

The Amherst Steele High School Track and Field program has a long history of tradition which is passed on to a new generation of student-athletes each year. As we celebrate our 65th Comet Relays, we would like to take a few moments to honor two individuals who have been a tremendous part of that tradition - Howard Dulmage and Bernie Nirode. When we think of the Comet Relays, we often remember the athletes and coaches who have left their mark - setting records, racking up wins, and leaving us with amazing memories. Yet these unbelievable moments wouldn't be possible without the volunteers, workers, and officials who put in tireless hours behind the scenes, often without much recognition or glory. For several decades, Howard and Bernie have dedicated their time and energy to making the Comet Relays a success. We would like to honor their efforts by dedicating this year's Comet Relays to Howard Dulmage and Bernie Nirode.

Bernie Nirode's passion for track and field started when he served as a volunteer track coach at Hilliard High School and Mentor High School in the 1960s. In 1971, Bernie became a track and field official, mostly working at local high school meets. He has worked numerous high school conference, district and regional track meets and was selected as a starter for the state track meets for four years.

In addition to his high school experience, Bernie has officiated at the collegiate level, including the National Indoor Division III Championship Track Meet, the Big Ten Indoor Championship Track Meet, and the Big East Indoor Championship Track Meet. Bernie has worked the Comet Relays for 40 years and has enjoyed working with all the athletes, coaches, and fellow officials he has met along the way.

Howard Dulmage discovered his love for track while throwing shot put and discus in high school in South Amherst. He went on to letter in track at Ashland University, then took his first job as a teacher and coach at Northwestern High School. Howard eventually coached at Midview, New London, Twinsburg, Vermilion, and Amherst, but he spent most of his time at Berea High School, where he coached for 14 years. While at Berea, Howard compiled an amazing record of 127 wins and 12 losses. For his efforts, he was inducted into the Berea Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006.

Howard eventually moved into officiating, where he has served our student-athletes for 46 years. From snowy blizzards to intense heat waves, Howard has braved all kinds of weather to officiate district, regional, and state meets. Like Bernie, Howard has also worked the Comet Relays for 40 years. With great pride, Howard relishes his relationships with student-athletes, coaches, and officials, who have often remained his friends to this day. Howard and his wife Laura have raised four adult children. As he has said many times throughout the years, "It is a great day to be alive...and it is a great honor to be remembered at the Comet Relays."

Please help me thank Howard and Bernie for all their dedication and support to the Comet Relays over the years.

THE 65TH ANNUAL COMET RELAYS ARE DEDICATED TO:

HOWARD DULAMGE



**AND
BERNIE NIRODE**

