

# Coaches

# and Staff

A black and white photograph of Joe Piante, a coach, wearing a white cap with "Notre Dame" written on it and a dark jacket. He is surrounded by several young athletes, some of whom are wearing athletic gear with numbers. The scene is outdoors, possibly on a track or field, with a blurred background suggesting motion or a large gathering.

**Joe Piante  
begins his 30th  
season as head  
cross country/track  
and field coach  
this season. He is  
the longest tenured  
coach at the University.**

In 1889, track and field became the second varsity sport in school history. One hundred and 15 years later student-athletes continue to represent the Fighting Irish across the nation on the track, in the field and on the cross country course.

Out of those 114 years of competition, Joe Piane has been leading the program for the last 29. The longest tenured coach at Notre Dame, Piane will begin his 30th season at Notre Dame in the fall of 2004.

Since 1974, Piane's cross country and track and field teams have posted the following numbers:

- Men's cross country runners have earned All-American status 19 times.
- A Notre Dame cross country runner has appeared at the NCAA Championship meet for the last 14 years, while the team has made the trip 12 out of the last 16 years.
- The Notre Dame men's cross country team has finished in the top 15 at the national meet in 12 of the last 17 seasons.
- The Irish men's track and field team has earned All-America honors 49 times since 1974, while the women's team has received such accolades 31 times since 1994. Combined, Piane has helped guide 80 All-Americans during his tenure at Notre Dame.

A distance-coaching specialist, Piane is recognized across the nation as one of the best in the business. He has been named NCAA Division I Cross Country Coach of the Year on two different occasions (2001 and 1987) while garnering five district/regional coach of the year honors.

As the Irish program continues to assert itself nationally (the men's track and field team finished second at the BIG EAST indoor meet before taking first at the outdoor meet, while hurdler Selim Nurudeen made noise on the national level and the women's team produced five All-American performances), Piane has led from the front for 30 years.

The 2004 men's track and field season was highlighted by several different BIG EAST Champions and NCAA Championship qualifiers. Among the successful distance athletes coached by Piane in '04 were freshman Kurt Benninger and senior Kevin Somok.

Benninger ran a season-best 1500-meter time of 3:41.95 at the Georgia Tech Invite before advancing to the NCAA Championships where he finished 25th. Benninger's season also featured two second-place finishes in the BIG EAST outdoor meet with one in the 1500-meter run and the other in the 4x800-meter relay, which featured another Irish standout in Kevin Somok. Somok also ran his season best 1500-meter performance at the Georgia Tech Invite - a 3:42.26 effort- and qualified for the NCAA Championships where he finished 22nd.



**Joe Piane**

*Head Coach*

*30th Season*

*Loras College '69*

## Piane Continues Standard of Excellence

*Irish head coach celebrates his 30th season in 2004-05*



The 2003 track and field season was highlighted by several special performances from Luke Watson. Both Piane and Watson set their sights on breaking the four-minute mile barrier at the Meyo Invitational in 2002, hoping that Watson would become just the second runner to crack the mark. Piane helped assemble an outstanding field for the race and it ended up as arguably the highlight of the collegiate indoor season. Watson did his part, scorching past the field in the final straight away to win in 3:58.83, easily a school-record time and briefly the fastest mile run in the world during the indoor season. Watson eventually moved on to garner All-America honors in the indoor mile, indoor 3,000 meters and outdoor 5,000 meters - as well as taking home BIG EAST Championships in the mile, 3,000-meter steeplechase and outdoor 5,000 meters.

In 2001, Piane helped distance specialist Ryan Shay compile one of the greatest track and field seasons in Notre Dame history. The Central Lake, Mich., native won the BIG EAST indoor 5,000 meters, the conference outdoor 5,000 and

10,000 meters and finished off the season in legendary style by becoming Notre Dame's first individual NCAA champion since 1972 by taking first place in the 10,000 meters at the NCAA Outdoor Championships in Eugene, Ore. Shay has since moved on to become one of the best marathon runners in the country.

