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EXCLUSIVE

**THE AMAZING
HERB ELLIOTT**

**THE TORTURE OF SUCCESS
HIS STRUGGLE TO REMAIN AMATEUR
THE MAN WHO MAKES HIM RUN**



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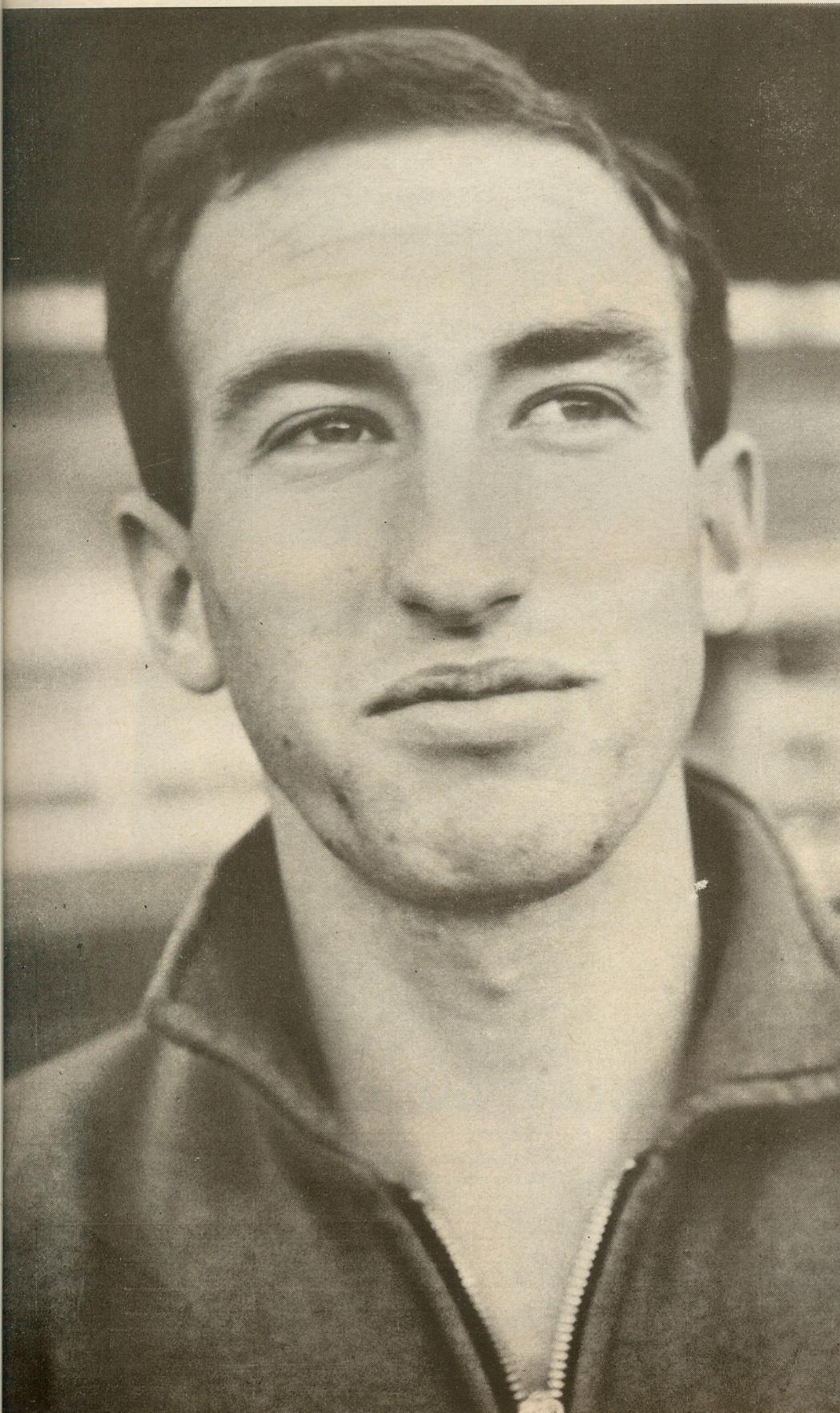
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THE AMAZING

David Potts

**Led by a fanatic and driven
by private furies, Australia's
fantastic miler finds solace
and satisfaction in pushing
himself beyond endurance**

by DON CONNERY



ON A PRIMEVAL, wind-swept beach at Portsea, a curling tongue of scruffy Cape Cod land 60 miles south of Melbourne, a slender Australian clerk with a Dick Tracy nose and a tanned body of sinewy steel sprints a final hundred yards and slumps to the golden sand. Dragging in his footsteps like the exhausted survivors of a desert march come a boilermaker, shoemaker, architect, draftsman and a panting Dalmatian.

Catching his breath after the chill morning's 14-mile gallop down a sandy road, round and round the rolling Portsea golf course and along the broad beach, the leggy clerk revives suddenly. He kicks off his trunks and moldy track shoes, and plunges into the frigid waters of the Bass Strait. The others follow dazedly and thrash with him in the foaming breakers. Then he leads them, clothing in hand, in a naked single file through a forest of looming, unruly sand dunes. At the largest dune, he grunts at the 60° slope, then alone churns up the grueling 80 feet. (On another day, more refreshed, he had mounted the dune a record 42 times in succession.) Muscles now worked to the limit, he leads the troupe of young athletes through scrub and roots and over barbed-wire fences to a clapboard "ski hut" surrounded by rusty barrels, empty paint cans and orange peels. They dart into a cold shower, then collapse into bunks and sleeping bags. But within half an hour, as if someone had turned on the juice, the clerk is up again. Refueling on raw carrots, cabbage, brown bread, cheese and milk, he cuts around the stunted

HERB ELLIOTT

tea trees to a grove marked "muscle tougheners" and begins hefting barbells and heavy slabs of rail.

Thus does Herbert James Elliott, 20, world's fastest man, owner of the international mile and 1,500-meter track records and already preserved in wax at Madame Tussaud's, work off the problems and frustrations of success with deliberate tortures of the body. A man who seems to find in prolonged and superhuman effort the isolation from the public and private furies which possess him, Elliott is the prototype of the modern super-athlete who seems destined to go far beyond the limits of what hitherto has been considered tolerable for the human physique. For him, this Saturday morning workout was only the beginning of two grinding days of running and exercising at a fitness fanatic's homemade commando course. For four days during the work week, resting only on Friday, he had lifted weights and run 10 miles every day through Melbourne's abundant parks. Now he would run some 50 miles over the weekend before hacking off his brief beard and returning, in his gray Austin, to the Monday morning files and adding machines of the finance department, Shell Chemical (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. His next race was months away—not until February next year. He would not run abroad until March. But Herb Elliott acted as if tomorrow were already here.

