Altamont Indoor Track Athletes Break *Six* Indoor School Records

By James Rumbley

Most years, Altamont track and field teams return from state championship tournaments with trophies. This year, the girls were state champs and the boys were runners-up. On top of that, Knight indoor track athletes broke multiple school records, some more than two decades old.



Senior Cruz Cunill set the boys' high jump school record at 5 feet 8 inches, beating his own 2025 record of 5 feet 6 inches. "It really felt like I was flying," said Cunill, who added that that he had not been expecting to beat his own record this year.

Abbey Sellers, Elle Sellers, Berkely Owens, and Sydney Fraser beat the previous girls' 4-by-400-meter relay record of 4:23, set in 2024, with a time of 4:17. When asked if they knew that they were going to win, the general consensus was that they knew by the time Ellie Sellers handed the baton off to Owens. However, Owens had thought they "were done" until she finished her first lap.

Cambell Hughey, Jack Hoover, Parker Neiman, and Joe Porter beat the boys' 4-by-800-meter record of 8:49, set in 2021, with a time of 8:34. They placed first at state a few weeks after breaking their record with a time of 8:35. When asked if there was a moment when they knew they were going to win, Hughey said, "I would say at the start … I just ran faster than everybody, then Jack ran faster than everybody, then Parker ran faster than everybody, then Joe ran faster than everybody."

Neiman, Ethan Billups, Tylan Floyd, and Zahid Issa ran a 1:38.13 in the boys' 4-by-200-meter, breaking the old record of 1:38.84 set in 2020.

Additionally, Claire Nichols, Megan Wetta, Elle Sellers, and Abbey Sellers ran a 10:10 in the girls' 4-by-800-meter, beating the previous record of 10:11 set in 2006.

Finally, Fraser, Owens, Kendall Lawson, and Tricia Maddux ran a 1:50.01 in the girls' 4-by-200-meter, beating the previous record of 1:52.40 set in 2004.

Mia Mayo also tied the girls' high jump record set by Amanda Boyd in 2004 with a height of 4 feet, 8 inches. That was at a junior varsity meet that her entire team competed in. "It was not

stressful ... and I think that helped me." She said she would love to break her own record during this outdoor track season.

These athletes have come a long way. Neiman said that when he first did a time trial, he ran a ten-minute mile and ended up on the floor. "I remember the first time I ran a decent 800," he added. "[Altamont track] Coach [Jamie] Rediker was like, 'that's it, that's your event, you're going to be fast in this.'"

Mayo said she didn't think she would ever tie a record. "I was very nervous as an athlete," she remembered. "I would purposefully [get disqualified] because I was so nervous."

Each athlete had a different story, but most credited their coaches for their records. Fraser also said "lots of caffeine" helped her. Owens said "wanting to get it done and go home" was part of her motivation. Elle Sellers said, "It was state, so it was like everyone already had a lot of adrenaline, and it was the last event … We were like 'we gotta go home with this gold, we are winning state.'" She also said her coaches' training plans were specially tailored.

Porter added, "We ran about a minute faster [than we did at state two years ago]… Coach Rediker, he has a really good training program for the 800 … he always has us ready."

Cunill echoed that point: "I was not very consistently going to practice a lot of the times, and whenever I was able to make it to practice, [the coaches] helped with my form, they helped me with my steps, they helped me with all of that to get me prepared to jump … I give a lot of the credit to my coaches."

Mayo, who also runs the track and field teams' Instagram account, created individual posts for athletes who broke a record. The record-breakers said their friends and families were happy for them and hoped more people would show up to cheer for them in the future.

"Records are meant to be broken," said Rediker. "I am happy that what I put together in practices gets [the runners] in that position, and then I'm even happier when I see them achieve it, and everything is through their own work. I am just instructing them, I am not doing what they do…"

When asked if he was proud of his athletes, he replied, "Oh, *absolutely."*