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**SOUTHLAND'S MOST PROMISING OLYMPIC TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETES  
TEAM WITH CEDARS-SINAI PHYSICIANS AS PART OF  
BREAKTHROUGH TRAINING PROGRAM**

**LOS ANGELES (March 21, 2008)** –A group of world-class track and field athletes has teamed with one of the world's highest-quality medical centers, Cedars-Sinai, to form an alliance that combines physiology expertise with training techniques to improve performance.

The Cheetah International Track Club, a not-for-profit organization that has produced some of the nation's best track and field athletes for more than 30 years, selected Cedars-Sinai Orthopaedic Center because of its unique expertise in the specialized treatment, research and education in the field of sports medicine, including the emerging area of high-performance/athletic medicine.

Under the leadership of orthopaedic surgeon Rodney Gabriel, M.D., the Cedars-Sinai Orthopaedic Center's athletic medicine specialists will collaborate with the track team's coach, tailoring training regimens to improve performance and prevent injuries as these elite athletes train for major competitions, including the upcoming 2008 Olympic trials.

According to Gabriel, the type of support provided by Cedars-Sinai physicians to the athletes is part of the emerging field of medicine referred to as athletic medicine, which differs from sports medicine programs which generally focus on treatment and rehabilitation from injuries.

"Drawing on our knowledge of physiology, we can promote the body's natural ability to increase muscle strength and to generate more energy, ultimately producing better speeds – and better athletic performance," said Gabriel. "In collaboration with the team's coach, we will develop a comprehensive plan to address the specific improvements we'd like to see in each athlete."

The partnership between Cedars-Sinai and the Cheetah International Track Club was the brainchild of Coach Ernie Gregoire (Coach G), head of the Cheetahs for some 30 years.

Gabriel, in conjunction with Coach G, will develop fitness protocols that utilize a range of physical strength training models to enhance muscle function. They will revamp the team's workout formulas to include specific exercise routines that focus on building muscle, reducing injury and enhancing balance training. In addition, Gabriel will work with Cheetah International's trainers to create dietary programs that incorporate the proper food groups to optimize an athlete's natural performance.

Gabriel, a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon, developed his interest in athletic medicine as a college basketball player and while at medical school at UC San Diego. Gabriel, who also specializes in the treatment of shoulder and knee injuries, is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

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Coach G has an illustrious history in the sport of track and field, including serving as assistant coach for the 2000 U.S. Olympic Team. Coach G is the recipient of the 2003 Southern California Track and Field Lifetime Achievement Award.

"I have a group of promising athletes who dream about making the 2008 Olympic team. I believe our partnership with Cedars-Sinai and Dr. Gabriel will help them realize that dream," said Coach G. "Dr. Gabriel and his team are highly skilled professionals who are lending support and expertise in a preventative capacity, as well as contributing to a training and development program that will help make my team better athletes."

One of Southern California's oldest track clubs, the Cheetah International Track Club is comprised of 12 elite athletes and several senior athletes (40 years and above), including several Olympic hopefuls, such as long jumper Tameisha King, a five-time NCAA All-American who in 2004 ranked second in the nation and won a gold medal in the USA Indoor Track and Field Championships; Angela Daigle-Bowen, 2005 USA Track & Field National Indoor 60m champion; and Johnny Deryeghiayan, gold medalist in the 100m and 200m events at the 2007 Pan-Armenian Games.

The Cedars-Sinai Orthopaedic Center is also planning community athletic medicine seminars and educational lectures that will be geared toward amateur athletes, local coaches and people of all ages who enjoy athletics, including baby boomers concerned about maintaining optimal fitness.

Cedars-Sinai's orthopaedic program, ranked by *U.S News & World Report* as one of the best in the United States in 2007, provides comprehensive services for the treatment of orthopaedic injuries and conditions. Along with pioneering new physical training programs that target the specific needs of professional and amateur athletes, the center is involved with new research and treatments for foot and ankle, shoulders, hands and knees, and houses one of the nation's only dance medicine centers.

For more information, contact the Cedars-Sinai Orthopaedic Center at 1-800-CEDARS1 or visit [www.cedars-sinai.edu/ortho](http://www.cedars-sinai.edu/ortho).

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