

## Meet Preview - State and National Leaders Take the Spotlight

By Steve Fagundes

The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Sacramento Meet of Champions (SMOC) looks to be one of the most outstanding editions of this annual Northern California affair. With 158 high schools participating, this year's competition will be highlighted by national leader and sophomore Ashton Purvis and her sister senior hurdler Julian Purvis both of St. Elizabeth's (Oakland). With state, national, and international competition behind them, they will be taking aim to once again rewrite the SMOC record books. As the weather final heats up after one of northern California's coolest winters, these stellar athletes along with over 900 other participants hope to be "burning" up the track and field with a bevy of seasonal and personal bests.



**Girls Track Events:** In the sprints defending champion and SMOC record holder Ashton Purvis (St. Elizabeth, Oakland) leads the field. As a freshman last year, she had as decorated a season as any ninth grader in US history, with age-group world bests highlighting a season that ended with a gold medal at the World Youth, under age-18 championships in Ostrava (Czech Republic). She has not lost a step this season as she has dominated the sprints with a state leading 11.54w for 100 Meters (M) in winning the prestigious Arcadia Invitational and dashing to a national leading 23.54 over 200 M at the same competition. Laguna Creek (Elk Grove) junior Sammi George at 12.19 (CA #9) and senior Kasey Rodgers (Franklin, Elk Grove) with a seasonal best of 12.25 (CA #14t) should also challenge for podium spots in the 100 M as well. On paper talented junior Sara Sipes (Oak Ridge, El Dorado Hills) with an unchallenged early season personal best of 24.94 (CA #14) and the Chavez (Stockton) tandem of junior Shaprice Jones and senior Dominique Crosby should be contenders in the 200 M. Logan (Union City) sophomore Thandi Stewart leads a strong 400M field with the 55.58 (CA #6) she recorded in winning the Percy Knox Invitational. She should be challenged in this event by the trio of senior Amber Purvis (Benicia) at 56.35 (CA #12), junior Alima Kamara (Chavez, Stockton) (56.40 – CA #17), and junior Donnise Powell (Logan, Union City) at 56.45 (CA #20). In the 100 M hurdles the SMOC record may be challenged as senior Julian Purvis (St. Elizabeth, Oakland) leads an impressive group with her state-leading 13.59 followed closely by senior Brianna Stewart (Logan, Union City) at 13.67 (CA #2). Purvis is ranked among the top dozen US high school hurdlers of all-time with her 13.32 runner-up in the 2007 California State Meet, a second at the National Scholastic Indoor Championships last month over the 60 M Hurdles, and a victory at the World Youth (under 18) Championships last summer. Senior Kayla Sanchez (Carson, NV) returns at 42.86 to defend her title in the 300 M low hurdles and should be challenged by locals Tenise Brewer (a senior at Florin [Sacramento]) at 44.88 and junior Te'Keya Birkley (Foothill, Sacramento) with a seasonal best of 44.94. The always exciting "passing of the baton" will provide a fitting beginning and ending to the girls' track events. Hercules has the leading mark in the 400M Relay at 47.86 (CA #9) with the talented group from Oakmont (Roseville) "hot on their heels" with a seasonal best of 48.17 (CA #14) and Logan (Union City) closing with a 48.23 (CA #17). Logan leads the 1600 M Relay with their superb 3:44.97 (CA #2) in finishing second at the Arcadia Invitational. Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland) ranks second in the 1600M Relay with a swift 3:52.27 (CA #6) with Hercules a close third in 3:53.20 (Ca #7). With a total of six teams entered already under the "four-minute" barrier, this could be one of the epic girl's relays in SMOC history.



