

# Houston Elite Track & Field Club

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Head Coach

USA Track and Field  
Gulf Association  
November 2011

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## The Big Race: The Art of Preparation

The art of preparing for the biggest race of the year is a subjective topic. All of us have developed a method for physical and mental preparation when we walk onto the track for what we consider to be the most competitive meet of the year. To imagine that one of us holds an exclusive insight to success is arrogant, and perhaps even delusional.

So, prudence would lead a man not to write about this subject, but I have been seduced into it based on interaction with other sprinters. I was talking with a fellow athlete in Berea, Ohio at this year's USATF Nationals, when out of nowhere, he asked "Rick, how is it you always run well at a championship, and never seem to freak out? You always seem so calm about it." I gave him the best answer I had. It was an answer I repeated at dinner the next evening, to the same question, though phrased differently by the second athlete.

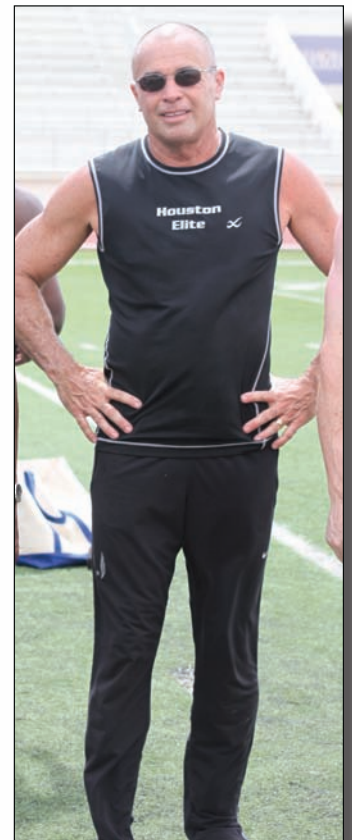
I could tell by the look on their faces, that the answer I gave them was bewildering. However, having coached baseball players for many years, I was accustomed to seeing that particular expression. The explanation I gave them, regarding preparation, was one I had been preaching to my baseball students for many years.

The art of preparation, as I define it, involves dipping our toes into the teachings of Taoism. If that feels spooky, then understand that our esteemed coach, Mr. Collins, lives and teaches in a world of Taoist wisdom. That should make it more comfortable for you. When Coach Collins tells us to "travel at the speed of thought," he is telling us, succinctly—though mysteriously—that we will perform to the level of our preparation. This is a key, and ancient, Taoist teaching.

I will describe this to you in a different way by advising you that the key to good performance in the biggest races is to understand and embrace acceptance. What does this mean? It is a teaching offered by the ancient Taoist, that when translated to our specific circumstance, means we have to fully accept that the result of our performance is always revealed by our preparation. When we fully accept that truth, our preparation can be more focused.

In my coaching days, I taught my baseball players that every ground ball is identical. When we treat each ground ball in practice as if it is just as important as any ground ball we

*...continued on page 2*



# Houston Elite Track and Field Club

Club Number: 0115 • Association: Gulf 25

We are an open club with no fees or dues. Each member will be responsible for their own travel and all meet entry fees. It is not a requirement that you purchase a uniform to run open events, but if you plan to participate on relays you must have a club top, whereas some meets require relay teams have the same team uniform top.

If you're not a member of the Gulf Association, your membership must go through the USATF national office. E-mail the following information to: [membership@usatf.org](mailto:membership@usatf.org). They must receive this information directly from the member requesting the transfer.

- 1) Current Membership Number:
- 2) Name:
- 3) Current Association:
- 4) Association to transfer to:
- 5) Reason for the transfer:
- 6) Date and meet you last competed for a club in a USA TF sanctioned event and the club you competed for.
- 7) Club (if any) you wish to be affiliated with in the new Association:

## Our Mission

We are part of the oldest sport known to mankind, we will always handle ourselves in a respectful manner, we will respect all athletes, officials and administrators.

The team nor any of its individual members are bigger than the sport itself. We will be humble and keep our actions and words in a kind and respectable manner at all times, as we carry the team's name—on and off the athletic arena. This has been a principle of our track club for over 25 years.

Our club is a family, we honor the relationships that have developed and will continue to develop over the years. We use the meets as reunions to fellowship with each other, as we compete in good spirit on the athletic field. The family support in our club is second-to-none. We welcome all athletes with open arms, and work to promote long and lasting relationships.

**Bill Collins**, Founder and Director  
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## The Big Race: The Art of Preparation...continued from page 1

will field over the course of our baseball career, then we come to a truth that no specific ground ball carries more importance than another. I taught them that when we practice the art of hitting baseballs, every swing of the bat carries identical importance to any other swing of the bat. Therefore, when we walk to home plate, we don't go there with the intent of proving what a great hitter we are—we go instead to conduct the art of hitting, which has been finely honed, day after day, in diligent practice. It doesn't matter if we are hitting in the 9th inning of the World Series, or if it is a pre-season practice game. Every "at bat" carries equal importance, and the art of hitting remains unchanged—no matter the circumstances.

