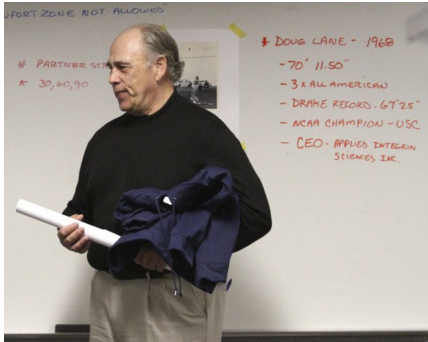


Lane used sports as springboard for success

Written by Tom Fruehling

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The one thing Doug Lane was good at as a Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School student back in the mid-1960s was throwing a 12-pound steel ball.

He could throw it so far, in fact, that after 46 years he still holds the state shot put record as well as the high school record at the Drake Relays.

When he heaved the shot 70 feet, 11 inches at a meet in Dubuque on a mild day in May in 1968, it was a remarkable 10 feet farther than any Iowa prep had thrown before and five feet farther than any has done since.

"A perfect day," Lane, now 64, recalled on Friday while watching this year's J-Hawk track squad practice at Kingston Stadium. "Everything came together."

It set the national record then, too, by more than a foot and put him on the cover of the prestigious Athletic Journal.

Long since living in California after he left Cedar Rapids for an All-American and NCAA championship stint at USC, he was back in town to visit relatives. And he asked Jefferson Coach Ron Tower if he could talk to the track team.

"I've wanted to do this for a long time," he said.

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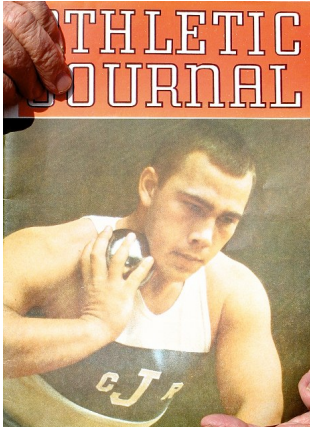
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"I wanted to explain to these young athletes that throwing the shot put all those years ago was only a small part of my life. But it was a very important part of my life. It was a springboard for everything I have done since then.

"The education I received in the Cedar Rapids schools and the discipline I learned from being an athlete made all the difference in my life. They gave me my start."

And he stressed that while his name may still be in the high school record books, it's what he's accomplished since that's given him the most satisfaction.

With his track scholarship, he earned a degree from USC in psychology and later picked up degrees in microbiology and biochemistry in addition to a master's in business.



He's long enjoyed a successful career in the business side of the health sciences industry and is now CEO of two Malibu-based firms on the cutting edge of cancer and Alzheimer's drug treatment development.

"I love what I do," he said. "Biotechnology is a risky business. What I do is try to take the risk out of the business and let the scientists do their miracles.

"I love the entrepreneurial spirit of it. And I've always been very competitive."

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He said that's what made him a champion at an early age and has motivated him from then on.

Lane grew up an only child of modest means in southwest Cedar Rapids near Hayes Elementary School. His dad, Bob, worked at the water treatment plant, and neither he nor his mom Izora went past the eighth grade.

"They said I **WOULD** go to college," he recalled.

In school, he said, "I wasn't the student I could have been." (Partly, he thinks, because he was well into his 30s when he discovered by accident that he was dyslexic.)

There was always sports, though, from ice skating to football to his eventual niche of howitzer-like shot putting.

"I had outstanding coaches," he told a locker room full of J-Hawk preps. "They taught me technique, and I studied and worked hard at it. It wasn't just strength.

"And I had great teammates. There were four of us who threw the shot 59 feet or greater, and we pushed each other. But there was always that desire to compete and to win. When I competed, I was so focused that I channeled all my energy into that throw."

And one day in May a long time ago a young Doug Lane had a moment that many say will never be repeated.

"Not all of us have an opportunity for perfection," he told the athletes. "But all of you have the resources to do great things."