

Lloyd 'Bud' Winter – San Jose State: 1940-1970 Posthumous 2010 Pacific Association Legacy Coach Award Recipient

by URLA HILL, M.A., Guest Curator
[Speed City: From Civil Rights to Black Power](#)

Lloyd 'Bud' Winter, architect of 'Speed City' who propelled San Jose State to the pinnacle of track and field during the mid-1900s, is the 2010 Posthumous recipient of the Pacific Association legacy coach award.

Coach Winter created a legacy not only through his ability to coach, but also through his ability to mentor other coaching hopefuls, and promote the sport of track and field. In all, he would coach 102 All Americans, 27 Olympians, and 49 NCAA- and 37 world- record holders throughout his career as the Spartans' coach, which took place between 1940 and 1970. Notable Spartans include sprinters **Ray Norton** and **Bob Poynter**, ranked Nos. 1 and 2 in the world, respectively, during the late 1950s and 1960; 1968 Olympians **Tommie Smith** and **John Carlos**, who placed first and third, respectively, in the 200 meters, and **Lee Evans**, who took the gold in the 400, and on the 1600- meter relay team; **Ben Tucker**, a prominent member of SJS's '62 and '63 NCAA cross country championship teams; Olympian **Willie Steele**, who captured the gold in the long jump in '48 (He competed at SJS before enlisting in World War II.); and '68 Olympic Greek pole vaulter **Christos Papanikolaou**, who became the first to vault 18 feet.



Of Winter's nomination, Poynter noted: Other track and field coaches – such as Stanford University's **Payton Jordan** or the University of Oregon's **Bill Bowerman** – may have received more recognition and acceptance because their programs had great wealth and media support, but Bud was a creative, competitive, fun-loving teacher, who had great passion for the sport.

"I learned how to develop a quality track program on meager resources, how to organize a track team, and build a support group," said Poynter, who coached Olympians **Millard Hampton** ('76) and **Andre Phillips** ('88) while at San José's Silver Creek High School. "He taught me that it was important to be a good teacher and to share the knowledge with others. He was a fun-loving coach who made the grueling practices fun, and encouraged all racial and ethnic groups to work together. I have been blessed to have mentored hundreds of athletes with his basic principles." Poynter also coached sprinters at San José City College for six years, and SJS for eight years. He began coaching sprinters at West Valley College upon retirement, and is in his 12th year.

Bud Winter had three children with his wife Helen: Michael, Jane and Kathi. **Kathi and Bert Bonanno**, his assistant during the mid fifties, recall Winter's effort in having the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing's (3M Company) Tartan track placed on SJS's campus during the late 1960s. It all started with a "test strip" laid in the early '60s on the infield.

"I remember him in meetings with 3M and talking about it all the time," said Kathi, who spoke on her father's behalf at the induction ceremony when he was inducted into the National Track & Field Hall of Fame in 1985. "He was so excited about it. I recall dad working on it multiple times, calls that came in at night to discuss the funding and his work with the college."

"It was invented so the horses could run in the snow and rain," Bonanno said. "Bud thought, 'If the horses could run on it, why couldn't we?'"

Bonanno, who became an assistant coach for the 1968 Mexican Olympic team with Winter's assistance, was in Mexico when 3M provided the world with its first artificial turf for Olympic competition. "It had been red cinder at the Olympic Games up until then. 3M hired **Jesse Owens** to assist them to convince the Mexican Olympic Committee to put that track in," said Bonanno, whose storied career as coach and athletic director at San José City College includes Olympians who either train or attended SJCC from Hampton to **Bruce Jenner**, to **John Powell** and **Marion Sidler**, to **Mac Wilkins** and **Al Feuerbach**. Bonanno also coached the Peruvian Olympic team in 1972; and numerous indoor and outdoor teams in countries including Hungary, Scotland, and New Zealand throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s; and brought the USA Track & Field Championships to San José for the first time in 1984, and then in '88. Bonanno also started the Bruce Jenner Invitational, which ran for nearly 20 years.

Winter, a University of California graduate, began his coaching career at Salinas High School in 1931 before moving onto Salinas Junior College (*nee* Hartnell College). It was there he would coach the late, great **Hal Davis** – who also was known as the *California Comet*.

