

2018 Inland Empire County Championships

By Mark Gardner

In what has become the premier Track & Field event of the Inland Empire, welcome to the 15th edition of the **Inland Empire Championships!** The best of Riverside County comes together with the best of San Bernardino County to showcase one of the strongest Track & Field hotbeds in the United States. Pound for pound, the Inland Empire has become the most competitive region in California and you will be witness to that talent this weekend. The 2017 CIF Southern Section Finals saw the Inland Empire earn **27** individual CIF titles along with 27 runner-up finishes. Furthermore, we also witnessed five relay squad titles come back home.

On the boys' side, Great Oak is the mid-season favorite to capture the SS-Div. I title and has the inside track to the State Team Title right now. Reflecting back, the Broncos of Vista Murrieta were the CIF Division I Boys Champions from 2010-2013 only to see Southwestern League rival, Great Oak, bring home the titles in 2014 and 2016. Drafting off those national powers' success, nearby Rancho Verde took the team title in 2017 while on their way to the California State Team Title!

The two previous seasons, Vista Murrieta came back home with the championship hardware. At the Division I CIF Finals in 2016, the top four squads (GO, VM, RV and MLK) all hailed from Riverside County. In 2017, five of the top six squads descended from the Inland Empire with Rancho Verde, Great Oak and Roosevelt claiming the top three spots, respectively. The SS-Div. I Team Champion has come from Riverside County the last eight seasons.

For the Division I girls in 2017, four of the top seven squads came from the Inland Empire with Great Oak settling for the 2nd place plaque by a mere four points behind Long Beach Poly. Over the past two decades, only two schools were able to break the dynasty set forth by the Long Beach legacies (Poly and Wilson) – both from the IE. Rancho Verde's girls turned the trick in 2007 while Great Oak did so in 2016. *Could it happen again here in 2018?* Upland's girls have come into mid-April as the mid-season team favorite for the Division I team title with Great Oak not too far off their heels.

Vista Murrieta High School will host the meet in 2018 once again. With the meet being the genesis of Chris Drescher of the Finished Results timing firm, he formed a collaborative meet committee that has come together to take this invitational to another level. With a more consolidated schedule this year, this meet runs as efficient as any other.

You will be entertained by a slew of California State Meet qualifiers and CIF Finalists while the top squads and individuals in the Inland Empire clash for bragging rights and supremacy. The top athletes are bouncing back from the Arcadia Invitational last weekend and with league finals less than three weeks away, the very best are fine tuning to step it up to another level in May! The overall depth, especially in the boys' sprints, is staggering. We expect to see most meet records challenged on all levels while you do not want to overlook those future stars at the Frosh/Soph level!

Girls 3200 Meters – Meet Record: Destiny Collins 10:46.94 (Great Oak) 2014

With the cooler temps prevalent in the morning air, we begin the meet with the Varsity Girls 3200 meters. While some of Great Oak's national class distance runners rest up this weekend, Yucaipa sophomore **Danielle Gee** has also dipped under that coveted 11 minutes. Taking 2nd place this past XC season in Div. I as a team, Vista Murrieta's senior duo of **Annabelle Werner** (11:07) and **Nadine Dubon** (11:11) will flirt with that 11 minute threshold while Serrano's **Vanessa Walton** (11:14) will stay on their shoulders all throughout. Big Bear junior **Kaia Hoak** (11:17) was a Div. IV CIF Finalist a year ago. Murrieta Valley senior **Arabella Reece** (11:17), Shadow Hills' junior **Nyah Chavez** along with Roosevelt's **Paloma Barron** (11:20) will all be right there in that chase pack behind our race favorite. Reece (5:07) has shown considerable improvement in the 1600 and will look to steal the show here in the 3200. We have a huge group all coming in with 11:25-11:35 credentials that will also be pushing for those medals.

Boys 3200 Meters – Meet Record: Spencer Dodds 9:02.30 (Great Oak) 2016

The IEC has been blessed the past two seasons with opening the meet up with a 9:02 meet record back in 2016, only to see seven boys all finish within the 9:15-9:25 window a year ago. With our 2018 version having a lot to live up to, Vista Murrieta's

Edgard Villa will look to defend his home turf. The senior qualified for the Cross Country state meet this past Fall while also possessing sub-4:20 speed for the 1600. The Vista Murrieta senior is the only one coming with 9:20 credentials and will have to be at his best in May to advance onward in the postseason. Shadow Hills' senior **Isaiah Gonzalez** (9:37) along with the Etiwanda's **Ivan Mejia** and Valley View's **Juan Nunez**, both juniors, will lead the charge in working to use Villa dip under 9:30.

