

Awards and Recognitions

The Dick Barbour

Meritorious Service Award

1985.....	Hank Patton
1986.....	George Newlon
	Roxanne Anderson
1987.....	Dan Dotta
	Del Dotta
1988.....	Harry Young
	Henry "Hank" Weston
1989.....	Ed Parker
	Harmon Brown
1990.....	Horace Crow
1991.....	(No award)
1992.....	Dick Connors
1993.....	George Kleeman
1994.....	Tom Moore
1995.....	Charlie Sheppard
1996.....	Norm Morrison
1997.....	(no award)
1998.....	John Luppess
1999.....	Richard Zulaica
2000.....	Jim Hume
	Jim Wynn
2001.....	Bob Shor
	Rick Milam
2002.....	Bob Rauch
2003.....	Lori Maynard
	Sonny Maynard
2004.....	Gail Wetzork
2005.....	Phil Watkins
2006.....	Bill Edgar
2007.....	Ed Hicks
2008.....	Dick Iwamiya
2009.....	

The George Newlon

Special Recognition Award — Track

1995.....	Bob Mason
1996.....	Ben Morjig
1997.....	(no award)
1998.....	Jerry Colman
1999.....	Bobby Hughey
2000.....	Dan Davidson
2001.....	John Coie
2002.....	Gerry Collet
2003.....	Dick Iwamiya
2004.....	Rick Urband
2005.....	Joe Harper
2006.....	Richard Cabral
2007.....	Colin Campbell
2008.....	Jeannie White
2009.....	

The Horace Crow

Special Recognition Award — Field

1995.....	Sonny Maynard
1996.....	Rich Zulaica
1997.....	(no award)
1998.....	Bill Edgar
1999.....	Joan M. Wilson
2000.....	Phil Watkins
2001.....	Dr. Leon Glover, Jr.
2002.....	Bruce Colman
2003.....	Dick Petruzzi
2004.....	Teddy Hayes
2005.....	Shirley Connors
	Margaret Sheehan
2006.....	John Murray
2007.....	Bill Hawkes
2008.....	John Shirey
2009.....	



Turns & Distances

Pacific Association Officials Committee

% Dick Connors, 2065 Kings Lane, San Mateo, CA 94402

2009 Annual Meeting

It's annual meeting time again! The Pacific Association officials will host hold their 2009 annual meeting on August 30, in the **Bruce Edwards Club Room** at U. C. Davis's new football stadium (Aggie Stadium), starting at 11:00 a.m. The Club Room is located on the ground level of the press box on the west side of the stadium. **Coach Jon Vochatzer** and the Aggie Track and Field Program will be our hosts.

To reserve your place at the luncheon, send a check for \$10 per attendee (Emeritus officials attend free!), to **Phil Watkins** (1090 San Ramon Way, Sacramento CA 95864). The check should be made out to: "PAUSATF" attn: **Officials Annual Meeting**. Tell Phil whether/what you're planning to bring for the Annual Raffle.

Hume's note...In the past only 20%+/- of the certified officials and their spouses have attended our annual meeting. The food is delightful, the "meeting" refreshingly short, the awards in abundant supply and the raffle USUALLY finds everyone going home with something. Last year, if memory serves, found us on round two in order to distribute all the goodies. This is certainly an opportunity to socialize with other officials. We often do not have enough time to do that. Y'all come ya' hear!

Aggie Stadium



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Heard at the Track:

- At the Brutus Hamilton Track and Field Championships on April 25, the University of California track and field team recognized six long term officials for their contribution to the program at Cal over the many years. The honorees were: **John Coie**, a head finish judge and lap counter; **Bill Pratt**, a clerk of the course; **Leon Glover**, the wind gauge operator; Stewart Sampson, a throws official; **Jim Waldron**, a horizontal jumps official; and **Don Bailes** a field events specialist. Each of the men was introduced to the crowd and given a gift certificate.
- **Mike Shimanski**, veteran official from Danville, was honored by the North Coast Section CIF for his many years of service to the section, at the Meet of Champions held at Edwards Stadium on the campus of UC Berkeley. Congratulations, Mike!
- **The PAUSATF Officials Committee** wants to thank the **Peninsula Athletic League** of the Central Coast Section, U. C. **Berkeley** and **About Timing Associates** for their most kind donations to our cause.
- Looking for **track and field results on the internet?** These web sites carry most significant results from Northern California meets: <http://www.dyestat.com> , <http://www.flashresults.com> and <http://www.sml1.com/recordingtiming> .
- **New track meet added:** At the Western Regional NCAA meet in Eugene, Oregon, Dick Connors with the assistance of Pacific Association USATF, hosted a scheduling breakfast for the 2010 season with Division I coaches from Northern California and Western Nevada. The conversations amongst the coaches resolved several conflicting dates for the 2010 season and helped publicize a new meet added to the schedule. *On March 6, 2010, Stanford will host either a Quad or a five way involving: Stanford, Cal, UC Davis, Cal Poly SLO and Fresno State.* It should be great competition. The fate of the California Invitational Relays at this date is unknown.



Mike Shimanski



Here is **Dr. Glover** in his other role as wind gauge operator.

