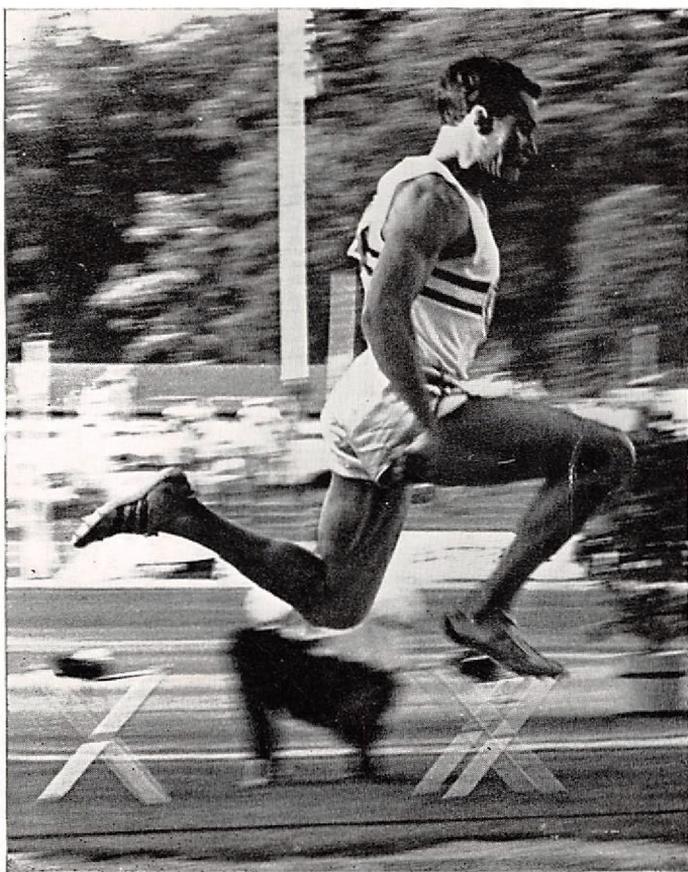


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CLUB

NEWSLETTER



DEREK BOOSEY
(Madeley College and Belgrave Harriers)

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Mexico 68. A Hammer Thrower's Eye-View

A. H. PAYNE

FIFTEEN minutes out from London airport the captain spoke over the intercom: "We have a fire in number 4 and so we are returning to Heathrow." Pale faces tried to be cheerful as the plane circled for another half hour to lighten the fuel load. The fire engines were ready on the tarmac, but the captain put the plane down without a bump and the load of British Olympic athletes returned thankfully to earth. However the captain let down our heroic feelings a few hours later by telling us it was only a false alarm from the warning system—there had never been a fire! We felt even less heroic by the time we landed, sleepless, in Mexico City some 17 hours later.

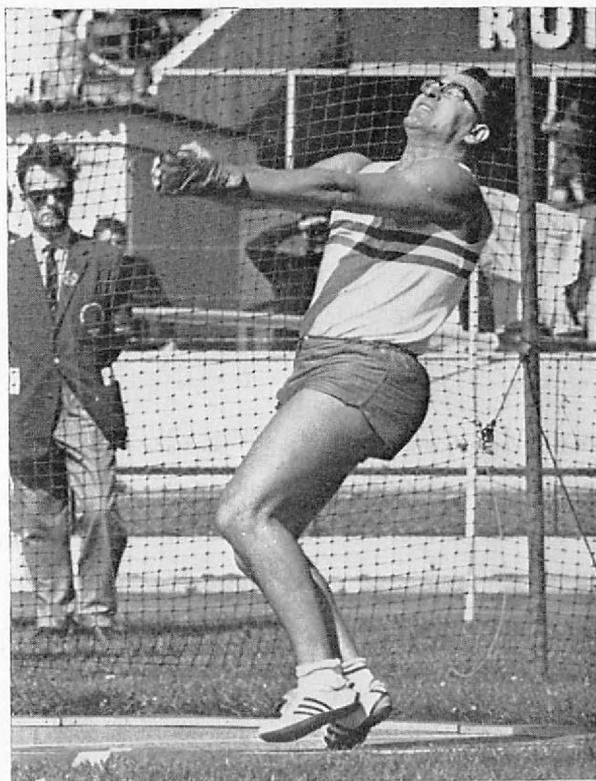
We were surprised to find that several of the athletics officials and headquarters staff who had come out on earlier flights were at the airport to meet us. They had been up all night in order to welcome us and get us to the Village. There they organised breakfast for us, then urged us to get to bed for some sleep. We discovered that the officials had even carried our luggage up to our rooms. This was a great start to our stay in Mexico and we were most appreciative.

The Olympic Village consisted of high blocks of flats, 4 spacious flats to a floor—spacious, that is, before 11 athletes were crammed into each flat. Our plane-load of competitors, finding themselves last to arrive had to be content mainly with sleeping in through-lounges with only one locker as furniture—not the sort of living conditions one would expect to bring a highly strung athlete to a peak for his event after two weeks. Results bear this out—only two of the sixteen living in the noisy through-lounges on our floor made a final.

On the credit side, the rest of the village facilities were excellent. Somehow or other the 7,000 plus competitors were very adequately fed three times a day in a dozen large dining halls. At least one restaurant was open from 6 a.m. to midnight and one could eat as much of the excellent food as one wished. The International Club in the Village was the social centre and contained an open-air swimming pool cinema, concert hall, billiard tables, sauna baths, etc. In the village there were also post offices, laundries and shops. For the athletes there was a first class Tartan track with separate areas for jumping, throwing and weight training. Training halls for wrestlers and boxers were also situated within the Village. All other sports were accommodated for training purposes at nearby venues. The Mexico Village had an advantage over the Tokyo Olympic Village in that the total area was relatively small and one could walk from one end to the other in about 5 minutes—an important consideration in any hammer thrower's existence! The Mexicans are great artists and sculptors and our Village life was brightened with scores of lawn sculptures as well as the famous "Friendship" construction in the flag area. Some of the statues of nudes were regularly dressed up by the athletes and regularly undressed by the administration.

As is usual in Olympic villages, the women's quarters were surrounded by a high wire fence and female Mexican soldiers guarded the only entrance. How they decided whether some of the people going in there were really female, baffled me, for some of them were bigger and stronger than most men.

Coaches left from the front entrance of the Village at regular intervals for training areas and competition venues, but boarding a coach was always an adventure. The correct number and destination on the front of the coach did not guarantee that it was going along the route stated. The only sure way of getting to the place you wanted was to ask the driver where he was taking his coach.



HOWARD PAYNE
(Birchfield Harriers)

We spent many pleasant hours walking round the Village, stopping to chat to old and new friends from other countries, browsing in the shops and sipping cool drinks which were supplied free from open-air counters dotted around the grounds. This part of the Village life was conducive to good athletic performances, for one could be free from outside cares and worries and just concentrate on getting as fit as possible. We had endless hours of discussion with other athletes about athletic techniques and trends, learning much from the more experienced and successful throwers such as Jay Sylvester, Les Mills, Robin Tait, Gyula Zsivotsky, Uwe Beyer, George Puce and Ed Burke. One of the greatest advantages an Olympic athlete can enjoy is the chance to train with some of the world's best in his event. Certain athletes will train alone at unearthly hours to maintain their secrets, but I feel they lose more than they gain. The hammer throwers, anyway, were uninhibited about their training and no-one even objected to being filmed.

Whatever you people back home think about the effects of altitude after all the conflicting reports, let me say that the effects are very real. On the first day in Mexico City a sea level dweller finds himself out of breath after the smallest exertion, such as walking up stairs. Even after a week or two, running and swimming beyond a very short distance become occupations one prefers to do without. Breathlessness seems to strike suddenly after running or swimming hard for about

60 seconds. Then it becomes difficult to get the rate of breathing and pulse back to normal. I was glad that I was not a runner! On the other hand the field events and the track events up to about 800 metres benefited from the lower air resistance and even this knowledge was psychologically sufficient to increase performance beyond that expected just from lower air resistance. There was less air drag on flying implements and the hammer, for instance, travelled an extra 20" or so as a result.

The Russians were out the first day I walked around to the throwing area. Klim looked bigger and more powerful than I remembered him from previous encounters, though he was as uncommunicative as before! He threw regularly in the high 230's and even at half effort casually dropped around the 215' mark. Shuplyakov is tall and lanky and even with far-from-perfect technique, could throw around the 220' distance. Kondrashov, the third Russian, did not train very much for the first few days I was there and I guessed that he had a slight injury. Lovasz, the Hungarian, who is the present A.A.A.'s Champion, was also training, using his ultra fast 4 turn technique, but Zsivotsky and Eckschmidt only watched. I saw Zsivotsky training later in the week and it was evident that the world record was in danger anytime that he had competition. Part of the field dropped away in a terrace at around 240 feet and both Zsivotsky and Klim went over this edge on occasion, evoking gasps of amazement from us and the crowds lining the fence alongside the main road. Ernst Amman, my great friend and rival from Switzerland trained often while his pretty wife sat coaching him—she was in the Swiss team for the pentathlon and long jump. Later their roles were reversed as he coached her.

