

Speed, Stamina, and Power

During World War II and immediately thereafter there were no world or American records set at the Relays. But the meet, as track generally, was back on the record path in the 1950's when two world records, four American, and four American collegiate marks were set.

It was the decade of Kansas and Abilene Christian. The Jayhawkers, who were coached by Bill Easton, had 18 relay victories compared to next highest Oklahoma State's eight, and had 14 individual winners compared to Illinois' 10.

Abilene Christian ruled the colleges with 14 relay wins before joining the university class to win sprint titles in 1957. This was the era when Coach Oliver Jackson's dash teams were the fastest the world had ever seen. They included a Mason City boy, Bill Woodhouse, co-holder of the world's 100-yard dash record. Their anchor was the man who won three gold medals in the 1956 Olympics—Bobby Morrow.

Kansas, too, had its great individual. In the 1930's, the school had Glenn Cunningham, who set world records in both the 880 and mile. His successor, at 148 pounds, was thinner than Cunningham and a runner with a lighter step. He was

Wes Santee, America's challenger for the 4-minute mile.

Santee was the Relays' Outstanding Athlete of 1952 and 1954 and Morrow of 1957. They thrilled fans that saw all-time greats year after year. For this was the decade when Al Oerter of Kansas won three straight discus titles. By 1968, he had won the event in four Olympics, a record unequaled. Parry O'Brien, Mal Whitfield, and Glen Davis competed at Drake in the 1950's. They each won gold medals in two Olympics. Milt Campbell, winner of the 1956 Olympic decathlon, came to the Relays, as did Olympic champs Bill Nieder, Kansas shot-putter; Hayes Jones, Eastern Michigan hurdler; Jerome Biffle, Denver broad jumper; and Walt Davis, high jumper from Texas A. & M.

There were others who held world records. In addition to Morrow and Woodhouse, four Relays sprinters—Jim Golliday of Northwestern, Willie Williams of Illinois, Ira Murchison of Iowa and Western Michigan, and Dave Sime of Duke—held the 100-yard or 100-meter world record.

Sime set world marks in the 100 (9.3), the 220 straightaway (20.0), and the 220 hurdles (22.2). At Drake he won the greatest dash in Relays history.

Even after pulled muscles took national champions Jim Golliday and Jim Ford of Drake out of the 1956 field, the 100 was a "dream race."

Morrow had won the A.A.U. championship as a freshman and was unbeaten with 30 straight victories. Sime, a strong 6 ft. 3 in. 185-pounder, had gone to Duke on a baseball scholarship. But he could throw a javelin well over 200 feet and could jump, hurdle, and run. Word came of almost unbelievable dash times made by the redhead. Drake was the meeting of the two great sophomores.

Friday was windy but mild and both men ran easy 9.4's with favoring winds before 9,000 fans. The build-up for Saturday was intense. A *Sports Illustrated* writer reported large downtown bets. But the temperature fell and rains came.

The track was covered with water and the temperature was 38° when Starter Les Duke called the runners to their marks. Sime in Lane 6 was wearing, at the recommendation of Coach Bob Chambers, spikes for a dry track. Morrow, 6 ft. 1½ in., 175 pounds, was in Lane 4.

A camera click caused a jump. "My best start," said Sime later. Between Sime and Morrow was Dick Blair of Kansas. The tension was too strong. Blair jumped for a second false start.

The runners were away the third time, Sime a bit ahead of Morrow and even with Blair. The Duke runner led by a yard at 30. Then Morrow made his move, but Sime responded and won by a margin estimated at from two to four feet. It was a record 9.4 under miserable conditions.

Until Bob Hayes came along, spectators would

believe that the Sime of the 1956 Relays was probably the fastest sprinter the world had ever seen. But running on curves just ahead of a later meet, he injured a leg and dropped out of track to concentrate on a medical career. Four years later, he returned to limited training and lost by inches the 1960 Olympic 100 to Armand Hary of Germany.

