

SEC Track and Field Championships – Final Quotes

Georgia sophomore Denzel Comenentia - men's hammer throw champion

“It feels great winning this title because I wasn’t expecting it,” said Comenentia. “To execute like I did late in the comp was an encouraging feeling. Alex (Poursanidis) and I are the first to score for the men so hopefully we boost everyone up with our performances today.”

Georgia freshman Beatrice Llano - women's hammer throw champion

“This is an amazing feeling and I think gives me more power and motivation heading into the NCAA Prelims and Nationals,” said Llano. “I am proud to score points for my team and I think it proves that being a freshman is not an excuse.”

Texas A&M junior Ioannis Kyriazis – men’s javelin champion

“I’m super happy and super excited to be part of this team. I just want to keep performing at a high level.

“Honestly, because I threw with cross-over steps, it didn’t feel like a good throw. It was kind of an empty throw. But when I heard it was 80 meters, I was kind of surprised since I didn’t expect it to be 80 meters.

“Now I want to get a good throw at NCAA West to qualify for nationals, and then I’ll use my throws in Eugene to try to set a new PR.”

Alabama junior Alfred Chelanga – men’s 10,000m champion

“The race turned out well, because I won. The first half was really slow, then we were supposed to make a move after 17 laps. He made a move with 12 laps to go, and I decided to follow him. He told me we were too slow, and I said ‘okay, let’s go.’”

Missouri sophomore Jamie Kempfer – women’s 10,000m champion

“It means the world to be out there grinding for my team. Those 10 points mean a lot. It started out pretty slow. Championship races usually do, so I was ready for that. I let some of the other people do more of the work on the front half so I didn’t have to use that much energy at the beginning. I knew I would have to shake some of the other girls loose early on in the race, so I started picking it up with two miles to go.”

Arkansas junior Taliya Brooks – heptathlon champion

“I was happy with the win – I wanted to get the standard. I’m a little disappointed in that. I need to work on my 800, but it will come. I was a little disappointed with my javelin as well.”

Missouri freshman Ja’Mari Ward – men’s long jump champion

“My coach just said move back and let it rip – and that’s what I did. I really just wanted to get in first place so I can get my team some points. It’s a team sport, and that’s what I’m here to do – help the team win. It gave me a big confidence boost to come out here and win.”

Texas A&M senior Lindon Victor – men’s decathlon champion

“It’s always a good thing when you win and bring a record home. With the decathlon, you go up and you go down. It’s about having a level head and being focused the entire time. It just shows my versatility – I battled back from the first day. I knew I could have a good second day.”

Ole Miss junior Brian Williams – men’s discus throw champion

“I figured it out when it mattered, and that’s when the big throw came. I was just thinking go for it. You train all year for this situation, and you need to trust your technique and your coaches and go for it.”

Georgia sophomore Keenon Laine - men's high jump champion

“Winning my first SEC title means the world to me. To win this in THE hardest conference in the nation in my first SEC outdoor meet is unbelievable. For me to be able to come out here and win is like giving candy to a baby. This is what I needed and now I want to scream, cry, about every emotion.”

Florida junior Lloydricia Cameron – women’s shot put champion

“I started off, and it was a little rough for me. I didn’t have a good feeling in the circle, but my coach kept pumping me up. On my third throw before finals, I finally got more pump, and my technique kicked in – I knew I had a chance then. I was in the finals with three more throws, and I had nothing to lose. I just knew I had a chance to win it.”

Arkansas sophomore Alexis Weeks – women’s pole vault champion

“Coming into the meet today with Victoria (Weeks), Desiree (Freier) and myself, we wanted to go 1-2-3. We did that, so we’re very happy to give our team as many points and give ourselves a shot at another championship. After the rain delay, it was about focusing on my mentality and what I needed to do on the runway.”