One thing which was very noticeable whenever the Continental throwers trained was that they were always accompanied by a coach. I am sad to relate that when the British throwers trained they trained alone with no one to advise them. With only 3 coaches for 73 athletes, we could hardly expect them to hold stopwatches for our runners and organise relay teams and still have time for individual coaching of the highly technical field events. (The other National coaches who travelled to Mexico went as observers only. Why?) One of the other coaches did ask me if there was anything he could do for me but by that time I had very nearly completed my training before the actual competition. I have great respect and friendship for our coaches as individuals—and they do a great job for our runners, but our throwers are getting nowhere and something must be done about it. It is because we are neglected by overworked coaches and officials and frequently insulted by the press that we languish. (Example of an insult, Desmond Hackett reporting in the Daily Express of 27th August, 1968: ". . . most of the opposition will still be warming up after Payne has reached his limit. His best is around 30 feet behind the world peak. And I did read some pious resolution that nobody will go to Mexico unless they have a real chance." I have not yet received an apology from this man.)

We had an "uncle," Mr. John Cooper, attached to our team. John is an Englishman living in Mexico, speaks the language and knows the ways and the people better than most Mexicans. He gave us invaluable help in settling down and understanding the country. For instance he introduced us as honorary members, for our stay, to the Reforma Athletic Club, which has its Club house and grounds just outside the city. The Club has a long history dating back to the beginning of the century and there are old photographs on the walls of competitors putting the shot from squares and vaulting into murderous looking pits. In the beautiful grounds of the Club, amongst the cricket fields and tennis courts was our main attraction—a large, clear-watered swimming pool open to the warm sun, and it was there that we relaxed away many hours before and after the competitions.

The San Juan market in the city was another venue for relaxation, though of a different kind—here the athletes of all countries would be found bargaining and haggling over the prices of silver, leather, stone and basketwork goods. The early arrivals—the long distance runners who had to acclimatise—found the bargaining easy and could even bring a seller down to half the original price, but those of us who came later had difficulty in getting even a quarter reduction on first bids, because of the increased demand for souvenirs. Still it was great fun and we came away with loads of stuff we didn't really want!

There was a two day Pre-Olympic meeting at the University track the weekend before the Games opened. On the first day we saw the giant Russian, Gushin, smash the European record in the shot with 66' 6½".

The ladies' discus was held on a back field some distance away from the stadium and I had great difficulty finding it. Conditions were good though and there wasn't a breath of wind. The Russians, Murajeva, (180' 11"/55.14) and Popova (180' 10"/55.12) edged out the Hungarians, Kleiber (180' 6"/55.02) and Stugner (180' approx.). Solonzova, the third Russian threw in the 170's and then Jean Roberts of Australia followed in with about 168'. U.S.A.'s Moseke and Fiji's Del la Vina were way off form, throwing less than 150 feet most of the time. Jean Roberts was looking good, but her nerves let her down—she asked me not to film her because the noise of the camera upset her.

The men's discus on the second day was a long drawn out affair with decathlon men adding to the large number of competitors. The event took place from a fast circle on a field by the side of the stadium, but this field was more accessible and there were thus more spectators than for the ladies' discus. There was no wind. Milde of East Germany looked in good form. He wears a weight-lifting belt when throwing to protect an old back injury. John Cheffers, the Australian coach, reckons that Milde's tendency to back trouble is caused by his throwing style—his left leg lands too soon and the right leg has to drive against this obstruction. Milde is very dynamic in his throwing, putting everything he has into it, which makes his style rather jerky, and it may be this jerkiness that has caused his back trouble. Robin Tait looked more aggressive in his throwing than I have seen him—he should go over 200 feet soon. Results were:—

Milde (E.G.)—201' 11"/61.54
Danek (CZ.)—201' 0"/61.28
Tait (N.Z.)—193' 4"/58.94
Gudashvili (U.S.S.R.)—184' 10"/56.34
Kragbe (Iv.C.)—184' 4"/56.18

That second day also saw one of the greatest hammer competitions ever, with three men going over 230 feet. I reckon that we would have seen the world record surpassed by both Klim and Zsivotsky if it hadn't been for an inexplicable action on the part of the referee. As the competition started he removed all the tungsten filled hammers, leaving us with great brass blunderbusses. The Eastern European competitors accepted the word of authority without murmur, but I exploded and ranted and raved at the judges. They couldn't understand me anyway, and I just spoilt my first two throws. Realising that I needed a boost to my confidence from this competition for the Olympics, I settled down for my third throw, just making it into the final 8 for another 3 throws. In the meantime, Zsivotsky and Klim, who had both thrown near the world record warming up with tungsten hammers, were having a great duel nevertheless with the brass monstrosities. The result was:—

Klim (USSR)—236' 1"/71.96 (71.92, 71.96, F, 70.50, F, 70.32)
Zsivotsky (Hun.)—235' 8"/71.84 (71.84, F, F, 70.52, F, F)
Theimer (E.G.)—231' 11"/70.70
Shuplyakov (USSR)—221' 9"/67.60
Lovasz (Hun.)—221' 9"/67.60
Eckschmidt (Hun.)—217' 10"/66.40
Payne (G.B.)—216' 5"/65.98 (61.38, 60.44, 64.72, F, 65.98, 65.22)
Commonwealth and U.K. National record.
Ammann (Swi.)—209' 5"/63.84
Martinez (Spa.)—199' 7"/60.84

Theimer was looking really good in spite of a ragged technique. He is only in his early twenties and has already thrown 233' 9" this year. He is also an excellent Olympic weight lifter of the ability of Rudenkov. I predict that when Theimer smoothes out his technique a little he will throw around 250 feet. I came away excited but very much aware that even a Commonwealth record was good only for seventh place in a competition without many of the big guns.

The West Germans, North Americans and the Japanese began to arrive in the Village. The West Germans had been competing against the Americans in Flagstaff, Arizona, the week before where the hammer had ended as follows:—

Beyer (W.G.)—231' 5"/70.75
Burke (U.S.A.)—228' 9"/69.72
Fahsl (W.G.)—220' 8"/67.26
Hall (U.S.A.)—218' 11"/66.73
Connolly (U.S.A.)—217' 4"/66.24

On form therefore, it looked as though, in the Olympics, Klim and Zsvitsky would be arguing as to 1st and 2nd, while the bronze would be decided amongst Beyer, Burke and Theimer.

Praveen Kumar, silver medallist in the 1966 Commonwealth Games, who had been shadowing me all summer for the Commonwealth record arrived and showed how he had improved since 1966 by tossing nearly every training throw at 200-210 feet. Only Ishida and Sugawara appeared to have been selected to represent Japan. I was surprised to note that the great Samuels of Cuba was not to compete in Mexico—he had thrown 225' 8" earlier in the year.

One day at midday the entire British team was invited to a reception at the British Embassy. The Embassy, nicknamed "Wilson's Folly" was a great palatial sort of a place with a swimming pool at the bottom of the garden—one of the items for which we pay such crippling taxes! I am sure that the explanation that "embassies have to be great edifices to impress the natives" is no longer true in this day and age. The British team were well represented but I could only count four members of the athletic team there. On enquiring later why this was so I was told that the athletes were fed-up with "dos."

The Mexicans are warm-hearted, friendly people but their system is riddled with corruption, and bribery is the "done" thing. The story goes that the fierce rivalry between the two German brothers, Dassler, one of whom owns the sports shoe firm, Puma, and the other, Adidas, really erupted into something more sinister in Mexico. Apparently Adidas bribed the authorities half a million pesos to keep Puma out. It is certainly true that the customs held up the entire Puma consignment of shoes, that the police arrested a Puma representative on a technical charge (entering the Olympic Village without a pass) and locked him up for five days and that Adidas had a beautiful shop in the Village. Adidas agents refuted these rumours saying that they did not bribe the authorities, but they made a legal business deal with the Mexican shoe firm, Canada Shoes, and that the Canada-Adidas combine got the Village shop because it was a Mexican-based firm.

I heard it from more than one Mexican that when stopped by police for a motoring offence the first thing to do is to attempt bribery. I saw with my own eyes a man bribe his way into a "full" night club, past a long queue of people waiting to get in.

The police and soldiers are tough and unlike ours one expects no mercy from them, whether guilty or not. The advice freely given to anyone unlucky enough to be involved in an accident in which a person is seriously hurt is to clear out before the police arrive, even if this means abandoning one's car. The tendency is to lock up everyone, including witnesses until the court case! There was a story going around that when the military arrived to take over the University some students tried to prevent the passage of the tanks by lying down in their path—the tanks merely rolled over them, killing a dozen or so. No guns were carried by the soldiers working in the Olympic Village, but those guarding the Coapa Village, where sports officials were housed were armed to the teeth.

