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Guardiola meet alive in fifth year

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

FREMONT -- The legacy of David J. Guardiola remains alive and well in 2009.

The fifth annual David J. Guardiola Track and Field Festival, which will take place Saturday at Fremont Ross High School's Alumni Fields, has expanded by adding the hammer throw to its lineup of events.

Guardiola, who died in a car accident June 9, 2005, was a 17-year Ross student who was a wide receiver for the Little Giants' football team and an 800-meter runner for the Ross track and field squad.

Judy Guardiola, David's mother and organizer of the track and field festival, is proud that many athletes have supported this event over the years.

"We have close to 80 athletes who have registered online," Judy Guardiola said. "And I know there were a few more that came in Thursday, but I have not processed those applications yet. It is an increase over last year."

Online registration will be accepted at <http://www.davidjguardiola.com/> until 12 a.m. Saturday. Athletes can also register from 9-10 a.m. Saturday at Alumni Fields.

The online registration cost is \$6 for an event and \$2 for each additional event. On Saturday, the registration fee will be \$8 for an event and \$2 for each additional event.

"We would love to see this meet grow and continue to grow to where it just ends up being a nice family gathering," Guardiola said. "It's a nice outing here in town that people can come and watch. And they'll be seeing some top-notch athletes."

Scheduled to attend the festival this year are Emily Pendleton, a two-time Big Ten discus champion for Michigan and the only person to become a four-time OHSAA state discus champion; Erin Pendleton, a two-time OHSAA state discus champion and a Michigan recruit; and Elon Simms, a Fremont Ross and Ohio State University graduate who is a two-time runner up in the Big Ten in the 400 intermediate hurdles and an NCAA regional qualifier in the 1,600 relay.

In addition to the hammer throw, field events begin at 10:30 a.m. and include a softball toss, the shot put, the discus, the long jump and the high jump. At 11:30 a.m., track events begin and include an 800 fast walk, the 100 hurdles, the 50 dash (for ages 3-6 only), the 100 dash, the 200 dash, the 400 dash, the 800 run, the 1,600 run, the 3,200 run and the 400 relay.

Events, which are open to persons aged 3 to 50-and-over, will be broken down into to several age divisions. Medals will be awarded to all male and female 800 run winners in all age groups.

Proceeds from the track and field festival support the David J. Guardiola Scholarship Fund, which will be awarding scholarships to Fremont Ross graduates Jessica Soule and Wyatt Harvey this year.



Tony Cole, of Ohio State, wins the 100 during the David Guardiola track meet at Ross High School on Saturday. (News-Messenger file photo)