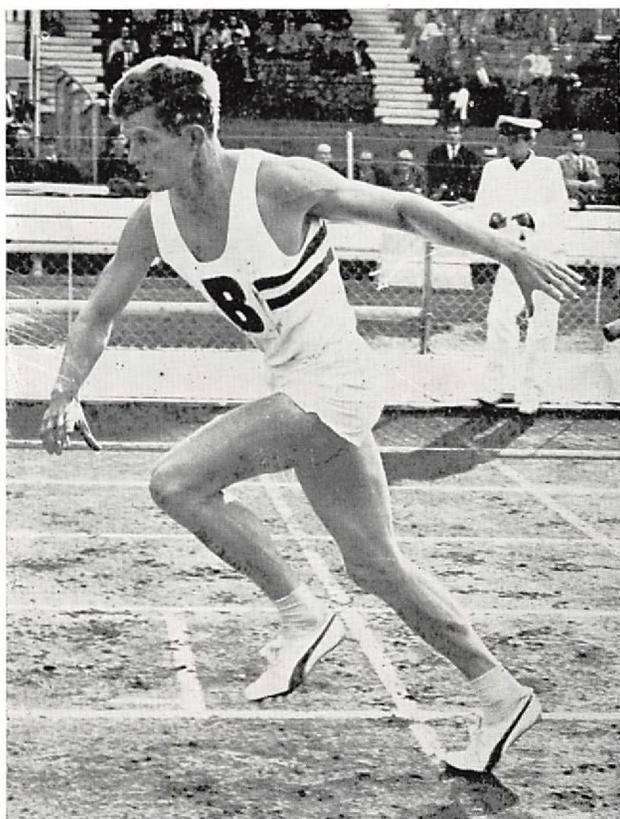


**A.A.A.**



**CLUB**

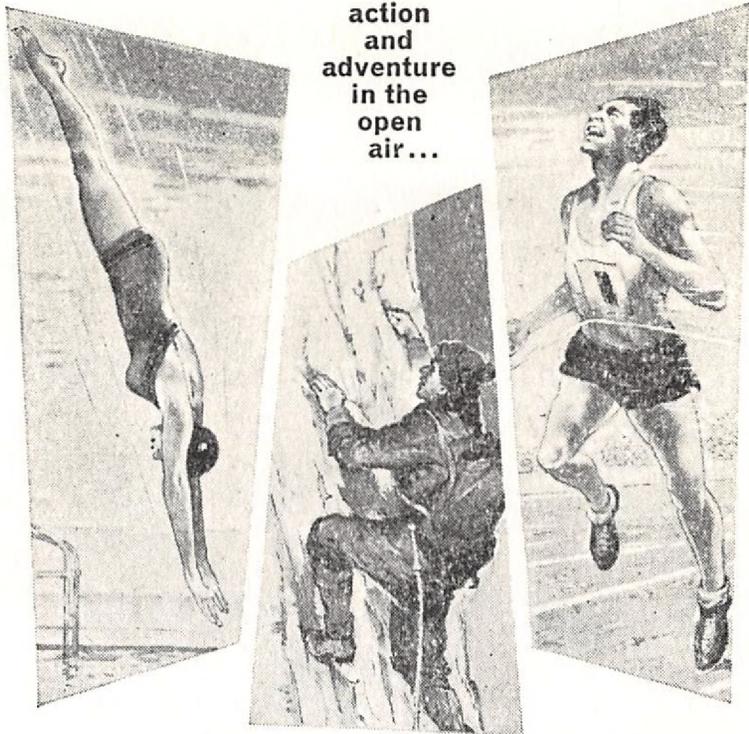
**NEWSLETTER**



**ROBBIE BRIGHTWELL**

(Birchfield Harriers)

**action  
and  
adventure  
in the  
open  
air...**



**...they bring out the best in you**



**OVALTINE**

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The cover photograph was supplied by Mark Shearman, 23 Lynwood Drive, Worcester Park, Surrey.

# Don't Shoot the Starter !

RONALD A. JEWKES (Grade 1 Starter)

AT a recent social function I was introduced to a complete stranger as "The White City Starter." Without a moment's hesitation my new acquaintance let me have it hot and strong. "You are just the man I've been dying to meet" he hooted. "I'm a keen follower of athletics—I often watch it on the telly and it always infuriates me how you manage to ruin every single meeting by holding them so long that somebody breaks! If only you had the common sense to shout "Set" and then fire at once, you would be able to fire before anybody could move!"

I have, of course, become quite accustomed (and immune) to such incidents. It is nothing new in this great sporting democracy of ours for the spectator to consider that he knows better than the experienced official nor for the spectator to know nothing whatever of the rules or the theory and practice of the duty. In this case he was also ignorant of the fact that several different Starters are engaged each year at the White City and that each has his own characteristics, clearly distinguishable to an expert.

The problem of starting is possibly the least understood of all the technical problems in our great sport and this situation can be remedied only if we are able gradually to educate athletes, coaches, officials and spectators alike. The Editor's kind offer to publish a few brief and not too technical notes on the subject in this excellent publication was therefore gladly accepted because the A.A.A. Club contains a splendid cross section of the athletic fraternity and this magazine provides a perfect medium for the dissemination of this type of knowledge.

The main rule on the subject of starting states simply that the starter will give the order "Set" and when the athletes have come into the set position and are motionless on the mark he will fire. This appears simple enough but when the starter has six highly-strung sprinters, all with differing speeds of reaction to the stimulus of the word of command and all coming up at different speeds, he has the problem of selecting the precise moment when they have all ceased moving and have remained motionless long enough to allow him to fire the gun, reasonably confident that nobody will move at the very moment that he does so.

For convenience we refer to sprinters, although the same theory applies to every track event.

However, let us for a moment assume that we have a starter who has accepted our critic's demands and throughout a whole meeting is firing immediately the sprinters attain the set position and is not holding them at all. His only object in life will be to see that nobody beats the gun and his "Set" is therefore quickly followed by the bang. The interval is so short that he is not sure if everybody was steady or not. The chances are that somebody was not. Now it is a mechanical fact that a sprinter still moving into the set position however slowly, when the gun goes, already has momentum and thus develops greater acceleration with a result that he gets a "flyer." Following the inevitable recall, two things happen at the next attempt. Firstly the other sprinters, not wanting to be "left" by this "sharp" athlete, take a chance and run soon after the "set," and secondly the starter, not wanting to be beaten, fires a little faster. In the next heat the other athletes will almost certainly run immediately on the set for fear of being left either by the gun or by the competitors. The starter, sensing this development, will fire faster still! Thus the bitter battle between sprinters and starter which leads to inevitable disaster has started. This battle will last throughout the meeting and a symptom of the disease is a huge number of recalls. Yet do the crowd boo such a man? Never!! To them he is a very smart fellow trying to control a lot of wretches who are all trying to beat the gun! Both they and he have overlooked the fact that in his efforts to ensure that nobody beats him, he has ignored his more important moral responsibility of seeing that the start is fair and that the athletes do not beat each other.

We cannot however completely dismiss our critic's interpretation of the rules without a reasoned alternative. The obvious answer is that having given the order "set" we must then wait until everybody has been motionless for a period long enough to ensure that nobody is likely to guess and thus "go with the gun." There is, incidentally, an additional hazard quite unknown to the spectators in that it is also imperative to fire the gun within the "peak of maximum concentration" so that they are also enabled to achieve their best times. But more of this anon. Having decided however that we must wait for a period before firing, the question we must answer is "How long must we wait?"

The problem is not by any means new and it is interesting to recollect that almost since the beginning of the modern era of athletics, a century ago, the start has been a haphazard affair and that the history of the sport is fraught with reports of this or that major race having been upset or decided by a doubtful start accompanied by dozens of recalls. In attempts to eradicate this admitted evil the rules have several times been changed. Undoubtedly the major breakthrough came in 1931 when F. H. Hulford, the immensely experienced English International and Olympic athlete and already a leading British starter, hit upon two important prerequisites to a successful sprint start. The first was to stand well away laterally and just sufficiently far in front to keep the athletes in a narrow angle of vision whilst gazing along an imaginary line just in front of them which must not be broken. The second was that having given the order "Set" (or "Get Set" as it then was) he waited about two seconds before firing. In other words this was the bringing of the era of the long set into reputable amateur athletics. Despite considerable opposition from a number of athletes and officials and unpopularity from the spectators, Fred Hulford "stuck to his guns" in more ways than one and as a starter at the Olympic Games at Wembley, 1948, set a standard that has never been surpassed and seldom equalled anywhere in the world.

Experimental confirmation of the soundness of the theory of the long set is available in a book on Track and Field Athletics by the great American authors on this subject, Bresnahan, Tuttle and Cretzmeyer. They observed an enormous number of practise starts aimed at ascertaining the holding time which would enable sprinters to achieve their optimum performance. They found firstly that a holding time between 1.4 secs. and 1.6 secs. after reaching the "set" and before the firing of the gun produced the best results and secondly that holding times of exactly 1.0 second and 2.0 secs. produced the worst results. It can therefore be concluded that a definite peak of maximum concentration occurs and that if the gun is fired either before this is reached or after it has receded then the sprinter's reaction will be poor.