- **Dr. Leon Glover**, the officials' award chairman, is still seeking recommendations for awards to be presented at the meeting. Stop a minute and think, what officials have done work you admire? Who has been a mentor to you? For whom have you said, "Gee, ?? Ought to get an award. Leon

may be contacted evenings at (650) 968-2007, or via email at lglover@tycoelectronics.com

- **Annual calendar for 2010...Bill Hawkes** is assembling the Association calendar of track meets for 2010. Please send Bill the dates time and contact persons for all meets you are aware of. Let's make this a complete calendar. Remember: everyone uses this calendar now that it's on line—officials, coaches, clubs, and athletes. (flojo1049@yahoo.com) is your e-mail address to send Bill your additions. Bill's calendar will be published in the November issue of Turns and Distances, and posted on the PA website.
- **Becky Klein** is again assembling the fall long distance running/cross-country calendar. Please let her know dates and contact persons for those meets at boopwalk@yahoo.com.
- **Shirley Connors** says, "It's time to start thinking about clinics!!!" **Shirley** has been appointed to take over from George Kleeman's as chairman of the Education and Training Committee starting with the 2010 season. Shirley has told T&D she is open to your suggestions regarding sites, dates and curriculum for this winter's clinics (December, January, and February.) She is also seeking master-level officials willing to teach the classes. Shirley may be contacted at: so.connors@att.net



Shirley Connors

- **All-Comers summer T&F series...**Again this summer, **Rick Milan** will be hosting the summer series off all-comers track and field meets at Los Gatos High School. The meets are held every Thursday night through August 6. Meets start at 5:00 p.m. with Pole Vault followed by running at 6:00 p.m. If you are an official or starter looking for experience, a summer Thursday night with Rick and the gang is good place. Rick may be contacted at 408-241-6578.
- **Officials needed!!! The USA Senior Games** will be hosted by Stanford University in Palo Alto, August 5-11, 2009. **Dick Connors** is coordinating officials. The entry fields are large and Association level officials could gain valuable experience working this meet and more experienced officials could gain experience being the head of an event. This is an eight day meet, but do not feel you must be there all eight days, **however**, do remember how good working a national meet like this will look on your resume when you want to move up a level. Dick is seeking a lot of help and you may telephone him at (650) 341.6781 by e-mail at

Richard.Connors@att.net

Rick Milam Honored...Every once in a while one of our own gets recognized for his many years of service to track and field and the community. This recognition was bestowed on Rick Milam a few months ago. The Santa Clara Board of Supervisors presented to Rick a Resolution that says in part "has over 45 years of experience as a participant, official, meet director and coach, has been actively engaged in the study of NFL, NBA, Olympics, disabled, physically challenged, youth, high school, university and professional athletes"



This article was sent to us by **Leroy Milam** (yes, Rick's older brother). Included in the picture are **Frank Jewett**, **Willy Harmatz**, Rick and **Bobby Poynter**.

Not to be outdone, the California State Senate also presented Rick with a Certificate of Recognition for his 44 years of his work in track and field. It reads, in part, "Coach Milam has demonstrated outstanding leadership, dedication and commitment in the building of a better community, through more than 45 years of service as a track & field coach, teacher, mentor and advocate for children and young adults that have allowed thousands of students to realize their highest athletic academic potential"

At the same time, the State Assembly issued its own Certificate of Recognition that said in part, "Through your work with countless young people, you have inspired many generations in the pursuit of both academic and athletic achievement."

This article was sent to us by **Leroy Milam** (yes, Rick's older brother). Included in the picture are **Frank Jewett**, **Willy Harmatz**, Rick and **Bobby Poynter**. Bobby was also presented with these awards. For those of you who have good memories, you will remember **Bobby Poynter** as one of the fastest sprinters in the world...circa 1956. He, however, picked the wrong time to get sick, just before the Olympics.

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remember **Bobby** as one of the fastest sprinters in the world...circa 1956. He, however, picked the wrong time to get sick, just before the Olympics.

Interview with the National Officials Chair

by Richard L. Connors

Your editor sent seven questions to new USATF Officials Chairman **Len Krsak**. Here are answers. Mr. Krsak is an active masters throws official from the Ohio Association.

Editor: *Are you planning any major changes in the way officials are selected for the National Championships and the Olympic Team Trials? If so, what will be your new criteria?*

Mr. Krsak: As far as selecting officials for future National Championships and Olympic Trials I currently will stay with our current program. However one does not know what the future will bring. With the economic conditions the way they currently are and possibly Local Organizing Committees (LOC's) cutting back funding, changes may have to occur in the way we select National Championship officials at some point in the future.

Editor: *The training clinics at major championships and the annual convention have been very well received by the membership. Do you plan to continue this program? If yes, what will be your major points of emphasis?*

Mr. Krsak: The past clinics at the Annual Convention and National Championships have been very well received and productive. The success of these clinics is the result, in most part, of the efforts of Shirley Connors. It takes an extreme amount of coordination to produce these clinics, such as getting presenters, obtaining meeting rooms, subject and topics to discuss and scheduling. **As far as my major points of emphasis, from traveling around the country and working meets at all levels I've notice the mechanics of officiating being done differently and in some instances not by the rule book. We as an organization must officiate a meet the same way regardless of the location.** Other sports do it according to their guidelines and so should we.

Editor: *The national officials were recently included in a national liability insurance policy while working track meets. What additional benefits for officials will you be actively seeking during your tenure in office?*

Mr. Krsak: The National Liability Insurance program is a huge benefit for the officials' fraternity. However as everyone should be aware it is not free. Realistically with the present economic conditions I don't see officials being paid at National Championships. However additional benefits that can possibly be negotiated with USATF and local LOC's are stipends, uniforms allowance, and possibly every certified official receiving a free rule book every year. Through all this

we cannot lose sight that the officials fraternity has benefited the past several years with housing and meals being provided at Championship meets.

