

Coaches



Co-Head Track and Field Coach

Hanah Smrt

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Bio:

Hanah Smrt is an accomplished athlete and coach, now serving as the co-head coach for Yuba College track and field. A proud Yuba College track alumna, Hanah holds school records in the high jump, long jump, and 100-meter hurdles. She has been recognized as the 2018 BVC and 2019 GVC Field Athlete of the Meet, and in 2019, she was honored as the CCCAA State Champion in the Heptathlon and the CCCAA Field Athlete of the Year. She is a four-time NorCal Champion; 2x Heptathlon, 1x 100-meter hurdles and 1x long jump. Additionally, Hanah is a two-time Yuba College Female Athlete of the Year and a five-time CCCAA All American.

Continuing her athletic journey, Hanah earned a scholarship to compete at the University of Nevada, Reno, where she secured top 10 all-time rankings in the long jump and pentathlon and became a five-time Mountain West scorer.

Transitioning into coaching, Hanah has made significant contributions at Reno High School from 2022 to 2024, coaching athletes to state-level success, including state finalist Ezra Sambrano in the 300 hurdles, state runner-up Nick Woodhead in the high jump, and state finalist Sydney Porter in the high jump. She was also the Nevada Track and Field team manager for

the 2023-2024 season, gaining experience in the higher education coaching scene.

Academically, Hanah holds an AA in Social and Behavioral Sciences from Yuba College, a BA in Psychology, and an MS in Equity and Diversity in Education from the University of Nevada, Reno. Her blend of athletic excellence and academic achievement positions her to help develop the next generation of athletes at Yuba College.



Head Track and Field Coach

Howdy Atkinson

Throwers and Multis Coach

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Coach Howdy Atkinson – Head Coach, Yuba College Track & Field (2026 Season Bio)

The 2026 season marks Coach Howdy Atkinson's 12th year as Head Coach and 16th overall with the Yuba College Track & Field program. Over the past decade, Coach Atkinson has built a legacy of excellence, guiding more than 53 athletes to the State Finals in over 88 events and producing more than 26 All-Americans. His teams have shattered **over 30 school records**, and his coaching impact has been recognized with four Coach of the Year honors.

Under his leadership, Yuba College has emerged as one of the nation's premier programs in the multi-events and throws. His athletes have earned top regional and statewide accolades, including 12 Yuba College Athletes of the Year. Among these are 10 Conference Athletes of the Year, one Regional Athlete of the Year, and one CCCAA Track & Field Athlete of the Year. His program has also produced two State Champions: **Darrell Kaanaana** (Shot Put) and **Hannah Smrt** (Heptathlon).

Before his time at Yuba, Coach Atkinson spent four seasons at Butte College as the Throws and Multi-Events Coach. There, he guided 28 athletes to State Finals, produced 11 All-Americans, and helped crown three State Champions. His athletes set five school records and contributed to 38 new Top 10 performances in both men's and women's programs.

Coach Atkinson's broader coaching journey includes stints at CSU Chico (3 seasons), Chico High School (2 seasons), Amador High School (1 season), and Yuba City High School (1 season), reflecting a lifelong dedication to athlete development.

As an athlete, he competed at CSU Chico, where he earned All-American honors by placing 4th in the Shot Put at the 2003 NCAA National Championships. He also achieved national rankings of 17th in the Discus and 25th in the Hammer, bringing elite-level experience to his coaching philosophy.

Now entering his 11th year at the helm, Coach Atkinson continues to shape Yuba College into one of California's strongest field event programs. He lives in Yuba City with his wife, Meagan Atkinson, an educator in the Yuba City School District.

Jay Meder

Title: Assistant Coach

Jay Meder – Sprints, Relays & Hurdles Coach

Jay Meder enters his 6th year as a coach for the Yuba College Track & Field team, where he leads the Sprints, Relays, and Hurdles programs with unmatched expertise and dedication. A former standout athlete at Yuba College himself, Jay competed as a two-sport athlete in both Track & Field and Football, specializing in the hurdles and sprint events. His competitive background and firsthand experience on the track give him a deep understanding of the physical and mental demands required to succeed at a high level.

