

Queensland Open U23 & U20 Combined Events Championships
Gold Coast City Athletics Track
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by Peter Hannan

Open & U20 Men's Decathlon

The last two editions of the Qld Open & U20 Combined Events Championships on the Gold Coast had seen some problems with the electronic timing system. The photo finish system had been working without a glitch for all meets since the beginning of the Winter Series Meets back in June 2007, so this year we were hoping to be 'third time lucky'. However, once again difficulties were encountered. This time, however, it was an operator error. A thumb slipping off the capture button at just the wrong time meant that the first two finishers in the men's 100m were not captured by the photo finish. Fortunately, the problems encountered at the recent South Australian Championships had ensured that the local organizers were well and truly prepared for just such an eventuality. The requisite number of hand times were taken for each of the competitors, and the competition would continue with hand times used for all track events.

The Open competition had five competitors – talented New Zealander Brent Newdick (fourth at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games) along with Queenslanders Kyle McCarthy (from Maroochy Club on the Sunshine Coast), Ben Turner (Gold Coast Victory), Darrin Norwood (Ipswich & Districts) and Bruce Kupfer (University of Queensland).

Noteworthy non-starters were 2006 Commonwealth Games competitors Jason Dudley (bronze medalist) and Richard Allan (sixth place getter). Dudley had competed recently at the South Australian Championships, and Allan is still recovering from hip surgery which will see him miss the National Championships as well. Ben Turner would be hoping that the bad luck which had dogged him throughout his training year was finally behind him. Visits to doctors for a variety of different reasons (including a bite from a redback spider) had been the norm rather than the exception. However, recent training had been going well, and he was looking forward to a change of fortune.

In the U20 Division, local boy John Lane had hoped to be competing against the talented New South Welshman Matt Harris, but Harris withdrew a few days before the competition when an Achilles problem had failed to respond fully to treatment. Lane's spirits were lifted, however, when after close of entries, young New Zealand talent Kieran Fowler's name appeared on the entry list. Unfortunately, when the day arrived, Fowler did not appear. Local talents Adam Bevis and Nathan Trembath opted not to contest the Queensland Championships, so Lane had to find his challenge from the Open competitors. However, he would be going into the competition with limited training in the previous two weeks after tearing ligaments in his right foot in a training mishap.

Day One

In the 100m, Lane had only an average start, but quickly regained his composure and proceeded to speed away from the field. Newdick gave chase but was unable to reel in the young speedster. Lane crossed in 10.6, Newdick ran 10.8, followed by Turner in 11.3. McCarthy and Kupfer crossed almost simultaneously. Both were given the same time of 11.6, but Kupfer was given the higher placing. Norwood, the oldest man in the field at 29, was the last to cross in 12.0.



John Lane

Left to right: Kyle McCarthy, Bruce Kupfer, Brent Newdick

Photos courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus". www.sportingfocus.com.au

In the second event, the long jump, Newdick produced the best jump of the night with a 6.96m effort. One of Newdick's other jumps was just over seven metres but he fouled the jump by a 'toenail'. McCarthy jumped 6.79m, a long way short of the 7.21m he jumped last year in the competition at Arles in France.

Lane's best saw him land at 6.73m. Like Newdick, Lane also had fouled a seven metre plus jump by just a few centimetres. Kupfer kept in touch with a 6.65m leap.

Turner spanned 6.43m but felt a sharp pain in his hamstring on his take off for his last attempt. Ice and compression bandage were applied but Turner would have been wondering what he had done to deserve this prolonged run of bad luck.

After two events, Newdick led the Open men's field on 1656 points from McCarthy (1467), Kupfer (1435), Turner (1426) and Norwood (1136). John Lane had accrued 1647 points to be well on the way to a strong first day total.