Morrow went on to be the star of the Melbourne Olympics. He returned to Drake in 1957, anchored two record-setting relays, and ran a 9.4 hundred. In all, he anchored five winning relays at Drake and set three records. In addition to Woodhouse, other Abilene runners were: Don Conder, Jim Segrest, Leondus Fry, and Waymond Griggs. As late as 1959 Morrow was running at Drake. He lost to Ira Murchison in a 9.4 hundred and finished fourth as Glen Davis ran a 46.5 quarter-mile.

Santee came on the Drake scene in 1952. He was 60 yards behind Joe LaPierre of Georgetown when he got the baton in the 4-mile relay. With 150 yards to go, he still trailed by 20. But as LaPierre twice looked back, Santee burst to the lead and won in 17:15.9, an American record. The previous mark had been held by Indiana with Relays director Tom Deckard running. Santee's mile was 4:06.7, then the fastest ever at Drake. The Kansas team included Lloyd Koby and Art Dalzell, sophomores, and senior, Herb Semper. Santee and Semper featured a distance medley the

next day, Santee starting 45 yards behind and winning by 50.

Georgetown returned in 1953. "We have prayed all year we'll get revenge," said Charles Capozzoli. The Hoyas got revenge, as anchormen Capozzoli and LaPierre held leads despite Santee's efforts. But the Kansan ran a 1:50.2 half in a come-from-behind sprint medley victory.

Santee was Outstanding Athlete again in 1954. He ran a 1:49.8 half as Kansas set a new sprint medley record and anchored comparatively easy 2-mile and 4-mile wins and the distance medley.

Art Dalzell helped the medley with a 3:00.1 three-quarters. Santee's 4:07.4 mile gave the team the American record of 9:50.4. Santee won a 1955 A.A.U. mile at Drake in 4:08.4.

From a Drake standpoint, the 1951 Relays was a classic. The current Indiana coach is Jim Lavery. In 1951, he was a waiter in a Des Moines cafe and a Drake runner. At 7 a.m. the Saturday of the 1951 Relays, Coach Tom Deckard called. He did not want Lavery on the cafe's noon shift. The genial Canadian agreed.

The result was Drake's greatest Relays day. Lavery, with Jim Ford, who would win two national sprint championships, Ray Eiland, Jack Kelly, and George Nichols, formerly of North's "Flying Four," won the 440, 880, and mile relays. The 440 was won in a duel with Iowa. This was the first time Drake had won this event. The 880

produced a record 1:25.5 in preliminaries and a 5-yard victory over Illinois in the finals. Now Deckard felt his team was tired and decided to scratch the mile. But the runners argued loud and went to the blocks for their third race in 95 minutes.

Oklahoma dominated early going, and anchor-man Jerry Meader started with a 4-yard lead. At the Kansas Relays, Lavery had started too fast, and Jim Ford yelled to the Canadian as he took the baton, "Remember Kansas." Lavery waited this time until the final curve, then sped past Meader to win by three yards. For the third time, the 1952 Olympian threw his baton high. The anchor was 47.3.

Lavery led off the sprint medley the next year in 47 flat, but baton passes were faulty. The 440 was being run faster this decade. Big blonde J. W. Mashburn of Oklahoma State had a leadoff 46.5 in 1955, and Jack Parr of Oklahoma a 46 flat leg in 1957.

Improvement in the 880 followed the pattern. Billy Tidwell of Kansas State, Emporia, broke a barrier in 1955 with a 1:48.6 anchor on a sprint medley. In 1959, George Kerr of Illinois ran 1:46.6, as the Illini set a 3:17.8 world medley record.

In this decade, the discus record progressed by over 15 feet with Al Oerter. Vaulters reached the 15-ft. frontier in 1952 with Don Laz, Illini alumnus, and the javelin mark was extended over 30 feet by Bill Alley of Kansas. The 14-second bar-

rier in the 120 high hurdles was broken in 1957 as Willie Stevens of Tennessee A. & I. ran 13.8, and Olympic king Hayes Jones hit 13.7 in 1959 with slightly too much wind.

