

# THE STORIES

22 JUNE



## TEAM CHILE

**Máximo Pacheco (18) & Cristián Maluje (12)**

### **Todo el equipo mexicano de fútbol viene de la Península de Yucatán**

Eso fue lo que nos contó Juan Eduardo Xool, de 25 años, hijo de Josefina y Julio Eduardo Xool. Además él tiene tres hermanas y va a cumplir diez años en Olimpiadas Especiales. Juan Eduardo ha participado en los dos últimos Juegos de Verano de Olimpiadas Especiales: en Alaska y Carolina del Norte, y ésta es su tercera vez.

Él entrena dos horas diarias de lunes a viernes, y en el equipo de fútbol de México juega como medio campista.

También nos dice que su comida favorita es la comida de México, que su animal favorito es el gato y que sus bandas de música preferidas son Maná, La Ley y Carlos Santana.

En la Península de Yucatán no hay temblores, pero hay sifones y tormentas eléctricas; y en octubre, noviembre y diciembre es cuando hace más frío.

Cuando juegan fútbol, lo que ellos visten son playeras, que en algunos otros países se llaman poleras o remeras. Juan Eduardo supo de Olimpiadas Especiales gracias a un amigo que lo invitó a participar, y así pudo involucrarse en esta organización.

De su país, incluyendo atletas, entrenadores y doctores, entre otros, vinieron a Irlanda más de 70 personas, y más o menos su viaje demoró un día y medio.

En México se conoce muy bien a Olimpiadas Especiales y no hay tanta diferencia entre las personas que no son como la mayoría.

Juan Eduardo nos contó también que le gusta la guitarra y la batería y que le gustaría aprender a tocar alguno de los dos.

Por último, todos los participantes de la península de Yucatán son el 23% de la delegación de México en los Juegos de Verano de Olimpiadas Especiales 2003.

### **The Entire Special Olympics Mexico Football (Soccer) Team Comes From The Yucatán Peninsula**

*Translation by Francisco Lobos*

Juan Eduardo Xool, representing Team Mexico in football, is 25 years old, and son of Josefina and Julio Eduardo Xool. He's got three sisters and is about to start his 10th year in Special Olympics. Juan Eduardo has participated in the last two Special Olympics World Games, held in Alaska and North Carolina.

He trains two hours daily, Monday to Friday, and his position on the Mexican team is midfield. Eduardo also told us that his favorite food is Mexican food, that his favorite animal is the cat and that he likes listening to music from Maná, La Ley and Carlos Santana.

In the Yucatán Peninsula there are no earthquakes, but there are typhoons and electric storms, and the colder months of the year are October, November and December.

When he plays soccer he wears a "playera," which is the Spanish word for a T-shirt. Juan Eduardo knew about Special Olympics through a friend, who invited him to participate. That's how he got involved in this great organization!

Including athletes, coaches, and doctors, among others, the Mexican delegation is composed of 70 people. Their trip to Ireland took almost one and a half days. Special Olympics is very well known in Mexico and little differences are made to people who are not like the majority.

Juan Eduardo told us also that he likes guitars and drums, and that he would like to learn how to play one of these one day.

Lastly, all participants from Yucatán make up 23 percent of the Special Olympics Mexico delegation to the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

# THE STORIES

## TEAM ALASKA

### Ryan Atkinson & Angela Wegscheider

Taking place at the same time as the 2003 World Summer Games is the Global Youth Summit. Nineteen countries from around the world are coming together to discuss inclusion and report on athletes participating in the Games. Among the countries that are attending is South Africa. Representing South Africa is an athlete, partner and chaperone.

Although he doesn't know his exact birthday, he knows that he 15 years old. Rofhiwa Manwadu (row-fee-nea mawn-wa-do) is the athlete from South Africa participating in the Global Youth Summit. He comes from the town of Thohogandou (Paloewane) in the Limpopo Providence. Watching Rofhiwa in running is not something his three siblings take part in, but his parents do show up at many events.

