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CELEBRATING ATHLETES AROUND THE WORLD
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WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE IAAF

I am delighted to welcome you to the IAAF World Championships London 2017.

The United Kingdom is a valued, trusted and regular host of IAAF World Athletics Series events. Yet while Cardiff was the venue last year for the IAAF World Half Marathon Championships and Birmingham will stage the IAAF World Indoor Championships next winter, both events which Britain has organised before, London has the honour of becoming the first UK city to host the pinnacle competition of the series, the biennial IAAF World Championships.

The 16th edition of the championships will be the largest global sporting event of the year. Since the inaugural edition of the IAAF World Championships were celebrated in Helsinki, Finland in 1983, we have seen the IAAF’s premier championships grow from 1355 athletes from 153 nations to approximately 2000 athletes representing 200 nations here in London.

The eyes of the sporting world will be on the British capital from 4 to 13 August. Broadcast to over 200 territories, the ten days of full-on competition, played out to many hundreds of thousands of spectators in the stadium and on the streets of London, will reach an estimated accumulated global audience of 6 billion.

The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has quickly established itself as a celebrated venue for world class athletics. High on my list of favourite performances are David Rudisha’s 800m world record to win the 2012 Olympic title and become the first man inside 1:41 and Kendra Harrison’s 100m Hurdles world record at the 2016 London IAAF Diamond League meeting, which demolished the previous mark that had stood for 28 years. Plenty more records and personal bests will fall in the stadium and on London’s roads at these world championships, heroic performances which, mixed with the drama of enthralling head-to-head battles, will motivate the next generation of athletes and fans.

We are taking the sporting action to the heart of London too. The marathons on Sunday 6 August and the Festival of Race Walks on Sunday 13 August will bring the world’s best athletes onto the capital’s streets. The marathons start and finish on Tower Bridge and take in many iconic London landmarks, while the race walks are contested along The Mall. With victory ceremonies respectively held in the Tower of London Moat and against the stunning backdrop of Buckingham Palace, these are very much London’s world championships to savour.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication since these championships were awarded to London in November 2011. Their successful organisation is a joint effort between the IAAF, Local Organising Committee, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Greater London Authority, UK Sport, UK Athletics, Official Partners and Suppliers of the World Athletics Series and National Partners and Suppliers.

I wish everyone involved in the IAAF World Championships London 2017 – the athletes, fans, officials, media, and of course the thousands of volunteers, without whom these championships would not be possible – a most enjoyable experience in London.

Sebastian Coe
IAAF President
DEAR ATHLETICS FAN,

Welcome to London’s Summer of World Athletics and the 2017 IAAF World Championships. This is the biggest ever athletics event in the world with 2,000 athletes from 200 countries competing for 47 gold medals over ten days of intense competition.

If this is your first chance to see live elite international athletics, prepare to be astonished. If this is your first experience of athletics at the London Stadium, we hope it surpasses your expectations. If you are returning to London, we are sure you will be pleasantly surprised at the many innovations that we have introduced for these Championships, in particular the one-day Festival of Walks in The Mall and the marathon route starting and finishing on Tower Bridge.

We realise that the Championships will only be as good as the athletes who perform on the track and in the field, and that they can only give of their best because of the dedication of the team managers, coaches and performance staff who have supported them in their preparations in recent months, and who will be working with them over the coming days of competition. On behalf of London 2017, I would like to thank all members of the athletics family around the world whose hard work will have enabled the athletes to excel in front of a vibrant crowd in the stadium and a global audience watching online and on television.

The Championships would also not have been possible without the commitment of our many partners over the past few years, in particular the Greater London Authority, UK Sport, UK Athletics and the British government. We are also grateful to the operators of the London Stadium, our many commercial partners, and most importantly our many friends at the IAAF.

Athletics is in great shape. Our sport is growing rapidly, athletes are breaking records and fan engagement is soaring. These IAAF World Championships will take it to new heights. Thank you for being part of that experience. We hope that you leave London with memories that will last you for a lifetime.

Ed Warner
Co-Chair, London 2017 Ltd
Hello and welcome to London Stadium for the IAAF World Championships. London’s golden summer of sport was just five years ago. Now the stadium will once again be brought to life by some of the world’s greatest athletes. The competition is going to be tough, with record breakers and world champions on London’s track once again.

All major sports events rely on volunteers. These championships are no different. So I’d like to pay a special tribute to the army of 5,000 Runners. They have given up their own time to make this event a success. We are all grateful for their hard work and dedication.

In recent years, London has become known as the best city in the world for top sporting events. Our venues are truly world-class, and our enthusiasm for sport is second to none. So we are excited to welcome you, your family, and friends, to the city and show you London is Open.

I want to harness the power of elite sport to inspire generations of Londoners to live healthier, more active lives. This summer, I invested £400,000 in over 50 community projects so Londoners can get the chance to try athletics in their local area. These events also bring different people together, which is so important in a city as diverse as ours. In London, we embrace and celebrate our differences. I want to use sport to build a stronger city that stands together against intolerance.

Thanks to London 2017 Ltd, the IAAF, Transport for London, London Borough of Newham, UK Sport and UK Athletics for their hard work. This event has been a real team effort. I hope you enjoy it.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
The IAAF World Championships will see the greatest athletes from across the globe return to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for an unforgettable Summer of World Athletics.

**Session 1**
**FRIDAY 4 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:00 Opening night
- 19:00 100 metres (m)
- 19:20 Discus throw (m)
- 19:30 Long jump (m)
- 19:35 1500 metres (w)
- 19:45 Pole vault (w)
- 20:20 100 metres (m)
- 20:45 Discus throw (m)
- 21:20 10,000 metres (m)
- 21:53 10,000 metres (m)

**Session 2**
**SATURDAY 5 AUGUST - Morning**
- 10:00 Shot put (m)
- 10:05 100 metres hurdles heptathlon (w)
- 10:35 Hammer throw (w)
- 10:45 100 metres (w)
- 11:00 Triple jump (w)
- 11:30 High jump heptathlon (w)
- 11:45 100 metres (w)
- 12:05 Hammer throw (w)
- 12:45 800 metres (m)

**Session 3**
**SATURDAY 5 AUGUST - Evening**
- 19:00 Shot put heptathlon (w)
- 19:05 100 metres (m)
- 19:25 Discus throw (m)
- 19:35 1500 metres (w)
- 20:05 Long jump (m)
- 20:10 10,000 metres (w)
- 21:00 200 metres heptathlon (w)
- 21:35 Long jump (m)
- 21:45 100 metres (m)

**Session 4**
**SUNDAY 6 AUGUST - Morning**
- 10:00 Long jump heptathlon (w)
- 10:05 3000 metres steeplechase (m)
- 10:40 Pole vault (m)
- 11:05 400 metres hurdles (m)
- 11:45 Javelin throw heptathlon (w)
- 11:55 400 metres (w)
- 13:00 Javelin throw heptathlon (w)
- 13:15 110 metres hurdles (m)

**Session 5**
**SUNDAY 6 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:40 Discus throw (m)
- 18:45 10,000 metres (w)
- 18:50 100 metres (w)
- 19:00 Pole vault (w)
- 19:05 Javelin throw (w)
- 19:10 100 metres (w)
- 19:40 400 metres (m)
- 20:10 110 metres hurdles (m)
- 20:30 Javelin throw (w)
- 20:35 Shot put (m)
- 20:40 800 metres heptathlon (w)
- 21:15 800 metres (m)
- 21:50 100 metres (w)
- 21:53 Heptathlon (w)

**Session 6**
**MONDAY 7 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:10 Pole vault (w)
- 18:15 Shot put (m)
- 18:20 100 metres (w)
- 18:30 200 metres (m)
- 18:35 Triple jump (w)
- 19:00 Hammer throw (w)
- 19:30 400 metres hurdles (w)
- 20:20 400 metres hurdles (w)
- 20:25 Triple jump (w)
- 20:55 400 metres (w)
- 21:15 Hammer throw (w)
- 21:30 110 metres hurdles (m)
- 21:50 1500 metres (w)

**Session 7**
**TUESDAY 8 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:55 Triple jump (w)
- 19:00 110 metres hurdles (m)
- 19:05 1500 metres (w)
- 19:20 Javelin throw (w)
- 19:30 200 metres (w)
- 19:35 Pole vault (m)
- 20:35 400 metres hurdles (w)
- 20:40 Shot put (w)
- 21:10 3000 metres steeplechase (m)
- 21:35 800 metres (m)
- 21:40 3000 metres steeplechase (m)
- 21:50 400 metres (m)

**Session 8**
**WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:40 Javelin throw (w)
- 18:45 800 metres (m)
- 18:50 400 metres (m)
- 19:05 3000 metres steeplechase (w)
- 19:10 Long jump (w)
- 19:20 Hammer throw (m)
- 19:55 Pole vault (m)
- 20:05 5000 metres (m)
- 20:25 Shot put (w)
- 20:50 Hammer throw (m)
- 20:55 200 metres (m)
- 21:30 400 metres hurdles (m)
- 21:40 Shot put (w)
- 21:50 400 metres (w)
### A Day-by-Day Guide to All the Events

#### Session 9
**THURSDAY 10 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:15 400 metres hurdles (m)
- 18:30 5000 metres (w)
- 19:05 Javelin throw (m)
- 19:10 High jump (w)
- 19:15 400 metres (w)
- 19:25 800 metres (w)
- 20:20 1500 metres (m)
- 20:35 Javelin throw (m)
- 21:05 200 metres (w)
- 21:35 400 metres hurdles (w)
- 21:50 200 metres (m)

#### Session 10
**FRIDAY 11 AUGUST - Morning**
- 10:00 100 metres decathlon (m)
- 10:10 Discus throw (w)
- 10:45 100 metres hurdles (w)
- 11:05 Long jump decathlon (m)
- 11:15 High jump (m)
- 11:35 Discus throw (w)
- 12:55 Shot put decathlon (m)

#### Session 12
**SATURDAY 12 AUGUST - Morning**
- 10:00 110 metres hurdles decathlon (m)
- 10:35 4 x 100 metres relay (w)
- 10:55 4 x 100 metres relay (m)
- 11:00 Discus throw decathlon (m)
- 11:20 4 x 400 metres relay (w)
- 11:40 200 metres (w)
- 11:50 4 x 400 metres relay (m)
- 12:20 Discus throw decathlon (m)
- 14:15 Pole vault decathlon (m)