When in Tokyo I pondered on the paradoxical nature of the people who then seemed so highly civilised, and yet had allowed the atrocities of the war only twenty years previously. Again in Mexico I was perplexed by the character of the people who were so friendly to me and one another and yet could hold life to be so cheap and who could close their eyes to the misfortunes of others around them. On the other hand, if one extends these generalisations to the British, there is even more confusion—the unfriendly Englishman is the most humane creature on this earth!

The organisation for the Opening Ceremony was the best I have experienced in two Olympics and four Commonwealth Games. We left at exactly the appointed time, 9.45 a.m. and were driven by coach to the warm-up track of the Olympic stadium. There we had an hour's wait but this was short compared with the waiting of other Games' Openings. Most of us took our cameras, contrary to instructions, and we spent the time taking pictures of the gigantic fancy-dress collection of competitors and officials. The British marched in in ragged formation as usual—thank goodness we did, and I hope all future British teams will show the world that we as athletes have no time for useless military marching. I shudder to think of the goose-stepping squad who carried the Olympic flag around the arena. As soon as we halted the rag-tag had broken ranks and were rushing around taking photos with team managers going round the bend trying to restore order. Nearly every other team did the same and it became so bad that those still coming into the stadium could hardly march for the rabble. The spectators didn't like this break down into chaos especially when the torch-bearer had trouble finding her way through hundreds of athletes on the track. The crowd whistled their disapproval but it was too late to control anyone. Only the Cuban team kept ranks.

The usual speeches, balloons, torch, flags, cannons and pigeons were ceremoniously gone through. It was useless, wasteful and tiring—but it was also magnificent, wonderful, inspiring and it brought lumps into thousands of throats and tears into thousands of eyes. The moment to remember above all was when the lone figure stood with the torch held high just before igniting the stadium flame. The Olympic Games is the greatest show on earth with a cast of thousands and an unlimited budget and yet the moment that reaches right into one's heart is the simple act of one lonely person holding a torch high to a hushed stadium. The organisation for getting the 7,000 athletes away from the stadium and back to the Village was again excellent and we were back at 2.0 p.m.

The next day the competitions began at the Olympic Stadium which was not far from the Village. The Tartan track was first class and the run-ups and circles were superfat. Spectator accommodation was rather exposed to the elements and gentle sloping terraces meant that most spectators were too far from the arena for comfortable viewing. Programmes were difficult to come by and announcing was almost non-existent (which perhaps was desirable in competitions so crowded with competitors). In these circumstances, the numbers carefully sewn on vests were of interest to officials only, the spectators sitting in ignorance of most identities. Those watching their television sets back home at least had the vast knowledge of David Coleman and Ron Pickering to supply the names and gossip. The form was usually that qualifying rounds and heats took place in the mornings with finals and some heats in the afternoons. Most of us tried to get to the stadium so as not to miss anything, so it was a problem to fit lunch and training into the day.

In the throwing events there was a welcome innovation which had been used for some of the jumps in Tokyo—the competitors were split into two pools for the qualifying rounds. This meant that an athlete didn't have to wait for some 30 others between his own throws. There was also an attempt at seeding the best athletes into the first pool . . . which meant that the British throwers were in the second pool! The British throwers had an arrangement in which when one was competing in a qualifying round the others would keep score of the first pool to determine the number of qualifiers. We would then communicate the results to the one who was "it" as he marched into the stadium for his pool. This would allow him to concentrate on his own preparations without having to waste nervous energy watching the first pool.

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On that first morning of the athletics we were sad to see our friend Vilmos Varju of Hungary eliminated from the shot even though it was our own Jeff Teale who edged him out for 12th place by one centimetre. Les Mills of New Zealand had an unfortunate ordeal in the second pool. He had a doctor's certificate for the tape on his fingers, but the officials said that it was no good and whisked him away to their own doctor, who replaced the tape with a bulkier one. Les had no warm-up throws and found the new tape a hindrance but he showed what a tremendous competitor he is by hurling this second attempt over the formidable qualifying distance of 62 feet. Jeff Teale had the British spectators biting their nails all the way through to the end of the battle.

It was interesting to meet the world's best discus throwers in the Village and to listen to their theories on technique. Jay Silvester says that as far as he is concerned the secret of discus throwing is to get balance over the left foot at the beginning—if that is right the rest of the throw follows. He starts with a wide stance to gain momentum and he leads with the right foot thrown wide. Robin Tait and Les Mills, analysing the Silvester start, point to a slight hesitation of the right foot as it swings past the left foot. The hesitation is followed by a fast movement of the right foot into the centre of the circle which has the effect of winding up the body like a spring. George Puce thinks a lot about his technique and also agrees that the initial movements at the rear of the circle are vital. He attempts to get the wind-up of the body right from the start by early rotation of the hips. He thinks of his right hip moving round rather than the right foot as Jay does. There are as many theories as there are throwers!

The discus qualifying rounds were held on the second day of the Games and there were two unusual occurrences in the first pool: George Puce failed to reach the required 190' 3" after having thrown 21 feet further than that earlier in the year and Ludvik Danek insisted on taking his remaining throws even after qualifying easily with his first attempt. In the second pool it was good to see our old friend Robin Tait go to town with a magnificent 193' 2" and it was good to see Nicaragua and Salvador observing the Olympic spirit by entering their best discus throwers irrespective of their standard.

My impressions of the men's discus final on the third day were admiration for the high standard of throwing in spite of the soaking they had in the downpour as they warmed-up, dismay at Jay Silvester's tenseness which wrecked his performance and amazement at Al Oerter's re-emergence.

"You will go a whole second faster in the final" I predicted to David Hemery after his 49.3 semi-final. What a joy it was to see him make nonsense of even that seemingly wild prediction! With balance, relaxation and co-ordination like that he could make quite a hammer-thrower!

"Uwe Beyer has failed to qualify" they told us as we, in the second pool waited nervously at the entrance to the stadium. "That means only ten have qualified so far" we added mentally, so perhaps two of us could go forward to the final if we threw further than Uwe's 214' 8" (65.44).

16th October, 1968 was a bright warm day in Mexico and there was no trouble in getting warmed up. Except for a bout of extreme nervousness with the accompanying diarrhoea I was feeling physically good. Psychologically the situation was tricky—we were in the scrubber's pool in which were all those who this year had thrown 225 feet downwards. There were 12 of us and even of these I was ranked only 7th on past performance. I thought of Percy Cerutti's maxim when I faced my formidable opponents: "Who the Hell are these bastards who think that they are better than I am!, and Terry O'Connor's patriotic "Go into the competition and say to yourself: I'm British, and the British are the best in the world." These thoughts made me feel confident and I knew I was going out there to throw further than I had ever done before.

There was a great feeling of comradeship amongst those going out in the second pool and we chatted pleasantly while trying not to show how scared we were, Ernst Ammann came over to shake hands and said: "You and I, Payne, are great rivals, but we are also very good friends—good luck!" My old friends Hal Connolly, Al Hall, Sandor Eckschmidt and Praveen Kumar were also there as were

newer friends, Lutz Caspers and Yoshihasa Ishida. We marched out in single file under that hot sun, feeling like gladiators entering the arena. There was a fairly large crowd in view of the fact that it was 11.0 in the morning. Everything was perfect for hammer throwing—fast circle, flat surrounds to the circle, no wind, efficient judges and a good selection of hammers. The worst aspect was that the cage mouth was very narrow, but I had made preparation for that and I could throw fairly accurately down the left hand sector line so as not to strike the cage on the right side. There were others who weren't prepared for it and lost valuable feet when their hammer handles caught the end of the cage, even though their throws were within the sector. There were about 15 minutes of warming up allowed in the stadium and most of us got 3 throws in before the start. I went 200', 207' and then had one very close to the yellow tape marking the qualifying distance of 216' 6" (66m.).

There were seven no-throws in the first round as each competitor tried to come to terms with his nerves, but Eekschmidt and Ishida blasted over the qualifying tape. The rest of us knew then that to get to the final we had to go over 216' 6". It was more than five of us, including me, had ever thrown in our lives. I was the closest on the first round with a too relaxed and easy 214' 11" (65.52), though Caspers went over by a few feet, but landed just outside the sector. Most of those who had no-throws in the first round went over-carefully in the second and one just cannot afford to go carefully when the distance required is so far, unless one is called Zsivotsky or Klim! Only Connolly went berserk and sent one around 225 feet. In the excitement Hal made a dreadful mistake for one of his experience—he walked out the side of the circle instead of going out of the rear and the judge put up the red flag. I leaned forward, hit the ground and still went 212' 7" (64.80). In the last round Ammann began to show a little more fire but it was too late for him; Caspers and Connolly tried too much control and couldn't get moving and Hall had too little control in his final desperate effort.

As I went into the circle for my last throw I saw my great opportunity to make an Olympic final slipping away from me. I remembered the failure of Tokyo where I had broken the qualifying tape with a no-throw; and the days of mental anguish that had followed that. I thought of all the folks back home, unreasonably expecting me to beat the world. I talked to myself: "Go for it boy, this is the big one, but don't tense-up head up shoulders down and loose, hips in back straight long fast swings balance turn fast faster GO MAD!" It was over so fast I can't remember much of the feeling except that every ounce of strength and mental effort went into it. As I came out of the circle there were spots before my eyes from the exertion. I ran out onto the field knowing it was over the qualifying tape, but, oh, so far I had never dared to dream! The distance went up on the electronic board 68.06 metres an incredible 223' 3"—nearly 7 feet further than ever before delirium!

