

USATF TODAY

The Official Newsletter of USA Track & Field's 2004 Annual Meeting

One Team.
One Dream.



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1 • DECEMBER 1, 2004 • PORTLAND, OREGON

GATLIN, HAYES WIN JESSE OWENS AWARDS

Triple Olympic medalist Justin Gatlin and Olympic record-holding hurdler Joanna Hayes on Monday were named winners of the 2004 Jesse Owens Awards by USA Track & Field.

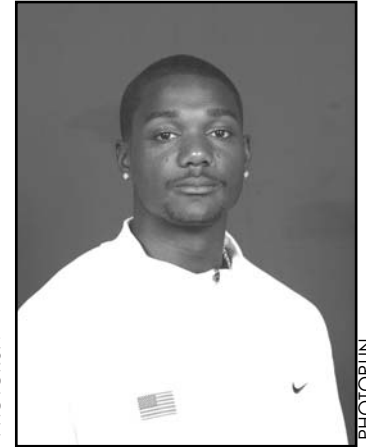
Established in 1981, The Jesse Owens Award is USA Track & Field's highest accolade, presented annually to the outstanding U.S. male and female track and field performers.

Jesse Owens Award winners are selected in balloting of members of the U.S. track & field media.

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Joanna Hayes



Justin Gatlin

PORTLAND WELCOMES 2004 ANNUAL MEETING

USA Track & Field's 26th Annual Meeting, bringing together nearly 1,300 of the sport's top administrators, athletes and volunteers, will be held December 1-5 in Portland, Oregon.

The Opening Session officially kicks off the meeting on a new date and a time – Wednesday, December 1st at 7:00 p.m. – with the rest of the annual meeting continuing through Sunday, December 5th at the Hilton Portland & Executive Tower in downtown Portland.

This year's Meeting features a multitude of hospitality, reception, banquet and breakfast activities – all of which are included in the basic registration fee. Here's the lineup:

Thursday Night Welcome Reception – December 2: USATF and the U.S. Track Coaches Association team together to welcome delegates to Portland. It will be a night filled with food, fun and the opportunity to meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

Friday Expo Breakfast – December 3: Our expo participants help sponsor this popular continental breakfast, so take the opportunity to meet with them, have a bite to eat, and see the latest innovations from our sport.

Jesse Owens Awards Dinner and Xerox Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony – December 3: This year, the site will be in the Stanford Auditorium at the Tiger Woods Center on the Nike Campus in Beaverton and promises to be an extravaganza. Instead of purchasing tickets for tables of 10, you'll be purchasing a seat(s) in the beautiful auditorium that will showcase our heroes of yesterday and stars of today. Note: This is Reserved Seating and tickets will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis and once purchased cannot be reassigned. A reception, featuring an array of hors d'oeuvres and beverages, will precede this year's ceremony. Unlike past years, this is not a dinner ceremony. Rather, it is an Academy Awards-style celebration.

Saturday Awards Breakfast Buffet – December 4th: The traditional hearty breakfast is highlighted by the opportunity to recognize and support those volunteers who are the backbone of our organization. This is a tremendous chance for you to recognize and appreciate your peers. Following breakfast, interested delegates will have the opportunity to watch world-class competition at the 2004 USATF National Club Cross Country Championships, which are being held at Portland Meadows.

2004 marked the return of the men's 100 meters to the international spotlight, and Gatlin took center stage. The 22-year-old won the most competitive men's 100m in Olympic history in Athens, as five men finished under 9.95 seconds. Gatlin won in 9.85 to take the gold over a field that was filled with potential winners. Gatlin's time stood as the fastest in the world in 2004 and gave him his first of three Olympic medals. He added a bronze medal in the 200 meters (20.03) and silver in the 4x100m relay (38.08) to become the only male track & field athlete from any country to win three medals at the 2004 Games, running a total of 10 races.

Gatlin ran under 10 seconds for the 100 on five occasions in 2004, including his runner-up finish of 9.92 at the Olympic Trials. He also placed second in the 200 at the Olympic Trials (20.01).

