

## Sorensens Take Gold at Junior Olympics

By Jennifer Wake

Two Stanley Middle School students, Tyler and Nicolette Sorensen took gold medals at the July 24 USATF National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, Calif.

Tyler, who won the midget (11-12) boys' title last year, took top honors in the youth boys' 3000-meter walk at 15:01.51. His younger sister, Nicolette, captured gold in the midget (11-12) girls' 1500 walk with a time of 7:43.20.

Nicolette was the first to start race walking three years ago at age 8, after a friend at Diablo Track and Field Club (DVTFC) introduced her to the sport. After Nicolette won the Junior Olympics for race walking in 2005, Tyler got interested.

A fairly unknown sport, race walking revolves around keeping the right form. One foot must be on the ground at all times, and when a foot lands, the leg must be straight.

"To help do this, you land on your heel and roll to your toe and push off. And since your leg must be straight when you land, you rotate your hips out of the way," said Nicolette. "So on the whole race walking looks kind of funny. There are always judges at race walking events that can disqualify you if your form isn't correct."

In addition to race walking, Nicolette runs track events for DVTFC, setting the mile and 800-meter records for 6th grade girls at Stanley this year.

Tyler also runs track for DVTFC. His longest race was a 19 kilometer trail race and he runs the 10k Lafayette Reservoir Run every year. He is also part of Stanley's track and field team, holding the 6th grade boy's mile record.

The USATF National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships is the largest and most visible youth athlete developmental program in the world. Entry for this championship is based on athlete performances at preliminary, Association, and Regional levels of the 2007 USATF Junior Olympic Program.

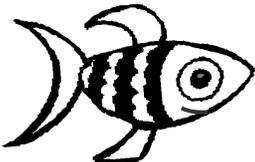
In the future, Nicolette says she would like to "keep winning JO's and eventually make the Junior National Race Walking Team, which is a team of track athletes age 14 to 18 that represent the United States at world competitions."

Tyler wants to break the USATF youth boys' national record next year and qualify for the Junior National Team when he's older.



Tyler and Nicolette Sorensen Photo provided

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