

NOMINEES FOR T&FN'S TOP FIVE WORLD ATHLETES OF 1968

BOB BEAMON (US)--leaped to immortality with one long jump at Mexico City. And it was a long long jump: 29'2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", rated as the greatest track and field performance in history on the Portuguese Tables. It exceeded the 27'4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " former record by a phenomenal 1'9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and by the greatest percentage increase ever of 6.62%. Beamon displayed his stunning potential early this year with a legal 27'4" victory in the AAU meet and won the Final Olympic Trials at a windy 27'6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". He was 11-0 outdoors this year and won every major title available to him (AAU, SOT, FOT)--not to mention the Olympic Games.

JOHN CARLOS (US)--ran in Tommie Smith's shadow until the FOT when he blasted 19.7 for 200-meters, a world record by three-tenths. It was the climax of a hot summer for Carlos who raced extensively in Europe after a second in the AAU at 20.4. On the continent, he lowered his personal best to 20.2m before his record run. He subsequently placed third at Mexico City in 20.0.

WILLIE DAVENPORT (US)--suffered a serious groin injury at the AAU meet which nearly spelled the end of his Olympic hopes. The 1964 Olympian, top-ranked in the world the past three years, missed two months of training in the summer but came back in September to tie the world 120-yard high hurdle world mark of 13.2 and crowned a storybook comeback with a 13.3 Olympic win, a Games' record-tying performance.

RALPH DOUBELL (Aus)--went to Mexico City without the benefit of either high altitude training or much international experience this year. Yet in the race that counted most, the Olympic 800 final, Doubell kicked home the winner in 1:44.3, tying the world and Commonwealth record and setting a new Olympic mark. His time was a career low by over 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. His best previous 1968 time was 1:47.2m and he won all his races outdoors in Australia.

LEE EVANS (US)--was the king of the quarter-mile in 1968. He won every major title available, including the NCAA, AAU (both 45.0), Semi-Final Olympic Trials (45.1), Final Olympic Trials (44.0) and Olympic Games (43.8). The latter two times were world records. He also anchored the US 1600-meter relay team to a 2:56.1 world record victory at Mexico with a 44.1 leg. His competitive record was 28-5, but he was undefeated in finals.

DICK FOSBURY (US)--claimed the Olympic high jump title with an American and Olympic record 7'4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " leap. Fosbury's self-evolved backward style carried him to the NCAA title (7'2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", a personal best), the SOT win (7'1") and he placed third in the FOT at 7'3", another career best. His competitive record was 11-6, and he exceeded 7-feet in five of those 17 competitions.

DAVE HEMERY (GB)--produced one of the major shocks of the Olympic Games as he demolished both the world record and the greatest intermediate hurdles field ever assembled with an astounding 48.1 clocking. His previous best prior to the Games was 49.6. He came back from a serious injury which kept him out all last year to better his career best in his first five consecutive meets and later took the NCAA title at 49.8m. He also contributed a 44.6 leg to the British 1600-meter relay at Mexico--the fastest split on the team.

JIM HINES (US)--didn't really get going this year until the national meet but from then, he burned up sprint tracks. No one has run 100-meters faster than his windy 9.8 at the AAU and he became the first man to run a legal 9.9. He finished second in the final to Charlie Greene but from then took Greene's measure, winning the SOT (10.3) and FOT (10.0). At Mexico City, he blasted to a 9.9 (by electrical timing) victory to again match the world record and anchored the US 400 relay to a world record 38.2 win.

KIPCHOGE KEINO (Ken)--proved he is one of the most versatile and talented of today's distance runners with such times this year as 3:34.9m, 3:55.3y, 13:35.8m and 28:06.4m. His 1500-meter time came on the last leg of an exhaustive Olympic triple as he defeated Jim Ryun by over two seconds. His 3:34.9 at 7350-foot altitude is equated to about a 3:30 at sea level. Keino earlier had placed second in the 5000 and was disqualified from the 10,000. His 1500 time is the second-fastest ever and his 10,000 clocking is third-fastest.

JANIS LUSIS (SU)--has no equal among the world's javelin throwers. He upped the world record to 301'9" this year to become history's second 300-footer. With his 295'7" Olympic record win at Mexico City, the Latvian now claims eight of nine 90-meter (295'3 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") throws in history; he got seven of them this year. Lusia was undefeated this year, proved consistent in the 285-290 foot range.

RANDY MATSON (US)--collected the Olympic title on his first throw with a 67'4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " toss after heaving an Olympic record 67'10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in the prelims. Randy lost just three times in 15 competitions this year but one of those was his third at the FOT which cast some doubt on his fortunes for Mexico. But Matson dispelled any disbelievers on his very first effort of the qualifying with his Olympic record.

VIKTOR SANEYEV (SU)--came through with another "impossible" feat in Mexico City's rarified atmosphere as he, trailing Brazil's Nelson Prudencio, triple jumped an astounding 57'3 $\frac{3}{4}$ " for world, Olympic, European, Soviet and personal records as well as the gold medal, the first ever for a Russian triple-leaper. Saneyev indicated his potential this year with jumps of 55'4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " and 55'3", and his Olympic series included jumps of 55'10" and 56'6 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

BOB SEAGREN (US)--competed in 33 outdoor meets, won 26, lost 7 but only two of those were worse than second place. He has battled a congenital back defect, which more than once put him flat on his back in bed. Seagren overcame that injury to win the FOT with a world record 17'9", and then proved to be a steel-nerved competitor (and a gambler as well) when he defeated a crack Olympic field with a 17'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " clearance.

JAY SILVESTER (US)--bettered the world record twice in early summer with throws of 218'4" and 224'5" (the former mark was 213'11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") and had a 230'5" foul on the latter occasion. He won the AAU, SOT and FOT, and compiled a 22-3 record prior to Mexico. He placed fifth in the Olympics with 202'8" after throwing an Olympic record 207'9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in the prelims.

TOMMIE SMITH (US)--was upset at the FOT by Carlos, 19.7 to 19.9m, but made it clear right from the start at Mexico that he was the man to beat over 200-meters. He tied the Olympic record of 20.3 in his heat, set a new mark of 20.2 in the quarter-finals, pared it down to 20.1 in the semis, and then, in the final, exploded to a 19.8 time which will probably be submitted as a world record since Carlos was wearing the controversial "brush" shoes when he ran his. Tommie had to overcome a groin muscle pull in the semis besides his speedy teammate. Smith compiled a 21-6 competitive record during the year and ran 45.2 in his only try at 400-meters.

BILL TOOMEY (US)--has totaled over 8000 points in the decathlon three times this year and in the big meets: AAU (8037), FOT (8222) and Olympics (8193). Only world record Kurt Bendlin has been over 8000 more than once. Toomey took Bendlin and the world's other ten-eventers at Mexico and emerged with his gold medal and an Olympic record. In that competition he ran a 45.6 400-meters, a decathlon world record. Toomey won five of six decathlons this year, his only loss coming to Bendlin when Bill was ill with the flu.

GYULA ZSIVOTZKY (Hun) --was considered the perennial second-placer to Romuald Klim, but the Hungarian obviously didn't think so despite second places to the Soviet in the 64 Olympics and 66 European Championships. Zsivotzky lengthened his own world record this year to 242'0" and then gave Klim a taste of the lower rung on the victory stand as the Hungarian threw 240'8" for an Olympic record and a gold medal after two silvers the past two Olympics.

NOTE: Information in these profiles was that available through 11/20/68; competitions after this date should be considered by you, the voter.