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## Growing Number of Olympic Athletes Use Rolfing® Bodywork For Improved Performance and Quicker Injury Recovery

Boulder, CO...May 15, 2004. When Amy Acuff, two-time U.S. Olympic high jumper posed for the Sept. '04 cover of Playboy magazine she had only one thing on her mind. Winning the 2004 Olympic gold. Her 4th place win in Athens last month positioned her as the only American to score in the high jump. Ranked top 10 in the world for four years, Acuff has a reputation for rising above the rest when it comes to claiming the spotlight. Interviewed in Vogue, Esquire, Glamour, and Rolling Stone she has been recognized for her athleticism and personal style.

For an athlete of this caliber, Acuff's training depends on body strength, flexibility, and fitness, and includes a type of bodywork called Rolfing® structural integration to give her the competitive edge. Acuff says Rolfing potentially helps improve her balance and flexibility. Acuff is not the only Olympian to use Rolfing. Others include three-time U.S. Olympic Judo player, Brian Olson; 2004 U.S. bronze medalist marathon runner, Mebrahtom Keflezighi, and Sanya Richards who placed 5th in the 400 meter run. Another 2004 Olympian, Obadele Thompson, representing Barbados, placed 7th in the 100 meter run.

Sports Illustrated For Women.com says Rolfing is "enjoying a resurgence among professional athletes." Former U.S. Olympians like Michelle Kwan, Elvis Stojko, Wendy Wagner, and Ben Hindle have also recommended Rolfing and used it to prepare for the Olympics. Wagner, a skier, told Sports Illustrated For Women in an interview about her experience with Rolfing, "I breathe deeper; my balance is better. It gives a competitive edge." Erin Aldrich, 2000 U. S. Olympic high jumper, recommended Rolfing to Acuff. Acuff says Rolfing helped improve her alignment so she could stand up straighter. "As an athlete, good alignment changes the whole way you receive information," says Acuff. "Your eyes are set to interpret spatial relationships based on where your head is. If your head is leaning forward or cocked to the side, it is harder to interpret distance and have an awareness of where you are in space."

"As an Olympic high jumper, my motor skills, range of motion and power through that range of motion are critical," says Acuff. "When I take off I have to be in position, and more important, I have to be powerful through the launch. I use Rolfing to increase my performance. It frees up a lot of space in my movement, increases my range of motion and gives me more efficient muscle control. The increased range of motion helps me refine the use of my proprioceptions, so I know where I am in space. It also streamlined my motor pathways."

In the spotlight a few years ago, Esquire magazine profiled Acuff wearing a fur fashion bra and briefs in competition. Waving the American flag, clad in red, white, and blue body paint, Esquire says Acuff was impressive, "... what Amy Acuff can do with her body has always been more amazing than how she makes it look. Acuff can jump over your head. That is, unless you're six seven."

Acuff won the 2004 U.S. indoor National Championships and has been receiving Rolfing for a year. She says, "I received Rolfing in March 2003, before I went to the World Indoor Championships with the USA Track and Field team. Rolfing helped increase my endurance, so I

was able to compete more frequently indoors. Normally I would not dare to compete for a few days back to back, it is too stressful, the joints feel jammed, and there is swelling and pain in my hip and ankle joints. Rolfing helped me do the jumps back to back, because I was putting less compression on my joints."

The U.S. produces some of the world's greatest track and field stars. Amy Acuff says the precision of her performance is vital to her success, "When I received Rolfing I was really impressed how I was able to make connections between distant parts of my body and see how they were related. For an athlete, this increase in connection can really improve your precision. The more I feel the connection and flexibility, the better I feel the precision in performing the jump."

Watching Acuff launch her jump, her coach knows Acuff has the skill to bring in the gold. Acuff, says, "As I come into my approach, I scan my whole body. I have to take off within a few inches of my ideal or the jump is ruined. As I run, my eyes take in information and send messages to my brain that help put me in that precise target area."

Olympian and teammate, Erin Aldrich introduced Acuff to her Certified Rolfer, Brian Beard at Academy of Oriental Medicine where Acuff is studying acupuncture. Acuff received Rolfing sessions before the world championships last May, and before the Olympics. Former Olympian, Erin Aldrich, was ranked No. 1 in the U. S. when she led the women's 2000 Olympic team. She says Rolfing helped her make the Olympic team, "I credit Rolfing for turning around a really bad injury - my sprained ankle - in time for me to jump at the 2000 U.S. Olympic trials. I saw my Rolfer, Brian Beard every week before the trials. I was scared I wasn't going to be able jump at all. He turned the ankle around, got me back to 100% and I made the team." At the Olympic trials, Aldrich jumped 6'4" to make the team.

Olympic MD, Dr. Karl Ullis of Santa Monica, CA, who has worked with Olympic athletes in track and field says, "The Olympic athletes wouldn't have as many injuries if they had soft tissue manipulation. Rolfing is valuable for all athletes in high level competition to address the build up of scar tissue and the disarrangement of myofascial tissue that occurs from training, scaring and injury. Athletes always need help with chronic injuries, muscular strain and overuse. Sports therapies help with circulation and relaxation but Rolfing supports structural realignment for greater efficiency of movement and more precise movement."

Rolfing® is a brand of structural integration and is a registered service mark of the Rolf Institute® of Structural Integration. For more info go to [www.rolf.org](http://www.rolf.org).

Bio: Brian Beard, Certified Rolfer has a private practice at Academy of Oriental Medicine, in Austin Texas. He has worked with trainers and athletes on many teams at the University of Texas including, football, women's golf, track and field, basketball and volleyball teams.