It was difficult to think of the final now, for this qualifying round had been everything—16th October had been marked in red pencil for over a year on my calendar. In a way, the mental preparation from that afternoon until the final at 3.0 p.m. next day was harder than that which I went through for the qualifying round. I would find my mind sinking into blissful satisfaction over the 223' 3" where nothing else mattered and I would have to mentally shake myself into consciousness of the situation: "Get that adrenalin flowing again—you can't go into that final and throw rubbish—you can't be last!" We studied the results that evening and calculated the form of the finalists. The results were:—

GROUP A		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Best	
Kondrashov, G.	URS.	67.56			67.56 (221' 7")	Qualified
Lovasz, L.	HUN.	68.96			68.96 (226' 3")	Qualified
Baumann, H.	E.G.	68.24			68.24 (223' 10")	Qualified
Klim, R.	URS.	66.82			66.82 (219' 2")	Qualified
Beyer, U.	W.G.	65.02	64.88	65.44	65.44 (214' 8")	
Sugawara, T.	JAP.	67.76			67.76 (222' 3")	Qualified
Shuchupliakov, A.	URS.	64.78	66.56		66.56 (218' 4")	Qualified
Burke, E.	USA.	67.36			67.36 (221' 0")	Qualified
Fahsl, H.	W.G.	65.80	67.90		67.90 (222' 9")	Qualified
Theimer, R.	E.G.	65.78	68.12		68.12 (223' 5")	Qualified
Zsivotsky, G.	HUN.	72.60	(Olympic Record)		72.60 (238' 2")	Qualified

GROUP B		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Best	
Ammann, E.	SWI.	X	61.48	62.40	62.40 (204' 8")	
Martinez, J.	SPA.	60.60	63.40	62.84	63.40 (208' 0")	
Caspers, L.	W.G.	X	65.54	64.70	65.54 (215' 0")	
Morales, G.	NIC.	X	43.88	45.76	45.76 (150' 1")	
Connolly, H.	USA.	X	X	65.00	65.00 (213' 3")	
Politis, F.	GRE.					
Hasbun Zablah, C.	SAL.	X	37.02	37.46	37.46 (122' 10")	
Eckschmidt, S.	HUN.	68.60			68.60 (225' 0")	Qualified
Kumar, P.	IND.	X	59.80	60.84	60.84 (199' 7")	
Payne, H.	G.B.	65.52	64.80	68.06	68.06 (223' 3")	Qualified
Hall, A.	USA.	X	65.70	58.28	65.70 (215' 6")	
Ishida, Y.	JAP.	67.16			67.16 (220' 4")	Qualified

"Finalists will travel to the stadium by car" said the official notice, so on the afternoon of 17th October I was duly delivered to the stadium by an official car! In the changing room our 50 Km. walkers were preparing for their ordeal.

I marched into that warm stadium again, this time with the 225 feet-plus boys, though now at least I felt on more or less equal terms with most of them. Many of them had withdrawn inside themselves but Ed Burke was his usual friendly self and he cheered me up in showing that there could still be great comradeship even within such a serious competition.

There was a variable strongish breeze blowing against us and this time the huge crowd was cheering not only the hammer throwers but also several other events on at the same time. We just managed to get in about three throws each during the warm-up period. I did about 198', 210' and 215'. The new system in Olympics is that all finalists get three throws and then the top eight get another three throws. The first round was disappointing as far as fireworks were concerned—only Kondrashov and Ishida got their best throws in this round. I got out a healthy 216' 5" and began to get excited when I found I was lying 8th at the end of the round. Burke fouled the rear of the circle and Fahsl also got a red flag. Lovasz had a no-throw in the 2nd round and Burke was the victim of the judges' ignorance of the rules—he restarted his throw quite legitimately and was given a red flag. Ed argued with them and finally succeeded in convincing the referee who ordered another throw for Ed as the other had not been marked. This was terrible luck for the great American and it was hardly surprising that he did not recover his form. I went berserk in my second and again went over 220 feet—221' 10". This put me above Baumann, but Shchupliakov moved just 5 inches in front of me and at the end of the round I was still 8th. Unfortunately for me Lovasz at last got his balance right in the 3rd round and turning like a top he lashed out his bronze winning throw of 228' 11". I was down to 9th as I came in for my 3rd. I went fast and balanced and hit it hard at the end—however I tensed up slightly in the delivery and it dropped at 218' 5", Baumann pushed me down another rung with his best of 223' 11". Helmut Baumann is not a large man but he has a great deal of control and delivers well up like Klim.

Fahsl improved slightly to 217' 8" but was disappointed to finish 12 feet below his best. He is big and powerful, but his technique is shaky. Another who is very strong and wastes it all on bad technique is Sandor Eckschmidt and he too got his best throw out in the 3rd round—227' 10", which then placed him in 4th position.

My feelings were a mixture of elation at achieving a decent distance again and disappointment at not quite making the final eight for another three throws. However I sank back, feeling very tired, to enjoy the spectacle of the eight best throwers in the world in action. Burke couldn't share even this semi-satisfaction and he walked off disgusted with himself.

Klim smashed out his best throw of 240' 5" in the 4th round while all three Hungarians had no-throws. Zsivotsky let his go into the net, making us all jump. Klim looked pleased and muttered something about "that's the end of Zsivotsky." I spoke to Gyula after that throw telling him that his shoulders and arms were too tense and that he should relax. I like to think that it was my advice that helped him in his next throw which won him the gold but I doubt that he even listened to me.

Sugawara, at last making use of his fourth turn, moved up to tie with Lovasz' 228' 11" for a new Asian record. Hammer throwers everywhere salute the great Japanese thrower for he, at 5' 8½" and 185 lbs. (13 stone 3 lbs.), is the living proof that the hammer isn't only for the big boys. The modest Kondrashov continued his good consistent throwing through to the end of the competition. In fact all three Russians were remarkably consistent and stable—they did not have a single no-throw amongst them! The Hungarians went wild with delight when it became plain that Klim, throwing last but one, did not improve on his final throw. They had cause for jubilation—they were first, third and fifth.

The final results were as follows:—

		1.	2	3.	4.	5.	6.	Best
1. Zsvivotsky, G.	HUN.	72.26	72.46	72.54	X	73.36	72.22	73.36 (240' 8") Olympic record
2. Klim, R.	URS.	72.24	68.96	72.82	73.28	71.16	71.64	73.28 (240' 4")
3. Lovasz, L.	HUN.	64.75	X	69.78	X	69.38	X	69.78 (228' 11")
4. Sugawara, T.	JAP.	67.24	68.12	X	69.06	69.78	61.40	69.78 (228' 11") Asian record
5. Eckschmidt, S.	HUN.	67.84	68.50	69.46	X	67.64	68.08	69.46 (227' 10")
6. Kondrashov, G.	URS.	69.08	67.00	68.64	67.10	67.98	67.70	69.08 (226' 7")
7. Theimer, R.	E.G.	68.82	X	66.16	68.84	67.86	63.54	68.84 (225' 10")
8. Baumann, H.	E.G.	65.94	66.98	69.26	X	63.76	X	68.26 (223' 11")
9. Shchupliakov, A.	URS.	67.58	67.74	66.90				67.74 (222' 3")
10. Payne, H.	G.B.	65.98	67.62	66.58				67.62 (221' 10")
11. Fahsl, H.	W.G.	X	64.00	66.36				66.36 (217' 8")
12. Burke, E.	U.S.A.	X	65.72	65.46				65.72 (215' 7")
13. Ishida, Y.	JAP.	65.04	63.72	X				65.04 (213' 4")

I went home on the coach with the Germans Hans Fahsl and Lutz Caspers. Lutz had studied the competition carefully and informed me that my technique was one of the best but that I was too slow in the turns and too weak in the delivery to match the others. He power cleans 360 lbs. (my best is only 270 lbs.). I met Uwe Beyer later that evening and he appeared to be fairly cheerful. He said that he felt tired from too much training, had lost form but even so he had been surprised that he could not throw the qualifying distance. Watch out for Uwe Beyer next year when he comes back for his "revenge!"

What of British hammer throwing in relation to the throwers who were in the Mexico final? As I wrote after Tokyo, the difference can be summed up in one word—dynamism. It is all very well getting serious about fine points of technique but there were several men in the final with worse techniques than some of ours back home in the 180 ft. range. What they have got and we haven't, is sheer blind delivery speed obtained from having a real go during the turns.