If I transfer these concepts to sprint racing, it would mean we do not go into the blocks to prove what a great sprinter we are, or to prove that we can beat a specific individual, but we always get into the blocks to conduct the "art of sprinting" at a level commensurate with our ability and preparation.

If I continue to mold this thinking, then I come to a paradoxical understanding that a finals race at a World Championship is no different than a full effort race at a Rice All-Comers meet. Many might stop reading at this point and think "what a bunch of foolishness!" And you would think that way, precisely because you have been programmed to think that one race is more important than another. Re-training yourself to think that every practice and every race carries equal importance allows you to improve your performance at both meets, because you are giving full attention to every practice and every race. When you are unable to distinguish between the importance of the All-Comers race, and a World Championship race, you are arriving at a point of realization. You are calm before the biggest races of the year, paradoxically because you fail to recognize it as such—you are simply going to the blocks to conduct the art of sprinting. This is the value and the art of embracing, and making peace, with a paradox.

In this way, the national or world stage does not differ in any way from your local track meet. You already know your capabilities. All that is left is to execute, just like you have done so many times before!

That was my answer to my bewildered listeners. That's how I stay calm. I do not distinguish the "big" race from any other race—I believe the result is based on my successful conduction of the art of sprinting—and on my personal fitness level. I will conduct the art of sprinting well, only if I have honed the art of sprinting and commitment to my workouts, day after day, at all levels of competition.

The inexperienced athlete overreaches. They do not know their abilities and limitations because their practice has never revealed the truth. The experienced athlete knows exactly what is possible, as well as what is not. When you know these things, all that is left to do is run as you have prepared, execute your art, and enjoy the fruits of your labor.



—Richard Riddle

Email: [rick@riddle-goodnight.com](mailto:rick@riddle-goodnight.com)



**Richard Riddle:** Rick is a practicing architect who leads the lifestyle of an ageless athlete. Training in the ACALA program with the Houston Elite Track Club, he has won medals in State, National and World Championships. He just recently earned his first Gold in the 400 meters at the National level winning the 400 in the Masters USA Track and Field Championships in Berea, Ohio. He shares his passion for architecture and athletics along with his love of writing. Rick resides in Arlington, Texas with Kathleen, his wife of 39 years.



## The 400 Hurdles? George, Are You Crazy?

### GEORGE, ARE YOU CRAZY?

I did hear that a lot from friends when I told them I intended to run the event. But I felt I had solid reasons to try it. I understood why they asked the question though. After all, the 400 hurdles is considered by many to be the most grueling event in track and field. You start with the well-known physical demands of the flat 400, especially the agony of that final straightaway. Toss in ten hurdles, the last two or three of which you have to jump over with legs that now feel like cement



George Haywood—Medal winner at the Worlds

columns. Then add a distinct possibility that you never have to think about in other races, which is, you might run full speed into a 33 inch-high wooden barrier and trip and fall flat on your face. Then mix it all together and you have the 400 hurdles—tremendous potential for either satisfaction or embarrassment.

So let me ask you again, George—the 400 hurdles—are you crazy?

Well, maybe. But the challenge was irresistible. And the more I thought about it, the more convinced I became that the 400 hurdles offered me the best opportunity to win a medal in an individual event at the outdoor World Championships. I looked at the results of the last three Worlds, and a 1:05 would

have gotten you onto the winner's stand every time. In the flat 400, which I had been running for years, medals are very hard to come by. I blame my friends for that. Most of the time I am in the same age group as Bill Collins and Horace Grant. (Luckily I am five years younger than Charles Allie, or the congestion on the podium would be even worse). These three are among the nicest guys I have ever known. In addition, they have 11 individual masters world records among them. It is a huge honor and a privilege to run with them as relay teammates (we hold the world record in M55 4 x 400), but competing against them is an exercise in frustration. One reason I so enjoy having meals with them is that it allows me to see their faces, whereas when I race them I only see their backs. And when you throw Steve Peters or David Elderfield, the British champions, into the mix, gaining access to the podium at a World Championship for the flat 400 is almost mission impossible.

Thus the attraction to the 400 hurdles. I felt I could run a 1:05, and that it would earn me a medal. I had consistently been around 56.5 to 57.5 in the flat 400. A hurdler with perfect technique, like my hero Edwin Moses, the greatest of all time, can run the 400H about 6 to 9 % slower than his flat 400. That would put me around 1:01 or 1:02. But I was not a good enough hurdler to be able to expect a 9% differential. I did feel that I could get to a 15% differential, however, even with mediocre hurdling technique, which would get me to 1:05+ and something shiny dangling from my neck. So those were the goals: a 1:05+, and World Championship hardware.

