

N U T S N O T E S
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Vol. 6, No. 4

Editor: Andrew Huxtable

Winter 1968

EDITORIAL

I have become increasingly disturbed by the almost total lack of response from members in sending statistical material for inclusion in NUTS Notes; this is even more regrettable when comparison is made with the journals of the Czechoslovak, French, German, Italian and Norwegian associations. For example, Atti e Memorie has recently included an analysis of the top 300 Italian 800m performances of all time; Start is already publishing top 10 year lists for Czechoslovakia back to 1918, studies of individual athletes in depth, 500 deep all time world list of DT performances; NAFS-bladet has published a 200 deep world all time JT list; Rundbrief has carried best marks in each of the 10 events by the leading German decathletes, etc., etc.

I therefore hope to see much more of this kind of material submitted for publication in 1969; after all, this is what we are primarily in existence to produce.

MISCELLANY

- * Members are reminded that their subscriptions for 1969 are now due. Please send yours to Brian Nott now. (See below.)
- * The AAA has set up a National League committee and has asked for a member of the NUTS to serve as a statistician. Any member who would be interested in this job is asked to write to Bob Sparks.
- * Peter May has suggested that there may be some members still without a copy of the Portuguese Scoring Tables (Systeme Rationnel pour Classer les Performances Athletiques) and that a bulk order could usefully be placed with the Federacao Portuguesa de Atletismo. Please write to the Editor if you require a copy of the 1962 edition.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF ATHLETICS STATISTICIANS - No. 5 CSSR

This is the most recently established group: it came into being formally this year.

The membership currently numbers 48 with ATFS members Alfred Janecky (born 17 Jan 18), Jan Popper (26 Jun 31), Genek Kohlmann (25 May 33), Milan Sykora (13 Sep 30), Jiri Hetfleis, Otto Kudelka, Milan Skocovsky and Ladislav Krnac among them. An extremely informative newsletter (Start) with an international flavour is appearing at fairly regular intervals (No. 2 bears the significant date 21 August) and is edited by Vladimir Visek (18 Mar 37); his brother Vaclav (9 Mar 43) is also a member of the group.

The NUTS send fraternal greetings to their colleagues in Czechoslovakia and acknowledgements to Vladimir Visek for information.

IMPORTANT!!! With effect from January 1, 1969 the address of the Hon. Treasurer will be: 3 Salisbury Court, Salisbury Road, LONDON, S.W.19.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS AND PROJECTED.

Please send details to the Editor if you wish to be included in this section. Offers to co-operate on particular projects should be addressed direct to the compiler.

- Shaun Adair - UK Track Directory
- Roger Gynn - Field events series
- Andrew Huxtable - Best brothers & sisters (world & UK)
Best married couples (world & UK)
Best twins (world & UK)
- Peter Martin - WAAA junior & intermediate Championship results before 1957
All time bests and dates of birth for juniors and intermediates
- Peter Matthews - Best 5 marks average (world)
Best marks in individual events by decathletes & pentathletes (world & UK)
- Keith Morbey - UK top 10 lists (annual before 1950)
World, European & Commonwealth relay lists (men & women)
UK relay lists (all age groups, men & women)
Championship results and record progression in relays
- Pete Pozzoli - UK all time best performers, age records and county records by birth (women)
- Bob Sparks - Conversion tables (English/metric measurements and equivalents in track events)
Wind assistance in 200m/220y turn (revised)
Growth curve analysis

The intention is, of course, to publish this research so the members whose names appear are asked to submit their work at the earliest possible date. (See also remarks in Editorial on page 1.)

NUTS TIES.

These elegant items of clothing (which no gentleman 'nut' should be without) are available from Peter Hopkins at a cost of 15/- (post free.) Rush him your orders now!

§ Specially composed for this issue by M.G.§

8 DAYS WITH THE COOL MEDIUM by Andrew Huxtable.

Document.