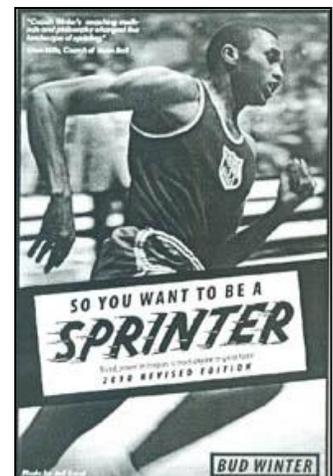
During the fall of 1940, Winter began his illustrious career as coach at SJSC. He would begin by coaching the freshman football team in the fall and track and field in the spring. It was here that he would team with **DeWitt Portal** – who started the boxing team – and **Dr. Dorothy H. Yates**, who taught psychology. Before Winter's arrival on campus, Yates and Portal had teamed to conduct research to determine how psychology might improve the athletic performance of Portal's pugilists. Deemed a success, Yates began to teach a class on relaxation for the Spartans. Winter, a psychology major at Cal, too, would be in attendance.

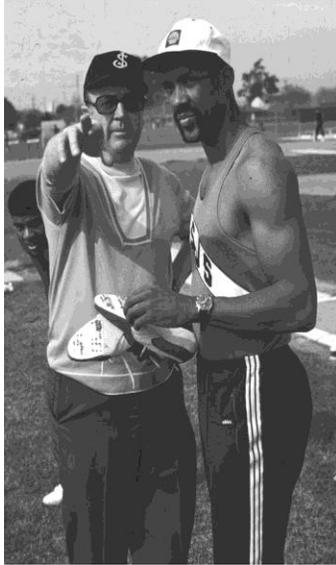
Before Winter's team could begin work with Yates, the U.S. would enter World War II and he would join the Navy. (However, he did bring Yates onboard a committee that studied the use of relaxation techniques on cadets training at the Navy Pre-Flight School.) In the Navy, Winter would train pilots to remain calm in battle. The techniques he developed training pilots would be reflected by his athletes (and later in *Relax and Win: Championship Performance in Whatever You Do*, one of the several books he wrote). Norton became Winter's test pilot on the track.

Former Jamaican Olympian and SJSC sprinter **Dennis Johnson** – who tied the world record for the 100-yard dash four times within a six-week period in 1961 – certainly believed in Winter. In 1966, the *Jamaican Jet* put together a series of training seminars in his home country at which Winter would speak. Upon Johnson's return to Jamaica, he took it upon himself to set up a collegiate athletic program capable of competing against the world's best.

According to Jamaican coach **Glen Mills**, Winter's "coaching methods and philosophy changed the landscape of sprinting." Mills, as Winter, guided a young sprinter to the status of World's Fastest Human: Under Winter, Norton led the world in the 100- and 200- meters in 1959 and '60. Mills coaches **Usain Bolt**, the current world record holder in those events. Mills first encountered Winter when he traveled to Jamaica to put on the coaching seminars. **Steven Francis** – who coached another 100-meter world record holder, **Asafa Powell** – also was in attendance.

"I was impressed with his methods and gained tremendous knowledge from his book [*So you want to be a Sprinter*](#)," Mills said. "This knowledge has played a significant role in shaping my philosophy as a coach, and has contributed to my success as a sprint coach."





“Bud was open to new ideas,” said **Dr. Tom Lionvale**, who based his psychological studies in a doctoral program at the University of Oregon on what he learned from Winter. “His drills were a thing of beauty in that his drills were sprinting drills . . . His drills emphasized the whole action, and now there are drills for sprinting to do apart. The drills are too fragmented, as far as I am concerned. In competition those drills don’t flow together easily, as you can see in the (film that Winter produced in 1967).”

Norton began coaching track while playing professional football, as he worked out at under his former track coach, **Ben Coleman**, of Oakland’s McClymonds High School. “Basically,” explains Norton, an Olympic competitor in 1960, “(Winter) was teaching us to coach without our being aware. We built skills for ourselves, and could correct other things on other athletes to help them be faster. Doing that, you had a tendency to believe that you could coach, too. If you could correct others, you could correct what you were doing.” Norton

would later coach at Merritt College in Oakland, along with **Maurice Compton**, another Winter protegee.