"Too many runners make the mistake," he says, "of thinking their hard training should begin when the racing season starts. But now is the time of year when they should really be training hardest. When the season is on, I just relax and do a little jogging."

Herb Elliott is an amateur athlete, but his approach to running is strictly professional. Under the verbal lash of his flamboyant coach-conditioner, 63-year-old Percy Cerutty, Elliott has whipped himself into the most relentless running machine in the world. From his first bowlful of dry

John Bull oats, bananas, raisins and nuts in the morning to his five more pages of H. G. Wells's monumental (1,200 pages) *Outline of History* before lights out, Elliott leads the "Sto-tan" life of sacrifice and self-reliance that Cerutty preaches from the examples of Stoicks and Spartans. The object is to burn the legs off every middle- and long-distance front-runner in the world.

The results are impressive. A schoolboy-athlete hero and now barely out of his teens, Elliott, in the less than two years since giving up an aimless, easygoing life in his native Perth, has swept across the track world like a Hun. "I wouldn't exactly say I have the killer instinct," he says. "It's just that I don't like to lose." He rarely has lost any race, and never his specialty, the glamour run: the mile.

With scarcely six weeks of furious training under Cerutty after a year of inactivity, 18-year-old Elliott ran nine spectacular races in January and February 1957. He broke the junior (under 19) world mile record his first

time out, in 4 minutes 6 seconds, and soon broke that down to 4:04.4. He emerged with a bagful of Australian junior records: 800 meters, 880 yards, 1,500 meters, mile, 3,000 meters, two miles and three miles (see page 71). At least three—the mile, the two- and the three-mile—were, and are, world junior records. Turning 19 in late February last year, Elliott in his first senior race came within a hair of cracking the 4-minute barrier with a sizzling 4:00.4. Two days later he took the Australian 880-yard (half-mile) record from John Landy with a 1:49.3, simultaneously setting a new Australian record for 800 meters with a 1:48.6.

This year, Elliott, twice running sub-4 minute miles (3:59.9 and 3:58.7) within a week's time in Melbourne, went on to stage the most awesome display of personal prowess in track history. In 29 races, from Toowoomba (near Brisbane) to Oslo, Elliott lost only three—at 440 and 880 yards, and at two miles—and won all 12 of his mile runs. He ticked

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CERUTTY'S PRIVATE HELL DUNE, A 60° SLOPE, IS CLIMAX OF THE DAILY WORKOUT



off an unprecedented 10 sub-4-minute miles and bagged the mile and 1,500-meter records with the stunning times of 3:54.5 and 3:36. In a year notable for astonishing performances, broken records and the total demolition of the 4-minute barrier, Elliott was clearly the driving force.

Barring injury or a temperamental decision to chuck it all, Elliott's potential seems limitless. So young and with so much already under his belt, he is fully expected to run the mile in 3:50 or less within a year or two by everyone from John Landy, whom Elliott has replaced as Australia's national sports hero, to his foremost rival, Melbourne Schoolteacher Mervyn Lincoln. Many track experts agree with Percy Cerutty that Elliott may well pocket, simultaneously, all the track titles from 800 to 10,000 meters. Even the marathon, 26 miles, 385 yards is not ruled out; Herb is already verging on marathon training.

A SWELL OF PRIDE

In sports-loving Australia, a giant, rugged land of a mere 10 million people where the summer sun beats hardest at Christmas, all this contributed to a tremendous swell of national pride. Elliott's world sweep, added to Aussie dominance in tennis, swimming and, now more than ever, track, has caused visions to dance before the eyes of sports fans and officials in which Elliott-led Australian teams run wild in the 1960 Rome Olympics and the 1962 British Empire Games in Herb's hometown of Perth in Western Australia. By then, so Aussies gloat, Herb will be stronger, enormously experienced, absolutely unbeatable, the greatest runner of modern times and a cruising billboard for the vigor and wonder of the land down under.

This rousing reverie was rudely interrupted in mid-August by a short, swart publicist-promoter named Leo Leavitt, a onetime Honolulu boxing operator who was drumbeating the global tour of Goose Tatum's Harlem Trotters (not to be confused, but they usually are, with Abe Saperstein's Harlem Globetrotters). In Melbourne, a week after Elliott's record mile run in Dublin, Leavitt, who calls himself the "last of the Damon Runyon characters," announced that he was offering Herb Elliott a spectacular \$250,000 two-year contract to turn professional.

Already helplessly irate over Jack Kramer's vacuuming of their great tennis stars, Australians reacted to Leavitt's bombshell with a colorful mixture of shock and cynicism. They howled at "these hungry American promoters," but they couldn't really blame Herb if he bit the bait. "The Lee-vitt's a terrible person to tempt our 'Erbie that way," cooed a grandmother. "'Erbie's such a nice boy. Not a bit skiting [boastful], you know." "My oath!" bawled an earthy cabbie. "'E's a flamin' mug if 'e don't take it!" "Stone the crows!" a sun-browned laborer swore. "The boy's a bloody fool if 'e don't grab the dough with both hands!" From Europe, Elliott said guardedly that "I can't really believe a fellow would have that much money lying around to stick in my bank."

But Leavitt, bustling about Australia like a one-man carnival, proceeded to bolster his offer with definitive—or so they seemed—details. He painted a glowing picture of Herb's future as a professional, promising to "perpetrate [sic] Elliott's name in history." He would tour the world with Goose Tatum, do some basketball announcing, sign autographs, give cigaret and cornflake testimonials, run for prize money against a field of hired hands "like Wes Santee." He would sing better than the Crosby boys, star on television, make movies, maybe tap-dance. "But nothing undignified," Leo promised. "One thing for sure, Herb won't have to stand out front selling tickets."

Some Australians reacted with more than expletives. To head off Leavitt, a group of businessmen began talking up a trust fund to secure Elliott's future. Amateur officials scowled. The Shell Company of Australia countered with an offer of a university scholarship and the prospect of an executive future. Lewis Luxton, Herb's boss and onetime Olympic rower (for Cambridge at Los Angeles in 1932), insisted that such a Shell education would be neither favoritism nor unprecedented and would fall well within the bounds of amateurism. Luxton should know; he is a representative in Australia of Avery Brundage's International Olympic Federation.