The Notre Dame men's cross country team has enjoyed two of its most successful seasons in the program's history over the last five years. In 2000, Piane helped the Irish recover from the loss of Shay due to injury and finish

Todd Mobley was another BIG EAST contributor for Piane, taking second in the outdoor 10,000-meter run while sophomore Kaleb Van Ort finished second in the indoor 5,000-meter run and third in both the indoor 3,000-meters and outdoor 10,000-meters.

The 2003 men's cross country team was the BIG EAST runner-up and featured standouts Todd Mobley and Tim Moore, who represented the Irish at the NCAA Championships. Mobley finished 27th at the meet to take his second cross country All-America honor.





outdoor championships. The Irish got over the hump by winning their first BIG EAST men's track title at the 2000 BIG EAST Outdoor Championships. Piane and his assistants earned the men's staff-of-the-year award for the second straight season.

To date, Piane has coached his men's track teams to 49 individual BIG EAST Championships and two relay wins in just nine years and the women have finished first as individuals 19 times and captured a relay team title in each of the last four seasons. In addition, Godwin Mbagwu (outdoor, 2004), Liz Grow (outdoor, 2002), Luke Watson (outdoor, 2002), Marshaun West (outdoor, 1999) and Jason Rexing (outdoor, 1996 and indoor, 1998) all received the conference's outstanding track or field performer at various championship meets.

In 1985, Piane was named a member of the United States National Track staff. As such, he was one of 40 collegiate coaches given the opportunity to coach a United States squad in international competition. During the summer of 1987 he did just that, guiding a team of American all-stars in meets held in England and Ireland. Upon the conclusion of the 1991 Notre Dame track season, Piane once again faced international competition as he was appointed coach of the

ninth at the NCAA championship meet.

With Shay back on the team in 2001, Notre Dame achieved its highest-ever national ranking (peaking at #4) and ended up sixth at the national meet to give the Irish their highest team finish since 1993.

In 1986, Piane was chosen as the District IV track coach of the year. The MCC track coach-of-the-year award was given to Piane in the first six years that it was awarded, while the entire track and field coaching staff was named the BIG EAST women's indoor staff of the year in 2002 after guiding the women's team to its first-ever BIG EAST Championship. The 2003 season witnessed the Irish men's team sweep the indoor and outdoor titles, with the Notre Dame coaching staff honored as the outdoor staff of the year.

Piane ushered the Irish into the BIG EAST in 1995-96 with third-place finishes in men's cross country and both the men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field. In 1997 and again in 1999, Notre Dame moved up to second in both the men's and women's indoor and outdoor track championships, with the Irish men's coaching staff earning staff-of-the-year honors at the 1999 BIG EAST

U.S. Pan American juniors team for the games in Kingston, Jamaica.

Piane became Midwest regional chairman for United States Olympic Development in the area of track and field in 1984. Piane's other Olympic preparation experience came in 1985 when he coached the North team in the National Sports Festival. He also coached the U.S. team against England in Birmingham, England.

Piane has produced a winning record in all but one season with the Irish cross country team and is also the creator of Notre Dame's National Catholic Cross Country Invitational, an annual meet held on campus since 1980. The Irish running program continues to be a rapidly-growing entity thanks to Piane's achievements. Continually searching for greater challenges, he also founded the Meyo Invitational and the Alex Wilson Invitational, both traditional indoor Notre Dame track events. The Alex Wilson Invitational has developed into one of the top indoor 'last chance' meets in the nation, hosting the nation's best indoor performers just a week before the NCAA Championship.

A 1969 graduate of Loras College, Piane ran both track and cross country for four years at the Dubuque, Iowa, institution. He captained Loras' undefeated cross country squad as a senior, while excelling in middle distance events during the track season. He was inducted into the Loras College Athletics Hall of Fame in the fall of 2002.

Piane began his impressive coaching career in 1970. Working for the Peace Corps, he coached track and field and cross country at both the regional and national levels in Morocco, North Africa. Piane guided a top-ranked junior cross country team, sending three runners to Cambridge, England, for the World International Cross Country Championship in 1972. Several of those runners went on to compete in the Munich Olympics and one advanced to the 1976 games in Montreal.

After returning to the United States in July 1972, Piane assisted the track and cross country programs at Western Illinois. During that time he earned a master's degree in physical education.