"It is such a great honor to win the Jesse Owens Award," Gatlin said. "It is one of the biggest honors in track and field and it is a great end to a great year. I'd like to congratulate all my fellow Team USA members and Jesse Owens Award finalists on their outstanding 2004 seasons."

Joanna Hayes wrote her own history at the Olympic Games. The 27-year-old, who had previously been known as more of a 400-meter hurdler, ran a stunning 12.37 seconds in 100-meter hurdles in the Olympic final to break the 16-year-old Olympic record of 12.38, previously held by world record holder Yordanka Donkova. Hayes also became only the second American ever to win Olympic gold in the 100 hurdles. She went on to win the World Athletics Final (12.58) and had three of the six fastest times in the world in 2004, including four clockings of 12.50 or faster.



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GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

USA Track & Field will honor the best of 2004 and induct an elite Class of 2004 into the National Track & Field Hall of Fame on December 3 at the 2004 Jesse Owens Awards and Xerox Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. A limited number of tickets for the event, which will be held at the Tiger Woods Center on the Nike Campus in Beaverton, are still available at the Annual Meeting registration desk. Individual tickets are \$50 each and include hors d'oeuvres before the awards ceremony. Note that this year's event is an Academy Award-style ceremony and as such will not include a full dinner.

XEROX®

The 2003 Pan Am Games gold medalist in the 400 hurdles and 1995 USA Junior and Pan Am Junior champion in the 100 hurdles, Hayes decided to concentrate solely on the 100 hurdles for the first time in her career in 2004. The fruits of that labor were first evident at the Olympic Trials, where she ran a then-personal best of 12.50 in the her semi-final race before taking second in a photo-finish final to American record holder Gail Devers. Both women finished in 12.55.

"To be the winner of the Jesse Owens award is an honor beyond words," Hayes said. "Receiving an award with his named attached to it is obviously prestigious and I am extremely honored to have my name associated with his. Knowing some of the great people who have won this award before me and knowing what it represents, I feel a sense of accomplishment and pride which lets me know that everything that I have worked for is and always will be worth it."

MARTIN NAMED BENGAY MASTERS ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Kathryn Martin of Northport, N.Y., who has rewritten masters long-distance-running record books while becoming a nationally known athlete has been named BENGAY Masters Athlete of the Year by USA Track & Field. Martin will receive her award December 3 at the 2004 Jesse Owens Awards and Xerox Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

BENGAY

For years one of the country's top masters runners, Martin in 2004 had an extraordinary year, by any measure. The member of the Northport Running Club and USATF Long Island Association broke seven individual American records and three world records in the women's 50-54 age group, adding a relay WR and AR to her resume as well.

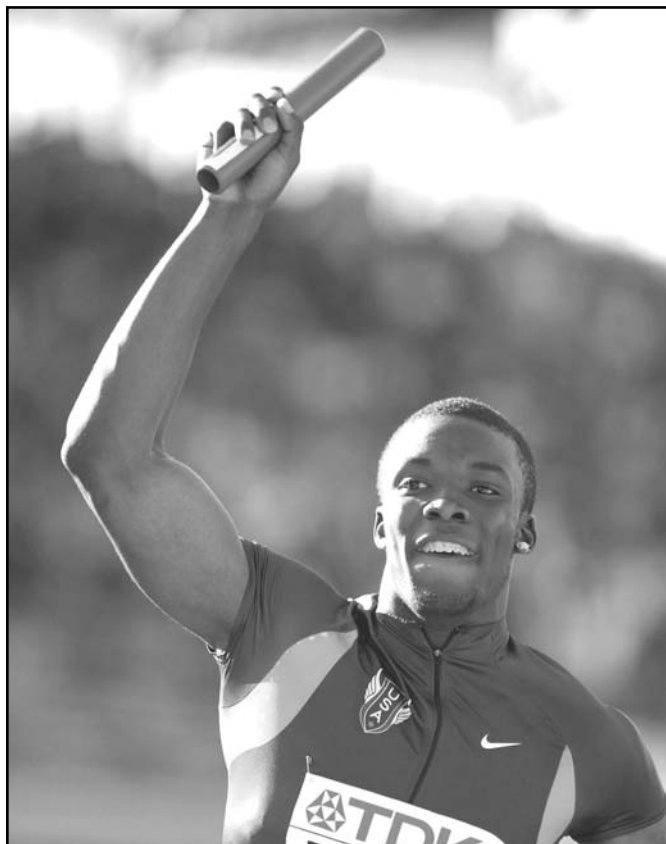
"I am truly humbled at being selected as the inaugural BENGAY Masters Athlete of the year considering the caliber of masters athletes in this country," Martin said. "At the ripe age of 53, I honestly believe that we have no idea what masters athletes are capable of, and I love to push the envelope. As masters athletes we are fortunate to have the tremendous

