

NEWS OF THE WORLDS



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PERRY, LAGAT WIN GOLD WITH STRONG FINISHES

OSAKA, Japan – Michelle Perry (Santa Clarita, Calif.) won her second straight world title and Bernard Lagat (Tucson, Ariz.) won the first gold of his storied career – and the first World or Olympic 1,500m medal for the U.S. since 1908 – Wednesday at the 2007 IAAF World Outdoor Track & Field Championships at Nagai Stadium.

One of the finest and most consistent middle-distance runners of his generation, Lagat had won two Olympic medals, was second at the 2001 World Outdoor Championships and won a World Indoor title at 3,000 meters while competing for Kenya. But a gold medal on the World Outdoor or Olympic level had eluded him. On Wednesday, the American record holder who became a U.S. citizen in 2004 – and who was cleared to compete as an American just one day before competition – celebrated his first championship competition in a Team USA jersey with a decisive win in the men's 1,500 meters.

The race shaped up as a U.S.-Kenya duel. 2007 world leader Alan Webb bolted to the lead at the gun, with Shadrack Kibet Korir of Kenya on his shoulder. After passing 400 meters in 58.63 seconds, the leaders of the cohesive pack settled into Webb, Korir, Lagat and Asbel Kiprop of Kenya. Kiprop took the lead with two laps to go, passing 800 meters in 1:58.08, followed by Webb and Lagat. With the pack still relatively tight at the bell, it was Kiprop and Webb, running side-by-side, followed by Lagat in third with Korir on his inside shoulder in fourth.

Coming down the stretch, defending champion Rashid Ramzi of Bahrain made a run at the lead as Webb and Lagat came around the outside. Coming from two meters back, Lagat sprinted cleanly to the front and went on to win in 3:34.77. It was Team USA's first gold medal in the event ever at World Outdoors, and the first gold medal of any kind since 1908, when Hall of Famer Mel Sheppard won the Olympic title. Ramzi was second in 3:35.00 and Korir third in 3:35.04. Spent, Webb ended eighth in 3:35.69. Lagat will get no time to savor his win, however. He competes in the first round of the men's 5,000 meters on Thursday.



BERNARD LAGAT

KRIBY LEE

Perry repeats in women's 100H

The women's 100m hurdles final also was dramatic. After a closely contested sprint to the finish, Perry had to nervously await the final results on the scoreboard before she knew of her second global title. As she has done throughout the meet, two-time USA outdoor champion Ginnie Powell (Los Angeles, Calif.) got off to a strong start in the race, along with Susanna Kallur of Sweden. Kallur seemed to hold the lead with two hurdles to go, but Perry surged over the final hurdle and the sprint to the finish, winning in 12.46 seconds. 2003 world champion Perdita Felicien of Canada moved up to second in 12.49, with Delloreen Ennis-London of Jamaica third in 12.50 and Kallur fourth in 12.51. Still coming back from injuries suffered in July, Powell was fifth in 12.55, with Lolo Jones (Baton Rouge, La.) sixth in 12.62.

In the women's 400 meters final, a determined stretch run by Dee Dee Trotter (Knoxville) fell short of a medal in a very fast race. The 2007 USA Outdoor champion went out conservatively but began to move in the final curve. Running in sixth, she began to move up on the leaders but ran out of gas with 15 meters left. Great Britain went 1-2 in the race, with Christine Ohuruogu first in 49.61 and Nicola Sanders second in 49.65; both times were personal bests. Novlene Williams of Jamaica was third in 49.66. Trotter finished fifth in 50.17, just .01 away from Ana Guevara of Mexico in fourth, with Mary Wineberg (Cincinnati, Ohio) eighth in 50.96.