“My high school coach asked me if I wanted to be a big fish in a small pond, or a small fish in a big pond when I told him I wanted to go to San José State,” said **Bob Rush**, who competed for the Spartans during the mid fifties, and coached at the College of San Mateo for 30 years before retiring in 1995. “I told him I would be a little fish . . . I went to San José State. San José State was the place to go to be a physical educator and a coach. It was the best in country.” Rush, who invented the Chronomix, an electronic timing device for group races taking place on the road and track, graduated from SJS in ’57.

“I was fortunate to have been coached by outstanding track coaches in junior high and high school,” said **Frank Slaton**, who coached 30-plus years with the desire to show youngsters that using their “God-given talents” could be a life-changing experience.

“During my high school years, our track team would travel to compete against San José State’s freshman team. That was my first introduction to Coach Winter. Being fortunate to later be coached by Bud was truly a dream come true. I was not one of Speed City’s star athletes, but was treated as an integral part. Through Bud I learned that by using my God-given talents, I could better myself not only as an athlete, but as a young man.”

Distance coach **Ron Davis** had held coaching positions in several countries before returning to the U.S. to coach at Maryland-Eastern Shore, New Orleans, Ohio State and South Alabama. Amongst his accomplishments is the founding of the LaGrange Sports Authority in Georgia. He also coached Tanzanian **Filbert Bayi** to a silver medal in the 3000-meter steeplechase in the 1980 Olympic Games; and Zambian hurdler **Samuel Matete** to victory in the 400 at the 1991 World Championships, and to a bronze finish at the 1996 Games. Davis has many fond memories of Winter, but none perhaps as heart-warming as Winter’s commitment to recruit people of color.

“Coach Winters was a man of courage recruiting so many African (and Hispanic) Americans for track and field at San José State at a time when the majority of white universities were not giving Blacks the opportunity to get a university education,” said Davis, captain of the Spartans’ 1962 NCAA Cross Country Championship team. “We had three Blacks, and one runner from Brazil on the team that won the national championship. We were given the opportunity because of our ability,

not our color.”

Winter also was known for his hunting ability. According to Lionvale, “He had a Model A Ford (which, according to other athletes, was bound with wire to hold it together) and sometimes he would come to practice from hunting ducks and geese in Milpitas. He’d have on hunting gear and a hat, though sometimes he would just wear it because it was raining.”

Perhaps Lionvale’s fondest memory is that of Winter’s ability to inspire his athletes. “Across the street from his office was a place that sold ice cream,” he said. “He would post on the bulletin board what a guy would have to do to get a milkshake. He paid monthly, and had little chips, or, rather, pieces of paper, that said if you ran that time on a Saturday at a track meet, you could get a shake. Everyone had a floating scale for a milkshake. But on the other end, in order for Ray (Norton) to get one he would have to break a world record.”

As well, if athletes broke a school record, **Helen Winter**, his wife, would bake that athlete a chocolate cake. “So each week you had a shot at a milk shake and chocolate cake.”

Lionvale – who has held coaching positions at colleges including Central Washington State, Oregon, the University of Kansas, the University of California at Santa Barbara, amongst others, before moving onto the College of the Sequoias – also enjoyed the team’s weekly meetings in which Winter would plot how his team would have to fare in order to win the meet. “Then he would hypnotize the whole track team,” said Lionvale, a sprinter in the mid 1950s. “We would kid the younger athletes, asking, ‘Are you going to let the old man hypnotize you?’

“He would tell us to close our eyes, and imagine our race being successful,” said Lionvale, who was honored as “Coach of the Year” twice during his career. “He would go event by event while we kept our eyes closed, and we’d have a positive imagery of ourselves being successful. Invariably, the whole team would be slumped over, imagining ourselves being a success . . .”

Rush was with Winter in the hours before he was to be inducted into the USATF Hall of Fame. “I saw him the night before, we had a beer,” Rush said. “At the luncheon (the next day), he sat at our table. Someone called him up to say that that evening, he would have to sit at the head table. He was disappointed because he wanted to sit with us again.”



Winter passed on December 6, 1985, after a game of racquetball. His legacy continues as dozens of his collegiate athletes from the 1950s and '60s have ventured into the coaching realm at the high school, community college, and collegiate levels.

