

2026 Athletic.net SuperClinic Speaker bios

Endurance



Scott Abbott has 30 years of experience in the sport of distance running as an athlete, coach, administrator, author, and commentator. He had an accomplished 15-year coaching career mentoring champion distance runners at the high school, college, and post-collegiate levels. Abbott has also authored coaching literature for the United States Olympic Committee on endurance athlete development, presented nationally on numerous topics related to coaching distance runners, and taught post-graduates in Sport Leadership for coaches at the University of San Francisco.



David Monk is a highly respected Track & Field and Cross-Country coach in his 30th year of coaching. Known for the success of his athletes at both the collegiate and high school levels, he has coached athletes at Sacramento State (Head Cross-Country/Assistant Distance Coach) and The University of Tulsa at the Division 1 Collegiate Level, and has led high school teams (Fairfield HS, Armijo HS, Vacaville HS) and individuals to numerous Section and State championships. With a strong background in athlete development, David played a key role in developing elite athletes such as Luis Grijalva (a future Olympian) and Dominique Jackson (NCAA All-American, Olympic Trials qualifier) during their high school years and continued to mentor them through their professional running careers



Maria Anderson is the new Distance Coach for UC Davis Track & Field. A decorated former student-athlete, she brings a strong record of developing championship-level distance runners and fostering holistic growth in student-athletes. Anderson joins UC Davis after coaching the men's and women's distance squads at San Francisco State and previously spent six seasons at Elizabethtown College, rising from volunteer coach to Associate Head Coach. During her tenure, she helped guide Landmark Conference Cross Country championship teams and coached numerous all-conference and all-region athletes, including NCAA Division III and regional qualifiers. Anderson holds a USATF Level 2 Certification in Endurance and brings an athlete-centered, development-focused approach to distance coaching.

Sprints-Hurdles



Shantell Twigg wrapped up her 21st season as head coach for the Nevada-Reno Wolf Pack in 2025. She also oversees the sprinters in the program.

The 2024/25 outdoor season featured several standout performances for the Wolf Pac. Sprinter Magdalene George claimed silver in both the 100 m and 200 m and added another medal as a member of Nevada's bronze medal winning 4x100m relay team.

Twigg was a member of three U.S. National Teams (US vs. Great Britain, 1994; World Cup, 1994; and Pan Am Games, 1995), leading off the gold medal 4x100-meter relay team at the Pan Am Games in 1995. She also won gold and bronze medals at the 1994 Olympic Festival as the anchor leg of the 4x100-meter relay team and the 200-meters, respectively.



Brian Weaver was named U.S. Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association's California High School Cross Country Girls Coach of the Year for 2025. He has been working at Buchanan High since the school opened in 1991 and has served as head coach since 2010. Coach Weaver has 40 CIF Championship Titles and four State titles – and more section titles than any other coach in any other sport in the Central Section. He is also the third-winningest coach in any sport in the state of California. Coach Weaver perennially has nationally ranked Cross and Track and Field teams, and is the longtime CIF Championships meet director at Buchanan's world-class facility.



Dan Friese is going into his seventh year as the Head Coach at Lincoln High School. While at Lincoln, he has coached sprints, relays, jumps, hurdles, throws, and pole vault at one time or another. A Multi-Event athlete at Sierra and American River Colleges, Friese placed in the state meet each season and still holds a Top 10 All-Time mark at ARC. Friese works to use his knowledge as an athlete and as a coach to create an environment where everyone involved in the program has a place and a purpose, and create a family atmosphere within his program that athletes routinely come back. During Friese's tenure, Lincoln athletes have broken nearly 20 school records, earned 2 league titles, and currently has 5 athletes competing collegiately, and 5 more who have just completed their collegiate careers. Friese strives every day to treat our athletes with love and support and instill the belief that they can accomplish and overcome anything on and off the track.

Jumps



Dave Unterholzner is entering his 41st season coaching track and field at Bella Vista High School, 34 as head coach. Dave specializes in coaching the long, triple, and high jumps while overseeing 9 assistant coaches in the other 14 track and field events. Over the years, he has guided multiple jumpers to individual league, Sac Joaquin Section (SJS) Divisional and SJS Masters titles as well as qualifying several to the CIF State Meet. His boys and girls teams have won a combined 28 conference championships and eleven Sac Joaquin Section Division 2 titles. When he is not teaching or coaching, Dave is managing track meets as the meet director for the Bella Vista Speed Festival, Bronco Distance Carnival, and the Sacramento Meet of Champions.



Leo Sacramento has been a California high school track and field coach for over 40 years. He holds a wide breadth and depth of track experience and knowledge as a former college triple jumper and as a coach in the Bay Area and Davis specializing in triple jumps. Over the years, Leo has worked with many athletes who have qualified for section and masters meets and who have continued their track participation on to the college level.



