

Sue Humphrey Biography

Graduated from Arizona State University, BA & MA in Education

Currently, works as an assistant principal at Gus Garcia Middle School in Austin

Started the women's track & field program at Arizona State University in 1975, coached at ASU from 1975-1981

Named AIAW Intermountain Regional Coach of the Year, ASU won Regional team titles in 1977 & 1978, finished 4th at AIAW Nationals in 1979

Assistant women's track & field coach at California State University, Long Beach from 1982-1984

Assistant women's track & field coach at The University of Texas from 1984-1989; coached NCAA National Champions in the High Jump, Long Jump & Triple Jump--only female coach to achieve this triple; Texas team won 4 NCAA titles during her stay at UT including the Triple Crown in 1986

Volunteer assistant men's track & field coach at The University of Texas from 1993-1995, only female coach to ever serve on a men's staff at Texas

Coached Charles Austin to an Olympic Gold Medal in the 1996 Olympic High Jump

Has coached 3 women over 6'6 and 3 men over 7'4 in the high jump

Served on three USA Track & Field Olympic staffs 1992, 1996 and Head Women's Coach in 2004; Head USA Pan Am Games Coach, USA World Cup Coach

Named the NIKE Coach of the Year in 1998, only female coach to win this honor

Has coached over 225 AIAW/NCAA All-Americans in her career

Served as USA Track & Field Women's Development Chairman

Currently serving as National Women's Chairman for USA Track & Field and Vice President of the South Texas Association of USA Track & Field

Currently Volunteer Coach for The University of Texas Women's Track & Field Team for vertical jumps

Scott Simmons Bio

Scott Simmons is in his 3rd year as the head coach at Queens University of Charlotte's. In that short time he has coached four NCAA individual national champions. Simmons is no stranger to national collegiate success. He joined the Royals after three years at Virginia Intermont College where he led the men's team to three back-to-back-to-back NAIA national cross-country championship titles (2004-2006) right on the heels of two national team titles while at Minot State University in Minot, N.D. in 2002 and 2003.

Simmons earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of South Alabama in 1990 and a master's of sport coaching degree from the United States Sports Academy in 1992. He has earned USATF Coaching Education Certifications at Levels I, II and III.

Simmons list of achievements during his 19-year coaching career is impressive. Simmons is a two-time USA National Team Leader, has been honored with six NAIA National Coach of the Year Awards and coached numerous individuals to US national titles and onto US National teams including Fernando Cabada, who broke the American record for 25k while a collegian and ran 2:12 for the marathon, the seventh fastest debut by an American.

Simmons leads the American Distance Project, a group of professional athletes that include Justin Young, who qualified for the 2009 World Championships in the marathon with a 2:13 PR in 2008 ranking him #2 in the US; Fasil Bizuneh, who qualified for the US Olympic Trials with a 27:50.48 10k, the fifth fastest time by an American in 2008 and who finished 2nd at the US Half Marathon in 2007 beating Olympic silver medalist Meb Keflizighi; and 42-year old Stephanie Herbst Lucke who ran within 5-seconds of the American master's record for 10k with her 32:55 a year ago.

In addition to serving as a coach, Simmons is a nationally recognized speaker, serving as a guest lecturer at seminars throughout the United States, including Georgia, Ohio, North Carolina, New Mexico, Iowa and Nevada. Simmons has penned a handful of books on the sport as well, including "Take the Lead: A Revolutionary Approach to Coaching Cross Country" and USA Track & Field's "Post Collegiate Distance Runners' Survival Guide."

Roy D. Willits Jr. and Jennifer Croissant Bio

Backyard vaulting: Tucson Pole Pilots owe success to homemade, backyard track course

By Christopher Wuensch, CWuensch@ExplorerNews.com

July 26, 2006 - The line of teens and adults carrying 12 and 13-foot poles stretched down the driveway and spilled out onto Edison Street, only to disappear one by one like planes taxiing on a runway.

Every so often, a lucky neighbor passing by on an afternoon walk could even catch the take-off as a spindly body arcs higher than the roof and toward the heavens.

The rubberized runway that used to be a driveway for Roy D. Willits Jr. and his wife Jennifer Croissant leads into a backyard that only a pole-vaulter could dream up. There, with the sound of the traffic of Grant Road as a backdrop, is the headquarters of the Tucson Pole Pilots, the premier pole-vaulting club in Southern Arizona.

"Every high school pole-vaulter is like, 'this is the house I wanted when I grew up,' said Croissant, sitting in a chair next to the one of the couple's two vault pits.

The house features two regulation-sized pole vault pits, trampoline, rings, ropes and a high bar and is training headquarters for more than 30 vaulters ages 14 through 60.

"We're pole vault geeks; we love it," said Willits, founder of the Tucson Pole Pilots. "That's why we do it."

Willits founded the program eight years ago when he began training two-time Olympian and Amphitheater High School alum Dominic Johnson. Today, the club features high school athletes from Canyon Del Oro, Ironwood Ridge, Mountain View, Amphi, Rincon-University, Sabino, Sahuaro and Sunnyside high schools.

Willits is no stranger to success. In 1973 he set the Tucson city pole-vault record, which he topped the next year when he became the first Tucson vaulter to clear 15 feet. The record held until 1993 when Johnson broke it.

Norris Thomas Bio:

Norris Thomas...Head Boys and Girls Track and Cross Country Coach Hamilton High School. Attended Milwaukee South Division High School. Won 3 consecutive team State Championships in high school and Indoor All-American Honors Track and Field News Magazine as a hurdler senior year. Graduated from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse earning All-American honors in Track and Football along with NCAA Div. III National Championships in both sports. Tried out with New York Football Giants and played two years in the Canadian Football League before beginning coaching career at Hopkins High School in Minnetonka, MN.

At Mountain Pointe, won a State Title as an assistant coach in track in 2002 and runner-up in 2003. Coached PJ Kinsale in the sprints, a multi-event State Champion in the 100,200, 400, and 4 x400 relay.

Entering his third year as head coach at Hamilton has led the boys team to back to back 4th place finishes and the girls a 6th place finish(highest in school history). Boys and Girls 4 x100 relay teams were both 2nd at State last year. Ryan Milus 10.33 100m State Record and 2 year 100m Champion. Milus also clocked a 21.06 in the 200m at Great Southwest Invitational along with a state title.