

Lamorinda represented at League Track and Field Championships and State Tournament

By Jon Kingdon



Photos Gint Federas

It is no small feat to be able to compete in the state meet. To make it to state, an athlete must first qualify out of league to the sub section championships. With the Lamorinda schools, one must finish in the top six at League to move on to Tri-Valley or run a qualifying time. From Tri-Valley an athlete must qualify in the top seven to move on to the Meet of Champions. At the Meet of Champions an athlete must qualify in the top three or run a qualifying time to move on to the state championships.

The California State Track and Field Championships were held June 2-3 in Clovis and all three Lamorinda schools had representatives there. The Acalanes athletes were Ryan Nall (shot and discus), Keaziah Smith (long jump) and Ariana (Muppy) Gragg (300 hurdles and long jump); Campolindo was represented by Andrew Kimball (shot put) and the Miramonte athletes were Jordyn Bryant (shot and discus) and Cassidy Haskill (1600 meters).

Besides the above-mentioned athletes, there was ample representation for Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte at the Meet of Champions. Acalanes brought 15 other athletes to the MOC: Johnny Choi and Isabel Rasmussen in the high jump; Anna Weier (discus), Scarlett McCullough (pole vault) and runners Marianna Florinda, Mikaela Truong, Charlie Keohana and Emily Sverak in the 4x400 and Nicole Frigon (800 meters). Acalanes also brought its Unified Track and Field Team, which is comprised of special needs athletes. Explains assistant coach Jeff Hutson: "The special needs kids

compete and score for the school. They are fully integrated with the team. Each unified athlete gets a shadow – someone that helps them to compete and they participate alongside with their unified athlete and their times are combined. The unified athletes for Acalanes were Lena Johnson, Taylor, Alex Christensen and Aimee Gee, who participated in the Long Jump and 100 meters, and Tucker Starbuck and Shou Routh who both ran the 100 meters.

Though Frigon, a freshman, did not qualify for the state finals, she ran a personal best her last three runs – in the league meet, in the MOC preliminaries, and in the finals.

The other athletes that went to MOC for Campolindo were Isabella Chao (1600 meters), Maddy Doane (200 meters), Alicia Hober (1600 meters), Jenna Miles (3200 meters) and Ashley Thoms (triple jump).

Campolindo head coach Chuck Woolridge spoke highly of the entire team but singled out two members of the team that battled back from serious injuries: "Maddy Doane, a soccer player, had suffered two serious knee injuries which limited her laterally so she went out for track this year and was a very pleasant surprise for us. She ran the 100, 200 and 400-meter events, setting the school record in the 200 with a time of 25.19 and ran a 59.55 in the 400 meters which is fourth best time in Cougar history. With Maddy coming back and the young athletes on our team, we have a solid core to build on for next year."

Senior Ashley Thoms suffered a serious wrist injury while on the

Campolindo basketball team forcing her to miss most of the season. When she fully recovered she had what coach Woolridge described as a remarkable season.

"When she was clear to work out in the middle of April and working with our jumps coach, Ashley showed constant improvement all season and jumping 36 feet, 3 inches in the triple jump. Thoms best jump as a junior was 34 feet."

Miramonte, which won the league championship against 12 other teams, brought the following to the MOC: Marcus Young (pole vault); Kaylyn Goode (300 hurdles and 4X400 relay); Ava Moran, Ironnia Allen and Masina May in the 4x400 and Audrey Allen (1600 meters) and James Bull (1600 and 3200 meters).

Head coach Tristan Tool was particularly pleased with the performance of two freshman on the 4x400 relay team, Audrey Allen and Ava Moran, a team that finished in sixth place with a time of 3:57.16, a time that set a school record. Allen also finished eighth in the 1,600 meters. Tool felt bad for Bull, who "had a dominating season but just had a bad day at the MOC. However, he will be running in the outdoor national championships."

Though none of the Lamorinda athletes made it past the preliminary rounds at the state tournament, Acalanes head coach John Crain gave a great perspective to it all: "In California, the most populated state in the Union, we have over 800,000 high school athletes competing in sports. California has some of the best athletes in the

nation, and this meet will bear that out. After trials you will find out how you rank in your event in the state. Either you are in the top 9 in running events or the top 12 in field events, but if you finish in 10th or 27th that is how you rank out of all the athletes in the state that participated in track and in your particular event. There are no losers when it comes to this meet, because just to get to this meet, you have to be the best of the best (and this may mean the best in the nation)."

For Acalanes, Gragg, who will be attending Dartmouth, finished with a personal best and school record in the 300 hurdles (43.77) and would have qualified in the long jump but for scratching on her best jump. Smith finished 25th in the long jump (21 feet, 8 1/2 inches) and Nall, who will be attending MIT, finished 15th in the shot (53 feet, 8 1/2 inches). Said coach Crain: "They have every reason to be happy with their performances doing as well as they did."

Andrew Campbell represented Campolindo with his best performance of the year. Campbell finished with three throws over 150 feet with a best of 152 feet, 4 inches, which was the second-best throw for a North Coast athlete. Said coach Woolridge: "Andrew was a very coachable athlete. He was diligent and easy to work with in terms of being able to apply what we asked of him. He was a very composed and confident athlete who showed dramatic improvement from his freshman year when he was only able to throw the discus 75 feet."

For Miramonte, Jordyn Bryant, who will be attending San

Diego State University next year, finished seventh overall in the discus (151feet, 1 inch) and fifth in the shot put (43 feet, 7 3/4 inches), breaking the school record in each event. Said coach True: "Jordyn showed big improvement throughout the year and made the podium in the shot put and was almost as strong with the discus. She has so many skills, she may end up competing in the heptathlon."

True was particularly pleased with the return of junior Cassidy Haskill in the 1600 meters. After running a 4:52 as a freshman, Haskill had some major injuries and illnesses that forced her to take time off from the sport. At the MOC, Haskill once again broke the 5:00 mark. Said True: "Though it was not a top day for Cassidy at the state tournament, overall it was a very positive season for her. She was just happy to be running again and is looking forward to running cross country next season."



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5th GRADE GOLD CHAMPIONS POMPANO BEACH

(Front Row): Olivia Foster, Stella Baceda, Lucy O'Brien. (Back Row): Sienna Hope, Maddie Walsh, Campbell Evans, Taylor Mikalis, Mia Daly, Kayden Page, Virginia Jane Terry, Avery Botto. Coaches Brian Mikalis & Chris Evans.



6th GRADE GOLD CHAMPIONS HAMPTON BEACH

(Front Row): Rachel Moen, Siena Billings, Sydney Moen. (Back Row): Whitney Wilkalis, Hailey Pearson, Claire Diamantidis, Hailey Teixeira, Abby Selke, Julia Waide. Coach: Katy Diamantidis



7th/8th GRADE GOLD CHAMPIONS NEBRASKA

Kaitlyn Eng, Elizabeth Cho, Kylie Siegel, Remy Swartz, Juliet Diamantidis, Sophia Taylor, Olivia Feldman, Molly Keliher-Burke, Alexa Malinovsky, Rachel Gottfried, Marina Rago



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