

## World-leading times for Lendore and Aggie women's 4x400 at Razorback Invitational

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – Texas A&M finished second in team scoring behind Arkansas at the Razorback Invitational that concluded Saturday with a flurry of stellar performances inside the Randal Tyson Track Complex. The Aggies had a pair of world-leading performances from Deon Lendore in the 400 meters as well as the women's 4x400 relay.

The final team scores for the women had Arkansas winning with 151 points and Texas A&M just five points back at 146 for second place. Florida finished third with 84 with Florida State fourth at 83.5. The rest of the field included Oklahoma State (55), Oklahoma (40.5), Texas (38), Tulsa (30) and Stanford (4).

Arkansas men totaled 155.5 points for the win with Texas A&M second at 116.5 while Florida placed third with 92. The rest of the field included Oklahoma State (73), Oklahoma (58.5), Florida State (56.5), Tulsa (38), Texas (25) and Stanford (11).

"I never like to say that we go beat, but we did," stated Aggie head coach Pat Henry. "Arkansas beat us on both sides here this weekend, but our teams will match up real evenly when we see them again at conference. I feel good about the efforts we had. Some were great and some we need to work on. We're still getting a little better each time we are on the track in most cases.

"Florida was here this weekend as well and finished third behind us in team scoring on both sides. Any time we have that level of competition with Arkansas and Florida it makes for a great competitive environment."

In lowering his world-leading time over 400m to 45.47 seconds Deon Lendore answered the challenge from Florida's Arman Hall, who finished second in 45.63. Aldrich Bailey, Jr. ran a 46.25 to place second versus Florida State's James Harris (46.20) in another section and placed fourth overall.

Lendore produced the No. 5 performance on the Aggie all-time list, where he holds six of the top eight marks, while Bailey becomes the No. 5 performer. Lendore came through 200m at 21.44 with Hall close at 21.57. Once on the backstretch of the final lap, Lendore improved his advantage and established a clear lead on the homestretch.

"Coming into the meet I knew we were going to have a quality field," noted Lendore. "Arman Hall is a great runner, so I was expecting both of us to go out and have our best effort. I didn't want to be complacent with the time I already ran this season. So, I looked at it like a new meet to see where I'm at with my training.

"Arkansas is a good track, so it's always good to come here ready to run since you'll likely PR or come close to your best."

Kamaria Brown cruised to a 52.71 victory in her opening 400m of the season, holding off the challenge from Florida's Ebony Eutsey (53.56). Brown led the field at 200m with a split of 23.87 with Eutsey a step behind at 23.98. A&M's Ibukun Mayungbe placed eighth in the event with a 55.34.

Brown's time is the fastest collegiate mark on a banked 200m track this indoor season while one faster time has been recorded on a flat, oversized track. Brown is currently fourth in the world this season and the world leader with a 22.96 in the 200m.

"I was very happy with my time," said Brown. "Since I was opening in the 400 this weekend I needed to get a race strategy down. Even though I stumbled a little bit coming off the last curve on the first lap, I'm still happy with the time."

Later in the meet Brown split 51.69 as the second leg of the Aggie 4x400 that won in a world-leading time of 3:31.07 that is No. 3 on the A&M all-time list. The competitive race had Florida in second with a 3:31.52 while Arkansas (3:35.46) placed third and Florida State (3:43.55) finished fourth.

Ibukun Mayungbe led off the relay with a 54.28. Then Brown moved A&M from fourth to first with her sizzling carry. Janeil Bellille maintained the Aggie lead with a 53.06 split and Olivia Ekponé carried home the baton to victory on the anchor leg with a 52.06 split.

"It was very exciting," said Brown of the 4x400 finish. "Even though I got the baton in fourth I knew I had to put the team in first and give a lead to Janeil. That way she could give a lead to Olivia. I made sure to set up the race right so I wouldn't go out too hard on the first lap and not have anything left for the second lap.

"This was a very good meet. I considered it like a pre-conference with Arkansas and Florida here. To compete against these teams, finding out what we are capable of and what they are capable of, will give us an idea of what to expect when we host the conference meet at the end of the month."

In the men's 4x400 relay the Aggie men posted their best time of the season with a 3:05.06, which is No. 5 all-time at A&M, but it left them in third place behind Florida's world-leading 3:04.46 with Arkansas second at 3:05.02 and Florida State fourth with a 3:07.87.

The Aggie foursome included Roudette (46.99), Bailey (46.27), Shavez Hart (47.24) and Lendore (44.57).

"Chasing will always get you to a faster time," said Lendore. "I don't really like to lose 4x4s, I'm all about pride. Seeing how far back we were it didn't really matter how hard I had to go out. I really had to close the gap to make a difference and have it be a closer race. We didn't win, but we closed the gap and ran our fastest time of the season. We will go back, look at the mistakes and try to do better next time."

The Aggie women totaled 30 points in the women's 60 final as Ekponé set a career best time of 7.28 seconds to lead a 1-2-3-4-8 finish by Texas A&M. Ekponé remains No. 6 on the Aggie all-time list. Jennifer Madu and Aaliyah Brown were both timed in 7.34 (separated by 0.008) for second and third place. Brown now equals the No. 8 time on the A&M all-time list.

