

## **New Home for The Bob Hayes Invitational Track Meet**

**UNF ARENA | 11852 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA DR. | JACKSONVILLE, FLA. 32224**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - New Executive Director of the Bob Hayes Organization Greg Coleman announced that the 2023 Bob Hayes Invitational Track Meet will have a new home at the University North Florida's Visit Jax Track at Hodges Stadium. Coleman said, "this meet started at Matthew Gilbert on the eastside, then to Douglas Anderson on the southside, on to Northwestern and eventually to William Raines High School on the northside". Wherever this meet has been held, it continued to exemplify the excellence and standard set by the founding fathers of the Bob Hayes Invitational. I have heard it said that sometimes you have to 'Go to Grow' and this was one of those times".

For 57 years the annual Bob Hayes Invitational Track Field Meet has served as the premier High School Track Field Meet in the country. The annual event honors the achievements of Jacksonville native, Olympic Gold Medalist, and Super Bowl Champion, "Bullet" Bob Hayes. His success in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games was a pivotal achievement in fueling the track and field meet's success. The organization's vision represents the purpose of its existence by serving and enriching the lives of others through integrity, excellence, and responsibility. The Bob Hayes Invitational Track and Field Meet has shown a long-term civic and economic impact on the City of Jacksonville, providing an experience for young athletes locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.

Principle Vincent Hall of Raines HS, said, "we are ecstatic about the ongoing partnership with the Bob Hayes Organization as the official sponsor of the annual Bob Hayes International Track and Field Meet at Hodges Stadium on the campus of the University of North Florida". The Executive Director, Greg Coleman and his team are continuing to focus on the opportunities this meet provides for our students and athletes across the region "

We are so honored to partner with Raines High School and the City of Jacksonville in hosting the Bob Hayes Invitational Track & Field Meet," UNF Director of Athletics Nick Morrow said. "As UNF and Visit Jax Track at Hodges Stadium continue to become the premier destination for track and field meets, we now have the opportunity to showcase one of the best high school meets in the entire country. We look forward to March 2023 as we highlight incredible high school athletes at one of the best track & field facilities in the country.

Thank you to the Bob Hayes Invitational Track Meet Board for trusting UNF to host this prestigious meet. "This is an amazing opportunity to continue to share our vision of Visit Jax Track at Hodges Stadium being one of the premier track and field facilities in the country," University of North Florida Deputy AD Ervin Lewis said. "Hosting championships like the Bob Hayes Invitational advances that vision and we are excited for the opportunity."

The Bob Hayes Annual Track Meet Organization carries on the legacy of its founder, James (Coach) Day, whose vision was not only to provide a great athletic experience for youth but to get the community involved in supporting participants through the generation of scholarships.

Coleman also said, “the look on the face of the athlete when the trophy is presented and the gold medal is placed around the winners neck, the announcers say ‘ You are a Bob Hayes Champion for Life, is priceless!

The Press Conference will be held on Wednesday August 3, 2022 at Hodges Stadium Press Box

To find out more about Hodges Field at the University of North Florida click here:

<https://unfospreys.com/facilities/visit-jax-track-at-hodges-stadium/53>

Greg Coleman, Executive Director

[Gcoleman08@icloud.com](mailto:Gcoleman08@icloud.com)

612-800-8408