Editor: *With in the last two years, the Pacific Association USATF Officials were requested to have a background clearance check before they worked Youth Athletic meets (I understand that this is a national rule for all youth athletic coaches.) Is this an objective of the national committee? If yes, when do you hope to implement this policy?*

Mr. Krsak: To date the national Officials Committee has not mandated that officials have a background check. I believe its best left up to the local Associations to implement these checks if they so desire.

Editor: *As chairman of the National Officials Committee are you planning to write a column in the bi-monthly e-mail newsletter? If so, would you seek suggested topics from the membership?*

Mr. Krsak: Hopefully I can get a column out on a regular basis. Bimonthly may be a little tight with all the activities going on. I believe monthly would be more appropriate. I will encourage members of the NOC Executive Board and committee members to produce articles for the newsletter keeping membership informed as to projects they are working on. If something crops up unexpectedly and is urgent, we have the capabilities to place a message on our website at any time. The answer is yes I would seek to accept suggested topics from the membership as long as they were positive, informative and possibly inspirational.

Editor: *The past chairman of the National Officials Committee would not consider National Technical Officials (NTO's) for a position at National Championships and the Olympic Team Trials. Are you going to make this a permanent policy of the selection committee? If so, what is your rationale?*

Mr. Krsak: I am not opposed to NTO's who are not selected to work as NTO's applying for officiating positions at National Championship meets. In order for this to happen there would have to be a bylaw change. Current language in the bylaws prohibits this from occurring. All NTO's if they want to work the meet must apply like the rest of the officiating community and go through the selection process.

Editor: *In the early 80's the Northwest Association produced a video tape introducing track and field officiating. Do you have any plans to update that work?*

Mr. Krsak: Producing a DVD has been the goal of the NOC executive board and my predecessor. The past and present stumbling blocks have been several issues: 1. Financing, finding the money to fund the project. 2. Finding someone or a group to do the script, filming,

finding a location and editing. The training committee is currently exploring ways to accomplish the goal of producing a DVD. I would encourage and accept any Association's help in developing a DVD. As I stated in one of my previous remarks above, we as an officials' community must start doing the mechanics of officiating the same way across the country.

Local schools garner awards

Stanford Claims 15th Consecutive Learfield Sports Directors' Cup, from Stanford University Athletics News, June 19, 2009

Stanford has once again won the Directors' Cup as the national's top intercollegiate athletic program. This is Stanford's fifteenth consecutive win. UC Berkeley came in sixth, Cal's highest finish ever. The cup is awarded on a points system based on achievements in postseason championships across a range of intercollegiate sports.

*To read a full report Google **Learfield Sports Directors' Cup***

In addition, Stanford was national runner-up for the first-ever John McDonnell Award, which recognizes excellence in Division I track and field programs. The McDonnell Award is based on top national finishes in cross country and indoor and outdoor track. And who came in first? University of Oregon, coached by Stanford's ex-head coach, Vin Lanana.

*To read a full report Google **John McDonnell Program of the Year Award**.*

Cal AD Sandy Barbour Earns Regional Athletic Director of the Year Honor Award from NACDA... June 18, 2009

Berkeley - California's [Sandy Barbour](#), who oversees a 27-sport program that has won a combined 53 team and individual national championships during her tenure at the school, has been named one of four regional Under Armour Athletic Directors of the Year by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA).



Sandy Barbour

Barbour arrived at Cal in September 2004 and has helped the Athletic Department become a mainstay among the Top 10 in the annual Directors' Cup standings. The Golden Bears finished in the top 15 during each of her first four years in Berkeley and in the top 10 three times, including a high of seventh in both 2006 and '08. Cal is currently fifth in the 2008-09 Directors' Cup standings.

*To read a full report Google **Sandy Barbour Regional Athletic Director of the Year**.*

Missing From The Track

William “Bill” Hart Edgar Remembered... August 28th, 1933- April 26th, 2009 (from remarks made at Bill’s memorial, May 3, in Sacramento), by Jean Snuggs

I feel lucky to have known Bill; we are all lucky to have known him. I’m a link between Bill’s life’s vocation as a faculty member at American River College and his avocation as a USATF certified official. I had the privilege of working with Bill in a number of capacities.

We were faculty colleagues at ARC since 1979, Bill in math and me in PE and for most of the time, I was the women’s cross country and track/field coach.

Bill helped with both our intercollegiate basketball and track & field programs

He and I were both involved in USATF events, outside the college setting. We worked together at the ARC officials’ clinic, at the 1995 USATF National Championships, at both the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Trials in Sacramento, and at several junior national championships throughout the country.

In preparing a few words I wanted to ensure that I could capture the breadth of Bill’s contributions, so I talked with several of the coaches Bill had worked with at ARC (**Al Baeta, Hub Morphew, Bruce Werner**) and I talked with several of Bill’s buddies from USATF (**Dick Iwamiya, Jim Hume, George Kleeman, Phil Watkins, Dan Davidson**). Everyone had stories about Bill Edgar.

All of their stories had a common theme. Anyone who has ever worked with Bill can share joyful and respectful memories of a man who was a master teacher, a meticulous track & field official, a humble worker, and a passionate soul who cared for students and athletes, who was loyal to his colleagues and friends, and who, when given any task, would be certain it was done right.

