

NUTS NOTES

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EDITORIAL

For the second time in as many issues it is my sad duty to record the death of one of our most active members: Dudley Lewis (Doug) Busst. Since being elected in 1967, Doug was a regular supplier of results and a meticulous compiler of men's pentathlon and decathlon lists. Despite suffering from ill health in recent years, he continued to officiate at many meetings and also to continue the increasingly onerous job of issuing 5 Star Award certificates. A telegram was sent to Margaret Busst on behalf of the organisation and Dave McJannet very kindly represented the NUTS at the funeral. Margaret thanks all members of the NUTS for their kind thoughts and expressions of sympathy.

MISCELLANY

Ø Congratulations to Martin and Barbara James on the birth of Robert David on 6 October: Weight 3.11 Kgs (6lb 14 ozs)

Ø Peter and Sally May are now settled in Canada. He writes:

"Don Mills is a suburb of Toronto, and we have a marvellous apartment. It is on the top floor (25th) and has a clear uninterrupted view southward. We can see Toronto eight miles away and all along the north coast line of Lake Ontario. A couple of times, we could see right across the lake to the other side - 45 miles away!" We look forward to hearing from you again, Peter.

Ø Len Gebbett is going into print next year as co-author with Prof. J.T. Coppock of a work in a series published by Heinemann under the general title 'The Nature and Sources of Statistics in the UK'. The venture is sponsored jointly by the Social Science Research Council and the Royal Statistical Society. Len's contribution will deal with Statistics for Town and Country Planning.

Ø Margaret Gould - insatiable reader that she is - has drawn my attention to a fascinating reference in 'Munby Man of Two Worlds' by Derek Hudson (John Murry, 1972); from Munby's diary entry for 9 August 1864:

".. and went for 10 minutes, about 7 p.m., into the 'Alhambra', to see one Margaret Douglas, an Australian, who is there walking 1000 miles in 1000 hours. A boarded stage, 1/19 of a mile in circuit, has been built round the centre of the hall, high enough aloft to exhibit the performer: and upon it the woman was pacing as I entered. A stout sturdy little woman of 43; drest in a wideawake, a loose white shirt, a red kilt with a pair of knicker-bocker breeches underneath, and red stockings; no petticoats. Round and round she went, like a wild animal in a vast cage; walking about 4 miles an hour; taking no notice of anyone. A dozen visitors or so were looking on; at every round the umpire called its number: at the 19th he called 'Up!' and Margaret Douglas marched straight off the stage and disappeared - for an hour. She has been walking for a week: a monotonous, almost ludicrous performance: shows power and last, however, and that is why I went to see it.."

Ø New NUTS headed paper is now available. Please notify your requirements to the Hon Secretary, 78 Toynbee Road, LONDON SW20 8SR (01-432 9195 - office or 01-542 7412 - home).

THE FIRST GATESHEAD CLIPPER by Peter Lovesey

Much has been made in the media of the fact that Brendan Foster's 2 mile world record makes him the first Englishman since Alf Shrubb (9:09.6 in 1904) to achieve that distinction. That takes us back 69 years; go back another 43

and you find that the first 2 miler to set a record on a track (9:20.0 in 1861) was, like Brendan, a Gateshead man. He was a professional, of course, as in those days nobody north of Cambridge had heard of amateur athletics, and he was known throughout his career as 'The Gateshead Clipper'. His name was Jack White, and he stood only 5'2½" high and weighed 47.5 kg/105 lbs. Born on 1 March 1838, he made his running debut as a 6 miler in 1860 and had several close finishes with the top 'peds' of the day before setting a world record for 4 miles of 20:01½ at Brompton on 27 August 1860 - an interesting date for Gateshead's latest world record was set 113 years later to the very day. White went on to set many other bests on record, including a sensational 6 miles in 29:50.0 in 1863. He travelled to America and defeated the celebrated Deerfoot. His boast was, "Bill Lang would beat me at a mile, but I could lick all the other beggars from 4 miles up to 10 when I was fit." He competed regularly until 1870, when he became manager of the 'Star' running grounds at Fulham. Later he joined the ground staff at Lillie Bridge and so formed associations with amateur athletics. For years he was a familiar figure as the diminutive starter at athletics meetings, and actually started the matches between W.G. George and William Cummings in the 1880's. In 1893, he was coach to CUAC and in 1895 went to New York with LAC as their trainer for the first great international event, against NYAC. In 1908, when he was 70, the Olympic Games came to London, and the Official Report includes his name as one of the umpires on the day of the 5 mile race. Emil Voight was the winner in 25:11.2, but one wonders what the old Gateshead Clipper thought of that. In 1863, he had recorded 24:40 in the course of a 10 mile race!