Since Rofhiwa attends a separate school for students with disabilities, he doesn't get to participate with general education students and have their high school experiences and activities. All special needs students attend separate schools in South Africa.

"I would rather attend a regular school and have friends," says Rofhiwa, although, when he is with general education students he sometimes gets teased and that makes him angry. Besides running events, he also likes to play net ball with Mukovhe Ralulimi, (moo-ko-vay rawl oo-lemie) which is similar to basketball, and a popular game in many countries around the world. Mukovhe, who is also 15, is Rofhiwa's partner and participates with Rofhiwa through a community program sponsored by the high school coach.

Mukovhe got interested in Special Olympics when she attended Nelson Mandela's 81st birthday celebration, where she met several people with disabilities. She has one brother and three sisters who all attend a semi-private school that does not include students with special needs. She is glad that she has this opportunity to visit the World Games in Ireland and gets ideas from other people on encouraging interaction with students of all ability levels.

Her favorite music is rhythm and blues and what she calls "house" music, a cultural music popular in South Africa, and one of her favorite movies is Titanic. In the future she would like to like to help the earth by being an environmental scientist.

Traveling with Rofhiwa and Mukovhe is their coach, Michael Rasikhinya, who has received the Community Builder Award three years in a row in his community. In 1999 Nelson Mandela presented him with the Silver Star for his help with helping poor and at-risk children with after-school sports programs. He volunteers and also gives of his home and own resources to help students.

Special Olympics invited Michael to an organizational meeting and enlisted his help to include students with disabilities into his programs. Now that he is aware of students like Rofhiwa, Michael is trying to advocate to get others to join with him in supporting Special Olympic Programs in schools and the community.

"Awareness is the key to getting them involved. People are not aware of the opportunities and good things that can be done by bringing students of all abilities together."



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# THE STORIES

## TEAM TENNESSEE

### Tyler Straughn (18) & Dustin Hargrove (18)

Today we visited the football (soccer) venue of the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games. While there, we met Cody Shcaitt, age 17, and Ross Clubb, age 20. Both are from Texas. Cody has been involved with Special Olympics for over two years. He got involved "because he loved making people feel good about themselves." Ross has been involved with Special Olympics for five years. He started playing soccer and later a friend got him involved in both volleyball and basketball.

Cody and Ross met while training for the World Games. They have been training together for over a year. Although Cody and Ross do not attend the same school, they have become good friends through Special Olympics. One of Cody's greatest pleasures is helping the athletes have fun. When asked how he would broaden the Special Olympics appeal, Cody stated he would take films of the many different sporting events and show them to high schools across the United States.

Without having the experience of Special Olympics, these two athletes would not have grown to be such great friends.



## TEAM LEBANON

### Hiba Hammoud (16) & Jawdat Al Hajj

"My dream was to travel, to meet different people, people who appreciate me and my capacities. Now this dream has come true with Special Olympics."

Rami Moustafa from Lebanon is 22 years old and has been in the Special Olympics since 1997. He plays football (soccer). He likes to play basketball, floor hockey, football and gymnastics.

Moustafa was in an orphanage when he joined Special Olympics. He started to travel with them, and now thinks that traveling, meeting people who speak different languages and who are of different races, give him exposure to life from around the world. In 1998 he went to Greece, in 1999 he traveled to Syria, and then in 2000 he went to Alaska. Of course now he is in Ireland competing at the World Games. His ambition is to stay with his friends and prepare to be a player on one of the most important teams.



## TEAM JORDAN

### Susan El Mimi & Sura

#### A Blonde Knight

Blue sky, green land and the singing of the birds — this is how we started our day looking forward to seeing our special knight on his beautiful horse.

We were first impressed by the fantastic display of nature in Kill, which made us envy the Irish people for their countryside and life.

When we wanted to interview, we didn't know who to choose for our article until a young, beautiful girl approached us with her coach. We asked if they wouldn't mind being interviewed together and they welcomed our offer with excitement.