Ashley Collier posted a 7.37 for fourth place while Ashton Purvis finished eighth with a 7.66. At that stage of the meet the point tally moved the Aggies into an 11 point lead over the Razorbacks, 116-95.

"I'm really excited with how my 60 is coming along this year," stated Ekponé. "I went from 7.4 to consistently running 7.3s and now I came out with a 7.28. It's a different atmosphere at Arkansas and I love running here. Competing in a different environment was a good idea for us at this time of the year."

Brea Garrett won the weight throw with a mark of 66-8 (20.33) to claim the victory by a quarter of an inch over Florida State's Briana Cherry-Bronson. Garrett hit her best mark in round two after Cherry-Bronson opened her series with a 66-7.75 (20.31).

Garrett's mark is the No. 3 performance on the Aggie all-time list behind her school record. Placing eighth in the event with a personal best of 55-6.25 (16.92) was Aggie Jill Hydrick.

"I always embrace good competition," noted Garrett. "I want people to throw far so I can beat them at their best and the top of their game. I wanted a better mark today, but I'm pleased I was consistent with the marks I've been producing this season.

"You have to prepare yourself for any venue, but this one was familiar ring so it made me feel more comfortable. I'm more concerned with the competition than the ring, though. When we host the SECs later this month we will have the home advantage, so I'm looking forward throwing in the ring I practice in."

The Aggie men totaled 16 points in the weight throw as Casey Strong finished second with a 64-3 (19.58) with Austin Cook fourth with a personal best of 59-0.25 (17.99) and Ben Skrla sixth with a mark of 55-7.5 (16.95). Cook moves to No. 5 on the Aggie all-time list.

The men's hurdle final featured Wayne Davis II and Florida's Eddie Lovett. However, Davis cramped after clearing the first hurdle, then pushed over the second hurdle and didn't finish the race. Lovett rolled to a 7.73 victory. In the prelims Davis ran 7.84 while Lovett clocked 7.78 in a separate heat.

Shamier Little ran 8.47 for third place in the women's 60 hurdles to finish behind an 8.28 by Florida's Skylar Ross-Ransom and an 8.38 from Florida State's Anne Zarge.

LaQue Moen-Davis finished third in the triple jump with a mark of 42-3.5 (12.89) while Haley Gooch finished sixth with a 39-3.75 (11.98). Florida's Ciarra Brewer won the event with a 44-5.5 (13.55) to take over the collegiate lead in 2014 from the 44-3.25 Moen-Davis had set earlier this season.

A set of three personal best times were produced in the women's Invitational 3,000m by Hillary Montgomery, Grace Fletcher and Amanda Jenkins as they finished third, fourth and ninth.

Montgomery clocked 9:28.90 to finish a couple of strides behind Marielle Hall of Texas (9:28.24). Montgomery's time is the No. 3 performer on the A&M all-time list and the No. 4 performance. Fletcher posted a 9:29.75 to move up from No. 10 to No. 4 on the Aggie all-time list with the No. 6 performance. Jenkins ran 9:48.64 and is now No. 12 on the all-time list.

Josh Hernandez and Hector Hernandez ran in separate sections of the Invitational 800m and placed fourth and fifth with stellar times. Hector ran first and posted a 1:49.95 as he moved from fifth to third in the final stages of the race to clip Arkansas' Patrick Rono (1:49.98) at the line. Hector just missed his indoor career best of 1:49.66 set on this track last season during the SEC Championships.

Even pacing in the second section had Josh posting a career best of 1:49.15, moving to No. 4 on the Aggie all-time list, as he finished second to Florida's Andres Arroyo, who was second overall with a 1:48.53. Another Gator, Ryan Schnulle, won the event with a 1:48.05.

Splits for Josh were 27.10, 27.49 (54.58), 27.28 (1:21.86), and 27.29 while Hector opened with a 25.94 followed by 27.08 (53.02), 28.57 (1:21.58) and 28.37.

Another fourth and fifth place combo for the Aggie men came in the triple jump. Olabanji Asekun had a mark of 49-10 (15.19) for fourth while Jeffrey Prothro finished fifth with a 49-5.75 (15.08). Arkansas swept the top three places and added a seventh place for 26 points. The reclaimed the lead over the Aggies by a 133.5 to 110.5 count.

Karis Jochen placed third in the collegiate 3,000 meters with a time of 9:47.27, No. 6 on the Aggie all-time list. In fifth place during the early stages of the race, Jochen took over the lead with eight laps remaining as she produced a 37.95 lap.

With three laps remaining Tulsa's Emily Dunn shot to the lead, covering the five-second gap she was behind the leaders. Dunn went on to claim the win in 9:46.05 while Jochen challenged Arkansas' Samantha Mohler for second. Mohler held the edge at the line with a 9:47.24, just 0.03 ahead of Jochen.

Jochen's splits in the race included 3:15.64 for the first 1,000m then a 3:17.00 (6:32.64) followed by a 3:14.63.

Michael Bryan placed fourth in the 60 with a 6.83 while Prezel Hardy, Jr. finished fifth in 6.85.

In the men's collegiate mile A&M's Cameron Villarreal moved into the lead with a lap and a half remaining. Oklahoma's Dylan Blakenbaker (4:10.64) won the race by a step over Anthony Armstrong of Oklahoma State (4:10.74) while Villarreal finished third in 4:11.84