

# Astoria middle-schoolers score wins

The Daily Astorian

## SCOREBOARD

### PREP SCHEDULE

#### FRIDAY

Baseball — Class 2A State Championship: Knappa vs. Monroe, 1:30 p.m., Volcanoes Stadium, Keizer.

The school had two entries in the finals of the 1,600-meter relay, placing third (Van De Grift, Harris, Madison Burchfield, Hemsley) and fourth (Kelsey Fausett, Emma Roe, Sophie Long, Hailey O'Brien).

Van De Grift was fourth in the 100-meter hurdles (17.02).

For the Astoria boys, eighth-grader Ian Hunt was third in the 110-meter hurdles in 17.32.

Astoria's foursome of Andrei Gregory, Hunt, Ivan Delacruz and Donald Dieffenbach was fourth in the 400 relay, while Dylan Altheide-Nielson, Shrey Sharma, Colby Thygesen and Ephraim Tice placed fourth in the long relay.

LAPINE — The future state champions of Astoria track and field returned from Central Oregon with — of course — some first-place medals from the Oregon Middle School Statewide Championships, held May 30 at La Pine High School.

Athletes from Astoria Middle School scored two individual wins, with additional high placings in the relays.

Astoria Middle School eighth-grader Gracie Cummings won the 200 meters in 26.89 seconds and took fourth in the 100 meters (12.84).

Eighth-grader Samantha Hemsley had a toss of 94 feet, 6 inches to win the javelin, with teammate Dakota Morris fourth.

Back on the track, Astoria's 400-meter relay squad of Andrea Harris, Nara Van De Grift, Hemsley and Cummings took second behind St. Mary's in 53.40.



Photos by KARLA DeLONG — For the Daily Astorian

ABOVE: Gracie Cummings won the 200 meters and was fourth in the 100, in last week's Statewide Middle School championships. LEFT: Astoria's Ian Hunt placed third in the 110-meter hurdles in the Statewide Middle School track championships, last week in La Pine.

# Prefontaine Classic always brings out the best

By NEIL BRANSON  
For The Daily Astorian

EUGENE — Smooth, effortless, flowing, striking, stunning, exquisite, magnificent, picturesque.

I am not sure which of these, maybe all of them, aptly describe the show by Genzebe Dibaba of Ethiopia in the 5,000 meters, Saturday at the Prefontaine Classic.

Genzebe, like Pre would do, took charge early, not earning her keep off the efforts of pace runners.

This was woman against the clock, pure racing.

How strong of an effort? She came through 3,000 meters in 8 minutes, 33.33 seconds to break the field and Pre Classic 3K record of 8:34.47 set by Mariem Selsouli of Morocco in 2012.

The sellout crowd of 13,278 applauded boisterously, coming to their feet for the last mile as Genzebe clipped off consistent sub-70 second laps. Her final 400 in 65.96 garnered her the Hayward Field and Pre Classic records with her 14:19.76, well ahead of second-place Kenyan Faith Kipyeg (14:31.95).

Women's triple jump opened the competition, and like most events it was loaded with some of the world's best.

Catherine Ibarguen of Colombia had credentials that included 2013 World Championship Gold, London Games Silver and the 2014 No. 1 ranking.

On her final jump Ibarguen flew 49 feet, 9.75 inches to best Russia's Yekaterina Koneva (49-4¼), who won the 2013 World Championship and was second to Ibarguen at the 2012 Olympic Games.

Third place went to Olha Saladukha (47-6¼), whose portfolio included Gold at the 2011 World Championships and three-time European Champion (2010, '12, '14).

Six-time South American champion Kaila Da Silva Costa of Brazil was fourth at 46-7½.

The pole vault featured Renaud LaVillenie of France, the current world record holder at 20-2½. After scoring 19-10¼ to secure the win, he had the bar raised for three attempts at his world record height.

He had to bail out on his first attempt, and the next two were solid but not enough to clear the bar.