Bill started teaching at ARC in 1969. His first involvement in our athletic program came in the mid-70’s. Al Baeta was ARC’s track & field coach and Bill’s son John was a quality high school distance runner. As Al remembers it, one day Bill came to the track (an old crushed granite oval, at the time) to talk with Al about distance running. Al remembers Bill being very proud of his son’s accomplishments. Once that connection was made, Bill wanted to be involved and he began to volunteer at our home track meets...something he continued to do for the next 35 years. Also, Bill kept our

men’s basketball scorebook for more than 20 years, and Hub said two things to me about Bill and his scorebook – one after the game, you simply did not talk with him (not one word) until the scorebook total were complete and two, Bill Edgar’s scorebook was always 100% accurate.

Soon, Bill was in charge of running our finish line. He began, in the old days, prior to electronic timing, video cameras, and computers. He would have 12-18 faculty and administrators perched on a finish stand, each with a 30-second sweep Minerva stopwatch, hand timing a race that would often end up in a blur across the finish line. Today, with technology, we break ties down to the 100th of a second. In those days it was up to the person in charge to sort out the blur at the finish with absolute certainty to the accuracy and validity of the results...a perfect job for a meticulous math teacher who had a passion for accuracy and a passion for the athletes!

I asked one of our long term finish line workers, Sue Lorimer, to tell me about “life at the finish line – with Bill.”

First, he would give very specific instructions to his crew. And, he would expect a reasonable competence from his timers. He felt personally responsible to make certain the finish results were accurate and fair for the athletes. Frankly, he could get a little cranky when his timing crew could not get it right. Bill’s timing crew was typically about 50% administration, often times including our college president. Here, they were outside to enjoy nice spring weather and to have an opportunity to participate in

a student event. No matter who they were, if they messed up on the timing, they got chewed out.

In his quest for perfection, Bill could not understand why he had to repeat instructions over and over and over: for example, to not use their thumb on the stop watch or to who was picking exactly which place, or that they had to quit “gabbing” and should be alert to the start. In his frustration, more than once, he would say, “**Women can’t time**”...even if it was to the College President. With his passion, Bill expected perfection. He could be grumpy – but you know what? those timers kept coming back. Bill was compelling in his passion – and his quest for perfection would soon be shared by all of those around him.

Bill had a remarkable passion for the community college mission and for community college students. He donated literally hundreds of hours to the campus



Bill Edgar

community...simply because he cared.

Bill did such a good job with the finish at ARC's home meets, that we took it upon ourselves to volunteer his services at other college meets. Soon he was working at Sacramento City College and we would volunteer him for Conference Championship meets. As electronic technology started to come into play and our finish line timers and judges were no longer needed, Bill began to volunteer to work at the field events.

In the 80's our field event judges were generally ex-athletes or fellow ARC coaches, with no special certifications to do the job. True to his nature, if Bill was going to work the field events, then he wanted to "do it right." He went to USATF officiating clinics, took tests, and was first certified as a field official in December of 1988.

In 1993, Bill was promoted to a National level official and, in 1997, he was promoted to the highest level, a Master Certification. He had masters level certification in finish line judging and timing as well as for all of the throws: javelin, discus, and his favorite two: hammer and shot.

We always thought Bill was pretty special at ARC; we were able to give him many "atta-boy's," some post-meet pizza and an occasional ball cap or a t-shirt. USATF does a much better job of recognizing the service and expertise of its BEST officials: Pacific Association honored Bill with 2 different awards:

- In 1998, Bill received the *Horace Crow Special Recognition Award*; that is PA officials' highest honor for a field event official.
- Then, in 2006, Bill was honored with the *Dick Barbour Meritorious Service Award*, the highest honor given by the Pacific Association for ANY of their officials.

Recognize the caliber of meets at which Bill officiated:

- National USATF championships, both junior and senior level,
- NCAA Division I championships
- Cross country and junior Olympic meets, national masters competitions
- Four different Olympic Trials, including the 2000 and 2004 trials in Sacramento.

The best accolades for Bill, from his peers, would be their recollections of how he officiated: All of his officiating colleagues said to me that they liked to work with him: he knew the rules, he was alert to safety, and he just didn't have an ego with a need to claim the most visible of officiating positions. He would help wherever needed. Bill 'got it' – he wanted the spot light on the athletes. His role was to best ensure a fair and safe competition.

Bill was the consummate teacher and student. In his math teaching job, he continually was learning and was effective at all levels of mathematics. In his track & field officiating, he also was always learning. When the field events started to become more technologically savvy, Bill was one of the first to work with the palm pilots and field lynx computer system. Jim Hume related a story to me of how Bill 'saved the day' at a junior national championship meet in Texas because he was willing to jump in there and work with new technologies.

Bill became a mentor for new officials. He organized and spoke at officials' training clinics. He continually picked up new skills: he became a race starter of ARC's cross country meets, he recently was certified to do weights and measures of field event implements. Bill was a solid fixture at ARC, Sac City, Berkeley, UC Davis, and Stanford (where he LOVED to work meets).