Pictured right: **Bruce Kupfer**
Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards,
"Sporting Focus"
www.sportingfocus.com.au



There promised to be a good tussle between Newdick and McCarthy in the shot put, with both athletes having launched the implement over 14 metres in previous competitions. The 'big unit' McCarthy did indeed throw over fourteen. He started with a 13.77m, lobbed a big 14.28m bomb in the second stanza, and closed with a 14.02m. Any one of those throws would have been sufficient to win this discipline. Newdick was consistent, but at a lower level. He hit 13.55m on his first, and hit exactly the same distance again on his second, before fading slightly to a 13.27m on his third.

Lane was unable to utilize his normal rotary technique during the competition because of the ankle injury, so he used standing throws for each of his three attempts with the lighter 6kg ball. His best throw was his first, landing at 13.53m, but his form dropped off after that, recording 13.08m on his second attempt and then finishing off with a 12.59m. Ben Turner hit a best of 12.65m, but never seemed to really get under one. Darrin Norwood got one out to 11.74m, while the smaller framed Kupfer could manage only 11.31m.

McCarthy's efforts had seen him cut the gap to Newdick from 189 points to 145. Kyle was now on 2212 points to Brent's 2357. Turner was in third place on 2072 with Kupfer in fourth on exactly 2000. Norwood still trailed on 1727.

In the U20 age group, Lane was continuing to head towards a new PB, with a total of 2347.

After his disappointing long jump and below par shot, Turner would have been hoping to resurrect his competition in the high jump. He had jumped 1.90m in an Inter-club competition in Brisbane in late November, and planned to attempt to get near this performance in these Championships. He popped over 1.80m in warm up and things were looking good, despite the heavily strapped left thigh. However, as is often the case in combined events, things didn't go as planned once the competition started.

Norwood entered early – at 1.50m - as he was troubled by a suspect ankle on his take off foot, and wanted to ensure that he would gain at least some points. Conserving his energy, he passed 1.53m and 1.56m, and then cleared 1.59m. Another pass at 1.62m was followed by a first up clearance at 1.65m. He passed again at 1.68m, but took two attempts to clear 1.71m. Turner and Lane entered the competition at this height, and both cleared on their first attempts comfortably. Norwood failed all three at 1.74m and exited the competition.



Pictured right: **Darrin Norwood**
Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus"
www.sportingfocus.com.au

Both Lane and Turner decided to pass 1.74m. Lane cleared 1.77m on his first, but this is where 'the wheels fell off' for Turner. He had easy height on his first attempt but came out of his arch too early. His second attempt was a bit of a 'nothing' jump, but he was still positive when lining up for his third. However, his calves caught the bar on his third, and he was left with a mere 552 points, when he would have been hoping for something in the 700 point range. His disappointment was almost palpable.

McCarthy and Newdick joined Lane in attempting 1.80m, and all cleared easily on their first. Newdick, however, was troubled by soreness in his take off leg at the bottom of his patella. He passed 1.83m (as did McCarthy). Lane cleared on his first. At 1.86m, McCarthy and Lane again had first up clearances, but Newdick failed. Seeking to gain some time for recovery, Newdick passed his remaining attempts at 1.86m and passed to 1.92m. Lane and McCarthy again went straight over at 1.89m, while Kupfer, entering the competition at this juncture, took two to clear. At 1.92m, Lane's form deserted him, and he was out bang-bang-bang. McCarthy took two. Newdick failed at his first and then withdrew from the high jump event. Kupfer passed. Only Kupfer and McCarthy remained. McCarthy was over 1.95m, again on his first, while Kupfer again took two. At 1.98m, McCarthy took two, but Kupfer required three. 1.98m must have been McCarthy's Plimsoll Line, because at 2.01m he finally sank. However, Kupfer managed to nail this height on his third. 2.04m, however, proved beyond him on the night.

With one event to go on Day One, McCarthy had wrestled the lead back from Newdick. His tally of 2997 put him just thirteen points ahead of Newdick's 2984. Kupfer (2813) had moved further away from Turner (2624), while Norwood was adopting the Steven Bradbury technique and watching for any signs of faltering from the rear of the field on 2279 points.