Now it takes approx. 1/10th of a second, for even a highly-strung sprinter to react to the stimulus of the command "Set." It takes more time for him to move into his set position and to settle back on the blocks and now we have shown that it takes about 1.5 secs. for the peak of maximum concentration to be reached. Thus it looks as though a time of about 1.8 to 2.2 between "Set" and "Gun" will assist the sprinter to produce his fastest time. (How frustrating for him to reach the set position and begin to settle back as a "quick" gun goes!) Clearly then, in the extreme cases, times of less than 1.0 second or longer than 3.0 must be considered bad starting. Incidentally the only way the starter can learn to be consistent within these limits is to have frequent stopwatch checks made upon his performance. It is virtually impossible for a novice starter to guess. The tendency is always to fire much too "fast" rather than too "slow." Our critic is, of course, always welcome to take his watch to the White City and to check the starting, provided that he does not stand so close that the starter or athletes hear the click!

There is no doubt that it takes great courage on the part of the starter to stand firm and to stick to the long set once there have been a couple of breaks and for this reason alone he needs the sympathetic silence and understanding of the spectators. Once he gains the athletes' trust at the beginning of the meeting, however, and they are sure that he will remain firm and will not vary his system there is usually no further trouble. If then he gives the confident (but not shouted) "Set" and waits the seemingly interminable two seconds, he sees the athletes come up and

remain on their blocks as steady as rocks. On firing, they move off as one man and there is then no doubt about the fairness of the start. Apart from the advantages already mentioned the athletes have had plenty of time to come up to adjust any small error occurring as a result of excitement. Once they are firm, then the slightest movement thereafter or any tendency to rock or to over-balance is at once detected by the starter, with the result that the gun is not fired and the order "stand up" can be given. Thus the number of recalls fired is very few. Only with the "long set" can the starter be absolutely certain that all movement had ceased before he fired, and that the start was fair to all and in the spirit of the short rule in the A.A.A. Handbook governing this vast subject.

It is hoped that this brief article on a huge problem will have done a little towards dissipating a number of misconceptions and that all who read it will enjoy their athletics the better for their knowledge. They should also speak up whenever they hear uninformed or unjustified criticism of starting, for only thus shall we educate all concerned and secure a new approach based on a universal feeling of mutual confidence and respect.

Thus shall a bone of contention be removed and the prestige of our great sport further enhanced.

## A Short History of Blackheath Harriers

R. H. THOMPSON

(Hon. Editor, *Blackheath Harriers Gazette*)

### THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CLUB

"The first meet of the Club took place on Saturday the 23rd instant at the King's Arms, Peckham Rye, when the following gentlemen were present . . ." thus runs the account in "Bells Life in London" of 27th October, 1869 giving the news of the inaugural run of what is now the Blackheath Harriers. The beginnings of the Club do in fact appear to go rather further back yet, because F. H. Reed (one of the "following gentlemen" present on 23rd October, 1869) later referred to the formation of the Club on 29th April, 1869 and of an unofficial run in October, 1868.

This pioneer Club, the Peckham Hare and Hounds, which was devoted solely to paper chasing, did not have a long existence however, and in 1870 a successor Club with somewhat wider aims was formed under the title of Peckham Amateur Athletic Club, the originators including some of the same men who had founded the earlier Club. Cross country running indeed continued, but on the 27th April, 1870, an early morning track meeting was held which appears to have been the first of a series; and some two years later arrangements included the holding of a weekly track meeting every Friday morning at 6 a.m. with fines to be levied for non-attendance! From its earliest days, therefore, the new Club included both winter and summer activities and seems to have been the earliest of the known Clubs to do so, other contemporary Clubs confining their activities to one or the other.

That the Club maintained itself in an area rather aside from the then chief centres of sporting activity is attributable to the enthusiasm of two or three members, notably F. H. Reed already mentioned—an enthusiasm which set the style of a close knit family institution which was its most notable characteristic for many years and to a certain extent remains to the present day. Numbers remained small however, perhaps a score in 1871, rising possibly to forty or fifty, half of them active, by 1878; but the Club's stability was evidently assured early on to judge by the orderly records kept and a steady expansion in the number and scope of the specialised offices for directing it.

### THE YEARS AT BLACKHEATH

In 1878 the Club was driven to one of its most fateful decisions. The spread of bricks and mortar in South East London had restricted their "country" to foot-paths, making a move imperative, and in July of that year the Club moved to the Green Man at Blackheath and changed its name to the Blackheath Harriers. The effect of the move to this centre of sporting tradition was immediate and from a

struggling small scale undertaking the next twenty years (up to when the Club Gazette commenced publication in 1898) saw the emergence of a powerful Club with over 260 members on the roll, with additional Headquarters at the Green Man, Muswell Hill for North London members, and engaging in a wide variety of sporting activities over and above track and cross country running including walking, swimming and cricket. It was not long after this move that the Club took a leading part in the formation of the E.C.C.U. It was in fact D. T. Mayson, one of the Club's most distinguished Honorary Secretaries who in 1883 actually proposed the Resolution that a National Cross Country Union be formed and he became its first Honorary Secretary.

### YEARS OF RECONSTRUCTION AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The sojourn at Blackheath lasted more than 40 years, but then a double crisis overtook the Club: their country was again becoming built over, but besides this the toll exacted by the 1914-18 war was not being made good. Forty four names appear on the Roll of Honour, almost exactly one in ten of the membership and of course a much heavier proportion of the active athletes. Many others had been disabled or scattered by the upheaval. One winter afternoon in 1920-21 only thirteen runners appeared at H.Q.

The first problem was the more easily tackled, though not without tearing of heart-strings for many with lifelong associations with Blackheath. The Club moved to the Railway Hotel, West Wickham, in the Autumn of 1921.

The problem of recruitment was not one that could be solved at a stroke, but as it happened the decisive step was taken the year after the move to West Wickham by the election as Honorary Secretary of H. J. Dyball whose term of office, extending to 1928, was to prove one of the most noteworthy in the history of the Club.

It was largely during Dyball's term of office that the membership which stood at less than 450 after the war, was built up to nearly 750 ten years later. It was in this period that successes were again achieved on the track and the foundations were laid for the Club's cross country strength in the 1930's (when in terms of numbers the Club succeeded in turning out 119 for the traditional match against South London Harriers in 1932).

And it was at this time that the Club took another momentous decision—to purchase its own Headquarters.

### THE CLUB HEADQUARTERS AT HAYES, KENT

The property selected consisted of a couple of down-at-heel buildings in half an acre of ground a few hundred yards from the railway station at Hayes (one station down the line from West Wickham). The main building seems to have started life as a workshop in connection with the building of the railway line in 1882 and passed through use as a builders yard and then as a hauliers depot and stable; and it must have taken much vision on the part of the Club authorities to realise what could be made of it. But by the time the interior had been more or less gutted and new floors and a new staircase installed, the Club possessed a most commodious Club House (formally opened on 1st January, 1927) with dressing rooms and baths on the ground floor and a Club Room, Committee Room, Bar and Kitchen above—to the comfort and pleasure of succeeding generations of 'Heathens. From time to time improvements have been effected, the latest being the reservation of a portion of the dressing room as a small gymnasium for weight training and the purchase of another piece of ground adjacent to the existing land.

### THE CLUB'S PRESENT NATURE AND ACTIVITIES

It will be well in concluding this short survey of the Club's history to turn aside for a moment from chronology and attempt to see the present state and activities of the Club in the light of the various formative influences of the past. First the coverage of the full range of athletic activities. To the original cross country and track running and—not much later—walking, has been added long distance road running, in which the Club had great success some ten years ago, and more recently road relay racing culminating in the institution of the Club's own race at Hayes each September.

Secondly, participation in sports outside athletics. For many years there has been a rowing match for coxed fours with Ranelagh Harriers and South London Harriers, and by way of a return of courtesies to the rowing world the Club now runs an invitation 5 miles cross country race each November for Rowing Clubs which attracts a large entry. And although the Club no longer wins county water polo titles as it did at the end of the last century a swimming race is an annual fixture.

Thirdly the "family" nature: one of the great strengths of the Club has been its ability to retain the interest and support of older members long after their running day are over. There are several who joined before the first world war and many who are regularly in touch either by correspondence or in person.

With the continued support of the older members and the enthusiasm of the active athletes the Club looks forward to continued pleasure from the Sport—and to a good celebration in five years time at the entry to the next 100 years.

*It is hoped to make this article the first of a series giving the history of some of our oldest and greatest athletic clubs. Your Honorary Editor would therefore welcome further similar articles, or suggestions as to whom he should contact in an endeavour to commission such articles.*

## Presentation in Paris

*Impressions of the 1963 France v. Russia match by a White City Resident*

RONALD JEWKES

THE approach of the track season and the prospect of further standardised home international matches causes those of us who have been lucky enough to attend meetings overseas to reflect on these and to wonder whether we can incorporate any of the foreign features into our own meetings. It is with this in mind that we shall now describe, in not too serious vein, a visit paid to Colombes Stadium in September last—and then leave our readers to draw their own conclusions. Thus it will not be our object on this occasion to report on techniques, nor to give the results of this exciting match which have already been amply covered by other athletic journals or by the Daily Comic Cuts. It will merely highlight the impressions of an official steeped in the orthodox ritual indoctrinated at the White City Mecca over a period of a quarter of a century.

About 40,000 attended the meeting and after the initial push and shove, common to foreigners, the polite neutrality of the police, the tipping of the old girls who showed you to your clearly visible seat and of the lady in charge of the men's lavatory—all strictly observed French customs—you were able to settle down and see the meeting very clearly and in reasonable comfort. You were quite untroubled by the scruffy salesmen of dubious integrity protected by hordes of operatic policemen who to my mind ruined the Rome Olympics. If you required refreshment you had to go downstairs and under the stand to an open-air stall where service was prompt and courteous. So short, however, was the programme that despite the heat-wave few required additional calories other than those secured before or after the meeting.

