

Meet Preview - National Leaders Take the Spotlight

By Steve Fagundes

The 49th Annual Golden West Invitational (GWI) looks to be one of the most outstanding editions of this storied competition. With athletes from 30 states and Canada participating, this year's competition will be highlighted by seven national leaders – sprinter Jessica Davis (Highland; Palmdale, CA); distance runner Jordan Hasay (Mission CollegePrep.; San Luis Obispo, CA), discus thrower Anastasia (Anna) Jelmini (Shafter, CA); hurdler Spencer Adams (Butler; Charlotte, NC), Jordan Clarke (Bartlett; AK) in the shot put; pole vaulter Nico Weiler (Los Gatos, CA via Germany), and triple jumper Christian Taylor (Sandy Creek; Fayetteville, GA). With state, national, and international competition behind them, these talented athletes along with many others will be taking aim to once again rewrite the GWI record book and improve their personal bests.

Girls Track Events: In the sprints senior Candyce McGrone (Warren Central; Indianapolis, IN) (USA #10) leads the 100 Meter (M) field with a seasonal best of 11.47w. Sophomores Jessica Davis (Highland; Palmdale, CA), the California Interscholastic Federation State Championships (CIF State) runner-up last week, with a seasonal best of 11.62 (USA #20) and Alycia Prior (Mt. Zion; Jonesboro, GA) at 11.71 look to challenge the talented Indiana senior. Davis returns in the 200M where she captured the CIF State championship last week and holds a national leading seasonal best of 23.22w. Seniors Ronecia Nash (E. St. Louis; Alorton, IL), the Illinois State 2A Champion at 23.42, Amber Purvis (Benicia) with a best of 23.47w, and Ebony Eutsey (Southridge; Miami, FL) 23.67 should challenge for a spot on the podium. Underclass women dominate the 400M with junior Lanie Whittaker (B.T. Washington; Miami, FL) currently ranked tenth in the nation off her best of 53.83 leading the field followed by sophomore Kellie Schueler (Summit; Bend, OR) at 55.04 (the Oregon 5A champion) and super-frosh Jazmin Harper (Oakmont; Roseville, CA) who set a seasonal best 55.38 in finishing fifth at the CIF State. The 800M should be an interesting competition as junior Jordan Hasay (Mission Prep.; San Luis Obispo, CA) the national leader at 3200M, currently ranked second nationally at 1600M, and reigning World Youth silver medalist at 1500M moves down in distance. She leads the field off her seasonal best of 2:10.60, but could be challenged by a group of talented, underclass two-lappers including junior Katie Hoaldrige (Burluson; Burluson, TX) at 2:11.70; sophomore Jordan Diaz (Leigh; San Jose, CA) with a seasonal best of 2:11.80, and junior Justine Fedronic (Carlmont; Belmont, CA) at 2:12.86 (2:08.29 last year). Watch out for senior Taylor Johnson (San Lorenzo Valley; Felton, CA) with a best of 2:13.70, who looked strong last week in finishing fourth at the CIF State 1600M with a personal best of 4:53.17. The Mile Run will feature three of the nation's top distance runners led by sophomore Cory McGee (Pass Christian, MS) with a seasonal best for one-mile of 4:50.67 (USA #5) followed closely by senior Nicole Cochran (Bellarmine Prep.; Seattle, WA) at 4:50.46 (USA #8 at 1600M) and junior Sarah Penney (Xavier Prep.; Paradise Valley, AZ) checking in at 4:50.70 for 1600 M (USA #9). Senior twins Nadya Bishton (Mountain Ridge; Glendale, AZ) with



a seasonal best of 10:29.80 and Nastia Bishton (Mountain Ridge; Glendale, AZ) at 10:35.40 lead a good 3200M field along with senior Lindsay Anderson (Leeds; Leeds, ND) at 10:49.0. San Francisco Bay area athlete and senior Briana Stewart (Logan; Union City, CA) leads the 100 M Hurdle field at 13.61 (USA #10) followed closely by senior Olivia Amy (Horn; Mesquite, TX) with a seasonal best of 13.91, and “eighth grader” Trinity Wilson representing the East Oakland Youth Development Center (Oakland, CA) with a qualifying mark of 14.21. The 300 M Low Hurdles field is led by a strong California contingent consisting of CIF State bronze medalist and junior Ericka Nowell (Perris; Perris, CA) at 41.88 (USA #6), sophomore Katie Neims (Leland; San Jose, CA) with a seasonal best of 42.06 (eighth place at the CIF State), and senior Joi Glass (Skyline; Oakland, CA) at 43.17.