#### Session 13
**SATURDAY 12 AUGUST - Evening**
- 17:30 Javelin throw decathlon (m)
- 18:40 3000 metres steeplechase (w)
- 18:45 Hammer throw (m)
- 18:55 Javelin throw decathlon (m)
- 19:05 High jump (w)
- 20:05 100 metres hurdles (w)
- 20:15 Javelin throw (m)
- 20:20 5000 metres (w)
- 20:45 1500 metres decathlon (m)
- 21:10 100 metres hurdles (w)
- 21:30 4 x 100 metres relay (w)
- 21:35 5000 metres (m)
- 21:40 High jump (w)
- 21:50 4 x 100 metres (m)
- 21:55 Decathlon (m)

#### Session 14
**SUNDAY 13 AUGUST - Evening**
- 18:35 Javelin throw (m)
- 18:40 4 x 100 metres relay (w) & (m)
- 19:00 High jump (m)
- 19:10 Discus throw (w)
- 19:15 5000 metres (w)
- 20:10 800 metres (w)
- 20:30 1500 metres (m)
- 20:45 4000 metres relay (w)
- 21:00 800 metres (w)
- 21:05 Discus throw (w)
- 21:15 4 x 400 metres relay (m)
- 21:21 1500 metres (m)
- 21:26 High jump (m)
- 21:31 4 x 400 metres relay (w) & (m)
- 21:45 Closing night

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**IAAF World Championships**

**Marathon**

- **SUNDAY 6 AUGUST**
  - 10:55 Men’s Marathon
  - 14:00 Women’s Marathon

**Race Walks to Take Place at the Mall**

- **SUNDAY 13 AUGUST**
  - 07:55 Men’s and women’s 50km race walks
  - 12:20 Women’s 20km race walk
  - 14:00 Men’s 20km race walk
The vision of UK Athletics CEO, Niels de Vos, for London to become the first city in the world to host both the World Para Athletics Championships and the IAAF World Championships in the same summer, and to create the biggest celebration of the sport ever seen, became a key part of the London Stadium legacy plan. It was also a game changer for the governing body in the UK as it stepped up to lead the local organising committee (LOC).

This unique creation of a governing body-led LOC – thus enabling delivery of a pledge to provide a championships designed and delivered by athletics experts with a proven track record of event delivery – proved vital in securing the support and confidence of the international federations of the IAAF and the IPC to back this vision, and in securing the support of the UK Government for a highly cost-efficient delivery model.

In a major coup for the sport, the organisers of London 2017 have succeeded in bringing the IAAF World Championships and the World Para Athletics Championships together in the same venue, in the same season.

The UK has proved itself to be a world-leading host for major sporting events over the last couple of decades. Since hosting a hugely successful Commonwealth Games in 2002, the nation has gone from strength to strength, staging a number of global events, not least the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

But in bidding to host these two Championships, UK Athletics (the governing body for the sport) has achieved a number of historic firsts in the global landscape of athletics.

In leading both the bid team and continuing on as the LOC, UKA has managed something no previous host has done. Whilst UKA’s history of staging world-class athletics Grands Prix such as the Anniversary Games and the world’s biggest Indoor Grand Prix in Birmingham is well established, hosting a world event involves a different level of expertise and ambition.

Cherry Alexander, one of the sport’s most experienced individuals, stepped up to lead the LOC operation as managing director in February 2016. Alexander heads up a team of individuals boasting hands-on experience at every world championships, Olympics and Paralympic Games over the last 25 years.

By the close of the two Championships, London 2017 will have generated the highest ever revenues for both IAAF and IPC world championships (driven by record ticket sales for both), alongside significantly streamlined organisational costs – very much part of the original vision for the Championships.
Niels de Vos becomes chief executive of UK Athletics. With London 2012 already on the horizon and Edinburgh set to host the World Cross Country in 2008, he identifies bringing international events to the UK as a key part of the ongoing strategy to grow the sport in the UK.

**2007**

**2010**

UKA agrees with Lord Sebastian Coe it should put together a London bid for the 2015 WAC. Expression of interest lodged with IAAF in competition with Beijing.

**SEPTEMBER**

Interest in 2015 has to be suspended until future use of the Olympic Stadium is finalised. Beijing secures the right to host 2015 edition.

**DECEMBER**

As part of its commitment to host the IAAF World Athletics Championships, UKA also pledged to host the 2017 World Para Athletics Champs in Great Britain. Buoyed by the success of the 2012 Paralympics, London confirms interest as the host city.

**2011**

UKA bids for 2017 in competition with Doha. The future of the athletics track in the Olympic Stadium is confirmed. The Greater London Authority commits to the bid as UKA’s co-host, with HM government also on board. Barcelona declares an interest in the Championships but does not proceed to the formal campaign stage.

**SEPTEMBER**

London and Doha launch their official campaigns off the back of the Daegu-hosted World Championships in South Korea.

**OCTOBER**

Bob Hersch, head of the IAAF evaluation commission visit, declares London “a wonderful city and one that I have always enjoyed being in. The stadium is world class and we’re also very pleased with the passion and commitment of UKA and those who are involved in this bid. I think UKA have shown they are capable of holding a successful World Championships.”

**NOVEMBER**

Bidding cities present to IAAF Council following a week of campaigning. Doha promises new audiences and a commitment to invest in the sport. London commits to making athletes the focus of everything it does, to ensure great performances in front of the world’s most passionate audience. Denise Lewis, sprinter Jodie Williams and Seb Coe are amongst those presenting to the IAAF. After presentations the vote is won by London, 16 votes to 10.

After presentations the vote is won by London, 16 votes to 10.

**2012**

The IPC award London the right to stage the World Para Athletics Championships in 2017, making London the first city ever to host both championships in the same year.
For Usain Bolt, the IAAF World Championships will be a fitting swansong. But there are rumours he may yet return to sprint another day.

BY PAUL HENDERSON, SPORTS EDITOR OF GQ MAGAZINE

T ypical Usain Bolt... he is always in such a hurry. Why spend ten seconds running the 100m if you can get it done in under 9.6? Why dawdle halfway around the track in 20 seconds when you could take the 200m distance seriously and be finished in just over 19? And why spend valuable minutes on social media telling people in detail how your training is going ahead of the IAAF World Championships when you can sum it up in one hasty hashtag: #missionlondon. Bolt’s aim is to give athletics fans one final opportunity to see him race. One final chance to see him win at the London Stadium. And then he will bring the curtain down on his incredible career.

Because, unsurprisingly, the fastest man in the world – the fastest man, ever – is in such a rush that he has already confirmed his retirement from the sport. And yes, he is going to retire early. He will be only 30 years old when he hangs up his spikes, but if you want to see him collect his gold memento, you are all welcome. Put the date in your diary: Saturday, August 12, at around 10.00pm. He’ll be the tall guy, standing on the podium with his friends from the Jamaican 4x100m team, with another medal around his neck (you can probably guess the colour), and no doubt ‘Bolting’ for his adoring fans.

There are the rumours Bolt might turn his athletic prowess in another direction. Either to his first sporting love, cricket; or to football.
According to Bolt himself, the reason for retiring is simple: he has achieved everything in the sport that he ever wanted and now, like his fellow Olympic hero Michael Johnson, he is quitting at the top. His parents, Wellesley and Jennifer, are hopeful that another contributing factor in their son’s decision is a desire finally to settle down and start a family.

And then there are the rumours that Bolt might turn his athletic prowess in another direction. Either to his first sporting love, cricket; or to football. The Manchester United fan was typically modest when asked about the possibility of the latter. “I’m not going to lie,” he said. “I’m not going to say I’m going to be the best footballer in the world. But I’d be at a good level. Maybe Wayne Rooney level.”

Nowadays, Bolt considers himself a talented all-rounder – he once bowled out former West Indies captain Chris Gayle in a charity match – but as a child growing up in Sherwood Content, a small country town in the Trelawney parish of Jamaica, he played cricket and football just for fun. And he ran because he liked to win. He wasn’t serious about sport. He wasn’t serious about anything, for that matter. His family and teachers recall a playful, occasionally mischievous child who was always up for fun. “He tended to be a prankster, leaping up behind people in corridors,” remembers Webster Thompson at William Knibb Memorial High School. “It’s a part of his victory formula even now.”

Bolt was always fast. At 12, he was already the quickest in Waldensia Primary School, but his reluctance to focus and take his training seriously meant he did not really commit to the sport that would make him famous until the age of 14. Then the penny finally dropped and he decided to see how far his natural talents could take him. At 15, he became the World Junior 200m champion and at 16, despite sports-scholarship offers for
him to relocate to the US, he moved to Kingston to train at the IAAF High Performance Training Centre.

“People said, ‘You can stay [in Jamaica] but it would be better if you go overseas,’” he recalls. “They wanted me to go to some cold state, and I was, ‘Nah, can’t do the cold.’ Really, I just wanted to stay close to my family.”

It took Bolt a few more years to fully grasp the talent he had and the work he needed to do to develop it, but under a new coach and mentor, Glen Mills, he finally started to get the most from his 6ft 5in genetically perfect frame.

The 2008 Olympic Games changed everything. Bolt arrived in Beijing as an relatively unsung sprinter despite having recently broken the world 100m record and left it a global superstar with three gold medals in his hand luggage. [He would later stand to lose his 4x100m medal when the Jamaican team was retrospectively disqualified following teammate Nesta Carter’s positive test for a prohibited substance]. He followed up this success by winning three more golds in London 2012, and scored another hat trick in Rio four years later. He also found time at the 2009 IAAF Championships in Berlin to set the current world records for the 100m (9.58) and the 200m (19.19).

“What I always wanted,” he once famously said, “was to be great.” Mission accomplished.

The secret to Bolt’s great success has been endlessly discussed and debated. Both he and his mother suggest his staple diet (yams and dumplings, since you ask) is the basis of his incredible speed. Then there is his family’s deeply held religious belief that his talent is God-given. Geneticists point to the fact that Jamaicans carry the so-called sprinting gene ACTN3. In addition, athletes of African descent have more fast-twitch muscle fibres which are essential for elite sprinters. Then there is the basic maths: because Bolt is so tall, his stride length is so long that a 100m race requires him to take just 41 steps. That is three or four steps fewer than his rivals.

Perhaps the truth is a combination of all of the above. And, as Bolt always maintains, the rest is down to hard work. He might make it all look effortlessly easy, always appearing relaxed and enjoying the moment, but behind all that is a fierce will to win that defines him in everything he does. And his job makes him happy.

“The thing about Usain is that if there’s two people watching him or two million people watching him, he behaves
in the same way,” says his long-time agent, Ricky Simms. “He genuinely likes people. If you’re walking on the street and he sees a group of kids he’ll always stop and sign autographs… it just comes naturally to him. He’s just a very straightforward and likeable guy.”