AN AGREEMENT made the 16th day of October 1968
BETWEEN ATV NETWORK LIMITED OF ATV Elstree Studios, Eldon Avenue,
Borehamwood, Herts (hereinafter called "the Company")
AND ANDREW HUXTABLE, 78 Toynbee Road, London, S.W. 20 (hereinafter
called "the Performer")

WHEREBY IT IS AGREED as follows:-

1. THE Company engages the Performer who accepts the engagement to render his/her services in the capacity of Statistician in the television programme entitled: MEXICO OLYMPICS coverage at Foley Street and to attend as follows:-
for a period of 1 week during the period 12th - 27th October 1968 from 1.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. daily.

Scenes

The comfortably warm production office on the first floor of ATV, Foley Street at 1.45 a.m. on October 14. Only minutes before I had been racing across South London, over Battersea Bridge, through Chelsea, up Park Lane and along Oxford Street; past the sleepy uniformed commissionaire, up the stairs. On one long side - windows. At one end: four TV sets, stacked. Studio; above EBU. Next right: BBC 2 colour, above ITV. Latter has sound as well as vision. Outside the night is clear. Inside the light is subdued. Seated at the edges of the office: directors, editors and producer. Personal assistants, gripping clipboards, are dressed casually but elegantly. Coffee is being drunk from paper cups, and raids have clearly been made on stronger stuff in the cocktail cabinet. The first day's athletics are pretty well over, and transmission finishes at 2.00 a.m. Now there's a briefing session for the first edition of 'Breakfast Olympics'.

3.30 a.m. October 15. Mary D., dark, mid-twenties, dresses flamboyantly (today in a peacock blue cord trouser suit and beige boots) has asked me to go through the logging sheets, which are stop watch timed from the live transmission. An attempt is made to transcribe the commentary insofar as identifying the athletes is concerned. But of course these attempts are hampered by the frequently poor pronunciation of foreign names by the commentator and/or lack of knowledge on the part of the person making the transcription. As she munched her way through some fried-egg sandwiches, we wrestled with some very peculiar spellings!

The basement Video Tape Recording (VTR) section is reached by going out of the main entrance in Foley Street and round the corner into Ogle Street. About six VTR bays are here; the technicians (members of ACTT) are running through tape which has been selected for use in the programmes coming up. I have been asked to rush a stand-by piece into the studio for announcer Richard Davies. The time is 7.15 a.m. Only 15 mins. to go, and a notice confronts me on the solid door giving access to the studio: "When the blue or red light is on entry is prohibited". Consternation: the blue light is on! But Lawrence Hughes, one of the editors who spends most of his time in VTR indicates that this merely means "Rehearsal", and the notice may be ignored.

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And so back up to the editorial office where I'm in time to see 'Breakfast Olympics' get off the ground with a rendering of 'Mexico' by Long John Baldry. The same material, more or less, is repeated three times until 9.00 a.m., punctuated annoyingly by commercial breaks. Most days, the whole team goes up to the canteen after it's over to queue for breakfast. On the first morning, for example, the producer and editors discuss - over substandard coffee and fried eggs - the main story for the Lunch Edition, which is to be introduced by Leonard Parkin. It's obviously going to be Ron Clarke's failure in the 10,000m and subsequent collapse through lack of oxygen. Various medical authorities are mentioned for possible interviews but none are available and Gerry North is called upon to discuss the effect of high altitude on long distance events.

During the comparatively slack period from 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon I talk to Irina B., about 22, short, fair and with an unmistakable Australian accent (she's from Adelaide). She was born in Germany, of a Russian father and Polish mother. Had spent a month in Moscow with relatives, before coming to Britain, where she had arrived a week or two before the Games opened. She was attempting to remove the weight she had put on in the USSR (mainly due to eating lots of borsch) by smoking. After leaving the Olympic assignment, on which she was doing typing, she expected to take another temporary job until 1969, when she hoped to get over to Europe.

