

World Youth Contenders' News and Notes, week ending 4/12/2015

ARCADIA INVITE PROVIDES A GREAT PLATFORM FOR YOUTH ATHLETES

T.J. Brock, Lauren Williams, Hannah Waller, Elana Bruckner, Fiona O'Keeffe & Ben Veatch Star

By Mike Kennedy

In a matchup of two of the best sprinters in the nation sophomore **Lauren Rain Williams** of Oaks Christian (Westlake Village) was able overcome the rocket start of junior **Zaria Francis** of Rio Mesa (Oxnard) in a wind-aided 100, 11.42 to 11.45. In the 200, run in windless conditions, Williams was a very easy winner in 23.57 after Francis scratched. **T.J. Brock** of Chaminade (West Hills) ran a storming anchor leg on his teams 4 x 100 relay that almost caught the all-underclass Vista Murrieta (Murrieta) team that raced to a national-leading 40.68. Chaminade was timed in 40.80. Both teams featured athletes that are age-eligible for the World Youth championships in Cali (Colombia) this summer. Last week Brock won the Legends Invitational at UCLA last week in 10.53. Teammate **Diab Davis** equaled that time in finishing third at Arcadia for the two best times Youth times in the nation. Running for Vista Murrieta were sophomore **Cole Dubots**, who was fifth in the 100 at 10.69 and **Antonio Mitchell**, who was sixth in the 200 at 21.56. Junior **Hannah Waller** of Buchanan (Clovis) introduced herself to the nation in the 400 with a 53.57 for the second fastest high school time in the nation.

The Arcadia Invitational meet and especially the 3,200 has long been a destination for distance runners and this year was no exception with 19 boys breaking nine minutes and 18 girls bettering 10:30. This is one of the few meets where intermediate times are taken at 1,500 and 3,000 that can be used to better the WYC qualifying standards. **Ben Veatch** of Carmel (In.) and **Phillip Rocha** of Arcadia ran 8:23.92 and 8:26.94, respectively, to easily better the WYC standard of 8:44.0. The two finished in that order with times of 8:53.42 and 8:59.42. In the girls' race **Fiona O'Keeffe** of Davis ran 9:30.20 to better the WYC standard of 9:44.0. In the 1,500 **Katie Rainsberger** of Air Academy (Colorado Springs, Co.) ran 4:28.24 and **Lauren Gregory** of Ft. Collins (Co.) ran 4:30.15 on the way to mile times of 4:47.85 and 4:48.85. The WYC 1,500 standard is 4:34.00. Sophomore **Joseph Anderson** of Upland was second in the 110 high hurdles at 13.90 for the third best Youth time in the nation. In the girls 100 high hurdles, sophomore **Jurnee Woodward** of Vacaville, at 13.90, led five runners under the World Youth standard of 14.35. **Elana Bruckner** of Valley Christian was a double weight winner taking the discus at 153-10 and the shot put at 48-5. Last month she threw 49-10 for the best high school outdoor effort this season.

There were a number of other outstanding marks around the nation.

- **Candace Hill** of Rockdale (Conyers, Ga.) looks to be picking up with she left of last year as one of the nation's best sprinters. At the Taco Bell Invitational in South Carolina, she had a personal best of 11.30 and ran an easy 23.49 in the heats of the 200.
- **Ja'Mari Ward** of Cahokia (Il.) just keeps getting better and better. At the Belleville Invitational in Illinois he up his triple jump best to 51-11 while improving his outdoor best in the long jump to 24-10.
- **Damion Thomas** of Northeast (Oakland Park, Fl.) retook the national Youth lead in the 110 hurdles from **Norman Grimes** of Canyon (Tx.) with a 13.64 at the Florida Relays.
- For the past two years Florida's **Amir Rasul** has been one of the fastest Youth sprinters in the world. However, in both years his season has been interrupted with injuries in mid April. Rasul is now at Columbus (Miami) and opened his season last week with a wind-aided 10.70 in the 100 and a legal 21.93 in the 200.
- **Hezekiah Jones** of Stafford (Tx.) continues to improve and now has a legal best of 21.48.

- **Josephus Lyles** of T.C.Williams (Alexandria, Va.) opened up his serious outdoor season with a solid 47.73 but should soon be under 47.0.
- **Katelyn Gochenour** of Marian Catholic (Omaha, Nb.) has the national lead in the javelin at 167-2 but sophomore **Madison Wiltrout** of Connellsville (Pa.), who had a best of 151-1 last year, opened her year with a 164-11.
- Last year **Tyra Gittens** of Elsworth (Nashville, Tn.) set a national freshman record in the heptathlon at 4,934 and has already bettered 6-0 in the high jump this season.