

## Pass It On®...

### The Greatest Athlete You've Never Heard Of.

*In 1984, Michael Carter won an Olympic medal and a Super Bowl ring with the San Francisco 49ers.*

Long before he was a household name in the NFL, Michael Carter was a track and field prodigy out of Dallas, Texas. It's remarkable enough to reach the lofty realm of professional sports in one discipline. Very few attain those heights in two sports — working twice as hard to excel.

In 1979, while attending Thomas Jefferson High School, Carter set a national high school record in the shot put with a staggering toss of 81 feet, 3 1/2 inches. That throw smashed the previous high school record by more than 9 feet. More than four decades later, it still stands as the unbroken national high school record. Carter went on to win four indoor and three outdoor NCAA national championships.

As a two-sport athlete, Carter was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the fifth round of the 1984 NFL Draft to play nose tackle. However, before he ever suited up for training camp, he had unfinished business in that oldest of sports, the shot put. The Summer Olympics came to Los Angeles that year, and Carter stepped onto the global stage and threw his way to a silver medal.

Immediately after stepping off the Olympic podium, Carter traded his track spikes for football cleats. He joined Bill Walsh's 49ers for the 1984-85 NFL season. As a rookie nose tackle, Carter became the anchor of a formidable defensive line, starting in the middle and clogging running lanes for opposing offenses. The 49ers tore through the season, finishing with a dominant 15-1 regular-season record. On January 20, 1985, just five months after standing on the Olympic podium, Carter and the 49ers defeated the Miami Dolphins 38-16 in Super Bowl XIX. With that victory, Carter became the only athlete in history to win an Olympic medal and a Super Bowl ring in the same season.

Carter didn't settle for being a one-hit wonder. He went on to play nine seasons in the NFL, all with the 49ers, earning three Pro Bowl selections and winning a total of three Super Bowl rings. His incredible athletic DNA passed down to the next

generation, too. His daughter, Michelle Carter, followed in his footsteps to the shot put ring, winning the Olympic gold medal in the shot put at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro games — a victory that made them the only father-daughter duo to win Olympic medals in the same individual event.

Michael Carter's 1984 run stands as an imposing monument to human capability, specialized power and the sheer grit required to master two completely different athletic disciplines simultaneously.

Carter's legacy lives on through his daughter Michelle. You have to wonder what this larger-than-life father would say to his daughter at the dinner table to motivate her to success. Probably the same thing his father said to him: "When I was a kid, my dad told me that anything I do, no matter if it is sports or school or anything, you have to do your best. That's the lesson I took with me my whole life. Always do your best."

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