

Despite all the drug controversy that is surrounding the world of sport at the moment, the past two months has featured plenty of action on the track and road.

37TH PEACHTREE ROAD RACE
4TH JULY, USA

KENYANS were again the dominant force in the 37th edition of the Peachtree Road Race. Kenyan Martin Lel blew away the field to record his second victory in the point to point 10km event.

The Independence Day race, one of the world's largest races with 55,000 official entrants, was held in typically hot and humid conditions, but that did not prevent Lel from recording the second fastest winning time in the history of the race, 27.20 - second only to Joseph Kimani's course record of 27.04 set in 1996.

Lel finished well head of fellow Kenyans Wilson Kiprotich (27.49) and William Chebon Chebor (27.54).

The race featured the homecoming of Australia's Andrew Letherby, who attended university at Georgia State. Letherby was amongst the leaders early, but eventually finished 10th in 29:10. It was Letherby's third consecutive top 10 finish, but his finishing time was 25 seconds slower than his 2005 performance when he finished 6th.

In the women's event, Kenyan born Dutchwomen, Lornah Kiplagat achieved her fifth win (31:13) in the event finishing only 2 seconds in front of Kenyan Jemima Jelegat. The reigning European cross country champion had to overcome some serious challenges from Jelegat to become only the second woman to win the event five times, tying with American Gayle Barron who won five of the first six editions.

Ethiopian three time Olympic medalist Gete Wami held off Kenyan Susan Chepkemei to finish third.

ROME GOLDEN GALA
14TH JULY, ITALY

WITH Ethiopia's Tirunesh Dibaba still in line for the \$1 Million Golden League Jackpot, she set about setting the tone in the Women's 5000m. The race might have featured Olympic champion Meseret Defar, but Dibaba dictated the tactics of the race which led to another splendid last lap sprint between the two petite Ethiopians in the women's 5000m.

Dibaba never allowed the World record holder to get her nose in front. With the bell sounding as 13:55 ticked over on the clock, Defar's pursuit of

Dibaba began, as both women kicked. However, Defar never came closer than about 5 metres of her compatriot, with Dibaba showing a fleet turn of speed to close with a 58 second final lap and finish with 14:52.37. Defar was second in 14:53.51. The top eight broke 15 minutes.

In the men's 1500m, World champion Rashid Ramzi made a brave attempt to set a new World record. Ramzi had won the two previous Golden League 1500m races on the track.

But the overly fast pace, which saw the pace maker running 1:48 for 800m, eventually took its toll on the field which by 1200m was back to 2:46, still roughly two seconds inside the required record pace.

However, as expected, the lactic began to kick into the legs of the 1500m field with

Ramzi slightly more affected than his late pursuer and eventual victor, Kenyan Daniel Komen. Komen passed the Bahraini just before the line, winning in 3:29.02, a World season's lead. The time also established the Kenyan as the seventh fastest man of all-time, with Ramzi finishing second in 3:29.14, an Asian record, beating his own 3:30.30 (8th all-time fastest athlete) with which he won last year's race.

World Silver medalist Adil Kaouch of Morocco was third in 3:31.10. The top-10 finishers all came home in under 3:33.

In the men's 800m, Moroccan Aminie Laalou upset the more favoured athletes. The field was left adrift with too much work to do in the final stages. In winning, Laalou set a new Moroccan record of 1:43.25, another world's season leading time. The top three was rolled out with American Khadevis Robinson in second 1:43.86 and Saudi Mohammed Al-Salhi in third (1:43.99 - NR)

Laalou's previous personal best was a 1:43.68 (2004). It was a dramatic improvement for the 24-year-old who has been a World and Olympic semi-finalist but had a fastest of only 1:45.65 previous to this summer.

The big surprise of the night was Olympic champion Yuriy Borzakovskiy. The Russian had looked out of sorts finishing fifth in 1:45.28.

The women's 800m was taken by World champion Zulia Calatayud of Cuba in 1:59.35, followed home by America's Hazel Clark (1:59.83) and Kenyan record holder and World season's leader Janeth Jepkosgei (1:59.86).



