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Yueling Chen Speaks Out Aug. 3, 2000

Gold Medallist Race Walker Ms. Yueling Chen issued the following statement on August 3, 2000:

"First, I would like to thank the USA Track and Field, US Olympic Committee and the International Amateur Athletic Federation for allowing me to compete and earn a position on the United States Race Walking team that will participate in the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia. I am honored to have the opportunity to represent the United States, and promise to put forth my best effort.

"Unfortunately, the Chinese Track and Field Association is attempting to prevent me from competing due to a misunderstanding of an international Olympic regulation known as 'Rule 46.2.' This rule states that an athlete must be a citizen for three years before being allowed to compete.

"Their request to the USOC to deny my participation with the US team is flawed on two important points. Rule 46.2 was instituted to prevent Olympic athletes from playing musical chairs in order to compete in the games. I retired for over six years and even missed the 1996 Olympic Games. Thus, it is obvious I did not merely move to America to join the Olympic team here.

"In addition, earning US citizenship takes approximately six to seven years. This is in stark contrast to many countries which are willing grant athletes citizenship in order to build competitive teams. I have completed the process over the past few years and became a citizen this year. I truly believe I've met the intended spirit of the regulation and am confident the IOC will also feel this way.

"It is disheartening that the Chinese Track and Field Association and Chinese Olympic Committee have elected to discard this opportunity to strengthen relations with the American people. As a child growing up in a small village, the Olympic values of fairness, hard work and breaking down barriers through international competition were ingrained in me. The Games are a time to build a bridge between the US and China, not a



Chen receiving gold medal
10K Walk
1992 Olympic Games

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great wall.

"It is my sincere hope that this hurdle be removed so that the people of both countries can celebrate the first Chinese athlete to make the US Track and Field team, as well as possibly the first athlete to return after six years of no training to compete in the Olympics."

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- [Update: Aug. 10: China Grants Waiver for Chen](#)
- [Yueling Chen Official Website](#)
- [Transfers of Allegiance](#) details from the About Guide to Track and Field

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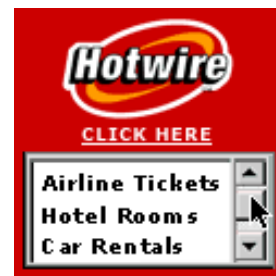
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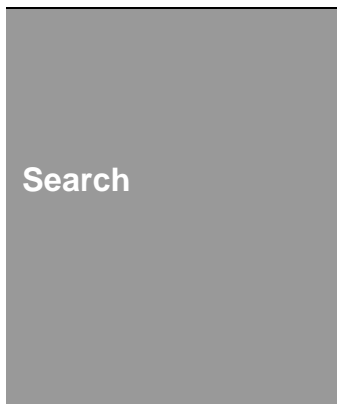
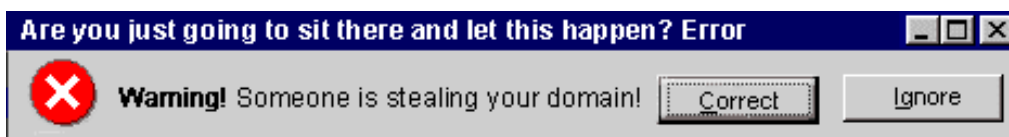
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