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Jamaican sprint stars head to U.S. Open; CHSAA relays return

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NEW YORK – Former world record holder and sprinting legend **Asafa Powell** will make his New York indoor track debut at the **2012 U.S. Open Track & Field** on January 28 at Madison Square Garden, USA Track & Field announced Wednesday.

Returning to the site of her 2011 NYC indoor victory, world and Olympic champion **Veronica Campbell-Brown** will join her Jamaican countryman in the short sprints, while two of the most popular Garden high school track events – the **Catholic High School Athletic Association boys' 4x800m and girls' 4x400m relays** – also will be contested.

"No U.S. city is more international than New York," USATF Interim CEO Mike McNees said. "Having Veronica and Asafa at the Garden will help spotlight the international importance of the Olympic year, with the U.S. Open as the first round of the 2012 USA-Jamaica rivalry."

The kick-off event of USATF's Visa Championship Series, the U.S. Open will be the first track meet to be held in the newly renovated Garden, and will be the first major professional meet in the United States as the 2012 Olympic Year gets under way. Tickets go on sale to the public December 1.

Powell debuts

As the man who has run more sub-10-second 100m dashes than anyone in history, Powell will make his indoor debut in New York at the U.S. Open. It will mark Powell's first NYC appearance since he ran the 2009 Reebok Grand Prix at Icahn Stadium and his first time competing indoors since 2004.

The 29-year-old Jamaican held the title of world's fastest human for three years, when he owned the 100m world record of 9.77 seconds from 2005 until Usain Bolt broke it in New York in 2008. He is part of the Jamaican 4x100m relay team that currently holds the world record.

VCB returns

Among the most consistent and decorated short sprinters of her generation, Campbell-Brown's resume is the stuff legends are made of: two-time defending Olympic 200m gold medalist; defending World Indoor 60m champion; 2011 World Outdoor champion at 200m; '07 World Outdoor champion in the 100m.

At the Garden in 2011, "VCB" easily won the 60m dash in the Visa women's 60 meters. Her additional international hardware includes a bronze medal in the 100m at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and silver in the 2000 Olympic 4x100m. At the World Outdoor Championships, she has won a total of seven silver medals, dating back to 2005.

Prep tradition at the Garden

Often some of the Garden's most crowd-pleasing events, the CHSAA boys' 4x800m relay and girls' 4x400 relay will be part of the U.S. Open program as well.

"As we reinvent professional track & field at the Garden, we made it a priority to include a few, select high school events that give young athletes the chance to compete on the Garden stage and give fans local heroes to root for," McNees said. "We are thrilled that the CHSAA will return to the Garden and give their student-athletes the opportunity to take the Garden stage."

Tickets on sale Thursday

U.S. Open tickets, starting as low as \$15, will go on sale to the general public on Thursday,

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December 1, at 12:00 p.m. Tickets will be available at the MSG Box Office, Ticketmaster charge at 866-858-0008, all Ticketmaster outlets, and THEGARDEN.com. Annual MSG Track & Field subscribers can contact 212-465-6073 beginning today (Wednesday, November 30).

For information on the Visa Championship Series, including the U.S. Open and TV information, visit www.visachampionshipseries.com
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