These athletes marked the improvement of a decade that began on a day when, as Bert McGrane wrote, "Nature showed her ugly side." The 1950 ugliness was snow, the fourth in Relays history. It was 29° Friday morning and 39° Saturday. The high jump was moved inside, blue lines were marked on the snow and the meet proceeded. Tobin Rote of Rice, a famous football name, donned cleats and won the javelin. Tulane's Paul Bienz, defending 100 champ, ate one meal daily, a regimen begun in February to lose 24 pounds. He won again, running 9.7 into a wind.

Again the Outstanding Athlete award went to Don Gehrman for relay anchors. The warmest dressed participant was Byrl Thompson of Minnesota, who won the discus for the third time. Thompson took preliminary throws in long johns, a leather jacket, and overcoat.

The decade closed with the Golden Anniversary Relays on days that fitted the title. Thirteen records fell in 1959, as competitors of over 40 years returned for induction into the Relays Hall of Fame. Ten coaches made original selections, since continued by Bert McGrane, Robert Spiegel, and Wilfred Smith, Chicago *Tribune* sports editor.

Between the snow and the Golden Anniversary

came national television which was begun in 1953. That was the year the Bulova Timer was used. For the only time in the history of the Relays, the public address announcer told people to go home. A tornado warning was given on Friday, a day when many small children were at the Relays. In 1953, a conference meet date was changed so a team could compete. The Southern California Conference moved their meet four days ahead so Whittier could come to Drake. The city of Whittier had raised \$2,100 for the Poets' trip. Whittier placed in three relays and came back in 1954 to win the distance medley.

C.B.S. returned to televise the 1954 meet. Bill Bangert, a shot put winner, had sung the National Anthem previously at Drake. He sang again in 1954. Now, he was blind in the left eye, as a result of an allergy, with sight only partially restored in the right.

The zoom lens provided TV viewers a thrill as Parry O'Brien's shot splashed lime at the 60-foot mark. Official measurement was 59-9 $\frac{3}{4}$, but it was a world's record. Another future Olympic winner, Bill Nieder of Kansas, set a university mark of 56-3 $\frac{1}{4}$.

Nine years after his first appearance at Drake, Mal Whitfield returned in 1956 and anchored Los Angeles State to a college sprint medley win. Bob Gutowski of Occidental, who would hold a world record, won the pole vault. This event was

moved into the fieldhouse. Del Shofner, later a pro football name, anchored Baylor's two sprint relay wins. Another future pro was the tallest man ever to compete at Drake. Basketballer Wilt Chamberlain jumped 6-6 $\frac{1}{4}$ to tie for a 1957 title.

By the next year, 1958, crushed brick was on jump runways but the thrill was at the track where two American collegiate records were set in spite of a cold wind. Alex Henderson of Arizona State, who trained by running 17 miles daily, ran the 2-mile run in 8:51.3. The record, broken by almost 19 seconds, belonged to Greg Rice. It had stood 19 years and was also an American collegiate mark when set at the Relays.

The second national record fell to the star pupil of the excellent Ames coach, Hy Covey. Cliff Cushman was a state champion miler at 15. While running for Kansas in 1958, he lowered the 440 hurdle mark to 52.3. The record belonged to another Jayhawker, Bob DeVinney, who ran 52.4 at Drake in 1952. Cushman, silver medalist in the Rome Olympics, has been listed as missing in action in Vietnam.

Another hurdle silver medalist, Eddie Southern of Texas, anchored three fine relay victories in 1959 on a track as brick red as the runways. The 880 was a blazing 1:23.8.

So swift was the decade's pace that world record holders lost at Drake. Hungary's Laszlo Tabori lost a 4:06.9 mile in 1957 to lanky Ted

Wheeler, Iowa's Olympian, and a 4:06.7 mile to Dyrol Burleson of Oregon in 1959. Rink Babka, of Southern California, lost a 1958 discus duel to Al Oerter.