In the past couple of days, while I was talking with several of Bill's officiating colleagues, I learned something about Bill's past: the story of Bill's own distance running career:

Dan Davidson coached Bill's son when he was at Foothill High School. Bill went to Dan and asked him for help to train to run a 5k race (that is, for Bill to run the 5k). Dan (himself a good mid 15's 5k runner) relayed to me how they trained together for 6 months in preparation for this race. Finally, in July, they ran together in a 5k road race in Folsom. Ever the coach, Dan paced Bill all the way until the final 100 meters or so. At that time, he told Bill he was on his own to the finish. Dan slowed--so his student could perform--and Bill sped ahead to "beat his coach," something which Bill did not let Dan forget for at least the next decade. (I do not believe he ever did another road race.) In reality, that experience gave Bill an empathy for the athletes that he never forgot when serving as an official.

Tribute to Don Wilson...1931-2009...(from remarks made at Don's memorial, May 12, in Oakland) by George Kleeman

I am one of a cadre of USATF officials who worked with both **Joan** and **Don Wilson** at many meets during the late 1980's and 1990's at a number of locations throughout Northern California. I first met Don when he came to help at a Cal track meet in 1985 or 1986. Don was the ultimate throwing official he particularly like the hammer and discus but also worked the javelin and sometimes the shot put. He was willing and able to work any position on the field. Don was first officially certified in February, 1989 but had worked meets over the previous decade. Consequently he moved up quickly in ranks and became a national level official when he first registered and Master level in all the throws by 1991 in the minimum required

time. He was given a National Certificate of accomplishment in 1994. He became one of a group of nationally-known throwing officials from Pacific Association who were picked for many of the national meets in the 1990's. The group included the likes of **Myron Godwin, John Luppés, Gail Wetzork, and Rich Zulaica.**

Don was chosen to work the 1992, 1996, and 2000 Olympic Team Trials, and the Atlanta Olympic Games in Track and Field. Big meets weren't the only ones he worked. He and Joan were always one of the first to be at the Cal all-comers meets in January and February each year and the last ones to leave after working several flights of hammer, javelin and discus, often without stopping for lunch. One of his last big meets was an Olympic Committee exhibition event at San Jose State College in March 2003 where he came out of the stands to help officiate a group of world class US shot putters. After that, Don started reluctantly to do fewer meets because of his leg problems. Then he and Joan both retired and became emeritus officials in 2005. After more than four Olympiads as track and field officials still he and Joan continued to keep in touch with his old friends and often attended our officials' meetings at Cal or UC Davis at the end of August each year.

But track and field was Don's second Olympic sport, his first love being weightlifting. Don was always interested in the athlete and the athlete's conditioning probably as a result of being a front line medic in the Korean War.

He often suggested weight lifting or other exercises to help athletes with their training or to help them rehabilitate from an injury, thereby combining the two sports.

Don was an avid weight lifter himself until a hand injury sidelined him from competition. His achievements in weight lifting were even more impressive than those in track and field. Don was a weight lifting official and referee both locally, nationally, and internationally for over 50 years, many of those years serving as the national secretary for USA Weightlifting. He worked the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles as an Assistant Weightlifting competition Manager and Protocol Delegate for Foreign Delegates. In the days when we had Olympic Festivals, Don would first work the weightlifting events and then come over to the track to officiate those events. He was recognized for his contributions by being inducted into the weightlifting Hall of Fame. He sometimes even recruited athletes and/or officials from one sport to the other. As one athlete wrote upon learning of his passing,

"his presence in the Sport Palace was an insurance policy that everyone would compete on a level field."

Beside all these sports activities Don was a regulation writer for the Oakland Fire Department and worked on making sure that police and firemen's disability pensions would not be taxed. Don had a way with words and certainly toasted me on several occasions, first when I got my leg broken by a discus at the National Championships in New Orleans in 1998 and then again when I retired in 1999. Don wrote and gave me a proclamation entitled the Special Long Throws Hero Award. He even made a wallet size card to go with it. That was Don, always smiling, interested in the well-being of those around him and willing to help wherever he was needed. Don was kind to everyone, and spent endless hours helping those older than himself or those in need. We will all miss him greatly.

Memorial contributions in Don's name may be made to: **Oakland Fire Fighters Random Acts**, P.O. Box 18842, Oakland, CA 94619 or Alameda Meals on Wheels, P.O. Box 2534, Alameda, CA 94501.



Don Wilson

Conversations with the Elders: Seven Questions for John Luppés

John Luppés is a cheery presence at track and cross country meets around the Bay Area, often seen refereeing high school events or visiting friends around the throwing venue at UC Berkeley.

John has received every honor given out by the Pacific Association Officials Committee—the Barbour, Newlon, and Crow awards—and the high school team exhibiting the finest sportsmanship at the Martinez Relays is presented with an

award named for him.

He has been Emeritus since 2004.

John made a coffee for us and sat down to talk about his life, in his sunny Pleasant Hill living room, overlooking a beautiful lawn bordered by rose bushes and fruit trees. Elise, his wife of over 50 years, listened from the next room.

[John and Elise's daughter, Monique Luppés, helped edit the transcript.]

T&D: Let's begin with your career as a competitive athlete.

I was born in the Netherlands in 1929, August 22. During the Second World War, the Germans did not allow organized sport in Holland.

After the war ended, I joined a sporting club in Rijswijk, Holland. That was in 1945. I started playing team handball

until I emigrated to the United States in 1957. In 1947, I started track due to the fact that the track coach challenged me to run against his 100 meter track athlete. And I said, you're gonna lose hands down. And I beat the 100 meter runner hands down. And that started my track season.

And then in 1948 I became a member of the selection group of the national team and in 1949 I was the champion in the Dutch Army in the 100 meters. That started the track, and I ran against Germany and I ran against France. My events were 100, 200 and relays (4 x 100).

