to England...

High jumper **Mariya Lasitskene** received a \$2465 prize for winning the Russian Champs in '20. She gave it away to charity: "I do not at all like the idea of getting 180,000 rubles for winning the Russian championship. Now is not the time for such gestures, when the majority of our citizens are going through a difficult period. Just give me back my rightful opportunity to perform and earn money myself..."

The **Ocean Breeze indoor facility** in Staten Island, New York, is installing state-of-the-art MERV filters in its HVAC system to help ameliorate the risk of COVID in the facility...

Hammer Olympian **Gwen Berry** has been awarded the 2020 Toyota Humanitarian Award for her activism on racial justice. The award allows her to donate \$10,000 to the charity of her choice—in this case, schools in three states that encourage minority students...

Speaking of Toyota, **USATF** has extended its sponsorship with the carmaker. No details were announced...

In an announcement that sounds straight out of Popular Mechanics magazines of the '60s, Uber has announced that it is has recruited Hyundai to help out with its plan to develop **flying taxis** for the '28 Olympics in Los Angeles...

Former high jump WR holder **Tamara Bykova**, 61, has recovered from C19, saying she lost more than 20lb (10kg) in 10 days, along with 75% of her lung capacity. She described her experience as, "The feeling that you are going to hell, and the devils begin to fry you in a frying pan..."

The Brits have set their Olympic marathon

trials for March 26 on a flat, fast loop course in London's Kew Gardens that is designed to help the team hit the Olympic standards...

Former hurdler **Jeff Porter** has been named to the WADA Athletes Commission...

In preparation of its hosting of the **World Junior (U20) Championships** next year, Kenya has warned its athletes that it has improved its database and will punish athletes and coaches who are caught falsifying ages.

Sprint legend **Donald Quarrie** is calling foul after losing his bid to head the Jamaican federation, 236–28. He said that while his opponent, general-secretary Garth Gayle, controlled the election and could lobby the voters, Quarrie was denied a list and could do no direct campaigning...

We often hear of runners moving up to the marathon, but not so much about marathoners moving down to the 1500. Germany's **Homiyu Tesfaye**, who ran 3:31.98 in '14, is moving back down after two years of marathon training netted him only a 2:18:30 best...

After distance runner **Kemoy Campbell's** near-death heart stoppage experience in the '18 Millrose Games, he had outstanding medical bills of \$71,000 for his time in the ICU and his pacemaker. The Jamaican government has stepped in and paid the bill...

Laura Muir: "I'm not sure if I'm going to race indoors as yet. Perhaps a few indoor races but we need to wait and see how things are – and if there are races. But everything is focused towards the Olympics. That's the big target..."

The **Lyles Brothers Sports Foundation** is now operational. Say Noah and Josephus, "Our goal is to empower youth through the advancement of health and wellness in our community..."

Former 5000 WR holder **Zola Budd** is soon to release *Everyone Knows My Name*, an autobiography that purportedly will expose sexual harassment and bullying in the sport...

Apparently Kenyan fans got quite offended that marathon WR holder **Eliud Kipchoge** was recently nominated for an award as a "fitness influencer." Said one on social media, "The GOAT cannot be compared to digital influencers... no offense, but he is on a league of his own!" □

HERE'S THIS MONTH'S collection of short takes on generally off-track activities that have gone/will go a long way towards shaping the way the sport is headed.

JIRO MOCHEZ/IMAGE OF SPORT



Hellen Obiri waxed Letesenbet Gidey in the Monaco 5K, but the Ethiopian went on to break the WR in a Wavelight race. Obiri decidedly isn't happy about it.

New U.S. Outdoor Meet Circuit Formed

The myriad meet cancellations that came out of the pandemic—and continue to be announced—have put athletes, particularly those not based in Europe, searching for competition into a corner. Combine that the difficulties of traveling across the ocean and the lack of a coordinated circuit in the U.S. has become an even bigger challenge facing the sport stateside.

"It's pathetic that all the best athletes in America go to a different continent for most of their racing," Music City Distance Carnival meet director Dave Millner told *Runner's World*.

