

Tracking performances

Viernes, Edwards duo grab spotlight in BIIF meet at Konawaena

by Wayne Joseph
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Hilo's Daysha Viernes and Ka'u's Jacob and Larissa Edwards lead the state in their respective track & field events, following Week 3 of the Big Island Interscholastic Federation season.



Hilo High's Daysha Viernes pole vaults over the bar during a recent BIIF meet. The Viking senior cleared 10-feet, 7 inches at Saturday's meet at Kealakekua. - Tribune-Herald File Photo

The talented Viernes, the defending state pole vault champion, cleared 10-7 on Saturday at Konawaena to continue to lead all vaulters early in the season.

"I've been practicing really hard and I felt good and confident coming into this meet," Viernes said after clearing her impressive height.

Using the same pole that she had in Week 1 when she cleared 10 feet, Viernes went two inches higher than her BIIF championship winning vault last season.

"I held lower on the pole and it didn't bend as much which gave me more spring to go vertical," Viernes said.

Using a 12-step approach, Viernes cleared the height and now has her sights on breaking the BIIF record of 10-9. "I want to jump 10-10 to break the record and I've got the confidence to do it," she said.

Meanwhile, the two best hurdlers in the state continue to glide through victories.

Ka'u brother-and-sister Jacob and Larissa Edwards have dominated the league in both the 100/110 and 300 hurdles.

Larissa, who recently signed a letter of intent to run for the University of Wyoming, and Jacob, who is only a sophomore, have given the Trojan coaching staff high praise for their success.

Jacob's goal coming into the season was to get his 300 times into the 41-second range. "I've already surpassed those preseason goals by getting my time into the 40s," he said of his 40.61-second performance.

Jacob credits the high level of BIIF hurdlers for his early season success. "I've got a positive attitude and have put myself into a good state of mind," he said.

Jacob, who also plays football and soccer for the Trojans, has excelled in both hurdle events and the triple jump. "My favorite event is the 110 hurdles because it's fast and fun," he said.

Waiakea's Likiak Jack, the defending BIIF champion in the discus, made a clear statement this past Saturday by throwing a league leading 151-feet, 8.75 inches.

"I slipped on the paint in the circle before regaining my balance or I would have done better," Jack said.

Jack, who stands 5-feet-7 and weighs 200 pounds, has gotten the spin move down to almost perfection to be able to outdistance taller competitors. "It's all about form and technique," Jack said of his BIIF-leading throw.

"I think if I can throw 165 and I should be able to place in the top three at states," the Warrior senior said. "I need to hit the weights more, because mentally I'm there."

Hilo's Adisa Ahern-Woodson, who is the defending BIIF champion in the high jump, showed his stuff by leaping a league-leading 6-2, which also places him first in the state.

Ahern-Woodson won BIIF title last year as a freshman, jumping 5-10 and during the past two weeks, has increased his height by two inches each week.

"I've placed all my focus on this event and I think I can get over 6-4 this year and do well at states," Ahern-Woodson said.

Another Viking, David King, came out of nowhere to surpass teammate Scott Hunter in the pole vault.

King cleared 13-6 with Hunter six inches behind. Another Viking, Gene Yoshikawa, cleared the state height of 12 feet to place Hilo in a great position to vie for team honors this year.

BIIF cross country champion Garrett Prinslow of Kealakehe edged state runner-up in the 1,500 Nick Ucker of Christian Liberty by three-one hundredths of a second.

Prinslow and Ucker ran side-by-side for three laps before the talented duo made their kick coming out of the final turn in the 1,500 run. Prinslow was given the nod, in 4:22.48 to Ucker's 4:22.51.

Honokaa's Beverly Quiamas swept the 100- and 200-meter races, clocking 12.96 seconds in the 100 and 26.16 in the 200 to beat a talented Larissa Edwards in both.

Another Dragon, freshman BIIF cross country champion Tialana Greenwell, ran away from the 3,000-meter field to qualify for state in 11:33.56.

Moments later, Hilo's Mark Turner took the field, along with Honokaa's Jake Shiraki, to set the pace and finish in an impressive 9:42.96, with Shiraki clocking in at 9:48.73 -- as both boys hit state qualifying times.

BIIF track and field action resumes this Saturday as Kamehameha hosts the league relays, starting at 9 a.m.

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