Which is why, when he lines up for his last race this summer at the IAAF World Championships, most of the spectators in the London Stadium and those watching around the world will be rooting for the Jamaican to go out on a high. After all he has achieved, it’s difficult to believe that anyone can stop him going out in a final blaze of golden glory.

Here’s the thing, though. Retiring at the top sounds great in principle, but it is also very difficult to resist the temptation not to return for one last race. Bolt has always said that Tokyo 2020 is “too far away” for him to consider going for a fourth Olympic title; that he might be too old; that he doesn’t need the stress; that he is satisfied with all that he has achieved.

But who knows? “A lot of legends, a lot of people, have come before me. But this is my time,” he once said.

Maybe the fastest man in the world has a little more time than he thinks.

A JAMAICAN IN LONDON

Ahead of the World Championships, Usain Bolt reveals what he loves about London and the UK.

You’ve competed in the UK many times. What do you love about this country?
“One thing you always get in the UK is full stadia, good organisation and knowledgeable fans. I always remember the 2012 Olympic Games in London when every single session was full—there were no empty seats. But the best thing about the UK is Manchester United.”

What is your earliest memory of London?
“I remember coming to London back in 2004. Even though it was summer, it was definitely a different climate to what I am used to in Jamaica.”

If you could be locked in one London building overnight, which would it be?
“Buckingham Palace would be cool. Can I invite other people?”

What about London nightlife?
“London has great nightlife. I like reggae, dancehall and hip hop music and can always find somewhere in London with a good vibe.”

Who are your favourite British celebrities?
“Jason Statham and David Beckham.”

What would you do if you were London Mayor for a day?
“I’d give everyone a day off work. Call it the Usain Bolt day.”

What do you love most about British culture?
“The UK is like a second home for Jamaicans. It’s always nice to meet Jamaicans living in the UK or whose parents emigrated to the UK. The other thing I like is the passion for football teams and how much opposing fans dislike each other.”

What do Jamaicans really think about the British weather?
“It is bad!”
How do you see the future?

What do you see beyond the passing of time?
What do you imagine will happen going forward, as time flows endlessly on?
You cannot create a future if you can’t imagine one.
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JOHNSON’S TRIPLE TRIUMPH
Michael Johnson (Gothenburg, 1995)

Try as they might, no athlete has managed to match Michael Johnson’s 200m/400m double from the 1995 Gothenburg championships. Threatening both world records, Johnson was imperious in Sweden as he secured two championship records. Over the lap he powered to 43.39 – to date the fourth fastest ever time – though the look on his face was tinged with regret, having missed the world record he craved by 0.1 seconds. In the 200m he appeared happier, punching the air after clocking 19.79 as the only man in the field to go sub-20. Just to add to his individual success, Johnson brought home a third gold, anchoring the US 4x400m quartet in the final event in the Ullevi Stadium.

JACKSON RECORD LEADS BRITISH DUO
Colin Jackson (Stuttgart, 1993)

Six years after Colin Jackson burst into the senior international picture with a 110m hurdles bronze in Rome, he was top of the world. Jackson entered the championships as world No.1, having run 12.97 into a headwind in the month before the Stuttgart World Championships, and all eyes were on him to see what he could achieve. The Welsh hurdler got off to a strong start, putting on a technical master class of sprint hurdling to dip under the world record by one-hundredth of a second. Fellow Briton Tony Jarrett’s silver medal finish in 13.00 meant it was the first time in a World Championships that GB had finished with gold and silver in the same event. Jackson’s record of 12.91 was to last for 13 years.

The IAAF World Championships have seen some thrilling, unforgettable moments over the years. Here are the top 12.

BY BEN COLDWELL
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USA’s Jackie Joyner-Kersee was one of the unquestionable stars of 1987 in Rome as she produced two performances which still today are the best any World Championships has ever seen. During her era this athlete was the best multi-eventer and long jumper on the planet, and she proved it yet again in Italy. Firstly, she wiped the floor with her competition in the heptathlon, topping the table in four of the seven events, including a 7.14m long jump. Her final total of 7128 was the third best of her career at the time. Then her best leap in the long jump at 7.36m was a personal best performance and beat Soviet jumper Yelena Belevskaya, who could only match the distance Joyner-Kersee achieved during the heptathlon.

British hurdlers dominated the landscape at the 1993 World Championships. The day before Colin Jackson flew to his world record, Sally Gunnell had set the bar with one of her own. She entered the championships in Germany as reigning Olympic champion and had beaten American Sandra Farmer-Patrick in Barcelona with her superior strength over the final barriers. Gunnell had to dig deep to conjure up the same qualities in 1993 to win herself world gold and become only the second athlete to run under 53 seconds. Farmer-Patrick took it out fast and was ahead off the final barrier. Gunnell managed to maintain her form and stay in touch before finally overhauling Farmer-Patrick in the final steps in a time of 52.74.
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Beijing played host to the greatest decathlon ever witnessed as Ashton Eaton won a second world title, breaking his world record in the process. Throughout two gruelling days the American was a man on a mission, and it was to be mission accomplished. Displaying an astonishing level of focus and consistency, highlighted by an outstanding 45.00 run over the 400m and holding a lead that even Michael Johnson would have been proud of, the 27-year-old was within touching distance once the tenth and concluding event of the 1500m arrived. Eaton knew it was going to take every ounce of effort over the course of a typically draining race to beat his score from 2012. But he mustered enough to do so, finishing with an all-time best performance of 9045 to beat his Olympic gold medal-winning total by six points – equivalent to around 0.8 seconds in the 1500m.

Stefka Kostadinova’s world record has this year stood for 30 years and it goes to show the significance of this Bulgarian’s achievement that, even today, it doesn’t look close to being beaten. She was at her best during the 1987 season, consistently clearing heights well in excess of 2.00m ahead of making her World Championships debut. When it came to it, not even defending champion Tamara Bykova of the Soviet Union was able to stand in her way. Bykova, with a best clearance at 2.04m – three centimetres higher than she needed for 1983 gold – was the only other athlete who went above 2.00m. The crowd was still in a frenzy, having just watched a dramatic men’s 100m final when Kostadinova served up something even better, sailing over 2.09m and breaking her own world record. To date, only one athlete has ever matched her 2.08m previous record.
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NOVAK DJOKOVIC

THE CHOICE OF THE IAAF SINCE 1985
QUIROT DEFIES THE ODDS
Ana Fidelia Quirot (Gothenburg, 1995)

Ana Fidelia Quirot was left fighting for her life in 1993 after she was caught in an explosion at her home, resulting in horrific burns which required months of skin grafts as well as causing the tragic premature birth and death of her daughter. Two years later, the Cuban 800m runner was top of the world. Defying the doctors’ prognosis that she would likely never compete again, Quirot planned her return from her hospital bed. In Gothenburg the Olympic bronze medallist saw her courage richly rewarded. Having qualified for the final, she watched as Letitia Vriesde of Suriname and Kelly Holmes of Great Britain set off at blistering speed. As the pair did battle for the lead down the back straight and round the top bend, Quirot waited before pouncing with just 100 metres remaining, kicking through the gears and exploiting her greater short-distance speed to kill off their challenge. Quirot’s victory can be seen as a true triumph of human spirit.

BOLT VS GATLIN
Usain Bolt & Justin Gatlin (Beijing, 2015)

Usain Bolt had never faced so many questions over his capacity to maintain a grip on world sprinting as he did in 2015. Battling fitness issues, he found himself pressured to prove that he had what it took to bring down a swaggering Justin Gatlin, who was enjoying a near-two-year unbeaten streak. The American former world and Olympic champion entered the championships as world No.1 over both the 100m and 200m, and cruised to the final in 9.77, while Bolt was left to struggle his way through in 9.96, just barely recovering from a slip in his blocks. When the final came round, Gatlin looked finally ready to triumph over his great rival. Entering the final 20 metres, he held a lead over Bolt but, sensing the imposing Jamaican breathing down his neck, began reaching for the line. Losing composure, he allowed Bolt to sneak in and pip him by 0.01 in 9.79. It was a definitive answer to Bolt’s detractors.
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EDWARDS’ RECORD RUSH
Jonathan Edwards (Gothenburg, 1995)

World records came like London buses for Jonathan Edwards in Gothenburg. He had proven he was in the shape of his life ahead of the championships when he unleashed a colossal 18.43m wind-assisted jump in France. And he didn’t have to wait long to make the world record officially his. In the opening round of the 1995 final, Edwards became the first man to surpass 18m with a wind-legal leap of 18.16m. As if that wasn’t good enough, the soon-to-be world champion went even further just 20 minutes later when, with his second-round jump, he flew out to 18.29m. The first jump was followed by an ebullient celebration, but the second simply by a sheepish grin. The final standings saw Edwards sitting top, 67cms ahead of Brian Wellman.

JOHNSON’S CROWNING GLORY
Michael Johnson (Seville, 1999)

For some six years Michael Johnson had been banging on the door of Butch Reynolds’ 400m world record to no avail. The Seville 1999 World Championships, his last, was to be the scene of arguably his greatest accomplishment, six years after first winning the 400m title. Setting a new world record of 43.18, Johnson ran a time which, for 17 years, many believed to be untouchable. He was the only athlete to qualify for the final in a sub-44 time and it was simply a matter of how fast he could go. Everyone else was left to joust for the minor medals. The American got out ahead of the field in the usual fashion and it was only once the stagger unwound on the home straight that his supremacy became clear for all to see. The American continued to open up a gap down the home straight as his competitors tired faster, and he crossed the line a clear 10 metres ahead, registering more than a second faster than Sanderlei Parello in second place.
DON’T RUN AWAY FROM YOUR LIMITS. RUN BEYOND THEM.
The 1991 long jump final, featuring Mike Powell and Carl Lewis, must go down as the greatest contest seen at an IAAF World Championships. It’s even up there with the greatest head-to-head battles in all sports. Heading into Tokyo, Lewis boasted a 15-0 record over Powell, but the tables were to turn. Powell opened with a modest 7.85m and shortly after watched Lewis, the 100m world record-holder and double Olympic long jump champion, fly out to 8.68m – further than Powell’s personal best. The underdog followed up by consolidating second place with 8.54 before Lewis produced wind-assisted efforts of 8.83 and 8.91 – the latter a centimetre over Bob Beamon’s 1968 world record distance. The title, if not a legal world record, looked destined for Lewis – until, with his penultimate leap, Powell reached out to a wind-legal world record of 8.95. Lewis responded with 8.84, his lifetime best wind-legal effort, and after Powell had fouled his final jump, he added another prodigious effort of 8.84. Extraordinary. But not extraordinary enough.
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Usain Bolt’s world record-breaking feats over the 100m and 200m at the Beijing Olympics were achieved in such an astonishingly carefree manner – he beat his chest en route to a 9.69 win in the 100m – that the anticipation was bubbling to see what he would do next in Berlin. Fortunately, he delivered the same pre-race showmanship which had become his trademark and followed it with the two most outstanding sprint races ever seen. In the 100m, instead of the mid-race antics, Bolt worked towards something special over every metre, even dipping his head to win in 9.58 while Tyson Gay finished back in second in a US record of 9.71. And the Jamaican wasn’t done there. Having broken Michael Johnson’s astonishing 19.32 200m world record in 2008, there was extra determination on Bolt’s face as he roared his way through a perfect half-lap, shaving 0.11 off his own record to clock 19.19. Brilliant.
Laura Muir has been embracing two very different types of training over the past few years. As well as honing her running skills, she has been studying to be a veterinary surgeon. The 24-year-old continues to make her mark in both fields.