What blocked the deal in the end was neither Australia's outrage nor any counteroffers that might have tempted Elliott nor even Herb's true-blue amateur spirit. The man who killed it was Leavitt himself. His big

talk almost won the confidence of Herb and his father, though never his mother ("We didn't bring up our boys to associate with people like that"), but he never quite produced the cash or credentials to back up his lip. Billing himself as "the world's greatest promoter," Leavitt could never give any flat guarantee that Elliott would not be used as a mere performing seal. Meanwhile, Australian newspapers questioned the reputation, resources and motives of Leavitt's outfit, Western Promotions, Inc. of San Francisco, headed by Bobo Olson's old fight manager, Sid Flaherty. They seemed to see the bulky shadow of Jim Norris in the background. Everybody wondered how Leavitt could possibly make back his quarter million dollars in two years.

A CORPORATION IN THE BAHAMAS

The Elliots, *filis et père*, did not seem at first to share any of these compunctions. Although Percy Cerutty warned from Europe that "it seems to be a very precarious scheme," Herb Elliott senior, once a small-time sports promoter himself, and friends looked over all angles. They consulted the legal advisers to Tennis Pro Frank Sedgman. They figured the income-tax bite might be softest if Herb were set up as a corporation in the Bahamas. When Leavitt flew to Japan after a conference with the Elliots in Perth, Herb saw him off at the airport in an affectionate farewell and gave him a boomerang inscribed, "Goodby, Leo. Might see you in Tokyo."

Soon afterwards, when the two Herbs returned from a kangaroo shoot in the hills outside Perth, they had a businesslike telephone talk with Leavitt in Tokyo. "This discussion must be treated in the strictest secrecy," opined Elliott senior. Agreed, said Leo. "We feel that as a matter of equity we must ask you to place £30,000 [\$67,200] into our solicitor's bank account in escrow for Herb, to be paid him if he accepts this offer." Herb passed his father a note: "Tell him it will prove him dinkum [O.K.]." Leavitt, seemingly agreeable, rasped in his frog voice that he would fly straight to Perth to clinch the deal. But when Leavitt failed to turn up on schedule and no word was forthcoming about his whereabouts, Herb decided Leo wasn't dinkum after all. He called a sudden press conference to announce that he had de-

cided to do what would make himself and his fiancée, pretty Perth hairdresser Anne Dudley, "happiest." Besides, he had been nagged by the thought of not appearing in the 1962 Empire Games in Perth. He was staying amateur. The assembled reporters and photographers cheered and celebrated with the Elliotts and friends on champagne, chicken sandwiches and asparagus tips. Herb flew off to Melbourne to resume training after a month's layoff and return to his Shell desk.

But the irrepressible Leavitt, spewing black ink headlines like a squid in flashy cufflinks, was still to wring countless columns of publicity out of the Elliott name. Flying into Darwin from Hong Kong, he warned: "I have one question to ask Elliott and if I don't get the right answer he will never run in the Rome Olympics. . . . I am as certain as my finger is now in this glass of whisky that Elliott will come with me." He was also, he promised, going to "bust up those slobs" of the amateur union.

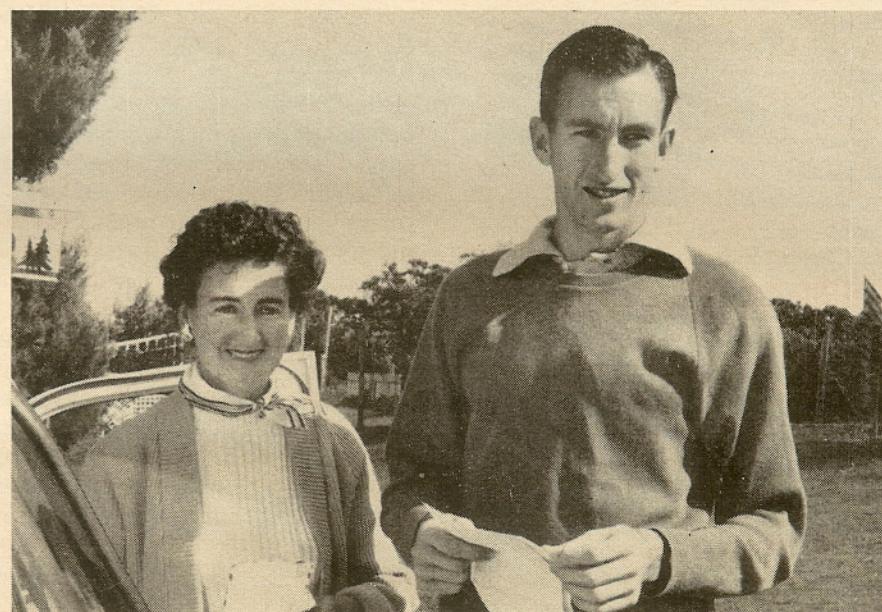
"I love that boy," said Leavitt. "I wouldn't want to hurt him, but if Herb Elliott says no to me I will refer the matter to two judges of the Supreme Court of California who are friends of Leo." He claimed he had a damaging tape recording of a secret phone talk with the Elliotts but never produced it. When Leavitt's rantings went too far and Aussies began threatening boycott of the Harlem Trotters, the promoter asked, "Is Elliott a sacred cow?" and whimpered, "No one believes me. . . . All I want the people of Australia to do is leave me alone." And just to make sure they did, he announced that he was about to offer the Konradses, Australia's famous teen-age swimming kids, a fabulous pro contract. From Mama Konrads came a scathing "No." Far off in Perth, Elliott senior, haggard and out of pocket a few thousand quid thanks to enforced neglect of business and the high costs of amateurism, muttered: "Our house has been turned into a circus. If we could only have some peace!"

To anyone who knew Herb Elliott, boy, youth and background, all these shenanigans would seem incongruous. Even the city of Perth, which by its very nature is inclined to take sporting things seriously, had never known such a hullabaloo. Twelve miles down the Swan River from the port of Fremantle, Perth is the capital and

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WITH LEO LEAVITT in happier days, Herb Elliott poses smilingly as he presents the promoter with an inscribed boomerang. Soon after, their brief friendship soured.



WITH HIS MOTHER, the boy wonder is the picture of youthful charm, almost bellying her description of him: "Living with Herbert is like living with an atom bomb."



