

N U T S N O T E S

Vol 13 No 2 Editor: A Huxtable 78 Toynbee Road LONDON SW20 8SR Summer 1975

EDITORIAL

The AGM was held at NSC Crystal Palace on 12 July; attendance was slightly up on last year (15). The proposed alterations to Rules 2(a) and (b) and 3(a) were amended so that only two categories of membership (Active and Associate) will be introduced on 1 January 1976. The division will be based largely on the questionnaires completed by members last year. The proposal to amend Rule 6 was defeated. Copies of the revised Constitution should be available later this year.

The members' dinner will be held at Le Bistingo, 334 King's Road, LONDON SW3 5UR, at 7.30 pm on 28 September. The average cost per head will (we hope) be not much more than £3.00. Please come armed with your cheque book or the necessary cash. But in any case, please complete and return the form enclosed as soon as possible. Guests will be Alan and Della Pascoe!!

MISCELLANY

§ Some of you probably noticed an article in "New Society" (12 June issue) entitled "Women chasing men", of which Richard Szreter was co-author. We look forward to reading the full account in "The Statistician", Vol 24, 1975.

§ Peter Lovesey recently had his sixth work of crime fiction published by Macmillan at £2.25; it's entitled "A Case of Spirits" and, like its predecessors, is an extremely "good read". Message to PHL: have you sent your 1975 subscription to BWN yet?!

§ We welcomed back last month Dr Carole Endersby after a 3-month lecturing stint at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

§ Dr Chris Thorne still pursues his other interest (bird ringing) and his researches on "Growth of Reed Warblers", published as Wicken Fen Group Report 5, 33-35 (1973), is listed in the national "Report on Bird Ringing for 1973" by Robert Spencer and Robert Hudson.

§ Peter Matthews submits his Top 25 for 1946-75 as follows:

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| 1. Emil Zátopek | 11. Parry O'Brien | 21. Lasse Viren |
| 2. Al Oerter | 12. Ron Clarke | 22. Bobby Joe Morrow |
| 3. Valeriy Brumel | 13. Glenn Davis | 23. Ralph Boston |
| 4. Herb Elliott | 14. Viktor Saneyev | 24. Valeriy Borzov |
| 5. Peter Snell | 15. Bob Beamon | 25. Rod Milburn |
| 6. Abebe Bikila | 16. Jim Ryun | |
| 7. Kip Keino | 17. Henry Carr | |
| 8. Janis Lūsis | 18. Tommie Smith | |
| 9. Vladimir Kuts | 19. Bob Mathias | |
| 10. Bob Hayes | 20. Josef Schmidt | |

§ Colin Young has sent in his Top 28 list which is "based upon the inspiration they have given me both as an athlete and spectator":

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Emil Zátopek | 14-28 (no particular order): |
| 2. Vladimir Golubnichiy (USSR) | Herb Elliott |
| 3. Abebe Bikila | Rafer Johnson |
| 4. Vladimir Kuts | Kip Keino |
| 5. Al Oerter | Jim Ryun |
| 6. Michel Jazy | Dave Hemery |
| 7. Gaston Roelants | Valeriy Borzov |
| 8. Abdon Pamich (Italy) | John Landy |
| 9. Alain Mimoun | Valeriy Brumel |
| 10. Ron Clarke | Adhemar F da Silva |
| 11. Gordon Pirie | Viktor Saneyev |
| 12. Jim Peters (GB) | Peter Snell |
| 13. Parry O'Brien | Mal Whitfield |

WHO'S WHO IN THE NUTS

Leo Patrick Coy b. Wexford (Irish Republic), 22 May 1946; 1.73m/59.0kg; Fuel supplies officer, CEEGB; married, 1d, 1s; other interests: family, home decorating; best marks: 800m - 2:07.6, 1500m - 4:24.5, 3000m - 9:08.0, 5000m - 16:21.0, 10,000m - 34:15.6, 3000mSt - 10:05.8; best marks witnessed: 8:13.8 Brendan Foster (1973), 27:30.8 Dave Bedford (1973).

REVITALISING BRITISH STUDENT ATHLETICS by Dr Mike Hayes

I am strongly of the opinion that a healthy state of athletics in our Colleges and Universities will mean strong athletics in Britain. Gentlemen and ladies of NUTS need not be reminded that the vast majority of British athletic successes (medals) in European Championships, Olympic and Commonwealth Games this decade were former students or were students at the times of their successes.

Thus, I have been concerned by the decline in BUSF Championships in recent years. I feel that much of the blame can be allocated to the BUSF organising committees. They have, in my opinion, been singularly weak in their approach to student participation in their championships.

For that reason, I have circulated letters to the BSSF and UAU (extracts reproduced below). Perhaps some further ideas can come forward from our organisation.

" To: Secretary BSSF

1.7.75

Dear Mr Gee:

When reading through the programme for the BUSF athletics championships I noted that a World Student Athletics Games will be held in the Olympic Stadium, Rome, between September 17 and 21 next. The appropriate notice (I think) asked athletes who wished to be considered to forward relevant forms.

I feel that on this occasion (as on all the previous occasions of student championships of this type), the authorities who are in charge of British student athletics have missed a fine opportunity to implement procedures which could only raise the standard of performance in the different domestic Collegiate competitions. To me it is ridiculous that a British student could take part in the Rome competition without prior participation in any British University or Collegiate championship. Persons in this category will have failed to contribute to standards in their appropriate student "Conference" (term to be defined later). In this context, it can be said that athletes such as Mr D Jenkins and Miss N Braithwaite (who did not take part in any BUSF championship, and who in so far as I am aware, did not honour selection by BUSF for domestic competition) could have contributed much more to the BUSF championships. Indeed, I feel that their involvement, and the involvement in the past of all university students of recognised athletic talent in the BUSF championships would have elevated that competition to the second most important of the domestic championships (behind the AAAs).