The best seats, about one third of them covered, cost about £1 and all appeared to be occupied. One third of the seating capacity comprising all the cheaper seats on both bends was almost deserted. It can therefore be deduced that the French athletics enthusiast is prepared to pay heavily to secure the best possible view of his chosen sport.

On both days the meeting started at 4 p.m. and ended by 6 p.m., the last event being scheduled for 5.45 p.m. This short snappy programme was achieved by having no women's events and none of the junior and invitation events (other than one walking event) to which we have become accustomed at the White City. Whether the White City crowd would find such a meeting acceptable is doubtful but I could not help casting my mind back to the pre-war days when we had full international meetings each on a single day.

Before the meeting commenced, the huge band of the Republican Guard gave a wonderful performance which compared most favourably with the White City's scratchy recording of Sousa's 1927 "Pick of the Pops." The Parade of Athletes was not the furtive shuffle of five embarrassed detailees, but a grand march-on of the full strength of both teams, sized with tallest in front, properly dressed, proudly marching in step and looking as though they were pleased to be representing their respective countries. The mere sight of this with the accompanying band stirred the crowd to fever pitch.

Five minutes before each event an official marched from the competitors entrance across to the side of the rostrum in front of the posh seats, followed by the competitors in order of lane or of trial. Each was then introduced to the crowd and took his bow, at the conclusion of which ceremony the competitors doubled away to the site of combat and the event commenced. At the conclusion of the event all returned and mounted the rostrum in order, winner first, as the full results were given and medals presented—invariably to thunderous applause. This little bit of whipping up of nationalism appeared to inspire both teams and spectators, but whether British athletes would submit to the disciplined showmanship involved is rather doubtful.

The two starters were attired in yellow jackets and apart from standing in positions not recommended in the new A.A.A. Starters Handbook, adopted rather short intervals and used almost flashless fuel which would have caused even Harry Hathway to boot his turnip clean over the scoreboard in annoyance! One piece of faulty gun play allowed a Russian to run the whole leg of his 4 x 100 metres relay before he was recalled. The announcement that there would be a short rest before the gripping repeat performance was greeted with thunderous applause.

The French crowd was very enthusiastic, athletically well educated and extremely sporting. Russian performances were cheered equally with French and a deadly silence descended on the whole stadium whilst any competitor made his trial at a field event, even in the much neglected triple jump. This by the way was sited alongside the back straight and was much appreciated by the dense crowd in the stands on that side. But why on earth do foreigners have to stand up at every exciting point in each event? The result of this faithfully observed phenomenon was that if you did not spring up at just the right moment, you missed the finish of the race concerned. In the 4 x 100 metres we went up and down like yo-yos and on the last leg it was inadequate merely to stand up—you had to ascend the seat in front. Oh for some of the old British sang-froid at this point!

There appeared to be fewer officials in the arena than at the White City, but there were some 40 rather undisciplined photographers who occasionally obstructed the view or distracted the field competitors. The scoreboard gave only the points score and in the absence of announcements in other than French we sadly missed even the White City Board. The officiating was generally very good and the track maintenance excellent—for instance during the 5,000 and 10,000 metres, the track was being swept continuously, the work being halted only to allow the competitors to pass. Each lane was also swept clear after each sprint. The competitors numbers, although as large as the White City ones, were in thinner characters and also carried an advertisement, thus making them extremely difficult to read from the stands.

As regards the competition proper, this was conducted in the highest traditions of sportsmanship. There was a complete absence of elbowing, blocking or boring. The star performer as far as the spectators were concerned was probably Tyurin who quickly gained immense popularity. Another point which struck a mere M.D. coach was the style of the walkers, almost none of whom used the locked knee technique to which we have become accustomed in this country. The French team on their home ground excelled themselves, but the fact remains that the Russians appeared tired and somewhat demoralised. Surely also some kind of administrative failure must have occurred to allow a long jumper to help out in the pole vault with 10 feet after

2,793,476 athletes had taken part in the Russian A.A.A. Championship with no expense spared? This point was not lost on John Le Mas who had been dispatched on Special Duties by M.I. 5 and, although not actually seen by a single soul, is believed to have been present, heavily disguised in false beard and sunglasses whilst armed with telescope, code book and Torrington telelink. Suffice it to say that despite making fifteen changes in their team the Russians failed to beat the British team which visited them a month later. *Res ipsa loquitur!*

Some forty of us travelled from London Airport and had a block of seats in the Stadium. Our vocal efforts and rapid exchange of information were much appreciated and experience both here and in Norway convinces the writer that a plane load of supporters (possibly a towed glider) could be mustered to attend any International Match on the continent in which Britain was competing and this could have only a beneficial effect on the morale of our competitors. The recent formation of the A.S.S.A. for the purpose is therefore to be applauded.

On the whole this meeting was more enjoyable and better supported than most White City meetings, but whether many of the presentation features could be copied here and whether these would be acceptable is open to debate. However, it is probably worth having a try in order to evade the present stagnation, although careful re-education of athletes and public alike would be imperative.

## Olympic Games, Tokyo 1964

SANDY DUNCAN

**F**OR the first time the Olympic Games will be held in Asia—in a country whose customs are far removed from those of Europe, and whose writing and numbering will mean nothing to any of us who attend them. This will present a great challenge, and yet if treated in the right spirit can add a zest to the Games which they have not previously had.

The Games will start on 10th October and finish on 24th October, with the athletic events from Wednesday, 14th October to Wednesday, 21st October. High standards have been set by the I.A.A.F., and if two or three are entered by one country in any event all these must have attained the standard. The entry of one athlete only in an event is permitted without regard to the standard.

The arrangements in Tokyo are taking shape. The Olympic Village will be at the old 'camp' recently used by the American Services, and consists of houses, flats, cinema, clubs, etc. in profusion. The Stadium is about 20 minutes walk away and is being enlarged to hold about 100,000 and the track will be entirely renovated. Trial strips and lanes of different track composition are being tested. Other sports are not so happily placed, the yachting being 56 km. away, the shooting 27 km., rowing 26 km., cycling 42 km. and canoeing about the same.

The plans for the Olympic team as a whole are already far advanced. A generous issue of team clothing is in hand; sea freight is planned for yachts, rowing shells and canoes. The Olympic air-lift is also arranged with charter planes (reinforced with a few regular service flights) leaving about 14, 10 and 7 clear days before the Opening Ceremony. A phrase book designed on an entirely new principle, printed in English and Japanese, is being produced; and team cars will once again be available in Tokyo.

An Appeal for £150,000 has been launched, which is a formidable target. Any help will be gratefully received by Richard Hinks, Appeals Secretary, British Olympic Association, 95 Mount Street, London, W. 1. Telephone: MAYfair 6253.

Those who go to Tokyo either in the Team or as spectators will certainly be faced with an adventure. The language barrier is formidable, but the phrase book will help. Traffic conditions in Tokyo are worse than those in Rome, but many new roads are being built. The use of chop-sticks will prove valuable so that 'tempura' and 'suki yaki' (both delicious) can be sampled properly. A copious supply of visiting

cards is recommended. Japan is doing all it can to act as a worthy host for the Games—and the following table shows clearly how the task of the host nation has grown since the modern Olympic movement began :

Athens, 1896	...	...	...	285 competitors	13 Nations
London, 1908	...	...	...	2,059 competitors	22 Nations
London, 1948	...	...	...	4,468 competitors	59 Nations
Helsinki, 1952	...	...	...	5,867 competitors	69 Nations
Melbourne, 1956	...	...	...	3,183 competitors	67 Nations
Rome, 1960	...	...	...	5,396 competitors	84 Nations

## Modern Champions

NEIL ALLEN

**CLARKE, RON** the latest sensation in the glorious line of Shrubbs, Nurmi, Zatopek and Kuts, staggered athletics enthusiasts at Melbourne on 18th December, 1963, when he ran six miles in 27:17.6 and went on, after some hesitation, to 10,000 metres in 28:15.6. Previous world records were 27:43.8 by Sandor Iharos in 1956 and 28:18.2 by Pyotr Bolotnikov in 1962. Clarke, born on 21 February, 1937, is 6 ft. tall, weighs 11 st. 12 lb., was a junior prodigy with a mile in 4:06.8 in 1956 and carried Olympic torch in Melbourne stadium. Formerly coached by Franz Stampfl is versatile with best marks of 4:00.8 (indoor mile), 8:35.2 (2 miles), 13:17.6 (3 miles), 13:41.6 (500 m.). Had a most successful indoor season in the United States, though never ran on boards before.

**BATTY, MELVYN RICHARD**, the reigning English cross-country champion was born on 9th April, 1940, is 5 ft. 10½ in. tall, weighs 10 st. One of Britain's most versatile track runners, the A.A.A. 1963 10 miles champion. Has best times of 4:09.6 (mile), 8:42.2 (2 miles), 13:29.8 (3 miles), 27:56.6 (6 miles), 29:01.0 (10,000m.).

## Copper for Crystal Palace



**T**HE sports hall of the £2½ million Crystal Palace National Recreation Centre will have one of the biggest copper roofs of its type in Europe. More than 120,000 sq. ft. of copper sheeting, weighing about 60 tons, will be used on the undulating roofs planned on three levels.

