

Two finals two meet records

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Jessica Ramsey celebrates after setting the Olympic Trials meet record in the shot put, launching the shot 20.12m. Photo by How Lao

By Caela Fenton and Kate Walkup

EUGENE, Ore. – In one of only two finals on Thursday at the 2020 Track and Field Olympic Trials, 2016 Olympian Raven Saunders broke Michelle Carter’s 2016 shot put meet record, throwing a personal record of 19.96m on her third attempt. Just minutes after Saunders set a new meet record, Jessica Ramsey took it down, throwing a personal record of 20.12m on her fourth attempt.

Ramsey’s meet-record throw came out on top, and she was crowned Olympic Trials Champion in the event

“I was prepared for this. I knew it was somewhere in there,” Ramsey said.

“Outside of teammates, we’re friends, then we’re competitors,” Ramsey said about Saunders. “We push each other. When I set it off, I went by her and I did it.”

In the second of two finals being contested tonight, Emma Coburn ran a new meet record of 9:09.41 to win the women’s 3,000m steeplechase. Courtney Frerichs placed second in a season’s best time of 9:11.79. Val Constien ran 9:18.34—a personal record—to snag the third spot on the podium.

“I just wanted to stay as chill as I could the first half and then Courtney, with maybe four laps to go, started really pushing,” Coburn said. “I was excited about that just because it thinned out the pack. She was rolling, and I was just trying to stick behind her and then with like two laps to go, I made a big push and didn’t look back.”



DeAnna Price breaks the meet record on her first throw of the hammer qualifying rounds, throwing 77.10m. Photo by Jay Bendlin

In the qualifying rounds of the women’s hammer throw, DeAnna Price threw a meet record of 77.10m to lead the top 12 throwers into the final scheduled for Saturday. The top six women have all thrown farther than the Olympic standard—two of which achieved the standard in Thursday’s qualifying round.

High school standout Hobbs Kessler won heat one of the first round of the men’s 1,500m in 3:45.63. The 18 year old went from sixth to first in the last 100m, winning his professional debut (he signed with Adidas immediately before the Trials).

“I don’t have much experience with these races, so for the first bit I didn’t know how it was going to play out,” Kessler said. “I was just staying in position. But at 100 to go, I

knew I was going to make it.”

University of Oregon freshman Cole Hocker took the win in the second heat in 3:39.72. Former Duck Sam Prkel won the third heat in 3:39.02.

Hocker, in his first year as a Duck, already has three NCAA titles to his name. At the indoor championships, Hocker took the top spot in the mile and 3,000m. At the outdoor championship, he won the 1,500m title and then doubled back to finish fourth in the 5,000m.

“I’ve grown a lot and am able to trust myself more and more with the confidence I’ve given myself through racing,” Hocker said about his development as an athlete over the last year.

In the first round of the women’s 200m, Cambrea Sturgis of North Carolina A&T won the first heat in 22.37. She won the 100m and the 200m at the NCAA Championships this year. Anavia Battle won heat two in the time of 22.37. Former Duck Jenna Prandini ran a personal best of 22.14 to win the third heat.

Gabby Thomas won heat four, running a personal record of 21.98—the first woman to break 22 seconds in 2021, moving her into the world lead.

Thomas says she was surprised that she ran the world lead time in the prelims. “I really was surprised because nearing the end I decided to slow down, so I was expecting maybe a 22.01. I feel like I have more left, so I’m super excited!”

Tamara Clark clocked 22.44 to win the fifth and final heat.

The women’s 800m kicked off on Thursday, with Chanelle Price (1:59.86) winning the first heat. Athing Mu—2021 NCAA Champion in the 400m and the 4x100m relay—ran 2:00.69 to win heat two. Ajee’ Wilson (2:00.55) won heat three, Sabrina Southerland (2:00.85) took the win in heat four and former Duck Raevyn Rogers (2:00.75) won the fifth heat to round out the first round.



Gabby Thomas clocks a world leading 21.98 in the 200m prelims on Thursday. Photo by Otto Horiuchi

The first round of the men’s 5,000m saw heat wins by Eric Jenkins (13:43.18) and Paul Chelimo (13:36.66). For Jenkins, the heat win was a confidence boost after the former Duck dropped out of the 10,000m on Friday.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve been in a meet like this, fighting for a spot on a team. Probably since 2017,” Jenkins explained. “I just let the moment overwhelm me and that’s about it. After the race, I just had to meet with my coach and have some words of wisdom spoken to me, and reset.”

Legend Boyesen Hayes threw 62.59m to lead the top 12 throwers in the men’s discus to the finals scheduled for Friday.

In the qualifying rounds of the women’s pole vault, five women cleared 4.50m to lead the top 12 vaulters to Sunday’s final. Half of the qualifiers already have the Olympic standard.

In the qualifying rounds of the women’s long jump, Brittney Reese jumped a season best of 6.86m to lead the field of 12 qualifiers to Saturday’s final.

Kenny Selmon (49.03), Rai Benjamin (49.12), Amere Lattin (49.81) and Cameron Samuel (49.89) won their respective heats in the first round of the men’s 400m hurdles. The top 16 advanced to Saturday’s final.

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