I usually came in races 2nd or 3rd. My best time was 11.2 in the 100 meters in 1949, against France. I will never forget that.

T&D: How did you make the transition to officiating?

From 1957 through 1964 I once in a while would go to Kezar Stadium and just run on the track, just warm up a little bit, until we moved to Pleasant Hill in 1964 and I met my real idol in track and field, Bob McGuire.

Bob McGuire asked me if I would work a couple of his meets and also if I would help him in coaching one of his athletes, because he was the Meet of Champions high school runner up in the 100 meters. And I did that. I met another good friend of mine on the track, Andy Gainza, and Andy and Bob McGuire asked if I knew how to time and I did.

And then in 1964, my neighbor Frank Isola got me involved with the local Catholic school's track and field program and we started the Diablo Valley Catholic Youth Organization league. We had five parishes—Catholic schools--running track at San Ramon High School, and we usually went for slurpies with all five teams, at that time five cents apiece. Nowadays the CYO league has almost twelve hundred athletes here in Contra Costa County alone.

I was involved with CYO for about 10 or 15 years and I would volunteer at Pleasant Hill High School and time the home meets.

Then in 1980 I met **Gail Wetzork** at a Pacific Association championship meet at Diablo Valley College. He was coaching Holy Names and I was coaching Carondelet High School. And I became a TAC [The Athletic Congress] official in 1980 and at that time we became National and Masters in a year and a half time, and I became Master in 1981.

And I began officiating long and triple jump—those were my first events.

Then **Myron Godwin** and **Gail Wetzork** asked me

would I do the hammer throw and the other throws. And we became a group that was called the California Connection, consisting of Gail, Myron, Don Wilson, Joan Wilson, George Kleeman, Rich Zulaica and myself. We did just about every big meet, an average of about 70 track meets per season.

T&D: This included national championship and international meets, correct?

My first favorite international meet was the Pan American Games in 1987 in Indianapolis. That was the most exciting games I ever did until 1996, when I did the Atlanta Olympics.

We did the Veterans World Games in 1989 and one of the French silver medalists was a discus thrower and George Kleeman came up to me and said, he's throwing an invalid disc because I think the thing was from 1912 and it was falling apart and the rim was not working. So George and I decided to take the discus away and the guy starts speaking German. And he said one word "*Schade*," which means, "shut up" and I gave him an answer "be quiet," in German ("*ruhig, bitte*").

And I started being French interpreter and they asked me to come to dinner, and they had dinners at the campus in Eugene.

T&D: What kinds of jobs did you hold, off the track, out in the "real world"?

Well, I was born in Holland, as I said. I was in the armed forces, drafted, 1949 until 1951. I was a sergeant, in the medical corps.

I met Elise in 1955, at a club dance. We married in 1957. She stole my heart.

I asked for her hand, if she wants to marry me, on the bike. And then we both fell off the bike because I was so happy I gave her a kiss on the bike and we hit the pavement. that's the way it was. [*Elise, coming through the living room: "you give me goose bumps!"*]

At that time I was also applying for emigration. We finally got permission to move to the United States, we arrived in Sebastopol in April 1957. I start working for the AAA and I commuted from Sebastopol to San Francisco on a daily basis on the Greyhound. Then we found an apartment in San Francisco for \$65/month.

I worked as a data processing operator for AAA. I worked myself from tabulating operator to senior programmer, then moved on to other companies, installing main frame computers. We moved to Pleasant Hill in 1964.

I had another couple of jobs. And then in 1976 we



John Luppess

opened a delicatessen [*"A disaster"—Elise*], we quit that in 1979. And then I started working for the nuns until 1995—as the cafeteria operator at Carondelet.

T&D: Who were your favorite athletes to officiate?

Brian Oldfield. Big guy, very big guy, wife's cute as the devil and very small. It is no comparison if you saw Brian and Mrs. Oldfield.

Every darned time I did a meet and he was in the shot put ring, he would say "Lupe, you know where I'm throwing?" and I said "I don't have the foggiest idea" and every darned time he says, "well, tell them to watch out where I throw," because he would be flying all over the place.

The other one was a hammer thrower, Ed Burke. First time I saw him, he was standing right behind the cage and I told him to move away. And he says, "I ain't gonna move", and I said, "Yes you are." And he said, "I didn't know that was a rule." After the competition, he says, "You are a damned good official." Tough guy. Nice guy.

T&D: You were our certification chair for a few years.

Yes. I took over from George Newlon. He and I got together one time and he said I got a name and address file for you and I'm not kidding you he opened up a very small box. It was a card file And I would put it on the computer, and George Kleeman would help me because I would put it on IBM cards and then I would run it on my computer to get a print out. And I remember the first two or three months I was not happy to be the certification chairman because I would call wives and they would say, "Oh, he's not with us any more." and I did that a lot. Then Bob Podkaminer took over from me.

T&D: tell us about great officials

Bob Mason was very conscientious, always friendly, always a good word for you, would explain rules or infractions. nice guy to work with.

Dick Barbour taught me long jump and triple jump officiating.

Really, there are too many top officials and good, lasting friends.

T&D: Finally, what was the greatest athletic performance you ever saw?

Oh, that was the 400 hurdle guy, Edwin Moses. And then later on Michael Johnson. Those are two guys who are good athletes.

