

Cherokee senior Lucciano Pizarro's astonishing improvement carried him to state title and #1 seed in Meet of Champions!!!!!!

Reuben Frank, June 5, 2019, SJ Track Coaches Association Webpage

The top shot putter in New Jersey had never thrown beyond 53-8 until three weeks ago.

Think about that for a moment.

Cherokee senior **Lucciano Pizarro** is one of those crazy stories you see sometimes in track and field where a solid performer entering the final weeks of his prep career suddenly becomes an exceptional one.

Sometimes it takes a few weeks for everything to click. Sometimes it takes years.

Pizarro threw 38-3 and placed 37th at Sectionals as a Sophomore. He surpassed 50 feet just once as a junior, going 52-10 for sixth at Sectionals.

He was ranked No. 649 in New Jersey as a sophomore and No. 28 last year.

Heck, he wasn't even one of the top 100 sophomores in the state two years ago.

Now he goes into the Meet of Champions as the No. 1 seed.

Pizarro had a breakthrough in his first meet this spring, PR'ing by 3 1/2 feet with a 55-2 at the Moorestown Invitational. He extended that to 56-3 1/2 when he won the Olympic Conference meet and then to 56-9 1/2 when he won sectionals.

This past weekend, he added three more feet to his PR with a 59-9 to win the State Group 4 title.

That made him the first Cherokee shot putter to win a state title since **Gary Roskoski** in 1999.

His 59-9 is No. 2 in Burlington County history or No. 3 if you include indoor marks. He's now No. 15 in South Jersey history.

Only three boys threw at least 57 feet at the various state meets. Pizarro is the top seed, Red Bank senior Anthony Zamarro threw 59-2 to win the Parochial A title, and Kyle Lipscomb of Linden threw 58-8 for second in Group 4.

The only Cherokee boy to win a Meet of Champions title is **Marc Pelerin** in the 1,600 with 4:12.74 in 2002 at South Brunswick.

SOUTH JERSEY ALL-TIME SHOT PUT LIST

68-8 1/2 ... Braheme Days Jr. [Bridgeton] 2012
64-10 1/2 ... Jon Kalnas [Paulsboro], 1997
64-6 1/4 ... Ron Dayne [Overbook], 1996
64-5 ... Ray Wilks [Bridgeton], 1995
64-4 1/4 ... Chris Robinson [Penns Grove], 1990
62-10 1/4 ... Nick Pulli [West Deptford], 2014
63-0 ... Lou Gordon [Bridgeton], 1995
61-11 3/4 ... Kamron Kobolak [Cinnaminson], 2018
61-10 1/2 ... Harry Dilts [Pitman], 1971
61-6 ... Josh Awotunde [Delsea], 2013
61-4 1/2 ... Bubba Green [Millville], 1976
61-4 ... Kofi Yamoah [Egg Harbor Twp.], 2013
61-2 1/4 ... Matthew Huckabee, [Timber Creek], 2010
60-3 ... Donate Rivera [Pleasantville], 2012
59-9 Lucciano Pizarro [Cherokee], 2019
59-8 1/2 ... Ell Ash [Willingboro], 2004
59-7 3/4 ... Chris Pressley [Woodbury], 2003
59-5 1/4 ... Cade Antonucci [Holy Spirit], 2017