The picture shows craftsmen forming the soft-tempered pure copper sheeting, cut from 1,200 rolls each weighing 1 cwt. Copper was chosen because it is corrosion-resistant and 'weathers' into pleasing harmonising tints. Every square foot of the copper roofing is being laid and formed by hand. From the outside the sports hall will appear as a translucent glass structure on a dark blue base, crowned by the copper roof.

Reprinted from the January, 1964 issue of "Sport and Recreation."

# The Torch Trophy Trust Awards

ROY MOOR

**A** TOAST, gentlemen, please, for **Jack Collard**. He has won the Torch Trophy Trust national award for services to club athletics.

Jack tops the athletics list in this new series of annual awards "for years of devoted work for Birchgrove (Cardiff) Harriers."

A 51-year-old aircraft inspector, living at 9 Heol Dyfed, Birchgrove, Jack has been the Birchgrove club's general secretary since its formation in 1950; and through his unselfish leadership in coaching, organising training sessions, arranging matches and social fixtures, and also keeping together a strong committee, the club now flourishes with a membership of more than a hundred.

"A most deserving recipient of the award" commented Commander F. W. Collins, the man responsible for the formation of the Torch Trophy Trust. "We aim through this scheme to bring public recognition of the enormous amount of valuable voluntary work that people are putting into sport at club level. Too much of their good work is taken for granted."

Cmdr. Collins organised the torch relay from Athens to London for the 1948 Olympic Games at Wembley, and it was in seeking a way to perpetuate the torch in British sport that he hit on the idea of the Torch Trophy Trust awards.

His fellow trustees are: Sir Arthur Porritt (chairman), Lord Aberdare, Lord Milligan, Sir Stanley Rous and the Rev. David Shepherd.

Nearly 70 sports organisations take part in the scheme and ten awards—miniature replicas of the 1948 Olympic torch—are being presented each year from now on—two to Scotland, one to Northern Ireland, one to Wales and six to England.

Oldest recipient in the current inaugural list is **77-year-old George Parfitt**, from Gillingham, Kent. He has been an enthusiastic worker for club soccer in Rochester and District for 60 years.

**Mrs. Ruth Howard**, 73, wins another of the awards for her successful running of the Dartmoor (North) branch of the Pony Club.

Youngest to receive the award is **Gerald Nevin**, 25, for outstanding work with the Yamada-Kwai (Belfast) Judo Club.

Other winners are: **Arthur Davies**, 54, of South West Manchester Cricket Club; **Geoffrey Dawson**, 33, Nottingham City Fencing Club; **W. A. Goff**, 63, Furnivall Sculling Club; **Robert Gray**, 55, King's Park (Glasgow) Weightlifting section; **Michael McFarland**, 47, Blandford and District Gun Club and **John Neil**, 45, Shotts Miners' Amateur Swimming Club.

Recommendations are made through the governing bodies of sport.

Cmdr. Collins, says: "We hope that through the scheme the public will be made more aware of what can be done by quiet work for others without reward, and will be encouraged to give a helping hand. There is a grave lack of volunteers to run the increased number of clubs in amateur sport."

And to help those eager to give a helping hand, but who are unable to afford the cost of taking the instructional qualifying courses, the Torch Trophy Trust provides the answer in a Bursary. From this, grants, not exceeding £25, can be made to cover such costs.

I should like to point out that the Bursary is exclusively for officials doing voluntary work at local level and that it is not intended to assist those who may gain advantage in their own occupation from these courses.

# The Dorothy Hyman Stadium

ERNEST JONES

(Chairman, Wombwell and District Sporting Association)

A PUBLIC meeting was held in November, 1959, to discuss the lack of sporting facilities in and around Wombwell, S. Yorks. (population 18,500). The meeting was well attended and the demand for sporting facilities was proved. A motion was carried that an association be formed to remedy the situation. Wombwell & District Sporting Association was born.

From such a simple start the committee of voluntary workers set about its task of raising funds through door to door canvassing, small lotteries, sales of work, socials, etc. The first year's target of £5,000 was reached in ten months. Prodigious efforts followed this; spare time no longer existed for the committee as an all-out drive was launched to increase fund raising. The fact that a turnover of over £24,000 was reached last year speaks for itself.

Apart from the task of fund raising, the task of providing training facilities and instructors proved no mean challenge. Through Further Education three school halls were placed at our disposal. With the whole-hearted approval and assistance of the Gaskell & Staincross Institute of Further Education, three of the Association's sections moved in and enjoyed good attendances. One in fact is held three times weekly and has a waiting list. Other places were rented and sections formed, and at the last count over 420 persons were on the weekly training list. In every case the sections are sponsored and all equipment supplied by the Association. To date over £2,000 of equipment has been bought for the sections' use.

Sections so far are under supervision of qualified coaches and include the following:—

Male Weight Training; Rifle Shooting; Kart Racing; Archery; Adult Football; Adult Cricket; Female Weight Training; Fencing; Allied Sports; Junior Football; Junior Cricket; Youth Club.

Many honours have been won by members of the above sections, reflecting well on their coaches. The demand exists for many more sections. These sections are on the Association's agenda for future development.

So far no person of any age has been barred from entering any of our sections, and so far we have only had occasion to expel two members for misbehaviour.

Apart from finance and indoor facilities, the task of providing outside playing fields was on the agenda. The demand was so great and the shortage of existing fields so acute that it was realised that nothing short of a proper stadium would suffice.

Investigations by the committee provided a shock; for, with the exception of two inadequate 'tied' N.C.B. sports grounds, miles from Wombwell, no sports stadium existed in the whole of South Yorkshire. The question then of course was, could the Association build a large enough stadium to fill the needs of this whole area. We could try.

This new demand ruled out the site the Association had in mind to develop. A much larger site was needed with more elbow room for expansion in future years.

The only available land to meet requirements was a derelict, marshy sloping patch of land, of many owners. The redeeming features of this site were its nearness to the town centre, its opening on to a major road and the fact that the railway station was next door. Owners were traced, one as far away as Canada, and the land available bought.

Experts were called in, advice sought and the unenviable task started. A six feet deep drainage ditch was dug all along the north west boundary, draining the marsh into a dyke. On the land drying out, an excavator was employed to strip off the top and sub-soil and also to manufacture an entrance way for a fleet of tipping lorries. These lorries brought in some 70,000 tons of steel slag bought from a steel works. This ballast was rough levelled and covered in ash. Soil was then replaced and the Association truly had a site.

Whilst tipping was still in progress the west side of the site, already tipped, was laid out with a tarmac Kart racing track, 440 yards circuit laid as to R.A.C. approved plans. On completion it was immediately made available to the Local Authorities for their Road Safety Scheme, thereby serving a double purpose.

The new sport of Karting immediately caught on and is proving a success. Apart from the fact that between 50 and 100 riders enjoy racing each day open, it has helped the Association's funds, for though no admission is charged, on fine days over 2,000 spectators watch and donate funds in appreciation of the fine sport.

Under supervision from Bingley Turf Research Institute, a sports ground contractor manufactured the playing areas. A tile drainage system was used and playing areas seeded.

The two open boundaries were fenced by a contractor using 8 ft. chain link fencing on concrete posts.

Archery butts were made and two pavilions bought for the west side of the ground for Archery and Karting.

On the east end of the ground a large temporary building was needed for the start of the present football season. The playing area was passed by experts as strong enough in growth to be played on. An ex-Army stores building 75 ft. x 32 ft. was bought. This was fitted out with fold-away dressing rooms, lighting, hot and cold water, heating, etc. Temporary toilets were installed, showers and bathing facilities provided. Our football team was able to play in Wombwell for the first time. Up to this they had to play in Barnsley, some miles away, as there was at that time no available field in Wombwell.

This temporary building has an inside playing area of 60' x 25' and this area is used each night. It has more than justified the outlay.

The main contractor has received from the Association for his part in the stadium development the sum of £13,600. Other contractors have been paid, and altogether nearly £20,000 has been spent on the stadium.

The stadium, when completed in 1964, will be known as 'The Dorothy Hyman Stadium' after a local girl and founder-member of the Association, who has been an inspiration to us all.

In conclusion of this very brief report I would draw attention to the fact that the Association is a non-profit making organisation, dedicated to the furtherance of sport. It has at present nearly 700 paid-up members and a subscription list of well over 3,000 persons. I honestly believe it is still in its infancy.

## Your Country Needs You

### SQUIRE YARROW

I HOPE that Ron Goodman's article in our last issue will have persuaded some members of the A.A.A. Club to try their hand as officials. Obviously without sufficient officials to supervise all the many sorts of competitions our sport would founder.

But there are other ways of assisting athletes and athletics which are also of great importance and which may have greater appeal or be more convenient for some of our members. I am thinking of the various activities which we summarise under the headings 'development' and 'coaching.'

There is so much in development which can only be done by the man on the spot, and so much help which can be obtained through local knowledge, that I am convinced that any such willing member of the Club would be immensely helpful and would, I feel sure, find a great deal of pleasure in the work involved. Similarly in coaching, where there is a lot of administrative work apart from actual coaching and all too few people to do it. Here again, I am sure that any member who is able to help would find it a most rewarding hobby.

If any interested person would be good enough to write to me at 21 Burton Manor Road, Stafford, saying in what he is interested and how he would like to help, I will gladly put him in touch with the appropriate chap in his own Area or County and arrange with the latter for the job of work involved.

Ideas, too, are needed. If you have any bright notions about athletics in general—or indeed about the A.A.A. Club in particular—we shall be glad to hear them.