“It is something I’ve always wanted to do ever since I was little,” the middle-distance athlete says on training to be a vet. “I really liked being around animals and working with animals. I’m fortunate that I got the grades as well. When I was growing up I always wanted to do something where I felt I was making a difference.”

Muir has definitely been making a difference in athletics. The sport is lucky she manages to effectively balance both of her passions. While her veterinary studies at the University of Glasgow continue – Muir will start her fifth year after this summer – the impact she is having on global athletics has already been seen.

Muir remembers watching Jessica Ennis-Hill work towards
Olympic heptathlon gold in London. The modest and unassuming Scot never imagined getting to that kind of level in her own athletics career, yet she’s been one of the poster stars for this incredible summer of sport.

From European under-23 1500m bronze medallist in 2013, under the watchful eye of coach Andy Young, the Dundee Hawkhill Harriers athlete progressed last year to become a British record-breaker, Olympian and Diamond League champion. She picked up from where she left off with further

“I’ve worked at my local vet practice a few times. I’ve had to take my name badge off a few times because we weren’t getting any of the consultations done.”

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record-breaking performances over the winter and got a
taste for double gold medal-winning success at the European
Indoor Championships in Serbia.

In 2013 Muir was described by Young as “the next Paula
Radcliffe/Kelly Holmes”. “Think the endurance of Radcliffe
with the speed of Holmes, but without the injuries,” he wrote
in a message to a friend.

No pressure, then?

Not when it comes to competing on the world stage in
front of a home crowd, at least. “If you’d asked me [about
feeling pressure] a couple of years ago, I probably would
have been a bit worried,” Muir explains. “Pressure I didn’t
deal with very well. I got pretty nervous. Now I just take it
in my stride and I see pressure more as support. I know the
reason the pressure is there is because people are expecting
me to do well and be running well. Now I know I run better
when I’m relaxed.”

The Scottish star was in the spotlight at last year’s Olympic
Games after having broken double Olympic champion
Holmes’ British 1500m record in the lead-up.

Muir mesmerises when she runs. With gritted teeth, she
leaves all her emotions on the track, and that’s why she wasn’t
disappointed with her run in Rio. After placing seventh, she
was back in action just 11 days later when she beat Olympic
champion Faith Kipyegon at the Paris Diamond League.

Returning to her gutsy front-running ways, she improved her
own national record by a further two seconds to end the year
ranked the best in the world. Just five days after that, she ran
her third quickest-ever time in Zurich.

“I knew what I was capable of in Rio and it didn’t happen.
I feel even more motivated to prove to people that I can
perform on the world stage,” she says. “There were two or
three days of being disappointed on losing out on a medal.
But I was relatively okay with it because I knew I completed
the race I wanted to and gave it everything I had. That made
it easier to understand and move on. I knew when it came to
Paris and Zurich I was going to show what I was capable of.
Luckily I managed to do that.”

She admitted to the IAAF that it’s very difficult to
compensate for missing out on an Olympic medal. “But the run
in Paris definitely showed that going with the two leaders in
Rio wasn’t a crazy move for me,” she adds. “It was a genuine,
good response. I guess it was good to show that I was up
there with those girls and that what I did in Rio wasn’t silly.”

With great power comes great responsibility. Or, in
Muir’s case, great recognisability. Nowadays she’s quite
used to being spotted outside of sporting circles, which she
doesn’t mind, although she admits it can sometimes be a little
distracting. “I’ve worked at my local vet practice a few times
and I’ve got my name badge on my scrub top saying ‘Laura
Muir, veterinary student’. Some people have clocked on to it.
I’ve had to take the badge off a few times because we weren’t
getting any of the consultations done. It was funny.”

Not that the poorly animals mind. Anyone with such
dedication on the track must take her second job very
seriously indeed.

LAURA MUIR
(GREAT BRITAIN)

Event: 1500m and 5000m
PBs: 1500m: 3:55.22; 5000m: 14:49.12
Born: May 9, 1993, Inverness, UK
Best results: 2017 European indoor 1500m
and 3000m gold; 2016 Olympics 1500m
7th; 2015 World Championships 1500m
5th, European indoor 3000m 4th; 2014
Commonwealth 1500m 11th; 2013 European
U23 1500m bronze.
Ever since the IAAF World Championships were first held (in Helsinki in 1983), the sight of Kenyan and Ethiopian runners tearing away at the front in distance races has been a familiar one. Since the 1987 championships in Rome, men born and raised in Kenya or Ethiopia have won 91 of the 126 medals on offer in the 5000m, 10,000m and 3000m steeplechase. For cultural reasons, the women took a little longer to assert their dominance, but since the 1999 World Championships Kenyan and Ethiopian women have won a staggering 81 per cent of the medals on offer in the 5000m and 10,000m, including 16 of the 18 golds.

So what is their secret? The answer is not one simple thing, but rather a perfect storm of factors. In the rural areas of the Rift Valley in both Kenya and Ethiopia, children grow up leading incredibly active lives, running to school, running home, doing chores, rarely sitting down to play computer games or watch TV. All of this is done at high altitude and they are almost always running around barefoot, which helps them develop good, fluid running form, as well as great foot and leg strength.

On top of this, the almost universal diet in the region is a simple but healthy mix of foods such as rice, beans, maize and kale, with junk food virtually non-existent.

Of course, these basic conditions are not unique to Kenya and Ethiopia, but what is singular to this part of east Africa is a culture that embraces running as a viable life option. Imagine the young son of a persistence farmer in India or Bolivia telling his family he was going to stop working to become an athlete. He’d be told to stop acting crazy and get back to digging the land. But if this happens in Kenya, the family will rally round, friends will support the young athlete, while other successful runners will pass on shoes, clothing and advice. The result is that all the raw talent in the highlands of Kenya and Ethiopia is channelled into running.

In the developed world, too, most talented young runners eventually give up the sport at some point. Distance running is hard, it takes commitment, and life has so many easier, more financially rewarding alternatives. But in rural Kenya and Ethiopia, for many people the most viable path to success, one that they can see repeatedly followed by person after person in their neighbourhoods, is running. In some places, it is pretty much the only show in town.

The region’s success, then, is in part a numbers game. Just in Iten, one small Kenyan town on the edge of a dramatic escarpment, there are an estimated 2,000 full-time athletes, training in focused groups, helping each other, inspiring each other. The wider Rift Valley area is full of thousands more top athletes, as well as coaches and managers. It is a land full of opportunity for distance runners.

In some ways, when you spend time there and see the immense passion and drive towards running that pervades everything, when you see the hordes of lycra-clad runners criss-crossing the trails in the early morning like commuters in any other city, the more intriguing and puzzling question is not, Why do runners from east Africa perform so well in the middle and long-distance races? Adharanand Finn went to live among the athletes in Iten, a small town in Kenya, for six months to discover their secrets.

What is their secret? The answer is not one simple thing, but rather a perfect storm of factors.
Why are the east Africans so good? But, rather, How on Earth do athletes from other parts of the world ever beat them?

In 2011, Kenyan athletes went on a blaze of glory at the World Championships in Daegu, winning 18 medals in the distance events, including gold, silver and bronze in both the women’s 10,000m and the women’s marathon. In the men’s marathon running that year, the top 25 fastest times in the world were all run by Kenyans, including course records at every major marathon. Yet we may one day look back and see 2011 as a high-water mark in their dominance.

That was also the year British athlete Mo Farah won his first global title. He has since won every Olympic and World Championship gold at 5,000m and 10,000m. In 2012 he was followed home in the Olympic 10,000m final by his training partner, Galen Rupp, from the USA, who took silver.

In the 2016 Olympics, Kenya won 13 athletics medals. That’s still a decent haul, but significantly down on the 2011 high. So what happened? Has there been a seismic shift?

Farah often points out that the moment everything changed for him, when he went from being a good European runner to becoming a world beater, was when in 2005 his manager, Ricky Simms, suggested he move in with a group of Kenyan runners living in Teddington, in south-west London.

“From that day on my attitude changed completely. I went to bed early. I trained hard. I ate more healthily,” he wrote in his autobiography, calling the decision to move in with the Kenyans “life-changing”.

As the world becomes more globalised, and as Africa develops, some of that natural advantage may be lost.

He then spent time living and training in Iten and Addis Ababa. Both these places are becoming popular training destinations for more and more of the world’s top athletes. In Iten, for example, it’s nothing unusual to see a Chinese team run past, followed by a group of British athletes, or a group from Serbia, or Italy.

Another athlete who decided his best route to success was to move in with the Kenyans was the 2012 Olympic and 2013 world marathon champion, Stephen Kiprotich. Although he was from nearby Uganda, the transition to living and training in Kenya, where the running culture is so pervasive and there are so many other top athletes to run with, clearly helped him fulfill his potential. It seems the rest of the world has begun to catch up, at least in part, by employing a policy of: if you can’t beat them, join them.

Another factor that may contribute to a slowdown in the dominance of the two east African nations is increased globalisation. Mobile phones are now almost as ubiquitous in places like Iten as they are in great modern cities such as Tokyo,
London or New York. While this brings many benefits to these small Rift Valley communities, the potential health issues linked with too much screen time are well documented.

As wealth increases, life becomes easier. Cars, for example, are becoming a more common sight on the region’s dirt roads, while, thanks to charities who have led a campaign to protect children from jiggers (a horrible parasite) by providing them with shoes, it is now much rarer to see Kenyan children running to school barefoot. Again, while these changes benefit the community, they may not be good for running.

The truth is that the tough life of the young Kenyans has contributed to their running success. It is not the only factor, but as the world becomes more globalised, and as Africa develops, some of that natural advantage may be lost. This may already be happening. The distance runners from the rest of the world are hoping so.

