

# Older athletes feeling good



## He knows the value of athletics

Don Amidei has been active in sports as long as he can remember.

"In the old neighborhoods of Chicago, where I grew up, physical exercise was year-round," says Mr. Amidei, who now lives in Park Ridge. "It was just something you had to be involved in."

Mr. Amidei is now known as a track and field coach, though he came into that sport more by chance than choice.

"When I went into teaching, it was axiomatic that you went into coaching," he says.

"I went to my old high school, St. George in Evanston, and was going to coach boxing and basketball. They asked if I coached track and field and I said 'absolutely. I coach track and field.' I became proficient as a coach because I studied the sport — and I did study."

*(Continued from page 7.)*

with the speed bag," says Mr. Amidei. "I still do my stretching and calisthenics and I bike 10 miles and do my running."

Mr. Amidei says he doesn't do all his exercises every day and he no longer pushes himself beyond his limits.

"I don't do what I used to," he says. "I have always taken my pulse

Mr. Amidei coached track and field at DePaul University in Chicago and then moved north to Northwestern University in Evanston. He retired from collegiate coaching in 1982, though he coached two additional years at St. Ignatius High School on Chicago's West Side.

"I knew the value of athletics in the proper sense," says Mr. Amidei. "I always stayed active."

That activity, says Mr. Amidei, began "almost from the time I could walk." He grew up involved in basketball, softball as well as boxing, which became a passion.

"A lot of high schools had boxing teams then," says Mr. Amidei. "I enjoyed sports. But it was also a means to an end. It was the way to a college degree for me."

Mr. Amidei went to DePaul on a basketball scholarship and ended competing for the school's boxing team.

"I loved athletics, but it became a way for me to get a college education," says Mr. Amidei. "I never could have afforded to go to college and I know my parents couldn't have afforded to send me." Over the years, Mr. Amidei developed his love of athletics into a philosophy.

"I felt that you had better be true to the sport," says Mr. Amidei. "If not, I felt that it would turn on you. You respected the sport and your ability to participate in it."

After graduating and beginning his coaching career, Mr. Amidei continued to stay in shape.

"I still shadow box, I still work with the heavy bag and I still work

*(Continued on page 11.)*

and blood pressure. I know when to slow down and let my body rest."

Still, Mr. Amidei is moving forward with his active lifestyle. He is heading to the United Kingdom for a bicycling trip this summer.

"I feel better when I do these things," says Mr. Amidei. "I will probably continue to do this as long as I can."

-D.M.

BOB -

PER OUR

EARLIER DECISION

KEEP DISCARD THIS

2/27/11 - I HAVE

ANOTHER

P

27.27 M.

2/31/11