Enter the Pro Track Series, a 7-meet sequence set to debut in '21 where athletes will compete against each other for points and prize money:

- The Track Meet (Los Angeles, May 14)
- Portland Track Festival (May 29)
- Iowa High Performance (Des Moines, May 31)

- Music City Distance Carnival (Nashville, June 05)
- Under Armour Sunset Tour I (Los Angeles, July 10)
- Under Armour Sunset Tour II (Los Angeles, July 17)
- Ed Murphey Classic (Memphis, August 14)

We'll have more on this exciting new concept in the February issue of *T&FN*.

Obiri Says Wavelight "Is Like You Are Doping"

She's had some time to think over her stance on the Wavelight pacing system (in this space last month she said, "I think it is really unfair for us who did not compete"), but Hellen Obiri is still not a fan. Not even close. Not after the WR that she has chased umpteen times has gotten even farther away with the technology. "It is like you are doping; I can compare

those two. To me, they are the same," she told BBC Sport Africa. "With Wavelight technology you don't need to train 100% because you know there is something that's going to boost you.

"I think it can be fair if all athletes are there, not one or two. More like 12 athletes where anybody can break the World Record... If it's available, let it be available to all."

The Kenyan star noted that she much prefers old-school rabbiting. "We use pacesetters because you know they reach a point then drop out so that you can push yourself. Wavelight technology can take you maybe up to the finish."

Vaccine? Athletes Need To Get In Line, Says Coe

While professional athletes—at least in the U.S.—appear to have been getting some special treatment when it comes to C19 mitigation, WA head Seb Coe doesn't see our sport's athletes as deserving special consideration.

2022 World Champs Q-Standards Announced

Want to compete at the next World Championships in Eugene? To gain a qualifying standard mark you'll have to be pretty darn good. Here are the standards as released by WA in mid-December:

Men—10.05, 20.24, 44.90, 1:45.20, 3:35.00, 8:22.00, 13:13.50, 27:28.00, 13.32, 48.90, 2:11:30, 1:21:00, 2:33:00 (or 3:50:00 for 50K); 7-7¼ (2.33), 19-¼ (5.80), 26-11¼ (8.22), 56-2¼ (17.14), 69-2¾ (21.10), 216-6 (66.00), 254-3 (77.50), 278-10 (85.00), 8350.

Women—11.15, 22.80, 51.35, 1:59.50, 4:04.20, 9:30.00, 15:10.00, 31:25.00, 12.84, 55.40, 2:29:30, 1:31:00, 2:54:00 (4:25:00), 6-5 (1.96), 15-5 (4.70), 22-4½ (6.82), 46-11¼ (14.32), 60-8½ (18.50), 208-4 (63.50), 237-10 (72.50), 210-0 (64.00), 6420.

As will be done for the Olympics next summer, after the number of qualifiers is tallied the field will be filled out from WA's world rankings stats.

For most events the qualifying period will open on June 27, 2021. For the marathon & 35K walks the window began on November 30, 2020 and for the 10,000, 20W, relays & multis it opens on December 27, 2020.

"We have to be sensitive here: there are many claims on that priority," he said at a mid-December press conference. "Most of us are dependent on our frontline workers and our emergency services and we also recognise that there are vulnerable people in the community and we want to make sure that we look after them as much as possible. I'm not sure that it is for sport to be pressing the case for fit young people."

As to whether or not athletes should vaccinate, he continued, "I would like... that when the vaccine does become available and that the athletes have the opportunity to make use of it that they do. I'm not mandating it and I don't think it's my job to tell people what they should or shouldn't do in that area. I think that has to be a very personal and individualistic view.

"I hope they do avail themselves of it, I certainly would if I had the opportunity in the lead up to a Games like that, but it's very much a personal decision."

WA Amends New-Shoe Rules

With the latest products from the Shoe Wars swamping not just the yearly lists but also the all-time compilations, World Athletics has amended its rules on what shoes are acceptable in international competition.

The key change is that "development shoes" will be allowed in competition even before they are available to the public, as long as WA approves of the specifications in advance. This means such shoes are good to go for any international meets with the exception of the World Athletics Series and the Olympics.