Fortunately, I was not starting from scratch. I had run the 330 yard intermediate hurdles in high school. My coach was the legendary Brooks Johnson, who was then in his first coaching job, at St.

### 2011 WMA Prelims: M55 400 METER HURDLES HEAT 2

1 Haywood, George	M58 United States	1:06.94Q
2 Rapaccioni, Claudio	M56 Italy	1:09.44Q
3 Weerasinghe, Don	M57 Sri Lanka	1:11.61
4 Marriott, Wayne	M57 Australia	1:12.95
5 Galloway, Lamar	M57 United States	1:14.35
6 Jeffthas, Christo	M55 South Africa	1:22.38

Albans School in Washington DC in 1967. Brooks would go on to fame as the head coach at Stanford, U.S. Olympic coach in 1984, and USATF coach of



Brooks Johnson—USATF 2010 Coach of the Year

the year in 2010 (at age 76). I was very fortunate to learn early on from the best. Brooks and I have stayed in touch over the years. When I told him I intended to start hurdling again, he invited me to come down and train with his group in Orlando, Florida. He is coaching about a dozen world class sprinters and hurdlers there, including Olympic gold medalist Justin Gatlin and David Oliver (ranked #1 in the world in the 110 hurdles in 2010). Needless to say, I accepted Brooks' invitation.

The great thing about hurdling is that it's like riding a bicycle. The technique is difficult to master at first, but

once you learn it you don't lose it. I had not hurdled for forty years, but when I decided to take it up again two years ago at age 56, the technique was still there. Throw yourself at the hurdle, dive into it, run through the hurdle...there are various descriptions of the right way to think about running full speed and smoothly over a 33-inch high barrier. But the first time you run full speed at a hurdle, your instinct is to slow down as you approach it, or at least to leap high up over it to make sure you clear it without tripping. Think about it—over millions of years of evolution, we naturally developed an instinct to run full speed away from something, or maybe around something. The idea of running full speed directly at something goes against our natural instinct. These instincts are wrong for hurdling. Learning to overcome them takes a lot of practice and determination.

Fortunately I had put in the necessary amount of practice when I was young. I remember Brooks telling me in high school, "Haywood, if you want to learn to do this right, you need to do at least a hundred hurdles a day, and it's going to take a while". A 16 year-old body can do hundreds of hurdles a week without breaking down. I soon learned that a 56 year-old body (at least this one) could not even come close to that.

I often work out at Georgetown University's track. Shelia Burrell, fourth in the Athens Olympics in the heptathlon, was one of the coaches there. One day in 2009 I said "Hey Shelia, I'm thinking about doing the 400 hurdles this year—can you check out my form and tell me if I'm crazy?" She watched me do

a few hurdles, and pronounced my technique solid. I was very encouraged. She said I needed to work on my steps between hurdles, and my takeoff point. In my enthusiasm, I probably did 30 hurdles that day—very light work compared to what I was used to. Except the problem was, I was used to that 40 years ago. Mentally I was accustomed to the idea of doing hundreds of reps over the hurdles, but physically? The next day I was reminded that I was no longer 16, and that the pounding your lead leg and foot take when they go over the hurdle is considerable, especially if you sometimes land wrong because your technique is still rusty. I also have the disadvantage of being a right-leg-lead-only hurdler. When I was young I had never practiced going over with the left leg leading. So in my enthusiastic return to hurdling after a forty year layoff, all the pounding was concentrated on the right side. I developed a calf injury which I could not shake the rest of the summer. The dream was dead, or at least deferred until the next season. And I couldn't run the flat 400 either, so the season was truly wrecked. I thought about what a fellow masters runner once told me: "It's harder to make it to the starting line than it is to make it to the finish line."

The next season, 2010, I vowed to run smarter. I would limit myself to 12 hurdles in a day, and never hurdle two days in a row. I stuck with this plan, and succeeded in making it to the starting line. It was a local meet. I was nervous—this would be the first time in my life I

### 2011 WMA Finals: M55 400 METER HURDLES

1	Cipriani, Alessandro	M55 Italy	1:03.94
2	Haywood, George	M58 United States	1:05.13
3	Cummings, Steve	M55 United States	1:06.40
4	Rapaccioni, Claudio	M56 Italy	1:08.53
5	Easley, Ricky	M57 United States	1:08.84
6	Meier, Albert	M58 Switzerland	1:09.21
7	Cheadle, Bill	M58 United States	1:09.99
8	Mcnamee, John	M58 United States	1:11.07

had ever tried to run 400 meters over hurdles, and the first hurdle race of any kind I had run in 40 years. My heart was pounding hard. It always does that before a 400 race, in anticipation of the imminent effort, pain, and exhaustion. And this race we would have an added feature—all of the above, plus ten barriers to clear, and lots of doubts to run through.