The 400m got under way about twenty minutes behind schedule at 9.20pm. This must have been particularly difficult for Newdick, as he had come from New Zealand only the day before. With New Zealand still on Daylight Saving Time, the time differential was three hours. For Newdick's body clock, this was like running the 400m at twenty minutes past midnight!

John Lane was drawn in the outside lane and, without others to chase in front of him, set out hard. He maintained good form through the first 300m, with Newdick and McCarthy in hot pursuit. Lane entered the straight first and headed for home. He held on to win in a solid 49.5, with McCarthy working hard to overtake Newdick and record a time of 50.3. Newdick was close behind in 50.6. Kupfer crossed next in 53.7, while Turner carted his body through in 55.6, just ahead of Norwood who recorded 56.2.

At the end of an intriguing Day One, McCarthy led the Open field with 3791 points from Newdick on 3765. Kupfer was placed in third on 3459, ahead of Turner (3193) and Norwood (2825). John Lane from the U20 division had actually accumulated the most points for the day with his PB first day total of 3883.

Day Two

On Day Two, Brent Newdick came out with all guns blazing. Apparently untroubled by the knee problem which had hampered him on the previous night, he sped cleanly over the hurdles in a fine 14.5.

McCarthy managed 15.3, while Kupfer and a pale-looking Turner both clocked 15.6.

Lane had a bit of a 'Barry Crocker' and clocked a time of 16.3, almost a second outside his PB. Norwood struggled home in 19.0.

Pictured right: **Brent Newdick**
Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus"
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Newdick had regained the lead with 4646, seventy points ahead of McCarthy on 4576. Kupfer (4210) and Turner (3944) maintained their same relative positions, and Norwood kept on 'hanging in there' on 3237 points.



The discus competition was a little unusual in that all throwers except Darrin Norwood threw their best in the first round. Norwood, who fouled his round one throw, then produced his only valid throw of 29.61m in round two. In this event, Newdick displayed fine form to lob the platter out to 44.19m on his first. His other two throws of 43.99m and 41.45m were both good enough to have taken out the competition. McCarthy tried hard to keep close to Newdick, with his best being 41.36m.

Left: **Brent Newdick** Right: **Ben Turner**

Photos courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus". www.sportingfocus.com.au





Lane continues to make gradual improvement in his throws, recording a PB of 37.53m. Kupfer was happy with his 35.20m, but a pallid and weak-looking Ben Turner could manage only 36.33m, more than three metres below his best.

Left: **John Lane**

Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus".

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Standings after 7 events:

Open Men: Newdick 5396, McCarthy 5268, Kupfer 4778,
Turner 4534, Norwood 3694.

U20 Men: Lane 5171

The pole vault can often create havoc for multi-eventers. The wind was mostly from behind, occasionally swinging across from behind the vaulters left shoulders. Darin Norwood had a mishap in warm up, catching his left shin behind the pole while swinging through. As his right leg swung through, he

slashed his right calf with the spikes on his left foot. After getting some first aid treatment, he was able to continue in the competition.

Norwood entered the competition at 3.00m, taking two attempts to clear. He passed 3.10m, but cleared 3.20m on his first. He then passed until 3.50m, where he was joined by Lane and Kupfer. Lane cleared on his first, but Norwood was unable to negotiate this height. Kupfer failed on his first two attempts, and on the third the bar was knocked off by his pole. The Chief Judge however, ruled that the bar had been pushed away with sufficient force that, if it hadn't been for the wind, would not have carried onto the bar. A fortunate Kupfer lived on in the competition.