An approved development shoe—there are now some 200 on the list—will only be legal for a year before it is either given a final approval or rejected. The onus is on the athlete (and representative) to notify WA of the competitions the shoe will be worn at; written approval needs to be obtained.

In WA's eyes, all performances resulting from permitted use of developmental shoes will be considered valid, even if they include World Records, apparently.

Whether or not individual federations such as USATF opt to recognize such records themselves is a separate matter that would need to be resolved later.

In a related development, it was noted that multiple runners in those fast The Track Meet races were wearing 40mm "stack height" road flats, whereas the new WA guidelines consider the max stack for track distance races to be 25mm. WA will not consider any such marks as legitimate OG qualifiers, but USATF will accept them for OT purposes. However, USATF will not accept any such marks starting January 01.

Will Podium Demonstrations Become Accepted?

The movement to remove the punishments for athletes who protest on Olympic podiums got a big boost when the USOPC said it would not sanction athletes for raising their fists or kneeling on the podium at international events. Said CEO Sarah Hirshland, "When you sit in my seat, you have to make decisions that you think are on the right side of history."

What will be the IOC's response to the

flouting of Rule 50?

WA head Seb Coe—a new IOC member—apparently supports the move, saying in a ceremony to honor the three men on the Mexico City 200 podium, "the bravery, dignity and morality of these three men continue to inspire athletes from all sports 50 years on."

Not so fast, countered IOC chief Thomas Bach. In a press conference in early December he noted that such demonstrations continue to be prohibited under WA rules. "I have nothing more to add at this time," he said.

Rudisha On The Fence About Tokyo

Nobody has ever won 3 Olympic golds in the 800, but David Rudisha has a shot for a trifecta in Japan. The WR holder, however, says it's too soon for him to decide whether to go for gold No. 3 in Tokyo.

"Because of this difficult time with COVID and I have been up and down with injuries, I have been off, I have not been training," he told BBC Sport Africa. "I am hoping maybe next year I will make my decision whether I will come back and see the level of my physical fitness. That's when I will be able to assess my level and my standard and that will gauge if I will come back or I will make another decision, but I love sports."

It has been more than 3 years since the Kenyan ace, who turned 32 in early December, has raced. Of 2020 he says, "I had a bad injury at the beginning of the year and it is taking quite some time. Coming back you need to prepare yourself very well."

No Cross Country In Paris In '24

The IOC has handed down a pair of decisions on the event lineups for all sports to be contested at Paris 2024, making virtually no one in our sport particularly happy.

The long-hoped-for return of a cross country event to the Games—a pet idea of WA head Seb Coe—got shot down completely. And walk fans hoping to see women get a chance to race 50K in the Olympics were told that's not happening either. Instead, a mixed sex race—apparently a relay of some sort—will be in the offing.

A WA statement on the matter read, "Cross country is an exciting and fast-growing sport around the world so we are clearly disappointed it will not feature at the Paris 2024 Olympic

Games, even more so given the heritage of cross country in France at the Paris 1924 Olympic Games. However, we have developed what we believe is a really exciting mixed relay product and have been encouraged by the commitment from the IOC that they will continue to work with us to realise our vision of seeing cross country in a future Olympic Games."

The overall IOC decisions bring men and women participants to a 50/50 split in Paris, while Tokyo will only feature 48.8% women.

WADA Wanted 4, Russia Gets 2

In mid-December CAS eased up on Russia's punishment for operating a state-sponsored doping conspiracy, lopping 2 years off the ban on Russia's flag and uniform, and also watered down other aspects of the original judgment, allowing neutral Russian athletes to wear uniforms with their country's name.

Alexander Ivlev, supervisory board chairman of RUSADA, called it a win: "Our teams will be selected by the ROC and the RPC, athletes can wear uniforms with the colors of the national flag and the word 'Russia.' And fans will be able to attend competitions with paraphernalia and national flags."

"We were able to respond to WADA's claims in a straightforward manner with concrete reasoning. What was published was significantly different from the original requirements. I think this is positive news."