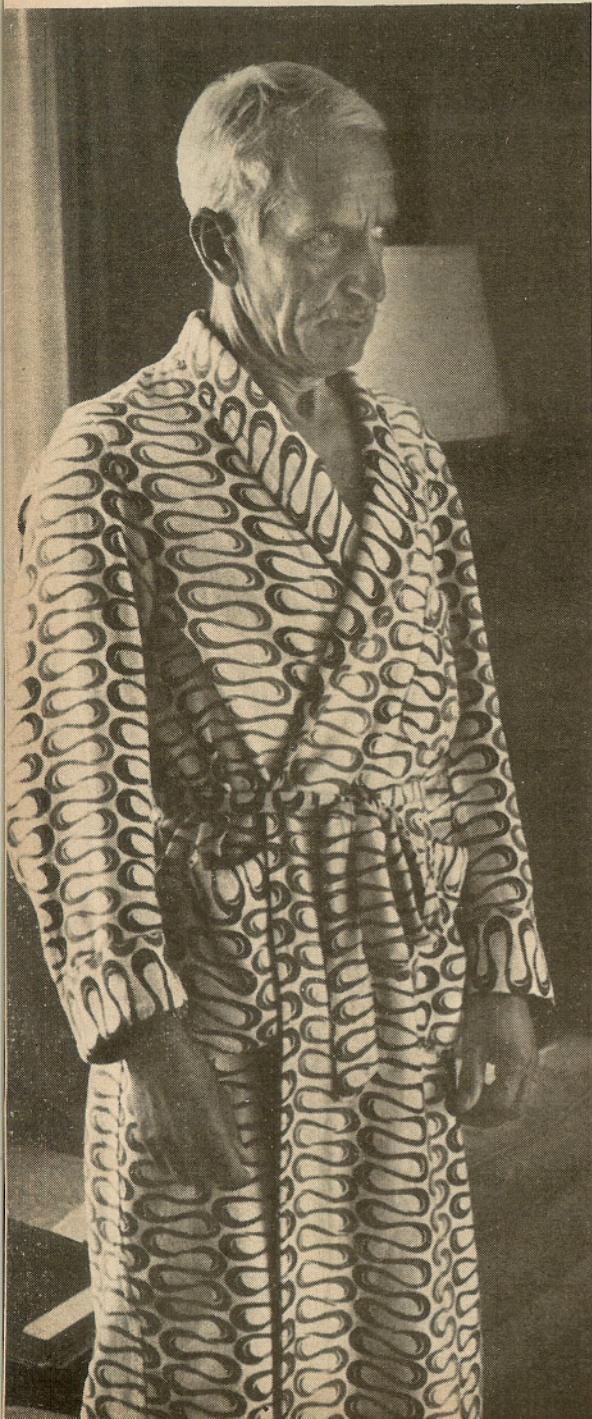
WITH HIS FATHER, Elliott holds press conference on the proposed deal with Leavitt. Elliott senior, who was at first disposed toward deal, was later bitterly disillusioned.

HERB ELLIOTT

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only large city in the vast reaches of Western Australia. Sunshiny days and crisp evenings, which bring a spanking cool breeze known as the "Fremantle doctor," combine with gleaming beaches, rippling bays, handsome parks and untamed countryside to make it a playground city for its near-400,000 population. Perth people lead a robust outdoor life at swimming, surfing, golf, tennis, cricket, football, yachting, hunting, field hockey and even softball. Licensed bookmakers behind painted windows in downtown Perth handle heavy betting traffic for

FIERY TRAINER Percy Cerutty has the air of a modern Svengali in flamboyant robe.



racing fans. On busy Saturdays, special trains speed the horseplayers straight from the track to the big football oval.

Herb Elliott was born into this salubrious sporting environment on February 25, 1938. The Elliott family's deep roots in Australia reach even farther back to Ireland. Herb's father, Herbert Charles Elliott, now a balding, somewhat astringent businessman who is closing up his home-furnishings business to manage a finance company, was once a scratch cyclist (one of the last men off the mark) in handicap races. He organized cycling events for a bicycle company, including Hubert Opperman's famous cross-country ride in the late 1930s—2,800 miles from Fremantle to Sydney—at a time when even motorists feared to cross the desolate Nullarbor Plains.

Herb and his brother Laurence, two years younger (now also a runner of outstanding promise), grew up in a relaxed and sporting atmosphere, joining their parents in everything from rowing to golf. The family's present six-room house in suburban Scarborough is within sprinting distance of sand and surf. The boys hauled tons of rock and dirt to carve out a tennis court in the back yard. Growing up, they were close but different: "Herb," says his mother, "was commanding and always terribly aggressive. Laurie is gentler and more even-tempered, like a Dunlopillo"—a popular brand of foam-rubber cushion.

Herb Elliott was a big man on Perth's Aquinas College (equal to U.S. high school) campus. Good marks and "distinctions" in mathematics came easy, perhaps too easy. "I didn't have any trouble in the brain box," he says candidly, "but I was lazy. I didn't have an aptitude for study." Herb played the piano, won prizes in debating, was named captain, or head proctor, of the school. He rowed and played a hard game of football—breaking his nose—and he was a track star of overwhelming talent. Aware of his potential, Elliott wrote John Landy for advice on style and training. "Landy told me that the important thing is to run for the sake of running, never just to run against the clock or to set out to break a record." Percy Cerutty saw Elliott run a 4:22 mile in September 1955 and tapped him as world-class material. But three months later and only a week after finishing Aquinas, Elliott dropped a piano on his right

foot while preparing a school hall for a dance. He went on crutches and put away his vague thoughts of taking track seriously. He began work for his father's firm as a door-to-door salesman of furniture, carpets and drapes. A star salesman, he was also, by his mother's testimony, "a boy who likes a good time—late nights, dancing, you know." Elliott drifted about town on his Lambretta scooter, smoked heavily, whiled away long hours at Luigi's coffee lounge. Eighteen years old, Herb had everything but a goal. "At that age you don't know what you want to do," he says now, at 20 the world's most famous Australian.

In November 1956 the family flew to Melbourne to see the Olympic Games. "Dad and Mum were both on my back a bit to get me running again," Herb recalls. Seldom demonstrative, Elliott was on his feet to cheer Soviet Sailor Vladimir Kuts's inspired 5,000- and 10,000-meter victories. Perth Chiropractor James Tunney, an old family friend, who was sitting next to the Elliotts in the Olympic stands, took the opportunity to growl at him: "If I had half your ability I wouldn't even finish this cigarette." A seed was planted. Hopping the fence around Olympic Village, Elliott hobnobbed briefly with the athletes and met Ron Delany. Then he drove to Portsea to see Percy Cerutty.