Johnson comes around showing his golden shoes at the Olympics. And I'm sitting in the first row, right there, in Atlanta, and I went like this [*gestures as if pointing at the athlete*] and he gives me his shoe, and I go, "thank you" [*mimes putting the shoes under his arm*] and he was funny about that, he said, "**Mr. Lupp**, no no no no no, it doesn't go that way." I said, "let me tell you something.

First of all, I didn't even officiate you, I'm not a running event official, I did the hammer and the javelin, that's all I did." And then later, he gave me a thank you note, in general for doing such a good job.

A Cautionary Tale... Vertical jumps official Pat Randall spotted this article from: *The New Haven Register*, 5/15/09

New Haven A young Wilton man who was paralyzed from the chest down in 2002 while pole vaulting at Southern Connecticut State University has won \$6.4 million in damages from the Connecticut affiliate of USA Track and Field.

Brandon White, 25, won the civil lawsuit in May from a six-member New Haven Superior Court jury.

The ruling came seven years after White, then a high school senior and a member of the Wilton High School boys' track team, came to SCSU's Moore Field House to compete in the USATF Junior Olympics Championships. SCSU was not named a defendant in the lawsuit.

White's attorney, John Wynne Jr. of New Haven, noted White sustained the injuries the week before his high school graduation. He attended the ceremony in a wheelchair.

After he arrived for the competition, White was told by USATF/CT representatives to warm up inside the field house, according to Wynne's legal complaint.

"While attempting a warm-up maneuver after running down the runway of the pole vault area, the plaintiff fell struck the plant box (the metal box where the pole is planted), causing him to sustain and suffer serious physical injuries and losses," the writ said. White "violently struck his head and back on the vault box," Wynne wrote. The teenager suffered a spinal cord injury, "resulting in complete paraplegia."

Wynne said White was hurt because of the carelessness and/or negligence of the USA/CT representative who "failed to adequately supervise and monitor" the pole vaulting warm-ups and failed to inspect the area for safety. Wynne specifically cited a baseball batting cage that obstructed part of the pole vault runway, and he said the runway was only about 105 feet long instead of 131 feet.

Eileen Becker of Wallingford, the defendant's attorney, said, "We respectfully disagree with jury's decision on liability." She believes the jury made its decision because, "He's a likable young man and he suffered a catastrophic injury."

Becker also said pole vaulting is "an inherently dangerous sport," and added. "there was a problem with the plaintiff's methodology" during the warm-ups. According to Becker, White didn't do a proper test run

before attempting his vault.

Wynne replied that the defense experts who testified during the three-week trial, including Jan Johnson, who won a bronze medal in the pole vault for the U. S. during the 1972 Summer Olympics, use a different way to determine their starting points than White.

White said it has been “surreal” trying to mentally process the jury’s decision. Asked how he will use the damages money, White said, “I’ll just try to do everything I hoped I could do,” including moving into his own residence and attempting to make a living as a painter.

But White said the trial was a tough experience. “It was difficult re-living everything all over again, especially when I was on the witness stand, talking about ‘the day of’ and the damage, how it changed my life.”

Hume’s note: If you Google “brandon white + usatf” you will find leads to a number sites with numerous comments on this cautionary tale.

Trying to Say Nice Things

The 2009 NCAA Division I Track and Field Championship were held at John McDonnell Stadium on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, June 10-13. The two-year-old stadium is gorgeous, a totally new track and field venue in the heart of the athletic complex on campus. The stadium has a seating capacity of approximately 8,000 with half the spectator areas covered on both sides of the track with both ends of the field open. The competition venues are positioned in a well thought out scheme where the safety of the athletes and officials was a primary concern. The media and the VIP’s are well cared for in a tremendous glass-enclosed, air-conditioned press box on the main finish line. The VIP’s have luxury boxes with theater seating on the main straight away, above the grandstands. The remainder of the press building contains coaches’ offices and team locker rooms. It is an ideal track and field complex.

Mike Armstrong, the officials coordinator and host, did an outstanding job of communication with the officials making us feel welcome and arranging the dormitory rooms, the officials’ meals and hospitality. Officials were given two meals daily at the track and each official also received two polo shirts as well as a baseball hat. Ride sharing to and from the airport was also arranged by one of the officials. It should have been a great track meet as the organizing committee did an excellent job.

But it rained on each of the first three days of the competition to such an extent that the competition had to be suspended and the stadium evacuated, while athletes, coaches, officials and fans had to seek refuge in the basketball arena, the dormitories or hotels for up four hours at a time. The last race on the first day of

competition went off at 12:40 a.m. *the next morning*. Each of the ensuing days had delays of up to three hours plus, with time schedules move back accordingly, meaning extremely long days for everyone.

The athletes, the coaches, the press and officials were all shaking their heads in disgust by Saturday morning that the NCAA track and field committee had chosen to schedule the major championship of the sport in tornado alley where in early summer severe thunder storms are an almost-daily occurrence. The weather definitely hurt the quality performances of numerous athletes.

Question: is the NCAA being fair to the athletes, coaches, officials and fans by scheduling their championships in venues where weather conditions are going to be less than ideal? Bad weather of any type hurts our sport.

Isn’t this supposed to be the meet that brings out the best in the athletes? How could this have been the best competitive venue available for the athletes?

Please NCAA, come to the realization that there are places in USA that have better weather conditions during the early summer than the tornado belt of the lower mid-west.