Outside of Moscow, the decision didn't play so well. Argued USADA head Travis Tygart, "To once again escape a meaningful consequence proportional to the crimes, much less a real ban, is a catastrophic blow to clean athletes, the integrity of sport, and the rule of law." He also called the verdict a "weak, watered-down outcome."

WA, in a statement of begrudging acceptance, noted that it still controls which Russians will be allowed in as neutral athletes. However, a WA Council meeting ended on a positive note for the Russians, with new federation President Peter Ivanov saying he was hopeful for reinstatement by March.

Leeper Appeals CAS Decision

Paralympic sprinter Blake Leeper is taking his case to the last stop on the line, appealing to the Swiss Supreme Court the CAS decision (Last Lap, November/December) to ban him

2021 Diamond League Schedule Released

As currently constituted, next year's Wanda Diamond League series will consist of 14 meets in 13 countries. The meets:

May

23—Rabat; 28—Doha

June

04—Rome; 10—Oslo

July

04—Stockholm; 09—Monaco; 13—London

August

14—Shanghai; 21—Eugene; 22—China2 (city tbd); 26—Lausanne; 28—Paris

September

03—Brussels; 08-09—Zürich (first day is 7 street events)

The U.S. Olympic Trials fall in the window between the June & July meets, the Olympic Games between July & August.

We'll give you more details in the February issue, but note that the 200, steeple, 5000, TJ & DT have been returned from exile and will once again be part of the program. The TV window will be expanded from 90 minutes back to 2 hours.

from competing against able-bodied athletes at the Olympics and in the World Athletic Series.

CAS, in backing WA's original decision, found that the American's prosthetic limbs make him 15cm taller than if he had his biological legs—as a result he has the legs and stride of a 6-8 (2.03) man. The court did uphold one part of the appeal, that it was unfair to put the burden of proof on the plaintiff.

WA originally used Maximum Allowable Standing Height (MASH) to make its decision. The rule is regularly used in Paralympic competition.

That is now at the heart of Leeper's contention. His lawyers maintain that MASH—which

was developed from studies done on whites and Asians—discriminates against Black athletes.

At the '19 USATF, Leeper placed 5th in the 400 final after hitting 44.38 to win his semi, amazingly splitting an almost-even 22.0/22.4.

Tokyo Organizers Remain Optimistic

Right now, it's full speed ahead for the Tokyo Olympics, with the city's governor, Yuriko Koike, saying she can "see no circumstances" under which organizers would pull the plug. She added, "The best-case scenario would be when all athletes from all countries come here in safety and with peace of mind and the Olympics can, as in previous years, be held with full

spectators present as well."...

The Tokyo 2020 budget is now at version 5, and the overall budget has risen to \$15.3B (yes, billion with a b)...

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies are set to see their budget increase by c\$35M, to a total around \$117M...

It's also been reported that Japan is preparing for "large-scale" numbers of overseas visitors to come, without mandating vaccinations or quarantines. However, later reporting noted that the Japanese have endorsed an IOC proposal to accelerate the vaccination of athletes...

Athletes will be encouraged to limit their stay in the Athletes Village and return home when finished competing...

In December, Tokyo reached 10,000 COVID-19 deaths in a month for the first time. "Tokyo's health care system is approaching capacity," said the governor...

So far the government has planned to spend an extra \$960 million on additional COVID-19 countermeasures. That cost will be on top of the \$1.9 billion figure tallied for the expense of the initial 1-year delay...

One idea that has emerged is the government might require visitors to pick up private health insurance to reduce the size of the tab the Japanese taxpayers could be left holding...

On the hook, though, may be the Olympic sponsors. Already they've ponied up a record \$3.3B, but organizing committee CEO Toshio Muto said, "We are in the process of asking for additional sponsorship from our partners."...

One barometer to watch: in early December it was reported that around 18% of Japanese ticket buyers have asked for refunds, despite beating huge odds to win the chance to buy them in a national lottery. □

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Died: Cliff Bertrand, 84

On November 28, in New York City; of natural causes. In '60, the Trinidadian won Olympic bronze as part of the 4x1 team representing the British West Indies. In '62 he placed 6th in the NCAA 220 for NYU.

