

Meet records fall under extreme heat

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Gabby Thomas on her way to breaking the 200m meet record for the third consecutive time at the Olympic Trials, earning her spot on the Olympic Team destined for Tokyo. Photo by Otto Horiuchi

By Caela Fenton and Kate Walkup

With an extreme heat advisory in place, several of today's distance events during the seventh day of competition at the 2020 Track and Field Olympic Trials were moved to earlier in the day to ensure cooler temperatures. The men's and women's 20km race walk started the day off with 7:00 a.m. start times in Springfield, Ore.

Robyn Stevens (1:35:13), Maria Micheta-Coffey (1:39:25) and Miranda Melville (1:40:39) took the podium in the women's race, while Nick Christie (1:30:48) won the men's race and Daniel Nehnevaj (1:31:59) and Emmanuel Corvera (1:34:38) took second and third.

Back at Hayward, the gun went off at 10:00 a.m. for the women's 10,000m final, with a trackside temperature of 87 degrees. Emily Sisson set a new meet record of 31:03.82 to win the event. Karissa Schweizer and Alicia Monson took second and third to round out the team for Tokyo.

"I talked to my coach beforehand and he said 'let's play to your strengths and your strength is your strength,'" Sisson said of her decision to take the lead after the first race and force the field to run Olympic standard, "I was prepared to lead."

That was just the first of eight meet records set that day.

In the women's hammer throw final, DeAnna Price broke her previous meet record that she set in the first round by throwing 77.82m on her first throw of the finals. She extended it on her second. On her third attempt, she broke her own national record, throwing 79.98m. That was the farthest throw in the world this year and the eleventh farthest throw in history.

On her fifth attempt, Price extended her national record, throwing 80.31m. That throw moved her into seventh for the farthest throw in history. Price's record-breaking series of throws crowned her Trials champion. Brooke Andersen (77.72m) and Gwendolyn Berry (73.50m) joined her on the podium.

"My husband and I worked on competing at the highest level you can," Price said. "First one, get it in, make the meet, make the final. Then you go and you attack."

Rai Benjamin won the final of the men's 400m hurdles, breaking the meet record, taking the new 2021 world lead and recording the second fastest time in the world ever in a time of 46.83. The previous meet record was set by Edwin Moses in 1988. He was joined on the podium by Kenny Selmon (48.08) and David Kendziera (48.38).

"It was great, I felt great going in. I knew based on running the rounds I knew that I was in 46 shape," Benjamin said. "It was just a matter of piecing the perfect race together."

Maggie Malone won the women's javelin, throwing 63.50m—a new meet record—followed by Kara Winger (61.47m) and Avione Allgood-Whetstone (58.94m).

"[Rio] was the first time I'd ever competed internationally. So I had no idea what to expect," Malone said in her post-event interview. "This time I feel more confident and know I can execute exactly what I've been doing all season."

In the women's 200m final, Gabby Thomas emerged victorious, clocking 21.61 for the gold medal. Her time is not only a personal record, but also a meet record and world-leading time for this year.

Thomas is now the second fastest woman in history in the event, with only Florence Griffith Joyner (FloJo) having run faster. Former Duck Jenna Prandini ran a personal record of 21.89 for silver, and collegian Anavia Battle ran a personal record of 21.95 for bronze.

Thomas also has an undergraduate degree in neurobiology and is currently pursuing an M.A in epidemiology.



Grant Holloway takes the victory in the men's 110m hurdles, earning his first Olympic birth. Photo by Jay Bendlin

(13.10) and Daniel Roberts (13.11).

In the men's 200m semifinals, Kenny Bednarek (19.90) and 17-year-old high school senior Erriyon Knighton (19.88) snagged heat wins. Knighton beat Usain Bolt's 20U world record with his top-qualifying performance. The final will be contested tomorrow.

Sydney McLaughlin (53.03) and Shamier Little (53.71) won their heats in the women's 400m hurdles semifinal. The final will be contested on Sunday.

In the women's long jump final, Brittney Reese (7.13m), Tara Davis (7.04m), and Quanesha Burks (6.96m) will represent team USA in Tokyo.

"It was perfect jumping weather out there," according to Reese. "It produced two seven meter jumps from the competition, and anytime that happens, it's a good competition."

The first four events of the women's heptathlon got underway today, with athletes contesting the 100m hurdles, high jump, shot put and 200m throughout the afternoon.

Heptathlon leader Annie Kunz threw a heptathlon shot put meet record on her second attempt, throwing 15.73m.

"I think, for me, being in school really makes me appreciate what I'm doing on the track," Thomas said. "Being able to compartmentalize two different things that I love doing, it really makes me appreciate the time I have doing it."

In the pole vault final, Katie Nageotte cleared 4.95m to set a new meet record, personal record and 2021 world lead and to top the podium. Morgan LeLeux cleared 4.7m for silver and Sandi Morris cleared 4.60m for bronze.

Grant Holloway ran a blazing fast time of 12.96 under 97 degree temps to top the field in the men's 110m hurdles. Holloway's time is an Olympic Trials record and world lead time. He was joined by former Duck Devon Allen

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