[Adharanand Finn is author of Running with the Kenyans: Discovering the Secrets of the Fastest People on Earth.]

MY TIME IN KENYA

In 2011 Adharanand Finn, the author of this article, travelled to the Kenyan town of Iten to write and research a book. Here’s how:

I lived in elite training camps with athletes such as Emmanuel Mutai (World Championship silver in the marathon), met the many stars living in the town, from Mary Keitany to Wilson Kipsang, and also ran with the up-and-coming athletes dreaming of success. To find the runners, I was told to stand at a certain crossroads in the town at 6am and join in when they turned up. So I did. Despite being only an amateur runner, I was welcomed by the Kenyans. Someone was always waiting for me when I eventually dropped off the pace. My biggest mistake was attempting a cross-country race in nearby Eldoret. After being lapped by just about everyone in the field, I eventually dropped out, humiliated. I was in good company though: Asbel Kiprop also dropped out that day, while three-time London Marathon winner Martin Lel could only finish 33rd. The winner that day? A young 18-year-old called Geoffrey Kamworor, now the World Half Marathon and World Cross-Country Champion. Watch out for him at London 2017.

SIX OF THE GREATEST EAST AFRICAN DISTANCE RUNNERS

Kenenisa Bekele (Ethiopia)
The current world record-holder in 5000m and 10,000m, and the second fastest runner ever over the marathon, Bekele has won five World Championship gold medals – including four in a row in the 10,000m – and three Olympic gold medals.

Haile Gebrselassie (Ethiopia)
Gebrselassie set 27 world records during his illustrious career, winning four World Championship golds in a row in the 10,000m, and two Olympic golds.

Tirunesh Dibaba (Ethiopia)
The ‘Baby Faced Destroyer’, as she’s known, has won five World Championship gold medals and three Olympic gold medals at 5000m and 10,000m. She is the 5000m world record-holder.

Ezekiel Kemboi (Kenya)
Between 2003 and 2015, Kemboi won three World Championship silver medals in a row in the 3000m steeplechase, and then followed it up with four gold medals in a row. During that time he also won two Olympic gold medals.

David Rudisha (Kenya)
The 800m world record-holder is a double Olympic and double world champion.

Vivian Cheruiyot (Kenya)
Cheruiyot has won four World Championship gold medals at 5000m and 10,000m, and finally got her first Olympic gold in Rio in 2016.
He might insist nothing has changed, but the Mo Farah who will compete at these IAAF World Championships is very different to the athlete who took part at the London Olympics five years ago. For starters, the man who is preparing to return to his favourite stadium is a Knight of the Realm these days. Her Majesty the Queen’s recognition of his achievements – he’s a four-time Olympic and five-time world champion over 5000m and 10,000m – means he can now be addressed as ‘Sir’. Not that he often enforces the title.

“It’s same old Mo,” says the 34-year-old who was born in Somalia but moved to Great Britain as a child. “Everybody who knows me as Mo can still call me Mo. It’s nice to have the title but, at the same time, nothing’s changed.”

He says being a knight is nothing he ever possibly envisaged in his younger days. “Coming to Britain and not speaking a word of English – there’s no word really to describe it. It’s an honour to be called ‘Sir’. I remember the first time getting a Great Britain vest was amazing. To have the career I’ve had and to be able to achieve what I have for my country, and then to be recognised for it, is incredible.”

Farah is now one of the most recognisable figures in his sport. He is very much the man to beat, having won the last nine major finals he has contested. This, however, will be his track championships farewell. The roads, and the challenge of tackling the marathon will be the next task on the horizon. But first of all he would like nothing more than to bow out with a golden goodbye.

It’s that opportunity, not to mention a fundamental love of his work, which keeps him going. As the years advance, the challenge to remain at the top grows ever greater. The treadmill of travel and the demands that come with being an international athlete can also be difficult to handle, particularly when it means he is forced to spend prolonged periods of time away from his wife and four children at the family home in Oregon, USA.

“There’s always pressure. The most common question I’m asked is ‘Do you get nervous?’ Every athlete gets nervous and that’s part of it. But I do enjoy it.”
He knows, however, that such sacrifices come with the territory. It’s one of the prices he must pay to keep the chasing pack at bay. “As I get older I’m finding it harder to recover as quickly,” he says, which is particularly significant for someone who doubles up in major championships. “At the same time I’ve got a wife, I’ve got four kids, I’m a family man and, sometimes, I like to spend more time with them. But, in order to win races, you can’t always have that time to spend with the family and not train as hard. You’ve got to go to training camp and focus. No one’s going to wait for you. There are a lot of athletes out there who are training hard and want to beat you so you can’t live the comfortable life.”

The heady days of summer 2012 seem a long time ago. Farah will never forget how the home crowd roared so loudly during his 5000m final five years ago that the soundwaves caused the photo-finish camera to shake. “One race can change your life,” he reflects. “I’m just glad everything’s gone well and I’ve achieved what I have. It’s been hard work. In life we have to be positive and not take it for granted.”

There will be expectation on Farah’s shoulders this time, too. Not just from the British public who want to see a fairytale ending but also from himself. “There’s always pressure. The most common question I’m asked is ‘Do you get nervous?’ Every athlete gets nervous and that’s part of it. But I do enjoy it. I love the sport and love what I do and I’m really excited about London and it being my last track races. It would be great to finish on a high.”
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ART ON THE UNDERGROUND

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Decathlon and heptathlon require a combination of skill, training, timing and dedication. Here, some of the world’s greatest in combined events explain how victory is achieved.

BY JASON HENDERSON, ATHLETICS WEEKLY.
Mental strength
Physical talent aside, the ability to endure the psychological ups and downs during two long days of competition is crucial. “The emotional toll can be huge,” says coach Mike Holmes, who guided Katarina Johnson-Thompson to a European indoor title two years ago. “It can be quite a debilitating experience and I have known athletes to require weeks, even months, to recover fully.”

Get a good coach
Harry Marra not only guided Ashton Eaton to the world decathlon record and Olympic titles in London and Rio but he also coached Eaton’s wife, Brianne Theisen-Eaton, to the 2014 Commonwealth Games gold. “It is not a brute force event,” Marra says of decathlon and heptathlon. “You have to be a well-rounded athlete with many different skills and techniques.”

Technical knowledge aside, a good coach is also able to motivate their athlete at crucial moments. Dutch coach Charles van Commenee was renowned for his extreme measures in this area. In the 2000 Sydney Olympics, for instance, he told Denise Lewis her high jump was “the performance of a novice”.

Jackie Joyner-Kersee, meanwhile, was so close to her coach, that she married him.

Find a physio
The extreme demands of excelling in sprints, hurdles, middle-distance running, jumps and throws means combined-events athletes are particularly prone to injury. Roman Sebrle of the Czech Republic, the first decathlete to break the 9000 points barrier, was once speared through the shoulder with a javelin at a training camp, while Denise Lewis hobble her way to heptathlon victory at the Sydney Olympics with her calf muscles and one of her ankles strapped up to protect injuries.

Embrace the training
Combined-events athletes need to train for a huge number of hours every week and leave no stone unturned. “You have to be prepared to walk over broken glass,” says the 1980 and 1984 Olympic decathlon champion Daley Thompson. “I trained three times on Christmas Day every year for 15 years.”

Pay attention to detail
With bags of equipment and about half a dozen pairs of shoes or spikes for various events, it’s easy to mix up all the gear in the melee of competition. Denise Lewis, the 2000 Olympic heptathlon champion, once almost forgot her middle-distance spikes when stepping on the track of the final event, the 800m.

Then there is Bob Matthias, the 1948 and 1952 Olympic champion from the United States, who nearly bombed out of his first games after mistakenly – and illegally – walking out of the front of the shot put circle, instead of the back.
Work on your weaknesses
Consistency is important so it’s vital not to lose points in poor events. Czech ironman Tomáš Dvořák, for example, famously had no weaknesses as he tore through his 10 events to break the world record and claim three world titles from 1997 to 2001. “I’m not fast and I can’t jump very high. I don’t have any great ability. I just take the ability that I have and make the most of it,” he said modestly.

Reigning Olympic heptathlon champion Nafissatou Thiam, meanwhile, won gold in Rio in 2016 thanks to her prowess in jumps and throws. However, the Belgian athlete knows she can still improve her relatively weaker running events.

Stand out as an individual
Carolina Klüft, the 2004 Olympic and three-time world heptathlon champion from Sweden, used to take her toy Eeyore donkey to her competitions for good luck and was renowned for competing with a huge smile on her face. “The most important thing is that you’re having fun,” she says.

But the most individual combined-events athlete of all must surely be the 1976 decathlon gold medallist Bruce Jenner who, since his retirement, has earned a living as an actor, a racing driver and a reality TV star, most famously in Keeping Up with the Kardashians. Then, in 2015, Bruce underwent gender transition and became Caitlyn.

A flying start
Put pressure on your rivals with big points in your opening event. In decathlon this is the 100m. For women, it is the 100m hurdles. In the latter, at the London Olympics five years ago, the eventual champion Jessica Ennis-Hill set a British record of 12.54 seconds. It was so fast it would have won individual sprint hurdles gold at the previous Games in Beijing.

Avoid disasters
Failing to register a mark in field events means zero points and effectively ends your chances of winning. Katarina Johnson-Thompson discovered this at the 2015 World Championships when she fouled all three attempts in the long jump and plummeted from second place to 30th, while a poor javelin throw at the Rio Olympics saw her slide from third to eighth.

She is not alone: three-time world decathlon champion Dan O’Brien fouled his pole vault attempts at the 1992 US Olympic trials and failed to make the team for the Barcelona Olympics where he would have started as red-hot favourite.

Speed beats stamina
If you are to excel in any events, then choose sprints and jumps. The majority of combined-events legends are stronger in this area, such as Jackie Joyner-Kersee, the long-time world heptathlon record-holder who won two Olympic gold medals in heptathlon and three global titles in the long jump during the 1980s and 1990s. Some events such as the 1500m in decathlon do not generate as many points on combined events scoring tables, meaning that many gold medallists have been able to rumble around in a modest time and still win overall.

[An earlier version of this article appeared in Populous magazine.]
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"MY DREAM DAY WILL COME"
Elaine Thompson realised a dream in Rio last year. By achieving the rare double of winning Olympic 100m and 200m gold – the first woman to do so since Florence Griffith Joyner – she announced herself to the world in remarkable style. With her place in sporting history cemented, it would be understandable if she took her eye off the ball or lost focus a little. There could be the temptation to spend more time concentrating on the trappings of fame.