Died: Heinfried Birlenbach, 79

On November 11, in Siegen, Germany. A 4-time World Ranker in the shot, he earned his highest position, No. 4, in '70. A 3-time West German Olympian, he didn't make the '64 final and then was 8th in '68 and 7th in '72.

Died: Ernesto Canto, 61

On November 20, in Mexico City; of pancreatic and liver cancer. The gold medalist in the 20K walk for Mexico at the '83 Worlds and '84 Olympics, he set a World Record 1:18:40.0 on the track in '84. Nine times he made the World Rankings, with No. 1s in '81 & '84. He also ranked No. 6 in the 50K in '82.

Died: Buddy Davis, 89

On November 17, in Port Arthur, Texas. In '52 the Texas A&M star won everything in the high jump: NCAA, AAU, OT and OG (as the last Western Roller to win gold). The next year he set a World Record 6-11½ (2.12). All this despite being paralyzed by polio as a child. He World Ranked three times, with No. 1s in '52 & '53. He later played in the NBA, twice on championship teams.

Died: Fred DeBernardi, 71

On December 03, in Las Vegas; of cancer. Winner of a shot/discus double at the '72 NCAA, the UTEP star earned All-America status 6 times. Had PRs of 70-3½ (21.42) and 201-8 (61.48) He made the World Rankings once, a No. 10 in the shot in '72. Was a member of the short-lived ITA pro league.

Died: June Foulds, 86

On November 06. She helped the British 4x1 win the bronze in the '52 Games and the silver four years later. World Ranked once in the 100 (No. 8 in '56) and twice in the 200 (No. 5s in '56 & '58).

Died: Paula Girven, 62

On October 17, in Asheville, North Carolina; of cancer. A '76 Olympian in the high jump, she set a High School Record of 6-1¼ (1.85) that lasted for 5 years. At Maryland she was an AIAW All-America indoors and out, and she placed 2nd in the '80 OT. A 6-time U.S. Ranker, she was No. 2 in '76.

Died: Heidi Hertz, 64

On November 28, in Tampa, Florida; of COPD and cancer. AIAW pentathlon champion for Florida in '76, she made the U.S. Rankings 3 times, with a No. 7 in '76.

Died: Attila Horváth, 53

On November 13, in Szombathely, Hungary; of C19. The bronze medalist in the discus at the '91 Worlds, he placed 5th in the '92 Olympics. A 4-time World Ranker, he was No. 3 in '91. Won 9 national titles.

Died: Virginia Ioan, 71

On November 09, in Bucharest, Romania. A '68 Olympian, she made the high jump World Rankings 4 times, reaching No. 5 in '73. PR of 6-3½ (1.92).

Died: Mariya Itkina, 88

On December 01, in Minsk, Belarus. As a Soviet, she set 4 WRs in the 400 between '57 and '62. With the 400 finally added to the women's Olympic program in '64, she finished 5th. She had previously placed 4th in the '56 4x1, and in '60 had finished 4th in the 100, 200 and 4x1. Unfortunate distinction: only Olympian in any sport ever to finish 4th 4 times without getting a medal. She appeared in the World Rankings 21 times: 4 in the 100 (No. 2 in '61), 7 in the 200 (No. 1 in '61) and 10 at 400 (No. 1 in '57 & '59).

Died: Ron Livers, 65

On December 19, in Collegeville, Pennsylvania; of brain cancer. Three-time NCAA triple jump champion for San José State, Livers was a 4-time World Ranker in the event, with No. 3s in '77, '79 & '80. He scored 8 U.S. Rankings, leading in '77 when he set an American Record 56-4¾ (17.19) that moved him to No. 9 on the all-time world list, and '79 when he won the national title. Was also a 7-4¼ (2.24) high jumper, ranking No. 4 in the country in '75. Standing 5-8 (1.73), that gave him the highest height-over-head clearance in history to that point.

Died: Jordi Llopart, 68

On November 11, in Badalona, Spain; of a heart attack. He won '80 Olympic silver in the 50K walk. A 5-time World Ranker, he was No. 2 in '78 & '80.