Daniel Komen (left) and Rashid Ramzi (right) fight it out to the final metres of the men's 1500m in Rome. Getty Images

Ten men went under 13 minutes in the 5000m - the first time in history that has happened in one race - outlining the quality of the field. But really the race was a three-way battle for middle distance running supremacy between World Recorder Holder Kenenisa Bekele, World Steeplechase champion Saif Saaeed Shaheen of Bahrain and Kenyan Isaac Songok.

It was Bekele who came out on top in 12:51.44, the second fastest time of the summer. Bekele had set the World leading mark in Paris the week before (12:51.32).

It was another blistering burst of speed that set up the Ethiopian's win, comfortably showing a clean set of heels to Shaheen and Songok and easily holding them off. Shaheen set an Asian record to take second, 12:51.98, with Songok third in 12:52.39.

The men's 3000m steeplechase featured an impressive solo effort. Following the heels of the designated pacemakers, Olympic bronze medalist Paul Koech of Kenya clocked a sub 8 minute performance. His time of 7:59.94, is second on the rankings list only to World champion and recorder Shaheen's 7:56.32 set in Athens on July 3rd. Koech was followed home by the third, fourth and fifth quickest times of the summer from fellow Kenyans Richard Matelong (8:07.50) and Olympic silver medalist Brimin Kipruto (8:08.32) and Morocco's Abdelkader Hachlaf (8:08.78 PB). In 5th, America's Daniel Lincoln set an American record. His time of 8:08.82 improved on Henry Marsh's ancient mark of 8:09.17 established back in August 1985.

WETKLASSE ZURICH GOLDEN LEAGUE MEET
18TH AUGUST, SWITZERLAND

FOLLOWING the mid season break in competition for the European Championships, action on the track heated back up again with the Zurich Golden League meet. The highlight would have to have been Jamaican sprinter Asafa Powell's World Equaling run of 9.77 for 100m, but the distance events still provided plenty of action.

In the women's 5000m, Tirunesh Dibaba continued to keep her \$1 Million Golden League Jackpot chances alive with a clear victory. While her Ethiopian compatriot Mestawat Tufa reached the bell first, behind her Dibaba simply did what she does best: shift gears and begin her extended kick to the finish. Berhane Adere gave pursuit down the back straight, but the race was all but secure for Dibaba as she reached the front stretch, eventually crossing the line in 14:45.73. Some 70m from the finish, Kenyan record holder Edith Masai passed Adere to take second (14:48.22),

nearly a second ahead of Adere (14:49.03).

The men's 5000m set up another dual between Kenyan Isaac Songok and World Record holder Kenenisa Bekele. With about 200m remaining it looked like the Oslo finish would be repeated, where Songok ran down Bekele. With Bekele leading, Songok seemed to be biding his time, waiting to pounce in the final straight.

But it never happened. The Kenyan couldn't find the closing speed he had two months earlier and Bekele again reigned supreme, reaching the finish in 12:48.25, a world leading performance. In finishing second, Songok lowered his personal best to 12:48.66.

Eliud Kipchoge, who ran with the duo until the final lap, faded over the final 300m to finish third in 12:57.69. The rest of the field was well back throughout the race, with Jonas Cheruiyot leading the pack in fourth (13:04.91).

The men's 3000m steeplechase began with an assault by Qatari athlete Saif Saaeed Shaheen on his own world record. Despite continuing to show his absolute dominance of the event, his

attempt fell a little short.

Reaching the bell with 6:54 on the clock, Shaheen was already more than a full straight of the track ahead of the chase pack, but more than two seconds behind the world record pace. He powered on to the finish to record a meet record, 7:56.54.

Frenchman Bob Tahri won the race for second, ahead of Kenyan Wesley Korir and European champion Jukka Keskisalo, all some 20 odd seconds in arrears.

In the men's 800m Kenyan Wilfred Bungei appear to have his third straight Zurich title locked up with 40m to go. However, South African Mbulaeni Mulaudzi had other ideas, charging past to take the win in a fast 1:43.38

Dutchman Bram Som, showing uplifted spirits following his European Championships victory, also stormed past the fading Bungei over the final few meters to finish second in 1:43.45, a Dutch national record. Bungei held on for third (1:43.67) with world leader Amine Lalou of Morocco fourth (1:43.91). Olympic champion >>>



Eloise Wellings (far right) looking very comfortable competing against the likes of Tirunesh Dibaba (#4).. Getty Images



The margins have been smaller this year, but Bekele is still the man over 5000m. Getty Images

>> Yuriy Borzakovsky continued his poor run of performances being last at the bell and making little headway over the final straight, finishing eighth.