Girls 400 Relay – Meet record: Rancho Verde 46.32 (2007)

We suspected that Upland has something special brewing in the pre-season, but last weekend cemented that. Led by senior **Jada Hicks**, Upland erupted for a 45.78 clocking at the Arcadia Invitational. This is now #3 in the United States and #1 in California by almost a full second! Even with their 'B' team, Upland has posted a 46.54. So, watch out for that meet record! Murrieta Mesa has emerged as one of the best 4x100 Relay squads in Southern California. Their 48.19 on this same track three weeks ago has the crew ranked #9 in the Southern Section. Junior **Chioma Okonkwo** will lead the Rams. Our defending champions, the **Mya Green**-led group from Carter came home with a 48.65 last month. Bolstered by **Deja** and **Mariah Allain**, La Sierra recorded a 49.44 at the California Relays last month. With several squads splitting their 'A' teams up between the varsity and F/S levels, Citrus Valley has run to a 49.59 while Great Oak, Oak Hills, and Vista Murrieta will all be right there fighting behind our two favorites.

Boys 400 Relay – Meet record: Rancho Verde 40.74 (2017)

The Inland Empire owns seven of the top nine 4x100 relay squads in the Southern Section! With memories of the last two post seasons in their minds as motivation, **Rancho Verde** waited until the Arcadia Invite to reveal their true arsenal. Their 41.49 clocking is now #1 in California and just off the Riverside County all-time Top 10 list. But, right on their outside, Murrieta Mesa has emerged as one of the best in the state as well. The **Christian Shakir**-led 41.67 effort last weekend now has them at #3 in the state. But with one hiccup in exchanges, Yucaipa anchor **Asani Hampton** (42.09) will take advantage and bring home the victory. With Yucaipa ranked #6 in the Southern Section, Great Oak, Etiwanda and Vista Murrieta have also dipped under 42.40 this season as a 42.92 was the last to qualify into this elite session. This is just a preview of what we have in store for the individual boys' sprints later!

Girls 100 Hurdles – Meet Record: Jordie Munford 13.96 (Rancho Cucamonga) 2011

We have a slew of California's best loaded in the middle of the track for this affair. The Inland Empire boasts four of the top five in the Southern Section this season. Temecula Valley's **Danae Dyer** took 3rd at the Arcadia Invite with a new personal best of 13.68. This elevates her to #2 in California and now ahead of Roosevelt's **Breanna Bernard Joseph** (14.02 this season). Dyer has been a state meet finalist the past two seasons while BBJ finished ahead of her in last year's finale. Not so much in their shadows anymore, Carter senior **Mya Greene** brought home a 14.20 from Arcadia and now owns the #5 wind-legal time in the state. Even with Upland's Jada Hicks sitting this out, Upland is #1 in the United States in the Shuttle Hurdles for a reason as freshman **Jordyn Grady** along with senior **Kennedy Smith** makes up half that crew. Grady produced a 14.64 wind-legal effort at Arcadia last weekend while Smith brought home a 15.02 (two wind-aided efforts under 14.90 this season). ML King senior **Sarah Ann Frank** broke that coveted 15 second barrier several weeks ago while Carter's **Mariah Stewart** has recorded a 15.05 wind-aided effort at the Mt. Carmel Invite last month. **This is THE most loaded girls' event on the docket for the 2018 IEC.**

Boys 110 Hurdles – Meet Record: Torrey Atkins 14.13 (Heritage) 2014

This race is wide open in regard to our favorites. With the 110 Hurdles being down across the section this season, Vista del Lago's **Jaden Ellis** (14.98) and Roosevelt's **Lucas Anotado** (14.96) lead the way here. Anotado has experienced the most improvement of any boy in the area. ML King junior **Reyte Rash** continues to improve, coming in with a 15.10 wind legal best while San Jacinto's junior **Wayne Thomas** impressed two weeks ago for a 15.20w breakthrough. Don't be surprised to see Silverado's **Derek Porter** in the mix up front as well. Porter is coming off an impressive 15.17 into a -2.4 wind. Perhaps, a sleeper here is Yucaipa's **Patrick Cundieff** who ran to a 15.37w personal best at Arcadia last weekend. Citrus Valley junior **Josh Hannah** is coming off a 15.46 as well. In that F/S division, watch for Vista Murrieta's **Hunter Escorcia**. His 14.78 is currently the #2 all-conditions mark in the Southern Section as he is looking to set a new F/S meet record.

Girls 400 Meters – Meet Record: Jade Miller 55.06 (Great Oak) 2013

One of the marquee events on tap for our women, the Citrus Valley duo of freshman **Cianna Norman-Thomas** and senior **Kyrah Johnson** may turn this into another 56 second training session. Norman-Thomas is California's top 9th grader (56.25) and 5th in all of California. Johnson rolled to a 56.57 at Arcadia and moved up to #10 in the Southern Section. Meanwhile, focusing on the 400 this weekend, Riverside Poly's **Kalea Ibarra** has consistently clocked under 58 all season while Palm Springs' junior **Lilliana Chalfant** moved up with a 57.89 victory at the Beaumont Invite three weeks ago. Watch for Murrieta Mesa junior **Chioma Okonkwo**, who usually focuses on the 100/200 double, but is taking that 57.4 split from a relay onto the open track. Defending River Valley League champ, **Deja Allain** of La Sierra comes in with a 57.97 personal best. Finally,

Norco's **Taylor Shorter** and Corona's **Jazmin Lucatero** will renew their battle from their dual meet where Shorter prevailed, 58.15 to 58.16. We could very see that our seeded section may also have the entire field breaking 60 seconds.

