

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Joseph Newton

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Sports Stories - IHSA Oral History project

Interview # SIH-A-L-2016-062

Joe Newton, life-long cross country and track coach at York High School with a stellar record of accomplishments, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories-IHSA* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Dec. 21, 2016

Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:07 / 1.12 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on June 16, 2017

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Joseph Newton, *Sports Stories – IHSA, SIH-A-L-2016-062*

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Joe Newton was born on April 13th, 1929 in Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from Parker High School in Chicago, where he earned twelve varsity letters in track, baseball, and basketball. He earned a BS degree from Northwestern University in 1951, and an MA degree in 1952, majoring in physical education. (He lettered on then Northwestern track team as a sprinter.) After graduating, Newton spent one year in the Army, stationed at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, and coached the base's track team. Joe then obtained a teaching position at a small high school in Waterman, Illinois (near DeKalb). There he taught physical education and coached track/cross country from 1954-56. Joe then returned to the Chicago area, teaching at York High School in Elmhurst until 2016. His duties included teaching physical education and sometimes math, coaching the football team for two years, and cross country and track. Newton became known nationwide for his cross country and track teams; his teams won twenty-eight state titles (twenty-three in a row), came in second place twelve times, third place four times, and fourth place five times. In addition, his teams won twenty National Championships and produced 300 All-State Athletes. York also added one state championship in Track, and found time to author four books. His teams were also featured in a documentary. He was named to assist the 1988 Olympic track team competing in South Korea, and received many honors during his long career, including president of the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, being named to the Chicago Sports Hall of Fame, the Northwestern Hall of Fame, the National Federation of State High Schools Associations Hall of Fame, and the IBCA Hall of Fame. There is also a field house named after him. Joe's career led him to be a popular motivational speaker.

This interview explores Newton's sixty year cross country and track career, from athlete to coach. He discusses practice schedules for cross country athletes, the importance of trials to determine those running at the invitational meets, strategies for top performances at state meets, York's East End Park and increasing the length of the cross country runs from two to three miles. Newton also discussed his four books and his many speaking engagements, and helping to coach the 1988 cross country Olympic Team. He passed away on December 9, 2017.

Subject Headings/Key Words: cross country at York High School; cross-country training strategies; cross-country and track rules changes; coaching for the USA's 1988 cross country Olympic team; *The Long Green Line* by Joe Newton; *Motivation-Name of the Game* by Newton; *Running to the Top of the Mountain* by Newton; *Coaching Cross Country Successfully* by Newton

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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