Iowans fared well in the mile. Drake runners, Dewey Johnson and Ray McConnell, surprised in 1952 and 1953. Johnson won over Wheeler, and McConnell, a Nevada, Iowa, native, defeated another University of Iowa Olympian—Rich Ferguson.

A future world record holder, Jack Davis of Southern California, won a 1954 hurdle race in 14 flat. An Illinois hurdler, Joel McNulty, had tied Darrow Hooper of Texas A. & M. for Outstanding Athlete in 1953. Hooper twice won the shot and discus, and his put of 55-4 $\frac{1}{8}$ broke Jack Torrance's mark. Byrl Thompson of Minnesota and Don Cooper of Nebraska were the two men in the era to complete 3-time wins—Thompson in the discus and Cooper in the pole vault.

Hooper's shot record was frequently broken. Tom Jones of Miami (Ohio) in 1954, Bill Nieder in 1955, and, finally, Dave Owen of Michigan, in 1957, broke the collegiate mark. Owen's put was 57-5 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Iowa won the 440 relay in 1952 with Ira Murchison leading off and Gary Scott of the "Flying Four" anchoring. That was the year Illinois broke the American 2-mile relay record with 7:31.6, seven seconds under the Drake mark.

Dick Reynolds, Lawton Lamb, Stacey Siders, and Henry Cryer ran for the Illini.

Iowa won the shuttle hurdle in a record 59.2 in 1955 with Tom Ecker, Don Peterson, Les Stevens, and Jack Mathews. Ecker of Waverly and Stevens of Lovilia had won prep Relays hurdle races. In later years, Ecker has been prominent in international track circles.

Iowa Teachers (*now* University of Northern Iowa) won the school's only open Relays victory in 1951 as Leland Crew, Bob Buum, Ray Eiben, and Don Lange won the 2-mile in 7:53.6. In the early 1950's, two Iowans, Bill Conrardy of Dubuque and Ocie Trimble of Cedar Rapids, ran on teams from Loyola and Illinois respectively.

The prep scene saw middle distance progress. Caesar Smith, who with Les Stevens, Gastonia Finch, and Ted Wheeler, figured in two Iowa medley victories in 1956, ran a 48.9 quarter for North in 1954, breaking the prep mile record of the "Flying Four." Smith added a 1:56.2 half in a record 3:33.7 medley. Bob Covey, son of the Ames coach, ran 48.4 in a 1957 mile relay at Drake.

Two races carried human interest. North and Roosevelt both smashed the 2-mile relay mark in 1955 with North, anchored by Ralph Lyle, son of the coach, winning in 8:07.7. Roosevelt ran 8:08. Jim Lyle had anchored the North team that held the record 21 years.

A remarkable boy gave Albert City, the small-

est town ever to win an open Drake relay, the sprint medley win that year. Harry Blusys had spent World War II with his family in a trek from Latvia to Berlin, evading Russian and German armies. Knowing almost no English, he had come to America and within two years had won a high school speech contest. Blusys could run as well. Taking the baton 30 yards behind in the final, he ran his second 1:58 of the day to give Albert City victory. North with 11 relay victories led the decade. Ames had 10. East won four relays in 1951, and Davenport four in 1952.

In 1956, Roger Carlson of Dubuque put the 12-pound shot 58-8 $\frac{7}{8}$, a mark that stood for nine years. Jack McDonald of Oskaloosa ran a 14.6 high hurdles, still a record. There was augury as Davenport's Gayle Hopkins won both high and broad jumps in 1959. Five years later, he combined other events for a university-college double.

Fields were big, and the prep mile run and 2-mile relay became invitational in 1956. Among the collegians that year were competitors from Finland, Australia, Ireland, Sweden, South Africa, Canada, Jamaica, and Hawaii. By 1958, over 200 teams were competing in the Relays.