Girls Field Events: The field events are highlighted by some of the nation's top horizontal jumpers, a bevy of rising freshman stars, and perhaps one of best of discus throwers of all-time. Senior Jacinda Evans (Durham, NC) leads a strong field in the long jump with a seasonal best of 20'03.50" (USA #5) over junior Alitta Boyd (Moreau; Hayward, CA) at 19'06.75" (CA #3) and outstanding freshman Abrianna Torres (San Luis Obispo, CA) with a super 19' 04.75" effort this spring. Boyd doubles back in the triple jump where her best of 41'03.00" ranks USA #5 followed closely by senior-hurdler Briana Stewart (Logan; Union City, CA) at 40'11.00 (USA #7) and her high school teammate outstanding freshman Tessa Runels (Logan; Union City, CA) with a best of 38'05.00. Expect an exciting competition in the high jump where junior J'Lynn Ledesma (Wellington, KS) leads at 5'08.00" followed closely at 5'07.00" by junior Cate Brus (Cody, WY) and senior Karen Han (Arcadia, CA). Senior Elizabeth Stover (Longmont, CO) leads an always strong pole vault field at 13'04.00" (USA #4t) followed by senior Stacey Jung (Campolindo; Moraga, CA) at 12'06.00" (CIF State fourth place finisher) and junior Logan Miller (Bishop Manogue; Reno, NV) with a Nevada state best of 12'05.00". Super thrower and double CIF State champion Anna Jelmini (Shafter; Shafter, CA) leads both the shot put and the discus events. Her 49'02.50" effort ranks USA #5 and leads a strong shot put field with juniors Brooke Gritters (Pella; Iowa) at 46'10.00" and Katie Evans (Putnam Cnty.; Powersville, MO) at 46'07.25", and senior Sarah Bella (W. Morris; Mendham, NJ) with a seasonal best of 46'05.00" vying for podium



spots. Jelmini dominates in the discus not only in this competition, but nationwide as she has six of the top ten throws in the nation led by her 183'11" toss this spring. Super frosh Alexa Collatz (Stockdale; Bakersfield) at 156'11" (USA #1 freshman) and junior Kayla Kovar (Burroughs; Ridgecrest, CA) at 155'05" add to strong discus field. In the hammer senior Emmalynne MacCorquodale (Dover Bay; Nanaimo, BC) 164'02" leads with senior Robin Callan (Monroe=Woodbury; Monroe, NY) at 152'04". Pacific Northwest rivals and juniors Andrea Hopkins (Lakeridge; Lake Oswego, OR) at 141'08" and Kenna Ross (Walla Walla, WA) 130'04" lead the javelin field.