Their meeting was the turning point in Elliott's life. A wiry, tempestuous man with a leathery face and flaming-white hair, Percy Cerutty is controversy personified—a fireball widely written off as a crank and a fanatic, and just as widely admired as the goad and original mentor of a string of Australia's top athletes. Landy, Les Perry, Don MacMillan, Albert Thomas, Dave Stephens, New Zealand's Murray Halberg all trained for a time at Portsea. Even the late Olympic cyclist Russell Mockridge, a friend of Elliott's who was killed recently when he rammed into a Melbourne bus, got athletic religion under Cerutty. He held the record uphill time (11 seconds) for Cerutty's 80-foot sand dune.

Cerutty, an Australian who was a runner in his youth, came to his extraordinary convictions on health and fitness fairly late in life. Sixteen years ago, at age 47, he was close to physical and mental collapse. He punched his way out of his illness by leading a Spartan life apart from his telephone

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HERB ELLIOTT'S TRACK RECORD

DATE	PLACE & EVENT	DISTANCE	TIME	DATE	PLACE & EVENT	DISTANCE	TIME
EARLY '54 Age: 15	Perth: inter-school championships (among schools in Perth area)	880 YDS. MILE	1:58.2 4:30.8	JAN. 18, '58	Melbourne: VAAA inter-club meet	880 YDS. MILE	1:51.8 3:59.9
NOV. 6, '54 Age: 16	Perth: State Schoolboy Championships	MILE	4:25.6	JAN. 25, '58	"	MILE	3:58.7
JAN. 3, '55	Perth: inter-school championships	MILE	4:26.8	JAN. 30, '58	Melbourne: VAAA twilight invitation	MILE	3:59.6
JAN. 8, '55	"	880 YDS.	1:57.2	FEB. 15, '58	Perth: West Australian championships	880 YDS.	1:49.5
FEB. 5, '55	Adelaide: South Australian Jr. Championships	880 YDS.	1:55.7	FEB. 22, '58	"	1,500 M.	3:51.8
FEB. 7, '55	"	MILE	4:20.8	MAR. 2, '58 Age: 20	Melbourne: exhibition	1,000 M.	2:21
SEPT. 17, '55 Age: 17	Perth: Aquinas College competitions	MILE	4:22	MAR. 9, '58	Toowoomba, Queensland (outside Brisbane): exhibition	MILE	4:08.8
OCT. 22, '55	"	MILE	4:26	MAR. 15, '58	Brisbane: Australian championships	880 YDS.	1:49.4
"	"	880 YDS.	1:57	MAR. 17, '58	"	880 YDS.	1:53.6
OCT. 29, '55	Perth: State Schoolboy Championships	MILE	4:20.4	APR. 6, '58	Geraldton, West. Australia	880 YDS. ¾ MILE	3:04
DEC. 26, '56 Age: 18	Frankston, Victoria: unimportant tryout race	880 YDS.	1:54 (handicap; lost)	BEGINNING OF WORLD TOUR			
JAN. 12, '57	Melbourne: inter-club competitions (Elliott running for the Coburg Harriers of Melbourne)	MILE	4:06 (world jr. record)	MAY 10, '58	Honolulu	880 YDS.	1:53.2
JAN. 19, '57	Melbourne: inter-club	880 YDS.	1:53.7	MAY 16, '58	Los Angeles: Coliseum Relays	MILE	3:57.8 (American record)
JAN. 26, '57	Melbourne: Victorian Championships	MILE	4:06	MAY 31, '58	Modesto, Calif. Relays	MILE	4:02.7
JAN. 28, '57	"	880 YDS.	1:50.8	JUNE 6, '58	Compton Invitational	MILE	3:58.1
FEB. 9, '57	Adelaide: South Aust. Jr. Championships	MILE	4:06.2	JUNE 20, '58	Bakersfield, Calif.: American Championship heat	MILE	4:01.4
FEB. 14, '57	Melbourne: twilight invitation meeting	2 MILES	9:01 (world jr. record)	JUNE 21, '58	Bakersfield: American Championship final	MILE	3:57.9
FEB. 16, '57	Sydney: New South Wales Championships	MILE	4:06.4	JULY 11, '58	London: English Championship heat	880 YDS.	1:52
FEB. 20, '57	Box Hill (suburb of Melbourne): club invitation meet	MILE	4:04.4 (world jr. record)	JULY 12, '58	English Championship final	880 YDS.	1:49 (lost)
FEB. 23, '57	Melbourne: inter-club senior meet	(1,500 M.) 3 MILES	(3:47.8) 14:02.4 (lost, but set world jr. record)	JULY 19, '58	Cardiff: Empire Games heat	880 YDS.	1:52.3
			(8:45.6)	JULY 22, '58	Empire Games final	880 YDS.	1:49.3
				JULY 24, '58	Empire Games heat	MILE	4:07
				JULY 26, '58	Empire Games final	MILE	3:59
				AUG. 4, '58	London: White City Empire vs. Great Britain	880 YDS.	1:47.3
				AUG. 4, '58	Watford (outside London): demonstration	880 YDS.	1:50.7
MAR. 9, '57 Age: 19	Melbourne: Australian Amateur Athletic Championships	MILE	4:00.4	AUG. 6, '58	Dublin: Invitation Meet	MILE	3:54.5 (world record)
MAR. 11, '57	"	880 YDS. (800 M.)	1:49.3 (1:48.6)	AUG. 7, '58	"	2 MILES	8:37.6 (lost)
OCT. 13, '57	Mornington (near Melbourne)	3 MILES	14:18	AUG. 25, '58	Stockholm, Sweden	1,500 M.	3:41.7
OCT. 26, '57	Hamilton (near Melbourne)	¾ MILE	3:00.5	AUG. 28, '58	Gothenburg, Sweden	1,500 M.	3:36 (world record)
DEC. 26, '57	Frankston (near Melbourne)	880 YDS.	1:52.4	AUG. 29, '58	Malmo, Sweden	MILE	3:58
JAN. 11, '58	Melbourne: inter-club competition of the Victorian Amateur Athletic Assn.	440 YDS.	50.7 (lost)	SEPT. 3, '58	London: White City invitation event	MILE	3:55.4
				SEPT. 5, '58	Oslo, Norway	1,500 M.	3:37.4

As Elliott turned 19 on Feb. 25 he simultaneously held Australian junior records for the 800 m., 880 yds., 1,500 m., mile, 3,000 m., 2 miles and 3 miles, plus world records for mile, 2 miles, 3 miles.

