

HIGH SCHOOL TRACK: Moussa invited to run in New York mile

By Keith Lair, Staff Writer
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CLOVIS - The high school track and field season is not quite over for some athletes. Yes, the CIF State finals have come and gone but some area athletes have not slowed down. Arcadia High School's Ammar Moussa has been invited to compete in the inaugural Jim Ryun High School Dream Mile on Saturday in New York City.

"That meet will have 15,000 people in a bowl and it is really cool," the junior said. "It is set up for a great time."

The meet is part of the adidas Grand Prix and will be at sold-out Icahn Stadium. The event includes numerous events with world-class athletes.

Moussa won the CIF State cross country title last November and finished third in the CIF State 3,200 meters last Saturday. He also won a CIF-Southern Section Division I title in the 3,200.

Ten boys and 10 girls have been selected from around the country to compete in the meet. The international Grand Prix circuit will make only one other stop in the U.S., in Eugene, Ore.

High-flying Perry

La Salle's Michael Perry had a very good reason to be excited after last Saturday's long jump competition in Clovis.

He achieved three goals, of which one - taking third place in state - wasn't necessarily in his plans 24 hours earlier.

Jumping 23 feet had been his primary goal all season. He had been so close, yet so far away until his second jump in the finals. He set a school record with a wind-legal 23-2 1/2.

"Usually I meditate on exactly how I am going to approach the jump," said Perry, who went through graduation ceremonies before the meet. "I told myself that I've done it so many times that I thought I would just go for it now. I would focus my attention on the crowd. It worked."

He went 22-3 1/4 to finish second in the CIF-SS Division 4 finals and then qualified for state at 22-8 3/4 in the CIF-SS Masters.

He struggled on the first day of State qualifying with a best effort of 22-6 1/2 and thought he was not advancing to the finals. But he got the ninth and final spot and that was enough to get him to his magical 23-foot barrier.

"I was thinking at the time that I had a 1 percent chance of qualifying," he recalled.

But then he went 22-10 1/4 on his first attempt, which was a personal best and school record. He followed that with his third-place finish.

"I felt the power," he said. "I knew the 23 was coming. It was a great jump."

"I was wanting to finish in the top six, maybe a top three, so it was awesome. I knew I could do this. The coolest thing is that this was my last meet in high school and I went out with a PR of 5 3/4 inches."

Speck honored

Former longtime Arcadia track and field and cross country coach Doug Speck received a moment of silence before the national anthem at Saturday's finals.

Speck, who died of cancer in March, was honored for his contributions to the sport.

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