

## 2010 Australian Combined Events Championships

Domain Athletics Centre, Hobart

February 13-14, 2010

### U18 MEN

Twelve months ago at this same venue, Lindsay Newton-Smith from Queensland had taken the U17 title from his fellow Queenslander Kade Jennings, with Western Australian Morgan Ward in third.

In 2010, Jennings was missing, having taken a short sabbatical from the combined events. However, Ward was once again on deck to see whether he could knock over the Queenslander and take the U18 title. Tasmanian Ben Gittus, fourth last year, had not returned, but fifth-placegetter Josh Zeitzen, also from Tasmania, was back once again.

So Newton-Smith, Ward and Zeitzen would make up the field of three which would do battle for the 2010 title.

### 100m

With a minimal breeze of 0.1m/s at the athlete's backs, Lindsay Newton-Smith (11.58) was the quickest down the straightaway, but only eight hundredths ahead of the long-limbed Morgan Ward (11.64). Joshua Zeitzen trailed behind over a half second further back in 12.19.

*Pictured right:* Lindsay Newton-Smith (lane 3), Morgan Ward (lane 2)

After the first event:

Newton-Smith 736, Ward 723, Zeitzen 614



### Long Jump

Newton-Smith's lead was swallowed up and surpassed by Morgan Ward in the long jump. Last year, Newton-Smith had jumped 6.16m to Ward's best of 5.78m. This year the roles were reversed. Lindsay jumped only 5.73m for 529 points, but Ward stretched out to 6.40m for 675 points! Zeitzen could muster only a 4.52m effort, less than he had jumped a year before (4.81).

*Pictured right:* Morgan Ward

After two events, the honours were shared one a piece between Ward and Newton-Smith:

Ward 1398, Newton-Smith 1265, Zeitzen 908

### Shot Put

Ward extended his lead in the shot put. Using his long levers to his advantage, Ward heaved the 5kg ball out to 13.08m, gaining another 52 points over Newton-Smith's 12.22m effort. Zeitzen struggled with the weight and threw only 7.55m.

After three events, it was two-one to Ward:

Ward 2070, Newton-Smith 1885, Zeitzen 1248



## High Jump

Ward was always going to have an advantage in this event. Bringing good high jumping genes to the competition, Ward (*pictured right*), son of current Australian open women's high jump record holder, Vanessa Ward, cleared 1.97m to Newton-Smith's best of 1.79m. Zeitzen again struggled, with a best of 1.52m.

After four events, Ward had captured three events to Newton-Smith's one:

Ward 2846, Newton-Smith 2504, Zeitzen 1652

## 400m

Given that he had taken out the 100m, and given that he could run quite well over the longer distances, Newton-Smith appeared to be the favourite for the final event of Day One, the 400m.

Such proved to be the case, as his 52.42 easily accounted for Ward's 54.34. Zeitzen was more in the picture in this event, with a time of 56.00.

After an interesting first day's competition, honours were fairly evenly split, with Ward having taken three events to Newton-Smith's two. However, the telling factor in combined events is not how many wins an athlete can put together, but how many points he can accumulate in the process. Ward would carry a solid lead of 262 points into Day Two.

Final Day One scores:

Ward 3472, Newton-Smith 3210, Zeitzen 2211

## DAY TWO

### 110m hurdles

Morgan Ward began Day Two very well once again. He ran strongly into a 0.5m/s head wind, to hold out Newton-Smith, about a half second behind. Ward had beaten Newton-Smith in this event in 2009 as well, but the times had improved markedly in the intervening 12 months – Newton-Smith from 16.97 to 15.92, and Ward from 16.90 to 15.44.

Zeitzen managed to negotiate the obstacles in just under twenty seconds (19.64). Ward had added a fourth event to his tally, and extended his lead to 317 points.

*Pictured right:* Morgan Ward leads Lindsay Newton-Smith off the last hurdle

After six events:

Ward 4269, Newton-Smith 3952, Zeitzen 2589

## Discus

Ward struggled somewhat in the discus. Despite having the advantage of the long levers, he had difficulty mastering his turn, and the result was a few wobbly efforts, the best of which fell to earth at a distance of 33.53m. While only 26cm



short of his performance in 2009, Ward would have been hoping for better. Newton-Smith seized the opportunity to grab one back from his opponent, throwing 34.54m to win the event, and snip Ward's huge points lead back by twenty points. Zeitzen lobbed the 1.5kg platter out to 24.35m.