Out into the bright sunshine among the rapidly thickening lunch-time crowds in central London: I can't think of a better time to finish one's working day!

LOST FOR EVER by Peter Lovesey.

In 1958, when the NUTS was formed, I missed a marvellous year for anniversaries. I hope that some track 'nut' 90 years hence won't let 2058 go by so easily. For while I frittered the year away on Finals and OCTU, the pages of the athletics press contained not one sentence on the events of 1858, seeming pre-occupied with such deeds as Herb Elliott's 3:54.5, Albert Thomas's 8:32.0 and 13:10.8, and Balas's 6'0/1.83.

Now 1858 was a vintage year. Among the babies who made their first lusty cries in those twelve months were Lawrence Myers, the most prolific record-breaker of the century (February 16); Harry Hutchens, the greatest pro. sprinter (February 21); William Page Phillips, the English counterpart of Myers, and world record holder for both sprints; Walter Goodall George (September 9) and his fellow-immortal among distance runners, William Cummings (June 10), and Michael Glazebrook, co-holder with the Hon. Marshall Jones Brooks of the world HJ record at 5'11/1.80 (August 4). That makes quite a nurseryful, in any year, for between them these infants were to make world records for every track event, amateur and professional, from 50y to 10M.

Nor was that all, for it was on July 12, 1858, that miler Tommy Hosspool, of Basford, Nottingham, in the words of "Bell's Life", "traversed the ground in the almost incredibly short space of four minutes and twenty-three seconds" at the Copenhagen grounds, Manchester, to set a professional record which brought mile records from the open areas of race-courses (the previous best was 4:27.0 by W. Matthews at Lansdown, near Bath, in 1849) onto

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enclosed tracks, where the distance covered was beyond dispute.

Robert Browning (who wasn't born in 1858, but 1812!) provides a fitting last word:

"This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it for ever."

(From "Youth and Art", xvii)

TRACK AND FILM by the Editor.

- We have mentioned previously (NUTS Notes, Vol. 2, No. 1; Vol. 6, No. 2) "The Running, Jumping and Standing Still Film", which contained what I described as "some typically English (i.e. light-hearted) hammer throwing". As a member of the NPT, I was fortunate enough to see this year, during the magnificent Joseph Francis (Buster) Keaton retrospective, "College" (1927), in which Keaton makes successively catastrophic attempts at sprinting, hurdling and so on, to finally perform some of the most remarkable hammer throwing ever recorded on film. Incidentally, it's interesting to note that this film marked the only occasion that Keaton introduced a stand-in: Lee Barnes (best of 14'11 $\frac{1}{4}$ "/4.30 in 1928; 1st in 1924 and 5th in 1928 OG) appears towards the end, vaulting up and through an open first floor window to rescue the heroine.
- Chris Marker has also been mentioned twice in previous issues (Vol. 2 No. 3; Vol. 3 No. 4) and I was therefore rather excited when the Institute of Contemporary Arts announced a season of his work early this year. Unfortunately, it failed to materialise for various reasons and the chance of seeing "Olympia 52" therefore missed. I have since learned from the BFI National Film Archive that a copy of this 16 mm record of the 1952 OG is not held in this country and they suggested I write to Marker himself, which I did. His reply, however, was rather unhelpful (Marker appearing to be unduly modest about this, his first effort at film reportage), so I have now written to the Cinematheque Francaise. If, and when, I locate a copy I will try to arrange a weekend for interested NUTS members - perhaps in Paris!
- Before the annual "AW" Club film show held on December 6 at Bowater House, John Le Masurier paid a warm tribute to the work performed by NUTS members in providing the National Coaches with information. Some of you will recall a letter in similar vein from Denis Watts, which appeared in the September 9, 1967 issue of "AW". It's good to receive public acknowledgment of our work occasionally.

+ The Editor wishes to acknowledge the painstaking efficiency and good humour of Margaret Gould in typing the two latest issues of NUTS Notes.+

END