This young girl's name was Sibille Carquilot and she lives in Switzerland. Sibille is 18 years old and has been in Special Olympics Switzerland since the 2000, participating in equestrian sports. Although this is the first international Special Olympics competition for Sibille, she is absolutely ready to compete with all of the athletes.

When Susan and I asked Sibille about her feeling when she rides a horse, we were extremely impressed. "I feel confident," she said with pride and honor.

Sibille's dream is very simple and beautiful. She wants her own horse.

So, Sibille, we wish that someone out there will fulfill your dream. Sibille would also like to thank all the Irish people for their kindness and hospitality.

# THE STORIES

## TEAM NAMIBIA

Chantal Van Wyk (13) & Freda Kambangula (14)

### Party Exposes Athlete Joaquin

The 11-a-side football (soccer) games were a thrill to watch at the AUL fields on Sunday, 22 June. The intensity of the games was surprisingly very high as if they already had reached the final stage. At the conclusion of the games on Sunday, 20-year-old Special Olympics Mexico soccer athlete Joaquin Gomez, born on 2 April 1973, was kind enough to share some of his experiences at these World Games.

Joaquin originates from a family of four and regrets that his family was unable to join him at the 2003 World Games, considering that this is the third time he has been involved in the Games. He, however, is so happy to be at these Games as this is a rare opportunity in life.

He first got involved with Special Olympics when a friend invited him to a party at which someone explained what Special Olympics was all about and extended an invitation to him to attend Special Olympics training. Since then, Special Olympics has been so important to him.

At this year's Games, he has had great fun, especially at the Opening Ceremonies at which he was able to see former South African President Nelson Mandela and other celebrities. He will treasure these memories. Apart from the Opening Ceremonies, he is so glad to see the beautiful landscape of Ireland. Joaquin spoke so highly of the general attitude and friendly approach of the local people and wishes he could stay much longer or come back for a visit one day in his life.

Joaquin believes that the Summer Games will bring lots of tourists to Ireland, not only to the events themselves, but also after the Games, considering that through Special Olympics people around the world are learning more about Ireland.



## TEAM ISRAEL

Nete Levi and Michal van Hems

### ראיון עם שחקנית מניס

ויקי היא שחקנית מניס, בת 29. נולדה ב-15/2/74 גרה בניו סאות' וולס, אוסטרליה.

ויקי משחקת מניס כבר 3 שנים.

לספיישל אולימפיק הגיעה בעקבות יום פתוח שבו מצגים ענפי ספורט שונים ולאחר התלבטות היא בחרה לשחק מניס, חוץ מניס היא אוהבת לשחק באיילנד ולשחק ורצנה לנסות לשחק סופמבול.

בכל מדינה באוסטרליה מתקיימות תחרויות אולימפיות שבהם נבחרים השחקנים לאולימפיאדה.

לאירלנד נשלחו 10 שחקני מניס, שני שחקנים (בן ובת) מחמש מדינות: ויקטוריה, סמסיה,

ניו סאות' וולס, קווינסלנד ו-ACT.

ויקי השתתפה בתחרות באיסטרליה חסות במגילית ארד. היא מאוד שמחה וטאה לייצג את אוסטרליה באולימפיאדה ומתרגשת לקראת התחרות, היא מקווה לזכות במגילית, בתקווה להגיע לזרוב, המאמן שלה אמר לה לחזור לאוסטרליה עם מגילית זהב.

ההשתתפות בתחרות גורמת לה להרגיש פיוסות.

היא רוצה להעביר מסר למפורסמים שלא הגיעו לאולימפיאדה, שידברו במסירה ואם הם אוהבים את ענף ספורט להעסיק לנסות שלא יחזרו על העולם ואם לא מצליחים שיבחרו משהו אחר.

ויקי היא הבת הבכורה ויש לה עוד שני אחים נשואים, היא מתגוררת בבית הוריה ועובדת כאורחת ראשית במפעל, היא גם

מתנדבת באמבולנס של עזרה ראשונה.

