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OLDEST U.S. POLE VAULT ATHLETE CITES CHIROPRACTIC FOR HIS SUCCESS

The oldest member of the 2008 Olympic U.S. Track and Field squad that competed in Beijing, China, this year is a 40-year-old pole vaulter who relies heavily on Chiropractic to keep competing on the international stage. This was the second Olympic appearance for Jeff Hartwig, who also competed in the 1996 Games in Atlanta where he finished in 11th position.

Jeff has been receiving Chiropractic treatment from Dr. Ted Forcum, D.C. of Tigard, Oregon. Dr. Forcum is one of 4 chiropractors that were members of a 62-person healthcare group who treated over 400 U.S. Olympic athletes in Beijing. "Without Chiropractic care, I doubt that I would ever have been able to reach these levels or been able to train at such an intense level," said Hartwig.

Following his first Olympic experience, Jeff went on to set the American pole vault record in 1998 when he cleared the bar at 19 feet, 9 inches. Fortunately, he didn't have to jump quite this high to qualify for Beijing, when his vault of 18 feet, 8 inches made him the oldest member of this year's team.

Jeff credits some amazing results from Chiropractic as the reason he is able to continue competing: "The first time I was treated by a chiropractor was akin to a miracle. It was a much better option than simply using conventional medicine because my injuries healed faster and my whole body felt better."

The history of Chiropractic being available to help athletes like Jeff goes back to the year 1980 and the Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, New York. Since then, chiropractors have joined with medical doctors, massage therapists and certified athletic trainers to provide health care services to America's gathering of elite athletes.

"Chiropractic fulfills a niche need, not only by treating injuries but also by aiding in recovery and positively impacting athletic performance," said Dr. Forcum. "Chiropractors promote active care and treatment with a commitment to healthy progression and rehabilitation."

Jeff had to be pleased, at the age of almost 41, to be a member of the U.S. team and to participate in Beijing. However, being a competitive athlete, his performance in the Olympic pole vault qualifying round that left him only 4 inches short of making it into the finals had to be somewhat disappointing. His best vault in Beijing was 18 feet, 2 inches and it took 18 feet, 6 inches for 12 of the 38 competitors in the field to make the final round of jumping.

Now, with the 2012 Olympic Games planned for London looming just 4 years away, it will be interesting to see if Jeff might have one more appearance left in him. With Chiropractic services available to him and an elite athlete's desire to keep on competing, only time will tell.

Source: The Foundation for Chiropractic Progress. "Jeff Hartwig, Oldest American to Qualify for the Olympic Team in Pole Vaulting, Attributes Success to Chiropractic Care." August 2008. http://www.f4cp.com/press_releases/PoleVaulter.htm