Born Aug. 6, 1946, in Westchester, Ill., Piane joined the Notre Dame staff in 1974 as an assistant track coach and physical education instructor with plans to stay on for just one year. He was named head track and cross country coach the following season.

Piane and his wife, Mimi, reside in South Bend, with their son, Nick.

**1987 & 2001 NCAA Division I  
Cross Country Coach of the Year**

**Five-time District IV  
Cross Country Coach of the Year**

**Six-time Midwestern Collegiate  
Conference Cross Country  
Coach of the Year**

**Six-time Midwestern Collegiate  
Conference Track Coach of the Year**

**1999, 2000, 2003 BIG EAST Men's Outdoor  
Track Championships Staff of the Year**

**2001 BIG EAST Indoor Track Women's  
Championship Staff of the Year**

**2003 BIG EAST Indoor Track Men's  
Championship Staff of the Year**



As the Notre Dame women's cross country team continues to establish itself as one of the best in the nation, Tim Connelly enters his 17th season at Notre Dame.

Connelly serves as the head coach of the Notre Dame women's cross country team and tutors the middle distance and distance runners during the indoor and outdoor track seasons. He also is closely involved with all aspects of the Notre Dame track and field/cross country program and is known one of the best recruiters in the Midwest.

Connelly and his athletes performed very well in both cross country and track during the 2003-04 campaign. The women's cross country team won its second-straight BIG EAST title, placed first in the NCAA Great Lakes Region and capped off its season with a 10th-place finish at the NCAA Championships. Junior Lauren King and sophomore Molly Huddle earned All-America honors for the Irish, with 28th and 41st-place finishes, respectively.

On the track Connelly's distance athletes combined to garner five All-America awards and five new school records. The runner behind many of these performances was sophomore Molly Huddle.

In 2004 Huddle had one of the most prolific seasons in Irish track and field history. She was an All-American in the indoor 3,000 and 5,000-meter runs as well as the outdoor 5,000-meters. In all three of these events she also recorded a Notre Dame school record. After the collegiate season ended Connelly accompanied Huddle as she competed in the United States Olympic Trials, eventually finishing seventh in the 5,000 meters as the top non-professional/collegian in the race.

Connelly also helped Kerry Meagher have a breakout track season in 2004. She recorded two All-America honors, earning the awards in the indoor mile and the outdoor 1,500-meter run. She also helped set two indoor school records; one in the 4x800 meter relay with Lauren King, Megan Johnson, and Katie DeRusso, and one in the distance medley relay with Lauren King, Kristen Dodd, and Molly Huddle.

Connelly enjoyed one of his finest seasons with the Irish in 2002-03, as he witnessed his cross country team finish third at the NCAA Championship. The third-place finish marks the highest-ever at the NCAA meet for the women's cross country team. On the track, Connelly guided Huddle (who finished sixth overall at the NCAA cross country meet) to All-America honors in the indoor 3,000 meters and outdoor 5,000 meters. Huddle capped her season by running away with the U.S. Junior 3,000-meter Championship at the national meet in Palo Alto, Calif.



## Tim Connelly

**Women's  
Cross Country Coach**

**Assistant Track &  
Field Coach**

**Women's Mid.  
Dist./Distance**



The Notre Dame women's cross country emergence began in 1999.

In '99, the Irish placed first in the initial three meets of the season and established themselves as a team to reckon with in the national picture. A fourth-place finish at the District IV Championships earned the team an at-large berth to the 1999 NCAA championship meet, the second invitation in the program's history.

The Irish raised the bar again in 2001. Combining veterans Jennifer Handley (Class of '02) and Megan Johnson with talented rookie Lauren King, the Irish climbed to 15th in the nation. Notre Dame eventually finished fourth in the BIG EAST Conference (behind three highly-ranked teams) and earned an automatic bid to the NCAA Championship with a second-place team finish at the NCAA Great Lakes Regional.

In 1993, Connelly and the Irish women's cross country team qualified for their first-ever NCAA championships and finished 15th.