Over his coaching tenure, Jay has made a significant impact on the Yuba Track program. Under his leadership, athletes have broken the school records in both the 100m dash and the 4x100m relay, signaling his ability to develop elite-level speed and technical precision. Jay has previously brought his coaching talents to Marysville High School and Wheatland High School, where he helped shape numerous student-athletes into top-tier competitors.

What sets Jay apart is his commitment to individualized training. Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all model, he creates personalized programs tailored to each athlete's strengths, needs, and goals. He integrates advanced tracking systems into daily practice sessions to monitor progress and make data-driven decisions that enhance performance. This detail-oriented approach extends into the weight room, where he implements a science-based strength and conditioning regimen to complement on-track development.

Thanks to his innovation, dedication, and technical mastery, Jay has transformed Yuba College into one of the premier hurdle programs in the North State. His athletes not only improve but thrive under his guidance, making Jay Meder a cornerstone of Yuba Track & Field's sustained excellence.

Dalton Novak

Title: Assistant Coach

Pole Vault / Multi-Events Coach – Yuba College

Dalton Novak brings a dynamic blend of versatility, technical expertise, and athlete-centered coaching to the Yuba College track and field program. A former Yuba College decathlete, he has a comprehensive understanding of the demands of multi-events, with specialized focus and advanced knowledge in the pole vault.

As the team's pole vault specialist, Coach Novak delivers in-depth technical instruction rooted in the fundamentals of speed, timing, body control, and spatial awareness. He works closely with vaulters on every phase of the event, including approach consistency, pole carry, plant mechanics, takeoff efficiency, swing progression, and bar clearance. His detail-oriented coaching helps athletes build confidence, improve consistency, and safely progress to higher bars.

Drawing from his decathlon background, he understands how to develop well-rounded athletes and effectively supports multi-eventers in maximizing performance across disciplines. His ability to connect pole vault technique with overall athletic development makes him a key asset for athletes looking to excel in both individual and combined events.

Coach Novak is passionate about teaching the pole vault as both a technical and mental event. He emphasizes repetition, discipline, and trust in the process, helping athletes become students of the vault while developing the competitive mindset required for high-level performance. His coaching approach balances technical precision with individualized progression, ensuring athletes improve safely and efficiently.

Committed to long-term athlete development, Coach Novak prepares vaulters and multi-event athletes for success at the collegiate level and beyond. He fosters a high-performance environment built on accountability, growth, and attention to detail, giving athletes the tools to reach their full

potential.

Abby Meder



Title: Assistant Throws Coach

Shot Put & Discus Coach – Yuba College

Coach Abby brings a strong combination of competitive experience, technical expertise, and a deep passion for athlete development to the Yuba College throws program. As a former standout thrower, she understands what it takes to perform at a high level and is committed to helping athletes maximize their potential in the shot put and discus.

Her coaching is driven by a genuine love for the sport and a holistic approach to performance. In addition to technical training, she emphasizes the critical role of nutrition in athlete development. Coach Abby has worked closely with throwers to manage and optimize their nutrition, helping athletes fuel their bodies effectively, improve performance, and support long-term health. She integrates strength, technique, and nutrition to ensure athletes are prepared to compete at their highest level.

She emphasizes technical precision, consistency, and progressive development, creating a training environment that prepares athletes for championship-level competition. Coach Abby takes pride in helping athletes become students of their events—developing not only physical ability, but also the

discipline, focus, and mindset required for sustained success.

Known for her energy and investment in her athletes, she builds strong relationships that foster confidence and accountability. Her coaching style combines high expectations with individualized support, ensuring each athlete has a clear path for growth and advancement to four-year programs.

Coach Abby is deeply committed to mentoring student-athletes and helping them grow both on and off the field. Her goal is to build a competitive, high-performance culture while guiding athletes to reach their full potential in sport, academics, and life.

Ed Wurz

Title: Assistant Throws Coach

Javelin Coach – Yuba College

Coach Ed Wurz brings over 35 years of high-level track & field experience, combining elite technical knowledge with a deep passion for coaching and athlete development. A former record-holding javelin thrower at Cal State San Marcos, where he earned his degree in Sociology, Coach Wurz has dedicated his career to helping athletes reach their full potential both on and off the field.