The bad news for her rivals at the IAAF World Championships, however, is that she intends to push even harder this year. Now that she is the champion, she intends to keep it that way.

“Winning double Olympic gold medals is like a journey. It doesn’t stop,” the 24-year-old Jamaican told IAAF Inside Athletics. “I have to continue. Even though my dream has come true, I don’t want to go home and buy fancy stuff and have a big car and a big house. My philosophy is to continue to work hard and be a better person. My dream day with my fancy house and my big car will come – I just need to put away some more money for my future. This motivates me, too, because I want to take care of my family. And it motivates me to be a wise person, spend wisely, work hard, train hard and perform on the track.”

Whatever wealth Thompson ultimately gains from sport will have been hard-earned. In athletics she is a self-made woman. With parents who, she reveals “didn’t understand much of the sport”, she had to find ways of motivating herself to improve when she was younger. “I would say to my Dad: ‘I’m going to a track meet tomorrow’, but it was like nothing to him,” she remembers. “It was my grandmother who would say: ‘Go and do your thing, he doesn’t understand’. And it was my uncle who encouraged me and said to me: ‘You’re going to be the next Bolt, you can run fast’. He saw something that I didn’t see in me when I was small.”

Thompson admits her parents were hardly supportive of her chosen career. Instead she took inspiration from other sprinters such as Veronica Campbell-Brown, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Merlene Ottey, as well as her support team.

Thompson first appeared on a global stage at the IAAF World Championships in 2015 when she won a silver medal in the 200m and struck gold as part of the 4x100m relay. That trip, she says, brought experience, while her first Olympics was a steep, albeit medal-laden, learning curve.

For 2017, she feels like a very different athlete. “I would say I know now how to control myself, how to go on the track and deliver. I still train the same but I will put in more effort because everyone wants to beat Elaine. I will try to push myself as hard as I can.”

“Being a champion, you want to look professional and fashionable. You want people to see who you are in your own skin.”

**Double Olympic champion sprinter Elaine Thompson has more hard work to complete before she enjoys the trappings of sporting fame.**

**BY EUAN CRUMLEY, ATHLETICS WEEKLY**

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**ELAINE THOMPSON (Jamaica)**

Events: 100m, 200m and 4x100m
Personal bests: 10.70 and 21.66
Born: June 28, 1992, Manchester, Jamaica
Best performances: 2016 Olympic 100m and 200m gold, 4x100m silver, World Indoor Championships 60m bronze; 2015 World Championships 4 x 100m gold, 200m silver
She will do so with some style, moreover. With a little influence from teammate Fraser-Pryce, Thompson’s hairstyles are becoming more and more elaborate. “Being a champion, you want to look professional and fashionable,” she says of her changing mane. “You want people to see who you are in your own skin. I try to adopt a certain style from Shelly-Anne.”

She also favours a choker necklace that she suspects might bring her good fortune. “I don’t know if it was good luck but I ran in it and I still wear it, even in my sleep. I will keep running in it.”

Thompson’s colourful image on the track is all part of being a positive role model for younger athletes. “It’s my time to give it back to the younger athletes coming up, to motivate them and to see the future and where they can be,” she says. “Not everybody is going to be fast from the start. You have to work towards what you want. I can show them how to do that.”

“It was my uncle who encouraged me and said to me: ‘You’re going to be the next Bolt, you can run fast’. He saw something that I didn’t see in me when I was small.”
Serving suggestion

RUN MORE
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Wayde van Niekerk may have smashed the world 400m record in the Olympic final last year but, it’s possible, that was him just getting warmed up.

BY JASON HENDERSON, ATHLETICS WEEKLY.

Back in the 1990s, Michael Johnson entered athletics folklore by flying to a 200m and 400m double at the Gothenburg World Championships and Atlanta Olympic Games before setting a blistering world 400m record of 43.18 at the IAAF World Championships in Seville. Now, a couple of decades later, Wayde van Niekerk is striving to match the American’s amazing feats.

Last summer in Rio, van Niekerk smashed Johnson’s long-standing world record in the Olympic final with a time of 43.03. What’s more, the South Africa sprint star did it from out in lane eight. “It was a blessing in disguise,” he says of the awkward draw. “Not being able to see the competition and just going out there and running my own race… I had no other choice. You can’t be waiting for anyone to catch up with you.”

Since then he has targeted an audacious 200m and 400m double at the IAAF World Championships in London, mimicking Johnson’s achievements from 1995. Initially, the timetable in London did not favour doing a combination of both events, but the IAAF changed the schedule in April to make it possible.

“It’s going to be tough,” he says. “It’s double the work and double the effort, but I’m excited for the challenge.”

If van Niekerk is going to do it, Johnson reckons the 25-year-old should not change his winning habits on the training track. “When you become world champion, Olympic champion, world record-holder, you’re obviously doing something right,” Johnson says. “So he should continue to do whatever it is that he’s been doing because he’s obviously found the right formula.”

Van Niekerk, who is coached by a 75-year-old great grandmother called Anna Botha (or Tannie Anns), first showed his turn of pace on the rugby pitches of his native South Africa. Since he took up athletics his speed has been brilliantly cultivated by Tannie Anns.

Such is his all-round sprinting ability, he is the first man to break 10 seconds for 100m, 20 seconds for 200m and 44 seconds for 400m. “I am a 100m, 200m and 400m athlete so I will dream for every record there is,” he says. “What sort of an athlete would I be if I didn’t?”

Indeed, he considers himself a 100m and 200m sprinter first and foremost. He only tried the 400m, he explains, in more recent years due to injury.

Such prowess has heightened speculation of a clash between him and Usain Bolt. Like the Jamaican, van Niekerk is a big football fan and supports Liverpool FC. In fact, he even credits the club with helping inspire his world record in Rio, as he was in a buoyant mood after watching them beat Arsenal.
4-3 in a Premier League game on television on the same day as his Olympic 400m final in Brazil.

“When you’re an athlete, you’re lying around in your room and you’re isolated, doing your own thing before your race,” he explains. “When Liverpool won I was happy and joyful. My mood was quite high for a bit, so it took my mind away from the fact that I was racing later.”

Later that year he visited Liverpool for the first time and watched his favourite team beat local rivals Everton 1-0 at Goodison Park. “The derby was very intense,” he says. “We were sat in the middle of the Everton and Liverpool fans, and you could feel the tension. I’m not someone who celebrates much. Even if you look at my races, I’m not someone who loses my mind. But when Liverpool scored I lost my mind and I was in the crowd with everyone else, enjoying the goal!”

Van Niekerk later met Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp. “I wanted to speak football and he wanted to speak athletics,” he remembers.

The Olympic Games changed the sprinter’s life. Since his record-breaking performance in Rio he has become one of the most talked about figures in world sport. He could end up being one of the biggest stars of London 2017.

“I am a 100m, 200m and 400m athlete so I will dream for every record there is. What sort of an athlete would I be if I didn’t?”

**WAYDE VAN NIEKERK**
(South Africa)

**Events:** 200m and 400m

**PBs:** 19.90 and 43.03 (world record)

**Born:** July 15, 1992, Cape Town, South Africa

**Best results:** 2016 Olympic 400m gold; 2015 World 400m gold; 2014 Commonwealth 400m silver
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Fancy learning to run, jump or throw? Or even becoming an official? Here’s how you can get involved.

Athletics offers a wide choice of sporting activities with the opportunity to throw, run or jump. The sport is for everyone – the different disciplines suit differing body shapes and sizes. And, of course, you can run anywhere, any time and at no cost, as long as you have a pair of running shoes.

If you’re looking to compete in the sport, joining a local club is a good way forward. Here you will get access to specialist equipment so you can try out the different events. This website will help you find your nearest athletics club: www.britishathletics.org.uk/grassroots/search/

There are a number of schemes that help children and young people get into athletics. British Athletics Academy Awards test children and potential athletes as they learn to enjoy all aspects of running, jumping and throwing, and provides teachers and parents with resources and support. British Athletics Parallel Success offers great opportunities for disabled athletes, providing guidance along the way for athletes, parents, clubs and coaches. For more information on both these schemes and others, visit the academy section of the British Athletics website.

Then there’s Run Together which aims to find fun, friendly and inclusive opportunities for everyone in England. (Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Athletics provide similar schemes – with information on their websites.) Find out more at www.runtogether.co.uk/

How about joining in your local parkrun? These free-to-enter, timed 5km runs take place in more than 450 sites across the UK, and thousands more worldwide. Anyone can take part, whatever their ability. (www.parkrun.org.uk)

VOLUNTEERING
Athletics relies on large numbers of volunteers who support clubs and events. You may want to consider becoming an official, a coach or helping out at your local athletics club or parkrun.

COACHING
Help athletes to learn new skills and maximise their performance. Contact your home country athletics association to find out more about how you can get into coaching or expand your coaching experiences. Visit the appropriate website below and select coaching:
www.englandathletics.org
www.scottishathletics.org.uk
www.athleticsni.org
www.welshathletics.org

OFFICIALS
If you fancy trying your hand at time-keeping, measuring, judging or starting races then get in touch with your local athletics club or contact British Athletics. Find out more at britishathletics.org.uk
LEGS
Good sprint mechanics depend on having long levers. “Bolt is perfectly designed for long strides and fast movement,” says Kevin Norton, professor of exercise science at the University of South Australia. “His lower leg, relative to his upper leg, is very long. His total leg length, relative to his total body height, is long.”

Dr Richard Ferguson, senior lecturer in exercise physiology at Loughborough University, adds: “If you have longer legs, then you have longer muscles, which can generate more speed and more velocity.”

STRIDE
With an average stride length of 2.44 metres in a 100-metre race, Bolt covers the distance in just 41 strides compared to the 44 to 47 strides of his rivals. It’s all down to the angle of his stride. American biomechanist Bob Prichard has measured the angle between Bolt’s front and rear legs when he’s at full stride and found it to be around 114 degrees, compared to around 106 degrees for his rivals. “Because a runner increases their stride length by two per cent for each degree that they increase their stride angle, Bolt is covering at least 16 per cent more ground with each stride than his opponents,” Prichard explains.

MUSCLES
Mere mortals have a 50 per cent split of slow- and fast-twitch muscle fibres. World-class sprinters like Bolt, however, have up to 80 per cent of fast-twitch fibres. Scott Trappe, an American human performance scientist, believes most people have one to two per cent of what he calls “super-fast-twitch skeletal muscle mass” which functions at double the speed of normal fast-twitch muscle mass. In Bolt’s case he could have up to 25 per cent of these super-fast fibres.