Ten officials from the Pacific Association made the trip east to Fayetteville for the Championships. They were: **Bob Podkaminer**, competition director; **Sean Laughlin**, understudy to the competition director; **Tiffany Banks**, head starter; **Shirley Connors** and **Teddy Hayes**, horizontal jumps; **Rory Osborn**, a marshal; **Dennis Boyle**, pole vault; **Pat Randall** and **Mark Youmans**, combined events officials and **Dick Connors**, clerk.--RLC

PA Officials Come Through for Masters/GWI Two Views

On June 13, Pacific Association put on the PA Masters Championship and the Golden West Invitational meet on the same day, in the same facility, at Folsom California. Here are two letters *Turns and Distances* has received about the officiating.

...from the Officials Coordinator/Referee

I’m just back from five days at the remote cabin in the Sierra, attempting to restore the hair that I pulled out during the run up to the June 13 events.

In retrospect, I must say that all went incredibly well, due in large part to the efforts of the officials of our association who stepped up and performed magnificently. Special kudos need to go **John Pretto** and **Joe Assereto** who graciously agreed to show up for the 8:00 a.m. hammer throw and were still on the field working with **Johns Shirey** and **Lilygren** and **Wilson Soohoo** at the pole vault, which concluded after 9:00 p.m. Also, **John**

and **Deri Bowen**, who volunteered for that 8:00 a.m. hammer, and when I contacted John the day before the event to give a heads up on the entries, he had already completed plans for setting up flights among those entries.

Joe Harper took it upon himself to find a third starter when **Aaron Wiedkamp** canceled on Thursday. With the exception of one official sleeping through his alarm and showing up an hour late for weights and measures (**George Kleeman** arrived about 7:30 with his equipment and got weigh ins started), every single field event went off without a hitch or a complaint. Even with the late start, we were back on schedule for long throws at the completion of the javelin throws, with only the shot put running about fifteen minutes behind.

Golden West events were right on schedule, except where poorly set by meet management, e.g. pole vault events only two hours apart, and girls long jump scheduled to begin one hour after the triple jump. Running events appeared to be right on time all day--a credit to **Jeannie White, Edith Coleman** and **Mary** and **Rich Cabral**.

Two other things - First, I did not receive a single complaint from any one of our officials - and it is a joy to watch them do what they do best, even with long hours. And second, I can't count the number of thanks and compliments that I received from athletes (especially Masters), parents and coaches.

One final incident. As I left the field to turn in some results, I was met by a distraught mother who needed to find **John Mansoor** immediately. I inquired why, and she related that her daughter had placed third in the hurdles, but that she was erroneously placed sixth, and nobody seemed to be able to help her. I asked her to stand by, found **Jerry Colman**, Running Referee, who took her in tow. Later, I saw her again with her daughter in the athlete check-in area, and asked if the problem had been resolved. It had, through the efforts of Jerry, who apparently reviewed the camera results and determined that she had in fact been denied her place --because of a problem with hip numbers. She had been restored to third place, but, alas, no medal. I took the young lady back to the awards area, and presented the printout of results to the persons there, and she was given the bronze medal. I told her to put it on and go show her Mom. A happy kid from Missoula, Montana (and probably a happier Mom). That's why we do these meets.--John Murray

...from the Meet Director

I would like to echo John Murray's kudos to all the officials who helped on June 13. Putting two meets on the same day in the same venue is a unique concept and one that required us all to be a little flexible in how we are used to doing things. Thanks to all the officials' help I think it came off well and is something we can build on for the future.

For those who were involved in the planning process, you

know that originally we were thinking about three meets in this same venue over the course of two days as we considered having the Youth Championships here too. Call me crazy, and that's what I was calling myself in the last couple of months, but I'm not going to give up on that concept. I believe one of the ways to improve our sport is to combine ages to allow the young, the middle and the experienced to watch and support each other. We call ourselves a sport for life--from cradle to grave--and I think we need to put that concept into action.

For next year another possibility that we are working on is combining the Golden West meet with the California ("Modesto") Relays and/or the adidas Carson meet. If this comes to pass it would have the best high school kids in the country with the Olympic-level athletes--again having the young watching and learning and being supported by the more experienced. It would also be great for the fans!

While we do not know which mergers will ultimately work we do know that we are hosting the U.S. Masters Championships back to back with the Junior Olympic National Championships in July of 2010.

Go ahead- call me crazy. Thanks again for your support! --
John Mansoor, Executive Director, PA/USATF

A Youth-Air Force Connection

Medical/EMT services at the last two PA youth meets of the season—the Youth Championships, in Santa Rosa; and the PA Junior Olympics, in Livermore—were provided by the US Air Force, courtesy of a PA official from Fairfield, **Donna Broussard**.

Donna is a Senior Master Sergeant in the 349 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, stationed at Travis Air Force Base. ("We fly C-17s," she told *Turns and Distances*.) At Livermore, she and her colleagues did a steady business in cold, wet towels and rehydration for athletes (and officials, including your Chair), suffering in the 104-plus degree heat—as well as treating the usual dings and owies associated with any track meet.

In her track and field life, SMSgt Broussard, with husband Gregory (also a certified official), is a coach for Full Stride Track Club. Their son, Kieren, competes for Full Stride.

Addition/correction/clarification:

T&D has received word that **Luka Sekulich**, emeritus official memorialized in our last issue, was indeed the founder of Martinez, California's Brickyard Road Race. His friend and former student, **Mark Ross**, says, "He absolutely loved to share the running experience and his sense of joy and purpose in running, and I remember him for his hard work, sportsmanship and sense of humor." --bc



Donna Broussard

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