# Whither the Olympics ?

STAN TOMLIN

**T**HROUGHOUT the ages poets and writers have sought to glorify the Olympic Games and make the world's sportsmen and sportswomen fully conscious of the noble ideals upon which they were founded. But in this modern era the individual is fast losing his status and being submerged by the demands of the State. Politics are taking over and it is not difficult to ask "Whither the Olympics ?"

The pace of this change was first set by the Iron Curtain countries. It is now being accelerated by those who are emerging as independent and becoming somewhat politically nationalistic as well as revealing certain racial tendencies.

Be that as it may, but it does mean State control of sport and, of course, of the teams that are sent to compete internationally. All of which is contrary to the accepted Olympic principles of individual contest.

In these teams will be athletes who cannot ethically be claimed as amateurs. They may not break the rules by getting direct payment for competing, but they certainly get it indirectly. Their status in the community and the remuneration that goes with it are often very much dependent upon their prowess and related to international success.

Such athletes have no worries about time off for training and competing, so do not suffer the same mental and financial cramp as Britons, for instance. Is it any wonder, then, that athletes in Western countries seek broken time payment and other perks that will give them a little more parity ?

But where is all this leading us ? The original Olympic Games came to a sad end because of such an attitude. They started off with great ideals and peaceful intentions, and then ended when barred by a Roman Emperor because of professionalism.

It was a purpose of those early Games to bring about a lull in conflict between warring tribes. But now it is the Games themselves which suffer a break in continuity because of conflict between warring nations.

The first five Games in the modern era were held; then came a world war. Another five took place before a second world war. The Tokyo Games will be the last of a third series of five. Will history repeat itself ?

In these days war seems more cold than hot, with words and threats playing the major role. But it is words and votes that could disturb Olympic tranquillity. They are in fact already doing this, because many now attending international committees are governmental rather than sporting representatives.

South Africa has been told "alter your internal politics or you cannot compete in the Olympics." Behind this was the growing influence of the newly emerging countries, seeking no doubt to exploit their proud new status. Some of them, united in GANEFO, have already begun to challenge accepted authority. As a result, individuals with distinct medal prospects have been barred from the next Games, and are in in the same quandary as athletes in South Africa.

This happened because the I.A.A.F. refused—in advance—to sanction the GANEFO meeting in Djakarta last year. However, the sponsoring countries (among which strangely enough are the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) of the Games for Newly Emerging Forces have gone ahead with plans for their own little Olympics and these are to be held in Cairo in 1967.

It is clear, then, that if this drift continues the Olympics will cease to be the great sporting international competition in which all may participate, regardless of religion or politics, and become nothing more than a sporting battle field for nations.

Which way to we go—fight them or join them ? Who can tell, but whatever the ultimate the Games will suffer. In fact they already have, and surely the time for a new charter has arrived.

Here it might perhaps be as well to remember the Berlin Games of 1936, for it was then that politics and nationalism first reared their ugly heads. Many readers will recall the considerable public agitation in this country which nearly prevented Britain from participating in those Games.

# Olympic Doubles

MELVYN WATMAN

IF recent history is anything to go by, at least three of the individual men's champions at the Rome Olympics should successfully defend their titles in Tokyo. Of the 1948 champions four retained their laurels four years later—Mal Whitfield (800), Emil Zatopek (10,000), Bob Mathias (decathlon) and John Mikaelsson (10,000 walk), while Harrison Dillard won the 100 in 1948 and the high hurdles in 1952. Three of the Helsinki victors succeeded in 1956 (pole vaulter Bob Richards, triple jumper Adhemar da Silva and shot-putter Parry O'Brien), and the same number triumphed for a second time in Rome (high hurdler Lee Calhoun, intermediate hurdler Glenn Davies and discus thrower Al Oerter).

Which of the 1960 champions are in line for another climb to the top of the victory dais? Of the 22 Rome gold medallists we can immediately eliminate eight. Armin Hary (100), Herb Elliott (1,500), Zdzislaw Krzyszkowiak (steeplechase), Lee Calhoun (110 hurdles), Glenn Davis (400 hurdles), Don Bragg (pole vault), Bill Nieder (shot) and Rafer Johnson (decathlon), alas, are all retired or professionals—though there are rumours that Elliott might try a comeback. Let's have a quick look at the others. Their best marks each year since 1960 should give some indication of how they have fared since their year of triumph. Metric conversions have been incorporated where appropriate.

**Livio Berruti (200):** 1960—20.5, 1961—20.8, 1962—21.1, 1963—21.0. Slumped badly in 1962, but he offered glimpses of his old form last year. If he sets his mind to it and trains accordingly, he could recapture his 1960 speed—though even that is some three yards slower than Henry Carr at his best!

**Otis Davis (400):** 1960—44.9, 1961—45.8, 1962—46.7, 1963—46.8. The figures tell the story and at his age (32 in July) he will be hard pressed to break 46 let alone 45 again.

**Peter Snell (800):** 1960—1:46.3, 1961—1:46.4, 1962—1:44.3, 1963—1:47.3. Concentrated on mile last year, hence the relatively unimpressive time, but still very much a threat at this distance. He will probably specialise at 1,500 this time.

**Murray Halberg (5,000):** 1960—13:39.4, 1961—13:35.2, 1962—13:38.4, 1963—13:41.2. Has headed the world rankings for the past three seasons but has done little training or racing this winter. One of the great competitors of all time, he will be hard to beat if he is still ambitious enough.

**Pyotr Bolotnikov (10,000):** 1960—28:18.8, 1961—29:04.4, 1962—28:18.2, 1963—29:16.4. After a quiet 1961 season he came back better than ever and he could do so again this year. At 34 he is still a great danger.

**Bikila Abebe (marathon):** Times don't mean too much in this race, but it is probably significant that he has not been anywhere near his then world's best of 2:15:16.2 in Rome. Nevertheless his chances of success are as bright as anyone's in this most unpredictable of races.

**Robert Shavlakadze (high jump):** 1960—7' 1", 1961—6' 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", 1962—7' 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 1963—6' 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". He was quite a veteran by high jumping standards when he gained his shock victory last time and he will probably have his work cut out even making the Soviet team.

**Ralph Boston (long jump):** 1960—26' 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 1961—27' 2", 1962—26' 6", 1963—26' 11". As good as ever he was, and capable of regaining the world record any time, Boston must rank co-favourite with Igor Ter-Ovanesyan (who has never beaten him outdoors).

**Jozef Schmidt (triple jump):** 1960—55' 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 1961—53' 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ ", 1962—54' 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 1963—55' 9". Well over a foot ahead of the next best in the world last season, a magnificent competitor . . . here is the most likely repeat winner.

**Al Oerter (discus):** 1960—194' 2", 1961—190' 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 1962—204' 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 1963—205' 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Al is shooting for his **third** successive title but he has two big worries: a slipped disc and a man named Jay Silvester. A fully fit Oerter will start firm favourite, though.

**Vasily Rudenkov (hammer):** 1960—225' 6", 1961—226' 2½", 1962—222' 5", 1963—219' 11½". Probably good for around 220 feet, but that won't be good enough to win this time.

**Viktor Tsibulenko (javelin):** 1960—277' 8", 1961—272' 8½", 1962—264' 10½", 1963—258' 2½". At 34 one of the grand old men of athletics and almost certainly past his best. He could still challenge for a medal.

**Vladimir Golubnichiy (20 km. walk):** Relegated to third at the 1962 European Championships and not ranked among the world's ten best of last year. Walkers have long careers and he could very well reach the top rank again.

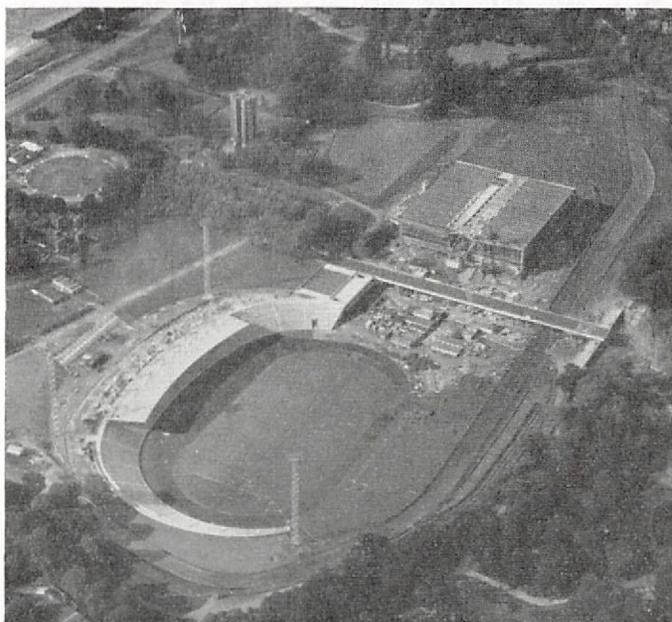
**Don Thompson (50 km. walk):** He, too, was a bronze medallist in Belgrade. He was laid low by illness last year but is walking again; with his renowned competitive flair he must not be overlooked.

Personally I would rate Schmidt, Boston and Oerter the best bets for victory, with Snell winning the 1,500. Come October we shall see!