Since beginning his coaching career in 1993, he has built a reputation for developing athletes through a balance of technical precision, discipline, and genuine investment in each individual. His coaching journey includes impactful tenures at Westmoor, Terra Nova, Gunderson, Cloverdale, and San Diego High Schools, as well as the College of Notre Dame at Belmont. Across all levels, he has coached multiple national qualifiers in the javelin and developed numerous league and district champions in the throwing events.

What sets Coach Wurz apart is his passion for the sport and his commitment to teaching athletes to truly understand their event. He emphasizes becoming a “student of the javelin,” focusing on technical mastery, consistency, and the mental approach required for high-level performance. His coaching style blends high expectations with strong mentorship, creating an environment where athletes are pushed to grow while feeling supported in their development.

Coach Wurz is deeply invested in the long-term success of his athletes. He takes pride in guiding them through the process of improvement, helping them build confidence, resilience, and a competitive mindset that translates beyond track & field. His goal is not only to develop top performers at Yuba College, but to prepare athletes to succeed at the next level and carry forward a lifelong appreciation for the sport.

Citlalli Fernandez

Title: Assistant Throws Coach

Hammer Coach – Yuba College

As the Hammer Coach at Yuba College, she brings a high-performance mindset built on proven success at both the collegiate and high school levels. A former standout thrower for the 49ers, she was the top-ranked hammer thrower in the state for two consecutive seasons, establishing herself as one of the premier competitors in California during her time at Yuba.

She combines elite competitive experience with a technical, detail-oriented approach to coaching, focusing on maximizing athlete potential in the hammer throw. Her training emphasizes technical mastery, consistency under pressure, and progressive development—preparing athletes to compete at a championship level and successfully transition to four-year programs.

She earned her Associate of Arts in Mathematics from Yuba

College before transferring to Chico State, where she completed her Bachelor of Science in Mathematics while continuing her throwing career. Her academic background strengthens her analytical approach to coaching, allowing her to break down complex movements and develop efficient, individualized training plans.

Prior to returning to Yuba College, she served as Head Coach at Yuba City High School, where she built a competitive program and developed athletes across all events. Her ability to identify and develop talent makes her a valuable resource for athletes looking to take the next step in their careers.

A Yuba City native and former conference champion, she understands the pathway from high school to collegiate success and is committed to helping athletes reach their full potential—both on the field and in the classroom.

Amelia Adamson

Title: Assistant Coach

Amelia Adamson – Multi-Events Yuba College

Amelia Adamson brings an exceptional athletic pedigree and a deep commitment to student-athlete development in her first year as a Multi-Events and Javelin coach at Yuba College, working under the guidance of Howdy Atkinson. A former standout heptathlete, Amelia competed for two years at Yuba College, where she quickly established herself as one of the top multi-event athletes in the state and nation.

As a freshman, Amelia earned **All-State honors** in the heptathlon, followed by **All-American recognition** as a sophomore. She was a scoring force at the conference championships, contributing points in the 100-meter hurdles, 200 meters, 400 meters, both relays (4×100 and 4×400), shot

put, and high jump—while also winning the **Triple Jump, Long Jump, and Heptathlon**.

Her success earned her a scholarship to **Cal Poly Pomona**, where she continued her impact, helping the Broncos win **two conference championships**. She was a key scorer in both the heptathlon and the javelin, showcasing her versatility and consistency at the highest level.

Amelia graduated **Summa Cum Laude** from Cal Poly Pomona with a bachelor's degree in **Kinesiology**, reflecting her academic dedication alongside her athletic excellence. She now serves as a **Physical Education teacher** at Johnson Park and Ella Elementary schools, continuing to inspire young students through health, movement, and discipline.

In her coaching role at Yuba College, Amelia brings a relentless work ethic and a “never stop” mentality that defined her own career. Her passion and drive will be instrumental in elevating Yuba College's Multi program, further solidifying its reputation as one of the **premier multi-event programs in the nation**.