

'Nash'ional Junior Record in Pole Vault

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18.08.12, 3rd Revision



Nash Nalus says hello to a 2.95m National Junior Record in the Women's Pole Vault. (Photo Credits: Macy Tirador)

Natasha (Nash) Marie Nalus continued her dominating streak of performances at the Weekly Relays. The 18-year old incoming freshman at the University of the Philippines broke the National Junior Record with a leap of 2.95m in [Week 5 of the weekly relays at Pasig \(18th Aug\)](#).

Nalus broke the old mark of 2.90m set by her team-mate and training partner Katrina Baron. Both Baron and Nalus are currently trained by pole vault coach Michael Pelaez, along with another previous junior record holder Alexandra Morrica Smith (DLSU).

Nalus is a graduate of St Paul's College Pasig. Nash was originally a member of the Philippine Pole Vault Club with coach Emerson Obiena.

At the start of the year Nalus best was only 2.50m from the Uni Games last year in Bacolod and then 2.60m during the weekly relays. Nalus leapt 2.80m during week three of the weekly relays to move from sixth on the all time junior list and was voted 'Athlete of the Week' with her performance.

Not only does Nalus now go in as the favorite to win the UAAP title in November, one of many new faces to emerge in a 'changing of the guard' (as defending champions now senior athletes are now very busy with studies or have graduated).

Nalus also now has a chance to become the first junior to go beyond the 3.00m mark; born in 1994 Nalus has this year and next year to achieve that feat. The Pole Vault has come a long way as 14 years ago the National Senior Record was still only 2.80m.

Mainly due to the efforts of coaches such as Vicente Villauneva, Emerson Obiena and Michael Pelaez the standard of pole vaulting but in particular the relatively new event of Women's Pole Vaulting has shot up dramatically. We will examine the history of the women's junior record.

History of the Philippines National Junior Women's Record

The History of the Junior record in the women's just like the men's has been a very controversial subject. However I will firstly note unlike the boys record, in the women's fil-heritage athlete Deborah Samson (3.81m, 2000) definitely did not have Filipino Passport, hence eligibility at the time of the record but later went onto set the senior record once she obtained a passport.

The Junior record starts with are first serious women's pole vaulter Anna Natad who was coached by Mr. Villauneva (a veteran pole vaulter himself from the age of bamboo poles, who these days is the chief caretaker of the PATAFA equipment shed). Natad from DLSU University in 1998 leapt 2.80m during the weekly relays which was the Junior and Senior record at that time.

The record was then equaled by Jam Valenton of Ateneo coached by Emerson Obiena, ten years later in 2008 at the weekly relays also. Contrary to my previous article on pinoymiler titled ['Smith claims sole ownership of the junior record'](#) and also in the following article ['A tale of two pole vaulters'](#)

The marks of Dawn Javellena (Ateneo, 2005) 2.70m, Riezel Buenaventura (FEU, 2005) 2.70m, and Alex Smith (DLSU) 2.70m and 2.76m 2010 (After careful research assisted by AA Statiscian Heinrech Hubeling) are not considered ever being national records as Natad 2.80m was not exceeded or equaled between 1998 and 2008. Valenton leap of 2.80m equaled that so she co-shared the record from 2008 to 2010.



Smith Clears 2.76m at the Weekly Relays in 2010[/caption]

The saga then continues in this article I wrote on pinoymiler titled ['A tale of two pole vaulters'](#)

"The email was brought to the attention of PATAFA but was not acted in on and in essence ignored. Smith aware of the higher marks of 2.80m reported in the past set on a campaign to claim sole ownership of the National Junior Record.

The drama continued as Smith seemed to falter from her record-breaking mark during the UAAP, weekly relays and National Games. She eventually managed to break through at the University Games in [Capiz](#) in mid October with a leap of 2.87m which unofficially claimed full ownership of the junior record.

However PATAFA national coach Roselyn Hamero informed me that due to the fact the national games was not an event sanctioned by PATAFA and arguably the officials are not accredited the record is very unlikely to be ratified by PATAFA.

In the case of track events that are understandable as there are no wind gauge and hand timing. However field events are very hard to stuff up measurements in comparison to sprint events were more time is available to ensure accuracy.

Smith new mark of 2.87 record regardless lasted less than a week. Her training partner Kat Baron (1992 also) of [UP Diliman](#) leapt an impressive 2.90m, a massive breakthrough performance on October 29 at the Weekly relays to claim what ,might be sole ownership of the Junior Record.

The Question now is can Smith dig deep and take the record back at the weekly relay finals this weekend which is arguably the last meet and last chance of the year. Regardless 2011 has been a win win situation for the MPF (Mike Pelaez Family)."

Conclusion

It is going to be a very interesting UAAP this year with National Junior Record Holder Natasha Nalus (2.95m) lining up against former record holders UP school mate Katrina Baron (2.90m) and Alexandra Smith of DLSU (2.87m). The three training partners are part of the MPF trainin group (Mike Pelaez Family).

Below is the Alltime List for Junior Womens Pole Vault in the Philippines

1	3.81m	Deborah Samson	17/10/1981	Los Angeles	2000
2	2.95m	Natasha Marie Nalus	1994	Pasig	18/8/2012
3	2.90m	Katrina Baron	16/7/92	Manila	1/11/2011
4	2.87m	Alexandra Smith	1992	Roxas City	2011
5	2.80m	Anna Natad	6/4/1979	Manila	3/10/1998
6	2.80m	Jam Valenton	19/6/1989	Manila	23/11/2008
7	2.70m	Riezel Buenaventura	20/4/1986	Manila	17.5.05
8	2.70m	Dawn Javellana	86	Manila	2005
9	2.70m	Bettina Maclang	28/9/89	Manila	31/8/2008
10	2.60m	Emily Jean Obiena	28/2/1998	Pasig	/2/2012

*NB. Natasha Nalus mark is the JR Record on this list.