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				SEPT. 5, '58	Oslo, Norway	1,500 M.	3:37.4

THE STICKIEST WICKET



In which Hugh Bentley-Giddings botches the attempt to smuggle Lamplighter Gin back from the States to the Empire for his personal use.

LAMPLIGHTER GIN

The costlier English Gin Americans now have firmly in hand—as dry as you can buy.

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technician's job and taking on weight lifting and competitive marathon running. In time, he turned his modest beach home and bunkhouse at Portsea into a training camp for young runners, charging them only token costs of about a dollar a weekend for food and facilities. He set the training pace himself. "Perce can fly like a bird," says Elliott, "28 seconds over 200 yards, a mile in 5:32. For a 63-year-old, he's just a kid."

At their first Portsea meeting Cerutty told Elliott he would have to come to Melbourne to work and buckle down to a life of sacrifice. Elliott made the move immediately. "I'm not interested in athletics," Cerutty snapped when his new trainee reported for duty. "I'm only interested in achievement." He ordered Elliott to be contemptuous of pain and thrust against it. There was no pat training formula, no timetable routine. Cerutty aimed to fashion out of the raw Elliott a resilient, superbly conditioned free spirit who would discipline himself instinctively and soar above the common herd of racers by virtue of superior strength and will power. Races would be won by instinct, not strategy. "Percy's a winding-up sort of bloke," John Landy once said of the trainer. Wound up like a steel spring after blistering training at Portsea, Elliott ran his first mile under Cerutty a full 13 seconds faster than his best school time.

COLD WAR BETWEEN COACHES

Cerutty's "agin'-the-government," chip-on-shoulder approach to amateur athletics and its bureaucracy has led to a cold war in Australia between his unorthodox training methods and the "scientific," stop watch methods of Austrian-born Franz Stampfl. Once a World War II civilian internee in Australia, later coach in England of Roger Bannister, Chris Chataway and Brian Hewson, Stampfl came back to his erstwhile captors under the sponsorship of the Victorian AAA and the University of Melbourne. He is consequently Australia's only paid university "athletic adviser." Embittered by Stampfl's acceptance and the supposed rejection of his own theories, Cerutty has lost no opportunity to bait his rival with Elliott's eight successive mile triumphs over Stampfl's prize athlete, Merv Lincoln. Handsome, 45-

continued

year-old Stampfl says with haughty contempt that he does not wish to dignify Cerutty with rebuttal, but he told *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED*: "Cerutty has been libeling and slandering me since I told him three years ago in England that his ideas are ridiculous. Actually, I feel sorry for the man. [Pause.] No, I am beyond that stage. I would like to wring his neck."

Stampfl suggests, obliquely, that the ferocity of Elliott's training under Cerutty is a trifle unsporting. "Lincoln trains only one hour a day," he says. "If he did more he might become a better runner, but would he be a better man? Anyone with a bit of talent can become a champion if he works for hours and hours to the exclusion of everything else. But at what cost to his complete personality?" In fact, Stampfl, while seeing some virtue in the *fartlek*, or freeplay, method made famous by Gundar Hagg and other Continental runners and spun into the Stotan creed by Cerutty, fears that "it is harmful and unnecessary if you overdo. Just as overeating can become grotesque, over-running can weaken the body. So much of all this is based on ignorance, yet we can find out the effects on the body scientifically. I prefer to define my terms. I like to know what I'm doing."

Arguments notwithstanding, it needed a man of Cerutty's fiery, evangelical nature to tap Elliott's enormous resources and bring them to the surface. Cerutty clearly filled a need in Elliott's life. "We put Herb in Percy's hands with confidence," says Mrs. Elliott. "That confidence has been well and truly repaid a million times over. He gave Herb an awful lot more than just making him stronger. He puts great stress on character. His standards for a man are very high. Oh, we have had some terrific arguments with him, but he's done the world for Herb."

An arrogant, almost too confident competitor, Elliott by his own admission is inclined to laziness, or, as he puts it, "bludging." He is impatient of routine, bored by conventional training. He can hardly stand the sight of a stop watch. Cerutty preached manliness and the glory of defying pain. It was a joy-through-strength doctrine. Elliott got the message. Today he is a dedicated convert, ruthlessly disciplining himself. "You get bloody sick of training," he



THE FUTURE MRS. ELLIOTT, beauty operator Anne Dudley, happily goes shopping with her famous fiancé in the streets of Perth, where Herb weekends with his family.

says, characteristically talking in the second person, "but that's the time when you stick to it. That's when one runner proves himself better than the others. Anyone can do it when he's enthusiastic. It's when you stick to it that you show you're the superior man. But once you start running it's O.K. You get a sensation of strain in your muscles and sweat on your brow. It's a manly pleasure. The pain is something real, especially now when you're not quite fit. Three or four times a week it hurts so much that you're dying to stop. Your muscles are screaming but you keep going. It's a matter of will power."

"I DON'T TRY TO HATE THEM"

Elliott insists he neither plans how he will run a race nor bothers much about who his competitors are. He remains aloof. "I don't try to hate them. It just happens that way. But the person you should really hate is yourself. It's you that you've got to hurt. It's you who's got to take the punishment." At the start of a race,

he admits, he is prone to falter "because I'm too relaxed." Then, "when I'm running, my mind hardly works at all. Afterwards I can't remember what I was thinking about exactly. I don't black out the way they say. That's a lot of bull. I am oblivious to the crowd." He usually doesn't even see Cerutty on the sidelines frantically waving signals with a white towel to tell him the competition is gaining or a record is possible. "I'm just concentrating on getting the job done. If I feel someone breezing along at my shoulder, well, competition gears you up." It must; Elliott's acceleration is astonishing. "I don't assume I'm going to win the race," he insists. "I've never gone out on the track with the intention of setting a record. I just go out and run. I never have a record in mind with a high-class field. All I want to do is win."

Why run at all? "I guess it's a way of expressing myself by going through pain. I aim to keep myself fit and to prove I'm the better man. Doesn't

continued

everyone want to show he's better than the next bloke at something?"

As part of his preachments of the manly virtues, Cerutty stokes Elliott and his other charges with "character-building" mental exercises out of the great books—particularly Tennyson. "Poetry," echoes Elliott, "can make you a better man by giving you an appreciation of beauty and an awareness of things around you. It seems today that you've got to be an intellectual to be able to get back to nature."

"The main thing about Perce," Elliott feels, "is that he coaches your spirit. This is the key to championship running." Herb is working on a personal theory that "the body itself may need only two months' training to get fit; the rest of the time you're building up your spirit—call it guts, or some inner force—so that it will go to work for you in a race without your even thinking about it."

