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## **2000 Olympics: How '96 Silver Medalist, Lance Deal Prepares For Sydney Olympics - From A Track And Field Perspective Rolfing® Was A Tremendous Boost To His Sport**

Boulder, CO...The U.S. produces some of the world's greatest track and field stars. When Lance Deal won the '96 Olympic Silver Medal, he became the first American Olympic medalist in the hammer since 1956. A four-time Olympian, ranked third internationally, Deal leads a trio of Americans into the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

For an Olympic hammer thrower, staying balanced, and spinning in center are essentials to gain the competitive edge that scores gold. Lance Deal, keeps his body in balance with Rolfing.

"My performance requires posture and timing, I'm the center of a spinning system, if the center is off balance, then the system is off balance," says Deal. "If I can't stand up straight and spin in a spot then I've lost the battle."

Deal says, "The standard athletic medical model did not serve me so I explored other avenues." He saw Rolfing structural integration as a tactical strategy to enhance his performance abilities and prepare him for competition. Rolfing, a form of soft tissue manipulation, investigates how the body works and uses energy. Rolfing frees up that energy by returning the body to its natural alignment and balance.

Repeating the same sports activity over and over -- to train or compete -- can unbalance the body and lead to repetitive stress injuries. "When I am working hard, doing heavy throwing and heavy lifting Rolfing helps me stay in balance," says Deal. "To throw a hammer, I spin in one direction repeatedly. Over time, I can get lopsided from holding the hammer. Rolfing straightens me out and makes the two sides of my body match. Since, the Rolfing approach is so specific, I am really able to see the effects right away. The treatments make me feel the way I'm supposed to feel. The effects are long lasting, and I carry that with me after the session into my practice training and competition."

"Rolfing is a part of my whole support system that is very important and my whole support system -- a coach, physical therapist, sports psychologist, and Rolfer -- are a credit to my longevity," says Deal. "My coach is aware how the importance of the other parts help me follow his training regiment."

"When I'm injured, my wife, a physical therapist applies myofascial release, which calms and relaxes the neuromuscular system," says Deal. "When I need to turn those muscles on

Rolfing allows me to be on the spot, it neutralizes my system. Massage is usually used as a flushing mechanism, for sports enzymatic issues. I don't get big lactic acid buildup in my sport, so massage hasn't been as effective for what I need." "Ten years ago, I completed the basic ten series of Rolfing, and started getting Rolfing tune ups sessions on a regular basis," says Deal. "Rolfing is the best kind of bodywork I've found for my sport."

- "It helps me access my inner strength. Rolfing gives me the posture to let the energy flow freely through me and be the thrower that I need to be. My Rolfer, Karen Lackritz, finds the spots that are holding tension, frees them up and change occurs."

- "Rolfing is injury prevention for me, it straightens me out. It helps me the most with the pain caused from an imbalance from throwing."

- "In my sport I turn on the side of my foot, I supinate it to spin and throw. Normally, I walk around with this foot rotation all the time but now my Rolfer, Karen flattens my foot back out so I can walk evenly again." "I like to do things differently," says Deal. "When I first started out, I slowly found out so much of all the popular belief in my sport were wrong."

- "Steroid use was the biggest misinformation going around. They said you have to take steroids to be good. You weren't supposed to be able to throw over a certain distance if you didn't take them. I proved them wrong."

- "They said you can't start throwing the hammer at 22 years old, it takes too long to learn. I did it."

"I sometimes have such spectacular results with Rolfing," says Deal. "The way it works with structure, intuition and somatic emotional response interests me. My Rolfer is magic. She looks me over, sees and fixes an imbalance. I'd like to learn how to do that. Though there's nothing else like hammer throwing, athletic sports are similar in many ways. I've learned ideas from Rolfing about addressing specific physical issues that I'd like to share with others. I would like to become a Rolfer someday when I stop throwing so I can help other athletes."

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Olympic MD, Dr. Karlis Ullis, at the Sports Medicine and Anti-Aging Medical Group in Santa Monica, Ca., "Athletes always need help with chronic injuries, muscular strains and overuse. The Olympic athletes wouldn't have as many injuries if they had appropriate soft tissue therapy," says Dr. Ullis. "Rolfing is valuable for athletes in high level competition to address the build up of scar tissue and disarrangement of myofascial tissue that occurs from training, competition and injury." Dr. Ullis has provided medical expertise to athletes at five Olympic games, including Lillehammer, Albertville, and Barcelona, in the fields of figure skating, cross country skiing, bobsleigh, biathlon, track and field and other sports.