

N. U. T. S. N O T E S

The National Union of Track Statisticians Newsletter

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The last number of N.U.T.S. NOTES appeared as long ago as July 1959, when Melvyn Watman compiled an issue largely based on questionnaires sent to members. We regret very much not having been able to follow this up with regular issues but so much work has been done that as chairman I felt another issue was more than overdue. I shall attempt in this issue to bring everyone up-to-date with details of publications, membership and other matters of interest. If any of you have any material that you think we could include in future issues let us know.

LEN GEBBETT

B.A.A.B. ANNUAL

The B.A.A.B. were very pleased with the first edition of the annual and we were greatly encouraged that the enterprise of the Board met with a good response. Over 2000 copies of last year's book were sold. Sales exceeded reasonable expectations and in consequence it has been possible to produce a 1960 version. An arrangement has been made whereby the N.U.T.S. retain 1s. commission for each copy sold this year. Let our secretary, Pat Brian, know how many copies you want and he will arrange for them to be sent to you. Try to sell as many as possible because we are confident that once someone has bought a publication of this sort he generally buys the next issue. 3000 copies have been printed this year. The remaining copies of last year's annual are now being sold at half-price, so be on the look-out for sales of this too.

You will all probably have seen my letter on behalf of the N.U.T.S. in Athletics Weekly, in which I explained that the Juniors and Youths lists would be published separately by us. The additional features in the annual include Olympic, World and British records with results of international matches. We have included best ever performances, where known, for each athlete, but we realise that athletes not near the top of lists may have done better in pre-N.U.T.S. days. Information on such cases and any errors you can spot will be most welcome.

Junior and Youths Booklet

This is our first independent publication. Sales of the annual last year convinced us that many young athletes were keen to find out about performances by juniors and youths. The total cost of printing 3000 copies, stationery and other expenses is about £100, which is a little in excess of our bank balance of £20 odd. Various London members are prepared to guarantee the difference pending what we hope will be best-seller sales! We have to sell at least 1000 copies to break even and Charles Elliot will be responsible for organising sales.

The printer did not send proofs as requested and all copies were printed complete with errors, particularly some cryptic abbreviations intelligible only to the initiated. The printer has since added an amendment slip free of charge. Despite these shortcomings the booklet is full of useful information about up-and-coming athletes. If only we can sell 1500 we shall be in a much better position to finance future publications.

Scottish Best Performers 1959

Did everyone see the advertisement in A.W. of "Scottish Best Performers 1959" compiled by Tom McNab, Simon Pearson and Tommy Robertson? If not, please note that copies are obtainable 2s.6d. post free from Simon Pearson, c/o Mrs. J. Tainsh, 1 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh 10. The lists go to a depth of 30 in the men's events and 15-20 in the women's events. Tom McNab and Simon Pearson are, of course, members of the N.U.T.S. and I think they and Tommy Robertson are to be commended and supported for this enterprising publication.

British Best Performances

Andrew Huxtable and Billy Scott produced "British Best Performances 1958" last year and encouraged by the response a similar publication for 1959 has been compiled by Andrew Huxtable and Peter May. This excellent publication is an ideal supplement to the annual. All the best performances in the men's and women's events are listed (up to 50 in the men's and 35 in the women's) with dates, venue, placing in the competition and conversion in the field events. This is a private publication and Andrew is not in a position to supply these to members free of charge. He is prepared, however, to let you have a copy at 2s.6d. (half the normal cost). You are warned, however, that only 100 copies have been produced. Andrew's address is 78 Toynbee Road, London, S.W.20.

White City Meetings

Anyone intending to visit London when a major meeting is being staged at the White City should get in touch with our treasurer Alf Wilkins. We order a considerable number of 6s. tickets well in advance. The seats are in "T" block, along the back straight and opposite the finishing line. If the tickets are all sold, the NUTS can be easily spotted after the meeting. Just look out for about a party of eighteen or so, all talking simultaneously.