In the women's 800m Russian European Champion Olga Kotlyarova sneaked by the leaders over the final 50m to take the win. African champion and world leader Janeth Jepkosgei, controlled the race down the back straight, but faded closer to the finish.

Kotlyarova used an inside run to take the win in 1:58.69. However, she only just managed to hold off Athens Silver Medalist Hasna Benhassi, who closed with a surge to take second, just 0.02 seconds behind the Russian. Last year's winner, Zulia Calatayud, took third in 1:59.44.

In the men's 1500m America's Bernard Lagat led Kenyan Alex Kipchirchir at the bell. But neither athlete would go on to take the win. With great closing speed Augustine Choge swept by Kipchirchir down the front straight to win and record a new personal best, 3:32.72. In a blanket finish for second, Kipchirchir hung on, ahead of Daniel Komen and Algerian Tarek Boukensa. 2004 winner Lagat faded badly down the final straight, finishing a distant seventh.

17TH MEMORIAL PEPE GRECO

19TH AUGUST, ITALY

THE 17th edition of the Memorial Pepe Greco was set as a clash between road running greats Martin Lel and Haile Gebreselassie, but it turned into a solo affair as Gebreselassie's plane from Addis Ababa to Rome failed to make the trip. Yet the small city of Scicli was still shown distance running at its best as Lel stormed through the 10km loop course to win in 28:45.

Gebreselassie has won this race four times (1995-98) and is the current course record holder. The record would have been further under threat had the Ethiopian managed to make the start line. However, the task proved too difficult for Lel and his countryman Robert Cheruiyot.

The Scicli course consists of ten 1km laps which features a 300m uphill stretch over cobbles. The race might not have been started until 10pm, but the 33 degree heat added further difficulty to the course.

Race directors had organized Kenyan Robert Kipngetich to set the early pace and take the field through in around 2:50. However, the first lap was completed in 2:56. This sprung Lel into action, taking the lead during the second lap and recording a split of 2:44.

By the end of the fourth lap, only Cheruiyot was able to hold onto the pace, with Qatari Hassan Shami fading rapidly in third place.

By halfway, Lel was alone, reaching the mark in 14:07, a pace quicker than Gebrselassie's race record. However, without support to maintain the fast pace he reached the bell with one lap remaining in 26:00. Lel pushed hard in the last lap, covering the distance in 2:45, but finished far from the record.

Cheruiyot arrived 39 seconds behind to take second place with Shami another 18 seconds in arrears.

Lel left the event very satisfied and pleased with his effort despite the conditions. He felt that the race was a good indicator of his current fitness level, but knows that he will have to improve as he's planning an assault on the World Half Marathon record in Rotterdam (September 10) before stepping up in distance again for the New York City Marathon – an event he won back in 2003.

HERCULIS SUPER GRAND PRIX

20TH AUGUST, MONACO

THE Herculis Super Grand Prix meet in Monaco provided some thrilling 1500m and long distance events.

In the men's 1500m, Kenyan Alex Kipchirchir was the sole competitor to follow the sub-1:50 800 metre pace, and the double African champion was rewarded with a lopsided victory in 3:32.08.

Kipchirchir carried a 20 meter lead as he passed the bell. He extended his

lead by a couple of strides the final time down the back straight.

Ukraine's Ivan Heshko led the field's late charge entering the final straight, but was edged just before the line by Moroccan Mohamed Moustouai, 3:32.80 to 3:32.84, with the Moroccan equaling his career best time. Kenyan Shadrack Korir was a distant fourth in 3:33.26.

Like Kipchirchir, Australia's Sarah Jamieson was on a mission in the women's 1500m race, again being the lone runner choosing to follow the furious pace. Jamieson carried a big lead past the bell, but then faded over the next 300m to be reeled in by the chasing pack. Russian Yuliya Chizhenko was the first to pass in the middle of the final bend, and then down the homestretch Jamieson was also passed by two-time World champion Tatyana Tomashova. Chizhenko took the win in 4:00.32, Tomashova second (4:01.21), with Jamieson holding off Yelena Soboleva to prevent a Russian sweep, 4:01.63 to 4:01.95.