בשעות הפנאי היא אוהבת לראות טרשים, בטיסה לאירלנד ראתה את הכרטיס "איך לאבד גבר ב-10 ימים" וסאוד נהנתה. תחביב טיפ הוא לאמץ כפות.

אנחנו מאחלים לויקי בהצלחה!!!



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# THE STORIES



## TEAM SOUTH AFRICA

**Manwadu Rofhiwa (17) & Ralulimi Mukovhe (15)**

### **Australian Golden Girl Impresses on First Attempt**

The bleachers roared with cheers as everyone screamed and jumped in joy. Like her role model, Ian Thorpe, she swiftly floated through the water in her preliminary race. The new Special Olympics 100m freestyle sensation clocked a magnificent 1 minute and 9 second race: the fastest time in all the heats.

Suzanne T. O'Moore, age 25, never dreamed of representing Australia until Special Olympics Global Messengers arrived in her school, Mount Maria Senior College, in 1989, bringing the good news of Special Olympics.

Although this is her first World Games, Suzanne was been involved in gymnastics at a local level in Australia for several years. During the interview with the Youth Summit delegation, she revealed the key to her successful performance. "I worked very hard during training. My training program started 12 months ago. I went to the pool four times a week and to the gym twice a week," she proudly said.

"I am going to enjoy myself during the finals tomorrow. I want to run my personal best time. The medal is not an ultimate goal but if it comes, I will be very happy."

"Special Olympics changed my life completely; I now have courage, believe in myself, feel motivated and greatness about myself. I just want to go out now and make some friends," she concluded.



## TEAM JAPAN

**Kazushige Takeuchi (18) and Ryosuke Niwa (17)**

### **Interviews at the Track**

*Translation by Saho Kitawaki*

#### ***Bruan Doran***

Bruan Doran is the youngest athlete on the Irish team. His sports are 25m and softball. His hobby is drawing and watching TV. He also likes running. He has been practicing for Special Olympics for two years. He got involved with the organization through school. He loves sports and is excited about Special Olympics. His family and friends are excited too. He has one older brother, one younger sister and no pets. He said the Games are "cool." His coach said he has been doing well.

#### ***Hautham Harbbad***

Hautham Harbbad of Kuwait runs in the 100m and 400m events. His favorite hobbies are listening to music, drawing and watching movies. He has six brothers and six sisters and they are all friendly. He likes traveling with his family a lot. He is excited about Special Olympics. He has been taking part in Special Olympics for the last five years. He started practicing for the Games last October. Since childhood he has been interested in athletics, but there was no place to practice. When he went to school he played baseball and football.

#### ***Harumi Nishimura***

Harumi Nishimura is here at the Games representing Japan. Nishimura has one older sister and one older brother. Her high school teacher is her coach. Before she came to Dublin, she had won her events and was very proud. She will be competing in the 400m dash soon, so she wants to do her best. Her best record is 71.88 seconds and she is hoping to achieve 70 seconds. She has been to two World Games so far.

#### ***Tomomi Yamauchi***

Tomomi Yamauchi joined Special Olympics by herself. She has won gold medals in the 100m and 5000m before. Her sport is actually running but she did skiing at the National Games in Nagano, Japan. She said "I want to get better results, so I'm doing my best." She is living with her mother in Japan. Her family and coach are always supportive of her endeavors.



# THE STORIES

## TEAM PERU

**Claudia Requena & Joanna Castro**

### Felicitaciones!

Con gran orgullo podemos decir que hoy día conocimos a Quek Puay Leng, nuestra primera entrevistada que gana una medalla de oro, felicitaciones Quek!

Cuando llegamos al Bowling fue espectacular; la musica, la decoracion y la gente eran increíbles. Despues de un largo viaje a Phoenix Park para poder llegar hasta alli podemos asegurar que valio la pena el gran camino. Al llegar nos recibieron con mucho carino y tuvimos la suerte de encontrasrnos y conocer el equipo que venia de Singapur.

