

The Flight Report

Charlotte Flights Track and Field Club Newsletter - April 2015

Welcome

Welcome to all of our new and returning participants, parents and coaches of Charlotte Flights. As we embark on another season of long weekends and hot days, we are all so blessed to be given the strength and health to be able to fellowship with our Flights Family.

My goal this season is to prepare myself to allow the past to help shape our future. The Flights have been blessed with a great group of former student athletes who are now productive Citizens in our community. In order for the Flights to develop our future we need our past to help train our present.

Welcome and Thank You!

-Coach AJ



One Track Mind

Cotrane Penn, Ph.D.

“You have to free your mind to do things you wouldn’t think of doing.”
Carl Lewis

At least three times each week, the members of the Charlotte Flights participate in physical training that pushes them to, and sometimes beyond, their physical limits. They train day after day with the only immediate reward being the fact that they completed the workout that many would say was impossible. The grit that is required of track and field athletes prepares them for so much more than crossing the finish line.

Sports are often used as metaphors for life, so me saying that track parallels life is nothing earth shattering. But think about the workouts that the Flights kids complete each day- let’s take the hills workout for example. Those kids charge up that hill over and over. Who would choose to do that? It’s physically painful, the hill is intimidating, and undoubtedly with each repetition some are thinking that they might

not make it to the top this time, but they do. What you are seeing is not their physical strength, but their mental toughness; you are seeing their grit. Grit means never giving up, and I’ve yet to see a Flight walking up that hill. Sure, the kids will be better athletes as a result each challenging workout, but more importantly they are developing grit by pushing themselves beyond what seems possible, and discovering that it is.

“Never say can’t” was one of the many mantras of my high school track and field coach. As a matter of fact, we were disciplined if he ever heard us say “can’t” in relationship to any component of the practice workout. The inability to say “can’t” led me to a full academic scholarship to Hampton University and a walk-on spot on the university’s track team (always take the academic scholarship if you have to choose). That same grit helped me push myself to an earned doctorate in educational psychology from the University of California, Berkeley.

And it pushes me every Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday to take my son to track practice far from home for long hours even though I have so much on my plate. I can because can’t is not an option, even though it would be easier.

As famed Yankee Yogi Berra mused, sport is “...ninety-percent mental and the other half is physical.” I look forward to sharing thoughts about the mind game that is so critical to track and field in future editions of the Charlotte Flights newsletter.

Cotrane Penn is a first year Charlotte Flights parent. She works for CMS, leading the district’s school-based mental health and substance abuse programs. She participated in track and field up through college when she stopped because it was no longer fun. She left not because she could not do it, but instead because she would not do it if she did not love it.



“It’s Your Season”

Available at charlotteflights.org

Edited by: Derek Woods

Educational Edge

Visit the following sites for test prep information:

End of Course Test (EOCT)

<http://www.bibb.k12.ga.us/domain/2765>

Standardized Tests

<http://www.fastweb.com/back-to-school-2012/articles/top-standardized-test-taking-tips>

Preparing for Track Meets

In addition to the many hours of conditioning, nutrition plays a vital role in each athlete’s performance. As our track meets approach, we would like to share a few tips:

Drink plenty of fluids (Water/sports drink)
Bring a small cooler with fruit (Grapes, strawberries, watermelon, etc.)

Avoid bananas

Avoid sugary foods and greasy foods

Minimize time spent in the sun



Alumni Spotlight

Jesse Lowry, Jr.

Years with Flights: 1991 - 2000

Current affiliation with Flights: Parent, Volunteer, Supporter

Profession: Virtual System Engineer, Cisco Systems

CFTFC Memorable Moments: AAU Junior Olympics in New Orleans, Louisiana. I was not aware that it could get that hot outside!!!!!!

2000 AAU Junior Olympics at Disney in Orlando, Florida. That was my last track meet as a member of the team.

What you gained from your Flights Experience: The importance of giving back.

Advice for current Flights: Take advantage of the opportunity you have to meet other athletes and coaches from around the country. Utilize your gifts and talents to help you reach your goals. Do not take track and field for granted. You will be amazed of the opportunities you will have as a result.