Team USA Medal Table

Gold (5)

Tyson Gay (Fayetteville, Ark.), M100m, 9.85
 Kerron Clement (Gainesville, Fla.), M400H, 47.61
 Reese Hoffa (Athens, Ga.), MSP, 22.04m/72-3.75
 Bernard Lagat (Tucson, Ariz.), M1,500m, 3:34.77
 Michelle Perry (Santa Clarita, Calif.), W100H, 12.46

Silver (2)

Adam Nelson (Charlottesville, Va.), MSP, 21.61m/70-10.75
 Lauryn Williams (Miami, Fla.), W100m, 11.01

Bronze (3)

Kara Goucher (Portland, Ore.), W10,000m, 32:02.05
 Walter Davis (Baton Rouge, La.), MTJ, 17.33m/56-10.75
 Carmelita Jeter (Long Beach, Calif.), W100, 11.02

PHILLIPS DEFENDS LJ TITLE, GAY GOES FOR ANOTHER GOLD ON THURSDAY

OSAKA, Japan – Dwight Phillips will try to win his third straight world long jump title, while Tyson Gay goes for his second gold of the Championships during Thursday competition at the 2007 IAAF World Outdoor Track & Field Championships at Nagai Stadium.

The 2003 and 2005 world champion and Olympic gold medalist, Phillips (Snellville, Ga.) looked very strong in Wednesday's qualifying round in the men's long jump. He's joined in the final by 2005 USA outdoor champion Miguel Pate (Tuscaloosa, Ala.) and 2002 World Junior bronze medalist Trevell Quinley (Sacramento, Calif.).

Tyson Gay (Fayetteville, Ark.) will try to complete a 100-200 double achieved previously by Maurice Greene and Justin Gatlin when he competes in the men's 200m final with teammates Wallace Spearmon (Fayetteville, Ark.) and Rodney Martin (Los Angeles, Calif.).

2007 Visa Champion and 2007 world leader Tiffany Williams (Columbia, S.C.) competes in her first women's 400mH final.

Several potential medalists compete in semifinal action Thursday night, including the women's 200m corps of Allyson Felix (Santa Clarita, Calif.), Sanya Richards (Austin, Texas), Torri Edwards (Corona, Calif.), LaShaunte'a Moore (Akron, Ohio) and men's 110m hurdles crew Terrence Trammell (Ellenwood, Ga.), David Oliver (Orlando, Fla.) and David Payne (Cincinnati, Ohio).



DWIGHT PHILLIPS

FILE PHOTO/KIRBY LEE

Fresh off winning the men's 1,500m gold medal Wednesday night, Bernard Lagat (Tucson, Ariz.) is joined by Matt Tegenkamp (Madison, Wis.) and Adam Goucher (Portland, Ore.) in the men's 5,000m first round.

Below is a complete listing of USATF entrants for Thursday competition.

Team USA entrants – Thursday, August 30

7:35 p.m., men's pole vault qualifying – Brad Walker (Mountlake Terrace, WA), Jeff Hartwig (Jonesboro, AR), Jacob Pauli (Cedar Falls, IA)

7:40 p.m., men's 800m first round – Khadevis Robinson (Santa Monica, Calif.), Nick Symmonds (Springfield, Ore.), Duane Solomon (Los Angeles, Calif.)

8:25 p.m., women's 400m hurdles FINAL – Tiffany Williams (Columbia, S.C.)

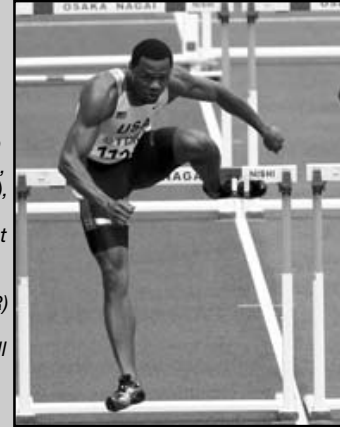
8:40 p.m., men's long jump FINAL – Dwight Phillips (Snellville, GA), Miguel Pate (Tuscaloosa, AL), Trevell Quinley (Sacramento, CA)

8:45 p.m., men's 5,000m first round – Bernard Lagat (Tucson, AZ), Matt Tegenkamp (Madison, WI), Adam Goucher (Portland, OR)

9:30 p.m., men's 110m hurdles semifinal – Terrence Trammell (Ellenwood, GA), David Oliver (Orlando, FL), David Payne (Cincinnati, Ohio)

10 p.m., women's 200m semifinal – Allyson Felix (Santa Clarita, CA), Sanya Richards (Austin, TX), Torri Edwards (Corona, CA), LaShaunte'a Moore (Akron, OH)

10:20 p.m., men's 200m FINAL – Tyson Gay (Fayetteville, Ark.), Wallace Spearmon (Fayetteville, Ark.), Rodney Martin (Los Angeles, Calif.)