Boys 400 Meters – **Meet Record:** Connor Edwards 47.58 (Chaparral) 2016

With a 5th place medal from last year's California State Meet, Vista Murrieta senior Parris **Samaniego** is the favorite. In breaking 48 seconds four times over the last three weeks of the 2017 season, he was the Div. I CIF runner-up and currently #6 in California and #3 in the section. His 48.10 seasonal improvement from Arcadia last weekend leads one to believe that the meet record could be in jeopardy. Two of the section's best juniors will look to pull the upset are Roosevelt's **Jalen Johnson** (48.61) and Centennial's **Gregory Lapit** (48.82 last weekend) They are #7 and #9 in the section, respectively. Beyond those three, it is a wide open affair. Oak Hills' **Darren Hill** is coming back from injury after a huge breakthrough season in 2017. In placing 3rd at the SS-Div. II Finals, his 48.45 eventually led him to the State Championship meet where he is looking to return over these last seven weeks of the season. One of the best 10th grade athletes in California, Upland's **Namir Hemphill** is fresh off a 49.51 two weeks ago at the Trabuco Hills Invite. Not only is he the #2 sophomore in the state for the 400, he is also one of the section's best Triple Jumpers. Colony's **Bradley Rainford** and La Sierra sophomore **Donovan Nelson** are all seeking to break 50 seconds behind the jet setters. Also watch for Temecula Valley's **Ezekiel Armstrong** (50.10 in 2017), who qualified under the at-large standard to the Division I prelims a year ago.

Girls 1600 Meters – **Meet Record:** Destiny Collins 4:48.90 (Great Oak) 2016

We go into this event convinced that the meet record will remain for quite some time. With that said, we have a slew of women looking to go under 5:10! As the nationally ranked women of Great Oak rest up from the last three weekends, Vista Murrieta senior **Annabelle Werner**. Werner has gone under 5:11 this season but qualified under the at-large standard from Southwestern League in 2017 with a personal best in 5:02.92. Wisely putting softball aside and in her first year of Track, Roosevelt junior **Miranda Camargo** is coming off a huge 5:10 and 5:08 splits on her squad's relays at Arcadia last weekend. Yucaipa sophomore **Danielle Gee** is coming off a 5:12 effort several weeks ago. Continuing to impress, Santiago junior **Samantha Velazquez** threw down a ten second personal best of 5:12.48 victory against ML King two weeks ago. Redlands' **Chelsey Romo** (5:14.64) Vista Murrieta's **Nadine Dubon** (5:08.53 in '17), Great Oak's **Katya Candray** (5:15.30 *but yet #7 on her team*), Murrieta Valley's **Caitlin Billman** (5:14.30 in '17) will be right up front as well. Vista Murrieta junior **Peyton Candaele** is finally healthy and ready to roll with our headliners while watch for Colony freshman **Amber Rios**. Rios posted a 5:17.30 last weekend after coming off an incredible inaugural campaign where she one of the top freshmen in the state. (8th place finish at the SS-Div. II finals and 11th place finish at the State Championships). In that Frosh/Soph race, Vista Murrieta's **Makayla Fick** (5:10.96) is the heavy favorite.

Boys 1600 Meters – **Meet Record:** Ruben Ramirez 4:14.74 (Don Lugo) 2004

One of our oldest meet records may stand for yet, another year. But we do not doubt that Vista Murrieta's **Edgard Villa**, Roosevelt's **Raymon Ornelas** or Rubidoux junior **Kevin Ramos** will be going after it! A SS-Div. I Finalist a year ago in the 1600 (4:17.15), Villa rolled to a 4:19.16 several weeks ago. With improved leg speed this season, Ornelas has been one of the best in California breaking 4:20 on multiple occasions this season. Ramos, one of the top Cross Country athletes in California, has a personal best of 4:21.82 while Centennial senior and UC-Berkeley bound **Trevor Woodward** comes in with a 4:22.77. Woodward and Ramos, along with Ornelas would like to use this 1600 to put behind the disappointment in the 3200 meters last weekend. Meanwhile, Great Oak junior **Noah Nevens** (4:21.15) and sophomore **Chris Verdugo** (4:21.42/4:23.51 for the full mile last weekend) are looking to make it four boys for Great Oak under 4:20 this season (six have gone under 4:22!). Seniors with two of the most impressive resumes in the region are also joining the party. Roosevelt's **Tyler Spencer** is looking to find that form that led him to the 2017 California State Meet in the 3200 meters while Footlocker XC National Finalist, **Darius Riley** of Rancho Cucamonga, wants to add a sub-4:20 effort to go along with his 9:12 best in the 3200 from three weeks ago. Roosevelt sophomore **Raul Chavez** is the strong favorite in the Frosh/Soph race, especially after his 4:23 effort for the full mile at the Rising Stars Arcadia Mile last weekend.

