

ATA Winter Season Notes and Observations

2/16/2025

Upon the completion of our club season, I wanted to document my thoughts and observations from our experience. First and foremost, without the parents/guardians making a way to get the scholar-athletes to and from all of our programming, none of this would have been possible.

Thank you to all of our coaches for a great season: Coach Micah, Amber, Aldrich, Shana, Damien, and Aretha. Without your hard work, we would not have had the excellent season we experienced this winter.

All seniors are academically eligible for four-year colleges. Theo Thurmond (Carmel HS) committed to throw for Indiana State, and Noah Wellington committed to Huntington University. Several others have taken visits to colleges around the country. We will continue to support everyone as they navigate their college journey.

We did great with the book *Chop Wood Carry Water* this season. Reading is a fundamental skill that is losing its impact on personal development. I cannot watch our kids learning sprint drills and not see them becoming better people. The scholar-athletes who took the book to heart evolved their mindset from the start of the season until now.

Leadership looked a lot different for us this year than it has in years past. We did not necessarily have vocal leaders, but that does not mean leadership did not exist. It was important to cultivate leadership in areas where the scholars felt familiar. DeAndre Cooper led team prayers before multiple workouts. He aspires to be a pastor. Everyone worked on public speaking and peer critique as we normally do.

We held more leadership discussions in place of a community service event this season. The talks were great. We involved lululemon staff members to discuss topics such as social currency and networking. Getting out in the community is just as important to me. I look forward to executing both in upcoming seasons.

This was our first season training up to four days a week. Our attendance percentage was about the same as last indoor season when we met three days a week. The increase in training sessions likely led to higher-quality performances, but who can say for sure?

Our boys' 4x200m relay is ranked third among club teams in the country, and the boys' 4x400m relay is in the top 10 of club teams. We broke or equaled seven club records: 60mH – Osby, Williams; 800m – Hunley; HJ – Spears; SP – Thurmond; 4x400m – Boys and Girls.

Theo dominated the shot put, improving over two feet from his best mark last indoor season. Three boys cleared 6' in the high jump, our highest total to date, both indoor and outdoor. Dixon Wilonja leads the state and ranks second in the region in the triple jump.

Our 800m group grew this season. Most of the athletes were new to the event but embraced one of the toughest events in track and field. Led by Evan Williams and Antre'Onna Osby, the hurdlers consistently brought strong performances to our team.

In the 400m, nine boys ran under 56 seconds, and four ran under 52 seconds. In 2024, six and two respectively hit those marks. All girls were under 70 seconds, and all ran personal bests this indoor season—two were completely new to the event. Hearing, “I never thought I would be looking forward to the 400m,” was gratifying because the 400m is the event that most athletes will find impact in on their school teams.

The 200m group showed great improvement: all girls were under 30 seconds, and three were under 28 seconds. Of the 20 boys who raced the 200m, 19 ran personal bests, and seven ran faster than their current outdoor 200m bests. Ten scholar-athletes broke 24 seconds, and three ran under 23 seconds. The 60m group saw eight boys running 7.30 seconds or faster, compared to five last year. All girls ran personal bests in the 60m dash, averaging a 0.16-second improvement from last year to this year.

Overall, I am pleased with how things went this season. Thank you to the seniors for all your hard work. We hope you come back and visit us at the year-end banquet in the summer. Everyone else, we hope you join us for summer track.

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