

# Carrying the Torch

## 1995 - 1996

In 1996, Atlanta became the center of worldwide attention as the site of the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. The much anticipated games defined the school year and was even used to nickname Harrison High School's senior class the "Olympic Class."

During this school year, interesting and unusual events livened the average school day. In preparation for the Olympic Games, several Olympic athletes from Russia visited Harrison High School to train on the track. Harrison also served for the first time as a political forum at the national level when Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-GA) and political reporter Bill Nigut visited.

One event that always maintains a grasp on the minds of every senior class at Harrison High School is graduation. For the class of 1996, it seemed only fitting that they graduate from an Olympic venue on the eve the 1996 Olympic Games. At the completion of the school year, the 1996 senior class graduation ceremony took place in The Omni, the predecessor to the current Philips Arena. In preparation for the school year, the Harrison faculty conducted pre-planning activities at the Olympic Natatorium within the Olympic Village at Georgia Tech.

In order to ensure that the seniors of Harrison finished high school with a fun and exciting year to look back upon, the Senior Forum was established. This forum planned senior activities such as cookouts, caravans, ice cream parties, and other social events and ensured that the class of 1996 had a truly unforgettable year.

Interestingly enough, Atlanta was not the only site of athletic excellence during 1996. During this school year, Harrison's varsity football team garnered an outstanding record of 10-2, which can largely be attributed to the leadership of specific individuals such as Corey Patterson and Daniel Cobb. The womens' cross country team continued its tradition of excellence by finishing for the fourth year in a row as the 5-AAAA Region Champions. In addition, the varsity volleyball team finished their season undefeated while other teams such as the mens' varsity basketball team was recognized as Cobb County Team of the Month in January.

In keeping with the spirit of the games, Harrison students continued to "carry the torch" over the course of the year. Through students' academic and athletic excellence, leadership, and involvement in the community, a commitment to leading by example and preserving some of Harrison's most important traditions was proven.

*Story by Grant Wills, Class of 2011*