Less than two days after his fast 800 metre victory over a tough field in Zurich, South African Mbulaeni Mulaudzi added further momentum to his end of season campaign with a well-earned 1:44.14 victory. Mulaudzi powered down the home stretch easily holding off challenges from Kenyan William Yiampong (1:44.31) and the fast-closing Algerian Youssef Saad Kamel (1:44.59).

The longest men's event on the program was the 3000m – an event that saw four of the top five finishers recording personal best. Kenyan Abraham Chebii turned out on top, kicking to a solid victory in 7:33.42. Hicham Bellani of Morocco was second in 7:33.71, well ahead of Kenyan Yusuf Kibet Biwott (7:34.40). Australia's Craig Mottram was featured in this race, but Buster finished well outside the major placings in 15th with 7:47.88.

In the women's 3000m Steeplechase, European champion Alesya Turava ran away from a solid field, breaking the meet record in the process (9:20.16). Russian Lyubov Ivanova was a distant runner-up in 9:23.61, with African Champion Jeruto Kiptum third with a personal best 9:26.07. World leader Wioletta Janowska, faded over the closing lap to finish fourth (9:27.34). Australia's Victoria Mitchell continued her good season, finishing 6th in 9:31.80.

RESULTS

37TH PEACHTREE ROAD RACE

4TH JULY, USA

MEN

1. Martin Lel	KEN	27.20
2. Wilson Kiprotich	KEN	27.49
3. William Chebon Chebor	KEN	27.54
4. Gilbert Okari	KEN	27.59
5. Micah Kogo	KEN	28.02
6. Samuel Rongo	KEN	28.15
7. Ridouane Harroufi	MAR	28.30
8. Mario Macias	USA	28.47
9. Nephth Kinyanjui	KEN	29.04
10. Andrew Letherby	AUS	29.10

WOMEN

1. Lornah Kiplagat	NED	31.13
2. Jemima Jelagat	KEN	31.15
3. Gete Wami	ETH	31.55
4. Susan Chepkemei	KEN	31.57
5. Nataliya Berkut	UKR	32.13
6. Kathy Butler	GBR	32.24
7. Lidija Grigoryeva	RUS	32.24
8. Luminita Talpos	ROM	32.28
9. Macdai Perez	MEX	32.34
10. Katie McGregor	USA	32.44

ROME GOLDEN GALA

14TH JULY, ITALY

WOMEN'S 800M

1. Zulia Calatayud	CUB	1:59.35
2. Hazel Clark	USA	1:59.83
3. Janeth Jepkosgei	KEN	1:59.86
4. Mayte Martinez	ESP	2:00.13
5. Kenia Sinclair	JAM	2:00.42
6. Tetyana Petlyuk	UKR	2:00.46
7. Hasna Benhassi	MAR	2:00.67
8. Elisa Cusma	ITA	2:00.84
9. Jolanda Ceplak	SLO	2:01.37
10. Diane Cummins	CAN	2:01.83

WOMEN'S 5000M

1. Tirunesh Dibaba	ETH	14:52.37
2. Meseret Defar	ETH	14:53.51
3. Gelete Bati	ETH	14:54.15
4. Berhane Adere	ETH	14:54.36
5. Priscah Ngetich	KEN	14:54.76
6. Isabella Ochichi	KEN	14:55.50
7. Susanne Wigene	NOR	14:58.33
8. Mestawet Tufa	ETH	14:59.05
9. Ejegayehu Dibaba	ETH	15:00.11
10. Edith Masai	KEN	15:02.99

MEN'S 3000M STEEPLCHASE

1. Paul Koech	KEN	7:59.94
2. Richard Mateelong	KEN	8:07.50
3. Kiprof Kipruto	KEN	8:08.32
4. Abdelkader Hachlaf	MAR	8:08.82
5. Daniel Lincoln	USA	8:08.82
6. Reuben Kosgei	KEN	8:11.66
7. Bouabdallah Tahri	FRA	8:14.33
8. Kipkirui Misoi	KEN	8:15.74
9. Wesley Kiprotich	KEN	8:20.04
10. Steve Slattery	USA	8:22.70