Elliott has an affectionate but by no means blind admiration for Cerutty. "He is more impetuous and excitable than I am," he says. "Percy talks all the time. He nearly drives us crazy, saying the same things over and over until you get damned sick of it. But when he's not here we miss the old beggar. I could train and run on my own but I like to have him around to talk things over." Elliott kept Cerutty around earlier this year when he hauled him in from death in the treacherous Portsea surf.

"ALL IN ALL, A WONDERFUL BLOKE"

"Percy claims a lot more than he should get credit for," Herb says with youthful indulgence. "He makes it sound as if you'd be a drunkard and no good as a runner if it weren't for him. It sometimes gets your back up and you feel like putting him in his place. But, all in all, he's a wonderful bloke." Elliott has had "a sort of unspoken gentleman's agreement" with Cerutty to stick together at least through the Rome Olympics. If he had turned professional, Elliott figures he would have given Cerutty a £3,000 (\$6,720) slice of the pie. For Cerutty, who has lived most of his life "on the smell of an oil rag," as a Melbourne newsman quaintly puts it, it would have been a useful but unwelcome pile. He had been shocked at the very thought that "Herb Elliott's gifts may be prostituted on the altar of Mammon."

Cerutty has been both a second father and a buddy to Elliott. When young Herb and old Perce set out for Fiji and points east last May for their four furious months abroad, they were a jolly pair of "round-eyed, unpretentious Australians," as Cerutty phrased it, "cast forth into this awfully wide, wide world." In Honolulu, after Herb quickly disposed of a field of locals in an 880-yard run despite a touch of diarrhea, Cerutty was crowned king at a hula-hula dance at the Outrigger Club. Writing friends in Perth, he bragged: "I completely nonplussed my plump Hawaiian hula-girl partner, who exclaimed to me, 'I give in—gee, you must have the spirit of eternal youth!'"

OVERWHELMED, APPALLED, SHOCKED

In Los Angeles the "unpretentious Australians" were overwhelmed by their posh, "crazy, crazy, crazy" Sheraton-Town House suite—but were also heard complaining that they could get nothing but "soft asparagus and puffy fish." They had to lay in a supply of dried fruit and walnuts. Cerutty found Los Angeles "hurrying, scurrying, mad, amazing," with "churches like business offices, business offices like churches" and "6-month-old babies propped in front of television." Herb was appalled at "the pasty look of America's pampered children" and fearful that Australia, threatened with rising prosperity, might go soft the same way. "These people," sneered Cerutty, "are overfed, live overluxuriously and are mostly fat and flabby." He was shocked by public signs advising what to do in case of heart attack.

At the Coliseum Relays in Los Angeles, after Herb ran the then second (after Ibbotson's 3:57.2) fastest mile in history in 3:57.8, he phoned his soon-to-be fiancée Anne, blithely chatted for about 15 minutes and was aghast when he learned the toll was \$57. After Los Angeles, Elliott raced three more mile events in the U.S., all in California. Two were sub-4s, one only scant seconds above 4 minutes. Herb also had his fun—the joys of a flashy, red Ford convertible; a quick journey to Mexicali; a bit of light gambling in Reno; a look at Yosemite ("the most beautiful place in the world"); and five days roughing it in the High Sierras. Meantime, Perce was fighting a long-distance battle with what he called "the muddle and bungling" and

"Gestapolike control" of Australia's Amateur Athletic Union.

In Britain, there was more fun but then a shock when Herb loped in third in the 880 (although with a respectable 1:49) behind Brian Hewson and Mike Rawson in the English championships at London's White City. Reported Cerutty: "I knew Herb had been 'seeing' London—'sampling' might be the better word—because our Herb, like myself, believes in living fully in the fullest sense of the word. . . . Well, old Perce and young Herb really stopped sightseeing and eating the old *pâté de foie gras*, abandoned the nightclubs and the fleshpots—and really got cracking! So we ran poor old Brian into the ground next time—murdered, massacred and mutilated the flower of British athleticism!"

And indeed Herb did so, 10 days after his loss, in the 880 finals of the Empire Games; and then again two weeks later at White City with a 1:47.3 win over Hewson, only half a second outside Tom Courtney's world record. In all, Elliott raced 12 times in Britain, Ireland, Sweden and Norway. He set his world records for the mile and 1,500 meters and, excepting his heat in the Empire Games, ran four sub-4 miles in all four of his mile races. His only other defeat was in the two-miler at Dublin when he paced fellow Australian Albert Thomas to a world record of 8:32. Thomas' pacing had helped produce Elliott's spectacular 3:54.5 mile in Dublin the day before.

Still, Cerutty had complaints, not always reasonable. "Herb is in bad company," he said. "He fraternizes with world-record holders like Ibbotson and Gordon Pirie—far too much! They know now they cannot beat him—so, like the Americans, they try to hobble him with hospitality—wear him out playing golf, visiting the Palladium, and much else." After England came France, and Herb, growing a beard and bumming up the Continent to Scandinavia with seven other athletes in a Microbus, was booted out of his sleeping bag in a Paris park by a policeman. "We finally camped in a farmyard outside of town," he recalled. "I didn't think much of Paris." He also didn't think much of spending his own money, an estimated \$800, to finish up his European tour. He had run out of the usual time limit—and a generous extension—for an amateur to be

continued



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HERB ELLIOTT *continued*

permitted to accept expenses abroad. Cerutty characteristically raged that "Herb has to get about like a poor student" because of "crazy, criminal" amateur rules.

Always there were complications. Immediately after his record-smashing 1,500 meters in Gothenburg, Herb hurried off to do a radio broadcast. "My mouth was dry and tacky," he said later. "Someone gave me an orange squash. I said something like, 'That's the best drink I ever had.' It was, too." Next thing he knew, his picture and testimonial were in the newspapers highlighting an orange squash ad. Amateur officials raised eyebrows. Elliott protested that he had been tricked, had gotten no money, and urged that the soda company be punished. Then Leo Leavitt stepped into his life and the press crowded him more than ever. Tired and homesick, Herb flew gratefully back to Perth. Cerutty stayed on in Europe for four months of lecturing as a prophet with honor.

