

## **New Zealand's Largest Track & Field Meet this Weekend**

The largest New Zealand Track & Field meeting of the year, the New Zealand Track & Field and Road Running Championships will be held at Wellington's Newtown Park Stadium on Saturday and Sunday. Two days of intense competition will feature over 1450 of New Zealand's top young athletes from 227 schools.

The middle distance running performances of Rebekah Greene and Julian Oakley should provide some of the highlights at the annual event. Oakley, from Tauranga Boys' College, son of former world squash champion Dame Susan Devoy, has posted impressive 800m and 1500m times this season and will be seeking the senior boys' middle distance double. In the 800m he will be up against an equally talented Brad Mathas of Cullinane College in Wanganui. Oakley has clocked 1m 50.24s and Mathas 1m 50.58s this season and given the competitive edge they will bring to the event the schools' race record of 1m 51.25s set last year by Brad Mathas will be under threat. Competition for Oakley in the 1500m will come from Kieron McDonald of Scots College, Tom Stringer of Waimea College and Ben Moynihan of Kings College. Oakley has run 3m 53.67s over 1500m this season but he has a tough call to eclipse the 1500m record of 3m 46.92s held by Richard Potts since 1989.

Greene of St Hilda's Collegiate will be defending her senior girls' 3000m title and also compete in the 1500m. Greene has already run under the schools 3000m record of 9m 33.39s held by Sonia Barry since 1985, this season with a time of 9m 21.82s. Greene's best 1500m time this season of 4m 19.78s is under the schools record of 4m 25.15s also held by Barry since 1986.

Brendon Barnett of Waimea College will be aiming for the senior boys' long jump record of 7.36m set by Nigel Park in 1990. Barnett has twice this season broken the New Zealand M17 record his best jump just two weeks ago being 7.36m. Julia Ratcliffe of Waikato Diocesan will be looking to improve on last year's record breaking throw of 57.47 when she erased Valerie Adams from the senior girls' hammer record. Ratcliffe set the junior record three years ago and should improve on the senior record after throwing 60.47m last Sunday.

Kodi Harman of Mt Maunganui College will be aiming for the senior boys sprint double. Andrew Whyte of South Otago High School will give Harman a hurry along in the 100m and Whyte will later go head to head with Thomas Symes of Wanganui Collegiate in the 400m. Dalton Coppins of Sacred Heart should feature in the 200m final.

Declan Wilson of Auckland Grammar may give Philip Starr's senior 3000m record of 8m 18.53s a nudge when he takes on fellow Grammar student Cameron Burstall. Nicholas Southgate of Rosmini College will have his eye on Paul Gibbons 1989 pole vault record of 4.50m when he defends his title. Pascal Kethers of Rangitoto is also down for the pole vault and has cleared 4.60m this season. Kethers will have a busy weekend as he is also entered in the 110m hurdles, and long and triple jumps.

Jesse Bryant of St Bede's is down for the 110m hurdles, long and high jumps. Jack Henry of Shirley Boys' should shine in the 110m hurdles and the 300m hurdles. William Cowper of Wanganui Collegiate, Chris Brake of Tapawera and Manu Ravouvounivouna of St Peter's Gore should all feature in the long and triple jumps. Brake is also a contender for a medal in the high jump.

Kyle Van Der Merwe of Francis Douglas is likely to feature in both the senior shot and javelin throw and should have an interesting competition with Richard Callister of Westlake Boys' in the discus throw. Callister is favourite to win the senior hammer throw. William Francis-Dittmer of Macleans is the favourite for the shot put while Dean Rusbatch of Otago Boys' High and Alexander Parkinson of Orewa College should be competitive in the shot, discus and hammer.

Louise Hodge of Rangitoto will be aiming for the senior sprint double while Megan McPhail of Waitaki Girls High and Brooke Cull of Takapuna Grammar School will also in with a chance in the 200m. Kerry White of Te Aroha College is down for the 800m while Mackenzie Keenan of St Margaret's should dominate the 100m and 300m hurdles. Keenan is also entered in the long jump. Greer Alsop of Southland Girls is expected to win the long and triple jumps, with competition in the triple coming from Anna Thomson of Aotea College.

Siositina Hakeai of Auckland Girls' Grammar will be competitive in the shot and discus throws along with Leesa Lealaisalanoa of Porirua College who will be defending her discus title as well as competing in the shot. Tori Peeters of St Peter's Gore comes into the javelin throw as the top ranked athlete. Also likely to be competitive in the three throwing events is Harii Kiriau of James Cook High School, while Ella Pilkington of Westlake Girls' should take a placing in the hammer. Kerry Charlesworth of Rangitoto should win the pole vault while Keeley O'Hagan of Western Springs has the best high jump this season of 1.72m coming into the high jump as well as competing in the long jump. Lee-Ann McKenzie of Mountain View High School has cleared 1.65m in the high jump and is also entered in the javelin throw. Courtney Ruske of Burnside High should collect the 2000m track walk while Thomas Currie of Long Bay College has a good chance for the 2000m steeplechase title.

Amy Robinson of Tauranga Girls' should win the junior girls' long jump. She is also entered in the 100m and 80m hurdles.

An interesting race is shaping up in the junior girls' 3000m with both Kara MacDermid of Awatapu College and Rosa Flanagan of Rangī Ruru Girls' having run times close to Tracey Kennedy's 1984 record of 9m 47.33s. MacDermid has a time of 9m 47.67s and Flanagan 9m 47.84s. Another to watch with interest in the junior girls' is Talia Horgan of Cambridge High School, who comes into the 400m final with a clocking this season of 56.20s. The junior girls' 400m record is 54.42s set by Carlene Dillimore in 1981. Interestingly it is faster than the senior record of 54.92s set in 1989 by Toni Hodgkinson.

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