MEN'S 5000M

1. Kenenisa Bekele	ETH	12:51.44
2. Saif Saaeed Shaheen	QAT	12:51.98
3. Isaaco Songok	KEN	12:52.39
4. Tariku Bekele	ETH	12:53.81
5. Abreham Fekele	ETH	12:54.19
6. Eliud Kipchoge	KEN	12:54.94
7. Hicham Bellani	MAR	12:55.52
8. Benjamin Limo	KEN	12:58.29
9. Zersenay Tadesse	ERI	12:59.27
10. Augustine Choge	KEN	12:59.70

MEN'S 1500M

1. Daniel Komen	KEN	3:29.02
2. Ramzi Rashid	BRN	3:29.14
3. Adil Kaouch	MAR	3:31.10
4. Juan Carlos Higuero	ESP	3:31.57

5. Tarke Boukensa

5. Tarke Boukensa	ALG	3:31.58
6. Ivan Heshko	UKR	3:31.61
7. Elkanah Angwenyi	KEN	3:31.97
8. Alex Kipchirchir	KEN	3:32.06
9. Kevin Sullivan	CAN	3:32.65
10. Mohamed Moustouai	MAR	3:32.80

MEN'S 800M

1. Amine Laalou	MAR	1:43.25
2. Khadevis Robinson	KEN	1:43.86
3. Mohammed Al Salhi	KSA	1:43.99
4. Nabil Madi	ALG	1:44.63
5. Yuriy Borzakoskiv	RUS	1:45.28
6. Alfred Yego	KEN	1:45.70
7. Juan de Dios Jurado	ESP	1:45.74
8. Gary Reed	CAN	1:45.78
9. Andrea Longo	ITA	1:46.33
10. Maurizio Bobbato	ITA	1:47.38

WELTKLASSE ZURICH GOLDEN LEAGUE

18TH AUGUST, SWITZERLAND

MEN'S 3000M STEEPLCHASE

1. Saif Saaeed Shaheen	QAT	7:56.54
2. Bouabdallah Tahri	FRA	8:15.05
3. Wesley Kiprotich	KEN	8:15.32
4. Jukka Kesiskalo	FIN	8:16.74
5. Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN	8:17.20
6. Reuben Kosgei	KEN	8:17.51
7. Mustafa Mohamed	SWE	8:18.79
8. Kiprof Kipruto	KEN	8:20.52
9. Cesar Perez	ESP	8:21.90
10. Kipkirui Misoi	KEN	8:22.35

MEN'S 5000M

1. Kenenisa Bekele	ETH	12:48.25
2. Isaac Songok	KEN	12:48.66
3. Eliud Kipchoge	KEN	12:57.69
4. Jonas Cheruiyot	KEN	13:04.91
5. Moses Kigen	KEN	13:07.47
6. Edwin Soi	KEN	13:07.60

RESULTS

7. Gamal Belal Salem	QAT	13:08.78
8. Benjamin Limo	KEN	13:10.47
9. Mike Kigen	KEN	13:11.51
10. Kiprono Menjo	KEN	13:31.98

MEN'S 1500M

1. Augustine Choge	KEN	3:32.72
2. Alex Kipchirchir	KEN	3:33.85
3. Daniel Komen	KEN	3:33.89
4. Tarek Boukensa	ALG	3:33.95
5. Craig Mottram	AUS	3:33.97
6. Kamel Boulahfane	FRA	3:34.55
7. Bernard Lagat	USA	3:34.70
8. Kevin Sullivan	CAN	3:34.87
9. Sergio Gallardo	ESP	3:35.95
10. Arturo Casado	ESP	3:36.14

MEN'S 800M

1. Mbulaeni Mulaudzi	RSA	1:43.38
2. Bram Som	NED	1:43.45
3. Wilfred Bungei	KEN	1:43.67
4. Amine Laalou	MAR	1:43.91
5. Mehdi Baala	FRA	1:44.04
6. Youssef Saad Kamel	BRN	1:44.05
7. Khadevis Robinson	USA	1:44.61
8. Yuriy Borzakoskiv	RUS	1:45.94
9. Mohammed Al-Azemi	KUW	1:49.08

WOMEN'S 800M

1. Oglia Kotlyarova	RUS	1:58.69
2. Hasna Benhassi	MAR	1:58.71
3. Zulia Calatayud	CUB	1:59.44
4. Janeth Jepkosgei	KEN	1:59.65
5. Tetyana Petlyuk	UKR	1:59.67
6. Hazel Clark	USA	1:59.76
7. Kenia Sinclair	JAM	1:59.77
8. Brigita Langerholc	SLO	2:00.02
9. Jolanda Ceplak	SLO	2:00.39
10. Maryam Yusuf Jamal	BRN	2:00.77

