

Mike Tate  
Two-time 1500 Metre Champ Returns to Defend

Southern Utah University's Mike Tate, 2-time defending champion in the 1500 metres is bringing his blazing finishing kick back to his N.S. roots for a possible three-peat at the Aileen Meagher International Track Classic in Halifax Saturday evening, June 10th.

Tate has just finished another year at Southern Utah where his progress as a distance runner continues to amaze. On March 31 he ran a new personal best in the 5000m, and a Nova Scotia provincial record of 13:39.81. Four weeks later he ran 13:34.23 to lower that record, a performance that ranked third in the NCAA for the season. To appreciate that time, it requires running just over 65 seconds for 400 meters twelve times in a row, and then adding another half lap to that, truly a world-class performance. Put another way, it is over 3 miles at a 4:21 per mile pace.

At the Meagher this Saturday evening in the 1500m, Mike will be running just three and one-quarter laps at close to 60 seconds each followed by a 200 meter kick that few have been able to match, even among the elite middle distance runners with whom he competes in American university track. Whether he will beat his season's best of 3:44.08 will depend on the weather and the competition, but be assured of that explosive finish that carried him to the title the past two years.

Tate has another year of university remaining, and although he will be defending Big Sky Conference champion in both 5000 and 10000, is unsure where his focus will be in the next year. That decision will be based on how he progresses in workouts, and where he can be most competitive on the NCAA, Canadian, and international track scenes.

His summer plans for 2017 are clear. "After Canadian Nationals my focus shifts to the Francophone Games where I will be competing for Team Canada in the Ivory Coast."

Looking ahead to 2018 and beyond, after finishing a fourth year of cross country, and indoor and outdoor track, he modestly states "If I can run fast enough to maybe compete at the Commonwealth Games next summer for Canada then awesome. It would be a great finish to my final college season. I don't have any long term plans set in stone. All I am sure of is that I want to continue running after I graduate from college. My life-long goal is to compete for Canada at the Olympics and be competitive on the international stage. Other than that I take it year-by-year and season-by-season."

If Mike Tate continues to progress as he has the past two years he can probably look forward to summers on the European track circuit, making future appearances in Nova Scotia uncertain. Those who take in the Aileen Meagher International Track Classic this coming Saturday evening, June 10<sup>th</sup> at Huskies Stadium will get a possible last look locally at the best male distance runner yet produced in this province.

