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NOELLE HARO-GOMEZ Tri-City Herald

Athletes compete in the boys 1600-meter run during the 58th Pasco Invite track and field meet on Saturday at Edgar Brown Stadium.

## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

# Track athletes turned it up at Pasco Invite as they close in on state championships

BY JEFF MORROW  
Special to the Herald

The Pasco Invite always seems to mark the time when track and field athletes start to turn things up a notch in preparation

for the state championships.

For the Walla Walla boys, however, they've been obsessive about it since Day 1 of spring sports.

"Every single day — Jared (McAlvey), Jahmal

(Mangarero), myself — all of the guys, we think about it every day," said Blue Devils senior Patrick Utschinski.

That's what happens when you lose a state team title by a half-point, like Wa-Hi did last year in

Tacoma. "Every inch in the field events, every millisecond in every race, counts," said Utschinski.

Boy, were the Blue Devils serious Saturday at Edgar Brown Stadium at the 58th running of the Pasco Invite.

Wa-Hi won the team title, while Utschinski won the boys shot put (59 feet, 4 inches) and finished second in the discus (155-1).

McAlvey was even better, winning the 300 intermediate hurdles (38.89 seconds) and a leg on the winning distance relay event (10:29.55), and placing second in the 110 high hurdles (14.73).

That earned him the Outstanding Male Athlete of the Meet award.

"Jared is in great shape," said Wa-Hi coach Eric Hisaw. "He wants to win two state titles on his own, and for us to get a team title this year. This whole group of boys are all in this year."

Still, neither McAlvey nor Utschinski were satisfied Saturday.

"This was not really my greatest meet," McAlvey said. "I had a week of tough practices."

Utschinski, headed to Washington State University in the fall on a football scholarship, agreed.

SEE TRACK, 11A

FROM PAGE 10A

## TRACK

"I had kind of a rough day in the discus," he said. "I only threw in the 150s, and that's very subpar for me. I'm disappointed, but I can learn from it."

That's what everyone did on Saturday — learn.

### KAMIAKIN VICTORIES

Kamiakin, bolstered by a first-place finish in the boys 4x100 relay team of Neal Berkey, Derek Fischer, Parker Morgan and Syl Hunt, finished second as a team in 43.43 seconds.

The Braves also got a 2-3 finish in the boys pole vault by Brayden Freitag (15-6) and Berkey (14-6), while senior Ryan Child finished second in the boys 3200 at 9:19.79 — losing only to Lewis & Clark's Wil Smith and his 9:18.47.

"The goal today was not to be fancy," said Child. "Just hang out for awhile, then take it at (lap) 5."

Child said even with the early spring snow that forced the Braves' distance runners inside for heavy treadmill workouts, he feels he's back on track to peak in Tacoma for state in late May.

"I doubled down in Arcadia in the 1600 and 3200 last week," said Child, who plans on attending the Air Force Prep Academy in the fall. "Right now, we're right on pace. I'm so happy with today's run."

Just know, there's a lot of work that still need to be done. "We're excited where we're at right now," said Wa-Hi's Hisaw. "But we've still got six weeks to get where we want to be."

### TAHOMA GIRLS

Tahoma rolls to girls title For the fourth straight year, Tahoma won the girls team title.

On Saturday, the Bears had three athletes win multiple titles, and none of them were named Aliya Wilson.

The Tahoma senior, who was named the Invite's Outstanding Female Athlete of the Meet in both 2017 and 2018, did not compete because of a quad injury.

But her twin sister, Alisha Wilson, won the long jump (19 feet, 0.5 inches) and triple jump (38-1.75) titles. And team-

mate Alaina Brady won both hurdles (14.39 seconds in the 100 High's, and 44-62 in the 300 lows), as well as placing second in the long jump.

But it was sophomore sensation Adaji Osaro-Igwe who was named this year's Outstanding Female Athlete of the Meet for winning the 100 (12.23), 200 (25.08) and 400 (58.28) meters.

And it wasn't as if she surprised anyone.

"I went to state in four events last year as a freshman," Osaro-Igwe said. "This year, I was hoping to win an event (at Pasco) and get a plaque (she did). I feel pretty good. I've been consistent with my times."

Just another weapon for Tahoma, even without Aliyah Wilson right now. "Aliya is so very inspirational to me," said Osaro-Igwe. "We work so well together in practice."

The meet's other multi-winner was Lake Stevens senior Taylor Roe, who doubled to victory in the 1600 (4:58.15) and 800 (2:15.30).

"Any time you double like that it's hard to get back up (after winning the 1600) and get going (for the 800)," said Roe, who will run cross country and track for Oklahoma State next year. "I knew I needed to get out fast in the 800."

She lost her 800 lead to Kennewick's Geraldin Correa-Cambindo and Jesuit's Molly Grant on the backstretch of the second and final lap. But Roe didn't panic.

"I just had to be patient," said Roe. "I told myself 'I'm in it. You're fine.'"

She retook the lead on the final stretch to win. Grant was second, while Correa-Cambindo was third.

The area's best girls performance belonged to Kamiakin senior Katherine Petsch, who placed second in the 100 and 200, and ran a leg on the second-place 4x100 relay team.

"I'm just very thankful to be here," said Petsch, who will run track next year at Eastern Washington University. "I feel like I'm just doing OK right

I'm just doing OK right now. I'm hoping to do better come state."

### OTHER FINISHES

- Chiawana's Dion Lee finished second in the boys triple jump.
- Kennewick junior Jagger Child's may have had the most impressive performance of the day. Childs entered the boys javelin with the lowest mark among the 40 competitors at 144-1. But Child's unleashed a throw of 176-8 to place second.
- Connell's Alma Manzo placed second in the girls triple jump (37-2.75).
- Tahoma also took home the combined boys-girls team title and trophy, the Bears' fourth consecutive year of doing so.
- Selah's boys was named the event's sportsmanship award winner.
- The Invite honored Dale Gier, the former instructor, coach and administrator at CBC who passed away last year. Gier was a long-time volunteer at the Pasco Invite too.
- The Invite dedications went to long-time volunteers Dale Lindsay and Willie Taylor.

### HALL OF FAMERS

The Invite also started a Pasco Invitational Hall of Fame this year.

First members are former Pasco High athletes Quenna Beasley and Ron Howard. Beasley was a two-time Invite champion in the girls discus and shot put.

She went on to be an NCAA Track and Field All-American at the University of Oregon. Howard won the triple jump and both hurdles at the Invite.

He went on to play in the NFL for both the Seattle Seahawks and Dallas Cowboys.

Jeff Morrow is former sports editor for the Tri-City Herald.