YEARS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

The world tour gave poise and assurance, and a touch of cynicism, to a young man already more than mature for his years. Physically, Elliott is considered to be years ahead of schedule for strength and stamina. His taut body of almost 6 feet (5 feet 11) and 150 pounds is essentially a welding of a superbly deep chest to whipcord legs. Mentally, as a friend put it, "Herb is a chap with his head screwed on." Now that he has rejected professionalism "for good," his whole attention is directed to driving himself to track dominance over the next four years—through the Olympic and Empire Games.

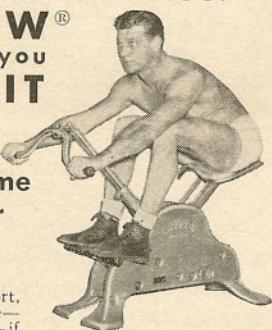
How well he does will depend greatly on the caliber of his competition and the importance of his races. As Cerutty says, "Herb's is the big-occasion temperament." Younger brother Laurie, who now runs the mile in 4:31 and the half mile in 1:58.8, will go under Cerutty's wing at Portsea in December when he finishes school. He is heavier and two inches taller than Herb, who says, "There's nobody in the world I'd rather have give me trouble than Laurie." Whether Laurie, a gentler type, can match his brother's dogged spirit and killer instinct remains to be seen. Elliott bristles when asked to predict his own future perform-

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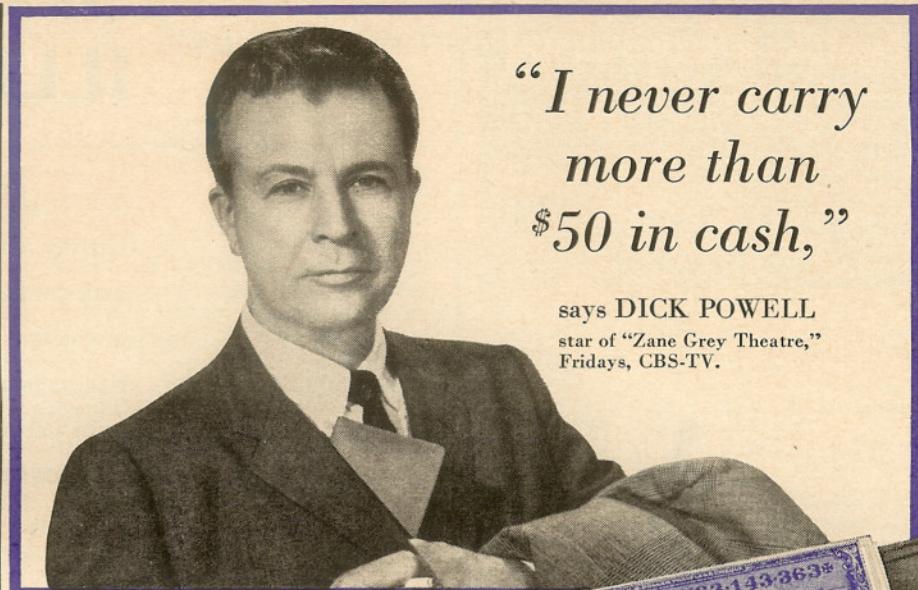
ances but he figures it is only a matter of time before he or another runner pushes the mile record below 3:50. He can't agree with Roger Bannister that 3:50 is the ultimate for the mile with the present human physique: "Who can be sure what the ultimate is? If everyone starts thinking of 3:50 or some other round number as a barrier, then someone is going to crack it. The experts said the same thing about 4 minutes and then 3:55, and they could prove it scientifically."

"LIKE STEEL BANDS FALLING AWAY"

Elliott expects to marry next year and start his university career—under Shell auspices—in Australia. Happy when he's running at Portsea ("When you go down there it's like steel bands falling away from your muscles"), he resents the side effects of fame. He now inclines to be temperamental, outspoken and not always sensible about "stupid reporters" and the way people "try to exploit me." He suffers fools badly. He courteously dashes off answers to fan letters during his lunch hours "but it's costing me 10 shillings [\$1.10] a week." No idealist about the glory of sport, he thinks amateur athletes in Australia ought to get something more tangible than just medals and "well done" for their pains and sweat—athletic scholarships at least. Amateur rules, as admired by "petty-minded pretenders" in a day of high-powered promotion, world tours, jammed stadiums and demands for world records, are to him just plain "archaic."

Despite present glories, the future occasionally gives him concern. Taking a cue from Ralph Waldo Emerson, Elliott worries at times whether too much physical exercise and "living like an animal" will dampen his intellect and slow down his mental advancement. He is beginning to wonder whether intense devotion to the Stotan creed will be compatible with the happy marriage he earnestly wants. The Leavitts of this world—Leo himself was finally publicly disowned and fired by Western Promotions and left Australia still mouthing threats about "secret tape recordings"—seem to concern him no longer. Now trying for a transfer to the Shell office in Perth, Herb Elliott may soon learn whether romance and a normal life can mix with great running: "a manly pleasure, not for women or softies."

END



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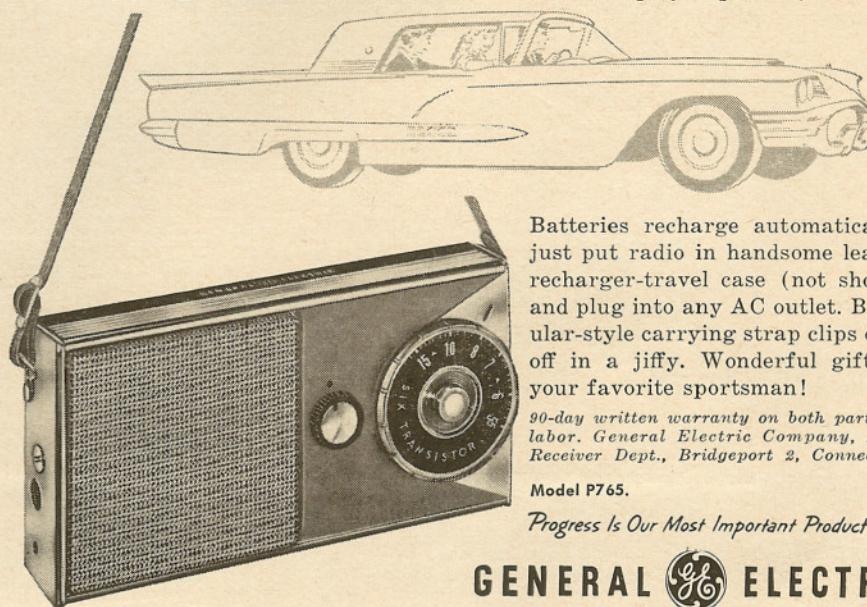


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