At 3.60m, Ben Turner entered the competition. While the decathlon gods had smiled on Kupfer, they continued to plague Turner. He no-heighted and scored zero points. Lane required two to clear this height. Lane successfully cleared an equal-PB of 3.70m on his second attempt, but failed at 3.80m. Kupfer re-entered at 4.00m, clearing on his first. However, with the bar raised to the next height of 4.20m, Kupfer's run had come to an end. McCarthy entered at this height and cleared on his first. At 4.30m, Newdick entered the fray. Both he and McCarthy required two attempts to clear. McCarthy attempted 4.40m but was unsuccessful. Newdick passed, but had no more luck at 4.50m.

Pictured right: **Kyle McCarthy**

Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus"

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After 8 events:

Open Men: Newdick 6098, McCarthy 5970, Kupfer 5395,
Turner 4534, Norwood 4100.

U20 Men: Lane 5706

Ben Turner withdrew from the competition after the pole vault. He had not revealed to his fellow competitors that he had been suffering all morning from a dose of food poisoning after eating some dodgy chicken in a take away meal the night before. It exemplifies the character of the combined eventers that he had still tried to complete the event despite his obvious illness and discomfort.



In the javelin, McCarthy once again applied the pressure to Newdick. He hit a big 56.57m, while Newdick managed only 52.31m. Norwood also showed a reasonable throwing arm, landing one at 49.29m. Kupfer hit 40.91m, while Lane once again had little success with the spear, managing only 30.43m. However, this was another PB and he continues to slowly improve his Day Two events.

Left: **Kyle McCarthy**

Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus".

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With one event remaining:

Open Men: Newdick 6721, McCarthy 6656, Kupfer 5850, Norwood 4678,
Turner DNF.

U20 Men: Lane 6011

From the gun in the 1500m, McCarthy took to the lead. The pace stayed at about 5 minute pace for the first 400m or so, with the pack still all relatively close. McCarthy then started to wind it out a little, with Newdick shadowing him relentlessly.

Lane stuck to his rhythm, but was slowly dropping back from the two lead runners. Kupfer had moved up to fourth after 350m, but soon dropped back through the pack into last spot by the 500m mark. Little changed through the third lap; McCarthy had continued his gradual build up of speed, and Newdick had stuck with him. For McCarthy to overhaul Newdick he would have to arrive at the finish line about ten seconds ahead of his Kiwi rival. Newdick was obviously doing everything he could to ensure that that did not happen. With 200m to go, McCarthy began a long hard drive for home. The gap between him and Newdick widened, but had he left his move until too late? McCarthy powered to the finish line, crossing in 4:43.4, but Newdick finished less than four seconds behind, in 4:47.7. Victory would go to the New Zealander.



Left: **Kyle McCarthy leads Brent Newdick in the 1500m.**

Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus".

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Lane, displaying much better pace judgement than in his previous outings over this distance, made his own drive for the line, with a new PB in the offing. His goal had been to break five minutes, and he managed this with only fractions of a second to spare, stopping the watches at 4:59.6. Norwood, following on from his success over Kupfer in the javelin, once again got one up on his younger rival, crossing in 5:03.7, while Kupfer struggled home in 5:17.6.

Once again, this had been a great contest. The ice pack had played a major role with Newdick (knee), Norwood (calf and ankle), Lane (ankle) and Turner (hamstring) all requiring treatment at some stage during the competition. Even though Ben Turner hadn't managed to finish he had displayed the grit and determination necessary to be a successful combined eventer.

What a way to celebrate Australia Day on the Gold Coast!

Final placings:

Open Men:	Brent Newdick	NZL	7354	1	
	Kyle McCarthy	Maroochy	7315	2	(1 st Queenslander)
	Bruce Kupfer	Uni of Qld	6313	3	(2 nd Queenslander)
	Darrin Norwood	Ipswich	5217	4	(3 rd Queenslander)
	Ben Turner	Gold Coast Victory	DNF		
U20 Men:	John Lane	Gold Coast Victory	6573	1	



From left (rear): **Kyle McCarthy, Brent Newdick, Darrin Norwood**
 Front: **John Lane**

Photo courtesy of Peter Edwards, "Sporting Focus".

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