Boys Track Events: Senior Deangelo Cherry (Mt. Zion; Joesboro, GA) leads a strong sprint field in both the 100M and 200M. His seasonal bests of 10.24 and 20.91 currently rank him third and eighth respectively in the national rankings for these events. He will be challenged in the 100M by junior Derrick Hopkins (Monsignor Pace; Pembroke Pines, FL) at 10.43 and senior TJ Graham (Wakefield; Raleigh, NC) with a 10.44 to his credit this year. In the 200M Graham leads the field with a 20.82 (USA #5) followed by Cherry and then Hopkins with his seasonal best of 20.97. The 400M boasts the strongest field of any running event at the GWI with three of the nation's top six athletes entered. Junior Tavaris Tate (Starkville, MS) who led his team to the MS state title has burned a 46.41 this year (USA #2). Seniors Christian Taylor (Sandy Creek; Fayetteville, GA) at 46.60 (USA #4) and Amaechi Morton (Riverwood; Sandy Springs, GA) with a 46.75 (USA #6) round out the top three entrants. Watch out for the nation's top freshman Dedric Dukes (BT Washington; Miami, FL) at 47.49 who could be primed to break into the top three. In the 800M seniors James Eichberger (Catalina Magnet; Tucson, AZ) at 1:51.55 (USA #10), Charles White (Cherry Hills, CO) at 1:52.60, Doug Bettisworth (Oak Park, CA) with a seasonal best of 1:54.20, and local product Vijay Tidwell (Rodriguez; Fairfield, CA) at 1:54.20 lead the field. Senior and appropriately named Miles Unterreiner (Gig Harbor, WA) with a seasonal best of 4:13.20 returns to defend his Mile Run title. He will be challenged by seniors Mohamed Abdula (Willow Glen; San Jose, CA) at 4:13.08, James Clark (Thomas Haney; Maple Ridge, BC) checking in at 4:13.90, and Dylan Ferris (E. Forsyth; Kernersville, NC) with a seasonal best of 4:14.20. Abdula is also scheduled for the 3200M where he leads a closely packed field with a best of 9:07.00. Juniors Bill Matthews (Baylor School.; Birmingham, AL) at 9:10.80 and Trevor Dunbar (Kodiak, AK) with a best of 9:11.90 follow along with seniors Rory Tunningley (Lockhart, TX) checking in at 9:12.40 and Jacob Parisien (University; Anchorage, AK) at 9:12.50. Senior Spencer Adams (Butler; Charlotte, NC) leads both the 110M High Hurdles (HH) and 300M Intermediate Hurdles (IH) at 13.51 (USA #1) and 36.04 (USA #1), respectively. In the HH seniors Cedrique Smith (Agua Fria; Avondale, AZ) at 13.97 and local talent Aaron Burney (Granite Bay, CA) 14.09 will challenge. The IH will again feature Adams along with senior Amaechi Morton (Riverwood; Decatur, GA) at 36.91 (USA #8) and super-soph Cody Riggs (St. Thomas Aquinas; Pembroke Pines, FL) with a 37.41 seasonal best and currently USA #2 for sophomores.

Boys Field Events: Senior Christian Taylor (Sandy Creek; Fayetteville, GA) looks to dominate the horizontal jumps where he leads the field with a long jump of 25'06.75" (USA #3) and the triple jump where he ranks USA #1 with a best of 52'05.25". Juniors Dwayne Lloyd (Vista Murietta; Murrieta, CA) at 23'11.50" and DJ Wright (Sheldon; Eugene, OR) with a best of 23'08.50" should challenge for medals. In the triple jump the nation's top freshman and CIF Champion Johnny Carter (Ridgeview; Bakersfield, CA) with a best of 49'0.75" and junior Duke Williams (Hug; Reno, NV) 49'0.00" look to improve on their seasonal best and perhaps break that elusive 50



foot barrier. Seven foot jumpers senior Spencer Patterson (Tigard, OR) and junior Nick Ross (Vista Murrieta; Murrieta, CA) 7'0.00" lead the high jump field with junior Josh Butler (Damonte Ranch; Reno, NV) checking in at 6'10.00". Two time CIF Champion and 2008 World Youth Pole Vault Champion senior Nico Weiler (Los Gatos, CA via Germany) leads the competition at 17'04.00" (USA #1) followed by seniors Riley Egan (St. Thomas Aquinas; Ft. Lauderdale, FL) and local product Blair Wallingford (Roseville, CA) (CIF State bronze medalist) both at 16'07.00" (USA #11t). National leader Jordan Clarke (Bartlett; Anchorage, AK) (see photo at left) checks in with a phenomenal 71'03.00" throw to lead the nation with seniors Colin Quirke (Los Gatos, CA) at 63'06.00" and Matt Eader (Frankfort; West Frankfort, IL) with a best of 61'09.50" looking to garner medals. Senior Christopher Adams (Conv. Chris. Acad.; Bedford, TX) leads



the discus field with a seasonal best of 209'08" (USA #4) with Clarke checking in at 194'08" and senior Matt Darr (Frankfort; West Frnakfort, IL) at 182'06". Senior Vincent Torrisi (Monroe-Woodbury; Central Valley, NY) with a toss of 180'04" and junior Cole Gison (Camas, WA) 175'05" lead the hammer field. The javelin field looks to be a close competition as seniors Ted Heitzman (Sthrn Columbia; Ellysburg, PA) at 198'07", Mike Dylan (Bothell; Lynwood, WA) with a seasonal best of 191'10", and Jason Flanagan (Fthr. Judge; Philadelphia, PA) at 189'04" lead the field.

Notes: National rankings were obtained from the most recent lists compiled on DyeStat.com. Photo credits to John Oshiro (Jordan Hasay), Anastasia Jelmini (Mark Smith), Jordan Clarke (Erik Hill [Anchorage Daily News]), and Rich Gonzales (Nico Weiler).