FEET
Wearing US size 13 shoes, Bolt’s feet act as highly effective levers. But they’re very nimble levers, too. Each one kisses the ground for only four hundredths of a second (compared to 12 hundredths for ordinary runners) and with 450kgs of force for each step. No wonder he managed to break the world 100m record at the 2008 Olympics, even with a shoelace untied.
Ten years ago, if someone had told you that a 6ft 5in Jamaican would revolutionise world sprinting, it would have sounded like a tall story – in more ways than one.

Usain Bolt is almost a foot taller than some of his predecessors who have held the 100m world record, yet he has bucked the trend by showing that his lofty height is no disadvantage.

In theory it should be hard for someone so tall to get into their stride. Once he gains momentum, though, the 30-year-old can reach a top speed of 27.79mph.

This has led to record times of 9.58 and 19.19 seconds for the 100m and 200m respectively. “Bolt combines a long step length with a step frequency high enough to run faster than anyone else,” says Dr Ian Bezodis, a sports biomechanics expert from Cardiff Metropolitan University.

With an average stride length of 2.44 metres, Bolt covers the 100m in just 41 strides compared to the 44 to 47 strides of his rivals.

[An earlier version of this article appeared in Populous magazine.]
For Nafi Thiam, the 2013 IAAF World Championships in Moscow marked “the beginning of a new adventure and a new story”. The talented 22-year-old has written some incredible chapters since then.

This Belgian heptathlete’s experience in Russia, where she placed 14th, motivated her to strive for further action in major championships. After improving to 11th in the seven-discipline event in Beijing two years later, Thiam takes to the world stage for the third time, now as a reigning Olympic champion and the third best heptathlete of all time. She has gone from being “a little star-struck” four years ago to the leading light.

“Looking back at my first World Championships, it was a huge event for me. It was something you only dream about,”

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“Competing in Moscow was amazing and I remember being at the warm-up track surrounded by athletes I looked up to and admired.”

– Nafi Thiam

Reigning Olympic heptathlon champion Nafi Thiam is the third best heptathlete of all time. Keeping on top of seven disciplines is a full-time job. Yet the Belgian still finds time to study geography at university.

BY JESSICA WHITTINGTON, ATHLETICS WEEKLY
she told the IAAF. “Competing in Moscow was amazing and I remember being at the warm-up track surrounded by athletes I looked up to and admired. I remember thinking it is crazy: here I am watching everybody. It was just like being in a movie.”

Thiam, whose full first name is Nafissatou (a legacy of her Senegalese father), has dedicated herself to the sport in order to achieve her leading role. When she was just 14, she decided to team up with coach and former decathlete Roger Lespagnard who had represented Belgium at the 1968, 1972 and 1976 Olympics. This required an 80-mile round trip on the train after school from her home city of Namur to Liège.

It paid off and she now lives closer to her coach as she studies geography at the University of Liège. In fact, after her sensational 7,013-point performance in Götzis earlier this year, writing on Twitter she joked: “Flying on a little cloud right now. No doubt my June exams session will bring me back on Earth very soon #emotionalrollercoaster.”

While Thiam has clearly worked very hard to get to the level she’s at today, combined-events talent does actually run in the family. Her mother, Daniele Denisty, is an international masters athlete and has won European titles both in the indoor pentathlon and the heptathlon. “When she began to take me to athletics from the age of seven, she became frustrated waiting around on the sidelines for me and she re-started the sport 14 years ago,” Thiam told Spikes magazine, explaining how Denisty had previously given up the sport as a teenager. “Obviously, when I first started, she was way better than me. I used to look at her (high jump) PB of 1.61m and think it was amazing. Over time I bettered all her PBs, with the last being the discus throw [a non-heptathlon event] when I was about 16.”

Performing when it matters most, Thiam’s winning series at the Rio Olympics featured a total of five personal bests, including an impressive 1.98m word heptathlon best in the high jump, the strongest of her seven events. She then equalled that height in Götzis. Her 6ft 3in height obviously helps.

She also had a clearance of 1.96m en route to her European indoor pentathlon win in Belgrade in March, despite being unable to do much jumping in training over the winter due to a lack of indoor facilities. “When it snows you really cannot do anything,” she explains of Belgian winters. “We usually just free one lane and all just run in the same lane. But it’s always been like that so I guess I got used to it.”

Thiam’s performances in Serbia and Götzis again proved that she can handle the pressure when she’s the one to beat. “I think a lot of people will look at me but it doesn’t really bring me stress,” she says, looking ahead to London. “I really like the sensation of competition. I like the stress you have before the first event. I like the process in the call room. That’s why I train so hard all year – to live sensations like that and perform.”

Among Thiam’s scalps in Rio last summer was a certain Jessica Ennis-Hill. The Belgian talent admits that one of her standout memories was watching the Briton work her way to Olympic heptathlon gold in Belgrade in March, despite being unable to do much jumping in training over the winter due to a lack of indoor facilities. “In the hurdles, I was so impressed with what she did there,” recalls Thiam, who was placing 14th as a 17-year-old in the World Junior Championships during the same summer that Ennis-Hill won her London gold. “She had an incredible win. That’s one of the moments I remember the most.”

With world-class athletics returning to the UK capital, it’s now time for lots more special moments. Perhaps Thiam will feature in some of them.

**NAFISSATOU THIAM**
(Belgium)

**Event:** Heptathlon

**PB:** 7,013 points

**Born:** August 19, 1994, Brussels, Belgium

**Best results:**
- 2017 Götzis Hypo Meeting 1st;
- European indoor pentathlon gold;
- 2016 Olympic gold;
- 2015 European indoor pentathlon silver;
- European U23 high jump silver;
- 2014 European bronze;
- 2013 European junior gold.
London has played a special role in shaping what we now know as the modern-day marathon. Although the event was first staged at the inaugural modern Olympics in Athens in 1896, it wasn’t until the 1908 Olympics in London that what is now the official distance for the race – 42.195 kms or 26 miles 385 yards (26.219 miles) – was first raced, and it became the Olympic distance from 1924 onwards.

The 1908 race started at Windsor Castle and finished at the White City Stadium in west London – 385 yards were required to travel round most of the track and finish in front of the Royal Box – with the American runner Johnny Hayes taking gold. However, it will always be remembered for the hapless Italian Dorando Pietri who crossed the line first but was disqualified since he had been helped by officials.

Since those strict amateur days, many great marathon races have been staged in the British capital. For much of the 20th Century, there was an annual race called the Polytechnic Marathon. London also staged two further Olympic Games: at the 1948 Olympics, the Belgian runner Etienne Gaillot tottered into the stadium first, but had to settle for bronze as he was passed by two runners, with Argentina’s Delfo Cabrera taking gold. At the 2012 Olympics, Ethiopia’s Tiki Gelana took gold and the women’s Olympic record by a margin of just five seconds.

But it’s the annual London Marathon that is this city’s best-known 26-miler. Hundreds of thousands of amateurs and professionals have taken part since the inaugural edition in 1981, raising more than £450 million for charity over the years.

This summer’s IAAF World Championships marathon starts and finishes at Tower Bridge. It follows the north side of the Thames as far as Westminster before looping back along the river and through the City. There are some wonderful landmarks along the way.

Opposite – left to right: Dorando Pietri finishes the 1908 London marathon; Delfo Cabrera wins Olympic gold in 1948; Women’s marathon runners on The Mall during the London 2012 race.
Newham

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Technology has developed drastically since the days when athletes routinely dug their own starting holes and races were hand-timed. From electronic starting blocks to video distance measurement and photo-finish systems, there are ever-expanding methods to ensure that athletics events are fair and measured with split-second and millimetre accuracy. In addition, a large team of technical officials ensure athletes play by the rules and have their efforts correctly recorded.

At the IAAF World Championships there will be over 180 technical officials for track and field, and roughly 35 for the race walk events and the marathons. “It’s a mixture of human input and top technology,” explains Chris Cohen, the Head of Competition.

Races begin when the starter pistol sounds. Rather than a real gun, the starting official will pull the trigger on an electronic device connected to the timing system as well as the starting blocks. (Real guns are used only to recall athletes after a false start.) Blocks are used for all races up to and including 400m. On the start line, if an athlete moves within one tenth of a second of the gun sounding they are ruled to have false-started, the race is stopped and the offending athlete disqualified.

However, as Cohen explains, it’s not always so simple. He reflects on one of the most famous false starts, by Usain Bolt in Daegu in 2011. “If you look at a video of the race – and I was standing behind the start – one of the other athletes actually twitched slightly; his elbow moved. Although Usain didn’t use that as a reason for the false start, that may well have been what set him off to do the false start.”

In the event of a false start, athletes need to be notified if they are being recalled. “We actually have to have proper guns [for the recall] because, although there is an alarm that goes off, the athletes still need something fairly loud to bring them back again,” Cohen adds. “That’s because they are concentrating so hard on what they are doing.”

One of the major challenges Cohen and his colleagues face is bringing those real guns into the stadium. “We’ve had to go through the Metropolitan Police to make sure that’s all correct. What’s quite funny is that we have to do the same thing for the marathon and the race walks. The race walks are on The Mall, right in front of the Queen’s house. We’ve had to have lots of discussions to make sure that can happen.”

Since 1985, Seiko has provided timing and measurement services to more than 170 IAAF events around the world.
After the gun sounds and the athletes are away, other technology further down the track includes cameras capturing finish-line activity. Athletes’ race times are determined precisely when their torsos (rather than other body parts such as heads or arms) cross the finishing line. “It’s tried and tested over many years and it’s being advanced all the time,” Cohen says. “We can now separate athletes to one thousandth of a second.” It was such a blink of an eye that denied British sprinter Adam Gemili an Olympic 200m bronze medal last summer. Narrow margins can make all the difference in the field, too, where a system known as video distance measurement is used. Cameras up in the stands are aimed at the jump pits and the take-off boards, allowing officials to observe the action on a continuously running film. Then there’s the device known as Hawk-Eye which allows officials to spot lane infringements and fouls.

Cohen says none of the technology available to him would do its job if it wasn’t for the dedicated team of officials using it. “It’s a massive team of people. When the world’s best technology and a skilled team come together, there should be no cause for doubt.”

**RISE OF THE MACHINES**

Here are some of the more important technological devices used by athletics officials.

- **STARTING PISTOL**
  This electronic device is fired to start the race. A false start is committed if the athlete leaves the blocks within one tenth of a second (0.1) of the gun sounding.

- **ELECTRONIC STARTING BLOCKS**
  These are connected to the starting system. Pressure pads in the blocks can detect false starts.

- **PHOTO FINISH**
  Finish-line cameras can take up to 2,000 images every second to record athletes’ results to thousandths of a second.