After last year's titanic struggle in the 1600 M and a national record for Oak Ridge's (El Dorado Hills) Alex Kosinski (now at Oregon), this year's distance races appear to be a wide-open affair. Davis senior Laurynne Chetelat (bound for Stanford) has dominated in the 1600 M (4:53.59 – CA #4) and 3200 M (10:15.07 – CA #3 and all-time Sac-Joaquin Section best) while still finding time to represent the US at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships (Edinburgh, Scotland) last month. She will be focusing on the 1600 M this evening where a sub-4:50 outing is a possibility. Sophomore Heather Cerney (Carondelet, Concord) raced to a seasonal best of 4:57.30 at the Stanford Invitational and could give Chetelat some competition. With the last minute scratch of Karen Taurver (Serrano, Phelan), North Coast Section representatives and seniors Brazile Clark (Bishop O'Dowd, Oakland) (2:13.29 – CA #8) and Jami Hardy (Logan, Union City) (2:15.39 – CA #21) should battle for honors along with a "doubling back" Laurynne Chetelat and Oak Ridge sophomore Hayley Scott at 2:16.68. In the 3200M Folsom junior Maria Malone leads the field with a "converted from 3000 M" personal best of 10:40.55 for 3200 M based on her thrilling performance at the Stanford Invitational. South Tahoe sophomore Kelsey Smith has also gone under 11:00 minutes based on her Stanford Invitational run over 3000 M and Placer (Auburn) senior Jordan Burke fresh of an outstanding 11:00.02 solo effort at the Arcadia Invitational could also be a factor.

**Girls Field Events:** The field events will be highlighted by a number of high caliber horizontal and vertical jumpers. Freshman Ciarra Brewer (Logan, Union City) leads a talented group with a seasonal best of 19'04" (CA #2) followed closely by senior Amber Purvis (Benicia) at 18'10.50"w and junior Alitta Boyd (Moreau, Hayward) right behind at 18'09.50". In the triple jump a stellar group with 3 girls over 40 feet should provide a lot of fireworks. Junior Alitta Boyd leads the field at 41'02.75"w (40'04.50") followed by senior Briana Stewart

(Logan, Union City) at 40'07.50" and her freshman teammate Ciarra Brewer at 40'02.00". Galena (NV) senior Langley Iverson leads the high jump with a seasonal best of 5'08.00" with Vallejo senior Lauren Johnson ranked second at 5'06.00". Campolindo (Moraga) senior Stacy Jung heads the pole vault field with a 12'06.00" (CA #3) performance. Bella Vista (Fair Oaks) senior Diane McAllister topped a



seasonal and personal best of 12'0.00" at last weekend's Wood Wilson Invitational along with Colfax senior Tess Balcomb to rank second here and in a tie for CA #4. In the throws, a bevy of underclass women top the shot put with St. Mary's (Stockton) junior Jackie Ahloo leading at 42'06.50" (CA #5) followed Alemany (Mission Hills) junior Maddie Casanova at 40'0.00" and sophomore Jazmin Porter (Shasta, Redding) with a best of 39'02.50". The discus field is led by senior Kendall Morris (Beyer, Modesto) at 143'11" (CA #5) with El Dorado (Placerville) junior Lindsay Machado ranked second at 137'01" (CA #11) and junior Leckina Rithy (Stagg, Stockton) in third at 127'08".

**Boys Track Events:** The boy's sprints will feature most of Northern California's top sprinters. Senior Gregory Turner (River City, W. Sacramento) has raced to a seasonal best of 10.78 in capturing the Modesto Invitational (CA #10). Franklin (Elk Grove) senior Gavin Banks has been consistent and quick the entire season with a seasonal best of 10.79w and a victory at the Stanford Invitational. De La Salle (Concord) senior Travis Carrie and junior



Justin Nesbitt (Grace Davis, Modesto) with seasonal bests of 10.83 and 10.85, respectively, round out the top four. Travis Carrie and fellow De La Salle (Concord) senior Ricky Kearney top the 200 M with their seasonal bests of 21.88 and 21.97, respectively, with Sutter senior Darius Ray at 22.03. Look for a close race in the 400 M where Michael Rideout (Valley, Sacramento) leads the field with a 48.44 (CA #7) followed closely by next three finalists separated by less than 0.07 seconds with 48.85 for senior Alan Flemons (Lincoln, Stockton), 48.85 for senior Daurwan Howard (Grant, Sacramento), and a 48.92 turned in by De La Salle's Ricky Kearney. With five of California's top ten "timber toppers" competing in the 100 M High Hurdles this promises to be one of the meets' most exciting events. Seniors Marcus McMillan (Vacaville) at 14.38 (CA #3) and Aaron Burney (Granite Bay) with a 14.43 (CA #4) have battled all year for northern California supremacy and will continue their battle along with junior Kyler Martin (Vacaville)(14.53 – CA #7) and seniors Chase Dixon (Nevada Union, Grass Valley (14.57 – CA #8) and Monterey's Mykel Block (14.66 – CA #10). Vacaville's dynamic hurdling duo switch order here with Kyler Martin clocking an event leading 39.10 and Marcus McMillan second at 39.24. Pittsburg junior Avery Patterson also checks in with a seasonal best of 39.24.