Jack White died in November 1910, his world record for 6 miles still unbeaten by amateur or professional. It took Nurmi to do that in 1921. Brendan Foster may not know it, but in representing Gateshead he is following a great tradition.

HAS THE NUTS A FUTURE? by Bob Phillips

The question posed above sounds provocative, even sensational. Do I mean it? I'm not sure... but a chain of thought has been sparked off; views which need airing; and where better than NUTS Notes, even though so many of us - only too eager to commit pen to paper on other tasks - so often fail to provide our Editor with the stream of material he deserves?

This year's AGM in Edinburgh shook my confidence, undermined my enthusiasm, caused me to stop in my tracks and start to wonder what exactly the NUTS is supposed to be doing these days. What sort of function are we supposed to be fulfilling? Let's face it, as an annual meeting of what is popularly reckoned to be a lively, adventurous, intelligent group of 70 or so souls, it was a complete non-starter. Where was everybody? That's the first question I feel compelled to ask. Why were abject excuses made for prominent NUTS members in hotels 5 minutes down the road when at least one enthusiastic individual to my knowledge made a special 100 mile car journey, starting at 6.30 a.m. on Saturday morning, in order to attend the meeting. Why was it that an annual meeting included among its number for the last 45 minutes or so no more than two members of the committee? Couldn't somebody have given some prior thought to the fact that a technical meeting might have intruded and caused the Chairman to depart at short notice? Won't anybody stand up and ask why the President deems it necessary not to arrive at the meeting until an hour after it was supposed to start?

Call me a bolshie provincial if you must but let me have my say. As an ex-chairman of the organisation, I feel I'm entitled to it, and I can only echo the sentiments of one of the very few Scottish members at the meeting who seemed to be questioning the whole raison d'être of the organisation, if I understood him correctly. He was talking specifically about the NUTS annual, but his remarks could be construed as applying to the organisation as a whole. We've lost our sense of direction, our purpose, our motivation, he hinted without perhaps realising what honest heresy he was propounding.

I feel jolly pleased - and I'm sure all other decent thinking chaps feel the same way - that we're represented on the national selection committees; that one of our members supplies the Beeb with all their stats (after all, you can't expect R.J. Pickering to do that as well on the measly few thousand a year they pay him); that we provide announcers, recorders, wind gauge operators galore; that we're obviously held in such high esteem; that the BAAB couldn't do without us (but they're quite happy to stop sponsoring our book); that other organisations remark on our efficiency (but then we all know the ATFS is just about as effective as a Masonic lodge in Moscow). And where has all that praise and commendation got us? Nowhere, do I hear, from a voice at the back of the hall? But then I've asked a lot of questions in the comments I have penned so far, and it's about time some answers were given, too. I wish I could be confident they were convincing ones: all I can offer instead is some mundane philosophy.

Let's get back, for heaven's sake, to the grass-roots. Let's try and revive the days when just talking about Athletics, sharing common experiences, revelling in the thrills of it all was enough. Let's try and shake off this choking cloud of sophistication that's enveloping us - this involvement with so many other aspects of the sport. We don't want announcers, selectors, journalists, timekeepers, bottle-washers and spiked-shoe salesmen. We just want people who are interested in athletics - people who've got the time to devote to the simple enjoyment of it. Make 'British Athletics' a duplicated broadsheet for a small coterie of the really dedicated, if necessary; take the organisation out of London, if all you commuters to the Smoke can't stand the pace; come back, Marie Antoinette, all is forgiven - let's start eating bread again. These Kunzle cakes are too sweet for my tooth.

I won't comment in detail on the main thrust of Bob's article (though I agree with much that he says), but will merely confine myself to some remarks on the points he makes about the AGM. First of all, the choice of date and venue for the meeting: it will be remembered that at the 1972 AGM held after the AAA Championships only 12 members were present and it was felt that the opportunity should be taken in future of holding the meeting outside London at a time when the members would be more likely to be in a "captive situation". In the event, there were 17 members at this year's meeting; although I must admit it was disappointing to find that some members in Edinburgh were unable to attend. When the date and time for the meeting were fixed by the committee on 1 June, it was not known that the hammer would be brought forward to 12.30 and that this would be preceded by a technical meeting. It was, of course, unfortunate that Bob Sparks and Peter Matthews had to leave before the end. In fact, there were, in addition to the Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer, three other members of the committee present during the whole meeting.