WOMEN'S 5000M

1. Tirunesh Dibaba	ETH	14:45.73
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2. Edith Masai	KEN	14:48.22
3. Berhane Adere	KEN	14:49.03
4. Isabella Ochichi	KEN	14:50.19
5. Vivian Cheruiyot	KEN	14:52.10
6. Eloise Wellings	AUS	14:54.11
7. Mestawet Tufa	ETH	15:00.56
8. Irene Kipchumba	KEN	15:02.88
9. Marta Dominguez	ESP	15:10.07
10. Jennifer Rhines	USA	15:10.65

17TH MEMORIAL PEPE GRECO

19TH AUGUST, ITALY

1. Martin Lel	KEN	28.45
2. Robert Cheruiyot	KEN	29.24
3. Hassan Shami	QAT	29.42
4. Robert Kipngetich	KEN	30.15
5. Hillary Kipchumba	KEN	30.34
6. Daniele Meucci	ITA	30.36
7. Francesco Ingargiola	ITA	30.39
8. Bibi Amhad	MAR	30.51

HERCULIS SUPER GRAND PRIX

20TH AUGUST, MONACO

MEN'S 800M

1. Mbulaeni Mulaudzi	RSA	1:44.14
2. William Yiampong	KEN	1:44.31
3. Youssef Saad Kamel	BRN	1:44.59
4. Amine Laalou	MAR	1:44.81
5. Florent Laccas	FRA	1:44.88
6. Wilfred Bungei	KEN	1:45.12
7. Mohammed Al Salhi	KSA	1:45.29
8. Ismael Kombich	KEN	1:45.54
9. Mouhssin Chehibi	MAR	1:45.58

MEN'S 1500M

1. Alex Kipchirchir	KEN	3:32.08
2. Mohamed Moustouai	MAR	3:32.80
3. Ivan Heshko	UKR	3:32.84
4. Shadrack Korir	KEN	3:33.26

5. Elkanah Angwenyi	KEN	3:33.41
6. Suleiman Simotvo	KEN	3:33.88
7. Hudson de Souza	BRN	3:34.47
8. Driss Maazouzi	FRA	3:35.43
9. Nicholas Willis	NZL	3:35.81
10. Mark Fountain	AUS	3:36.50

MEN'S 3000M

1. Abraham Chebii	KEN	7:33.42
2. Hicham Bellani	MAR	7:33.71
3. Kibet Biwott	KEN	7:34.40
4. Boniface Songok	KEN	7:34.78
5. Matthew Tegenkamp	USA	7:34.98
6. Patrick Komon	KEN	7:37.69
7. James C'Kuriu	QAT	7:38.21
8. Ali Saidi-Sief	ALG	7:39.12
9. Gert-Jan Liefers	NED	7:39.41
10. Mark Bett	KEN	7:40.06

WOMEN'S 1500M

1. Yuliva Chizhenko	RUS	4:00.32
2. Tatvan Tomashova	RUS	4:01.21
3. Sarah Jamieson	AUS	4:01.63
4. Yelena Soboleva	RUS	4:01.95
5. Marvam Jamal	BRN	4:03.01
6. Irvna Lishchynska	UKR	4:03.06
7. Nataliya Tobias	UKR	4:03.61
8. Lidia Chojecka	POL	4:03.96
9. Hind Dehiba	FRA	4:04.27
10. Nouria Merah-Benida	ALG	4:04.28

WOMEN'S 3000M STEEPL

1. Alesia Turava	BLR	9:20.16
2. Lvubov Ivanova	RUS	9:23.61
3. Jeruto Kiptum	KEN	9:26.07
4. Wioletta Janowska	POL	9:27.34
5. Salome Chepchumba	KEN	9:30.58
6. Victoria Mitchell	AUS	9:31.80
7. Veerle Dejaeghere	BEL	9:38.86
8. Gladys Kipkemai	KEN	9:38.87
9. Cristina Casandra	ROM	9:40.00
10. Korene Hinds	JAM	9:41.01