

## K-State & KU Track Athletes Wrap Up NCAA's with Top Performances

The 2012 NCAA outdoor track and field championships finished with great performances from track athletes from Kansas State University and the University of Kansas over the four day event, but it also had its heartbreak for some athletes, too.

For the Wildcats the brightest moment was the battle in the men's high jump, where K-State's, Erik Kynard came away with this second straight high jump crown, out-dueling Indiana's, Derek Drouin. Kynard cleared 7 feet 8 inches on his first try, where as Drouin took multiple attempts, both gentlemen would try and continue but come up short on their next jump, thus giving the title to Kynard, since he cleared the last height only on one attempt. The win gave Kynard back-to-back high jump crown's at the NCAA outdoor track and field championships.

Kynard, was joined by Mantas Silkauskas in top finishes, as Silkauskas finished seventh in the long jump with a leap of 25 feet 4 1/2 inches. With Kynard's win and Silkauskas finish the Wildcats tied for 23rd place as a team and for the second straight year finished in the Top 25 at the NCAA outdoor track and field championships.

Plenty of other Wildcats competed at the championships with Tomas Kirieliuss finishing 18th in the decathlon with a total of 7,033 points. On the women's side Boglarka Bozzay finished 21st in the 800-meters, Jacquelyne Leffler placed 19th in the discus throw, while Ryan Kraiss and Mairead Murphy finished 14th and 19th, respectively in the heptathlon.

Even though, Kraiss didn't get a top place on the day in her events, she did leave the championships with a top honor earning the NCAA's, NCAA Elite 89 award which goes to the top student-athlete in their sport and honors them not only for their athletic accomplishments but, also their academic achievements.

For KU it was success and heartbreak that filled the storylines of the NCAA outdoor track and field championships. The KU women finished as a team with the best place in school history as they tied for fourth place with Clemson scoring 28 points, with LSU finishing first (68pts), Oregon second (52pts) and Texas A&M (32pts).

But the point total could have potentially been more for the Lady Jayhawks, as Andrea Guebelle won the triple jump with a leap of 46 feet 11 3/4 inches, but was later stripped of the title after an appeal from another school's coach, after the event was over. Guebelle apparently had faulted on the jump, thus knocking her down to her leap of 45 feet 5 inches in prelims, which only gave her third place.

The heartbreak for the Lady Jayhawks didn't end there, as their 1,600-meter relay team had appeared to finish third, finishing with a school record time of 3:27.19, but it was ruled after the race that one of the Jayhawk runners had stepped out of her lane, thus disqualifying them from the race.

Even with the heartbreak the Lady Jayhawks did finish tied for fourth and saw multiple top 10 finishes over the four day event. Paris Daniels notched an eighth place finish in the 200-meters with a time of 23.73, while her fellow runner Diamond Dixon took third in the 400-meter with a time of 51.59.

The other top performances came in the field events for the Lady Jayhawks, as Alena Krechyk took sixth in the hammer throw (21 feet 10 inches) and Francine Simpson and Andrea Guebelle finished fourth and sixth, respectively in the long jump (21 feet 6 3/4 inches & 21 feet 4 inches).

For the Jayhawk men the shining performer of the championships was thrower, Mason Finley who

placed eighth in the shot put (63 feet 7 inches) and was earned national-runner-up in the discus throw with a toss of 200 feet 2 inches. Finley performance helped pace the way for the Jayhawk men to tie for 23rd place as a team tying in-state rival, K-State, Ohio State and Iowa.

Overall the 2012 NCAA outdoor track and field championships were successful for K-State and KU and the some of the athletes look for that success to continue as they will compete in national events. The USA Junior Championships are next week in Bloomington, Ind. and the USA Olympic Team Trials will be June 22nd-July 1st in Eugene, Oregon.