

EHS grad Julian Harvey soars to record with monumental jump

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EDWARDSVILLE – [Julian Harvey](#)'s track and field life accelerated with one explosive moment Feb. 10. It made the SIUE senior jump for joy.

The Edwardsville High graduate soared 26 feet, 5.5 inches (8.06 meters) at the Tyson Indoor Invitational in Fayetteville, Arkansas, to set a school record and establish the best indoor mark in the nation thus far.

It also was the third-best Senior Men's long jump in the world, according to the International Athletic Associations of Federations (IAAF), the governing body for the

sports of athletics. Jean-Pierre Bertrand of France has jumped 26-6.25 (8.08 meters) and Lamont Marcell of Italy has gone 26-5.75 (8.07 meters).

"It was my sixth and last jump of the day," Harvey said, recalling his record leap. I went out as forceful as I could and I sort of blanked out on my last four steps."

Once he landed, the 5-foot, 10-inch, 180-pound All-American eagerly waited his result. There were some anxious moments for the kinesiology major.

"I saw a red flag and thought maybe that was for my jump. But it wasn't. The officials were telling the next jumper to wait," Harvey said. "The wait felt like forever, but it was no more than a minute."

Harvey rewrote SIUE history with his monumental jump.

"I told him to let it rip on his last jump. However, I had no idea he went that far," said SIUE Assistant Coach Joey Pacione, who works daily with Harvey. "It was pure joy and excitement when we found out about it. You don't get many opportunities to do something like that."

Harvey added, "It's definitely the No. 1 thrill I've had in track."

He will strive for further feats this weekend during the [Ohio Valley Conference](#) Indoor Championships at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston. The competition begins Friday and concludes Saturday. Harvey also is competing in the high jump and triple jump.

He owns the league's best high jump at 7-0.25 and is second in the triple jump and 50-6.75 inches. He's the SIUE record-holder in all three jumps. Harvey previously soared 7-1.5 outdoors in the high jump and 51-9 indoors in the triple jump.

"It's a combination of things that has helped him to improve," Pacione said. "If you can point to one factor, though, it's Julian's attention to detail with everything. He always tries to do his best, whether it's technique, mechanics or anything else."

Pacione pointed out, "His basics are sound because he works hard. That's why he can do everything well. He comes to practice expecting to improve and because of his mindset, it's going to happen."

Improvement is the name of Harvey's game and he has come a long way since jumping in three events for Edwardsville High School and coach Chad Lakatos four years ago.

During Harvey's senior season with the EHS Tigers, he spurred them to an eighth-place finish with 26 points in the IHSA large-school finals at Charleston. Harvey took sixth in the triple jump (45-10.75), seventh in the high jump (6-5) and 12th in the long jump (22-0.75). He was runner-up in all three events at the Rock Island Class 3A Sectional.

"When you think about it, Julian has gone from 12th in the long jump at state his senior season in high school to third in the world now," Pacione noted.

Harvey said, "My confidence has grown and it's at an all-time high. I've been blessed with great coaches. They (Pacione and Head Coach [Scott Block](#)) have set up a good training schedule and I know more what's going on in every meet."

Part of that burgeoning confidence comes from qualifying for the Olympic Trials last year in the long jump. The invitation to compete in Eugene, Oregon, opened Harvey's eyes to what he can accomplish.

"There was a time when I wondered whether I was supposed to be here, but the Olympic Trials changed that," Harvey said.

The 2020 Olympics and a pro track career are in the back of Harvey's mind, yet there are more immediate goals. If he fares well at the OVC Championships, it could lead to choice spots in the NCAA Indoor Championships, scheduled for March 10-11 at College Station, Texas on the Texas A&M campus.

Harvey is determined to finish with a flourish during the indoor season. SIUE has never had a male NCAA track and field indoor or outdoor champion.

Holly Noller (javelin in 2006) and Deserea Brown (400-meter hurdles in 2008) are the only SIUE female individuals to claim national titles.

"I think if everything goes right for Julian, he can contend for a national title," Pacione said. "He continues to improve, he knows what he has to focus on and he hasn't found a ceiling yet."

That's fine with Harvey. His goal is to go as high and far as possible.

"When I go into a meet, I want to hit the board as fast as I can," Harvey said about long and triple jumping. "I don't want to get too caught up in the marks or distances. I just want to improve."

He added, "Everything is the same for me each week. I go into the next week wanting to run as fast as I can and jump as far as I can."

The indoor season will mark the end of his NCAA competition this year. Harvey will redshirt during the spring outdoor season so he can compete outdoors in 2018.

"It'll give Julian one more year of training for the outdoor season next year," Pacione said. "He will get to compete in track during his fifth year of college and I think that will help him."

Harvey said, "Down the road, I want to compete in pro track."

And perhaps live that Olympic dream.