Girls 100 Meters – **Meet Record:** Eboni Sutherland 11.81 (Centennial) 2013

Temecula Valley senior **Danae Dyer** has been on a roll as of late! After working to win the 100 Hurdles, Dyer will be back here to improve upon her 11.98 best for the open 100. Defending Desert Valley League champion, senior **Haley Murdica** (11.97) of Palm Desert has impressed us with consistency. Murdica is currently #5 in the section while Dyer and her 11.98 best is currently #7. But, do not get too far away from the fact that La Sierra senior **Mariah Allain** will be right there to defend her 2017 IEC title. In taking 2nd place in Div. III, Allain qualified for the Southern Section Masters Meet a year ago. Those three have the credentials to push one another under 12, while the rest of the field will be led by Carter's **A'Nysti Reece** along with the Upland duo of **Kennedy Smith** and **Amya Small**.

Boys 100 Meters – **Meet Record:** Michael Norman 10.28 (Vista Murrieta) 2016

With everybody in place, this event could be a deeper field than we what witnessed in 2017 where three of the top four boys at

the California State Meet were our top three here at the IEC (top six from the Division I SS Finals)! Yucaipa senior and Michigan bound **Asani Hampton** continues to be the standard within the state. Currently ranked #1 in California, Hampton took 4th in 2017 and 6th the year before as a sophomore. Coming off a stellar 3rd place, 10.47 effort at Arcadia, he is ready to claim the IEC title. But, he will have company. In leading Gahr High to 2nd place in the 4x100 relay at the 2017 State Meet, senior **Christian Shakir Ricks** has made a new home at Murrieta Mesa. He rolled to a 10.57 on this same track last month and is #2 in California! The IE graduates the top two in California and replaces them the very next year. Shakir's teammate, **Matthew Okonkwo** (10.79) will rest from the 400 (47.65 #1 in section) this weekend and focus on the 100. Elsinore junior **Kamari Maddox** is coming off 10.84 efforts at the Arcadia Invite. Both are now just outside the top ten in the section. Vista Murrieta's **Myles Martin** posted a (10.84w) last month while Ontario Christian's **Nolan Crespo** rolled to a wind aided 10.86 at the Trabuco Hills Invite and is now one of the favorites to challenge for the Div. IV title next month. This is the most competitive all California only field for the 100 meters in the state this season as a wind legal 10.93 did NOT qualify into the fastest heat! Can't get enough..... San Gorgonio sophomore **Lorenzo McMillan** will threaten Hampton's Frosh/Soph record from 2016 as he has already dipped below 10.80 this season!

Girls 300 Hurdles – Meet Record: Breanna Bernard-Joseph 42.43 (Roosevelt) 2016

Lacing it up for the final time, Roosevelt senior and USC bound **Breanna Bernard Joseph** will look to bring home the victory and improve upon her own meet record. She has been the state finalist the last two seasons and is currently #2 in California. She is also the defending Div. I champion. Carter senior **Mya Greene** continues to move up that ladder as her 43.57 from the Trabuco Hills Invite places her as #9 in the state and #6 in the section. One of the reasons why Upland is expected to score so well during next month's postseason lies here in the 300 Hurdles. Freshman **Jordyn Grady** raced to a 43.73 last weekend while **Chelsea Daye** has clocked a 44.46. Those marks are #7 and #9 in the section. Great Oak will look push that Upland crew in May as junior **Kolonnie Green** may play a huge role. She has run a 45.11 this season which finds her at #11 in the section. ML King's **Sarah Ann Frank**, San Jacinto's **Payton McCartney** and Heritage's **Kaleigh Giannone** have all crossed the line under 46 seconds this Spring and all within the top 20 in the Southern Section. Watch for Upland sophomore **DeMia January** in that Frosh/Soph division as she looks to regain that form that saw her qualify for the Div. I CIF Finals last year.