Olympic Games

Several members are going to Rome for the Olympics. They are Les Crouch, Mike Wolfe, Alf Wilkins and myself. Any other member with a sufficiently distorted set of values to spend about one-half of his net income on watching a few days' athletics under the burning Roman sun in Europe's noisiest capital should get in touch with our little group of lunatics.

Modern Athletics

Stan Tomlin, the editor of "Modern Athletics", has offered us space every month in his magazine. We certainly can give him articles for at least two months but welcome any suggestions or contributions from all our members. We haven't been able to keep in touch with you all as much as we would have liked but "Modern Athletics" gives us an excellent opportunity to rectify this. We shall limit ourselves in our first effort to a brief review of our recent publications as a group and as individual members with, space permitting, the standards for next year's book. Pat Brian has prepared an interesting table comparing standards in 1958 and 1959 which we shall use in the next issue. We can use this as a starting point for a brief discussion of the way things are going this year.

N.U.T.S. Winter Meeting

Charles Elliot organised the NUTS first winter meeting at Hurlingham on 6 February 1960. This attracted about 200 competitors many coming from outside London. Amongst the competitors were Laurie Reed, Don Taylor, Bill Giddings, George Cnela, Paul Rutter and Richard Jones (AAA Junior Mile Champion). The net cost to us was a little over £2 and we hope that all our members will agree that the excellent response justified the money we spent. The highlight undoubtedly was the first sub 14 minute 3 miles of the year in England. We must thank Charles for a successful meeting and look forward to having an annual winter meeting.

New Members

Our representative at Loughborough College is Michael Fleet, one of Britain's leading half-milers. He has already run 1: 52,6 twice this year and we should like to see him get down to 1: 50,0. We are looking forward to all the Loughborough news which he will be sending us at the end of term. Some of us met him for the first time at the Surrey championships where he ran very well.

Several very useful letters from Pat McKenzie at Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge, quickly convinced us that he must become the Cambridge NUT. As a contemporary of another outstanding Fitzbilly high-jumper Ivar Vind, I was pleased that Pat won against Oxford last year. The high jump list this year is a bit thin after Sandy Davis, so what about another 6'3½" Pat? By the way, who were the 5 sub 50 sec. quarter-milers in the C.U.A.C. sports?

Ian Smith (Blackburn) joined us while still in the Navy and sent us extensive details on Navy athletics. We have already had an excellent report on a Blackburn meeting and we can take any amount of this sort of thing on meetings going on in Lancashire. Ian has an article in this month's "Modern Athletics" on the Hungarian distance runner Josef Kovacs.

Richard Szreter is a schoolteacher in Hull and has been a member of the A.T.F.S. for several years. His speciality is Polish athletics and articles by him have appeared from time to time in "Modern Athletics".

Percy Wright (Southampton) became a member after Keith Morbey moved to London. He has spent many years in athletics in this area which boasts many good runners including Hyman, Kilford, Tulloh and Graham and is becoming increasingly important.

Vic French is our Devon member. We first met him 2 years ago at the Commonwealth Games shortly after he had won the junior mile at the Devon championships. He has since become one of the leading Devon runners both on the road and over the country. Devon is a depressed area so far as number of tracks is concerned and it is little short of a miracle that athletes like Crook and Kent-Smith have done so well. News is also hard to come by and Vic has a useful part to play.

Other Members

Melvyn Watman, who did so much for the NUTS as our first secretary, particularly on the 1959 annual, was called up late last year. Fortunately he is stationed near London and has been able to see most of us in the South at early season meetings. He is, of course, contributing regularly to A.W. again.

Peter May took over Melvyn's work on the ranking lists for A.W. and on the 1960 annual, and Pat Brian dealt with his general secretarial work. Our debt to Peter's tremendous efforts is considerable. He kept a log of time spent on the book and in one period of 7 weeks it amounted to 118 hours. Correspondence poured in thick and fast from December to February, thirty or forty letters a week, often overflowing with detailed information. Many dozens of letters were also sent to clubs and individuals. He had also to prepare several hundred queries which were considered during two marathon meetings of a "Doubtful Marks Sub-Committee". The organisation of work for the index alone entailed much effort. He has returned to the U.S.A. where he has previously spent 3 years. We are partly compensated for this loss by Peter's promise to keep a close watch on the achievements of British athletes in America.