Died: Paul Nihill, 81

On December 15, in Gillingham, England; of C19. The silver medalist in the 50K walk at the '64 Olympics, the British star also captured the

European gold in the 20K in '69. Our World Rankings in the walk didn't start until '70; from then he rated twice at 20K (No. 3 in '71); at 50K he was No. 9 in '71.

Died: Maria Piątkowska, 89

On December 19, in Poland; of C19. She was a 3-time Olympian ('52, '60, '64), taking 6th in the Tokyo 80H and 11th in the Rome LJ. Three times World Ranked in the hurdles, with a high of No. 2 in '63, the same year she was No. 5 in the pentathlon. Her 10.6 PR in the hurdles made her =No. 7 on the all-time world list.

Died: Arnie Robinson, 72

On December 01, in San Diego, California; of C19. The '70 NCAA champion in the long jump for San Diego State, he moved to the top of the World Rankings the following year and in '72 captured Olympic bronze. His finest moment came win winning the gold in Montréal in '76, where his PR 27-4¾ (8.35) moved him to =No. 3 on the all-time list. He captured 7 AAU national titles (6 outdoors, 1 in) along the way and World Ranked 8 times, with a stretch of 3 straight No. 1s, 1976-78.

Died: Hugh Short, 98

On November 04, in South Burlington, Vermont; of natural causes. While at Georgetown he won the '42 IC4A title in the 440, and the next year tied the indoor WR at 600y (1:10.2).



Recordsetting sprinter Willie Smith was our prep Athlete Of The Year in '74.

Died: Willie Smith, 64

On November 07. Our High School AOY in '74, when he tied the prep 100 (9.3y) and 220 (20.6) records, Smith went on to star at Auburn, where he won 2 NCAA Indoor 440 titles. Named to three Olympic teams, he only got the chance to run in '84, when he was awarded a gold for his duties in the 4x4 heats. He World Ranked 5 times in the 400, with a best of No. 3 in '78, the year he PRed at 44.73. □

RIP: Decathlon Legend Rafer Johnson, 86

One of the giants of our sport, Rafer Johnson was born on August 18, 1934, in Hillsboro, Texas (for many years his birth year was thought to be 1935) and died of unspecified causes in Sherman Oaks, California, on December 02.

In his biggest glory year, '60, he broke the World Record for the third time in winning the Olympic Trials and went on to capture an Olympic gold to go with the silver he had won in '56. He was hailed as T&FN Athlete Of The Year and won the AAU's Sullivan Award (2 years earlier, after his second WR, Sports Illustrated had named him its Sportsman Of The Year).

After winning the California State high hurdle title for Kingsburg High in '54, Johnson moved on to UCLA and set the first of his WRs in '55, beating Bob Mathias's mark in just his second 10-eventer ever. In '56 he was runner-up in the NCAA long jump and high hurdles for the Bruins and made the Olympic team in both the LJ and decathlon. But he went to Melbourne injured, struggling to the runner-up position in the dec and withdrawing from the LJ with a bad knee.

He made the World Rankings four times in the multi-event, with No. 1s in '55, '58 & '60. He also ranked in the 110H and the long jump (No. 6 in each in '56).

His decathlon PR of 8683 is worth a modest 7982 on today's tables, but the mark was a monster in its day, putting him 257 points up on No. 2 on the all-time list.

He had Olympic glory away from the field of play as well, carrying the U.S. flag in Rome's Opening Ceremony in '60 and lighting the cauldron in LA in '84.

FOR THE RECORD

THIS IS A LISTING of all the absolute (indoor and outdoor combined) records set during calendar 2020 (note that USATF doesn't recognize this concept, even though T&FN and WA do). + = event not officially recognized by governing body; ¶ = not under ratifiable conditions; w-o = women-only.