Ole Miss senior MJ Herb – men’s 300m steeplechase champion

“It feels great anytime you can walk away with a conference title. It was a perfect night – I just want to save as much energy as possible to come back tomorrow and get another win. I stayed patient, and let the race go as people wanted to make it. With 900 meters to go, I wanted to put in a really hard lap and get separation.”

Kentucky junior Kay Kunc – women’s 300m steeplechase champion

“I’m so thrilled – I’ve worked so hard for this all season. I felt so comfortable, and I knew it was mine from the beginning. I’m still in shock right now. I wanted to get an early start and focus on my jumps because in the past I have fallen. I wanted to take the lead at the mile and start pushing the pace.”

Alabama senior Quanesha Burks – women’s long jump champion

“It feels amazing. This one is very special because it’s my senior year. I really wanted to go out with a bang because it’s my last SEC meet. The best way to go out is as a champion.”

Missouri sophomore Gabi Jacobs – women’s discus throw

“It felt great. I’ve been working really hard this year. I knew how great these ladies were coming in. They push me everyday in practice, just the knowledge of knowing how far they can throw and the great things they can do. With my new coach this year, we just really worked on technique. I’m so glad that it could come together at this point, I could throw far and do great things at the SEC Championship.”

LSU senior Rebekah Wales – women’s javelin champion

“Oh yeah, it was worth it. I’ll do my master’s (degree), so maybe I can make that graduation,” Wales said of missing her college graduation on Friday to compete at the SEC Championship. “I felt like I was going to throw big today. I knew that one was coming, I just didn’t know which throw it would be. I’ve always dreamed of throwing that far, but you never know in reality when it might happen.”

LSU senior Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake – men’s 4x100m relay champion

“First off I’m thankful we all came in healthy. The weather conditions weren’t great but at the end of the day eight lanes had the same weather. We’re defending champions. We came back and got the job done.”

LSU senior Jada Martin – women’s 4x100m relay champion

“It felt good to win. We have been at a point where we’re trying to perfect our relay and get as close to perfect as we can. So the fact that we were still in the 42’s, in these conditions really says a lot.”

Florida junior KeAndre Bates – men’s triple jump champion

“For me, I usually compete against myself and the competition. So even when they are ahead of me, I’m still competing against me. I always put that pressure on me so I can help my team. We need these points to win the championship. It was key for me to remain technical and to trust my coach and the process of what I have been doing. That’s what I was trying to get in the habit of – to do it the same way I do it in practice.”

Ole Miss senior Craig Engels – Men’s 1500m champion

“It feels pretty good. I was hoping for us to go one through four, but they are young guys and they have another year. When Farnham-Rose made that move luckily I had enough in me to get the win.”

Arkansas junior Nikki Hiltz – women’s 1500m champion

“Honestly I just did it for the team. We were sitting pretty well on day one, but any points help. All the girls in this race have really good accolades and they are really great. I have a whole team behind me so that helped me. I stayed patient. A lot of moves were made on the last lap, and I stayed patient till I was ready. With 100 meters to go, I was finally ready.”

Kentucky sophomore Jasmine Camacho-Quinn – women’s 100m hurdles champion

“I just had to stay calm throughout the race. I just focused on myself, and hope everything went well. Staying calm throughout it helped me. It was a great experience.”

Georgia junior Tatiana Gusin – women’s high jump champion

“Our goal with Madeline Fagan and myself was to go one and two again like we did in indoors, and we accomplished our goal. It’s a great feeling”

Georgia junior Devon Williams – men’s 110m hurdles champion

“It means a lot especially because I didn’t do the decathlon this meet. I came out here to sharpen up on a couple of events so I just did the long jump and hurdles. It feels good to win.”

Arkansas senior Daina Harper – women’s 400m champion

“It’s amazing to win, especially since it’s my senior year. I wanted to go out the right way, and not only as an individual champion but also being able to have a triple crown with my team – that’s most important. I just needed to execute the race – I knew the weather wasn’t going to be ideal so I had to have my race that I planned to do.”