Quek Puay Leng estaba completamente feliz. Mientras que su entrenador celebraba, Quek saltaba y hablaba con sus amigos, estaba muy emocionada. Ella tiene veiticuatro anos, nacio en el 1987 y su cumpleaños es dentro de dos dias; el veintiseis de junio, feli día adelantado, desde aqui te deseamos lo mejor.

Asimismo, Quek nos conto que en su tiempo libre le fascina correr, nadar, y ver television. Le fascinan todo tipo de programas; dibujos animados, series, novelas, etc. Tambien nos dijo que el bowling para ella es lo mejor, le fascina por que "es divertido y puede hacer muchos amigos cuando juega"

Hoy cuando la vimos nos conto que en la ceremonia de inauguracion le encanto los juegos artificiales y los cantantes, especialmente U2. Tambien nos dijo muy emocionada que iba al colegio Sia Minds en Singapur y que tiene muchos amigos ali.

Finalmente nos emiciono mucho que nos dijera que si pudiera decirle algo a todas las persona que estan aqui les diria que "quiero darles las gracias a todos por darme esta gran oportunidad aqui"

## Blue Angel

Vanessa Futral is a gymnastics athlete on Team USA and she gave us the honor of interviewing her though she was in a hurry (she had to compete again but this time, with the hoop). She was wearing a beautiful, sparkly blue gymnastic suit, but it was her sweet and innocent expression that caught our attention immediately.

She was talking to her brother and they were very excited. Her brother introduced us and she began to talk about herself and about her experience in Ireland so far.

She has been involved in gymnastics for over a decade and she strongly believes she will be doing it all her life. "It's great." She is a multifaceted girl. She goes to North Capital High School, she paints in her spare time, she practices gymnastics and she loves Disney music.

She told us that she is very happy because all of her family is here: her father, mother and brother. She also told us that this is the best experience ever because she has been able to make new friends from Rhode Island, New Jersey, Texas, Oklahoma and from many other places around the globe.

We are looking forward to seeing you compete again soon and we wish you the best!



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# THE STORIES

## **What a Wonderful World ...**

We were wandering around in the gymnastics venue when we saw a very colorful team. While the athletes were having a break, we decided to talk to them for a while.

It was very interesting to learn that they were the Special Olympics Brazil team and that they were waiting to see the performance of women on their team. Within the group there was a boy who seemed very chatty and we thought it would be lovely to share his story as he is for sure, a wonderful boy and an outstanding athlete.

His name is William Loughnane and he is 18 years old. His birthday is 29 November and he has been involved in gymnastics for more than a decade. It was incredible to hear him talk about himself and about how much he was enjoying the World Summer Games. Moreover, he told us that he was looking forward to competing; we will never forget his words, "It would be an honor to win."

In addition to this, he told us that he enjoys other sports such as cycling, swimming and going to the gym. He does all of these in his spare time. He goes to Saint Claire's School where his favorite subject is science. We can understand this as he adores reading books about it.

Finally, we must acknowledge that he is having the best time in the world here in Ireland and that he will remember the Opening Ceremonies for the rest of his life. In his own words, "It was splendid, great. I was so excited and U2 rocks!"

## **TEAM PARAGUAY**

### **Beto Aguilera y Milena Cociani**

Entrevistamos a un joven guatemalteco de nombre Marcos Antonio Madina, su cumpleaños es el 23 de abril.

El practica Fútbol, lo juega porque le agrada mucho, puede mantener un buen estado de salud, porque puede compartir con sus compañeros durante las prácticas y, le satisface representar a su comunidad y a su país a través de este deporte cuando sale al extranjero.

Tiene una familia a quien ama con todo el corazón, tiene cuatro hermanos un padre y una madre muy trabajadora.