American Sam Kendricks was second an even 10 inches. Of his performance, LaVillenie said, "It's just the begin-



AP Photo/Don Ryan

Joe Kovacs competes in the shot put during the Prefontaine Classic track and field meet in Eugene, Ore., Friday, May 29, 2015. Kovacs won with a distance of 72 feet, 7 inches.

ning of the season. I have a lot of work to do, and get myself to jump even better next week."

The women's 400 meters featured two ladies who consistently light up the fans of Eugene.

Sanya Richards-Ross and Allyson Felix combine for eight Olympic and 13 World Championship Gold in the 200, 400, 400- and 1,600-meter relays.

Richards-Ross came into the meet with the world-leading time of 49.95, and this was Felix's initial 400 of the year.

As expected, a tight battle was waged with Felix coming off the Bowerman curve holding a slight lead that she held down the last 100 meters to eke out a 50.05 to 50.29 win.

Felix has been to Hayward many times and never tires of it. "I love racing against the best people in the world, and there is no better place to do it than Hayward."

Three ladies made the javelin competition very tight as the all threw 206-feet plus. On her second attempt, Christina Obergfoll, the 2013 World Champion from Germany, got off a 206-11 heave that withstood two 206-2 efforts by Kara Winger of the USA and Madara Palameikda of Latvia. Winger topped Palameikda in places because of a better second throw.

The United States stood tall and youth was served in the women's 1,500 meters.

The Americans claimed first, fourth, sixth and seventh places with Jenny Simpson getting the win in 4:00.98, as she held off Mercy Cherono of Kenya finishing a scant 0.28 seconds back. Americans Shannon Rowbury — who, incidentally competed in Irish Dancing for 11 years — ran 4:02.28 for fourth, Sarah Brown in sixth 4:03.20 and Alexa Eframinson from Camas, Wash., broke Mary Cain's American Junior record of 4:04.62 with her seventh place finish in 4:03.39.

Simpson thanked the crowd during her victory interview saying, "With a crowd like you guys it makes us want to show off."

The 200 meters was a hot race with Justin Gatlin running a world-leading 19.68, a Pre Classic record, breaking the 19.72 (Walter Dix, 2010).

Possibly Gatlin was taking out some of his frustrations from being questioned at Friday's press conference about his previous suspension from doping, and just how a 33-year-old could continue to compete on the world stage.

His thoughts about age were summed up with his saying "I'm very proud to be here, to be able to come out here and run with these young

guys. I don't think age is anything but a number."

The meet begins and ends with men's mile races. In the "International Mile," 10 men went under the 4-minute barrier with Eugene resident Ben Blankenship crossing .04 seconds ahead of Kenyan Jonathan Sawe, 3:55.72 to 3:55.76.



AP Photo/Don Ryan

Christabel Nettey, from Canada, competes in the long jump during the Prefontaine Classic track and field meet in Eugene, Ore., Friday, May 29, 2015. Nettey took second with a jump of 22 feet, 11-1/4 inches.

To put the lid on the 2015 Pre Classic, all 13 entrants in the Bowerman Mile were under four minutes. The times spanned from 3:51.10 by Ayanleh Souleiman of Djibouti (who said, "It was not fast, it was easy") to the last of seven Kenyans, Aman Wote, coming in at 3:57.34.

Making a race out of it was former NCAA 1,500 Champion for the Ducks, Matt Centrowitz, second at 3:51.20.

Right here in our backyard, from around the world the very best athletes in their disciplines descend on Hayward Field for the Pre-

fontaine Classic Diamond League Meet.

No other sports competition in Oregon comes close.

Next up are the NCAA Championships (June 10-13). Following that are the USA Track and Field Championships (June 25-28) where our team for the 2014 Beijing World Championships will be determined by performance and performance alone.

No votes, not getting carried by other athletes, it is athlete-on-athlete with only the clock, height and distance as the sole judges and arbitrators.

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