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MERRITT NAMED VERIZON YOUTH ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



IAAF/GETTY IMAGES

Triple World Junior Championships gold medalist Lashawn Merritt of Portsmouth, Virginia, has been named the 2004 Verizon Youth Athlete of the Year by USA Track & Field. Merritt will be honored December 3 at the Jesse Owens Awards Dinner and Xerox Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, held in conjunction with USATF's 2004 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.



Merritt was a star throughout the summer of 2004 and in the Verizon Youth Series. The 17-year-old was named Verizon Outstanding Athlete of the Meet at the 2004 USA Junior Championships after he completed a double in the 200 (20.72) and 400 meters (46.80), where his wins set him up for success at the 2004 World Junior Championships in Grosseto, Italy. There, Merritt won gold in the men's 400m (45.25 seconds), 4x100m relay (38.66) and 4x400m relay (3:01.09), with the relays breaking world junior records.

"It is a great honor that I was chosen over so many outstanding youth athletes," said Merritt, who this fall entered East Carolina University. "I am proud of the hard work that I put

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support in our local and national USATF organization and from BENGAY.”

Martin’s individual world records all came in the indoor mile, and all were set at the Armory Track & Field Center in New York. On January 15, she opened her year with 5:19.2; she improved to 5:17.8 on February 12; and topped it off with 5:13.93 on March 21. Among her American records was breaking the 5:00 milestone in the 1,500 meters, running 4:57.7 for an American record indoors on February 8.

Martin racked up nine U.S. titles on the track, roads, and in cross country and was named the world’s #1 female road runner in the 50-54 age group by Running Times magazine.

“Kathy exemplifies all masters athletes who push themselves to find new boundaries,” USATF Masters Track & Field Chair George Mathews said. “Her excellence inspires fellow competitors of all ages and abilities.”

“Kathy has excelled in the three major venues of our sport,” said USATF Masters Long Distance Running Chair Rev. Norm Green, “on the track, on the roads, in cross-country. We congratulate her on this award.”

GET INFORMED ... THEN SCHMOOZE!

Two key events Thursday will enable to expand your mind as well as your social circles.

First, stop by the USATF CANDIDATES’ FORUM, from 7:00-7:30 p.m., in Galleria II. As we all know from recent national elections, every vote counts in this election year. Hear what candidates for USATF elected positions have to say.

Then, head to the USATF WELCOME RECEPTION, from 7:30-11 p.m., in the Grand Ballroom I/Parlors. Relax and mingle with USATF administrators, volunteers, athletes and coaches at our annual reception. This is your chance to rub elbows, relax and generally have a gosh-darn good time. And best of all, it’s FREE!

FEELING SHEEPISH?

Our Communications staff would love to be at every meeting here in Portland, but genetic cloning hasn’t yet progressed far enough to enable three people to attend hundreds of meetings – and Dolly the Sheep hasn’t yet been hired. So, please help us out in our efforts to report the Annual Meeting going-on by submitting your group’s latest news for use in USATF Today. Just stop by the Media Room (Cabinet Room on the third floor) with your news item by 3 p.m each day, and we will include it in the newsletter.

in early in the season, which has paid off in the end with me receiving great awards like this one.”

“The future of Team USA is bright with athletes such as Lashawn,” said USATF Youth Chair Bob Flint. “His accomplishments have proven the benefit of USATF’s Youth and Junior programs within the U.S. as well as on the world stage.”



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