## Crystal Palace Almost Ready

*EMLYN JONES*

*(Director, Crystal Palace National Recreation Centre)*



**WATCHING** a building grow is a fascinating process, which is why, presumably, many large building sites provide facilities for public viewing. For me there has been no lack of fascination as, over the last years, I have seen the Crystal Palace National Recreation Centre rise slowly from the liquid mud or freezing snow of winter and the dusty clay of summer. The fascination has, however, been heavily

tinged with frustration since, obviously, my main interest is in seeing these magnificent sports facilities in use rather than under construction. We have now accepted our first booking—a Young Athletes course arranged by the Southern Counties Amateur Athletic Association—which will come into residence on Whit Saturday; and, no doubt, this period of frustration will be replaced by an era of problems when the CCPR takes over the Centre on that day.

The capital cost of about £2,300,000 is being met by the London County Council (£100,000 has been given by the King George VI Foundation towards the building of the Hostel) and the LCC will also provide £25,000 a year to cover about half the estimated annual deficit for the first five years. The Ministry of Education and City Parochial Foundation will give £10,000 a year each for the same period. The LCC's Architect's Department has been responsible for the design and the CCPR, in consultation with the appropriate governing bodies of sport, has acted as technical adviser.

The suggestion that a sports centre should be built came from Sir Gerald Barry in 1952 when he acted as consultant to the LCC on the development of the Crystal Palace site as a whole. Since then many voices have been raised, and numerous fingers inserted in the pie to arrive at the present stage. To use a Churchillian phrase, the end of the beginning is now in sight.

Some doubts are occasionally expressed about the accessibility of Crystal Palace. It is only six miles from the centre of London (an easy car ride by the Capital's standards) and is well served by train and bus services. In fact, it compares more than favourably with other sports centres in London, and an added advantage is that the Centre adjoins Crystal Palace station.

It is, of course, a site which has been associated with triumph and disaster and cannot help being affected by the atmosphere and traditions of the past. The terraces, the statues and a magnificent avenue of trees are a daily reminder of palmy Victorian days. The Centre is, in fact, being built just behind a bust of Sir Joseph Paston, originator of the old Crystal Palace; the immortal W. G. played cricket and bowls here and, in the early years of this century, the FA Cup was played on the plot of ground which has been developed as the present Stadium.

This Stadium, one of the three main features of the Centre, is very close to completion. Its sickle-shaped stand has 12,000 seats—4,000 under cover in a cantilever stand—and the white concrete contrasts with the dark cinder of the athletic track and the green turf within its perimeter. The *Redgra* warm-up area for athletics and a practise pitch (100 yds. x 50 yds.) in the same material add yet another vivid splash of colour to the scheme. Adjacent to this area is a covered track 120 yds. long and a covered practise area 120 ft. x 70 ft.; the latter, among other things, will prove most useful with its two blank walls for team games training. The Stadium pitch has full-scale floodlighting and the outdoor and covered tracks and the *Redgra* pitch have low-level floodlights for evening training.

The other main features of the Centre are the Hostel and the Sports Hall. The former will provide accommodation for about 135 in double and single rooms with a bathroom for each three residents and, like the Stadium, this building is close to completion.

The Sports Hall is, without doubt, the focal point of the Centre; it is only a few feet short of 100 yds. in length, 70 ft. high and double-glazed on four sides. This building will be completely enclosed before Christmas and the heating plant will be operating in preparation for laying the timber floors. It is a most imaginative building with its glazed aspects in the great tradition of Paxton's glass palace. Aesthetics have not been forgotten, but it is extremely functional.

The Sports Hall houses the swimming baths on the east side, the indoor arena on its west side, an indoor cricket school with four nets, six squash courts, three training halls (each 60 ft. x 34 ft.) and two changing rooms with 400 lockers in each. There are, in fact, three separate swimming pools—an eight-lane 55 yds. racing pool 6 ft. 6 in. deep overall; a separate diving pool with spring and fixed boards to Olympic specifications; and a 2 ft. 9 in. deep teaching pool. There are 1,760 seats in a two-tiered stand and by covering the teaching pool and erecting a 'bleacher' the capacity can be raised to well over the 2,000 mark.

### Electronic timing

The racing pool will also have an electronic timing and judging device (developed by the LCC) and an electrically-operated scoreboard to provide visual information on swimming, diving and water polo. The timing device is accurate to 100th of a second and will judge between competitors to an accuracy of 1,000th of a second. All swimming baths are expensive to run and this one will be no exception; it is, therefore encouraging that the Amateur Swimming Association and its branches are making ambitious plans to use the swimming and diving pools for competitive and training events. The ASA's National Championships (also the British Olympic trials) will be held at Crystal Palace from 17-22 August and Britain's Olympic swimming and diving team will carry out its final training stint at the Centre before leaving for Tokyo.

It would seem that the pattern of use for the swimming baths during weekdays is likely to be by school groups during the morning and afternoon, by the general public at lunch-time and in the early evening, and by groups attending courses and carrying out specialised training from mid-evening onwards. The arrangements for the week-end will have to be on an *ad hoc* basis and use by the general public will be limited by bookings for residential and non-residential training events. Every effort will be made to provide facilities at all times for top-class swimmers and divers nominated by the ASA.

### The indoor aspect

The Indoor Arena, on the west side of the Sports Hall, is the most intriguing and interesting facility from the point of view of the problems which it poses. It is an *avant-garde* multi-sports hall which has all the advantages—and some of the disadvantages—of areas of this type. There seem to be two main dangers in all multi-sports halls; first, it important that the designer knows to what extent standards can be compromised in order to make the hall suitable for a number of sports; second, those responsible for running such a facility must not cut the cake into such small parts that the recipients cannot even taste it. It would seem that at Crystal Palace the first danger has been averted, and every effort will be made to avoid the second.

The floor space can be used as a large indoor training area which offers numerous permutations in dividing it into courts. By pulling out the retractable seating, about 1,400 spectators can be accommodated, and a 600-seater 'bleacher' will be available to boost the capacity to the 2,000 mark. With the seating pulled out, this is still sufficient space to accommodate a centre lawn tennis, basketball or netball court, six badminton courts and about one dozen table tennis tables. So that maximum flexibility can be achieved, the LCC's scientific advisers are investigating a means of sealing the timber floor which will give it a matt, non-reflecting finish and will also prevent the surface becoming too fast for lawn tennis. They are also trying to produce a paint which is quick-drying, durable and easily removed. If these two problems can be solved a major contribution will have been made towards achieving maximum flexibility in a multi-sports hall.

The CCPR has pioneered the idea of National Recreation Centres in this country and, on the Continent, Germany, Russia and a number of other countries have centres which excite envy. What then has Crystal Palace to offer which is new? The range and scope of its facilities are a factor and its position in relation to the large

mass of London's population is also significant. The residential side will run on much the same lines as our Bisham and Lilleshall centres but, in addition, its facilities are easily accessible for non-residential use and for events which require spectator accommodation. We have the problem of learning how to make the maximum use of the facilities by accommodating training and spectator events at the same time and in the right proportion.

### Hiring charges

The charge for full board and accommodation—25s. a day—also includes the use of the facilities required for the event for which the resident is attending. This charge can be reduced for certain categories of young people, and may be increased when the accommodation is used for purposes other than sports training. The list of charges for facilities used on a non-resident basis is also available. When used for practice and play by clubs and individuals, they are comparable to the fees payable for similar facilities elsewhere in London, but there is a reduced rate for specialised training courses and players by governing bodies and their branches.

Occasionally some surprise is expressed because no hiring fee has been quoted for the Indoor Arena, Swimming Baths and Stadium when used for events for which spectator accommodation is required. The Crystal Palace Committee decided that each event of this type should be negotiated separately. In negotiating a hiring fee, the first principle that has to be considered is that it is no part of the CCPR's function to subsidise events of this type. The fee should, therefore, at least cover the running costs of the facilities hired, and, if possible, show a margin of profit. However, this having been said, some sports bodies could not commit themselves to an economic rent and in such circumstances, bearing in mind that the Centre exists to serve sports bodies, we are prepared to consider reducing the hiring fee but, as compensation, taking a higher percentage of the gate. In this way we try to arrive at a formula to suit the promoting body and the event.

The booking position for training and competitive events for the second half of this year and the early part of 1965 is encouraging. The residential accommodation is taken up in July and August by one-week courses either booked direct with the Centre or included in the CCPR's national programme. The Football Association will bring in courses for coaches and players, swimming will feature prominently including the ASA's pre-Olympic training, and a number of other sports will join in the Centre's baptism. Outside this period the main demand, not unexpectedly, is for week-end bookings. Competitive events include the national championships in swimming and weight-lifting, the Olympic judo trials, international basketball, provisional bookings for an international soccer match, as well as several other events of national or regional interest.

What chance has the man in the street of using this Centre? Individual use by the general public cannot be regarded as high priority, but it would seem that a reasonable amount of time can be available to the public for some facilities; for example, the swimming baths or squash courts for individual use and the cricket nets and indoor tennis courts for clubs. Members of the public will have to become 'authorised users' to entitle them to use these facilities. This can be done for a nominal charge of 5s. a year which will enable the holder to enter the Centre, but the normal charge for individual use will have to be paid in addition.

The Centre has been built by the LCC and will be run by the CCPR. It is there to be used by the governing bodies of sport, by local education authorities, by youth organisations and by the general public. The generous action of the LCC has pointed the way for other local authorities, but the acid test for future statutory provision must depend to a large extent on the way in which the Centre is used.

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# Memories of the Olympic Games

*The Rt. Hon. PHILIP NOEL-BAKER, M.P.*

**White City 1908.** I might possibly have been a competitor in 1908, but was advised that, at the tender age of eighteen, it would be a mistake. I now regret that I accepted this advice!

