

Sweltering day time temperatures dissipated just as the second installment of the Summer Nights Track & Field Series got underway at San Diego Mesa College on Wednesday, June 22, 2011. A large turnout of some of San Diego's finest athletes turned in a number of exceptional marks across eight scored events and three additional exhibitions.

In the first event to commence, Canadian Junior Nationals hopeful, Sullivan Parker, heaved the 6kg shot put an impressive 51' 0 ½." Matching the quality of his earlier mark, Parker then took to the discus, whereupon he launched the 1.75kg disc over 151 feet. In the high jump, Stephen Siber led the way with a clearance of 6' 4," while former Olympian and World Record holder in the Triple Jump, Willie Banks, cleared 5' 8" to take the Masters Men's title. In the Long Jump, Daniel Herman outdistanced his competitors with a leap of 21' 10 ¾," while Mishe Scott won the Women's title by more than a foot, bounding 16' 11 ½." Finally, in an unscored event, Maurice Strickland vaulted 15' 3" to take the Men's Pole Vault crown, while his female counterpart, Jacqui Kilpatrick, nearly bested a number of the male vaulters, taking the Women's title in 12' 0."

On the heels of a head-to-head battle in the Men's 400m Hurdles, won by Edgar Vazquez in 59.90 seconds, CSUSM alumnus, David Edwards, ran away from the field in the Men's 800m, crossing the line in a near personal-best 1:51.41. Nearly lost in Edwards' wake was a noteworthy performance from Army and Navy Academy junior, Alexander Monsivaiz, who ran 1:55.46. On the Women's side, Elaine Ribeiro proved to be the class of the field, leading the way with a strong 2:22.64 effort. Blowing the proverbial lid off the meet, Aishabanea Mohammed raced off the turn in the Men's 200m to a runaway victory in 21.96 seconds. On the Women's side, it was a familiar "young" woman leading the way again. Having won the 400m at the June 8th meet at Cathedral, 14 year old Sasha Stephens today opted to take down the half-lap event, doing so in a blistering 26.36 seconds. Opting to bypass the "long sprint" (i.e., 400m), Stephens left the door open for 49 year old Jai Black, who just missed cracking the 1 minute barrier, finishing at 1:00.83. Impressive though she was, Black was not alone among the elite Masters sprint competitors. 40 year old Aaron Lacey, like Black, achieved a double-victory on the night, taking both the 200m and 400m Masters titles at 23.06 and 51.42, respectively. One of the few "long sprinters" that Lacey couldn't catch, Daniel Thomas, a standout member of the Cornell University track team, took the 400m almost a full second clear of the field in 49.45 seconds.

In the lone scored distance event, parity amongst the age groups prevailed. In the 3000m, overall winner, Glenn Racz just edged out Masters winner, Tim Gore, and teenager Dennis Roth. The trio finished in 9:07.42, 9:14.30, and 9:16.51, respectively. On the Women's side, Morgan Sjogren nearly took down the 10 minute barrier, racing to the line in 10:01.97. Finally, in the evening's last event, the 10,000m, Mesa College harrier, Deng Akuien seemed content to pace with the field for the first 5K, before summarily dropping all competitors in the race's second half, finishing in 35:20.31. Although lapped by Akuien, 70 year old Richard Gauntner put on quite a display for 25 laps, racing the onset of a thick marine layer and finishing the 10K in 45:03.38, just seconds behind the Women's overall winner, Maria Perez.

Competition amongst San Diego's finest resumes in two weeks at Cuyamaca College on July 6th.

From Colin Donnelly