On the day after the hammer final Bill Tancred and I set out to watch and film the ladies' discus, which happened to be at the same time as another event we wanted to watch—the men's long jump. The ladies looked good warming up and we prepared ourselves for a feast of good athletics. In the first round the majority were either too tense or they took it too easy and only Manoliu of Rumania got near her best distance. While this was going on we also saw that incredible jump of Beamon's. The judge doing the measuring was confused because the rail of the sliding telescope measuring device didn't reach far enough to accommodate a 29' 2" jump—the jump had to be measured by means of a "steam" tape! We had summary conversion tables for the long jump but even they didn't go over 28', and we had to carry out hasty calculations—and we thought we had made a mistake when they came out to 29' 2". The crowd went wild with delight and the lady discus throwers were forgotten. These poor girls had worse in store—the rain started to come down as the second round began. The circle which was a dual purpose hammer/discus concentric type was much too fast in the wet and

after a number of no-throws and dangerous slipping about the ladies called a halt and left the area. I have spoken out in the past about the evils of the dual purpose circle—hammer and discus are two entirely different events and the surface required is vastly different for the two. There should always be two separate circles with the hammer circle surface faster than that for discus. Fortunately for the hammer men, unfortunately for the discus throwers, this surface was super fast (it is usually the other way around in Britain). The only argument for concentric circles is that it is easier to construct a cage around a single unit. Which brings me to another sore point—the present cage mouth rule is sheer insanity on the part of those who closed it right up to the sector line. I saw one discus bounce from the right hand edge of the cage and narrowly miss an unsuspecting athlete on the left of the cage. A little geometry shows that a cage right up to the sector line prevents throwers from using the entire area within the 60° sector.

Back at the Games the rest of the afternoon was disappointing—Beamon and Manoliu were in such strong psychological positions and the rain dampened a lot of competitive spirit. Bill and I huddled under the one raincoat between us and watched the discus throwers come out several times between showers only to slither and slide about that circle. Westerman partly got hold of one and secured the silver. Except for Beamon the long jumpers went on with their mighty task right through the rain. When the girls trooped out for the second or third time to avoid the rain, Bill and I, frozen and wet, decided to call it a day. The day after was warm and sunny and I sat in the stands with a disappointed Jean Roberts and her coach John Cheffers. I should have known better than to accept an Australian's offer of a beer with a long hot afternoon ahead! We sat and drank pint after pint after . . . it wash a gloriously afternoon . . . Hic!



DICK FOSBURY
(U.S.A.)

The final day of the athletics was another of tremendous performances and I shall never forget Margita Gumel's 64' in the shot, Dick Fosbury's 7' 4" "flop" or those fantastic relays. Some of us went outside the stadium to see the marathon runners come down the road which was lined by thousands and thousands of people. The spectators cheered every runner—even the 50th man—as though he were the winner. I vote for the Mexicans as the best spectators in the world. In some countries I have cringed as the people have booed their own competitors who were also-rans—but in Mexico the people went delirious when their man appeared even if he was last. And that is the right spirit of the Olympics.

The Games seemed to go a little flat after the athletics had finished even though there was a whole week left for the other sports. I am sure that even competitors in these other sports will agree that athletics is the number one interest in the Olympics and it is a pity that they are on the first week. However the athletes themselves didn't mind for it gave them a week in which to enjoy themselves as spectators at the other sports. I managed to get tickets to swimming and diving and some of the gymnastics, though I am ashamed to say that I had to resort to using unfair influence to do so. In Tokyo, competitors were able to buy tickets to sports other than their own in the Village. In Mexico the buying of tickets was a huge cloak and dagger affair with the authorities holding back as much as they could. From one or two bits of evidence, I gather that certain tickets were held back for people with money or influence. Our headquarters staff and the British Embassy must have had neither for I could obtain no tickets through them. In the final week before the Games some tickets were put on sale at the Auditorium, but the queues for certain tickets were 48 hours long. Incidentally it was interesting to note the difference in popularity of various sports—the queue for gymnastics stretched half a mile but there was no queue at all for fencing.

The police were clamping down on profiteers with books of tickets. We "flannelled" our way into the back office at the Auditorium and carried out secret negotiations. Even then we were "done" when the man who was to bring us the tickets disappeared with them. It took four long return journeys and hours of persuading before we finally ended up with some tickets, many of them for events we hadn't intended to see, and all of them costing a lot more than we wanted to pay. However, as I sat thrilling to the super-human performances of the divers and the gymnasts I knew that it had all been worth while. To me, one of the highest physical achievements of man, and one of the most beautiful of movements is that of the springboard divers' perfection. Some of the multiple somersaults with multiple twists followed by perfect entries into the water just took one's breath away.

The most knowledgeable crowds were those that attended the gymnastics and the judges at those contests were not to be envied for the crowd would whistle until an unpopular mark was amended. Tickets to the gymnastics finals were simply unobtainable but some of us took a chance on the last night when the men's finals were held and we managed to get in with the help of our identity cards. We were given front row seats within whispering distance of the pommel horse and the horizontal bar.

During that last week there was a trip to Acapulco for those who did not wish to stay to watch the remaining events: about 250 miles away, the journey took only six hours along excellent roads, though drivers had to watch out for cows on the road. The drop down to sea level was an illuminating experience. In the normal atmosphere again we realised just how much the altitude had affected us in Mexico City. We felt full of energy and long swims in the warm ocean were so easy. All too soon, however, we had to return to the altitude for the last few days of the Games.

To have all the competitors march into the arena for the Closing Ceremony would have invited greater chaos than there was in the Opening, so only a handful from each country marched while the rest sat in the stands. Even so the few inside the arena went wild and rushed round the track refreshingly undisciplined. Several

spectating athletes joined them too, but the thing did not get out of hand. Each Olympic Closing Ceremony has some spectacle which is different from the others. Tokyo had its thousands of torches as the stadium lights went out. Mexico gave us the most beautiful fireworks display I have ever seen. For about ten minutes the sky above us became a moving, changing work of art.

Soon it was all over and we made our way back to the Village to say goodbye to our friends and pack our suitcases for the journey home to Britain the next day.

In spite of the professionalism, the freaks, the drugs, the nationalism, the politics, and the dire warnings of the press, the Olympic Games will not die. Too many enjoy it and too few count the cost. After all the Olympic Games is the greatest show on earth. What was it I felt when I stepped out of the plane into London . . . "Thank goodness I've returned to sanity" or was it "Too bad that the show is over?"

This article is reprinted from "Discobolus," the magazine of the Discus Circle, to which I am very grateful.

Indoor Competition

MIKE FARRELL (*Hon. Secretary Midland Counties A.A.A.*)

INDOOR Athletics has been in existence for just over 100 years, for on 11th November, 1868, the first Indoor Meet in the U.S.A. was held under Amateur Laws.

This country has only been promoting the sport for some thirty years, starting with the Indoor Track at Wembley before the Second World War, until the track was destroyed by fire in 1932.

Indoor Athletics was revived again after the war in 1955, by the Midland Counties A.A.A. on a gym floor at R.A.F. Cosford, thanks to the initiative of Lionel Pugh (who was then a National Coach in the Midlands) and Bill Marlow, who was at that time, Midlands Coaching Secretary, and Wing Commander 'Dan' Davies (now Officials' Secretary).

The track was of 160 yards circumference and was used once a month by a mere handful of athletes, who used to travel up from the Birmingham and Wolverhampton Area by coach. The organisation of the meetings was dealt with by Bill Marlow who had doubts, on more than one occasion, as to whether there would be enough people on the coach to pay the costs of this transport. Matches were arranged with the R.A.F. and occasionally, Loughborough Colleges, and the meetings were kept going until 1960 by a small band of officials but the meetings never really hit the headlines. Graded events were arranged, on the night, with athletes competing in numerous events. Peter Radford, as a school boy, first made his mark on British Athletics with his consistently good 60 yard times on the slippery gym floor on which he would sprint in bare feet (the floor was susceptible to humidity and to combat this, 'Daz' was used to dry it out, the only thing which seemed to work).

During the latter years of the 50's, a track was laid of some 330 yards on the vast concrete Hangar floor in which the present board track is situated. Here, it was possible to hold 100 yard races and Radford was able to get some valuable preparation work in for his 1960 Olympic Bronze Medal.

These facilities were lost to us, temporarily, in 1960/61, but athletes were able to compete at R.A.F. Feltham during these years and R.A.F. Stanmore was now a further centre available, with a board sprint track of some 80 metres in which the S.C.A.A.A. held a series of TV Meetings for Sprinters, Hurdlers, Jumpers and Shot Putters, but no distance events were included.

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In 1962/63, the M.C.A.A.A. decided to hold a Saturday meeting and advertised the meetings in "Athletics Weekly" and this was the turning point for Indoor Athletics in this country.

The meetings grew from a mere handful of athletes to astronomical numbers of over 800 entries and the same was happening at R.A.F. Feltham with meetings going on from early morning to early evening.

In 1962, the A.A.A. were offered an Indoor Track of 145 yards to be laid at Wembley, by the Daily Herald (which was later renamed 'The Sun').

The A.A.A. Indoor Championships were staged for the first time in 1963 and an Invitation International Meeting was held.

The costs of promoting these meetings was a heavy burden with the hire of Empire Pool being over £1,000 a day. The crowds never really caught on with presentation, leaving much to be desired with the public not being educated enough to this form of sport.