I was, however, a passionately interested spectator, and by accident I was in the gateway of the White City stadium when the Italian marathon runner, Dorando Pietri, arrived there. As he passed through the arch onto the track he heard the enormous crowd stand and cheer him, and mistakenly believing that he had won, he let himself collapse on the ground. I have no doubt that without the assistance of the officials he would not have broken the tape ahead of the American who came second. The Americans, in my view, were, therefore, entirely justified in their objection to Dorando's receiving the Gold Medal. The incident provoked a lot of anti-American criticism, but the delicate situation was saved by Queen Alexandra who gave a special medal to the Italian hero Dorando, who had arrived back at the stadium half a mile ahead of the field.

**Stockholm 1912.** It was my privilege to run in the final of the 1,500 metres with the Gold Medallist, Arnold Strode-Jackson, then in his second year at Oxford. Jacker was one of the greatest athletes who ever went on a track. In Stockholm he was in superb physical condition. He made a new Olympic record, and could have run much faster had that been required.

He was distinguished not only for his athletic prowess but for his sterling character as well. He proved this in the first World War, when he won a D.S.O. with three bars, a letter of personal commendation from the Commander-in-Chief and the rank of Brigadier at the age of 28. Few, if any, other men in the British forces achieved such an astonishing record. When the war was over he was one of the original founders of the Achilles Club, and almost certainly without his help it would never have been born.

**Antwerp 1920.** In Antwerp I had the privilege to run in the 1,500 metres final with the Gold Medallist Albert Hill of Britain. Albert had already run through three rounds of the 800 metres and had already won first place in that final. It was a great achievement to win the 1,500 metres as well. None who saw the race ever forgot the way in which at the beginning of the last lap Albert went away on his own.

Antwerp, coming immediately after the first World War, was a very happy and thrilling festival of sport. Britain did well, and might have done better with a little luck.

**Paris 1924.** In Paris I had the privilege of sharing a bedroom with Harold Abrahams and of thus being in close and constant communication with one of the greatest sprinters of all time in his most glorious year. His recovery in the semi-final of the 100 metres when, by a misunderstanding, he had been left at the start by more than two yards—in spite of which he won in a new Olympic record—was an outstanding feat. So was Douglas Lowe's great win in the 800 metres.

I had hoped to run in the final of the 1,500 metres with Henry Stallard and Lowe, but was prevented by illness from doing so. Had I been there I would have tried to ensure that Henry Stallard had been less than 40 yards behind the great Nurmi at the beginning of the last lap. Limping on an injured foot, Stallard, by an amazing sprint, was up to Nurmi's shoulder 15 yards from the tape. At that point pain and exhaustion made him pass out and he staggered over the line a defeated but glorious third.

# Running and Cross-Country Running

ALFRED SHRUBB

*(The World's Greatest Pedestrian)*

Extracts from the book bearing the above title published by Health and Strength Ltd., circa 1911, price 2/6.

## Preface

It has often been suggested that there would be a fairly considerable demand for a book on running by some prominent modern-day pedestrian, and that, in view of the records associated with my name, it was my plain duty to supply this long-felt want.

I have hitherto resisted these kindly suggestions, as I have not felt that I was possessed of the ability to write a book which everyone would particularly care to read; but persistent and quite recently increased pressure having been brought to bear, I have at last ventured to issue this book dealing with my ideas: firstly, as to how a runner should train; and, secondly, how he should set about running any race for which he might be entered.

It was pointed out that, having regard to the forthcoming Olympic Games, and to the fact that the American athletes generally were anticipating a general series of triumphs in the field sports, I, who am now debarred from competing in any pedestrian event as an amateur, may at all events assist my country's representatives with the benefits of such experience as has fallen to my lot during a fairly long and successful career.

Now it must be admitted that the results of the last few running contests between the United Kingdom and the United States have given the representatives of the latter country certain grounds for their confidence, and for that reason I have been tempted to offer these opinions of mine on running matters generally, in the hope that they may prove of some slight assistance in redressing the balance. For I certainly am no partisan of those Jeremiahs who seem to be only too ready to bewail the decadence of British athletics, and to accept the superiority of the American pedestrian as a fact which cannot be disputed. I have myself visited most of the American running tracks, and have seen the majority of their leading athletes, with the result that the only superiority which I have discovered them to possess lies in the training methods commonly in use.

Not that I regard these as being the best in existence, for, vanity apart, I am inclined to fancy that one or two of our English trainers could give their best men several valuable points. But I must confess that the American pedestrian, as a rule, takes his sport more seriously than is the custom here. He is more highly-strung, if I may say so, and seems to set his mind more determinedly on winning than does his British rival.

That, however, is a matter of temperament, and can, I think, be more than counterbalanced by British doggedness, if this quality be only allied with common-sense, practical methods of preparation.

The Briton has, I am convinced, a far greater stamina, as has been proved over and over again by our superiority in long-distance races, a superiority which our American cousins even will readily admit, once they are seriously challenged on the point.

There are not too many long-distance events on the Olympic programme, but those there are should all be annexed by British representatives if only our men will make up their minds to do so. The Marathon race, which we have hitherto allowed to go to one or other of our rivals, should be regarded as a British preserve, as it is just the sort of race at which our men commonly excel.

The walking contests also ought to come our way, and I see no reason why we should not stand a really good chance in all the pedestrian events, save, perhaps, the purely sprint races.

Sprinting is, of course, a purely natural quality, and hitherto our men would seem to have been compelled to acknowledge American superiority over these short distances, but since the ability to sprint is more or less of an accidental quality, there is no reason why we should not discover a man who can establish new records over short distances.

This, however, is by the way, since the point I wish chiefly to impress on all athletes who may read this book is that if they wish to excel at any branch of sport they must train. Train steadily, consistently, and constantly, and always bear in mind that however well they may be doing it is still possible for them to do better.

Above all, let them train on the best lines discoverable. There are good methods of training and there are bad methods, the latter, unfortunately, too often extensively patronised. My methods may not be the best, but they have always served me well, and such as they are I now place them at your service.

### **From Chapter III: Special Preparation for a Long-Distance Run**

. . . I have never trained but in the one fashion, and that is to rise at about 7.30 a.m., and, after going through about ten minutes' free exercise, to dress quickly and get out of doors for a brisk two-mile walk before breakfast, going at about four and a-half miles an hour. All walks should be done at this pace.

I have generally made a point of getting up at half-past seven, as I have usually gone to bed about 10.30 p.m., and believe in having at least nine hours' sleep. I would put the minimum period of rest necessary as being from eight and a-half to nine hours, and would advise all athletes to govern their walking and sleeping hours by this rule. The morning walk should be a sharp one, so as to loosen the muscles, expand the lungs, and give one a good edge to one's appetite. . . . The walk finished, you will be more than ready for breakfast. This should, nevertheless, be a fairly light meal. Two or three medium-boiled eggs, a little fish, perhaps, some dry toast, and, say, two cups of coffee in preference to tea. It is as well to take some oatmeal porridge now and then in order to supply the necessary building material for one's bones, which is to be found in oatmeal in greater quantity than in any other food with which I am acquainted.

After sufficient time has been allowed for the due digestion of one's breakfast, get out on the track and put in a four or five-miles' spin, which distance should be increased to eight miles once or twice a week.

Then back to lunch or mid-day dinner—whichever you prefer—at about 1 p.m. This should be fairly substantial. A steak, or plain roast or boiled beef or mutton, fruit, milk puddings, and a sufficiency of green vegetables. No potatoes. Stale bread, or, preferably, dry toast. One glass of old ale will be found about the best thing to drink, or, if an absolute teetotaller, a cup of Bovril or coffee, and whatever is taken should be taken with the food, not before or after.

Then about 3 p.m. go back to the track and put in your afternoon work, which should consist of three-mile runs for the first week, eight or ten miles during the second, and two-mile fast bursts for the third. Follow up the system as prescribed for preliminary training, varying it from two-mile runs at top speed to four-, five-, six-, eight-, and ten-mile steady runs.

It is, perhaps, difficult to lay down a hard and fast rule, as the course of training will naturally vary with the time at one's disposal; but the best method to adopt will perhaps be to divide whatever time you may have into about ten periods, and to devote the first three to three-mile runs, the next two to four-, five- and six-mile

distances, the next two to eight and ten miles, and the last three to two-mile bursts, interspersing throughout an occasional trial of your speed over the full course, as though you were actually running the race. . . .  
. . . . Whatever you do, don't make the mistake of trying to do the full ten miles too often. Vary your training spins as much as possible within the lines sketched above, and, when going for the short two-mile runs, go as fast as you can all the way, so as to develop your speed as much as possible.

Supposing that you have received a fairly decent handicap, in yards if not in time, you may confine your full distance spins to the course which you will actually have to cover in the race itself. But I would certainly advise you, in any event, to go over the full ten miles at least once.

At the close of the afternoon work stroll back home, and about 5.30 to six have your last meal of the day. This, which should be a sort of high tea, should consist of much the same items as your breakfast; that is to say, of eggs (medium-boiled), a little fish or cold roast meat, dry toast and tea. Fruit or rhubarb may also be taken, but all pastry, stews and made dishes should be carefully avoided.

After tea go for a two-mile walk, and before going to bed drink a cup of Bovril, or something of the kind.

It is most important to observe regular hours throughout. Meals should be taken at the same times every day and the times for going to bed and rising should also be strictly the same.