My clearest memories from that maiden 400H voyage are of how sloppy my technique was over the last four hurdles, and how much it hurt in the final straightaway. I also remember how high I popped up in clearing the last few hurdles. Very amateurish, I remember thinking even as I did it. My time was 1:08.42. Not what I had hoped for, but at least I finished without hitting any hurdles. It was about 11 seconds slower than I could do a flat 400. I had hoped for a differential of closer to 9 seconds (about 16%). Oh well, it's only my first try, I thought, but I can see that this hurdling business is going to be even tougher than I expected. I was pleased that although my time was not what I had hoped for, I was ranked #2 in the USA at that point in the season. (I finished with a #5 ranking for 2010).

*Horace Grant, Charles Allie, George Haywood and Toney Mulhollan-Gold Medal winners in the 4 x 400 relay, 2009 Indoor Masters Championship in Baltimore, Maryland.*







400 Hurdle Finals—Picture L to R: John McNamee, Rick Easley, Claudio Rapaccioni, Alessandro Cipriani, George Haywood and Steve Cummings

I began plotting how to take three seconds off my time. I was pretty sure that a 1:05+ would win Nationals. Injury had kept me from going to Worlds in Lahti, Finland in 2009, but a gold medal at 2010 Nationals would be a great consolation. Unfortunately, my high hopes were dashed once again. Despite sticking to my 12 hurdles a day limit, I developed plantar fasciitis. It was in the right heel of course, the one I land on coming off the hurdle. Treatment, therapy, rest, all to no avail. I had to cancel the trip to Sacramento for 2010 Nationals, which was very disheartening, even depressing. *“It’s harder to make it to the starting line than it is to make it to the finish line.”*

That became my mantra for 2011. The World Championships were scheduled for Sacramento. Another chance to achieve those elusive, injury-postponed goals. In order to have any chance at success, I HAVE TO MAKE IT TO THE STARTING LINE!

I was determined to focus on injury prevention. I bought a measuring wheel so I could put some hurdles on soft grass and mark off the 45 meters to the first hurdle, and 35 meters in between hurdles. Soft grass was a much better surface for 58 year old feet and ankles and calves. Brooks gave me a tip—put a hurdle at the edge of the sandy landing pit for the long

jump. Now you can practice running at it full speed and land safely. **MAKE IT TO THE STARTING LINE.**

I entered the same local meet as the year before, but I decided to approach the race differently this time. All my caution in practice would be for naught if I injured myself in the adrenaline-fueled all-out effort of a race, with the pounding that could give to the previously coddled joints and muscles. Should I risk it? But I needed to get more experience in the 400 meter hurdles. I had only done it once in my life, the previous year—how could I go to the Worlds without getting some more racing experience under my belt? Compromise: I’ll do the race but I’ll wear my fat, cushiony jogging shoes, the ones with the thick heels that would absorb the blow if I landed wrong coming off the hurdle. Spikes are faster, but they have no cushion in the heel. You are not supposed to land on your heel, but it can happen. One false step in flying over the hurdle might revive the plantar fasciitis—and I didn’t want to deal with that again.

So I put on the clunky shoes and did a few practice runs over the hurdles just before the race. But that presented another problem. Wearing heavier shoes that had less traction threw off my steps, and steps are key to hurdling. There are two aspects to hurdling technique: how

you go over the hurdle, and how you run between the hurdles. The two aspects are separate, but interrelated. To go over the hurdle with maximum speed and efficiency, you have to take off from the right distance in front of the hurdle, about six feet in my case. If your steps are off, you will approach the hurdle and find you are too far away, or too close. In either case you have about one second, while running as fast as you can, to adjust so that you can take off at your optimal takeoff point. The adjustment process usually involves stutter-stepping, which destroys your speed and rhythm. So keeping the same stride length is very important in hurdling. For example, the distance to the first hurdle is 45 meters. I normally take 23 steps. But if something affects your steps by just 2% while you run those 45 meters, you will miss your takeoff point by a full 3 feet—a disaster.

The clunky shoes had at least a 2% effect, and I could feel that right away. I had to change my race plan. I would take 25 steps to the first hurdle, and 19 steps between hurdles instead of my usual 17. I executed the plan with some difficulty, but finished in 1:08.64. Given the shoes and the short steps, I was not unhappy to run basically the same time as the year before when I ran in spikes, but I knew I had to go much faster at Worlds.