After seven events:

Ward 4803, Newton-Smith 4506, Zeitzen 2944

### **Pole Vault**

Newton-Smith (*pictured right*) showed the advantage of putting in some pole vault training in the previous twelve months. He improved his 2009 height (2.90m) to 3.70m at these Championships. Ward had also improved – from 3.30m in 2009 to 3.50m at these 2010 edition of the championships. Zeitzen unfortunately recorded no height and scored zero points for this event.

After eight events, the “events won” was evenly shared at four apiece, but Ward fared much better with the more telling statistic – points earned. He still held a lead of over 240 points:

Ward 5285, Newton-Smith 5041, Zeitzen 2944

### **Javelin**

Javelin was one of Newton-Smith's best events. He would be hoping to throw close to sixty metres, given that he had thrown 58.72m at last year's competition and he was twelve months older. Of course, Ward was no slouch with the spear either, having thrown 51.75m at the 2009 meet.

Once again another surprise was in store. Newton-Smith managed only 54.59m, but Ward exceeded this performance with his best of 54.90m. **It was a difference of only four points**, but again it was in Ward's favour. Zeitzen threw a reasonable 35.59m.

With only one event remaining, Ward held a seemingly insurmountable lead of 248 points. Was it even remotely possible that Newton-Smith could pull a rabbit out of the hat to win from here?

With one event remaining:

Ward 5946, Newton-Smith 5698, Zeitzen 3323

### **1500m**

In 2009, Newton-Smith had 4:44.93 for 650 points in the 1500m. Ward had run 6:15.78 for only 203 points. If Ward had not improved, and Newton-Smith could replicate his 2009 performance, he could still snatch an unlikely victory.

At the recent Queensland Championships, Newton-Smith, albeit on a very hot and humid summer afternoon in Brisbane, had run only 5:05.37. Ward's recent 1500m form was an unknown, as was Zeitzen's.

In the early running, Newton-Smith and Zeitzen ran close together, but as the race progressed, Newton-Smith realised that, if he were to have a chance of overhauling Ward, he would have to move ahead and run the race by himself from the front. With split times written on the back of his hand, Newton-Smith relentlessly pursued his goal. Behind him, Ward tagged along with Victorian U17 competitor Luke Cann in the hope of being dragged along to a faster time.

To overcome Ward's 248 point lead, Newton-Smith would be hoping to run sub-4:45 (about 650 points), and hope that Ward could do no better than 5:30 (about 400 points).



For his part, Newton-Smith was leaving no questions to be asked. He drove his body from start to finish, and crossed the line in the fine time of 4:40.34. He had played his role to perfection. Now there was the part over which he had no control – the performance of Morgan Ward.

Ward was in obvious discomfort throughout but he pushed on as best his body would allow. When he finally crossed the line, he was more than 22 seconds faster than in 2009, but this still only gave him a time of 4:52.59, for 295 points. Newton-Smith’s time had been worth 678 points. **He had managed to turn a 248 point deficit into a 135 point win!**



1.

2.

3.

*Pictured above:*

1. Joshua Zeitzen and Lindsay Newton-Smith in the early going
2. Newton-Smith checks the back of his hand for his split times
3. Luke Cann (U17) leads a struggling Morgan Ward

Final standings Men’s U18 Decathlon:

Newton-Smith 6376, Ward 6241, Zeitzen 3857

**Post script:**

Is it just me or are others in the Combined Events world starting to salivate about the potential competition that might transpire in two years time in the Australian U20 Championships with World Junior berths up for grabs. The word from his coach is that Kade Jennings is seriously considering a return to the combined events.

**Imagine.....** Jennings, Ward and Newton-Smith improve their vault to 4.20m (673 points); Ward and Jennings spend a lot of time over the next two years improving their 1500m endurance work so that they can under 4:45 (650 points). With improvements in these two events alone, what scores could the protagonists anticipate, based on best previous decathlon performances?