DAVID PAYNE

ERROL ANDERSON

Qualified Successes

Qualifying rounds continued to reap strong results for Team USA on Wednesday night.

Team USA looks poised for a possible sweep in Friday's final of the men's 400 meters, with all three remaining Americans easily advancing. 2000 Olympic 400m hurdles gold medalist Angelo Taylor (Decatur, Ga.) looked very controlled in winning the first semifinal in 44.45, and defending champion Jeremy Wariner (Waco, Texas) looked just as easy winning the second race in 44.34. LaShawn Merritt (Suffolk, Va.) kept the momentum rolling by winning Heat 3 in 44.31, the fastest time of the day. Wariner's time was second-fastest and Taylor's third.

Three Americans also are slated for Thursday's men's 200m final after Wallace Spearmon (Fayetteville, Ark.) and Rodney Martin (Los Angeles, Calif.) went 2-3 in the first semifinal in 20.05 and 20.18, respectively, thanks to strong stretch runs. Nursing a slightly sore knee after his 100m victory Sunday night, Tyson Gay went the second heat in 20.00.

All four women's 200 meter runners will compete in Thursday's semifinal round after Sanya Richards (22.31) and Allyson Felix (22.61) won their respective heats, and Torri Edwards (22.62) and LaShauntae Moore (22.71) were second in theirs.

American record holder Shalane Flanagan (Pittsboro, N.C.) moved into Saturday's final of the women's 5,000m by placing fifth in her semifinal in 15:07.47, while two-time Olympian Jennifer Rhines did the same in the second semi, placing fifth in her race in 15:14.30. Michelle Sykes (Winston-Salem, N.C.) was ninth in the first heat in 16:01.06 and did not advance.

Two-time USA Outdoor champion Shani Marks (Brooklyn Park, Minn.) was 18th overall in women's triple jump qualifying with a best mark of 13.90m/45-7.25 and will not compete in the final.

Morning roundup

Two American women will appear in the 1,500m semifinals on Friday. Four-time NCAA All-American Erin Donohue (Haddenfield, N.J.) placed sixth in Heat 2 in 4:10.89 seconds. In Heat 3, Treniere Clement (Knoxville, Tenn.) found an opening in the pack with 300 meters to go and finished second in 4:10.85. Christin Wurth-Thomas (Springdale, Ark.) placed 10th in Heat 1 in 4:20.21 and did not advance.

2007 USA champion Terrence Trammell won Heat 1 in men's 110m hurdles qualifying in 13.40 seconds. In Heat 5, David Payne (Cincinnati, Ohio), who arrived in Osaka Tuesday as a substitute for injured Dominique Arnold, advanced with his third-place finish in 13.27. In Heat 3, David Oliver (Orlando, Fla.) was fifth in 13.66 seconds, reaching for his right hamstring as he crossed the finish line. All three Americans advance to Thursday night's semifinals.

In men's long jump qualifying, reigning world and Olympic champion Dwight Phillips (Snellville, Ga.) sailed to the final with first-attempt, automatic qualifier of 8.22 meters/26 feet 11.75 inches. He'll be joined in the final by teammates Trevell Quinley (Sacramento, Calif.), who had a best of 7.99m/26-2.75, and 2005 USA outdoor champion Miguel Pate (Tuscaloosa, Ala.), who had a best of 8.10m/26-7.

In women's javelin throw, national champion Dana Pounds finished 14th in her group with a best throw of 55.00 meters/180 feet 5 inches, and will not advance.

For complete results, quotes and Team USA reports, visit www.usatf.org



MICHELLE PERRY

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