Tennessee junior Christian Coleman – men’s 100m champion

“I think it just shows the type of coaching we have at Tennessee. I was ready to peak at the right moment, and I’ll be ready to peak even higher at regionals and nationals. I was able to put a good race together today.”

LSU junior Aleia Hobbs – women’s 100m champion

“It felt pretty good. It was just hard to get myself back warm after all the rain and cold. I finished the race in first so that’s a good thing.”

Texas A&M freshman Devin Dixon – men’s 800m champion

“I was just patient and let God do his work and he did it. It is a crazy and amazing feeling. I’m still a little numb from it. I don’t really know how it feels yet but it’s going to come to me.”

Arkansas junior Kemar Mowatt – men’s 400m hurdles champion

“It’s a blessing. First and foremost I have to give God thanks because I asked him for this. I asked him to bless me in my work and he did just that. So it’s a blessing.”

Texas A&M sophomore Jazmine Fray – women’s 800m champion

“Being an SEC Champion is always such a blessing. I have such a good team and such good coaches, teammates, workout partners, family and friends – everything comes together for meets like this. I like to take each 200 meters as it goes – if you think about the 800 as a whole, it’s such a hard race and you have to go fast the whole time. So I do like to take it in increments, and that was the plan.”

Tennessee junior Christian Coleman – men’s 200m champion

“I felt pretty good coming into the weekend. I just wanted to score as many points as possible for my team. I knew what I had to do, and I just got it done. There were some top guys in the world in the field in this race, so I knew I had to set it up and stay cool. I had to be strong at the end and execute as best as I could.”

Florida senior Kyra Jefferson – women’s 200m champion

“It felt great. I didn’t have an indoor season so coming into it, this is my third 200 meter. I’m not too happy with the time considering I ran better in the prelims. But I’m happy I got a win for my team.”

Ole Miss senior MJ Erb – men’s 5000m champion

“Today was my big focus. I knew the steeple yesterday wasn’t going to be as difficult, but you never know how you’re going to feel the second day. I wanted to make sure I contributed as many points as possible. I try to be as consistent as possible - I don’t try to do too much or too little and look to find that right amount. I certainly have found it this year, and I’ve been able to be as consistent as ever.”

Georgia sophomore Denzel Comenetia – men’s shot put champion

“It felt great. I knew Josh [Awotunde] was going to push me to do my best. I’m just grateful that my coach got me ready, and I executed well.”

Texas A&M junior Audie Wayatt – men’s pole vault champion

“It feels really good to be a back-to-back SEC Champion. It was a rough day today, but we did the best we could. All in all, it feels really good to score points for the team. Someone had to win the competition no matter the conditions. You just have to go out there and be the best on that day and have your head right.”

Missouri junior Karissa Schweizer – women’s 5000m champion

“It’s amazing just to come out here and represent my team and just to get some points on the board. It’s an incredible feeling and it never gets old.”

South Carolina redshirt senior Tyler Brockington – women’s 400m hurdles champion

“It’s great to be a Gamecock, every day. It’s a really humbling experience to come out here and compete, and for the first time in five years I was able to pull off what I really can do. It’s amazing to race these girls that are top-10 in the nation. I’m going to take my win and enjoy in and prepare for Regionals.”

Georgia junior Keturah Orji - women's triple jump champion

“I am happy to win another title for my team and for myself in the triple,” said Orji. “I am not happy with the marks that came out of the competition but I know I have time to improve and get on track before we go to the NCAA meet.”

Georgia sophomore Denzel Comenentia - men's shot put champion

“Winning this title gives me a special feeling since this is my favorite event,” said Comenentia. “It was a tough competition and I knew the South Carolina guy (Josh Awotunde) was coming for me on his home track. But I’m glad Coach (Don) Babbitt

had me ready to go today. It feels great scoring this many points for my team since I have never scored this many at one meet.”