



USATF SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION, Post Office Box, Baton Rouge, LA 70821
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ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL EDITION

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for the support you have given me for the past two years. Because of your support (the Southern Association) has made a number of strides in a positive direction. Your unselfish support has allowed us to feel more like a family. I hope that you feel that you have been included and not excluded in our family.

Reflecting back on 2007 we had a wonderful track season. Our LDR Chair (Dennis Groll) started us off with over 350 runners in our Cross Country Championships in Monroe. Our outdoor season got off with a bang on a \$2.5 million dollar track at Zachary High School. The Future Track Club welcomed over 400 athletes to their Future Classic. Just one week later, not to be out done Dennis Groll was at it again, he put on a show like no other in Monroe as he welcomed over 600 athletes to his Peak Performance Classic. Then things got even better, or should I say "MO BETTA" for the Rev. Burnett King and his two congregations hosted the Faith Classic at his old high school. The Jackson High Complex saw over 400 athletes complete before a standing room only crowd. Once the dust had settled it was now time for our Association championships. Our Youth Chair, recovering from a recent surgery put on one of his best shows. We had over 500 youth and master athletes converge on Port Allen, Louisiana. So, you know what was next. That's right, the Association JOs. Coach Floyd and Southwest Mississippi Community College did not serve GOAT this year, but they laid out a \$2 million dollar track second to none. I must say that all of our meets were run in an organized manner. All of the Meet Directors should be given a pat on the back for their efforts. Our kids performed at a higher level than they ever have. This was evident looking at our performance at the National JOs.

If you haven't heard yet, we now have a MASTERS program. Our Masters Chair Byron Turner has done one of the best jobs of resurrecting a program since Doc Woods' last TD at The Valley. He set a goal of a 10% increase for this program. Little did he know that the masters community was only waiting on him to call them for duty. This program saw a 40% increase as runners came from across the country to compete in meets at Zachary, Jackson and Baton Rouge.

Now that 2008 is almost over, we must not focus our attention towards 2009. We have just installed new officers. I want to be the first to thank you for entrusting in me to lead this Association once again. The following officers were installed: President, Roderic Newton, 1st Vice-President, Jackie Callender, 2nd Vice, Rev. Burnett King, Sr., 3rd Vice, Rashad Hannah, Secretary/Membership Chair, Earlett Buckley, Treasurer, Martha Harris and your new Youth Chair is Byron Turner. Let's all welcome our officers with open arms and sign up for some of their committees.



Pictured From Left to Right: Rev. Burnett King, Earlett Buckley, Martha B. Harris, Roderic Newton, Byron Turner, Rashad Hannah and Jackie Callender

With that being said, I would ask that we try to follow the chain of command when you need particular questions answered. Our 1st Vice will handle all High Performance and Sports, Athletes Advisory and LDR questions, The 2nd Vice will be your contact for Law & Legislation, Rules, Officials and Budget and Finance. For all of your Athletes for the Disabled, Coaching Advisory and Developmental Group questions, please call your 3rd Vice. Ms. Buckley, our Secretary will handle all membership and team issues. Youth Chair Byron Turner is working at this time on our Championship, Calendar and Records.

Although '07 and '08 were great for the association we still have a number of things to accomplish within the next 2 years. Our main focus will be our Plan for Improvement. A main part of this plan calls for coach's education. All of our coaches must get Level 1 certified and go through the Background process. This will mean if you really want to be called COACH, you will attend the certification clinics that we schedule in your respectful areas. To help defer the cost we are working on grants from Gill Equipment Company, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, and others. We also want our athletes to move to an elite status. In order for them to do this, we will schedule clinics for them as well. These clinics will be event specific across the Association. If you have a list of clinics you would like us to host or you host, give us a call. You may also want to ask your athletes what type of clinics they are interesting in.

We would like to implement a 2009 calendar for the Association. We need your involvement, by submitting birthdays, anniversaries, meet dates, workshops, clinics, and other items that you want in this calendar. And if you would like to provide assistance in creating it, please contact Earlett Buckley at earlettbuckley@southernmasters.org or 225.270.3322. Along those same lines we would like you to provide us with your e-mail address and phone numbers so that we can keep you better informed with anything as it relates to the Association.

As most of you already know we would like to put a bid in for the 2011 National JOs. Because we value your input, we will be having a conference call within the next few weeks for all teams/clubs. During this call you will be given the opportunity to let us know what you want from the host (Baton Rouge and New Orleans Sports Foundation). Please make every effort to be available at the time of the call as it is my desire to include as many of you as possible in our outcome measures.

Finally, it is imperative that you get your sanctions, team insurance, team membership and membership information submitted before all due dates. You will need to have all memberships complete prior to the kids competing.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Thanks,



Roderic Newton

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