

Aggie men finish sixth in NCAA Championships, Latario Collie claims second in triple jump

EUGENE – On a breezy Friday for the final day of men's competition in the NCAA Championships, Texas A&M placed sixth in team scoring with 27 points as Oregon defended its team championship with 85 points in front of a crowd of 11,168 at Hayward Field. A total of 81 teams scored in the national championship meet.

Latario Collie recorded the top finish for the Aggies with a runner-up performance in the triple jump. Collie becomes the third A&M jumper to place second in the NCAA triple jump, joining Julian Reid (2009) and Tyron Stewart (2010).

The Aggies also had fifth place efforts from Gregory Coleman in the 400 hurdles and the 4x100 relay while the 4x400 finished seventh.

As Oregon defended its team title the Florida Gators repeated as runner-up with 56 points while Arkansas (53), LSU (45) and USC (40.5) rounded out the top five schools. Finishing behind Texas A&M among the top 10 teams were Texas (26), Mississippi State (20), Texas Tech (18), Illinois (17) and Penn State (17). It marks the first time since 2007 the Aggies didn't place among the top five teams.

"It's great to see Latario jump that far in this kind of competition," said Texas A&M head coach Pat Henry. "He held up his end of the bargain and did a great job today. We had one get hurt today with Deon Lendore, so that changed up a lot of things we were able to do."

Defending triple jump champion Marquis Dendy opened with a 57-5 (17.50) and finished with a windy 58-1 ¼ (17.71) to capture a second sweep of NCAA long jump and triple jump titles. Collie opened with a wind-aided 53-11 ¼ (16.44) and improved in the next couple of rounds to 54-2 ¾w (16.53) and 55-9 ¾w (17.01), which is the third best performance under any conditions on the Aggie all-time list.

"Having the competition on two runways threw me off a little bit," stated Collie. "My jumps today were ok. I started off a little rough, so I thought about indoor nationals (where he fouled four of six attempts) and knew I had to perform tonight. I'm pleased with my first year in Division I at Texas A&M and contributing points to the team."

In round five Collie had a wind-legal mark of 55-4 ¼ (16.87) which is the No. 3 performance on the A&M all-time list behind his school record of 56-4 ½ (17.18) from the SEC meet and Reid's previous school record of 55-8 ½ (16.98). Aggie Olabanji Asekun finished 12th in the competition with a 52-4 ¾w (15.97).

Gregory Coleman finished fifth in the 400 hurdles with a clocking of 50.15 from his lane eight position. Michael Stigler of Kansas, twice a NCAA runner-up, claimed the victory in 48.84 over a 49.24 from Jordin Andrade of Boise State. Coleman became the third Aggie to finish fifth in the NCAA 400 hurdles, joining Chappelle Henderson (1984) and Nick Robinson (2008), and was the first to score in the event since 2008.

"It was a real good experience," said Coleman, who ran in lane eight. "Making the final there was less pressure since I had already done the hard part in getting through the tough rounds. Then I just had to go out there and give it my all.

"I'm used to people running off me, so I reminded myself the race is 400 meters and that helped me relax and not back off too much. In the homestretch I was reminded to trust the steps and not to approach the hurdle too quick and stay open."

The Aggie 4x100 placed fifth in a time of 38.77 with the foursome of Devin Jenkins, Shavez Hart, Elijah Morrow and Deon Lendore. It was the second fastest time of the season for A&M, who won the SEC title in 38.74.

Arkansas won the sprint relay in a collegiate-leading 38.47 over TCU (38.59), LSU (38.62) and USC (38.75). Finishing behind A&M were Florida (38.96), Illinois (39.36) and Alabama (39.63).

Later in the 400 final Lendore stopped in the first 125m and did not finish. LSU's Vernon Norwood won the race in 45.10 to complete a sweep of the NCAA Indoor and Outdoor titles. Oregon's Marcus Chambers (45.59) finished second with DJ Zahn of Illinois (45.97) third.

"We don't really know the extent of anything on a day like today," Henry said of Lendore. "Our medical people have all looked at him and he's got a little bit of an inside hamstring, it looks like. We'll just have to wait and see."

With Lendore unavailable in the 4x400 and Coleman having just finished the 400 hurdles, the Aggie 4x400 consisted of

Deon Hickey, Shavez Hart, Hector Hernandez and Bralon Taplin. They clocked a time of 3:06.85 to place seventh.

"This time schedule doesn't allow a sprinter to come back and do a couple of doubles they've always been able to do," noted Henry. "This is a great schedule for distance people, but it isn't for sprinters. We had some guys try to do some things in the relay, but we couldn't line-up and get it done."

LSU won the race in 3:01.96 as Norwood charged past Florida's Najee Glass in the final 60m. The Gators were runner-up in 3:02.48 with Mississippi State third at 3:04.96.

Saturday's final day of the NCAA Championship will crown the women's team champion. The Aggies have Shelbi Vaughan defending her title in the discus at 3:35 p.m. (CT) to start things off. ESPN2 will offer live coverage at 4 p.m. (CT) with field event coverage on ESPN3.

Also in action for Texas A&M are Aaliyah Brown and Jennifer Madu in the 100 meters, defending champion Shamier Little in the 400 hurdles, the 200m combo of defending champion Kamari Brown and A. Brown as well as both the 4x100 and 4x400 relays. The sprint relay is seeking a third consecutive title and its seventh in the past nine years.