

Columbus Junction's Olympic Connection

by DEB BEAN and TAMMY K. VIRZI

From one's love of the game and a true dedication to a sport, a local man's interest will put him on the biggest stage in United States Track and Field later this month.

Columbus Junction's Mike Jay has been selected by USA Track and Field (USATF) to announce the 2008 Olympic Team Trials in Eugene, Oregon. He will join a three-man team in calling the events of the meet, which is scheduled to start on June 27 and run through July 6, 2008.

The voice of the Columbus Wildcats, which we all have become so familiar with, will echo thru Hayward Field on the campus of the University of Oregon as the nation's elite athletes vie for place on the USA Team and a trip to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China.

Hayward Field is known as a mecca for track and field, and has been considered hallowed ground for athletes and fans alike. Originally constructed in 1919, the venue most recently underwent \$8 million in renovations making it the best track and field-only facility in the world.

Jay, a 1977 graduate of Columbus Community was an avid track and cross country athlete. Under the guidance of Coaches Ken Purdy and Richard Peterson, he developed a deep love for the sport over his four years of high school competition and later serving as an assistant coach under Purdy.

"It was Coach Purdy and Coach Peterson that instilled the love of running and the sport of track and field," says Jay. "A love that I passed on to my children and continue to develop that same passion in the student athletes I have the opportunity to coach each year."

Following graduation, Mike remained close to the sport and has been coaching Cross County and Track at Columbus for the past 23 years, accumulating five SEISC Cross Country Championships and 14 Conference titles in Track. He further pursued his love by announcing the Columbus meets and was later invited to do the SEI Super Conference Meets.

His big break however, came after attending a meet at the University of Iowa, where he was less than impressed with the public address announcer at that event.



Mike Jay announcing at the Drake Relays

"The person doing the announcing knew very little about track and field... it was just awful," stated Jay. "I went to the Iowa Coaching Staff and volunteered to do their announcing for free."

The rest is history. Mike was now one of the nation's most recognized voices in track and field, calling all of the Hawkeye meets, is the announcer for the University of Nebraska Track and Field Team, has helped announced the Mt. Sac Relays in California, the Kansas Jayhawk Relays, the Big 10 and Big 12 Championships and most recently has joined the team at the Iowa High School T&F Championships and the famous Drake Relays. He will return to Drake Stadium next week for the running of the 2008 NCAA Division I National Championships.

His most memorable moment in announcing however, may have happened last week when he called the Boys 1600M Run at the Iowa High School Championships where a pair of his athletes, Casey Robertson and Sam Chaney raced to the medal podium, placing 5th and 6th, respectively.

When Jay makes the trip to Or-

gon, his family will stay behind. It takes approximately 30 hours to prepare for a meet and then several additional hours each day preparing for the next day's schedule. Jay reads about 9 papers a day and spends hours on the internet looking for information on each of the athletes he will see in each event.

"It's a working trip, and I don't have much time to do anything but prepare for the meet", says Jay. "My family doesn't travel with me, but it's for sure they will be watching all the action on TV!"

Although Jay won't be able to do much sightseeing off the track, it will be a special trip in the fact that he will be returning to a stadium where one of his idols and all time greats competed. Track legend Steve Prefontaine awed crowds for holding every American record between 2,000 and 10,000 meters in the mid-1970s.

With luck Jay will be able to call a new American Track and Field record... and love every minute (second) of it!

Editor's Note: Mike Jay states, "There are some people who need

credit, because without them, I would not have had the exposure I have gotten.

My Coaches, Purdy and Peterson and my brother Mark, instilled the love of Track and Field in me.

My wife, Renea for allowing me to coach and go when and where I want to announce meets.

Rich Bridenstine for allowing me to take vacation time when I want, so I can go to these meets.

Attorney Steve Moore. Steve is a Drake grad and ran track for the Bulldogs. He was always putting in a "good word for me". Mark Kostek, Drake Associate Athletic Director and former Drake Relays Director, who gave me a shot at Drake Stadium.

Larry Wiczorek, Men's Track and Field and Cross Country Coach at the University of Iowa. One of my best friends. He let me call my first college meet.

Garry Wilson, Head Women's Track and Field Coach and Cross Country Coach at the University of Minnesota... a great friend who has helped me meet some very important people in the sport."

Briefly -

Catch the Reading Bug this summer

Kickoff: Friday, June 6th - 9-10 a.m. (All contest work can begin on this date). First Week: Monday, June 9th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Wednesday, June 11th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Friday, June 13th - 9-10:15 a.m. Second Week: Monday, June 16th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Wednesday, June 18th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Friday, June 20th - 9-10:15 a.m. Please turn in all entries for the different contests before July 18th, so the materials can be judged and ready for the ending party. Ending Party: Friday, July 18th - 9-10:15 a.m. All contest work will be judged and distributed. Prizes will be given.

Breakfast in Ainsworth

There will be a June fundraiser breakfast buffet on Saturday, June 7, 2008 at the Ainsworth Opera House (284 Railroad St.) The cost will be \$6 for adults, 12 and under is free. The menu will include: biscuits and gravy, ham, sausage, chicken, mush, pancakes, scrambled eggs, hash browns, rolls, fresh fruit and maybe waffles, and more. No breakfast in July, cooks need a rest.

Legion Auxiliary potluck

Remember the potluck picnic for the American Legion Auxiliary at the Lewka's on Tuesday evening, June 10th at 6 p.m. Meat and drink will be provided. Bring your spouse and lawnchairs.