#### 2011 W.M.A. CHAMPIONSHIPS SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Well, I’m here. The qualifying heats of the 400 hurdles. I made it to the starting line. This is what I trained for—two years of hard practice, strategizing,

*“The idea of running full speed directly at something goes against our natural instinct. These instincts are wrong for hurdling. Learning to overcome them takes a lot of practice and determination.”*





400 Hurdle Finals—Picture L to R: Steve Cummings, George Haywood, (Cipriani-Lane 5), Claudio Rapaccioni, Rick Easley and John McNamee

fighting doubts, battling injuries. But I'm at the starting line, which means I have a chance. I have my spikes on—running fast is the objective now. I do have some gel inserts in the heels though—injury prevention is not totally forgotten. I practice some starts and calibrate my steps over a couple of hurdles. I feel good, and my steps are perfect. This bodes well, I think. The gun goes off and I focus on smoothness and rhythm. It works. I have a big lead entering the final straightaway, so I relax to save for the final. Happiness—a 1:06.94, a personal best, the fastest qualifying time, and it felt easy. I know I can go faster in the final, and I know I will have to.

Learning about your competitors in masters track is not difficult. Most of them have been running for years, and a bit of research on the web turns up lots of data. Two of my fellow Americans, Steve Cummings and Ricky Easley, had been consistent 400 hurdlers for years, and seemed likely to present a tough challenge. But one competitor particularly stood out. Alessandro Cipriani from Italy had run 1:01.91, 1:01.99, and 1:01.95 in 2007, 2008 and 2009 respectively. He was remarkably consistent, very fast, and had just turned 55. I figured him to be the favorite. He was the second-fastest qualifier for the finals, in 1:06.99. One thing I had noted from seeing his results over the years was that he usually dropped about three seconds from the heats to the finals. So I

was not overly confident about the final just because I was the fastest qualifier.

### THE FINALS

The hardest part is over. I made it to the starting line. Now I just have to make it over ten hurdles while running as fast as I can. No more worrying about injuries, no more asking myself whether I was crazy to run this event, no time left for doubts. I fought through an awful lot to get to this starting line, and right now I only have 400 meters to go. The work is done. It is time to have some fun.

What happens after the gun sounds is a blur. I enjoy the smoothness I feel through the first five hurdles, flying down the backstretch faster than I ever have. I hear someone shouting out the split time as we go through the 200 turn—30 seconds. We are out fast, maybe too fast. I say to myself, “he who best fights fatigue from here on will win.” It is so damn hard to keep your steps while running the turn! As my legs start to get heavy, I have to switch to 19 steps—I am tiring and I know I cannot reach the next takeoff point in 17 steps. I can see Cipriani pulling away on my right in lane 5. Not surprising—the research was right. But Steve Cummings on my left in lane 3 is passing me. He is running a strong race, better than I expected. “Don’t panic”, I tell myself, “From here on in is where this race is decided.” I push as hard as I possibly can while trying to maintain form. We are entering the final straightaway—90

meters and two hurdles to go. I’ve got some gas left in my tank. I start to gain on Cummings, and then pass him. Attack the hurdle! ... but do not let it trip you. Now one hurdle to go. Cipriani is way ahead, maybe 12 meters. Lots of adrenaline. Attack! I clear the last barrier cleanly. 40 more meters to go. I’m gaining on Cipriani...but his lead is too large. Now it’s over—I made it to the finish line. I look up at the scoreboard: Cipriani 1:03.94...Haywood 1:05.13... Cummings 1:06.40.

Cipriani did what I thought he would, running three seconds faster than he did in the heats. But I accomplished what I thought I could do, and, standing there, hunched over gasping for oxygen as the other runners cross the line, I feel tremendously happy and proud. It was a two year journey, but I finally made it to the starting line, and 400 furious meters later, I made it to the finish line. I straighten up, gazing at the scoreboard, making sure I hadn’t misread it in my total exhaustion. The gaze confirms the first glance—I am the silver medalist in the 400 meter hurdles at the 2011 W.M.A. Championships. I congratulate Cipriani first, then my other competitors. The feeling as we exchange handshakes and hugs is actually more camaraderie than competition. We just put our 55 to 59 year old bodies through the toughest test in track and we all feel like we aced the final exam.



—George Haywood

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## The Sprinter's Journey to Success, Pt. 2

Houston Elite Head Coach, Bill Collins



We all know that track and field sprinters are like thoroughbreds, high-spirited, high-strung, and easily spooked. Because of this, the importance of training cannot be overstated. The training has to be both mental and physical. It is imperative that we put the sprinter in a variety of circumstances during their training phase. Not only can lane assignments challenge a sprinter but also everything on the following list:

- Rain
- Head winds
- Tail winds
- Too cold
- Too hot
- Different makes of blocks
- Who is in the race
- Who is not in the race
- Inadequate warm-up time
- Too much warm-up time
- Too much sleep the night before
- Not enough sleep the night before
- Pre-race meal

- Friends/family in the stands
- How we feel, our mood
- New/Old/favorite shoes/spikes

As you can see, just about everything you can think of can impact the mind of a sprinter. If you let them, an athlete can think themselves right out of the race. During the training phase for sprinters we need to teach them that circumstances are rarely perfect. Circumstances are beyond our control so we must teach athletes to be “in control.”

