

# Web site tells Jesse Owens' story

Pictures, words show his life achievements

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OAKVILLE — If the Jesse Owens museum board could pull visitors through their computers and into the Oakville facility for a tour, it would.

That's what it had in mind when it recently redesigned the museum's Web site, www.jesseowensmuseum.org.

The opening page gives visitors a panoramic view of the museum's longest hallway, which has poster-sized photographs depicting a timeline of Owens' life.

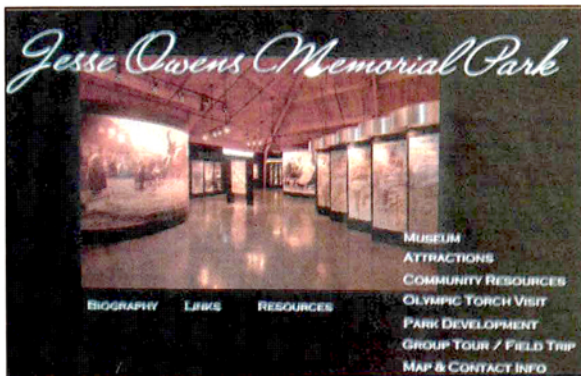
The view doesn't stay there long before it shifts to the interior of a dogtrot cabin, a replica of the one in which Owens was born in 1913.

A link to his biography has additional links, one for each stage of his life from Oakville to Cleveland, Ohio, to the 1932 Olympics to his life after the Berlin games.

The links describe the conditions under which Owens accomplished his feats, including poverty and racial barriers.

"A visitor to the Web site will get a chance to experience the life of Jesse Owens, from his humble beginnings in Oakville to his rise to greatness in the 1936 Olympic games," said Kenneth Brackins, chairman of the Jesse Owens Memorial Park and Museum board. "The idea that someone with such a humble beginning, who experienced all the accolades of greatness in the 1936 Olympic games, winning four gold medals, came back to this country still humbled, a hero, during a time of segregation and subjugation, and Jesse Owens never lost hope."

Owens Park board members hope the Web site will reflect the quality of the museum and attract more visitors to the park. Admission is free for visitors and \$2 per person for groups of 10 or more. Visitors can, however, give a donation.



Courtesy Photo

The opening page of the Jesse Owens Memorial Park and Museum Web site gives visitors a panoramic view of the museum's longest hallway, which has poster-sized photographs depicting a timeline of Owens' life.

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— Nancy Pinion, Jesse Owens Park volunteer

"It's a tremendous improvement," said Nancy Pinion, an Owens Park volunteer. "I think it's going to be difficult for anyone to go to it and not want to come to the park. It shows what we have there, including the landscaping and new attractions. I think a lot of people go to the Web site to make a decision on whether they want to visit."

The museum and park contain interactive kiosks and a mini-theater, a welcome center, a statue of Owens and a long-jump pit that marks the length of his gold medal-winning

jump. There also is a replica of the 1936 torch, which is supposed to burn eternally in Owens' honor.

Lee Sentell, director of the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel, said Owens remains an inspiration for young people everywhere, and the new Web site will reach even more people with the message of hard work and determination in the face of adversity.

In 1955, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Owens as Ambassador of Sports, and he toured the world promoting the virtues of amateur pro-

grams.

"We all owe Jesse Owens a debt of gratitude," Brackins said. "It is unmistakably clear that his passion, not only for athletics, but for humanity as well, I think visitors to the Web site will be motivated by the courage, determination and the attitude that he exhibited and will come to appreciate his great legacy and humanitarianism even more."

Images on the Web site include those by DECATUR DAILY photographers and those by author and photographer Charles Seifried.