



*For Immediate Release
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Neillsville Resident to Coach at Special Olympics World Summer Games in Greece

Madison- Washington, D.C.-based Special Olympics International (SOI) recently named Steve Meurett of Neillsville as the Team USA Head Athletics (track and field) coach for the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece to be held June 25-July 4, 2011.

Team USA includes athletes and coaches from all 50 states and 185 countries, including two athletes from Wisconsin—Rebecca Stelpflug of Menomonee Falls competing in swimming and Christopher Mark of Burlington competing in track and field. As head coach, Meurett will take the lead on training essentials for the Team USA track team and be responsible for communication of all information updates to their assigned athletes, family members and local coaches. Team USA coaches working under Meurett are also responsible for ensuring that all athletes are training with appropriate supervision and ensuring the athletes and coaches experience the athletic, physical and social benefits of participating in a World Games.

Meurett is a 20-year veteran Special Olympics coach. On the local level, he is a cross country and track coach and statewide, he has served on the Area Management Team for the State Winter Games in Wausau. On the national level, this will be his fifth World Games experience as he coached cross country skiing athletes at the 2001 World Games in Anchorage, Alaska; the half-marathon at the 2003 World Games in Dublin, Ireland; cross country skiing athletes at the 2005 World Winter Games in Nagano, Japan and cross country skiing at the 2009 World Winter Games in Boise Idaho.

“I have learned so much from each World Games opportunity I have had. With so many great coaches on my team, I feel I can be a good resource for them with past experience I have obtained through Team Wisconsin. Nothing is more exciting than representing our team where the actual Olympics originated in Greece,” said Meurett. He added that after over 20 years of coaching high school athletics, he really appreciates what Special Olympics athletes bring to ‘athletic competition’- since they know the true meaning of competition. “I know I’ll be coaching with the best coaches in the United States and with some of the best athletes in the country.”

Meurett has been recognized at the annual Special Olympics Volunteer Award and Recognition Program as the Coach of the Year in 2004 and Volunteer of the Year in 2001. Meurett is an art specialist for K-12 students in the Neillsville School District and teaches photography courses at Neillsville High School. His favorite hobbies include photography, art, outdoor sports including mountain biking and cross country skiing and trail building.

The 2011 World Summer Games are expected to draw more than 7,500 athletes from around the world, as well as tens of thousands of volunteers, event officials, coaches, families, spectators and media representatives from around the world. The Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens will be the largest sporting event in the world in 2011 featuring 22 Olympic-type sports!

Thank you to Kwik Trip and the Law Enforcement Torch Run, the Mission Partners of SOWI, enabling the organization to hold nearly 80 competitions and five state tournaments per year. SOWI provides year-round training and competition opportunities through 18 different Olympic-type sports

for nearly 10,000 individuals with cognitive disabilities. Join our online community by following us on Twitter and Facebook! For more information, visit SpecialOlympicsWisconsin.org or call (800) 552-1324 or visit www.athens2011.org for World Games specifics.

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To obtain photos or an interview with the delegation attending World Games, please contact Kelly Klopping at 608-442-5662.