World Records

Men

5000—12:35.36 Joshua Cheptegei (Uganda); 10,000—26:11.00 Cheptegei; 20,000+—56:20.1 Bashir Abdi (Belgium); Hour—21,330/13M,446y Mo Farah (Great Britain); 300H+—33.78 Karsten Warholm (Norway); PV—6.17/20-2¾i Mondo Duplantis (Sweden); 6.18/20-3¾i Duplantis; 5K—13:18 Rhonex Kipruto (Kenya); 12:51 Cheptegei; 10K—26:24 Kipruto; Half-Marathon—57:32 Kibiwott Kandie (Kenya)

Women

5000—14:06.62 Letesenbet Gidey (Ethiopia); Hour—18,930/11M,1341y Sifan Hassan (Netherlands); 4 x 1500—16:27.02 United States; Half-Marathon—64:31 Yeshaneh Ababel (Ethiopia); w-oHalf-Marathon—65:34 Peres Jepchirchir (Kenya); 65:16 Jepchirchir

American Records

Men

10M—45:54 Galen Rupp (Nike); 4 x 1500—14:34.97 Nike Bowerman TC

Women

5000—14:23.92 Shelby Houlihan (Nike Bowerman TC); Hour—17,930/11m,248y Molly Huddle (Saucony); 4 x 1500—16:27.02 Nike Bowerman TC; DT—70.15/230-2 Valarie Allman (Oiselle/New York AC); w-o10M—51:23 Keira D'Amato (unattached)

Collegiate Records

none

American Collegiate Records

Men

5000—13:16.95i Tyler Day (Northern Arizona)

Women

none

Junior College Records

none

World Junior Records

Men

none

Women

JT—63.96/209-10 Elína Tzénggo (Greece)

American Junior Records

Men

none

Women

5000—15:34.47 Jenna Hutchins (Tennessee HS); 3000W—13:00.56i Taylor Ewert (Ohio HS); PV—4.48/14-8¼ Leah Pasqualetti (New York HS); Marathon—2:31:49 Tierney Wolfgram (Nevada)

World Youth Records

Boys

none

Girls

JT—68.76/225-7 Adriana Vilagoš (Serbia)

American Youth Records

Boys

200—20.33 Erriyon Knight (Florida HS)

Girls

15:34.47 Jenna Hutchins (Tennessee HS)

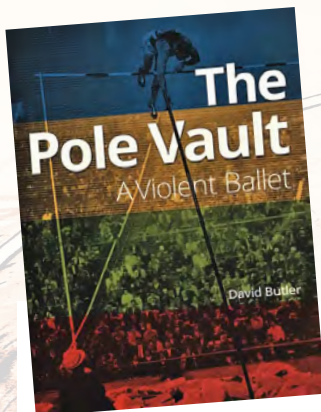
High School Records

Boys

HT—79.73/261-7 Trey Knight (Ridgefield, Washington)

Girls

5000—15:34.47 Jenna Hutchins (Science Hill, Johnson City, Tennessee); 3000W—13:00.56i Taylor Ewert (Beavercreek, Ohio) □



THE POLE VAULT

A VIOLENT BALLET

By David Butler

Foreword by Scott Huffman & Tim Mack / Introduction by Jim Bemiller

Facebook: *The Vault: How Bamboo Steel & Fiberglass changed our lives*

For More Information Contact:

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CALENDAR

DUE TO C19, all meets should be considered tentative. Current public-safety orders, if extended, would cancel meets in a number of states. TBC (to be confirmed) indicates that the host's schedule has not been announced for the season. Pandemic or not, always check with meet hosts before attending any meet.