Weather conditions are always high on the list of challenges for sprinters. If there is no lightning, it's a great idea to do an occasional training workout in the rain. For if you run long enough, you will have meets impacted by rain. Truth be told, sprinters have seen more falls and slips on dry tracks than they've seen on wet ones. Because of the rain, we naturally run with caution and pay closer attention to our foot work. So don't be afraid to do workouts in all types of weather. Of course, if your training in Texas it would be wise to avoid the hottest part of the day when it's 120 degrees, or at least make them very short workouts.

Another common challenge for sprinters is the final day before a meet. What time we retire the night before is important, even though it seems like many sprinters get little or no sleep the night before a race. What time we go to bed, what time we get up, can both impact our preparation. One mental habit we must ingrain is the principle that once we walk onto the track, everything that has happened yesterday is forgotten. The runner must come into the stadium transformed—into a “Sprinter.”

Mental preparation is key and we need to use our training programs to encounter all the circumstances we face on race day. A sprinter's daily practices become habits and these habits will be reflected on race day.

### CONFIDENCE IN TRAINING

A sprinter who is training for the short sprints (55, 100, 200 and 400) have to feel confident that they have done the proper training for the races they are attempting. With doubts in their mind, it will influence how they perform. There is nothing worse than having an athlete doubt the workouts and training methods of the coach. If this is happening, the coach and athlete must sit down and address the reservations and see if the doubts can be dispelled.

Sprinting is tough enough without putting any additional pressures on the relationship of coach and athlete. There must be a strong bond of trust that will enable the sprinter to commit themselves fully to the workouts and enable them to reach peak performance in training and on race day.

As a bond of trust is built between coach and athlete, it then becomes important to stay consistent during training and reviewing often the goals of the workouts and what they should be producing in the athlete. In a world with so many distractions it's important to keep our eyes on the prize.

### GUIDELINES FOR SPEED ENHANCEMENT

Can a person increase their speed? Yes! Speed is obviously important in track and field, but it has also become the focus in most sports—football, baseball, basketball and even soccer. The basics for increasing speed in all sports are the same. Here are broad basic 5:

1. First, you must build endurance.
2. Build on endurance training and apply conditioning work.
3. Once the conditioning phase is completed, you introduce speed.
4. The speed work will incorporate several levels of speed training.
5. From speed, we can now focus on quickness and reaction time.

...more to come

—Bill Collins

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## Running in the City of Sandstone



The city of Berea, Ohio (12 miles south of Cleveland) was established in 1836. Its superior sandstone which surfaces in the area became known around the world as “Berea Stone.” The Houston Elite athletes, though small in number, were etching their performances in stone at Baldwin Wallace College track.

The most notable accomplishment was by Robert Whilden who set a new American Record in the 100 Meters (75 age group) of 13.67 (In October, Robert broke his own American record, running the 100 meters in 13.55 [only .01 off the World Record]). Not far behind was Rick Riddle who won his first national championship in the 400 meters. To top it off, Charles Allie swept the short sprints, 100m, 200m, and 400m in the 60 age group. Robert Lida duplicated that performance by also winning Gold in the three short sprints (70-74 age group).

New HE athlete, Patrick Detscher ran with Rick Riddle, Robert Cozens and Charlies Allie as they won the 4 x 100 meter relay (50-59 age group). That is astounding considering the team included a 62 and 75 year old runner!



### 100 Meters

Place	Name	Group	Time
#3	Richard Riddle	M55	12.59
#1	Charles Allie	M60	12.24
#1	Robert Lida	M70	13.79
#1	Robert Whilden	M75	13.67*
#2	Robert Cozens	M75	15.05

\* New American Record

### 200 Meters

Place	Name	Group	Time
#6	Patrick Detscher	M50	27.33
#2	Richard Riddle	M55	25.67
#1	Charles Allie	M60	24.95
#1	Robert Lida	M70	27.38
#1	Robert Cozens	M75	30.84

### 400 Meters

Place	Name	Group	Time
#1	Richard Riddle	M55	57.96
#1	Charles Allie	M60	56.05
#1	Robert Lida	M70	1:03.97
#1	Robert Cozens	M75	1:10.32



Charles Allie garnered all the Gold as he swept the short sprints at the Masters Outdoor Championships at George Finnie Stadium in Berea, Ohio.

### 4 x 100 Meter Relays

#### 50-59 Age Group

#1	Patrick Detscher	M50	
	Richard Riddle	M55	
	Robert Cozens	M75	
	Charles Allie	M60	51.71

## Southwest Region Championship

July 23, 2011



The city of Bastrop, Texas was the host for the SW Regional Masters Track and Field Championship. The heat was once again a big factor as the summer heatwave was still scorching. Just days after the meet, Bastrop would be the epicenter for the fires that would rage in the Texas hill country. Only three athletes from HE attended as the nationals were only a week away, but each brought home a Gold for their efforts.



