

**A decathlete is a series of injuries  
held together by ligaments and a desire for points.  
A heptathlete is the female of the species.**

Matt Harris was a pace or so behind Daniel Lawton after 700 metres of the NSW decathlon 1500. It was obvious that the desire for points was intense.

Before Saturday Matt was not looking for a pb. But he was chasing the points needed for a NSW Open Championship. His opening effort was 11.50 in the 100 for a 15 point lead over Oliver Holland. After the long, Oliver was the competition leader. Matt regained the lead after the shot, and Daniel Lawton was closing in. His 2.07 high and 53.56 for the 400, had Daniel ahead by 193 points at the end of Day 1. Matt's series of injuries in 2007 and 2008 has him, in 2009, below his National Schools winning hurdles form and Matt was more than 300 points behind the leader with 6 events behind them.

The best discus of the day (40.94m), pole vault (3.70m) and jav (50.54) put Matt back in front by 198 points when ten men lined up for the 1500 at about a quarter past four on a sunny Sunday afternoon at Campbelltown.

At 5 minute pace 198 points is about 35 seconds, or 150 metres. Matt stayed within 5 seconds of Daniel Lawton and won the NSW Open Championship.

Daniel beat Matt in 5 events. Oliver Holland beat Matt in 5 events, to finish third behind Matt and Daniel. This weekend, with a spread of only 247 points between his best event (100) and lowest scoring event (1500) Matthew Harris from Maitland was the best decathlete : a series of injuries held together by a desire for points.

Andrew Neville, winner of the 16 years high and long at PSG in Canberra, scored 6304 for a convincing win the over his clubmate Bradley Sharne in the under 18 event. Under 18 points, using a lighter shot, discus, jav and lower hurdles are scored from the same IAAF tables. Matt's times, heights and distances were better than Andrew's in 6 events. Andrew Neville has also given Matt a 3-year start in the count of injuries real decathletes suffer.

Anthony France, from Wallsend, knows that combined events are fun. He chose to try one more decathlon. His best score is around 6800 points. But at age 42 that was half a lifetime away. He enjoyed the camaraderie of day 1, and decided to pass day 2.

Ron White has been at most NSW decathlon championships over more than 40 years, a few as a competitor and many more as a coach. One of his athletes, Jessica Fisher, from Hills club, retained her NSW heptathlon championship with a score of 4913 points

Gabi Simpson won the under 18 championship with a score of 4913 points, but her quick hurdles of 14.31 was over lower hurdles than Jessica's 15.75 in the open. The tape measures and clock showed Jessica was better than Gabi in 4 of the 7 heptathlon events.

Detailed results are presented elsewhere on this website.

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