Pat Brian has added Peter's duties to his secretarial work and will certainly need all the help that Mike Wolfe can give him. We are at our busiest in London from November to March so please send in all the useful material you can get as early as possible to avoid Pat being overwhelmed early in 1961.

Other members (contd.)

We are fortunate in having as our treasurer Alf Wilkins who happens to be a chartered accountant. He can have few clients whose financial position is as precarious as ours! He has been a hon. A.A.A. coach for several years now and recently passed his examination as senior A.A.A. coach. He gives several evenings a week to training athletes, including Alan Cowan (51,1; 1:55,0; 4:22,9 as a junior in 1959), Lawrence Simmons (50,5 - 1st year junior 1960), Jack Stone (130'2½" Discus) and Tom Bland (46'4" Shot and 145'3" Discus).

Stan Greenberg is still contributing articles regularly to "Modern Athletics" and is one of the chief sources of information for the lists. He is a well-known figure in Fleet St. and can often be seen during the summer months dashing in and out of the London offices of all the provincial newspapers in search of the latest marks.

Bob Sparks, well-known both here and abroad for his knowledge of junior athletics, did the bulk of the work on the juniors and youths lists but handed the details over to Charles Elliot because of final exams. for a B.Sc.(Statistics) this month. During the vacations he has worked in the A.A.A. office and can be seen prowling about the centre of the White City during meetings there with a walkie-talkie which he alleges has something to do with B.B.C. television relays. Articles appear regularly in the splendid German athletics magazine "Die Leichtathletik" with the heading "von unserem Londoner Korrespondenten Bob Sparks". We hope Herr Sparks gets a good degree.

Charles Elliot took over Bob's work on the Junior and Youths booklet and organised the N.U.T.S. first winter meeting. He is more generally known as the Junior Secretary of Poly Harriers and as secretary of the Barrier Club. He puts great energy into all these activities and has also established himself as an announcer at many important meetings in Southern England including international meetings at the White City. He is certainly putting a great deal into athletics.

Keith Morbey became a member while he was acting in repertory on the South Coast but has been working in London for an insurance company for nearly a year now. Instead of carrying a copy of "Macbeth" or "Charley's Aunt" he clutches grim little manuals on fire insurance. These provide him with relaxation from the serious side of life which is being a NUT and reading endless French and German sports magazines. The "International Athlete" published a translation he made of an article on training appearing in a Russian magazine. He is an assiduous collector of information on clubs and will be building up an index of men and women athletes for the NUTS.

Andrew Huxtable specialises in best performances as we have seen from his publications and is also our leading expert on the decathlon and the women's pentathlon. Most of the reports in A.W. on these all-round events are written by Andrew. He has a very keen eye for inaccuracies and inconsistencies and I am ashamed to say spots errors quite often in my little black book.

John Martell can always be seen officiating at Motspur Park and is joint editor of the excellent little magazine "Scan" (Surrey County Athletics News). In this year's May number, one of the chief contributors is Andrew.

Martin James is in charge of the compilation of the women's lists. He enjoys the distinction of seeing more important athletics meetings than anyone else in the organisation. He is being helped in his NUTS work by Roy Brisley who, like Alf Wilkins, devotes much time to coaching.

We met our Colchester member Roger Breese last year and we hope to see him at the White City again this year.

Bill Boulton has been to several of the winter meetings.

Very little gets past Les Crouch in the Midlands and he is very quick at passing information as I can testify. His many early morning telephone calls from West Bromwich are as effective for me as any alarm clock. Moreover he generally has some exciting information from an area which now boasts Radford, Brightwell, Yardley and Jackson over the shorter distances.

