

**3rd annual SOUTH CAROLINA TRACKFEST**

**SATURDAY AUGUST 29th, 2020**

PRESS RELEASE/MEET PREVIEW

COLUMBIA, SC -- The 3rd annual **South Carolina TrackFest** will take place this Saturday evening, August 29th in Columbia, SC, with Columbia International University playing host. This professional track meet, co-directed by Jimmy Stephens and Dave Milner, will bring to Columbia a plethora of world class middle-distance runners to run on the lightning fast Mondo track shared by C.I.U and Ben Lippen School.

The women’s 800m will be headlined by Ce’Aira Brown, who has a personal best of 1:58.01 and represented Team USA at last year’s World Championships. The race will also feature Hannah Segrave, a Tennessee-based British runner who has clocked 2:00.16.

The men’s 800m will feature Mexico’s Carlos Villarreal and Kenyan Edward Kemboi. Villarreal, who competed collegiately for Arizona, is the 2019 Pan-Am Games Champion at 1500m. Kemboi, who has a PB of 1:44.77, was the 2015 NCAA Indoor and Outdoor Champion at 800m while at Iowa State.

The women’s 3000m Steeplechase will have former Penn State All-American, Tori Gerlach, who has clocked 9:46, and 9:48 exponent Alicia Douglas, leading the charge, in what will be the first steeplechase to take place at a pro meet all year.

The men’s Mile – definitely the strongest event of the night - has a loaded field, with several sub-4 milers. The trace will be spearheaded by Australian Oliver Hoare, representing On Athletics Club. Hoare, the 2018 NCAA Champion at 1500m while at Wisconsin, clocked 3:34.63 at the Music City Distance Carnival in Nashville two weeks ago, lowering a Tennessee soil record that has stood since 1982. On Saturday night, he will certainly be looking to dismantle the South Carolina soil record for the Mile. That mark stands at 3:56.18, set by Cory Leslie in Greenville in 2014. With the pace being set for 3:51, Milner, who has put together the elite fields expects this to be the fastest mile run in the world so far this year. “The fastest mile in the world so far this year is 3:56.15, and I fully expect Ollie [Hoare] to be a good deal faster than that. Moreover, he has the chance to climb into a top 5 spot on the Australian all-time list.” Hoare will likely have hands full with Eric Jenkins, a former all-American while at Oregon better known as a 5000m runner, but a 3:53 miler himself.

In that Mile also will be South Carolinan, James Quattlebaum, a former Clemson stand-out who resides in Greenville. Quattlebaum has clocked 3:58.62. Another runner to keep an eye out for in that race is Rheinhardt Harrison, a 16-year-old from Florida. Two weeks ago the rising junior, who attends Nease High School near Jacksonville, clocked 4:01.34 in Nashville, bettering the national sophomore record belonging to Edward Cheserek by almost two full seconds and becoming the fastest 16-year-old ever to run a Mile in the U.S.

In that race, Harrison, closed very fast after a somewhat pedestrian first half. “With more even pacing,” Milner said, “he will have an excellent shot at scaring the 4-minute barrier. Only eleven high school boys have ever done that, and none as young as Rheinhardt.”

There will also be some all-comers races preceding the pro action, and entries are open until Friday night. Live meet results and meet schedule will be at [www.timinginc.com](http://www.timinginc.com) and the livestream will be at Timing Inc’s Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/EventTimingSolutions/>

Spectators are allowed, but Covid-19 precautions including temperature checks, symptom surveys, and social distancing protocols, will be in place.