After the take-over of the 'Daily Herald' the sponsorship was never renewed. The track was dismantled in 1965 and is now somewhere in storage under the Empire Pool, with parts of it being used for all sorts of shows and is now damaged beyond repair.

But Indoor Athletics was not dead! Due to the foresight of the A.A.A. and their late Treasurer, Phil Gale, the A.A.A. applied for grant aid for a 220 yard track at R.A.F Cosford, this was granted and the board track was available just in time for the 1965 A.A.A. Indoor Championships.

In 1967, the Indoor Track was used for a series of meetings at Cosford and was used by over 2,000 athletes in the season. World Best Performances began to fall regularly, such was the high quality of the design of the track itself. The highlight of this season was Wendell Mottley's (Trinidad) World Best 440 yards in 47.2 seconds.

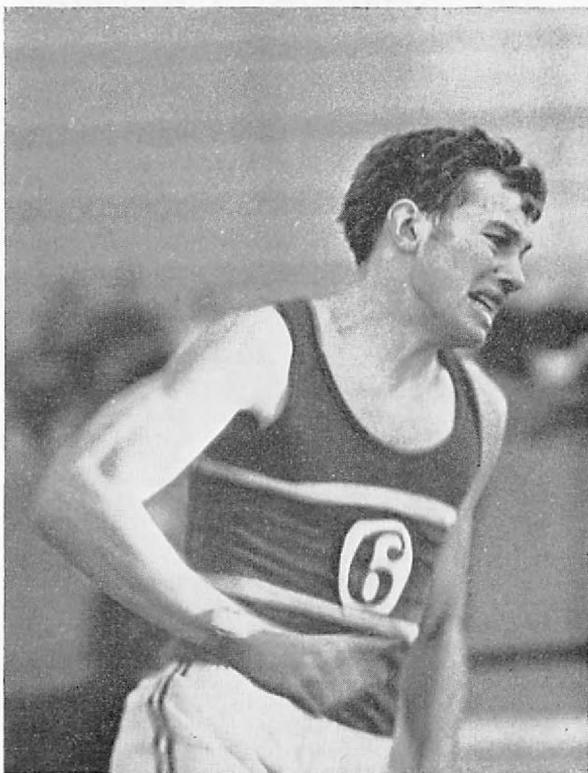
In 1968, the M.C.A.A.A. negotiated a contract with the B.B.C. for a series of four meetings but this season was marred, by the Foot and Mouth outbreak in the Area which necessitated one of the meetings being cancelled. Nevertheless, it was a fine season, with the first ever full International Indoor Match outside London being staged, against Germany.

This present season has been the finest ever, with the final meeting in March being the first Home International ever staged indoors between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The largest ever team of athletes went to Belgrade (14) and 9 came home with medals, two of them Gold—Alan Pascoe, 50m. Hurdles, and Ian Stewart, still only 20 years of age, captured the blue riband of the track in the 3000 metres. Stewart's time bears out what Phil Gale said when I stood with him in 1966, on the new arena. "Use this track, and you will get your world beaters"—for Stewart has all the makings of a world beater. He is the result of a calculated risk that he and his coach, Geoff Warr, took two years ago—to pick his races, only running when the opposition was there and to run hard, and to ignore cross country racing in the belief it was detrimental to his physical and mental approach to world class athletics.

The theory being that if you are to be a world beater you must be racing fit all the year round, able to compete all the year anywhere, and use the Indoor Season to supplement training during winter months, but with one's main sights set on a summer season, cutting out nearly all the slower tempo uneven running of Cross Country, where the sense of urgency is not always present, thus cutting to a certain extent the edge which is necessary to bring out the last ounce of speed on the track.

Stewart isn't the first to make his mark Indoors, Ian McCafferty first saw his name in the headlines indoors. John Davies was the find of '68, Ralph Banthorpe was the fastest 19 year old over 200m. in Britain and was weaned on the boards at Cosford. Mike Bull has also benefited amazingly. The standard of events this year, has never been higher.



JOHN DAVIES
(Sale Harriers)

The Americans thrive on Indoor running. It provides the competition necessary all the year round to make a top class athlete. For Field Events specialists and sprinters it is the only place where they can get regular practice in the long winter months when most tracks are out of commission.

What we want now are more of these Indoor Tracks—one in London, one in Scotland, one in Wales and one in the North East to cater for all athletes in this country giving them regular competition **ALL THE YEAR ROUND**. Then we shall have the depth of performers necessary to compete in the hard world of International Athletics and above all produce world beaters. But perhaps I am biased and stuck with a vision of a spectator sport, such as we had in the '50's, which will only come back to the sport when we have world champions wearing British vests.

Public Relations in Athletics

RON. MURRAY

DEDICATED coaches have a great affection for the Sport they coach and the young people in their charge. Unfortunately, most members of the community formulate and evaluate from impressions received at an athletic meeting or by opinions from so-called well meaning disciples of the sport which may not be accurate. What can be done to project an accurate image of a coach and engender enthusiasm towards the sport?

Coaches must establish methods of interpreting the policies, objectives and methods in reference to their sport and to the community.

How can the athletics story be told in order to give individuals a solid base to form judgements?

What are the best plans of action that can foster positive results. The following are some points of view that may aid in answering these questions.

Organize a public relations action programme. Commercial enterprises employ public relations in many various ways and degrees and find it an element of great success. There may be a message here for those in positions of responsibility in the field of athletics. The Coaching Director. Administrator, call him what you will, his staff and the coach must marshal all their resources to tell the 'athletics story' and tell it effectively.

Neglected in most cases public relations are predicated upon wins and losses. Though the number of wins a team may achieve is still a very important factor in a community's attitude, individuals in this present era are more cognizant of the educational values in athletics. Consequently a team's record does not have to be the only criterion for success. An athletics public relations committee should be established in order to explore, take advantage and implement all public relations possibilities. A standard avenue used to expose the community to athletic activities, be it school, college, club, or individual is newspaper coverage. It is usually adequate, but not always positive. It is fair to all concerned that the public be given an opportunity to take a look behind the scenes. Parent-teacher associations are not uncommon in current educational systems. Why can't this be applied in athletics?

Evening sessions could be offered for parents of athletes at school, college, and club level to learn the mechanics and rules of athletics and to create interest. A genuine understanding of athletic problems can also be brought to the surface.

An unique but informative technique in establishing good rapport is to extend an invitation to parents and interested athletic followers to attend a coaching session so that they may witness at first hand what their youngsters are experiencing daily in training. It is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the fact that athletic instruction has educational values and coaching is teaching in every sense of the word.

Coaching communication releases should be submitted periodically to the local and national papers, about teams or athletes coached. Bulletins sent home describing comprehensively the objectives, benefits and present coaching programme could promote profound parental support and understanding. The technique provides an effective method of reducing "Sports drop-outs." Bridging the gap could also be substantiated through "Parent's supporters clubs." These would offer new ideas to increase the sport's image in the community, stimulate interest and often change potential critics into advocates of athletics.

Interpreting the athletic jargon to the rank and file of the community is an essential consideration. Like the teacher in the classroom, the nucleus of a good public relations programme is the coach himself. Most constant means of communication to the home is that furnished by the athlete. Consequently, most opinions

held by parents have been moulded by the reactions of their children. This is often where coaches are remiss, usually too much concentration is directed to the 'stars' he coaches and limited consideration is given to the 'marginal' athlete.

There are vast opportunities for public relations possibilities, but the crux of public relations is the coach himself and the way he perceives his position and its responsibilities. Does he focus upon his athletes as to what is beneficial to them? Does he resort to good educational policies and practices? Does he appreciate what athletics can do for the participants? If he can answer yes to these questions, he has a firm spring board from which to start. Attitudes of a coach are reflected by his athletes.

Many coaches have not recognized the need for a carefully developed public relations programme. In brief, the coach should consistently appraise himself, study the community, understand his athletes, identify areas of negativism and develop an organization for carrying through a positive programme of public relations.

5 Star Award Scheme

DEREK HAYWARD (A.A.A. Hon. Coaching Secretary)

THE Five Star Award Scheme was introduced onto the athletic scene during 1967 by the Southern Counties A.A.A.

A Pilot scheme was arranged by the Area Association to operate in Bucks., Harrow and Cambridgeshire during that year for the 13-17 Year Age Groups.

The aim of the scheme was to provide an incentive for schoolchildren of all abilities to achieve success at one of five levels by scoring points from a score table in any three events (one field and two track or vice versa). Certificates were given to all pupils who achieved any of the awards between one and five stars inclusive whilst badges were sold to the children, on request.

The effect upon the schools where the Pilot Scheme was conducted was dynamic. Boys and girls suddenly realised that athletics was a sport which could be enjoyed at all levels, and not only by champions, as had been the impression for so many years. During the first experimental year 2,057 certificates were issued.

Encouraged by their success, the S.C.A.A.A. expanded their scheme to all Southern Counties in 1968. Again, the effect was one of great enthusiasm by pupils and schoolteachers, and over 20,000 certificates and 4,000 badges were issued throughout the South during that year.

