



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRACK CLUB ANNOUNCED

LOS ANGELES— VS Athletics general manager, Rich Benoy, and long-time local track coach, Skip Stolley, have announced the creation of the first Southern California Track Club in 20-years that will be dedicated to developing and supporting promising non-collegiate men and women athletes in all 7 track & field broad event groups. VS Athletics Inc. is the result of the recent merger of SpringCo Athletics and Venue Sports—creating the largest mail order company for track & field equipment, footwear, and apparel in the Western United States.

“My vision for this new club was born after the two pre-Olympic Trials Meets that I hosted last June,” says Stolley—meets that between them produced 80 OT qualifiers. “I was struck by the number of “unattached” entrants we had in those two meets in every event except the distance races. In speaking with those athletes, I learned they were not simply without club or sponsor affiliations. They were athletes without coaches or training groups ...athletes who were trying to train on their own, as best they could, wherever they could...athletes who were struggling to get themselves into the kinds of high-caliber meets that would enable them to achieve their goal of performing at the next level.”

As a result, Stolley’s club, TRACK WEST, a team with a 19-year history of success in developing men & women middle and long distance runners, will reinvent itself as a full-service track club to support and develop both male and female open athletes in every broad event group...sprints, hurdles, jumps, and throws, as well as the middle and long distance running events. “There hasn’t been a club like this in Southern California since the 1980’s, notes Rich Benoy—himself a world-class post-collegiate hurdler for almost a decade. The Club’s mission and structure is what we need to develop the complete spectrum of non-collegian Olympic hopefuls in Southern California. Hopefully, it will become a model for others like it.”

This flagship athlete development club will be known as the VS ATHLETICS Track Club. The Club will have a diverse group of 6-7 exceptional, well-known coaches working with a select group of VS Athletics men & women team members in their respective areas of coaching specialty. They will include:

Cedric Hill (Sprints & Hurdles) A Level-II USATF certified Sprints/Hurdles coach now in his 2nd year as an assistant coach Cal State Dominguez Hills. A former All-Army sprinter and World Football League player, he has worked with 1996 Olympic Gold Medalist Derrick Adkins and 2000 Olympic Semi-Finalist Louise Ayetoche (Ivory Coast). Has coached 15 Youth National Champions, 22 NCAA All-Americans and 6 NCAA Div-II Champions including 2002 Honda Award Winner, Nicole Duncan, and the 2002-03 Div-II Female Athlete of the Year.

Todd Riech (Javelin) A 3-time All-America in the javelin at Fresno State, setting an NCAA Championship record of 266’9”. After making the 1996 U.S. Olympic Team, he became an assistant coach Long Beach State in 2001. One of America’s brightest young coaches, he produced 5 scorers in the Big West Conference Championships in his first year of coaching—and men and women javelin throwers who have dominated the Conference every year since.

Dave Rodda (Jumps/Multi-Events) One of Southern California’s premier coaches for the past 33-years. Has coached 11 Olympians in the jumps and multi-events—including Olympic bronze medalist in the high jump, Joannie Huntley, sprinter Martha Watson, and heptathlete, Sharon Hansen. Has been selected as a coach for

12 USA Teams in international competition. Head coach for the 1995 USA Pan American Games Team and 1991 USA World Championships Team and an assistant coach for the 1980 and 1988 USA Olympic Teams. Currently an assistant coach at Long Beach State. Also serves as a member of NIKE Track and Field National Advisory Board.

Brian Yokoyama (Pole Vault) During his 16-year tenure as Pole Vault Coach at Mt. San Antonio College, has produced seven State Champions and more than 34 State Meet finalists. A coach/consultant for such top national and international pole vaulters as 2004 Olympic Gold medalist Tim Mack, 2004 Mexican Olympian & U.S. Community College Champion Giovanni Lanaro, 2004 Japanese Olympic finalist Daichi Sawano, 3-time Canadian Champion Rob Pike, 2004 U.S. Olympic Trials Finalist Ebbie Metzinger, 1997 NCAA Champion/5-time All-American Jason Hinkin, and NCAA D-1 All-American Jeff Ryan. Currently coaching 5 elite pole vaulters. A member of the USATF Pole Vault Development Committee and Board of Directors for the North American Pole Vault Association (NAPVA). One of the organizers of the annual USATF National Pole Vault Summit.

Skip Stolley (Middle/Long Distances) Founded Track West 1986. has coached 24 Olympic Trials qualifiers, more than 50 qualifiers for the USA Championships and cross country teams that have placed among the top-3 at the USA Championships six times and won national titles in 1994 and '97. Has been featured as a guest speaker at coaching clinics in 18-states and authored more than 40 articles for various coaching journals and running publications. Meet director for two annual Southern California track & field invitationals that serve as final qualifying meets for the NCAA and USA Championships. Holds executive committee positions within both USA Track & Field and the U.S. Track Coaches Association and selected as a coach for five USA National Teams. In 1999, he was recognized by USA Track & Field as Cross Country Coach-of-the-Year. In 2000, he received USA Track & Field's Outstanding Contributor award.

Skip Stolley will be the administrator of the Club and coordinate with its other coaches on logistic support, meet entries, and travel arrangements. The total VS Athletics Track Club membership will be capped at about 40 athletes. There will be no quota for men or women team members, but it is implicit that the Club's mission is to develop athletes of both genders in all events. The Club's coaches will collaborate to establish minimum VS Athletics performance standards for club membership. Those standards are likely to be in the neighborhood of the 1200-point marks, event by event, as published in the current edition of the Hungarian IAAF Scoring Tables listed below. Ultimately, however, the Club's coaches will use their own discretion as to which athletes they choose to coach and offer VS Athletics Track Club membership.

Those 1000-point standards are:

Men: 10.50, 21.00, 47.00, 14.50H, 52.00H, 1:51.00, 3:48.00, 9:00.00, 14:10.00, 30:00

6'10"HJ, 24'6"LJ, 51'2"TJ, 17'0"PV, 60'0"SP, 190'0DT, 235'0"JAV, 225'0"HT

Women: 11.70, 24.00, 54.00, 14.50H, 60.00H, 2:08.00, 4:26.00, 10:40.00, 16:50.00, 35:30.00

5'10"HJ, 20'6"LJ, 42'6"TJ, 13'0"PV, 55'0"SP, 175'0"DT, 165'0"JAV, 180'0"HT

With this announcement, the Club's coaches will immediately begin scouting and recruiting prospective team members. The new VS Athletics Track Club will first debut during the fall 2005 cross country season with 10-12 men and women team members and become fully operational for the 2006 track season. Its primary focus will be on helping as many of its athletes as possible to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Trials and compete for places on the USA Team.

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