During the track season, Connelly has helped the women's middle distance and distance runners reach NCAA Championship competition 18 times since 1996. At the BIG EAST level, Connelly has coached five individual champions, including the distance medley relay team which set a meet record

Taking over the women's cross country program in its infancy, Connelly assumed the reigns of the Irish program in 1988 and has led the team to three NCAA Championship appearances in the last four years. The Irish also broke through for the first BIG EAST cross country title in 2002, led by individual champion Lauren King. Combined with second-place BIG EAST finisher Huddle, Notre Dame went on to capture its first NCAA Great Lakes Regional cross country title.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., Connelly is determined to build the Irish into a power in the BIG EAST, a conference which has produced nine NCAA women's cross country champions.

at the 2003 indoor championship.

A 1983 Notre Dame graduate, Connelly ran both cross country and track for the Irish. Following his graduation, Connelly served as a graduate assistant coach under Joe Piane while working toward his master's degree in business.

In 1986, Connelly moved on to Syracuse as an assistant cross country and track coach. During his time in northern New York, he coached the men's and women's middle distance and distance runners and managed recruiting duties for both programs.

Connelly and his wife, the former Donna Southerly, are the parents of a daughter, Alexandra, and son, Brendon.





**John Millar**  
*Assistant  
 Track & Field Coach*  
*Sprints/Hurdles*

One of the top sprint and hurdle coaches in the world, John Millar enters his 14th season at Notre Dame and has developed the Irish women's sprint group into a force in the BIG EAST Conference. Millar's 14-year stay at Notre Dame, which has included serving as the speed coach for all Notre Dame athletic teams for several years, is the third-longest tenure of any current Irish assistant coach.

A dedicated coach, recruiter and organizer, Millar has developed the Irish sprint/hurdle group into one of the best in the Midwest. He also plays a key role in Notre Dame's organization of four home indoor meets, which are widely regarded as the top events during each annual indoor season.

Millar will welcome back Selim Nurudeen for his senior season in 2005. One of the top sprint hurdlers in the Midwest, Millar has helped Nurudeen develop into a four-time BIG EAST Champion and two-time NCAA qualifier.

In his first year with the Irish, Millar began the process of enhancing the Notre Dame sprint corps which culminated in three school records in the 55 and 200 meters along with the 4x100 relay. He guided Raghieb Ismail to a second-place finish in the 1991 NCAA indoor championships and the fastest collegiate 55-meter time in the world. Millar also coached two-time All-American Allen Rossum to seventh-place finishes in the 55-meter dash at the 1995 and 1997 NCAA indoor track championships and hurdler Errol Williams was an All-American in both indoor (55-meter hurdles) and outdoor track (110-meter hurdles) in 1998.

Millar has also developed a strong group in the women's sprint lane. He helped develop '02 graduate Liz Grow into Notre Dame's first women's All-American sprinter, as Grow was a fixture at the NCAA indoor



and outdoor meets during her four years on the team.

Millar's sprint group made a huge splash on the national scene in 2002. The women's 4x400 relay of Ayesha Boyd, Kristen Dodd, Grow and Kymia Love qualified for the NCAA Indoor Championships, becoming the first women's sprint relay to achieve that distinction. In the outdoor season, the same group took a step further, earning All-America honors by finishing fifth in the nation at the

NCAA Championships in Baton Rouge, La. Millar's 4x100, 4x400 (outdoor) and 4x400 (indoor) all set school records in the last three seasons and the 4x100 group has won two consecutive BIG EAST Championships in 2003 and 2004.

The development of the sprint group allowed Notre Dame to capture its first-ever BIG EAST team title in 2002 at the league indoor meet. Millar and his fellow Irish coaches were named the BIG EAST Indoor Coaching Staff of the Year.

Even after losing Grow to graduation in 2002, Millar helped the women's 4x400 team return to both the NCAA indoor and outdoor meets in 2003. The squad of Tiffany Gunn, Kristen Dodd, Ayesha Boyd and Kymia Love just missed out on a repeat All-America effort at the outdoor meet, finishing ninth. Boyd, Dodd and Love joined Tameisha King in the 4x100 relay at the outdoor meet as well.

The native of Toronto, Canada, took a break from his coaching duties at Notre Dame in early March of 1999 to serve as the head coach of the USA women's track squad, which earned eight medals at the 1999 World Indoor Championships in Maebashi, Japan.

