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Notebook: 100-meter dash sees oldest, youngest and fastest compete in Day 3 of USATF Masters Championship

BY MIKE GEGENHEIMER | SPECIAL TO THE ADVOCATE JUL 15, 2017 - 6:23 PM



Julia Hawkins runs the 100-meter dash during the USA Track and Field Outdoors Masters Championships on Saturday at LSU's Bernie Moore Stadium. Hawkins, 101, set the world record in the 100 for competitors older than 100 with a time of 40.12.

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Mike Gegenheimer

If **Julia Hawkins'** world record time of 40.12 seconds in the 100-meter dash doesn't seem like blazing speed, maybe consider the fact she was born during World War I.

At 101 years old, Hawkins became the oldest female athlete to compete in the USA Track and Field Outdoors Masters Championships on Saturday by breaking the world record for competitors older than 100.

Hawkins ran faster at the Senior Games earlier this year, but records aren't officially ratified until December. If for some reason her previous run is not accepted, Saturday's time becomes the record.

"I didn't feel like I was (breaking the record)," Hawkins said. "Other times I felt like I was flying. This time, I wasn't feeling like I was going that fast."

A Baton Rouge native, Hawkins made her Masters debut alongside fellow Baton Rougean **Mary Norckauer** (92) and **Christel Donley** (82).

Combined, the three sprinters have 275 years of experience between them. By comparison, the entire field of nine sprinters in the women's 100 at the 2016 Rio Olympics had a combined age of 198.

Norckauer, previously a well-established competitor at the Masters, ran a time of 33.21 seconds, while Donley ran 21.60. While all three ran in the same heat, they're all considered champions for their respective age groups, which put competitors into five-year divisions.

Another one bites the dust

Bill Collins (66) set his 62nd world record Saturday with a time of 12.34 seconds in the men's 65-69, 100-meter dash after being unsure if he would be able to compete before the event.

Collins, who was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré six years ago, was forced to drop out of the 400-meter dash Friday, but battled through the pain to return to the track Saturday.

"It's amazing, Collins said. "But it's also difficult, because six years ago I couldn't walk. ... Based on what the doctors told me, I wouldn't be doing it anymore."

A former All-American and three-time Southwest Conference champion at TCU, Collins has a history of greatness in the sport. That only drove him further once he was handed the diagnosis, which can affect muscle memory and cellular loss five times faster than normal.

He returned to competition about four years ago, and, despite routine cramps and pains, he hasn't looked back.

"I haven't come back yet," he said. "Coming back (two years after), they said that was a little too quick, pushing the body. They told me not to run for three or four years. But you know us."

Collins hopes to run the 200 Sunday.

Dix runs away with title

Former Olympic bronze medalist Walter Dix claimed the men's 30-34, 100-meter dash championship Saturday with a time of 10.28 seconds.

Dix is the youngest 100-meters champion at the Masters after making his debut at the event this season.

"It feels good. It feels like a pro meet," Dix said. "The energy here is great. I encourage all the past Olympians to get up out the bed and compete at Masters."