



Olympic Voice

U.S. Olympic Training Center, Chula Vista

July 16 - 31, 2011

JULY 2011

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH:



BLAKE LEEPER

Chula Vista Olympic Training Center resident athlete and Paralympic hopeful Blake Leeper was born in Kingsport, Tennessee, and has spent the last seven months at the Training Center perfecting his stride in the 100 meter and 200 meter sprint as well as the 4x100 relay.

Blake was born with a birth defect that left him wearing prosthetics before he was a year old. He was drawn to athletics and excelled in sports in high school, playing point guard for his high school basketball team and catcher or second base on his baseball team – all while wearing walking leg prosthetics. For most kids wearing prosthetics, they must be replaced every six months to a year, mainly to accommodate growth. Due to his active ways, Blake had to have his prosthetics replaced almost once every three to four months as a result of both growth and wear-and-tear.

He graduated from high school in 2007 and started attending the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, but the hype surrounding the Beijing Olympics in 2008 got him thinking about joining the Paralympic movement. He spent the next couple of years researching how to get involved and qualified for the U.S. Paralympic team after running his first 100 meter race in

June 2009, with a time of 11.96 seconds. He made a connection with the Challenged Athletes Foundation, which helped him secure his first pair of running legs – Ossur Cheetah prosthetics – in August 2009. He acclimated quickly to the new legs with the lightweight material and energy-return design which increased his speed. By December 2010, he was invited to train full-time at the Chula Vista OTC under Coach Joaquim Cruz.



In April 2011, Blake set this year's world record at that time with a time of 11.32 seconds in the 100 meter at the Kansas Relays Invitational. He also recently nabbed the bronze medal at the May 2011 BT Paralympic World Cup in Manchester, England. In June 2011, Blake won the men's T43/44 100 meter in 11.43 seconds at the 2011 U.S. Paralympics Track & Field National Championships. His upcoming competitions include running events in London, Belgium and at the fast-approaching Para Pan Am Games in November.

Blake's training schedule consists of going to the track in the mornings, hitting the weight room in mid-day and squeezing in a bike work out in the afternoon between visits to sports medicine and the other resources available at the Training Center. Beyond his athletic aspirations, he is looking to take classes at a local college to finish up credits that will transfer back to the University of Tennessee and allow him to complete his degree in Applied Physics.

Though he misses his family and the Southern food found in Tennessee, he enjoys the atmosphere of being in San Diego. The perfect weather and the on-campus life make it a little easier to focus on running faster. He has become friends with other resident athletes and gains motivation from the other athletes who are always working hard to be their best.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:



The AT&T Connections Center is the temporary home to Sports Medicine while the Sports Medicine Building is under construction



The Spirit Store is closed for renovation, but Team USA gear can still be purchased online at www.teamusa.org



Volunteers are needed! Athletes, their family members and community members are encouraged to get involved in the Chula Vista Olympic Training Center's Volunteer Program. We have an immediate need for tour guides, van drivers and special event assistance. Stop by the ACI desk or call 619-482-6148 for more information

OLYMPIC DAY - JUNE 23, 2011

Olympic Day is held annually on June 23 to commemorate the birth of the modern Olympic Games. On that date in 1894, Pierre de Coubertin organized a meeting which was held at La Sorbonne in Paris and created the International Olympic Committee. They selected Athens, Greece, to be the host city of the Games of the I Olympiad, or the 1896 Summer Olympics, and the planning began for the Olympic Movement.

The first Olympic Day was held in 1948 to promote participation in sport across the globe regardless of age, gender or athletic ability. It is an international effort to promote fitness and well-being in addition to Olympic ideals of Fair Play, Perseverance, Respect and Sportsmanship. Thousands of people in more than 160 countries celebrate Olympic Day. In the United States, at least one city from each of the 50 states held at least one Olympic Day event on June 23, 2011.



