

2022 B.C. MASTERS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, Feb 25-27 THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY, KAMLOOPS

After having the 2021 B.C. Masters Indoor Championships cancelled due to Covid-19, it was great to be able to compete this year. The 2022 indoor championships were held from February 25-27, in Kamloops, at the Tournament Capital Centre. Everyone, athletes, officials and spectators, were required to be fully vaccinated and to wear masks except when competing. Perhaps because of these restrictions and the fact that the virus was still prevalent, the number of participants was lower than usual.

Christa Bortignon, who turned 85 only one month prior to the meet, was the star of the Championships. She broke four world records in the W85 60m (11.18), 200m (42.09), long jump (2.70m) and triple jump (6.35m). Christa also broke the Canadian record in the shot put (6.49m) and was on the W70 4x200m relay team, along with teammates Deborah Lee, Deanna Clark and Avril Douglas, that set a new Canadian record (2:49.26).

Also breaking world records was the team of Barrie Dargie, Mark Stewart, Tom Ukonmaanaho and Pat Harton, who broke the M75 4x800m world record in a time of 13:07.96 (listed world record is 13:44.84 by a team from Spain). Later, Piara Bhullar joined Mark, Barrie and Tom to break the M75 4x400m world record with a time of 5:24.52 (listed world record is 5:37.03 by a team from Germany).

Canadian records were broken by Deborah Lee in the W70 60m hurdles (14.35) and by Nancy Craig in the W55 pole vault (2.50m). Another Canadian record was set by the W55 4x800m relay team of Julie Valente, Sharon Hann, Deanna Clark and Carol Montgomery (13:55.46).

In addition to her Canadian record in the 4x800m relay, Carol Montgomery also broke two BC records in the W55 1500m and 3000m. Mark Pinckard also broke two BC records in the M60 1500m and 3000m. Mark was recently named as co-winner of the 2021 BC Athletics Male Track Athlete of the Year. Cindy O'Brien Hugh, recently named as the 2021 BC Athletics Female Track Athlete of the Year, broke the BC record in the W60 60m hurdles. Also breaking BC records were: Tamara Robertson in the W50 400m, Erik Hurlen in the M40 800m, Jess Brewer in the M75 60m hurdles, Edwin Liu in the M65 triple jump, Roy Turkington in the M70 long jump, Bob Currie in the M65 3000m Race walk and Gary Silvester in the M50 pentathlon. Gary was recently honoured by BC Athletics for his "Novice Service as an Official".

Remarkably, six BC records were broken in the Weight throw event. Owing new BC records in the weight throw are: Nicole Carlos (W45), Christine Dalglish (W55), Kathy Brand (W75), Shane Wiebe (M50), Harnek Toor (M75) and Bruce Butcher (M85). Harnek Toor tied the BC record in the M75 triple jump.

Two more relay teams broke BC records, including the M40 4x400m team of Luke Wang, Jesse Tock, Will Harrower and Marvin Johnson. The team of Sharon Hann, Cindy O'Brien Hugh, Laurie Ritchie and Patty Szybunka broke the W60 4x200m record, just missing the Canadian record by 0.71 second.

Overall, the Masters athletes broke 6 world records, 11 Canadian records, 31 BC records and tied another.

Despite difficulties dealing with Covid-19, the Kamloops Track and Field Club did a remarkable job in hosting the BC Masters Championships. Thank you to the Kamloops' organizing committee and to all of the officials and volunteers for their dedication and hard work.