Rest on Sundays altogether. You will certainly feel strongly inclined for the lazy-off, and will certainly not suffer thereby.

### **Training for the Man in Business**

The above course of training, it may be objected, is no doubt admirable for the man with plenty of leisure, but not for one who has to attend an office or other place of business. Well, obviously, the latter can't possibly adhere strictly to it; but, nevertheless, it should not be impossible for him to approximate thereto as nearly as he can.

For instance, he can take his early morning walk, and after breakfast can walk sharply to business (or, at all events, for some fair part of the way). He can even cover some of the ground, if he lives any distance out, at a decent trot, and can follow the same rule on his way home.

His meals should also be regular, and he must adapt himself to circumstances in substituting evening work for the morning and afternoon work of his better situated rival.

Let him get down to the track about 6 p.m., or as near thereto as he can manage and put in a good run every night. As he has to make one spin serve instead of two, he would be well advised to lengthen his shorter runs by 50 per cent. or thereabouts—that is, run three miles instead of two, six miles instead of four. The eight and ten miles, of course, need not be lengthened, nor should the distance of the full speed two-mile bursts be interfered with.

Another means by which the business man can make up his handicap as against his leisured rival is by putting in a longer period of strict training. The latter, supposing him to be absolutely fit when commencing, should be able to "make do" with three weeks' hard work, while the former would be better suited with four or five weeks, which will enable him to take matters somewhat easier, and thereby run a lesser risk of growing stale.

This calamity, which is the constant dread of every brand of athlete during his training, is perhaps more readily detected by the running man than by the boxer or wrestler. His work is drawn out longer, and he is presented with more opportunities of recognising any lack of interest or want of fire.

He may also watch for the most certain tell-tale of all, that one sure sign which is vouchsafed to every one in training, viz., the absence of free perspiration after hard work.

But no matter what warning he may receive, he must take immediate steps to combat the enemy. He must knock off all work for a while and go very quietly indeed until he finds that he is fit again. A week's rest, with only one spin, would do the trick even in a bad case, but there are occasions when as long as a fortnight may be necessary.

Don't hesitate about this. Better go into the race half trained than over trained. For in the former case you will have fire and vigour at least, and without these two qualities success is not to be looked for.

Scratch even, if you feel like it, but only do this in extreme cases, as the race would serve as a good practice spin anyway. . . .

## Rules Revision and Records

*Instr. Lt. Cdr. CYRIL SINFIELD, M.B.E.*

*(Hon. Secretary, A.A.A. Rules Revision and Records Committee)*

THE Honorary Editor of the Newsletter has suggested that I should produce an article dealing with the work of my Committee and it is perhaps a good thing that members of our Club should know something about the functions of the various A.A.A. Committees. The Rules Revision and Records Committee, in addition to its Honorary Secretary, consists of one representative from each Area and one member recently added as a direct nomination of General Committee. The Area representatives are all Grade 1 Referees of vast experience in Track and Field events.

I expect many of you will think the Records side of our work is merely a question of receiving an application form and ratifying the performances after a cursory glance. It would indeed be a pleasure if all applications were as simple as that but we have a duty to all record holders and aspirants thereto. The ratification of any new record must be fair to various people:—

- (i) those athletes whose performances were better than the one under consideration but which were not accepted for various reasons;
- (ii) the present applicant who should not be given a false impression of his ability if there is any doubt about the conditions under which it was achieved;
- (iii) future performers who might turn in better times or distances than the existing record but not as good as the one under consideration;
- (iv) the holder of the existing record who should not be deprived of his title lightly.

The rules governing records are to be found in the A.A.A. Handbook, the Rules of Competition and, for European and World records, the I.A.A.F. Handbook. It is obvious that we ought to avoid ratifying any performance as a National record if it would not be considered for European or World listing. Our own rules have therefore been revised on the lines of the I.A.A.F. rule and will appear in the new form in 1964. The organiser of any meeting in which top class athletes are appearing should study the rules very carefully to ensure that all the essential requirements have been complied with. It is unfair to an athlete to find that his record throw cannot be considered for record purposes because the discus was under weight or the circle too large; the track man will be equally upset if the track is found to be several inches short or there were insufficient reliable timekeepers at the meeting.

We have all seen the inexperienced or unqualified official in action but those days are gradually passing—thanks to the work of another of our Committees. To safeguard our aspirants for records the officials directly concerned with the performance must be of certain gradings. Through the work of Development Committee many of our tracks have now been surveyed and details forwarded to the A.A.A. so that gradients, lap distances, field events sites, etc., are known and much time can be saved if an application or record is received from such a track. All Grade 1 and Grade 2 timekeepers are required to submit details of their watches and test certificates to the various Area Associations so a check can be made whenever times are involved.

A quick look through my Records file for 1963 produces one application form to which no less than seventeen letters—in or out—are attached. The need for a comprehensive rule on the subject is obvious.

Now to Rules Revision. 'Why muck about with the Rules every year?' says someone. The simple answer to this question is that progress demands it and we are not the only governing body which finds it necessary to keep a continuous watch over the rules under which their members compete. Our Rules of Competition have developed over a period of many years; bits have been added to existing rules and new rules have been introduced. Until a few years ago nobody bothered very much about the overall problem; then, with the growth of the scheme for qualifying officials, instructional courses were started. Faced by classes of keen candidates the lecturer often found that things which had always seemed obvious to him with his experience were not so obvious to one studying the rules for examination purposes. Newly qualified officials came up against snags which they passed on for clarification. Improvements and re-writing have cleared a number of the difficulties and anomalies, but new points still crop up from time to time.

It is essential that our prospective International competitors should find the rules the same at home as abroad and when changes are made in I.A.A.F. rules these need to be carefully studied in order that appropriate changes may be made in our own rules. Not every I.A.A.F. amendment is slavishly followed, e.g. a couple of years ago they decided that steeplechase hurdles must be spiked into the track, but we refused to implement this and the I.A.A.F. have had second thoughts.

Changes in techniques in field events are constantly taking place and bring problems of rules to my Committee. The various Specialist Clubs have, by their concentration on their own particular events, produced suggestions for amendments to rules. Development Committee is always studying technical details of impedimenta and equipment, and the ever present problem of Safety. Our rules must be kept in line.

I can justifiably claim that there is very close liaison between my Committee and most of the other Committees of the A.A.A. because most of them come up against problems of interest to the Rules side of our activity. Then, of course, there is the occasional letter from the chap who cannot sleep at night and spends his waking hours thinking about some strange combination of circumstances, or an impossible field events technique, and decides to submit it to the governing body for a ruling. We always manage to reply as courteously as possible to every letter which is received, so if any members of the Club have any rules problems which they would like sorted out, I hope they will not be afraid to seek our assistance.

## Book Reviews

**"SUPERMEN, HEROES AND GODS" by Walter Umminger (Thames & Hudson, 35s.)**

In a sense this book is a complete history of sport, ranging as it does from the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece to the modern version, from gladiators to footballers and bull fighters, from Polynesian legend to Kon-Tiki. It is all good fun, but inevitably very superficial. Roger Bannister figures on the cover, superimposed over a string of stylized runners from a Greek vase painting, but athletics appears in the text mainly in connection with the theme of amateurism. The athlete has the right to get a living from doing what he enjoys, urges the author—but if Sonja Henie is admired for the business acumen which led her from Olympic gold medals via films to millions of dollars, Britain's Jeanette Altwegg, who turned down professional contracts in order to go and work for 50/- per week in the Pestalozzi international village, is quoted as the "true story that could not be improved upon in fiction." There are a great many curious items of information to be picked up here (e.g. Tiglath-Pileser I of Assyria claimed to have bagged a whale), but nevertheless the price of the book makes them expensive. Its bibliography, from Abrahams, H. via Hunt, Sir J. to Whympers, E., is a valuable guide to more solid reading.

### 1964 HANDBOOK OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

(1/- post free from Mr. A. Foyston, 16 Cavendish Road, Hull, Yorks.)

The report of the 39th year of the Association reveals the highlights of the year to be the fifth Young Athletes Course at Lilleshall, the Annual Track Championships at Chelmsford and Cross-Country Championships at Coventry and the third Schools International Match. The high standards now reached by our best schools athletes are revealed by details of the performances at Chelmsford: 9.9 secs., 21.9 secs., 48.4 secs., 1 min. 55.1 secs., 4 mins. 11.4 secs., are the times recorded by the winning senior boys on the track; 6 ft. 4 in. in the high jump, 23 ft. 9½ in. in the long jump, 47 ft. 7¾ in. in the triple jump, etc., etc.

The future of athletics in this country is assured while youthful talent is encouraged and guided to such fine performances! British athletes do indeed owe a great debt to their schoolmasters and mistresses.

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We are grateful to all those who have contributed articles to this issue of our Newsletter. Their views are, of course, not necessarily those of the A.A.A.

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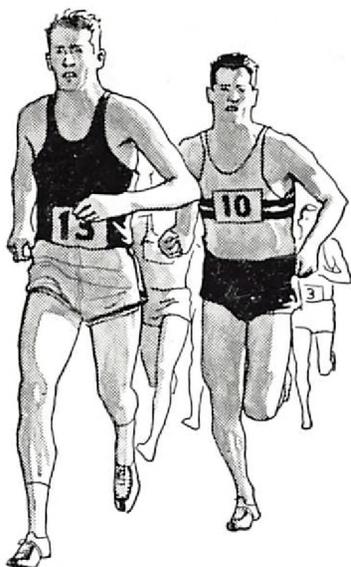
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