Locally, Olympic Day at the Chula Vista Olympic Training Center was attended by approximately 200 participants, including our athletes, as well as kids from area schools and the South Bay Family YMCA. Following opening comments from Olympic Training Center Director Tracy Lamb, Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox, YMCA Executive Director Tina Williams and Olympic rower David Banks, all of the kids were able to spend some time practicing track & field events and playing soccer

and beach volleyball. A highlight for many of the kids was when OTC resident athlete and rower Marcus McElhenney brought out his bronze medal from the Beijing Olympics and let the kids pass it around.



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Olympic Day was also celebrated in other area locations – one of which was the Mission Valley YMCA Seals Swim Team. Their coach wrote to us following Olympic Day and said that during the course of their week-long swim camp, they worked to develop good habits physically and mentally. To celebrate Olympic Day, they discussed the training and sacrifice that Olympic hopefuls have to make.

Each of the swimmers wrote letters to express their appreciation and wish our athletes good luck. One of these letters is included below. There are about 20 additional letters posted on the bulletin board upstairs from the dining hall, be sure to stop by to read their encouraging words!

To a hard worker and great role model,
Hi! My name is Andrew Stoddard. It's so cool to be writing to such an awesome athlete and person in general. You've worked so hard in your olympic journey and you know what? You can make it. Don't stop working at yOUR goals. If you are ever discouraged just work harder at it. Listen to the positive things around you that your family and friends tell you. Use failure and setbacks to your advantage. Pump yourself up! Love what you do and try your hardest. You have potential to be the best at what you do. People believe in you. Believe in yourself. Get out there and blow away the competition! You inspire me!

LONDON 2012 – ONE YEAR OUT

With athlete preparation for the London 2012 Olympic Games well underway in each country, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has been preparing the sites and firming up details. July 27 officially marks the one year out date and here's a look at how it is shaping up:



Construction was completed in June on the Basketball Arena in the Olympic Park. The temporary structure will host Basketball, Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Rugby and the final stages of the Handball competition. It is one of the largest-ever temporary venues built for any Games. Parts of the venue are expected to be reused or relocated elsewhere in the UK.

The Aquatics Centre is believed to be one of the most iconic buildings for the London 2012 Games. It features a wave-like design in its roof and spans a distance longer than one of the terminals at Heathrow Airport. A bridge runs over the top of the structure and will be used by most spectators as they enter the Olympic Park. The Aquatics Centre houses a 50 meter competition pool, a 25 meter competition diving pool and a 50 meter warm-up pool for swimming, diving and synchronized swimming events. Nearly 600,000 tiles were used to line the Centre's pools and locker rooms. After the Paralympics Closing Ceremonies, the Aquatics Centre will be transformed into a community, club and school-based facility.



The Velodrome, the venue used for hosting Track Cycling and Paralympic Track Cycling, was finished in February 2011. The Velodrome was built using sustainable materials, an efficient ventilation system which eliminated the need for air conditioning and makes good use of natural light, reducing electricity needs. A total of 6,000 seats are installed in the Velodrome. After the games, the Velodrome will be a part of the VeloPark

for the local community, sports clubs and elite athletes. In addition, a new mountain bike course and road-cycle circuit will be added.

Adjacent to the Velodrome is the BMX Track, which has been under construction for a few months now and is scheduled to be complete before the end of the summer. The BMX track at the Chula Vista Olympic Training Center is currently a replica of the Beijing Olympic track and it is scheduled to transition over to a replica of the London Olympic track after the BMX Supercross World Cup, which will be held at the Chula Vista OTC on September 30 and October 1.

The Handball Arena, which was finished in May 2011, will be the venue for Handball, Goalball and the Fencing portion of Modern Pentathlon. The exterior of the building is made from copper cladding, which will develop a different color as it ages. From its many multicolored seats, spectators will be able to watch the preliminary rounds and quarter-finals of the Handball competition during the Olympic Games. After the Games, the arena will be adapted to become a multi-use sports center for community use and athlete training.

The Olympic Stadium will host numerous events, as well as the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The Stadium will have a capacity of 80,000 during the Games. The final piece of turf was laid down in March 2011. A total of 360 rolls of turf were used to cover the 9,000 square meter infield area. The stadium will be transformed into a 60,000-seat stadium for West Ham United Football Club after the Games. For the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, artistic directors have been selected to create spectacular shows.

