

OT Site Rounding Into Shape

John Chaplin, the head men's Olympic coach for 2000, says that Sacramento's new Mondo installation is going to be a very fast track. "It's a first-class facility," says Chaplin, who served as technical consultant for the new oval, which was completed in September. "It's everything you're going to see in the world."

Next up for the site of the next Trials is a practice track adjacent to the new seat stadium at Sacramento State.

Organizers say that tickets will first go on sale at the Cal State stadium in June, followed by a major meet for USATF nationals in Eugene late in the year.

Indoor Meet Obituary

It's great to see that San Diego is on the list of major indoor meets this year. The list of undercover affairs which have faded from the once-thriving National Indoor circuit is sadly far-far too long.

Historical Editor Stan Saplin has compiled a list of major indoor invitationals which have vanished, "starting with the Boston meet which began in 1919 and pulled the curtain in '71." Boston also used to be a major indoor meet.

STAT CORNER

New High For U.S. Women In By-Nation Scoring

There was cause for rejoicing in the stat corner after the '97 season when the U.S. women topped by-nation scoring in the World Rankings for the first time. (We score the top 10 on a 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.)

This year the American women not only topped again, but also produced their best point total ever, 161. That topped by 1 the previous best, set in '85. So different was the landscape in those days—when the East Bloc was still so dominant—that the U.S. total found them only 3rd, behind the Soviets and East Germans.

The Soviets nearly always used to be No. 2 on the men's side, but that too has passed. The U.S. share isn't what it once was (just 19.9% of the points available this year, compared to 42.0% in '56), but the Americans nonetheless earned a 52nd straight leadership in '98. The U.S. total of 241 is the third lowest ever, beating only '87 (240) and '97 (221).

Kenya, which moved into the runner-up position to stay starting in '93, came within a point of becoming only the third nation other

annual Knights of Columbus affair.

Other cities which have lost indoor invitationals (some more than one):

Albuquerque, Baltimore, Buffalo, Calgary, Cleveland, Chicago, College Park, Dallas, Detroit, Edmonton, East Rutherford, Fairfax, Ft. Worth, Houston, Inglewood, Louisville, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, St. Paul, St. Petersburg, Tampa, Tulsa, Washington, D.C., Wichita.

Blocks That Talk

In the last edition's "We Think" editorial, which lamented some poor starter control at major internationals, we suggested, "Given the state of modern technology, it should be easy enough for the blocks themselves to signal a recall when the time-constraint period is violated."

Doug DeAngelis of Lynx System Developers says, "This is, in fact, an available option with our new ReactTime product: the block sensor itself can detect the violation and a 'gun-like recall shot' is fired through the attached speakers."

DeAngelis, whose firm makes a high-tech computer-based timing system, also says, "I do find it interesting how far people have come from the days when they were simply fascinated by technology—now they just take it for granted and if they can imagine an idea, they want it *now*."

Men's Scoring

1. United States 241; 2. Kenya 199; 3. Germany 101; 4. Russia 80; 5. Great Britain 64; 6. Spain 35; 7. Poland 34; 8. Cuba 32; 9. Hungary 31; 10. Morocco 30; 11. Finland 29; 12. Ethiopia 28; 13. Belarus 22; 14. Trinidad 19; 15. Namibia 17; 16. tie, Mexico & South Africa 16; 18. Ukraine 15; 19. tie, France & Jamaica 14; 21. Australia 12; 22. tie, Czech Republic & Lithuania 10; 24. tie, Brazil, Ecuador & Estonia 9; 27. tie, Iceland, Latvia, Nigeria & Portugal 8; 31. tie, Algeria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Sweden & Uzbekistan 7; 37. tie, Barbados & Zambia 5; 39. tie, Ghana, Holland, Senegal & Yugoslavia 4; 43. tie, Dominica, Egypt, Italy & Sri Lanka 3; 47. tie, Greece & Norway 1.

Women's Scoring

1. United States 161; 2. Russia 137; 3. Romania 72; 4. Germany 70; 5. Jamaica 52; 6. Ukraine 45; 7. Nigeria 42; 8. Italy 36; 9. Australia 35; 10. Great Britain 34; 11. Ireland 33; 12. Kenya 32; 13. tie, Belarus, Ethiopia & Portugal 26; 16. Morocco 25; 17. Czech Republic 22; 18. Greece 19; 19. tie, Bulgaria & Poland 18; 21. Japan 17; 22. Cuba 16; 23. tie, China & Spain 12; 25. Mozambique 10; 26. tie, France & Norway 9; 28. tie, Bahamas, Hungary, Lithuania & South Africa 8; 32. tie, Finland & New Zealand 7; 34. tie, Iceland & Yugoslavia 6; 36. tie, Barbados & Holland 5; 38. tie, Canada & Suriname 4; 40. tie, Belgium, Slovenia, Sweden & Switzerland 2; 44. tie, American Samoa & Austria 1.

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the past," according to founder and director Moore.

Save Mart, a 100-store supermarket chain in the Central Valley, will give the meet important promotional support, plus some financial backing, for the meet's 58th anniversary on May 8.

Bob Piccinini was approached by Orange County, publisher of the *Modesto Bee* and a big fan, and decided to support the meet. "I want to do whatever is necessary to re-ignite the Modesto Relays to a premier event," Piccinini.

Moore, "We want to still attract some elite athletes." Last year's meet drew such stars as Dan O'Brien, Stacy Dragila, Jeff Riggs, Reggie Torian and Roland McGhee, among others.

Moore concluded, "Save Mart will make important promotional efforts to strengthen the meet and boost interest in track."

Creatine OKed By IOC

"Creatine is food," said Prince Alexandre de Merode in explaining why the International Olympic Committee won't be putting creatine on its banned list. "You can't prevent people from eating food." Although creatine, an amino acid protein naturally produced in the human body and found in meats, has been linked with muscle wasting and dehydration, there have been no long-term problems reported.

De Merode concluded, "You can get ill if you take too much creatine, but if a person stuffs himself with 30 eggs or a kilo of foie gras, he'll damage his liver too."

The chair of the IOC's medical commission, de Merode also went on to say that his group is trying to convince major league baseball to ban the steroid precursor androstenedione, which is already on the banned list for the IOC, IAAF, USATF and NCAA. The most famous andro proponent is super slugger Mark McGwire.

It's Good To Be King

Ever since track's elite athletes began to crawl out from under the suffocating blanket that was amateurism, they've been talking about banding together in order to gain more control of their sport.

That IAAF head Primo Nebiolo is not exactly a proponent of any unionization attempts is clarified in an Associated Press story in which he is quoted as saying that we live in a democratic world, so people can create whatever kind of groupings they want.