

# BLACK HISTORY: OLYMPIANS



## JACQUELINE JOYNER-KERSEE

Born March 3, 1962, in East St. Louis, Ill.

1984 silver medal: heptathlon (6,385 points)

1988 gold medal: heptathlon (7,291 points/Olympic record/world record)

1988 gold medal: long jump (24 feet, 3 inches Olympic record)

1992 gold medal: heptathlon (7,044 points)

1992 bronze medal: long jump (23 feet, 2 inches)

Jackie Joyner-Kersee graduated from Lincoln High School in East St. Louis and from UCLA, where she played basketball under the sponsorship of the World Athletic Club.

In 1984 Joyner-Kersee set an American record of 6,520 points when she won the heptathlon at the U.S. Olympic trials. In the 1988 trials she scored 7,215 points in the heptathlon for her third world record since 1986. She won the Olympic heptathlon with

7,291 points, a world record that beat the old record - her own - by 76 points. Her performance in the individual events were: 100-meter hurdles (12.69); high jump (6-11); shot put (51-10); 200 meters (21.56, world record); 100 meters (10.54, Olympic record); 800 meters (2 minutes, 8.51 seconds, career best); and the long jump (24 feet, 3.5 inches, Olympic record - the old Olympic record was her own, 23-10). Joyner-Kersee was the first U.S. woman to win the Olympic long jump and the first athlete in 64 years to win both a multi-event competition and an individual event in one Olympics.

Joyner-Kersee was called the greatest athlete in high school history. In volleyball she was captain of her team and an All-Metro selection. In track she was the state champion in the 400 meters and long jump. She set a long jump record of 22-4. In basketball, she averaged 21 points and 14 rebounds per game. She was a three-time all-state selection and a two-

time high school All-American. In college she was TAC and NCAA heptathlon champion in 1982. prior to the 1984 Olympics she had a second-best ever pint total by an American. Jackie's sprint coach, Bob Kersee (whom she married in January 1986), calls her "the best woman athlete I've ever been associated with" (Los Angeles Times).

Joyner-Kersee scores consistently well in all the running and jumping events. Winning four individual events, she contributed 53.5 points as the UCLA Bruins claimed the NCAA title in 1985, scoring 55.87 seconds in the 400-meter hurdles, she became the seventh fastest American ever. She competed at the NCAA in the 100-meter hurdles (13.31 seconds), the long jump (21 feet 11 inches), the triple jump (42 feet 6.75 inches), and a 1,600-meter relay leg (44.75). Joyner-Kersee is considered by Ebony Magazine to be the best female athlete in the world. In 1986 Joyner-Kersee was

awarded the Broderick Cup as America's top female collegiate athlete. In 1987 she won the Sullivan Award as the nation's outstanding amateur athlete and was named the U.S. Olympic Committee's Sportsman of the Year by the Women's Sports Foundation (for the heptathlon and long jump at Seoul, the World Championships, and the Pan Am Games).

During a February 1989 awards luncheon in New York City, Jackie received The Sporting News' Waterford Trophy, a custom-designed piece of Irish crystal valued at \$15,000. "We reserve our award for that special person in sports, the one who makes the biggest impact and the most important contribution during the year," said TSN editor Tom Barnidge. She is the first woman to earn this prestigious annual honor.

Source: Black Olympic Medalists, 1992

## Dillard went 82-0 in his races

### HARRISON W. DILLARD

Born July 8, 1923, in Cleveland, Ohio

1948 gold medal: 100 meters (10.3 seconds/Olympic record)

1948 Gold Medal: 4x100 relay (40.6)

1952 gold medal: 4x100 relay (40.26)

1952 gold medal: 110 hurdles (13.91/Olympic record)

Harrison Dillard graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, in 1949. While still in college, he became a specialist high hurdler, and between May 1947 and June 1948 he ran 82 sprint and hurdle races without defeat. There was no doubt that he was the best high hurdler in the im-

mediate postwar years.

Track enthusiasts called him the best combination sprinter/hurdler who ever lived. (His record of 82 straight victories was only recently passed by Edwin Moses.)

Dillard was inspired by Jesse Owens as a child. At an all-day military track meet, where he won four gold medals in one day, General Patton said, "He's the best...athlete I've ever seen" (Los Angeles Times). At Baldwin-Wallace College, he was unbeaten. During his career "Bones" Dillard won 14 AAU titles and six NCAA Championships and set the world record in both the high and low hurdles.

Recalling his Olympic victories, he says, "When your

name is inscribed outside on the wall of the stadium in which the Olympics took place, your name is there for posterity...You're the best in the World at the moment you do it...You have achieved excellence" (black Olympians). Dillard was 61 in 1983 and business director for the Cleveland School Board, responsible for more than 3,000 employees and a budget of \$80 million. He later became chief of the Business Department for Cleveland Schools (where he had been for more than 20 years).

For 10 years before that he was with Bill Veeck and the Cleveland Indians Baseball Club.

Source: Black Olympic Medalists, 1992

## DeFrantz scaled Olympic heights

### ANITA LUCEETE DEFRANTZ

Born Oct. 4, 1952 in Philadelphia.