Other members (contd.)

John Bale is our member for Wales but at present is a student teacher at a training college in Bucks. He has in consequence become one of the White City regulars and was able to compete in the 880 at the NUTS winter meeting.

Chris Lindsay has already run 440 in less than 49.0 and if he recaptures his 1959 June form could go to Rome. He is very pleased, of course, with the exploits of his big little brother.

Pat Montague is our Oxford representative and we hope he will be doing the 3 in under 14 minutes again soon. His immediate task should be to see that Montague Senior gives the book a good review in The Guardian.

I have already written about Simon Pearson's and Tom McNab's work on Scottish performances. Tom is placed fourth with 47'9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " in the HSJ at present. Simon is one of our most determined correspondents both on senior and junior events.

We met Roy Taylor for the first time in February when he competed at the NUTS meeting.

Colin Young, our specialist on walking, who did very well in the National 50 km walk last year, will be doing his utmost to get to Rome as a competitor. If determination and enthusiasm count for anything he is half-way there.

I took over as the English correspondent of "Der Leichtathlet", the East German magazine, last year from Melvyn Watman. I was also invited to act as interpreter when the East Germans were here in 1959 and the French and West Germans for the indoor meeting in April. I shall be acting in a similar capacity when the Italians arrive next week.

I have mentioned all those members I have seen or heard of recently. My apologies to stalwarts like Billy Scott, Sean Kyle, etc.

Profile of our President - Harold Abrahams

Secretary, National Parks Commission; Repton, Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge. C.B.E. 1957; M.A., LL.B. Hons Law Tripos 1923, called to Bar 1924. President C.U.A.C. 1922-23. Represented Cambridge v. Oxford 1920-23. Represented G.B. in Olympic Games 1920 and 1924, winner 100 m. in 1924. Hon. Pres. A.T.F.S. Athletics correspondent "Sunday Times" 1925 - Advisory World Sports since 1948. Publications: Sprinting 1925, Athletics 1926, Training for Athletes (with Sir Adolphe Abrahams and others) 1928, Oxford v. Cambridge (with the late J. Bruce Kerr) 1931, Training for Health and Athletics (with Sir Adolphe Abrahams) 1936, Official Records of 1928 and 1936 Olympic Games, Track and Field Olympic Records 1948, Olympic Games Book 1896-1952, 1956, 1960, British Empire and Commonwealth Games Book 1930-54, 1958; Editor "Britain's National Parks" (1960). Best marks: 100 yds. 9.9 (9.6 w); 100 m. - 10.6; 200 m. turn - 22.0; 220 yds. straight - 21.6; 440 yds. - 50.8; L.J. - 24'2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

New Member

An omission from our list of new members is L.K. Raven (sorry - no Christian name) who lives in Southend. Associated with athletics since 1935 and a member of L.A.C. since 1946. He has been a press correspondent for New Zealand and South African papers as well as "Athletic Review".

Inter-County Championships

Standards have been set for the Inter-County championships in order to limit the number of competitors and so save money for the A.A.A. We were asked to examine the entries to see whether, according to our records, the athletes had reached the required standard in 1959 and 1960. We did this 3 weeks ago; amongst the correspondence with the entries we found a number of interesting new marks.

General

Since our modest beginnings as a small group about 2½ years ago we have expanded to 40 strong. Not even the most optimistic of us would have predicted the publication of a second athletics annual in 1960. We owe a great deal to the immense amount of work done by Melvyn Watman and Peter May, to the enterprise of the B.A.A.B., to the constant encouragement of our president and, of course, to the co-operation of Mr. P. Green, the editor of Athletics Weekly.

It is our policy to invite individuals to become members after they have given us useful information or show the unmistakable signs of the track and field fanatic. Members are asked to send information as often as possible (no restrictions on quantity) and to cover, if possible, everything happening in their county. Bob Sparks' estimate that we have now achieved 95% accuracy is probably a good one. We will never be 100% correct but we can try for something like 99%.