I should welcome comments on the broader issues raised by Bob from other members. Incidentally, copies of the AGM minutes will be available shortly and may be obtained on request from the Hon Secretary. Ed. THE ORIGIN OF TRIPLE JUMPING by Dave Terry

Some historians will lead us to believe that the triple jump was invented by the Greeks, but evidence for this is rather flimsy. This interesting information comes from ancient Greek jumping records. Chionis is attributed to having jumped 52 olympic feet (54'8" or 16.66 metres) at Olympia in one of the years 664, 660 or 656 B.C., while Phayllus is said to have extended himself to a distance of 55 delphic feet (53'4½" or 16.27 m) at Delphi at one of the Delphic Games between 540 and 516 B.C. Phayllus is supposed to have broken his leg when he landed five feet beyond the jumping pit, but what the ancient writers do not tell us is what kind of jump was performed in those far off days. Were they a total of three separate long jumps, a series of multiple hops or steps, or were they indeed triple jumps as we know them today? What information we have on these jumps dates from such later times as circa A.D. 50 (Zenobius) to c A.D. 1100 (Suidas).

Although the late German sports historian Carl Diem refers to a 'drei-sprung' at Augsburg in A.D. 1470, this can be interpreted as a three spring jump and not a triple jump.

We next take a look at England, Scotland and Ireland, each having a claim to the modern inception of the hop step and jump. The strongest claim appears to be that of Scotland, whose Border Games included the event in the 1790's or earlier. Laird Shaw achieved 42'0" in 1797 at the Liddesdale Games, while a writer of 1836 infers that the hop step and jump had been a Scottish sport for 100 years.

Ireland's claim is not so strong as that of Scotland's, as Professor John Wilson, a champion triple jumper visited Ireland in the first decade of the 19th century and commented upon the best long (22'0" +) and high jumpers (5'6" +) that he had ever seen. However, he remains silent on Irish triple jumping, but this may have been because he found no jumpers there exceeding his personal best leap of 46'6".

The earliest indication of the hop step and jump in England stems from the year 1737, when a horse was so named. Apart from this odd reference, we have to wait until the 1780's when the 'Blind Poet' of the Lake District refers to the hop step and jump in one of his works as being a local sport. At this period it was not uncommon to find mention of the event in other parts of England, e.g. a 43'6" jump on Islington Green by Mr. Hounsley, a publican, in 1794, a 36'0" jump outside the Brighton Pavilion during the 1790's and a 48'0" leap in Yorkshire by John Ireland in the years immediately prior to the turn of the century.

The coming of age of triple jumping can be said to date from the first modern Olympic Games at Athens in 1896. The event was only added to the olympic programme after a hotly disputed argument as to whether the event had existed or not in ancient times. The 1896 winner of the triple jump, and incidentally the very first winner of the modern Olympic Games, was Benjamin Connolly, a red headed Irish American from Boston, U.S.A. He won the event at 44'11" using unconventional two hops and a jump.

- References:
1. 'Phayllus and His Record Jump' by E. Norman Gardiner, in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 24, 1904.
 2. 'Greek Athletes and Athletics' by H.A. Harris, 1964.
 3. 'Le Saut Dans L'Antiquite' by Jean Le Floch'moan, in *Miroir De L'Athletisme*, No. 8, 1965.
 4. 'Weltgeschichte Des Sports und Der Leibeszuehung' by Carl Diem, 1960.
 5. *Scottish Provincial Newspapers 1810 - 1840*.
 6. *The Sporting Magazine*, various issues 1792 - 1800.
 7. *Victoria County History, 'Cumberland'*.
 8. *The Times*, various issues of 1896.

WHO'S WHO IN THE NUTS

Victor John Small b. 31 July 1930, Grimsby (Lincs); 1.78m/90kg; mathematical statistician, British Steel Corporation; single; interests: photography (cine and 35mm), philately (first day covers), graphical presentation of data; athletics interest started in 1958; greatest performances witnessed: Geoff Capes in SP demonstration at Peterborough and Wolverhampton & Bilston AC youths 4x800m in 8:00.0 (both in 1973).

John Melville Wilson b. 11 September 1931, Uphall; Broxburn (West Lothian); 1.78m/81kg; Assistant Director of Housing, Edinburgh Corporation; married, 2 children; interests: architecture, theatre, squash; athletics interest started in 1947; greatest performance witnessed: 8:17.8 2M by Emiel Puttemans (1971).

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