Boys 300 Hurdles – Meet Record: Cameron Samuel 37.47 (Rancho Verde) 2017

With Upland sophomore **Caleb Lutalo Roberson** (38.22 SS #2, CA #3) taking this weekend off, the favorites fall into the legs of Big VIII rivals in ML King junior **Reyte Rash** and Roosevelt senior **Lucas Anotado**. Rash's 38.75 is currently #5 in the Southern Section while Anotado is #8. But, right on their heels is Silverado's **Derek Porter** (39.29) and Murrieta Mesa's **Daniel Browne**, both #9 and #10 in the section. Coming from the Citrus Belt League, Yucaipa's **Patrick Cundieff** (39.62 in '17) and Citrus Valley junior **Josh Hannah** (39.19) will look to break 40 seconds this season for the first time. Along with Silverado's Porter, Hannah was a SS Div. II Finalist last year and CBL runner up. Last year's meet record holder went on to capture that California state championship, but it looks to remain for another year. On the Frosh/Soph level, Vista Murrieta's **Hunter Escorcia** (40.04) is within striking range of that F/S meet record.

Girls 800 Meters – Meet Record: Megan Huebner 2:13.32 (La Quinta) 2014

Roosevelt junior **Alexys Ford** continues to be a model of consistency as she has clocked between 2:15 and 2:18 every race this season and the last **THIRTEEN** attempts at this distance in an invitational. In anchoring her squad to a huge school record in the 4x800 Relay last weekend, her split was under 2:15 so perhaps, this weekend will be the time for a new personal best. She is currently #6 in the Southern Section. Fellow Big VIII rivals, Centennial senior **Rylee Penn** and Santiago's **Cayla Etheridge** will try to keep up with Ford's speed (57.7 for the 400). Penn is the three time Big VIII League Champ to go along with also qualifying for the Southern Section Masters Meet all three seasons as well. As Penn continues to work her way towards another great postseason, Vista Murrieta junior Peyton Candaele opened the season up with a 2:20 and now healthy to go after our favorites. Vista del Lago junior **Andrea Delgado** is also gearing for another successful postseason run as she was a SS Div. II Finalist in 2017 for the 400. Perhaps the sleeper of the group is Great Oak senior **Ericka Burgess**. She is the fourth element in that national leading 4x800 Relay squad and comes in with a 2:20 best. Vista Murrieta sophomore **Makayla Fick** is currently #8 in the section but is looking to break the meet record (held by Ford) for the F/S division.

Boys 800 Meters – Meet Record: Jeremiah Bias 1:53.40 (Vista del Lago) 2014

This could be a group of wild horses, uh, Mustangs and Broncos up front when it's all said and done. Roosevelt senior **Taylor Jackson**, part of his state ranked 4x400 relay squad, is one of California's best with a 1:53.21. He is currently #2 in California, #1 in the section while also possessing a 49.06 for the 400 meters. The long strides of Jackson will look to hold off the likes of Vista Murrieta junior **Willie Coleman** (1:57) and the Rancho Verde pair in junior **Trevor Nguru** and senior **Humberto Gonzalez** (both under 1:58). As the #2 sophomore half milers in the state, Upland's **Hassani Hawkins** rolled to a 1:56.86 two weeks ago. Almost the entire field comes in with sub 2:00 minute resumes and will be a close race beyond our favorite Jackson. Six others have dipped below 1:59. Corona junior **Israel Echeverria**, Indio senior **Jose Morales** and the junior from Yucaipa, **Isaac Ganly** are all entered at 1:58.4. The endurance skills of Centennial's **Trevor Woodward** and Rubidoux's

Kevin Ramos will also use the brisk pace to lower the personal bests under 1:59!

Girls 200 Meters – Meet Record: Eboni Sutherland 24.33 (Centennial) 2013

Our speed from the 100 meters match up with the strength of the 400 meters... Murrieta Mesa junior **Chioma Okonkwo** has experienced some nice improvement as evident from her 24.90 effort from the Arcadia Invite last weekend. After qualifying for the SS CIF Finals in the 200 last year, La Sierra senior Mariah Allain has a seasonal best of 24.74w at the Mt. Carmel Invite. But, fresh from the 400 meters, Citrus Valley freshman **Cienna Norman-Thomas** recorded a personal best of 24.93w at the Trabuco Hills Invite two weeks ago. Meanwhile, Palm Desert senior **Hailey Murdica** is coming off a 24.98w victory last weekend. Perris senior **Annaya Pelt** continues to improve as she posted a new personal best last weekend at Arcadia (25.17w). Along with her older sister, junior **Deja Allain** will be looking to use the brisk pace to break 25 seconds. In the Frosh/Soph section, watch for Corona sophomore **Egbe Ndipagbor**. Ranked #6 in California for the 400 meters, she has a seasonal best of 25.14 (run in the rain), while coming off a successful offseason where she was the top Californian in the 300 meters (38.93) at the Winter Championships.

