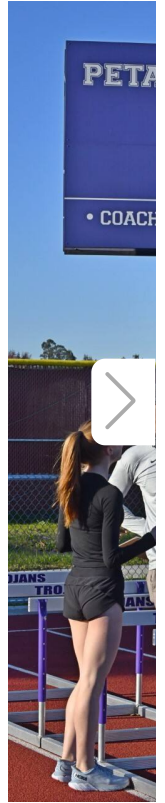


Former Rancho Cotate star to join Johnson as Petaluma track coaches

Corey Nelson will share Petaluma track coaching duties with veteran Doug Johnson. | 



SLIDE 1 OF 2

New Petaluma High track coach Corey Nelson is conducting conditioning sessions in preparation for the spring season. Nelson will share head coaching duties with Doug Johnson. (Sumner Fowler / For the Argus-Courier)

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JOHN JACKSON
ARGUS-COURIER STAFF
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Petaluma's new track coach is giving Trojan athletes new records to shoot for – his own.

Corey Nelson has joined veteran Doug Johnson to share head-coaching duties for the Trojan track and field team this season.

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The new coach still holds Rancho Cotate school and Redwood Empire records in the 200 and 400, the Santa Rosa Junior College record in the 400 and the Boise State record in the 400.

"I'll encourage our athletes to chase the records established by their head coach and, if they break my marks, I'll be the first to shake their hands," he said.

One of Nelson's goals is to develop an atmosphere of team unity and family, and he has been holding twice-a-week conditioning sessions designed not only to get Trojan track athletes into physical shape, but to develop team cohesiveness.

Nelson knows about family. He and his wife have five children, ages 6, 7, 17, 18 and 19 that keep them on the move and exercising time management skills.

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He is looking forward to working with Johnson, who has been coaching at Petaluma for almost 50 years.

"He is awesome," Nelson said of his co-coach. "With his knowledge and my knowledge, we are going to have a lot of fun."

Nelson has a wealth of coaching experience. He began his coaching at Rancho Cotate where he excelled in his own high school days, was head coach at El Molino, moved on the coach at the high school and junior college level in Southern California and his now looking forward to coaching at Petaluma.



"I love it," he said of his new job. "I always knew that I would be back in Sonoma County at some point."

"This (coaching track) is what I do. I love the opportunity to come back where it all started."

Johnson is looking forward to working with his new coach.

"He comes in with strong credentials," the veteran coach said. "He was an outstanding athlete, and still is."

"I'm excited to have him. I think he is going to do a good job for us. I'm going to turn a lot over to him."

Johnson and Nelson will have some good talent to work with this spring. The Petaluma boys won the Vine Valley Athletic League championship and a very young Petaluma girls team was fourth in the VVAL finals last season.

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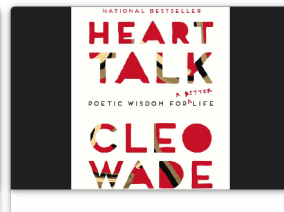
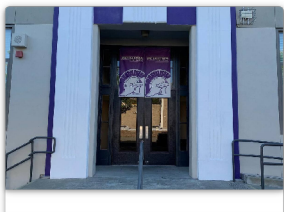


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