During the preliminary months of the scheme, careful notes were being taken by the people who were responsible for scoring tables, distribution of certificates, design of badges and numerous other items which were found necessary for the efficient running of the scheme.

At the end of the 1968 season, an Area meeting was called by the Southern Counties A.A.A. Organising Secretary, Derek Hayward, for the 25 'agents' who had been responsible for publicity, certificates and badge distribution within their County or Counties. A.A.A. National Coach, Tom McNab, who had suggested the scheme in 1967, acted as Chairman. At this meeting the delegates divided into sub-committees to discuss improvements and amendments to (a) design of certificates (b) scoring tables, (c) design of badge, (d) distribution of certificates, badges and pamphlets.

Their findings and resolutions were, subsequently, passed to the A.A.A., who had decided, at this time, that such an award scheme should be adopted on a national basis. Thus 1969 will herald the first year when the 5 Star Award Scheme is organised on a national scale. Thanks to the assistance of a sponsor, it should be possible to give certificates to any young person at school or in a club, who gains an award, and it is hoped that the revenue, which will be forthcoming from the sale of badges, will offset the cost of administration and expenses, and will serve as a valuable source of income for the A.A.A. and Areas.

Metric and imperial measurements have been included on the scoring tables, and the age groups now range from 10 years to 20 years.

The statistical information from the 5 Star Award Scheme should be most valuable, and could well be the foundation for the future structure of athletics in Great Britain. For example, the name of any athlete gaining the top, 5 Star Award should be forwarded to the County Coaching Committee in order that proper coaching can be assured for the athlete, if he or she is not already receiving advice. Similarly, it should be possible to assess the "Athletic population" in any region, and to create tracks and/or clubs where there are athletes, instead of the present day hit-or-miss approach where a local authority constructs facilities without any true idea of the demand.

No other country in Europe will have, at its finger tips, statistics of the athletic ability of its Youth, and we look forward to the future of this Award Scheme with great interest.

Above all, however, it is hoped that the scheme will help schoolchildren to enjoy athletics and to strive a little harder at club and school, in order to achieve their next grade in the 'star' award.

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

THIS, the first ever Regional Park stretches almost twenty three miles—from Bromley-by-Bow in the East End of London to Ware in Hertfordshire. The area so designated contains some 10,000 acres or nearly ten square miles.

In December 1966 the Bill, by which the Park Authority was charged by Act of Parliament with the task of developing, managing and maintaining a large part of the Lee Valley for a wide variety of leisure and recreation, received the Royal Assent. Since that date considerable progress has been made. The plan for the whole Park has now been finalized, though quite obviously such a plan will never be completed in detail for it must remain flexible and capable of change with time and circumstance. This year will be the first year of action on the ground and it is the aim of the Authority to complete all the major developments within fifteen years.

Included amongst the projects already at an advanced stage on the drawing board are a Multi-purpose Sports and Leisure Centre at Picketts Lock in Enfield, which includes amongst its facilities a large athletics training area for all track and field events. This will be the first of the major regional facilities to be built and will be on a site of nearly 100 acres. The centre piece and hub of the whole site will be a large multi-purpose building providing a variety of indoor sports and Social amenities, including two indoor sports halls available for, amongst other activities, athletics training and a hall for weight training.

The North-easterly section of the Park from Ware to Stanstead Abbots is being developed to include such facilities as Horse Riding, an Hotel/Motel/BoTel, extensive informal Play areas and pleasant picnic spaces with a Marina, centred on the peninsula between the Lee and Mill Stream waterways. There will be lakes on both sides of Stanstead Abbots for sailing, canoeing and fishing.

The Rye Meads area will have facilities for Boat Building and Repairs. Of more general interest there will be Boating, Go-Karting, Greyhound Racing and an extensive Wild Fowl Reserve.

The development of Dobbs Weir is being designed to include outdoor activities like Boating, Games, Country Walks, Picnicing, Angling and at Glen Faba it is intended to site a large chalet, caravan and camping centre.

In the Broxbourne and Nascing area a children's Adventure Playground will offer immense pleasure to the youngsters and the greatest possible scope for their naturally creative minds. Riverside Social Centre, Restaurant and Beer Garden, Boating Centre, up to the minute indoor and outdoor Sports Clubs and Swimming Pool, together with a fascinating Nature Reserve and Golf Centre with an 18 hole course will also be available.

In the area between Cheshunt and Fishers Green will be the National Rowing, Canoeing and Regatta Centre which is to be built to an international standard racing length of 2,000 metres. Other proposed facilities include a first class Grandstand and Viewing Terraces, a Sailing Centre, Boathouse, Members' rooms, an Hotel, Restaurant and many picturesque waterside walks.

Around Waltham Abbey will be the Indoor Riding Establishment, which will be built to International Standards, and the Angling Centre.

The Rammey Marsh section of the Park, situated north east of Enfield is being developed now as a new Youth Adventure Centre. There is also an immediate proposal for an 18 hole Golf Course.

The Enfield Lock and Sewardstone area will include a Motor Sports Centre, a small Road Racing Circuit for saloon and sports cars excluding racing cars, a Test and Skidpan area, an Artificial Hill Climb, Autocross and Motor Cycle Trials course. There will also be the Riverside Centre and pleasure craft moorings.

I have already mentioned the Multi-purpose Sports and Leisure Centre to be sited at Picketts Lock and there will also be another 18 hole Golf Course and Golf Driving Range, together with a Sailing Lake and Marina in this area.

In the Tottenham Marsh and Reservoirs section of the Park, it is planned to include provision for a Major Stadium which could incorporate facilities for top class Football, Athletics or similar activities with the very best of amenities both sporting and social. This is a long term proposal and the Authority intend to investigate the implications and the detailed methods by which it could be achieved.

The full extent of the Springfield and Lea Bridge Road site has not yet been determined but the present plans provide facilities for Sailing, Boating, Riding, Rowing and Skiing on a simulated slope. There will also be a Sports and Social Centre, Marina and Clubhouse.

The development in the south-easterly corner of the Park is planned to contain a garden and Horticultural Centre, an Aviary and also an Aquarium. Also the provision of an Entertainments Centre and Indoor Sports Drome. Also a Park Information Centre which would incorporate among other things a museum and Library of Sport and Recreation and a unit for the study of Medicine in Sport.

The main facilities in the most southerly major development of the Park, Millmeads, will be a Play Centre for the under-5's, a playground for older children and a modern all-weather Games Area.

This bold, exciting and imaginative scheme deserves to succeed and by the appointment of Ron Pickering, as Recreational Manager, the Authority have gone a long way towards the achievement of their ultimate goal.

Obviously a tremendous amount of work is still to be done and I consider this project so important that I intend to give progress reports in the Newsletter whenever possible. One can only hope that other authorities will now produce similar schemes.

I hope that this short piece will give readers some small insight into this large and complicated project. I feel that I can do no better then to conclude with the Authorities Objectives, which are as follows :-

This is the first area in Britain to be selected as a Regional Park and as such is designed to offer the widest scope of activities for recreational, cultural and educational needs to as much of its population as possible. The following paragraphs summarise the requirements in order to suit these current needs, and the necessity of flexibility of use of facilities to meet future demands.

Firstly, in nearly every development area there is ample space devoted to play areas, playgrounds and centres for children of all ages. The need for these is becoming increasingly more necessary especially for the densely populated regions in the southern half of the Park.

With regard to leisure activities for every other age group, it can be seen from the facilities mentioned that provisions will be made for the young and old, the family, beginners and experts, teams and individuals, clubs and groups and spectators. Great care will be taken in planning so that development facilities do not clash with those that are already in existence in the various regions.

It can also be seen that as much as possible will be done to meet educational needs and interests and to supply the best facilities for minority interests as well.

It is intended that over a long term the Park will be planned to form a complete, unified landscape that will be both attractive in overall appearance and functional for its population. Various areas of derelict and unused land, if not developed immediately, will be reserved for use when demands for new facilities arise.

The above is an extract from the Lee Valley Regional Park plan and Bulletin for January 1969.

Steroids

A. H. PAYNE

THE hottest subject for discussion amongst the athletes in Mexico was that of the anabolic steroids. For those of you who have not heard, these are drugs which stimulate the pituitary gland to alter the body's metabolism. More of the protein in the food eaten by an athlete taking these drugs is accepted by his body and laid down in his muscles. He becomes more muscular, stronger and puts on weight. There are side effects, some known, some unknown, which may not be manifest until years after. Known side effects include liver damage and sterility, the seriousness depending upon the dosage. Unknown side effects may include cancer. Newer drugs are said to produce less serious side effects, but one is never sure when messing about with the pituitary which is the body's key gland.