### 100 Meters

Place	Name	Group	Time
#1	Brenda Cook	W55	14.94
#1	Toney Mulhollan	M50	12.84

### 200 Meters

#2	Toney Mulhollan	M50	26.61
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### 400 Meters

#2	Toney Mulhollan	M50	58.90
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### 800 Meters

#1	Horace Grant	M55	2:08.71
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Horace Grant continued his string of excellent performances, easily winning the 800 in 2:08.71.



# HOUSTON ELITE: 2011 Club First



Bill Collins, Ron Johnson, Vance Jacobson and Charles Allie—4x100 at the 2011 Penn Relays

## FIRST PENN RELAY GOLD:

My first-ever Penn Relays. I ran the 4x100 relay as the 1st leg, passing to Charles Allie, then Ron Johnson, and Bill Collins anchored. Our 48.94 gives us the Club record and one of the top 5 times ever in the world. Penn Relays was an amazing experience.

I flew from Seattle to Washington DC. I spent the night at the “Hotel Haywood” where George introduced me to the superman breakfast on race morning. Running with the Houston Elite, seeing the crowd, and running the relay was the experience of a lifetime!

—Vance Jacobson

## DISQUALIFIED: A FIRST

Bobby Whilden was disqualified for a false start in the 100 meters at the World Masters in Sacramento. He was disqualified for the first time in his track career. Despite this setback, Bobby would go on to set a new American record in the following months.



## FAMILY FIRST:

For the first time, running track meets came second to taking extra time with my dad as he turned 88, and continues to fight Alzheimers. Somehow running 400 intervals did not seem as important. I'm looking forward to 2012 and getting back on the track.

—Alex Martinez



Wayne Bennett won his first Gold Medal in an indoor national event (Masters Championship in Albuquerque, New Mexico) in the 4 x 200 relays; running with Gary Sims, Robert Lida, and Mack Stewart.



Sarah Zentack (resting between relays) ran her first hurdles since graduating St. Lawrence University.

## INJURY FIRST:

Michael W. Moore, for the first time in his Track and Field career, ruptured his left hamstring during last track season. He is now back training and is looking forward to the 2012 season and improving on his 400m time of 53.8.



Porter Robinson (President of Gulf Association) presenting USATF achievement award to Bill Collins for his many years of service to USA Track and Field—September 17, 2011.



Patrick Detscher holds his first Gold Medal—won in the 4x100 relay at the Outdoor Nationals.

## WORLD MEDAL FIRST:

Bill Kaspari won his first Gold (4 x 100 relay) and Silver medals (4 x 400 relay) in a World Championship at Sacramento this year. It was particularly satisfying because he was unable to train because of a flare up of gout. Two days before the meet, his doc called and told him he could run on. Despite little training, he made it to the finals of the 200 and 400, and won medals in the relays!



## ENDURANCE FIRST:

Jean Vander Cruyssen won the Gold Medal in her first Warrior Dash competition in Conroe, Texas this year. Jean won the 65 age group, but her time was even faster than the 60 age group. This endurance event includes runs through mud, water, over fire and against the wind. There was 17 different events in a 3 mile run. She says it was a challenge and you had to push yourself because you were covered with mud and did things that you had never practiced, such as jumping over fire, climbing and much more.



# HOUSTON ELITE: Robert Cozens: Athlete of the Fall Season-2011



Running on black cinders at Olympic Park: Victoria vs New South Wales, Australia. 800 Meters, 1:51.1, (1960).



Victoria, Australia: 4 x 2 miles relay, East Melbourne Harriers, Lake Windermere, Ballarat (1958).

## Robert Cozens

**Birthdate:** June 2, 1936

**Place:** Dandenong, Australia

**High School/College:** Malvern Grammar, Australia / University of Houston (64)

**Present Age Group:** (75-79)

**Events:** Track-100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m. Road-5K, and 10K

### Career Highlights:

Represented Australia:

1959: Australia v's New Zealand. 800m-1:51.2

1960: National Championships, Perth WA. 800m-1:50.1

1960: Victorian Champion (Australia). 800m-1:49.3

1960-1964: Ran for University of Houston. UH Record 880 yds-1:50.3

### Masters Track and Field

1979: National Indoor Championships, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. 1st-1000 yds; 2nd-300yds; 3rd-600 yds.

