

PASCO BULLDOGS • CHIAWANA RIVERHAWKS

PASCO INVITE

60TH ANNUAL TRACK & FIELD INVITATIONAL • APRIL 15, 2023

2023 Pasco Invite Recap

By Jamie Council

The 60th Annual Pasco Invite took place on Saturday, April 15th at the John Crawford Track at the Edgar Brown Memorial Stadium in Pasco. The meet boasts the largest regular season meet in the state of Washington with nearly 1500 athletes competing from 73 schools in three states.

Local Athlete Highlights Meet

Rocky Mountain (ID) boys and Kamiakin (WA) girls took home the team titles. There were a lot of great performances, but a hometown jumper made headlines.

Chiawana's Kade Smith was the only individual athlete to win multiple events. Smith places top marks in both the triple (45-04.25) and long jump (22-02.5) at the Pasco Invite.

Smith is the defending state champ in the triple jump. Winning as a junior, he says it can be harder to jump with the extra weight of expectations on his back now in his senior season.

"I feel that there is more pressure on me because everyone that competes in trying to be the best," explained Smith. "Being the state champ last year, I feel I definitely have a target on my back."

Smith is currently ranked top 5 in the state in both jumps. Smith sat out the first couple of meets due to ankle sprains during basketball season. Fighting through injury, the multi-sport athlete hopes to hit his stride as the countdown to state begins.



Kade Smith (Courtesy Chiawana Athletics)



From left to right: Jan Blair (dad), Gail Blair (mom), Kelly Blair LaBounty, Jacob LaBounty (son), Lynn Blair (sister-in-law), Kooper Blair (nephew), Jeff Blair (brother), Kason Blair (nephew) - Photo courtesy of Jamie Council

Blair Returns to Her Stomping Grounds

In the late 80's, another local runner made headlines at the Pasco Invite. Prosser alum Kelly Blair-LaBounty returned to her roots. Blair-LaBounty hadn't been back to Paco since her days competing as a Mustang. The memories flooded back.

"It was the greatest place to grow up, the greatest community to compete in," said Blair-LaBounty. "It's interesting. This community whole valley gets behind youth sports and high school sports."

Although the accolade of being inducted into the Pasco Invite Hall of Fame alongside fellow Olympian Aaron Williams is modest compared to her accomplishments in college and the world athletic stage, the honor served as a tie of generations between Blair LaBounty and her children.

"I obviously had an athletic career that my family members and parents could follow," explained Blair LaBounty, "but my kids weren't around. To be honored and for them to be able to look back and see some of the things and hear some of the things, it's fun for me because I feel like they can be a little part of it."

Fun Fact: Three Olympians Graced the Meet

While we have established that former Olympic athletes of Kelly Blair-LaBounty and Aaron Williams were honored, there were actually three former olympians at the John Crawford Track. Volunteer Bob Weissenfels competed in the 1992 Winter Olympics in the four-man bobsled and is an avid supporter of high school athletics.



Pasco Invite Volunteer Bob Weissenfels