1976 bronze medal: rowing, eights (3:38.68)

Anita DeFrantz is a graduate of Shortridge High School, Indianapolis (1970), Connecticut College for Women and Men (1974), and the University of Pennsylvania Law School (1977). She also worked toward a Ph.D. in peace science at the University of Pennsylvania. She participated in rowing and basketball in college and was affiliated with the Vesper Boat Club in Philadelphia.

DeFrantz became an outspoken critic of the 1980 Olympic boycott, and because of her law background she was an eloquent spokesperson for the athletes. By supporting that Olympic movement, she became only the second American athlete to receive

the Bronze Medal of the Olympic Order of the International Olympic Committee. This occurred in 1981 at the IOC Congress at Baden Baden, West Germany. The honor was awarded "for her actions which symbolized the fight to safeguard the independence of all sports competitors from political power." While studying law, DeFrantz made the Olympic eights to become the first African American to compete for the U.S. in Olympic rowing.

She distinguished herself by winning six different national titles and sharing a silver medal in the Coxed Fours at the 1978 World Championships. She was a member of the 1980 U.S. Olympic team and coached the Princeton novice crew in 1980-81.

DeFrantz has been a member of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, a trustee of Connecticut College, a member of the Executive Board of the U.S. Olympic Committee,

and vice chair for the Athletes' Advisory Council of the USOC. She later worked as an assistant vice president for the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee and was vice president in charge of the Olympic Village. Currently she is president of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, which is responsible for distributing the \$90 million southern California share of the 1984 Olympic surplus.

In 1986 DeFrantz became the first black woman to become a member of the International Olympic Committee, replacing the late Julian Roosevelt as one of the two U.S. representatives on the committee. On May 16, 1988 she was named winner of the Koribos Award, which is given every four years to an Olympian who best exemplifies the Olympic spirit.

Source: Black Olympic Medalists, 1992

## Owens was star of '36 Games

### JAMES CLEVELAND (JESSE) OWENS

Born September 12, 1913, in Dallville, Ala.

1936 gold medal: 100 meters (10.3/tied Olympic record)

1936 Gold Medal: 200 meters (20.7/Olympic record)

1936 gold medal: long jump (26ft. 5.5 inches/Olympic record)

1936 gold medal: 4x100 relay (39.8/Olympic record/world record)

James Cleveland "Jesse" Owens attended East Technical High School in Cleveland, Ohio, and Ohio State University. His university coach was Larry Snyder, who once said that Owens had a "high-tension nervous system." He worked up such great tension before competing, that he had great strength under pressure. He was, at the same time, graceful, and he always appeared relaxed. Jesse Owens is remembered for record breaking, and especially for his feat on May 25, 1935, at Ann Arbor, Mich., when he beat or equalled six world records within 45 minutes. His single long jump of 8.13 meters (26 feet, 8 1/2 inches) was to last for 25 years. Owens scored 9.4 in 100 meters in 1933, a record that was not broken until 1967. His 220 straightaway mark, 20.7, didn't fall until 1953. His national prep long jump mark, 24 feet, 11 1/4 inches, lasted until



George Brown jumped 25 feet, 2.5 inches in 1949. Owens, a courageous and humble man, was one of the greatest of all track and field athletes. At the peak of his career he won nine world records in seven events. At one time he held 11 world records. His name remained in the record book for over 40 years. One of his world marks, the indoor 60-meter dash (6.6), was set in 1935 and wasn't broken until 1975. He equalled or broke 12 Olympic records on his way to gold medals. His 200 meters in 20.7 seconds at the 1936 Olympics was the fastest ever at that time around a full turn. The nine black Americans on the U.S. track and field team collected a total of eight gold, three silver, and two bronze medals. (Black Americans won every track event from 100 to 800 meters in 1936.)

It was claimed that Adolf Hitler snubbed Jesse Owens by refusing to acknowledge the medals he had won at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Hitler had been profuse in his praise of German and Nordic winners before blacks began to take medals in track and field events.

Owens turned professional at age 23, shortly after the Berlin Olympics, and he experienced many years of financial hardship and racial discrimination. But, always a fighter, he eventually became a successful businessman, inspirational speaker and youth worker. He was named a member of the United States Olympic Committee and in 1976 was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Source: Black Olympic Medalists, 1992

## Gift for West Charlotte baseball



PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

The West Charlotte High School National Alumni Association recently donated \$2000 to the school's baseball team. The baseball Lions spent six weeks tutoring at the Anita Stroud Youth Development Center as a community service project, which attracted the attention of the alumni association. On hand for the presentation were Carolyn A. Evans, chair of the alumni association's Special Projects Committee; Geraldine T. Powe, the association's president; West Charlotte baseball coach Michael Schildt, principal William Crawford and parent Bob Hopkins.

## Plaza has youth baseball sign-ups

Plaza Youth Athletic Association will hold baseball sign-ups every Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Briarwood Elementary School.

Sponsored co-ed teams include: T-ball, coach pitch and player pitch. Volunteers are also needed. For more information, call 527-7788 or come by Briarwood on



Saturdays.

The Charlotte Pro-Am is taking nomination forms for its Charlotte All-Star basketball classic.

The games, which showcases the top senior boys and girls players in the area, are scheduled for April 13 at Queens. Proceeds support the Pro-Am's high school programs.

Nominations are due by Wednesday. For more information, call 567-9511.

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