Winter also has been inducted to the San José Sports Hall of Fame, the USATF Hall of Fame, and the African American/Ethnic Sports Hall of Fame. In '56, Winter organized the first international coaches’ clinic. In addition to *Relax and Win* and [So You Want to be a Sprinter](#), he wrote *So You Want To Be A High Jumper*, *The Jet Sprint Relay Pass*, and *The Rocket Sprint Start*. He helped produce a film, *Sprinting with Bud Winter*, part of the Ryan Films track and field instructional series, in 1967.

The accomplishment of others who may or may not have been mentioned previously, but who benefited from Winter’s guidance include:

Bill Campbell After suffering an ankle injury, Winter persuaded Campbell to take his course on track and field. Campbell, who had plans to become a dentist, would switch his major to physical education. He spent the bulk of his career at West Valley College, 34 illustrious years, in fact, where he garnered a 253-11 dual meet record; 27 conference championships (16 consecutive); seven Northern California Championships; and one state title for the men's cross country team. As head coach for the women's team, he cumulated 144-11 dual meet record; eight conference championships; and five NCC championships. He holds six "Coach of the Year" honors, and also has been inducted into the California Community Colleges Track & Field/Cross Country Hall of Fame. Olympian **Monica Townsend**, who competed in the steeple chase in 1996, is one of the many notable athletes he has coached.

Lee Evans: An Olympic gold medalist in the 400 meters in '68, Evans started his coaching career at SJS in 1970. In his first season, he coached sprinter **Elmo Dees**, who, following in Evans' footsteps, completed the 400 in 45.5 seconds. While at the University of Washington Evans coached All-American **Ja'Warren Hooker**, the 1998 Pac-10 male track athlete of the year, and the first double-event winner (100- and 200- meter run) for the Huskies. During his stint at the University of South Alabama, Evans would coach a couple more All Americans, miler **Vincent Rono** and **Tony Okello**, a three-time NCAA All-American in the 5000 meters. The bulk of Evans' career has been spent overseas, beginning in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1975. Evans has coached Olympic teams for Nigeria, Cameroon, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. He also has coached World Championship teams for Cameroon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia; and the United States's 2005 indoor championship team. He has coached a slew of Olympians from these various countries, including **Sunday Uti**, **Rotimi Peters**, **Innocent Egbunike**, **Gabriel Tiacoh**, **Ibrahim Ismail** and **Falilot Ogunkoya**, who he had coached for two years by mail and in person. Finally, Evans coached Saudi Arabia's semi-finalist team in the 1600-meter relay, the country's first. Evans noted that during his early years coaching overseas, Winter would give him tips and advice whenever he was in the area.

Jimmy Omagbemi: Nigerian Omagbemi had already competed in the 200 meters and on the 100-meter relay team at the Olympic Games in 1960 before heading to SJS. Omagbemi, who also competed on the Nigerian 100-meter relay in 1964, was 30 years old when he began competing for Winter. During the 1970s, he would serve as the Director of Sports for what was known as the Bendal state of Nigeria in the 1970s. His son, **Victor Omagbemi**, won the 100 and 200 meters at the African Championships in 1992. Victor's wife, **Mary Onyali-Omagbemi**, is a five-time Olympian.

John Powell: A four-time Olympian – capturing bronze medals in 1976 and '84 – in the discus, Powell has run his own camp, the *John Powell Throwing Camp*, for 25 years; and has coached at various other camps for 30 years. He has coached several All Americans from Stanford University, including **Patty Purpur** (shot/discus), **Karen Nickerson** (discus), and **Pam Dukes** (shot put); and Olympic discus thrower **Carol Cady** ('84, '88). Powell also has worked with several Olympians, including shot putter **John Godina** ('96, '00) and hammer thrower **Kevin McMahon** ('96, '00). A seven-time National Champion, Powell has been named to the Sacramento Sports Hall of Fame, California Community College Track & Field/Cross Country Hall of Fame; and the American River College Sports Hall of Fame.

Willie Williams: This San José State College graduate spent 13 years at the University of Arizona, and was named the sprint coach of the 1984 U.S. Olympic team before his death that year. U of A's annual Willie Williams Classic is in its 29th season.

Nominated by, and recipient biography compiled by [Urla Hill, M.A., Guest Curator](#)
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