1986: Texas Senior Games, Temple, Texas. (50-54) 2nd-400m-61.2

1987: World Veterans Games, Melbourne, Australia. (50-54) 2nd-4x400m

1989: World Veterans Championships, Eugene, Oregon. (50-54) 3rd-4x400m

1990: GAC Age Championships. (50-54) 1st-400-57.4; 1st-200m-26.02

1991: Hill Country Classic, Mason, Texas. (55-59) 1st-200m-25.79 (meet record); 1st-400m-57.8 (meet Record)

1991: National Masters Outdoor Championship, Naperville, IL. (50-59) 1st-4x400

1993: Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (55-59) 1st-200m-26.02; 2nd-400m-59.1

1993: Senior Olympics, San Antonio, Texas. (55-59) 1st-800m-2:34;

1st-200m-25.75; 1st-400m-58.8

1996: Houston Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (60-64) 1st-400m-65; 1st-200m-25.2

1996: Texas Senior Games, Temple, Texas. (60-64) 1st-200m-26.7

1997: Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (60-64) 1st-400m-62.5; 2nd-200m-27.0; 2nd-100m-13.5

1997: National Masters Outdoor Championship, San Jose, California. (60-64) 1st-400m-60.06

1998: Houston Senior Olympics, Texas. (60-64) 1st-200m-27.6; 2nd-100m-13.8

2000: Texas Masters Championships, Dallas, Texas. (60-64) 1st-800m-2:32

2000: Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (60-64) 2nd-200m-27.05; 2nd-400m-63.3; 2nd-800m-2:35

2001: Houston Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (55-54) 1st-1500m-5:50; 2nd-400m-69.01

2003: Masters Indoor Championships, Boston, Mass. (65-67) 3rd-400m-64.67; 3rd-800m-2:42.6

2003: National Masters Outdoor Championship, Eugene, Oregon. 2nd-400m-65.9; 2nd-4x100-53.5

2004: National Masters Outdoor Championship, Decatur, Illinois. 1st-4x100 (60-69)-55.51

2005: Masters Indoor Championships, Boise, Iowa. (60-69) 2nd-4x400m-4:22

2005: Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas. (60-65) 1st-100m-13.9; 1st-200m-29.02; 1st-800m-3:03

2006: Senior Olympics, Austin, Texas. (70-74) 1st-400m-66.3; 1st-200m-27.6

2006: Brazos Valley Senior Games, Texas. (70-74) 1st-400-67.00; 1st-200-28.2; 1st-800m-3:02

2006: National Masters Outdoor Championships, Charlotte, North Carolina (70-74) 1st-400m-64.8; 1st-200m-28.4; 1st-4x400m-4:20.6

2007: Masters Indoor Championships, Boston, Mass. 1st-4x400m-4:37.28 (World Record)

2007: National Senior Olympics, Louisville, Kentucky. 1st-4x400m; 3rd-400-67.2; 3rd-200-27.1

2007: World Masters Championships, Riccione, Italy. 2nd-4x400-4:38.3; 2nd-4x100-54.45

2008: Senior Olympics, Houston, Texas (70-74) 1st-200m-30.08; 3rd-100m-14.02

2009: Masters World Championships, Lahti, Finland. Finalist 400m, 2nd-4x400m, 3rd-4x100m

2009: Master's World Games, Sydney Australia. (70-74) 1st-200m-29.2; 3rd-400m-68.3

2010: Masters Regional Championships, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. 1st-400-73.1; 1st-200m-32.2

2010: Masters Indoor Championships, Boston Mass. (70-74) 3rd 400-69.77; 3rd-200m-30.00

2011: Masters Indoor Championships, Albuquerque, NM. (70-74) 1st-4x400-4:50.3 (World Record)

2011: National Senior Games, Houston, Texas (75-79) 2nd-200m-30.7; 1st-4x100m-60.00

2011: World Master Championships, Sacramento, California. (75-79) 2nd-100m-14.2; 2nd-200-29.6; 2nd-400m-69.4; 1st-4x100; 2nd-4x400

2011: National Masters Outdoor Championships, Berea, Ohio. (75-79) 1st-400m-1:10.2; 2nd-100m-15.02; 1st-200m-30.84; 1st-4x100m (50-59)-51.74; 1st-4x400m-5:11.38

## Robert Cozens (75-79 age group)

Gold in the 200 Meters at the Indoor Masters Track and Field Championship (Berea, Ohio)

Gold in the 400 Meters at the Indoor Masters Track and Field Championship (Berea, Ohio)

Silver in the 100 Meters at the Indoor Masters Track and Field Championship (Berea, Ohio)





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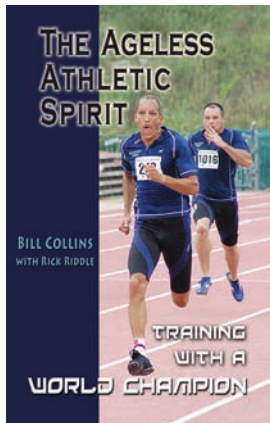
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