Ward	723 675 672 714 475 635 540 673 615 650	<b>6795</b>
Newton-Smith	736 621 620 619 706 742 554 673 719 678	<b>6668</b>
Jennings	742 693 665 636 587 662 566 673 546 650	<b>6420</b>

If one expects the World Junior Qualifying standard in 2012 to be around 7150 points, and improvements likely in eight other disciplines as well, who would like to put odds on the chance that all three might produce the qualifier in two years time? Roll on 2012!!

**Peter Hannan**

**Athletics Australia National Youth Event Coach – Combined Events**

Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2010

## **2010 Australian Combined Events Championships**

Domain Athletics Centre, Hobart

February 13-14, 2010

### **U18 WOMEN**

On the original entry list there were three girls listed to contest the U18 championships – one from Victoria, Ruby Holten, and two from New South Wales, Rachel Hardy and Gabrielle Ralphs. Unfortunately Ralphs had sustained an injury, and the title battle would be the two person Hardy-Holten show.

Hardy had won the U17 championship in Hobart in 2009, while Holten had placed fourth.

### **DAY ONE**

#### **100m hurdles**

Those who thought they would get an early indication of the possible winner of this event were none the wiser after the 100 hurdles.

In an unusual scenario, especially for combined events, Hardy and Holten dead-heated in the first even. Both girls recorded a time of 15.05s, to sit on 535 points after one event. The time was quite a good opening performance for both girls, and gave promise of an interesting competition ahead.

#### **High Jump**

In the high jump, Hardy made an initial break on Holten, clearing 1.60m. While this was a good 7cm below her best, it was enough to take her points clear of Holten, who cleared 1.54m. In a strange twist, the heights for both girls were the same as they had cleared in 2009.

After two events:

Hardy 1571, Holten 1501

#### **Shot Put**

Rachel Hardy told me that she had been working on some of her weaker events since the last Australian titles, and the shot put gave evidence of this. Last year Hardy had thrown 9.65m. In 2010 she had upped that by over a metre to 10.98m. Holten, despite enduring a year when she had suffered a few injuries, also improved on last year's performance (8.61), throwing 8.97m.

However, Hardy had moved out to a 202 point lead.

After three events:

Hardy 2165, Holten 1963

#### **200m**

While concentrating on her weaker events, Hardy confessed that she was a little concerned that she may not have maintained her stronger events as best she could. This became evident in the 200m. In 2009 Hardy had been knocking on the door of 27 seconds, running 27.05. She would have been hoping for something at least as good in 2010, but could manage only 27.55. Holten crossed the line well ahead of her in 26.53, reducing her deficit to 150 points.

Final Day One scores:

Hardy 2864, Holten 2714

### **DAY TWO**

#### **Long Jump**

The two girls remained very close to each other in the long jump. Hardy managed to take the win, but only just. Her 5.10m was just enough to turn back Holten's challenge. Holten landed in the sand only 4cm behind Hardy's best.

*Pictured right:*  
Rachel Hardy (310),  
Ruby Holten (311)

Hardy still led by a handy 161 points  
with two events remaining.

After five events:  
Hardy 3451, Holten 3290

### Javelin

Hardy (*pictured right*) was out of  
sorts with her javelin. In 2009 she  
had thrown just under 28 metres, but  
this year in Hobart she could manage  
only 26.12m. Her approach on the  
runway looked good, but she could  
not control the tip and failed to pull  
the 'tail through the point'. Holten,  
however, improved on her 2009  
effort (24.89), throwing 27.96m.

Ruby Holten had cut some more  
points from Hardy's lead, which now  
stood at 126 points.

With one event remaining:  
Hardy 3854, Holten 3728

### 800m

What sort of 'endurance condition' did the girls bring to Hobart with them? Hardy had run a fine 2:33.14 in 2009, while Holten had finished in 2:41.47. Was either girl in that sort of shape this year? Holten had had some injuries. How much work had she been able to put in?

Hardy put the competition beyond doubt when she recorded a solid 2:37.06, leaving Holten far behind in 2:59.81.

Final scores: Hardy 4461, Holten 4095

Hardy was 73 points the better in comparison with her 2009 score, while Holten was 202 points better.

*Pictured:* Ruby Holten (311 - 2<sup>nd</sup>), Rachel Hardy (310 - 1<sup>st</sup>)

**Peter Hannan**  
**Athletics Australia National Youth Event Coach –**  
**Combined Events**

Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2010