U.S. Indoor Invationals		
January		
08-09	Green Invitational (TBC)	Lexington, Kentucky
09	Orange & Purple Elite	Clemson, South Carolina
15-16	Blazer/Vulcan Invitational	Birmingham, Alabama
	Clemson Invitational	Clemson, South Carolina
	Virginia Tech Invitational	Blacksburg, Virginia
16	Corky Classic	Lubbock, Texas
	Dempsey Indoor Preview (TBC)	Seattle, Washington
	Nelson Invitational	College Station, Texas
	Purple Tiger Invitational	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
22-23	SPIRE Midwest Open	Geneva, Ohio
	Gladstein Invitational (TBC)	Bloomington, Indiana
	McCravy Invitational (TBC)	Lexington, Kentucky
23	New Balance GP (TBC)	Roxbury Crossing, Massachusetts
	Red Raider Invitational	Lubbock, Texas
29	Razorback Invitational (TBC)	Fayetteville, Arkansas
	Washington Invitational (TBC)	Seattle, Washington
29-30	Pollock Invitational	Clemson, South Carolina
	Terrier Invitational	Boston, Massachusetts
	Texas Tech Invitational	Lubbock, Texas
29-31	Houston Invitational (TBC)	Houston, Texas
	Indiana Relays (TBC)	Bloomington, Indiana
	National Open (TBC)	University Park, Pennsylvania
February		
05-06	Camel City Invitational	Winston-Salem, North Carolina
	Husker Invitational (TBC)	Lincoln, Nebraska
	Meyo Invitational (TBC)	Notre Dame, Indiana
06	South Carolina Invitational	Clemson, South Carolina
	Sykes-Sabock Cup (TBC)	University Park, Pennsylvania
	Thomas Invitational	College Station, Texas
12	Fastrack Invitational	Staten Island, New York
	Samford Invitational	Birmingham, Alabama
12-13	Hemery Invitational	Allston, Massachusetts
	Husky Classic (TBC)	Seattle, Washington
	Iowa State Classic	Ames, Iowa
	Kirby Elite Invitational (TBC)	Albuquerque, New Mexico
	Texas Tech Shootout	Lubbock, Texas
	Music City Challenge	Nashville, Tennessee
	Tiger Paw Invitational	Clemson, South Carolina
	Tyson Invitational	Fayetteville, Arkansas
13	Millrose Games	New York, New York
19	LSU Twilight	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
20	JML DMR Invitational	Winston-Salem, North Carolina
	Wilson Invitational (TBC)	Notre Dame, Indiana
Major cancellation: Pole Vault Summit		

Collegiate Indoor Conferences		
February		
20-21	America East (TBC)	TBC

	Big Sky	Bozeman, Montana
	Mets	New York, New York
	Conference USA	Birmingham, Alabama
22-23	Sun Belt	Birmingham, Alabama
24-25	Ohio Valley	TBC
25-26	ACC	Clemson, South Carolina
25-27	SEC	Fayetteville, Arkansas
26-27	Mountain West	Albuquerque, New Mexico
	American	Birmingham, Alabama
	Big 10	Geneva, Ohio
	Big 12	Lubbock, Texas
	Mid-American	Mt Pleasant, Michigan
	Mountain Pacific	Seattle, Washington
26-28	Horizon	Fort Wayne, Indiana
27-28	Big South	Winston-Salem, North Carolina
	Missouri Valley	Cedar Falls, Iowa
	Patriot League	Allston, Massachusetts
	Southern	Lexington, Virginia
28-01	Southland	Birmingham, Alabama
March		
05-07	IC4A/ECAC	Boston, Massachusetts
Div. I conferences that have been canceled so far: Atlantic 10, Big East, Ivy League, Metro Atlantic, Northeast, WAC		

National Indoor Championships		
February		
20-21	USATF	Albuquerque, New Mexico (TBC)
March		
04-06	NAIA	Brookings, South Dakota
05-06	JUCO	Pittsburg, Kansas
12-13	NCAA	Fayetteville, Arkansas
	NCAA II (TBC)	Birmingham, Alabama
	NCAA III	Geneva, Ohio
11-14	NSAF Indoor Nationals HS	Staten Island, New York
12-14	New Balance Indoor Nationals HS	New York, New York

World Indoor Tour Gold-Level Meets		
January		
29	Indoor Meeting Karlsruhe	Karlsruhe, Germany
February		
06	New Balance Indoor GP	Roxbury Crossing, Massachusetts
09	Hauts-de-France Pas-de-Calais	Liévin, France
13	NYRR Millrose Games	New York, New York
17	ORLEN Copernicus Cup	Toruń, Poland
24	Villa de Madrid	Madrid, Spain

Note: The World Indoor Championships, scheduled for Nanjing in March of 2020, was postponed to March of 2021. That meet has now been moved to March of 2023, with Belgrade hosting the '22 version. Late news: Millrose has been canceled.

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