Senior Joe Abbott (Galena – Reno, NV) clocked the fastest 800M with a 1:51.66 in finishing a strong third at the prestigious Arcadia Invitational. Lindhurst senior Joey Villaseñor ran a personal best of 1:55.50 at the Arcadia Invitational with senior Vijay Tidwell ranked third in the event based on his first place finish at the Woody Wilson Invitational with a seasonal best of 1:55.56. Dublin senior James Attarian leads the 1600 M with his 4:14.28 winning effort at the Stanford Invitational. Galena's Joe Abbott is ranked second here with his 4:16.83 performance from the Stanford Invitational and seniors Matt Maldonado (Modesto) and Cameron Mitchell (Woodcreek, Roseville) round-out the top four with seasonal bests of 4:19.39 and 4:19.66c, respectively. The 3200M looks to be an even race, as all of the competitors come into the competition with relatively close qualifying marks. Look for Woodcreek junior Garrett Seawell, Castro Valley's Jack Leng, senior Nate Beach (Acalanes, Lafayette), and senior Bahvik Kanzaria (Monte Vista, Danville) to be in the mix. In relay action, the 400 M Relay could decide "bragging rights" among Northern California parochial high schools as De La Salle (Concord), Serra (San Mateo), and Jesuit (Carmichael) lead the field with times of 41.92 (CA #9), 42.95, and 43.08, respectively. De La Salle (Concord) also leads the 1600 M Relay at 3:18.69 (CA #8) with Grant (Sacramento) ranked second at 3:21.92 (CA #18) followed closely by Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland) with a 3:23.13 and San Ramon Valley (Danville) in third at 3:23.56

**Boys Field Events:** As on the girl's side, the field events will be highlighted by a number of outstanding vertical and horizontal jumpers. Damonte Ranch (NV) junior Javon Marshbanks leads the long jump with a seasonal best of 23'02.00". North Coast Section standouts junior Chase Wheeler of De La Salle (22'06.50") and senior Brandon Williams of Livermore at 22'04.00" along with Fairfield junior Jaeson Flores also at 22'04.00" round out the top four. In the triple jump Damonte Ranch junior Josh Butler leads the event with a seasonal best of 47'09.00" followed closely by juniors Chad Jones (Bishop O'Dowd, Oakland) at 47'03.00" and Arnaud Brewer (Logan, Union City) at 46'01.00". An exceptional competition is expected in the high jump where two athletes have already cleared 6'10.00" – junior Josh Butler (Damonte Ranch, NV) and senior Kyle Cash (Justin-Sienna, Napa) and an additional three are over 6'08.00" – seniors Ray Nikzat (Lodi), Maurice Valentine (Castro Valley), and Mike Souza (El Camino, Sacramento). The pole vault showcases an elite field with three senior vaulters already topping the 16 foot barrier – Blair Wallingford (Roseville) at 16'07.00" (CA #2), Justin Miller (California, San Ramon) at 16'04.00" (CA #3), and Nevada's best Mike Arnold (Carson) at 16'0.00". Senior Jason Wacker (Shasta, Redding) leads the shot put entries with a best of 55'07.00" (CA #19) with seniors John Velasquez (Vacaville) and Derek Sinclair (Sierra, Manteca) not far behind with seasonal bests of 55'03.50" (CA #20) and 55'00.50" (CA #22). In the discus Logan (Union City) has the best throw at 165'07" with Vacaville's John Velasquez a close second here as well with a best of 164'11" followed by junior Andrew Titherington (Jesuit, Carmichael) at 163'06".

**Notes:** California rankings were obtained from the most recent lists on DyeStatCal.com compiled by Rich Gonzales. Photo credits to Photo Run.net (Ashton Purvis), Joy Kimani (Julian Purvis), and Doug Speck (Brianna Stewart and Alitta Boyd).