Millar is a seasoned veteran of coaching athletes both on the national and international levels. During a six-year stint at Texas, he coached 96 NCAA All-Americans, including 10 national champions, and helped guide the Lady Longhorns to four national titles. He has followed up by guiding Notre Dame athletes to 16 different All-America finishes since 1990.

Prior to his position at Texas, Millar was an assistant at Tennessee for two years where he worked with 1984 Olympic gold-medal hurdler Benita Fitzgerald-Brown. In addition, he served as an assistant coach on the Canadian Olympic track staff and assisted in training world-class hurdler Mark McCoy. He also served as USA Track and Field's national women's hurdle coordinator, coach of the North team at the 1992 U.S. Olympic Festival and assistant coach of the USA Junior National Team at the 1993 Pan-Am Junior Championships.

Millar was head coach at York University in Toronto from 1981 to 1983 where he served as chief director for both the men's and women's programs in track and field. He led the school to a Canadian national championship in 1981.

He also traveled to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, as a member of the Canadian track and field coaching staff.

Millar, a graduate of Western Ontario and master's degree recipient from Arizona State, and his wife, the former Lynn Haan, have a 18-year-old son, James, who is a freshman middle-distance runner at Notre Dame.



Scott Winsor enters his 17th year with the Notre Dame track and field program and works specifically with the jumps group, covering the long jump, high jump, triple jump and pole vault. Winsor spent his first 14 seasons with the Irish as the program's throws coach as well.

During his tenure at Notre Dame, Winsor has coached such athletes as 1999 indoor pole vault All-American Mike Brown, All-American Marshaun West (long jump) and NCAA high jump qualifier and IC4A champion Todd Herman.

On the women's side, Winsor helped guide 2003 graduate Tameisha King to long jump All-America honors four times during her outstanding career, including top-eight finishes in the indoor and outdoor long jump during the '03 campaign. Winsor also worked closely with '03 graduate Jaime Volkmer, who continually broke Notre Dame's school pole vault record and became the first Irish female vaulter to clear the 13-0 barrier.

Under Winsor, the first field athlete in Notre Dame women's track and field history qualified for the NCAA indoor championships in 1997 as Jennifer Engelhardt earned All-America honors in the high jump. Engelhardt repeated her All-America performance in the indoor high jump at the 1999 NCAA championships, while becoming the first Notre Dame women's high jumper to jump over six feet.

Winsor guided Engelhardt back to the NCAAAs in 2000 when she earned All-America



**Scott Winsor**

**Assistant  
Track & Field Coach**

**Jumps/Throws**



accolades for the third time – becoming the first Notre Dame woman to accomplish that feat. Also, Engelhardt finished tied for seventh at 2000 Olympic Trials.

Recently, Winsor has used his high jump expertise while working with two-sport standout Emily Loomis. Loomis, an all-BIG EAST first-team performer on the Notre Dame volleyball team, has earned all-BIG EAST honors at each of the four conference meets in which she has competed. She broke through for her first individual title at the 2003 BIG EAST outdoor meet last season.

Multiple event standout Stacey Cowan has also benefited from Winsor's tutelage. Cowan became the first women's high jumper to qualify for the NCAA Championship since Engelhardt last season, eventually finishing tied for 14th at the 2003 NCAA outdoor meet. Cowan followed up with an All-American 10th-place effort at the 2004 indoor meet.

During his time as Notre Dame's throws coach, Winsor helped Mike Fleisch qualify for the 1995 NCAA indoor meet in the shot put.

In all, 20 BIG EAST individual titles have been earned by student-athletes under Winsor's guidance, including 2004 long jump champion Godwin Mbagwu and outdoor pole vault champion Laura Huarte. Mbagwu ended up winning the 2003 BIG EAST team title for the Irish at the league's outdoor meet, leaping 50-3 1/4 on his final jump to provide the winning point total for Notre Dame. He also was named the Most Outstanding Field Performer at the league outdoor meet in 2004.

Winsor has helped Notre Dame competitors earn all-BIG EAST honors (top three at the league championships) 89 times to go along with 11 All-America certificates.