Boys 200 Meters – Meet Record: Michael Norman 20.74 (Vista Murrieta) 2016

We may still be catching our breath from the incredible depth and talent from the 100 meters. Most of those nationally ranked stars are back for the 200 meters! Like the in the 100, Yucaipa senior is the California state leader **Asani Hampton** is the headliner here. Taking 2nd place at the IEC in 2017, Hampton's seasonal best is 21.26. Winning that race at the Chandler Invite in Arizona, Hampton held off the deadly duo from Murrieta Mesa. Seniors **Christian Shakir Ricks** and **Matthew Okonkwo** rolled to 21.46 and 21.52 in one of the fastest version of the 200 meters in the US this season. Shakir came back last for a personal best 21.43 to move up to #3 in California (wind legal marks) while Okonkwo is #7. This heat will feature four of the top seven in the CIF SS, as **Parris Samaniego** bested Okonkwo in their dual meet last month with a time of 21.58! By the way, the Inland Empire actually boasts six of the top seven as the other two are resting up. Elsinore junior **Kamari Maddox** (22.03) in the only underclassman in this heat, and will use the torrid pace to break 22. Overall, 18 boys are entered here with seed times below 22.40! The warm up for our varsity concert is, like the 100, San Geronio's **Lorenzo McMillan**. Currently, he is the #2 sophomore in California for the 200 meters (wind legal) as he opened the season here on this track with a 22.20! Palm Desert's Liam Carr has run a 22.40 and will push McMillan.

Girls 1600 Relay – Meet Record: Colony 3:54.13 (2009)

As the meet concludes in the late afternoon, Roosevelt's girls continue to be the standard for the 4x400 Relay. With, yet, another girls group racing under a 3:55, the Div. I defending champs have unmatched depth (six girls under 61seconds). Even if hurdling sensation Breanna Bernard Joseph does not compete here, they are still a sub 4:00 group. They are currently #3 in California with a 3:51.41 seasonal best. Emerging onto the statewide scene are the girls from Citrus Valley. With Kyrach Johnson and Cierra Norman Thomas as their nucleus, the Blackhawks have moved to #6 in the CIF SS with a 3:52.61. With those two squads, they should be well ahead of everybody else. Murrieta Mesa and Vista Murrieta will be the top two squads challenging for the top three medals.

Boys 1600 Relay – Meet Record: Rancho Verde 3:14.95 (2017)

Like their women, Roosevelt's boys have been on the best in California for the last decade. Led by Jalen Johnson (48.61) and Jackson Taylor (49.06) their 3:18.31 clocking is currently #3 in California. With all characters on board, Roosevelt should run away with the victory. In an epic matchup of Mustangs, Rancho Verde barely out leaned Roosevelt for the state title in 2017. Rancho Verde waited until this meet to reveal that state championship crew and after last weekend, one wonders just how strong they are. Their seasonal best of 3:24.72 (#12 in the section) could be improved upon as the group from Vista Murrieta has recorded a 3:23 this season. Upland and Murrieta Mesa also possess the talent to push under that 3:25 threshold.

Boys Long Jump

Our main headliner in the field events is the California defending Triple Jump champion, senior **CJ Stevenson** of Great Oak. With Stevenson taking 2nd place in the Triple Jump last weekend at the Arcadia Invite, he stepped it up and won the Invitational Long Jump session. His 24'3" effort set a new school record and elevating Stevenson up the national rankings and now #2 in California. Elsinore junior **Kamari Maddox**, one of the stronger 100/200 athletes in the state, excels in the pits as well. His 23'6" personal best was in rainy conditions at the Irvine Invite where unfortunately, there was no wind readings (there was NO wind that particular morning). Upland sophomore **Namir Hemphill** has a personal best of 22'8" and was a SS Div. I qualifier as a 9th grader in 2017. San Jacinto senior twins in **Kevin and Patrick Maria** have consistently hovered around the 22 foot mark. Our F/S champion last year, Colony's **Ezra Gales**, is looking to clear the 22 foot threshold as he was a Div. II CIF Finalist as a sophomore last year. Qualifying for the Div. III CIF Finals a year ago, Mojave River League champ, **Ivontae Hudson** of Sultana, is coming off a huge 22'7" effort this past Tuesday. Also watch for Cajon sophomore **Jerome Weber** (22'3"). Keep track of Vista Murrieta sophomore **Richard Harris** as he also a legit 22 foot jumper.

Girls Long Jump

Moving over to the Girls Long Jump, Upland senior **Chelsea Daye** will move away from the track this weekend and focus primarily on this event. Her 18'10" personal best from the California Relays has her as our favorite. With teammates also in the 18 foot range, Upland will be challenged to decide which four events Daye will forward in when the postseason begins in three weeks. Away from being one of the best hurdlers in the state, Carter's **Mya Greene** has also been the Citrus Belt League champ the past two seasons in this event. She was a CIF Finalist as a sophomore and will look to give Daye a great competition. Roosevelt junior **Chaselyn Amos** is a two time Big VIII league champ here. She has consistently hovered on or above the 17 foot tape as well. Our 2017 F/S champ, **Adriana Wright** of Grand Terrace will be in the mix as well Great Oak junior **Kolonnie Green**. The versatile Green is also one that Great Oak has decisions to make regarding her postseason and where she can potentially score points at the SS Finals. She was the Southwestern League Champ in 2017 as a sophomore. Beyond these five, there are about ten other girls all flirting with that 17 foot measurement as well. Watch for ML King sophomore **Sheredyn Pfeiffer** in the F/S competition as she has a personal best of 17'7" which was achieved at a dual meet several weeks ago.

