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Life Hosts Pre- Olympic Challenge



The eyes of the world may be focused on Atlanta's Olympic Games this summer, but Life College is fast becoming **the** place to be for track and field stars.

By the time the Olympic torch is carried into the Games' Opening Ceremonies in late July, more than 5,000 track and field athletes — from elementary to high school to international stars — will have been on the Life campus to compete and train.

They are being drawn here by the College's extensive facilities which include a five mile cross country running trail complete with sand dunes and a stadium equipped with a state-of-the-art Mondo track — identical to the record-setting track in Atlanta's Olympic Stadium. Put them all together and you have what one national running magazine called "the perfect running environment."

International athletes last year turned the campus into a multi-national bazaar leading up to Life's first International Challenge. This year Olympic athletes are again making Life their training ground in preparation for the Olympic Games in July and August. For example, nearly a third of the competitors in the U.S. Track and Field Trials held at the Olympic Stadium in June did their training at Life College.

In addition, perhaps as many as 300 to 400 track and field stars from around the world — as many as half of the athletes competing in the Olympic track and field events — will make the Second Challenge July 17 and 21 their final tune-up before the big event.

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Events such as the Cobb County Parks & Recreation Youth Track Meet, Girl Scouts Track Meet, Georgia Junior Olympics and others brought thousands of high school and junior athletes to the campus. American Olympic distance stars Todd Williams and Bob Kennedy selected Life as the site for their own Step Ahead Distance Camp which brought the best high school running athletes from around the country together for a week of intensive training.

Nearly 800 athletes from colleges across the nation joined in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) National Track and Field Championship in May. The event was also broadcast on national television for the first time.

Life won the right to host the NAIA event for two consecutive years. Spino says the College got the championships because of the quality of Life's Mondo track.

"Our track is the finest by a large margin that has ever been used for the (NAIA) national championships," said Spino.

Athletes at all levels seem to agree with that idea. The Irish National track and field team arrived on campus in

early April for a month-long stay. In May Norwegian and Swedish National teams trained at Life in preparation for the Grand Prix track meet that same month — the first official event at Atlanta's Olympic Stadium. Swiss, French, British, Italian, Portuguese and Australian athletes are also using Life's campus as a training center.

"I was in Atlanta last July looking for a place for the team to train when a friend put me in contact with Mike Spino," said Nick Davis, the Irish team coach and manager. Like thousands of other athletes Davis and the Irish found Life's facilities to be exactly what they were looking for as a training venue.

Life's facilities have also attracted a number of homegrown stars as well. Kevin Young, former UCLA record holder in the 400-meter hurdles and a Gold Medal Olympian in Barcelona, was also looking for a training venue when word of mouth drew him to Life.

"Last year after having some problems finding a track in Atlanta to train at, a reporter suggested that I contact Coach Spino at Life College," recalls Young. "He invited me to come see the

track. I had driven down Barclay Circle many times. When I walked up the hill, the track just opened up to me. It was really like no other track I have ever been on, including the best in Europe and Barcelona. It was truly impressive that a chiropractic college has one of the top track facilities in the world."

While these high performance stars have been making maximum use of Life's running trail, gym and other facilities, they have also had the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of chiropractic — a first for many of them.

"At the end of the day we're interested in anything that may help with athletic performance," remarked Davis. He says that many athletes — even those who know little about chiropractic — are "...reasonably open minded."

Life's clinic director Dr. John Dahlhauser is heading up a team of chiropractors who will be providing chiropractic care to the visiting athletes beginning with the Irish.

He said the doctors first administer a battery of tests including range of motion and orthopedic exams and take x-rays of each athlete. After they have been under chiropractic care for a few weeks each

athlete is reevaluated to see what progress they have made.

The College has two main goals in providing the visiting athletes with care, according to Dr. Dahlhauser. First, is to introduce them to the benefits of chiropractic care in terms of improved health and performance. The second is to gather results for a possible research study on the effects receiving adjustments has on high performance athletes.

"If we have a large enough group of athletes — say a hundred or more — we can do a scientific research study," said Dr. Dahlhauser. "We look at the effects of chiropractic care on their performance and changes in the test results we get."

Spino added that the College and the community, not just the athletes stand to benefit from this arrangement.

"All of this activity is part of Dr. Sid's vision for international athletics at Life College. This is a great opportunity for us at Life College to present chiropractic techniques to these athletes and for the community to meet and interact with international athletes representing a wide diversity of cultures," he said. ♦