

Subject: Lavillenie And Payne Take Top Individual Honors At Hy-Vee Street Vault On Court Avenue
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Lavillenie And Payne Take Top Individual Honors At Hy-Vee Street Vault On Court Avenue

DES MOINES, Iowa – Renaud Lavillenie, the men’s pole vault World Record holder, and Demi Payne from Stephen F. Austin, won the inaugural Hy-Vee Street Vault on Court Avenue in downtown Des Moines on Wednesday, April 22.

Lavillenie and Marion Lotout were one of six pairs teamed up together in the men’s and women’s team competition. The French duo recorded a combined height of 32 feet 8 inches.

Lavillenie has become a regular at the Drake Relays presented by Hy-Vee, as he has competed at the last two Relays and won last year’s men’s Moscow World Championship Rematch pole vault. He won Wednesday’s street vault event by clearing 19-0.25 on his first attempt at the height before missing at 19-4.75.

“It was great to be back in Des Moines, and this experience in downtown was pretty good. Near the end it got to be a bit cold, but it was a good atmosphere and also some good vaults,” Lavillenie said. “I am pleased that many people came to watch pole vault because it’s not something we usually see at events.”

Payne, who is the daughter of former Drake Relays champion and Hall of Fame member, Bill Payne, vaulted a personal best of 15-1.5, claiming the women’s title. Payne, who holds the indoor collegiate record, barely missed on all three of her attempts to set the collegiate outdoor record at 15-2.25.

“I don’t think I’ve been to something as awesome as this,” said Payne. “The crowd was getting into it with the music. It was a great place to jump. I wish I would have gotten that record, but I am jumping on Friday so hopefully I’ll get it then.”

Brad Walker came in second on the men's side as he cleared 18-8.25 and missed all three attempts to keep up with Lavillenie. Akron's Shawn Barber and Steven Lewis tied for third as they both cleared 17-6.5 on their first attempts.

Katerina Stefanidi came in second for the women, vaulting 14-9.5. Marion Fiack and Lotout tied for third as they both cleared 13.7.75 on their second attempts.

Ziemek and Miller Lead Multi-Events After First Day Of Drake Relays presented by Hy-Vee

DES MOINES, Iowa – Wisconsin athlete Zach Ziemek and former St. Cloud State All-American Heather Miller lead the Drake Relays presented by Hy-Vee multi-events after the first day of competition.

Ziemek, a junior who is redshirting this season and competing unattached, compiled 4,018 points in the first five events of the decathlon Wednesday to lead Minnesota sophomore Luca Wieland and former Northern Iowa athlete Mat Clark, a two-time Drake Relays champion.

Ziemek got off to a strong start on a sunny, windy day by winning the opening event, the 100 meters. He also tied Wieland for first in the high jump and took second in the long jump

"It is my first meet, either indoor or outdoors, this season," said Ziemek, a two-time Big Ten champion. "The last time I competed was the end of July last year (in the Thorpe Cup), and coming out here was kind of like practice, but it was a competition. I was in a practice mode, which happened as I've been practicing all year. I am happy with my performance, and tried to do the best I could."

Wieland, the Big Ten and NCAA indoor pentathlon champion this year, is right behind with 4,010 points. Along with his first-place tie in the high jump, he won the long jump and finished second in the 100.

Clark, the Drake Relays champion in 2009 and 2011, finished the day with 3,899 points.

Miller, from St. Paul, Minnesota, put together a solid opening day, winning the 200, finishing second in the high jump and taking third in the long jump. She was second at Drake last year and was the NCAA Division II indoor pentathlon champion in 2010.

"It went pretty well," Miller said. "Like all heptathlons, you just want to come in and have consistent performances across the board. I thought I was able to do that. Nothing really outstanding, but nothing bad, either."

Former Des Moines Christian and Central Missouri athlete Lindsay Lettow, the Relays champion the past two years, is second with 3,376. Mississippi's Fabia McDonald is third with 3,328.

-DrakeRelays-