This year it is too late for the appropriate authorities to take a firm line with regard to participation in BUSF, UAU, WIVAB, and British Colleges competitions. Much could have been achieved, for instance, by decreeing earlier that only exceptional circumstances (such as illness, injury or family bereavement) could cause a student who missed the BUSF or the British Colleges championships to be considered for the British Students team. Such action would certainly have significantly improved the quality of the various championships.

But it is not too late to decide on positive action for the future. I believe that there is much that we can learn from the American system of team selection, and the suggestions which follow have some resemblances to aspects of that system.

Final trials for World Student Championship teams have much to recommend them. These trials might be staged about three weeks before the Games. The winner of each event (provided he has reached the appropriate qualifying standards) should be assured of a place in the British team. In high performance events the maximum number of athletes allowable should be chosen.

The manner of selection of athletes for the final trial can significantly affect "Conference" standards (I use Conference to denote UAU, WIVAB, BUSF, British Colleges and British Polytechnics championships). It might be in order to grant places in the final trial to students who finished in positions 1 to 3 or 4 at BUSF, 1 and 2 in UAU, first, or first and second in the British Colleges and first in the British Polytechnics championships. (Eventually, UAU might be made into a team championship only - see enclosed letter - in which case the first four or five placed persons from BUSF would be invited.)

There are many (and some who are correspondents for the National Press) who regard the "Conference" theme as obsolete and who call for a British Student championships. The final trial suggestion above, which would normally take place every two years, incorporates much that is inherent in such championships. But to disband the "Conferences" would only destroy the "seed beds" of British athletics. Teams, for example, from the Ivy League, Big Ten, Big 7, or Pacific Coast Conferences in the USA compete with as much enthusiasm for their Conference titles as they do for their National Collegiate championship. Sadly, Oxford and Cambridge do not bring to the BUSF championships the ardour which has always been characteristic of their Varsity match. However, the final trial prospect should provide the incentive to perform well at "Conference" level to every athlete of merit.

In many instances, persons who qualify from UAU will also qualify from BUSF. Where this happens, the discretion of the selectors should fill the vacant places for the final trial. Where a student does not belong to a "Conference" but is clearly of appropriate standard, the discretion of the selectors should again be invoked.

For several years I have made verbal oral? AH recommendations along these lines to BUSF representatives. These have not been heeded, and I have not observed any significant alternative proposals or actions which have helped to improve athletic standards at BUSF championships in recent years. I am therefore giving wide circulation to this letter, and I am hoping that it will help to rid the apparent complacency in the administration and in the participation in British Universities athletics."

" To: Secretary, UAU

1.7.75

Dear Mr Evans:

In a recent conversation with Mr Michael McFarnell (formerly permanent secretary of Birmingham University AU, now assistant director of the Finsbury Leisure Centre), I was greatly impressed by his proposals to revitalise the UAU athletics competition. He proposes that UAU athletics should concentrate on what he calls a true team championship. This could also be part of an elimination procedure for what might be called a National Collegiate team championship.

His scheme would involve UAU area championships, and two teams from each area would proceed to the finals. The first three (perhaps four) teams in these finals would proceed to compete for the National championships against two teams from the Oxford, Cambridge, London groups, the first and second teams from the British Colleges championships, and the Polytechnics champion. Mr McFarnell would feel honoured to organise the UAU involvement in the series, and I know of no better man who is available for this.

Should Oxford and Cambridge not wish to be involved in an elimination contest with London then the latter might consider joining in the UAU competition. In such an event, both Oxbridge teams should be included in the competition only when their standards would warrant it.

At this time, I would not welcome the abolition of the individual championship component in the UAU team championships. In a letter (a copy of which is enclosed) to the BSSF secretary I have outlined a procedure for the selection of British Student athletics teams for the future. This procedure would involve the award of a place in the final trial for selection to the first and second finishers in the UAU (or WIVAB) championships. Though I cannot verify it, I have heard reports of a proposed merger between Loughborough College and Loughborough University of Technology. Should this be true, then students from the present Loughborough College of Education would have entry to the final trial through BUSF. (In that case the first five to finish in their event at BUSF might be offered final trial places.) Under such circumstances, I would welcome regional eliminations for the UAU championships. I feel sure that this would improve all-round standards. Perhaps the prospect of a National Collegiate team championship would help renew the waning interest of the National Press in student athletics.

The initiation of such a National championship would call for adherence to an acceptable code of conduct by the different types of Educational Establishments involved. Proof of offers of inducements (or of student recruitment based on the athletic performance of the individual) should incur automatic suspension (from athletics for a period of time) of the institution involved. No College or University should be allowed to indiscriminately forward unrequested literature advertising their facility to athletes of promise until the future student has accepted a place at the institution concerned.

I am sure that others will have suggestions to supplement those of Mr McFarnell and myself. Certainly, we hope that they will bring forward their suggestions and that the matter will be given critical appraisal at the next UAU General Meeting.

The success of American track and field has its basis in an excellently organised Collegiate system. It is not generally recognised, but it is true that British athletics owes much of its successes to the students and graduates of the nation's Universities and Colleges. Perhaps the AAA will recognise this, and in the future coordinate fixtures to avoid clashes with appropriate Collegiate competitions. The cooperation of all concerned could greatly improve national athletics standards in the very near future."

Mike Hayes will be pleased to receive suggestions and comments from other members and I shall be pleased to publish any of these in a future issue. Ed.

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COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Deep lists of UK all time performances and performers for 1 mile. I look forward to receiving contributions from any members for inclusion in that issue. Deadline for copy: 1 October.

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