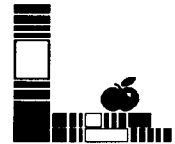


Ted A. Larson, Ph.D.
Southeast High School
2930 S. 37th Street
Lincoln, NE 68506

Head Coach: Cross Country & Boys Track & Field



September 30, 1997

International Sports Tours
P.O. Box 20261
Wichita, KS 67208

They call it an "experience of a lifetime." This probably doesn't go far enough to describe a European Track and Field Tour with International Sports Tours.

What makes an IST European Track and Field Tour the experience of a lifetime? I can only tell you about my experiences with IST. The primary purpose of an IST Tour is to compete with European high school students in track and field. But an IST Tour is much, much more than this. First of all there are the coaches. The coaching staff on an IST Tour is the BEST! I have been able to work with exceptional coaches from all over the United States. These coaches are carefully selected by the IST staff for their ability to motivate high school athletes as well as their innovative coaching techniques.

Of course there is much more to an IST Tour besides training and competing. Each tour is carefully planned by Don, John, Carol and the rest of the IST staff. After all, there is a whole lot to see and experience in Europe! A typical IST Tour might take you to Neuschwanstein castle, League of Nations Headquarters in Geneva, or the Olympic stadium in Munich. For myself, I'll never forget the somber tone of Dachau concentration camp.

As I said before, the focus of IST is to experience European track and field, and this means attending a Grand Prix meet. This in itself is an "experience of a lifetime." Nothing in track and field can compare to a Grand Prix meet! But wait. . . before you go to the meet, you actually have lunch with Olympic caliber athletes. Myself, well, how could I ever forget standing in line for the buffet luncheon in Stockholm right in front of Mike Powell, the world record holder in the long jump! Or how about having Scott Huffman explain to you his own unique pole vault technique, or what pole he would recommend? Or how about having Lynn Jennings tell you what strategy she will use that very night in the women's 5,000 meter run! Then you get to go and watch her actually do it! A Grand Prix meet is like nothing else. Each one is unique. And the competition is unbelievable! IST athletes have been able to watch Michael Johnson get tuned up for the 1996 Olympic Games. In 1994, our trip watched as Leroy Burrell set a new world record in the 100 meter dash.

An IST Tour means making friends, friends that you would never be able to meet otherwise. I still get cards and letters from IST athletes and coaches with whom I have worked. At the end of each trip, the IST staff gives each and every athlete a special award. And of course, although everyone might be eager to get back to the good old USA, there are plenty of sad "goodbyes" on that last night in Europe.

Would I recommend an IST European Tour? You bet! Two Thumbs Up - WAY UP! Lets just say that I hope to see you on the very next IST Tour. It is . . . an "experience of a lifetime!"

Ted A. Larson, Ph.D.
Head Cross Country Coach/Boys Track and Field Coach
Lincoln Southeast High School
Lincoln, NE