Youth golf lessons at Cedarcrest

Cedarcrest is once again offering Junior golf lessons this year starting on Monday, June 9th. Please call the Pro-Shop at 319-728-8461 and ask for details. These lessons are for kids ages 5-17.

City to flush water hydrants

The City of Columbus Junction will be flushing water hydrants during the next several weeks.

Museum open all day on June 14th

The Columbus Junction Heritage Museum will be open on Saturday, June 14th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Alumni members and visitors will be welcome to see the displays.

C.J. Alumni Banquet schedule

The Alumni Banquet for graduates of high schools in Columbus Junction, Cotter, and Conesville will take place on Saturday, June 14th at the Roundy Elementary School in C.J. Registration begins at 5:30 PM and dinner will be served at 6:30 PM. Tickets or reservations for the event are available from Carol Ann Howell at the Community Bank (319-728-2226) and Sherry Pine at the State Bank (319-728-2436). Ticket price is still \$10.00, and includes the delicious meal prepared by the Presbyterian Women. A limited number of walk-ins can be managed, but to assure yourself a seat and a meal, please buy your tickets or make your reservations in advance. All classes will be recognized, with special attention to the 50-year Class of 1958 and the 25-year Class of 1983.

WMU Playground fundraiser

The Winfield-Mt. Union Playground Committee will be sponsoring a playground fundraising event in memory of their late teacher Theresa Woline. The event will be held on Saturday, June 7th from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. See page 2 for complete schedule.

Great Beginnings applications

Great Beginnings is taking applications for next year. Please stop by the church office or call 319-728-2669 for an application or questions.

Half Hour Club to meet

Half Hour Club will meet on June 10, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. for a breakfast at the home of Margaret Bloomquist. Dorothy Allen is co-hostess. Roll call will be reading reports. Election of Officers will be held at this time.

Ice Cream Social in Conesville

Conesville United Methodist Church will be having a homemade ice cream supper Thursday, June 12 beginning at 5 p.m. Creamed chicken on a bun, hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, pie, drinks and homemade ice cream will be served. There will be a free will offering.

P.E.O. to meet

P.E.O. Chapter CX will meet on Monday, June 9th at Jane Thomann's at 7 p.m.

Adult Summer reading program

Reading is a Picnic: Summer reading isn't just for kids! Stop in the Library to sign up for the Adult Reading Contest. For every book you read from June 1 to July 2, you get a chance to win an apple pie and basket for your 4th of July picnic.

Swimming Pool now open

The Columbus Swimming Pool opened Saturday, May 24, for the summer season. Pool Hours: Monday-Friday - 1-6 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday - 1-7:30 p.m. ADULTS ONLY - Monday-Thursday - 6-7 p.m. Admission prices: Daily - \$2.50 for all swimmers; Season Passes - (Single) \$50, (Family) \$100; 10-Swim Punch Card - \$20. Lifeguarding class begins June 2. Successful completion allows you to work at the pool. Contact the high school office or stop at the pool for more details. Red Cross swimming lessons run Monday-Friday from 10-11 a.m., July 7-18. Cost is \$30 and registration forms have been made available to all elementary students. You may also register at the pool. Every child should learn to swim and Red Cross lessons have traditionally been a helpful start.

Wyman School Reunion and Banquet

The Annual Reunion and get-together for all former Wyman School students and teachers will be held July 12, 2008. The school was started in 1912 when 3 one-room school buildings were moved into town. Classes continued there until the school was closed in 1978. The Reunion and Banquet will be at the United Church of Crawfordsville, doors open at 5:30 P.M.; Banquet and entertainment at 6:30. For more information or to make reservations please call Lorraine Frame at 319-257-3401 or John Wittrig at 319-257-3377.

A memorable Friday at the Senior Center



Last Friday was a memorable day at the Columbus Senior Center. The day was organized to recognize their volunteers, but it also was a day to honor Judy Stirling, the Center's long-time director who was retiring on that day. In the picture above left, Judy is presented with a gift certificate from the center's Board of Directors, from left: Norma Schweitzer, Judy Stirling, Polly Prior, Ron Baird and Tom Huston.

In the photo above right, volunteers recognized were, back row: Norma Schweitzer, Greta Schrier, Dorothy Diller, Roberta Boulton, Jeanette Luthly and Tom Huston. In the bottom row, left to right: Roberta Garrett, Ted Garrett, Ron Baird and Joan Baird.



CJSB names two new officers

Doris Mougins and Nancy Brown, pictured at right, were recently promoted to the title of Assistant Cashier by the Columbus Junction State Bank. Doris has been with the bank since July of 2001, and serves as supervisor of the teller line. She lives in Columbus Junction with her husband, Dale. Nancy has been with the bank since February of 1974, and oversees the bookkeeping area. She lives in Columbus Junction with her husband, Dennis.



Congregate Menu for June 9-13

Monday, June 9 - Deep-dish pizza, wax beans, tossed salad, blushing pears, cookie.

Tuesday, June 10 - Roast turkey on wheat bun, tomato slice, spring salad, banana and mandarin oranges.

Wednesday, June 11 - Beef and noodles, mashed potatoes, asparagus, applesauce, cake and ice cream.

Thursday, June 12 - BBQ pork on wheat bun, potato salad, tomato slice, gobble up fruitcake.

Friday, June 13 - Tuna patty, baked potato, broccoli Normandy, fruit, orange juice, white cake.