It is now common knowledge that certain throwers are prepared to risk the side effects of these drugs and the condemnation of all those who believe in the ethics of sport in order to become heavier and stronger so that they may have an unfair advantage over their fellow competitors who don't take the drug. The I.A.A.F. include anabolic steroids in their list of proscribed drugs but although at present it is possible to detect that an athlete has taken amphetamines it is not practically possible to show that he has taken anabolic steroids. It is doubtful that even a well equipped and endocrinology laboratory could establish that someone was on medium sized doses of the steroids. But it is impossible to detect any traces if the athlete has ceased to take them for a month or two, although he may still reap the "benefits" in terms of increased athletic performance.

Dr. Martyn Lucking, arch-enemy of drug taking among athletes, has suggested a registration scheme for throwers whereby their body weights are regularly checked and recorded, any unreasonable increase being cause for closer scrutiny of the athlete in question. This is fine—for shot putters who can rely on massive body-weight to improve performance. But what of the rest? By careful dieting and dosing of steroids it is possible for an athlete to maintain almost the same body-weight while reducing fat and increasing muscle. In certain cases, it may be a requirement of the event that he does not increase his bodyweight, e.g. in high jumping and weight lifting in classes below heavyweight. Yes, as I discovered in Mexico, there are already many non-throwers on the steroids. Their use is much more widespread than any of us dare imagine—the tentacles are reaching deep into sport. I predict that by the next Olympics there will be few sprinters, jumpers and even long distance men who have not dabbled with steroids. The drugs could revolutionise sport—any strength gain you can obtain by years of sweat and toil with weight training, you can obtain in a few months with steroids and some weight training.

Sport has reached an impasse in respect to the anabolic steroids. The authorities forbid their use, but cannot effectively test for them. Many athletes are already taking them and many others are watching them draw away from their own performances. The sporting public unknowingly applauds those whose performances gain from the drugs and the others are strongly tempted to follow suit—they have three choices facing them, retire, be satisfied with “mediocre” performances or join the drug takers. Any top class sportsman, and many not so top class sportsmen face in drugs a conflict between their sense of fair play and their ambition, whether they give way to temptation or not depends on which is stronger.

There now exists an atmosphere of distrust among athletes and not even a genuine improvement in performance can escape suspicion.

Very few athletes are willing to admit that they have taken these drugs but in Mexico I delved deeply and after much persistence found that many would reluctantly admit that they had “experimented.” Many coaches condone, and some even encourage, this.

On the other hand in certain sections of sport there is complete openness and the taking of the bulk pill is accepted practice. Bob Hoffman editor of many American health and strength publications, manufacturer of health food supplements and well known body building expert told me that he now recommends the use of the milder anabolic steroids to his followers in body building and weight lifting. The philosophy here is that if the substance is harmless when taken in small quantities, what objection can there be to its use? It was put to me by one shot putter: “I can place a shot upon one of these pills and nothing will happen—it is still me that has to do the work on the shot to make it move.” It is still sad to see what the pharmaceutical industry has done for world shot putting. There are only a few using techniques which are a joy to watch, the rest lumber across a circle which looks ridiculously small and bash the shot out with brute pill strength.

Perhaps we should have emphasised the ethics of the situation, that drug taking is cheating, right from the start, instead of harping on the harmful side effects. We should have cared about our sport as a whole rather than the damage a stupid athlete was inflicting upon himself in his greed for glory. We have lost the use of the “medical damage” argument because of improved drugs with little side effects. We should have pointed out and tried to educate people that the important thing in sport is to compete honourably, that to win at all costs is a contradiction of the meaning of sport. Now, I am afraid, it is too late.

Junior A.A.A. Club

THE Junior A.A.A. Club was formed in the Autumn of 1968 following an enquiry by Nigel Hadlow. After a quiet start a strong and enthusiastic Committee has been built up, and we now look forward to consolidation and expansion during 1969.

Lady Simpson has agreed to carry on Sir Joseph Simpson's work for the Club by becoming our President. For Vice-Presidents we are extremely fortunate in having the services and experience of Roly St. John Harper and Barry Willis.

In Brian Hewson, our first Honorary Secretary, we have found a keen and enthusiastic worker with Monty Atton supporting him as Treasurer. The Committee members are Doug. Wilson, Susan Dennler, Nigel Hadlow, Laurie Reed and Shirley Toull.

Our aim during the first year is to build up a system for recruiting and coping with members on a national scale. For this purpose we want to enlist representatives in all of our principal towns and areas.

Junior members at this stage, number between thirty and forty, but if we can systematically build up representatives throughout the country, the rest will follow.

We are therefore appealing to members for men or women, or a husband-wife team would be most acceptable, to take on the work of organizing the Junior A.A.A. Club in their own area. Any person who is interested in becoming a representative should write to Brian Hewson at 39 Gravel Hill, Croydon, Surrey, CRO 5BJ.

The basic aims of the juniors are set out in a nomination sheet which will shortly be available from the Hon. Secretary. The Annual fee for Juniors is 10/- and the age limits, within reason, from 12 to 18.

From comments passed at recent A.G.Ms of the parent Club, it is apparent that a strong willingness amongst members to work for the Club exists. Will you help us in this the most encouraging of our new ventures. Our success depends on the support we get around the country. If you feel that you would like to help in this worthwhile job of building up the Juniors, please get in touch with our Secretary at the address given above.

I hope we may enlist your support.

A. M. ATTON,
Chairman.

National Athletics Library

A REPOSITORY for material relating to track and field athletics for the benefit of authors, physical education lecturers and students, and statisticians, is to be established this summer in the Main Library of the University of Birmingham.

The proposal to set up such a centre was put forward in 1968 by Norris McWhirter, and an assistant librarian (Malcolm Warburton of the N.U.T.S.) has been appointed to take charge of the collection, which it is hoped will be both national and international in character. Material in the form of printed books, programmes, manuscripts and photographs should be sent to: M. S. Warburton, Main Library, University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham 15. Donations of magazines, annuals and programmes are welcomed from clubs and individuals.

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.

Honorary Secretary of the A.A.A. Club: C. R. C. Johnston, 9 Sebright Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. Hon. Editor of Newsletter: P. S. Lenton, 38 Rugby Avenue, Wembley, Middx. Hon. Treasurer: R. K. Farmer, 9 Porlock Close, Gayton, Wirral, Cheshire.

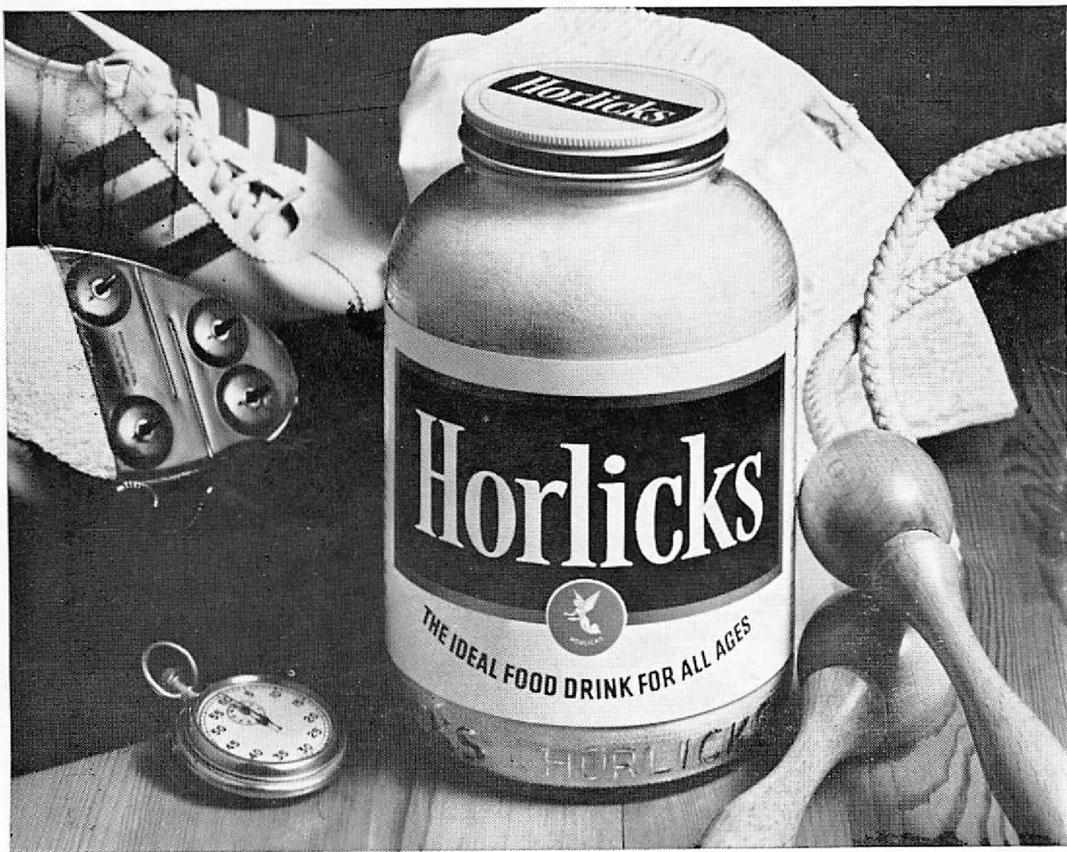


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