Es la primera vez que sale de su país, pues por eso sintió un poco de nervios, cuando subió al avión, y más aún cuando comenzó a acelerar para despegar, pero cuando despegó por completo el avión olvidó todos los nervios que sentía ratos antes. Fue maravilloso poder ver a mi ciudad desde el cielo. Creo que nunca olvidaré.

La delegación que ha venido representará a mi país en el Fútbol, natación, atletismo y otros deportes que no recuerdo bien.

Irlanda es un país muy agradable porque la gente es muy amigable todos sonríen y eso me pone muy feliz.

He conocido a mucha gente, en la Universidad donde nos hospedamos pudimos conversar con la delegación de Paraguay, también intercambiamos regalos típicos de nuestros países estamos notando los teléfonos para poder seguir comunicándonos para que esta amistad no termine aquí.

Desde que llegue me ha gustado todo, pero lo más impresionante fue la ceremonia de apertura. Cuando entramos al estadio me emocioné mucho porque todos nos aplaudían como si fueran todos de Guatemala, me gustó mucho los colores que utilizaron con los banderines y los globos gigantes, muy bueno!!

Estoy muy feliz por haber sido seleccionado en mi país y poder estar aquí compartiendo, creo que nunca olvidaré todo lo bueno que estamos pasando aquí, con ustedes.



# THE STORIES

## TEAM POLAND

### Mariusz Strzyzewski & Marcin Cichulski

Witam. Tu Dublin. Chciałbym dzisiaj opowiedzieć wam o wszystkim co dzieje się w stolicy Irlandii, a dzieje się dużo...nawet bardzo dużo!!!

Ale spokojnie ja wam wszystko wytłumaczę, otóż w Dublinie rozpoczęły się Igrzyska Paraolimpijskie. Jestem w Irlandii pierwszy raz, lecz oprócz lekkich komplikacji na lotnisku wszystko jest tutaj w porządku.

Ten kraj jest bardzo piękny i bardzo mi się spodoba. Jest tu bardzo zielono. Pięknem bija też krajobrazy. Ludzie są bardzo mili, co aż poraża- każdy na kogo spojrzysz odpłaca ci uśmiechem albo chociaż miłym słowem. OK koniec; reszcie dowiecie się z książek do geografii. Ja nie poto siedzę w RDS (głównie centrum dowodzenia olimpiady specjalnej), żeby wam truć o rzeczach które już wiecie. Przejdę do sedna. Otóż jestem wolontariuszem na olimpiadach – nie, nie zbieram pieniędzy bo przecierz o tym sobie pomyślicie przed chwilą, opiekuje się wraz z moją trochę starszą koleżanką, która pochodzi również z POLSKI – uczniem z intelektualną niepełnosprawnością uczymy się w szkole specjalnej w Warszawie.

Teraz trochę o tym co się tutaj dzieje. Otóż, zawody są prowadzone w różnych dyscyplinach w sumie ok 22. Jest w nich podnoszenie ciężarów, koszykówka, kajaki, pływanie, piłka nożna i wiele innych sportów.

Dzisiaj byłem na zawodach pływackich. Niestety nie widziałem całych, ale to co widziałem to z chęcią opiszę. Konkurencja jaka widziałem, było pływanie na dystansie 100 m., stylem wolnym. Atmosfera była wspaniała. Każdy dostawał ogromną dawkę oklasków nawet jak nie był z Irlandii. Szczególnie brawa otrzymywali Ci, którzy zajmowali ostatnie miejsca. Tutaj nie liczył się czas jaki uzyskasz, ale jak będziesz się wytrwał. Najbardziej spodobał mi się jeden chłopiec który nie miał władzy w nogach. Widac, że był bardzo silny psychicznie, wyszedł o kulach wspierany przez trenera, a gdy rozległ się dźwięk oznajmiający start ruszyli. Ow chłopiec na początku zostawał w tyle ale bardzo chciał płynąć szybciej. I to mu się udało. Mimo przeciwności płynął, a raczej mknął. I chociaż na początku wszyscy mieli przewagę to po przepłynięciu dwóch długości basenu miała już małą stratę do pozostałych zawodników.

