



Newsletter #31

Results and news from Wednesday 20th to Tuesday 26th February 2019

A new national record to Jack Lewer highlighted a very good night of athletics when the Palmerston North club hosted the third session of the Athletics Manawatu Wanganui championships last Tuesday night. Lewer's best effort in the shot was 11.15m which was an improvement on the 11.04m record he set at the Porritt Classic a couple of weeks ago. This is the third occasion that he has bettered the F20 category Athletes with disability record this year.

There was some exciting racing on the track with the men's 1500m being the stand out. With all grades being combined, we had a field of 21 athletes on the start line. The field which contained some of the country's most talented young athletes quickly spread out with Liam Back, Andre Hernandez, Noah Macdermid, Benjamin Wall, Isaac Murphy and Zac Bellamy most prominent and finishing in that order. Back's winning time being a very classy 3m56.83s with Hernandez recording 3m58.85s. Macdermid just managed to sneak past Wall in the race to the line in 4m01.23s with Wall who was possibly still recovering from his indoor races in the United States being timed at 4m01.56s. We certainly will have a very strong showing in the age grade races for this event at the national championships in Christchurch next week.

The women's event saw Charlotte Floodsmith-Ryan from Wellington first across the line in 4m43.81s with the centre title going to Sarah Lambert in 4m45.77s who was followed over the line by Tess Webb in 4m47.26s.

The women's 400m again saw some of the country's best with both the current New Zealand age grade and the New Zealand

schools champion lining up. Emma Osborne coming out on top winning in 57.06s from Tayla Brunger second in 57.19 with Ana Brabyn third in 58.04s. It will take a very brave person to bet against Manawatu Wanganui taking out the under 18 4x400m title at nationals.

Brayden Grant was all class in winning the men's 400m title in 49.49s with Joseph Chamberlain continuing to show improvement in taking second placing in 52.00s.

The 100m sprints which were run into a 1.8m head wind saw Sophie Williams cross the line in 12.64s just ahead of national age champion Genna Maple whose time was 12.84s, Leah Powick was third in 13.77s. The men's race saw Jonathon Maples first in 11.83s with Grant second in 11.89s and Chamberlain third in 12.15s.

Liam Woolford recorded one of his best times in winning the 3000m steeplechase in 10m21.79s with Mark Searle second and Bradyn Popow third.

Jordan Peters took out the men's shot put with his best effort of 11.48m with Lewer in second place. Sophie Andrews won the women's 18 title with a best of 10.55m whilst the W16 title went to Olivia Pickford with her 10.08m best.

Sam Mackinder had a best jump of 10.11m to win the W18 triple jump with Keiran Pere taking the M18 title with his effort. Jacky Dai being the best in the M16 competition with 11.32m.

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Once again, I must express my disappointment after the announcement of the finalists for the

Manawatu Sportsperson of the Year Awards. Athletics once again nominated athletes who are the country's best in their specialty. One of whom is now ranked New Zealand's second best ever in his event.

To see finalists named who are not ranked best in their positions in their sport has one scratching one's head. How a coach who coached the winners of two out of the four senior men's national jumps titles plus the runner up in the women's long jump title is not worthy of being a finalist is beside me. Enough said.

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Cooks Garden in Whanganui was made world famous on the night of January 27, 1962 when Peter Snell not only broke the four minute barrier for the mile in New Zealand for the first time but in doing so set a new world record of 3m 54.4s. Since that date the four minute mark has been broken 63 times at Cooks Gardens by 41 athletes from around the world.

On Saturday night there is the possibility of this number being added to and the big question is can Tauranga's Sam Tanner become the youngest person to achieve this milestone. The meeting organisers have attracted three top Australians in Jordan Gusman, the Australian 5000m champion, Rorey Hunter and a sub four minute miler in Craig Huffer. Locals in the field will include Isaac Murphy, Andre Le Pine-Day and Noah Macdermid, all of whom will be hoping they can tag onto the pace and achieve personal bests.

Next week is the National Track and Field championships being held in Christchurch. Athletics Manawatu Wanganui will have a very strong contingent with 40 athletes representing the centre.