The design for the Olympic Torch was recently unveiled and symbolism is heavily represented. It has 8,000 small circles cut out to represent the 8,000 Torchbearers who will carry the Torch throughout the UK. The top of the Torch comes to a triangular shape and is inspired by the following three sets of three:

- The three Olympic Values of respect, excellence and friendship
- The UK has hosted the Olympic Games three times
- The vision for the London 2012 Olympic Games is to combine three strands of work – sport, education and culture



The most recently completed building, as of just days ago, is the International Broadcast Centre (IBC) building. The building is a part of the Main Media Complex – a 24-hour media hub with space for over 20,000 broadcasters, photographers and print journalists who will bring the Games to an estimated four billion people worldwide.

RECENT RESULTS:

Archery

WORLD ARCHERY CHAMPIONSHIP

The World Archery Championships were held in Torino, Italy from July 3-10. More than 600 archers from close to 90 countries competed for world titles, medals and Olympic berths. USA Archery performed extremely well and brought home three men's Olympic quota spots, one women's spot, compound women's team gold, compound men's team gold, compound men's individual silver, compound men's and women's individual bronze medals, and the men's recurve bronze medal.

Rowing

ROWING WORLD CUP - THIRD ROUND

The U.S. Men's Rowing Team competed at the Lucerne Rowing World Cup on July 8-10 in Lucerne, Switzerland. The U.S. men's four of Scott Gault, Charlie Cole, Brett Newlin and Giuseppe Lanzone won a bronze medal to cap off the U.S. performance in Lucerne. The U.S. crew was among the leaders in the top half of the course and held off Germany to claim the podium position, posting a 5:57.61 at the line. Great Britain won the gold medal with a 5:53.84, followed by Greece with a 5:56.35 for silver. A total of 51 nations were represented at the competition with the U.S. bringing a total of 56 athletes who competed in all but one Olympic-class event.

Please email emily.cox@usoc.org with any additional recent results you would like to have published.

ATHLETES IN TRAINING:

RESIDENT PROGRAMS:

Archery
BMX
Canoe/Kayak
Field Hockey
Track & Field

SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS:

July 17 – 22
Beach Volleyball - High Performance Camp

July 24 – 30
Softball - Junior Men's Team Training Camp

July 26 – 31
Track & Field - Altius Track Club Pole Vault Camp

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHULA VISTA OTC:

Albion Cup National Soccer Showcase..... July 16-17

Crusaders Cup Soccer Tournament July 23-25

State Games of America 2011 August 6-7

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Medal winners from 45 State Games nationwide earn the right to compete against other winners and match their skills and competitive desire in a national arena. Competitions will be held in over 25 different venues, including the Chula Vista Olympic Training Center! We will be a venue for Archery, BMX and Soccer. Visit www.StateGames2011.com for more information.

USA Archery So Cal Showdown August 12-14

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The So Cal Showdown is hosted by the RoadRunner Archery Club and is open to all Senior, Junior and Cadet - Recurve and Compound Archers who are members of NAA, NFAA or an international FITA member organization. Spectators are welcome. Visit www.roadrunnerarchery.com for more information.

Thorpe Cup August 13-15

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Thorpe Cup is an annual decathlon and heptathlon track meet between the United States and Germany. First held in 1993 in Aachen, the Thorpe Cup returns to the United States after two years in Marburg, Germany. The meeting is named after the famous Olympian Jim Thorpe. Visit www.usatf.org for more information.

NORCECA Volleyball Cup September 21-25

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Stay tuned for more info - www.norceca.org

BMX Supercross World Cup..... September 30 - October 1

BMX ABA Nationals..... September 30 - October 2

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Stay tuned for more info - www.ababmx.com and www.uci.ch

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY:

9/11 Memorial Ceremony Sunday, September 11

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

9/11 Memorial Ceremony and Community Run will be held at Otay Ranch Town Center and we would like to have athletes participate in the run. More information will be available soon.