


**Summer Creek HS Jumper**

# BRIANNA RIVERS

## Makes her own mark, leaps for gold

By Jimmie Aggison

To become a great high jumper, athletes must enhance their back's flexibility and fine-tune their timing over the bar. Brianna Rivers did just that, adjusting her body angle to compliment her vertical jump as she refined her knee drive to maximize her leap over the bar at the UIL 6A track meet. With a jump of 5-feet-7, Rivers walked away a gold medalist for the first time.

"Brianna, works extremely hard at her craft. She attends all practices at school, weight room, and extra practices after school with a private coach," said Summer Creek high jump coach Karen Smith.

"Winning felt amazing," said Rivers, who is no stranger to the UIL 6A state meet.

Her freshman year, Rivers PR'd at Regionals by jumping 5-feet-8 and making it to state. She also PR'd (Personal Record) at the Regionals with a 5-feet-9 jumping during her sophomore season.

"Both years I made it to state with my PR's but my nerves got the best of me at that state meet and I placed eighth my freshman year and seventh my sophomore year," said Rivers.

At this year's state meet, Rivers felt that history might repeat itself as she struggled with jumping 5-feet-7.

"Brianna promised me that she would do much better in the State Meet than she had in years past. Even though she is very talented, she sometimes loses her confidence when she has missed jumps," said Smith.

After missing her last jump, Rivers was visibly shaken.

"I actually cried, but my friend Savanna tried to cheer me up by saying it's okay and we still have next year which made me feel a little better. However in the moment, I felt that all my practice was wasted especially because I was not jumping like I wanted to that day," said Rivers.

"She was deflated. While I was consoling her, Coach Roper tallied the total points and noticed that because of her previous cleared jumps, she was the new UIL 6A high jump champion. I told her that she had won but she didn't believe me. I showed her the results in the UIL app and when she saw the results, we were so excited we cried together," said Smith.

Rivers began high jumping after watching her big brother, Jalen Rivers, who while in high school at Summer Creek ranked fourth in the nation with a season-best clearance of 7-feet-1.

"I began track when I was 10 years old

with Track Houston. My brother did it, so my parents wanted me to try it with him. I remember running with my teammates Brooke Perry and Laila Payne, and just really enjoying the sport. Because it was fun, I continued with it throughout the years," said Rivers.

Rivers draws inspiration from watching other high jumpers like Woo Sanghyeok, a professional high jumper and Elena Kulichenko who jumps for the University of Georgia.

"I like to watch Woo Sanghyeok's walk up and his technique over the bar. I like Elena Kulichenko's approach and the speed she carries throughout her curve.

With a highly accomplished brother, it can feel overbearing at times, having others compare skill sets and failing to recognize your talent as your talent.

"At times it can be stressful, especially at big meets. But I have learned that he's my brother and I'm my own person. I can't focus on trying to live up to his accomplishments all the time, I need to make my own," said Rivers.

Rivers holds a PR record jump of 5-feet-10, tying her for seventh in the United States among high school girls.

"I just have to keep working. I plan to do a lot of weight training and plyometrics so I can try to be more explosive off the ground next year," said Rivers.

When looking back to inspire the next group of high jumpers, Rivers recalls the advice given to her by coach Tj Fakehinde.

"Just smile and have fun," said Rivers.

### ABOUT BRIANNA RIVERS

**Class:** 2025

**IG:** @bri.rivers

**Twitter:** @BriRivers11

**Events:** 100-meter hurdles, 300-meter hurdles, long jump, high jump

**Height & weight:** 5-feet-8, 118 pounds  
Athletes she studies: Woo Sanghyeok (Pro), Elena Kulichenko (The University of Georgia)

**Status:** Uncommitted

**Favorite artist:** Stray Kids

**Favorite subject:** Orchestra, Physics

**Shout-outs:** TJ Fakehinde, Margaret Clover, Devin Noel, Ahmad Roper, Jalen Rivers