Dla mnie najważniejsze. W zawodach startowała też Polka, 18-letnia Katarzyna.

W kwalifikacjach do finału, w swojej grupie, wygrała z dobrym czasem 1.23,15 min.

Tylko kilka innych dziewcząt miało lepsze czasy. Najlepszą była Australijka z czasem ok. 1.09 min. Niestety nie usiedziałem na miejscu z powodu mojego żołądka który domagał się pozywienia. I nie zobaczyłem naszego reprezentanta. Teraz bardzo żaluje.

Ogólnie mieszkam w pokoju z miotłopodiecznym, którego polubiłem i uwieście mi, zachowuje się jak ja, gdy byłem w jego wieku. Ma 15 lat, na imię Mariusz. Lubi piłkę nożną, koszykówkę i kocha pływanie.

Przeżywa pierwszą miłość. Lapie z tego powodu doły nie widzę żadnej bariery między nim a mną. Jest wspaniałym towarzyszem, a co najważniejsze, że rozumiemy się. Ja rozumiem jego, on rozumie mnie i wszystko jest w porządku.



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2003 Global Youth Summit



# THE STORIES

## TEAM HONG KONG

### Sam Wai Yip Tam (19) & Nelson Wing Hing Cheung (19)

Today we interviewed Scott Crowden and Radoslav Cosic, aged 19 and 30 respectively. They were both from Australia. They joined Special Olympics six years ago. They all play tennis. They like playing tennis because tennis is a one-on-one game and they can make more friends; most importantly, they want to get more medals.

Apart from tennis, Radoslav also likes racing pigeons, playing basketball and running. However, Scott didn't take part in the basketball and running competitions in this 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

Radoslav regretted that his family does not support him. His family members think that Special Olympics restricts the talent, potential and ability of athletes. When Radoslav attended some Special Olympics competitions, his family members would not go to the competition venue and support him. On the contrary, Scott receives the full support from his family, both in finance and spirit. When Scott competes in Australia, his family is always there to support him. However, since the 2003 World Games are being held in Ireland, it was too expensive for them to travel to Ireland, so they didn't come this time.

To sum it up, we learned that family support is very important to the athletes. When athletes start to join Special Olympics, they enjoy it very much. This shows that Special Olympics plays an important role in their lives.



## TEAM MISSOURI

### Andrew Roayl (17) & A.J. Hellickson (17)

#### Equestrian Event in Kill, Ireland

Equestrian is a sport that is seldom thought of when people think about Special Olympics, but if you were in Kill at the stables, you would have been very impressed by the excitement, skills and activity there. There were hundreds of volunteers and coaches trying to make sure that each participant and spectator was safe. In fact, getting into the event itself was a challenge even for those of us who were doing reports on the proceedings.

Sampsas reminded me of myself when I first began Special Olympics. He was shy and intimidated by the camera, but when his coach began to talk about his horse and the events he was participating in, he quickly gave us a huge smile.

He told me that he had a short flight to the Games, lasting only three hours, but the wait to compete seemed like a longer journey due to his overwhelming excitement.

Sampsas was very glad when his coach asked him to join the team and is glad to be working with her.

"I am enjoying being at the World Games and my favorite part so far has been the Opening Ceremonies. I was excited to see all of the entertainers.

I will be competing in the Walk and Trot event, and I am in the Masters division."

It was somewhat difficult to interview this athlete because I had to wait for the interpreter to translate the questions and the answers, but I was sure by the wide grins and hugs that he was enjoying his time in the Equestrian competition. I am so glad that I was able to cover this event because I had not been to an equestrian event before. I think my friends at home would have been excited too.

Andrew's Unified Sports® partner observed that he was very impressed that so many athletes had such knowledge of horses and that there was such a variety of events that they were competing in. We attended the event with the Special Olympics Lebanon and Special Olympics Jordan and they were equally excited about being at the venue. The arena and all of the facilities here in Ireland are impressive.