Kent Rhodes will enter his eighth year with the Jessup Warriors in 2026 as an assistant pole vault coach, bringing more than 20 years of coaching experience across the high school, club, and collegiate levels. Since joining Jessup, Rhodes has played a key role in the continued success of the pole vault program, highlighted by Rachel Travis earning NAIA All-American honors at both the Indoor and Outdoor National Championships and winning the 2022 GSAC Championship. Outside of Jessup, Rhodes has served as the pole vault coach at Placer High School and Del Oro High School and operates a year-round pole vault training club and facility in Northern California. He has coached more than 20 athletes to the CIF State Championship level, with multiple podium finishes, and has helped numerous vaulters continue their careers at the collegiate level.



Brandon Hierholzer is the new Multi-Event coach at UC Davis Track & Field and brings extensive experience in pole vault and multi-event development to the SuperClinic. Previously, he built a highly successful program at Long Beach State, where he coached multiple conference champions, All-Big West performers, NCAA regional qualifiers, and an NCAA All-American in the pole vault. His athletes consistently populated school record books, including multiple vaulters clearing 17 feet and multi-event athletes producing top-five program performances. A former collegiate pole vaulter himself, he competed at the NCAA regional level and ranks among his former program's all-time top performers. Hierholzer holds a bachelor's degree in kinesiology, is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS), and carries advanced technical and strength endorsements, bringing a performance-driven, athlete-centered approach to his coaching at UC Davis.



Laura Gustafson is the Head Coach for the Cross Country and Track & Field programs at Jessup University. Gustafson brings over seven years of coaching and administrative experience across NCAA Division II and NAIA institutions, with a strong commitment to holistic, faith-centered athlete development. She joins Jessup after serving as Assistant Track & Field Coach and Director of Operations at Trevecca Nazarene University, where she coached sprints, jumps, hurdles, and multi-events athletes to multiple NCAA provisional marks, conference championships, and more than 20 school records. She holds CSCS and USATF Level 1 certifications and brings extensive experience in recruiting, compliance, budgeting, and program operations.

Throws



John Dagatta: Dagata is the Program Director for Cross Country and Track & Field at Menlo School, where he leads the Knights' storied programs with the same high-level expertise he has brought to World, Olympic, and NCAA champions. A veteran of both collegiate and international athletics, Dagata has coached at the USA Track & Field Olympic Training Center, where from 2016 to 2023 he served as Resident Coach for Field Events (Throws) and Director of Operations, guiding athletes to Olympic gold and World Championship titles.

Dagata's collegiate résumé includes key coaching and operations roles at UC Berkeley, Iowa State University, UC Santa Barbara, and the University of Oklahoma. Internationally, he has served as Head of Coaching for UK Athletics/Welsh Athletics at the 2012 London Olympics, led Great Britain teams at the Commonwealth Games and World University Games, supported the Great Britain World Junior Team, and most recently headed discus and shot put coaching for the Republic of China.



Kyle Peterson is entering his second season leading the Sacramento State throws program. Peterson earned his degree in kinesiology and prior to Sacramento State, worked at Mini's House of Pain — a gym in El Dorado Hills, Calif. There, he oversaw the strength and conditioning for Oak Ridge High School student-athletes while also coaching the throwers at Oak Ridge HS. Peterson competed for Sacramento State from 2016-19 and remains ranked in the school's top 10 in five events. Peterson was a two-time NCAA West Preliminary qualifier in the discus (2018-19) and was the Big Sky weight throw champion in 2018. Peterson currently ranks second in the Hornet record book in the discus with a best of 180 feet. He is also fourth in the indoor shot put, sixth in the weight throw and hammer, and 10th in the outdoor shot put. Peterson came to the Hornets from Oakdale HS where he placed sixth at the California state meet as a senior in the discus. During his career, he was a two-time Sac-Joaquin Section Masters champion in the discus.

Special Topics



Lauren Ferrara is a Registered Dietitian with 15 years of experience in various fields of nutrition, including sports nutrition, where she's witnessed firsthand how diet culture can negatively impact athletes' mindsets and relationships with food. This sparked her passion to become a Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor and Sports Dietitian, focused on helping athletes, particularly endurance runners, fuel their bodies for optimal health and performance. As an endurance runner for 15 years, she recently completed her 14th marathon at the California International Marathon with a time of 2:48. In addition to running her private practice, Lauren is also the Head Coach for West Park High School XC/Track & Field.



Alec Richmond serves as the Strength & Conditioning Coach for Jessup University Athletics, where his primary focus is on developing resilient, high-performing athletes through intentional, evidence-based training. A former collegiate multi-event athlete, Richmond brings a deep understanding of speed, power, strength, and movement efficiency to his coaching, shaped by firsthand competitive experience in the decathlon. His approach to strength and conditioning emphasizes long-term athletic development, injury risk reduction, and performance transfer to sport, integrating technical lifting proficiency with mobility, sprint mechanics, and energy system development. Richmond works closely with coaches across programs to align training with sport demands and seasonal goals, ensuring athletes are prepared to train and compete at a high level.