

# Devers, Gail (1966-) Encyclopedia Article

## Devers, Gail (1966-)

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## Devers, Gail (1966—)

Labeled "the world's fastest woman" after she won the 100-meter dash and a gold medal in the summer Olympics at Barcelona in 1992, Gail Devers has become exemplary of excellence, grace, and courage, and has served as an inspiration to other athletes, especially women, throughout the world. In 1988, she set an American record in the 100-meter hurdles (12:61). What happened to Devers between 1988 and 1992, however, created a story, notes Walter Leavy in *Ebony*, "that exemplifies the triumph of the human spirit over physical adversity," for Devers was sidelined with Graves disease, a debilitating thyroid disorder. After nearly having to undergo the amputation of both feet in March 1991, Devers not only recovered to run triumphantly in 1992 but went on to win her second gold in the 100 meters at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996, becoming only the second woman to win back-to-back gold medals in this competition.

### Further Reading:

Gutman, Bill. *Gail Devers*. Austin, Texas, Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1996.

Leavy, Walter. "The Many Splendored Faces of Today's BlackWoman." *Ebony*. March, 1997, 90.