Boys Triple Jump

The overwhelming favorite is Great Oak senior **CJ Stevenson**. Measuring out over 50 feet places him as our current state leader (California State Champ in 2017) and #2 in the United States. Stevenson is one the best Triple Jumpers in Riverside County and over the next six weeks, plans on holding every record in the region. Cajon's **Jerome Weber** is one of the best sophomores in the state with a 46'3" personal best. Temecula Valley's **Christian Gbla** is back after taking 6th place (44'11") at the SS Div. I Finals a year ago. He was the Southwestern League runner up to Stevenson. Heritage senior **Damitre Cobb** bounded out to a 44'7" effort several weeks ago. Vista Murrieta's **Eric Allen** has shown some great improvement and recorded a best of 44'2" last month. We have a large group of boys entered in the 42-43 foot range, but this competition's headliner belongs to Mr. Stevenson. In the F/S competition, Vista Murrieta's **Richard Harris** has a personal best of 44'11" and is the favorite.

Girls Triple Jump

The Great Oak pair in junior **Kolonnie Green** and freshman **Summer Stevenson** are looking to measure out beyond 37 feet. But, the one to watch could very well be our two time Mojave League Champ, Serrano junior **Natalie Lim**. Lim has consistently bounded out beyond the 35 foot range. Also an accomplished pole vaulter, Temecula Valley's **Charisma Davis** (35'5") took 3rd place in the Southwestern League and earned a trip to the postseason. ML King's **Tresure Rucker** was a CIF qualifier in 2017 and consistently out over 34 feet. In her first year of Track and Field, Great Oak senior **Alanna Stein** has already jumped out beyond 35 feet and lead a large group of girls chasing after the top five spots.

Girls High Jump

Defending California State Champion, **Abigail Burke** of Riverside Poly, is the class of the field here. As a CIF Southern Section Masters Meet qualifier as a sophomore, Burke took it up a huge notch in 2017. After capturing the Div. I crown, she won the Masters Meet and elevated (5'8") to a new personal best to capture the state title. But, Upland junior **Amya Small** is veteran with tons of postseason experience. Small qualified for the SS Masters Meet as a freshman after taking the runner up spot at the CIF Div. I Finals. As a sophomore in 2017, she qualified for the state meet. She is coming off a 5'3" clearance at the Arcadia Invite. The Roosevelt pair of juniors in **Shaelyn Amos** and **Cajairah Fraise**, along with Elsinore **Ashley Farmer**, have all elevated up over the 5'3" bar. Six others have cleared 5'1" including Elsinore junior **Daniela Lopez** is the top Heptathlete in the Inland Empire. In the F/S division, Linfield Christian sophomore **Caylan Medley** is our favorite as she has cleared 5'4" this season.

Boys High Jump

With this event being down in the region in 2018, Roosevelt senior **Tyler Riley** is the only one coming in that has cleared the 6'6" bar. Great Oak senior **Grant Gaskins** was a CIF qualifier last year, while Murrieta Valley's **Trevon Waters** is bouncing back from clearing 6'3" at the Arcadia Invite last weekend. Waters is one of the most improved in the area. Challenging these three is a group of five boys that have all cleared 6'2" this season. Rancho Cucamonga junior **Miles Harris** has been consistent this season while coming off his Baseline League runner up placing in 2017. Watch for Vista Murrieta freshman **Darius Hill**. He has already cleared 6'3" and definitely one of our up and coming stars for the future.

Girls Pole Vault

Our three girls have all cleared 12'2" this season and are tied for 5th in the CIF Southern Section. All mentored by the same coach, Apple Valley senior **Darla Gonzalez** cleared that mark along with Roosevelt duo of junior **Erika Flaherty** and sophomore **Tessa Watkins**. But, watch out for Vista Murrieta senior **Katrina Meier** who cleared 12'1" last weekend at Arcadia and is now #8 in the section. Great Oak is also well represented as **Jenna Portis** has a personal best of 11'8" and sophomore **Kaitlyn Swenson** cleared 11'4" back in February. Vista Murrieta junior **Tamara Bader** has cleared 11'7" while

Chaparral senior **Alexandria Gray** has consistently hovered in the mid 11's the past two seasons. Four of the top nine in the section face off here as we have as deep a field of girls over 11 feet as you will find. In the Frosh/Soph competition, Chaffey sophomore **Brenda Wilmore** cleared 11'7" in damp conditions in Irvine last month while Linfield Christian sophomore **Kaelyn McCann** (11'1") is one of the favorites to capture the SS Div. IV crown next month.