A 1987 graduate of Loras College, Winsor was a standout performer on the track squad, specializing in the jumping events. Prior to his arrival at Notre Dame, Winsor was a two-year varsity coach at Fulton High School in Middleton, Mich., and an assistant at his alma mater, Loras, for one season.





**B.J. Linnenbrink**

*Assistant  
Track & Field Coach  
Throws*



B.J. Linnenbrink is in his third season as the Notre Dame track and field throws coach. Linnenbrink was hired just after the beginning of the 2003 season and has paid immediate dividends for the Irish program.

An NCAA and USATF championship qualifier in the weight throw at Florida State, Linnenbrink helped the Irish throws group develop rapidly during the 2003 and 2004 seasons. Juan Alba qualified for the inaugural NCAA Mideast Regional in both the discus and hammer throw in '03 and at the BIG EAST Conference level, Meghan Horn scored in the indoor and outdoor shot put. Jason Davis also earned all-BIG EAST honors in the hammer throw in 2004.

Also during the 2004 outdoor season, sophomore Kate Duman extended the school javelin record and qualified for the BIG EAST Championship. The men's javelin top thrower, Derek Goguen, qualified for the USATF Junior Championships in 2003.

Linnenbrink will return several top throwers for the 2005 season and will add a strong recruiting class as well.

A 2002 graduate of Florida State, Linnenbrink finished his career as the number two all-time hammer thrower in Seminole history. He earned all-Atlantic Coast Conference honors in '02 as well.

Before his two-year stint at FSU, Linnenbrink dominated at the junior college level, earning two NJCAA All-American awards at Johnson Community College in Overland, Park, Kan. In his two years at Johnson, Linnenbrink collected seven all-jayhawk east conference awards.

Linnenbrink graduated from Florida State with a bachelor of science in physical education. He and his wife, the former Monica Hardy, were married July 31, 2004.



The Notre Dame coaching staff runs two of the top meets in the country each season, the Meyo Invitational and the Alex Wilson Invitational.





*Notre Dame's men's cross country team began the 2004 season strong, finishing second in the Notre Dame Invitational and finishing second in its race at the Pre-National Meet.*

## John Murray

*Volunteer Assistant  
Pole Vault Coach*

John Murray begins his first season with the Irish and will help Scott Winsor in the preparation of Notre Dame's pole vaulters. An 11-year track and field coaching veteran, Murray hails from near by LaVille, Ind. and earned an associate's degree from Southwestern Michigan College in 1983. He moved on to Ball State to earn a physical education degree in 1988 and followed up with a master's degree in education from National Louis University in 1996.

Murray ran track at Southwestern Michigan College, where he was a regional champion and national qualifier in the pole vault. He also set the Ball State school record in the pole vault and was a USATF Southwestern Michigan Master's Pole Vault competition winner.

Murray began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at Ball State and has served as a head coach for track, cross country and volleyball during his career. Most recently, Murray served as the pole vault coach at Bethel College in South Bend, Ind.

Murray and his wife, Kimberly, have been married for 10 years and have five children and two stepdaughters.

## Sean McManus

*Volunteer Assistant  
Cross Country  
& Distance Coach*

Sean McManus is in his third year as an assistant coach on the Notre Dame cross country/track and field staff, working specifically with the Irish distance runners. McManus, a 2001 Notre Dame graduate, earned four monograms in cross country and track and field with the Irish from 1996-2001 and majored in civil engineering.

McManus began his assistant coaching career at Notre Dame for the 2001-02 season, helping the Irish win the BIG EAST Championship, NCAA Great Lakes Regional and finish sixth at the NCAA Championship. He moved on to Florida as a volunteer graduate assistant for the 2002-03 academic year, picking up a master's degree in exercise science. McManus returned to his alma mater for the 2003-04 season.



*The Notre Dame women's cross country team celebrates its 2003 BIG EAST Championship – the second straight for the Irish program (from left to right) Elizabeth Webster, Jenny Walls, Lauren King, Stephanie Madia, Jean Marinangeli, Kerry Meagher, Molly Huddle, Megan Johnson and Katie Wales.*