Boys Pole Vault

Like our girls' competition, the boys from Roosevelt could very well dominate the action here. Junior **Ethan Amata** has elevated himself amongst the best in the Southern Section. with a 14'10" best this season. He is currently 10th in the section. With our Inland Empire leader from Great Oak taking the weekend off, Roosevelt junior **Jacob Ernst** will challenge for the win as well. Formerly of Apple Valley, Ernst has cleared 14'7" in the past, but has been riddled with a number of 'no heights' throughout the season. Beaumont junior **Brady Ho** is looking to return to the form that saw him consistently elevate up over 14 feet as a sophomore. Great Oak senior **Cameron Franklin** cleared 14'3" in damp conditions in Redondo last month, while Vista Murrieta senior **Dustin Davis** opened the season up with a 14 foot clearance. Serrano senior Brandon Forbes continues to improve after going up over 13'10" last week in a dual meet. That Frosh/Soph competition, Great Oak's **Jack Wright** comes in with a best of 14'1" which ranks him as the top freshman in California.

Girls Shot Put

Our overwhelming favorite to win this competition is San Geronio senior **Ana Tovi**. She opened the season up with a 43'6.5" effort here at the Saddle Up Invite. Although she has a personal best of 44'1" from 2017, her seasonal best puts her at #8 in California and #3 in the Southern Section. Elsinore junior **Soley Lymon** just launched a new personal best of 38'6.5" this past Wednesday. Meanwhile, senior **Kalianna Lesa** is one of the favorites in SS – Div. IV after her 37'4.75" measurement last weekend. She represents San Jacinto Valley Academy. Prepping for another strong postseason run, Rancho Verde senior **Zion Levi** has gone out beyond 39 feet and was a Div. I CIF Finalist in 2017. Hemet's **Cassandra Gascon** has a personal best of 36'5.5" and was the Mountain Pass League runner-up in 2017. Finally, the defending Big VIII League Champ, Norco junior **Evalen Garcia** measured out to 37'8" best last year (36'8.75" this season).

Girls Discus

Like the Shot Put, San Geronio senior **Ana Tovi** is the headliner. Her 144'1" launch last month elevated her up to #8 in California and is currently #4 in the Southern Section. Her biggest threat comes off the heels of a 129'1" personal best effort just this past Wednesday. Silverado junior **Ksani Coney** is currently #11 in the Southern Section with that effort. Shadow Hills' senior **Victoria Soto** stepped it up with a 122'8" personal best to qualify for the SS Div. II Finals in 2017. She is a three time CIF qualifier. Perhaps, the deepest group from any one school in California, the girls from La Quinta are led by senior **Madeline Wallace**. She is the defending Desert Valley League Champ while La Quinta boasts the fact they have FOUR girls that have gone out beyond 111 feet this season. Just like the Shot Put, Elsinore junior **Soley Lymon** came home on Wednesday with a personal best in the Discus. Her 118 foot effort moves up the Riverside County lists.

Boys Shot Put

If you need a reason to verify why Great Oak has the inside track in capturing the CIF SS Div. I team title next month, go no further than the Shot Put and Discus sectors. Senior **Harrison Gould** (58'6.5") is currently #5 in California and #4 for the Southern Section. His training partner is right there with him as senior **Jaime Navarro** catapulted the shot out to 58'6" at last weekend's Arcadia Invite. Navarro is one place behind his teammate in both rankings. With those two dominating the competition, 3rd place is up for grabs. Heritage senior **Avante Robbs** has gone out over 48'7" while Valley View senior **Theo Bullard** has also thrown out beyond 48 feet. Actually, the 3rd ranked Shot Putter we have here is competing at the Frosh/Soph level. Great Oak's **Nick Meeker** has a best of 50'11" and is the #4 sophomore in California. Great Oak freshman **James Wright** will be looking to clear 46 feet for the first time this weekend.

Boys Discus

Great Oak senior **Jaime Navarro** is chasing the school record as his 185'8" personal best is currently #4 in California. He is now #3 in the Southern Section and is one of the best Riverside County has ever seen. Navarro is the defending Southwestern League Champ but looking to put the disappointment of the 2017 postseason behind him. His counterpart, **Harrison Gould** has hurled the disc out to 173'9" which is #6 in the Southern Section. Gould is perhaps the most improved Discus thrower in California as he went into this season with a best of 127'2! Patriot senior **John Ober** continues to improve with a 159'6" best this season at last weekend's Arcadia Invite. Meanwhile, Vista Murrieta junior **Alex Oyawale** has a seasonal best of 149'4" and is ranked #6 in Riverside County. We have a great group slated for the Frosh/Soph competition as Vista Murrieta sophomore **Edward Ta'amilo** come to us with a 149'9" seasonal best.