- **WIND GAUGE**
  In the 100m, 200m, sprint hurdles and horizontal jumps, this is used to record how much assistance athletes might receive from wind conditions. Results recorded with a tailwind of more than two metres per second cannot be registered as a record but still count for competition purposes.

- **TRANSPONDER SYSTEM**
  For races over 800m, athletes have chips in their bibs. As they run over loops beneath the track, split times are recorded for every 100 metres of the race. There are also loops on the marathon and race walk courses.

- **VIDEO DISTANCE MEASUREMENT**
  Cameras capture the long and triple jump landing areas so the length of the jump can be recorded. Officials watch the foul line to ensure athletes do not take off beyond the specified point.

- **THROWING CIRCLE**
  This is used for the shot put, discus and hammer, with a cage surrounding the discus and hammer circles. If the athlete touches outside the circle or on top of the stop board, they are deemed to have fouled that attempt.

- **VERTICAL JUMPS BAR**
  When it comes to the vertical jumps, the bars must have a minimum weight and lie flat on the stand. If an athlete knocks off the bar, it’s a foul.

- **ELECTRONIC DISTANCE MEASURING**
  This is used to measure the height of the pole vault bar. It’s also another way of measuring results in the throws and horizontal jumps events.

- **EVENT BOARDS**
  These feature information such as results, start lists and split times in order to keep spectators informed.

- **HAWK-EYE**
  A video referee system which involves placing cameras around the stadium to help rule on infractions such as lane infringements and illegal changeovers in the relays.
Passion has proved paramount for Thomas Röhler. The German Olympic javelin champion’s success has soared over the past few years but his athletics career could have turned out very differently had he not switched pebbles for a spear several years ago.

“I wasn’t a big boy. I was growing a little slower than the other boys, so throwing didn’t really make sense,” says the 25-year-old, reflecting on his early teenage years. “But – and there’s a big but – I always loved throwing. When we would go on holiday I was always happy to have a small competition with my dad, throwing stones from the shore to see who could throw further. It was like a hidden passion.”

At the age of 18 the javelin became Röhler’s focus and he hasn’t looked back since. Now he leads an impressive domestic talent roll which, last year, saw three German men in the world’s top four, with Johannes Vetter and Julian Weber joining Röhler in the Rio Olympic final.

After his Olympic success, Röhler picked up from where he left off at the start of this summer, throwing a monster 93.90m at the Diamond League meeting in Doha to place him second behind only Czech Republic’s Jan Železný on the world all-time list.

He believes the level of domestic competition is certainly playing a part in the rising standard of the event across the board. “At nationals, and if we have meets in Germany, suddenly you have an Olympic final feeling in the javelin throw in Germany,” he says. “So no one can rest, no one can really breathe for two days because you will get afraid the others are going to be training and getting better. That really drives us all.”

Röhler is also leading a generation of younger throwers now making their mark. He says that, back in 2012, he and his peers spotted an opportunity in javelin. “In 2012, when the Olympics was won with a throw of just 84 metres, that was the time that I was an under-23 athlete. Maybe it was a good thing because we saw a chance. Because 84 metres wasn’t that far away for us so it really motivated us. I think this is one of the reasons why we really rushed forward.”

The first occasion, in 2013, when he beat one of his idols – Norway’s two-time Olympic champion Andreas Thorkildsen – was also a turning point for Röhler. “He was that classic role model,” Röhler said. “I really liked the way he threw. I liked the way he made it look so super easy. When I happened to beat him for the first time in competition, all that role model stuff changed.”
Now Röhler, who is coached by Harro Schwuchow in his home town of Jena, is proud to be a figure others look up to. “It’s always nice to inspire young athletes to show them that it is worth going to training. It may be a stressful journey, but I am always trying to show them that it is a really enjoyable trip to start an elite sport.” He is now an ambassador for German school and Olympic training programmes.

Röhler himself enjoys a few unusual training practices. He loves the circuit-training sport known as CrossFit, and he’s quite partial to a bit of slacklining – the activity which involves walking like a tightrope walker along a stretch of rope, suspended a few feet above the ground. “It really helps to have a balanced body and this is what every athlete should look for in the throws,” he explains.

The 6ft 3in athlete also claims to be very adept at dealing with the stress of competition. “You shouldn’t freak out and stress yourself by wanting things super hard,” he says of his status as reigning Olympic champion. “Just let it come. I can step into the competition quite calm because I know I have done it before.”

Will he do it again this time?

“You shouldn’t freak out and stress yourself by wanting things super hard. Just let it come.”

Thomas Röhler (Germany)
Event: Javelin
PB: 93.90m
Born: September 30, 1991, Jena, Germany
Best results:
2016 Olympic gold; 2015 IAAF World Championships 4th; 5 x national champion.
“I FEEL LIKE IT’S REALLY JUST THE BEGINNING OF SO MUCH MORE I CAN DO AS AN ATHLETE. SO WHY NOT BELIEVE IN GETTING THAT SUB-43?”

Wayde Van Niekerk
400M WORLD RECORD HOLDER

“I’M SCARED OF HEIGHTS.”

Ekaterini Stefanidi
OLYMPIC POLE VAULT CHAMPION

“DESPITE THE FACT THAT I NEEDED A KIDNEY, I WAS READY TO RUN.”

Aries Merritt
110M HURDLES WORLD RECORD HOLDER

GET THE INSIDE TRACK ON THE WORLD’S BEST ATHLETES

spikes.iaaf.org  @spikesmag
The best athletes in the world have been at the heart of classrooms across Great Britain this year with more than 1000 schools using Starting Blocks, the official education programme of the IAAF World Championships London 2017.

Starting Blocks has a vast range of free, curriculum-based educational resources for pupils aged 5-14, offering teachers new and innovative ways to inspire, motivate and engage their pupils with the Summer of World Athletics.

Through a variety of classroom or whole-school activities, the resources use PE and sport to introduce young people to athletics, maths and numeracy in celebration of the 200 countries coming together for this summer’s events, and English and literacy to showcase the many faces – athletes, volunteers, sponsors and organisers – who will play a big part at the championships in London.

The subjects, competitions and activities are divided into sub-sections; Summer of World Athletics, The World in One City and Faces of Summer. The specific areas are targeted at three separate groups aged 5-7, 7-11 and 11-14.

Activities on offer for children aged 11-14 include a newspaper article activity with the aim of teaching pupils to tailor their writing to specific audiences and contexts, learning the uses and benefits of statistics in sport, and physical activities introducing pupils to techniques used by para athletes such as guide running and seated throwing.

For pupils aged 7-11, the activities designed include a postcard-making activity intended to be part of a schoolwide competition, lessons in practising the range of athletics skills needed in the heptathlon, and maths exercises which involve measuring and estimating distance, accurately recording and converting time, and comparing figures.

Those resources aimed at the youngest children also include an introduction to techniques used in para athletics in PE lessons, quizzes and puzzles about London, and storyboard exercises teaching kids about the work of the volunteers at the IAAF World Championships.

All throughout the programme, Starting Blocks uses many of the world’s best athletes to involve children in the build-up to the championships. These include Mo Farah, Katarina Johnson-Thompson and Adam Gemili.

Championship mascot Hero the Hedgehog also features heavily throughout the resource pack and is prominent in those activities which focus on numeracy and literacy.

The resource pack also includes a bank of videos and photos which can be utilised in and out of the classroom, as well as other opportunities relating to the championships.

Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT said: “The NASUWT is proud to be supporting the Starting Blocks programme which will help further advance the goals of increasing access to sport for children. “The Union has a long tradition of supporting and increasing access to sport for disabled and able-bodied children and young people and elevating the profile of Para Athletics is hugely important.”

“This programme will help inspire children and young people to get involved in athletics as participants and spectators and by providing creative and practical teaching resources, Starting Blocks is giving teachers invaluable support to help them motivate and encourage pupils to achieve and succeed in this area.”

NASUWT represents members in all sectors of education and teachers in all roles including heads and deputies. The NASUWT is the largest union representing teachers and headteachers throughout the UK.
For someone who admits she is afraid of heights, Katerina Stefanidi has chosen a rather challenging profession. However, the reigning Olympic champion pole vaulter has never been one to shy away from stepping out of her comfort zone in the pursuit of raising her own personal bar.

Dealing with difficulties has been a regular occurrence throughout her life. In her younger days she had to overcome eating disorders – she admits she was “borderline bulimic” as a teenager. And when she moved from her home country of Greece back in 2008 to study and train at Stanford University in California she encountered many problems with the new language. The English she had learned in Greece was very academic, and hardly useful in everyday life. American slang and colloquialisms posed particular problems for her.

Yet she continues to be based in America, where she lives with husband Mitchell Krier – also a pole vaulter but now retired – and it’s from that base that she is preparing to further elevate her sporting career by capturing her first IAAF World Championships title in London. She may well be hoping the medal podium isn’t too far above terra firma.

“It might sound surprising for a pole vaulter, but I’m afraid of heights. Even if I’m two feet off the ground, I’m freaking out,” Stefanidi told Steve Landells in Spikes magazine. “If I am up
high I get nauseous and dizzy and I’m afraid I will fall. It is strange because I never feel afraid of heights when I pole vault. I think I feel a lot more in control. I know it sounds crazy."

That feeling of being in control is largely down to her mental preparation. As a graduate in cognitive psychology, the 27-year-old certainly knows a thing or two about the power of the mind. She says she does everything she can to prevent her thoughts getting in the way when it comes to the heat of competition. Thanks to her relentless work ethic, she has honed the vaulting process to such a degree that she is almost able to switch into automatic-pilot mode.

“I would say I have learned how to turn my brain off,” she explains. “By that I mean not over-thinking every jump, and dwelling on moving up to a bigger pole and gripping higher. Experience has taught me to relax. I have vaulted for so long my body knows what to do.”

The process certainly seems to be working. Stefanidi has already secured the European Indoor title this year and has prepared for these World Championships with a level of confidence raised by the gold medal she secured in Rio. “We learned from last year what worked for me and what didn’t,” she adds. “I’ve got faster and I’ve got fitter as a result. It wasn’t just winning Rio, but the consistency I had in jumping over 4.80m last year that gave me a different confidence coming into the season.”

That self-assurance comes with a sense of calm, too. As the Olympic champion, Stefanidi is now an athlete under increased scrutiny and a conspicuous target for other competitors to aim at. But she refuses to allow this to weigh down on her. Enjoying her sport is the most important thing.

“It might sound surprising for a pole vaulter, but I’m afraid of heights. Even if I’m two feet off the ground, I’m freaking out.” Spikes magazine

“Those who treat the sport too seriously usually go worse. That [serious] approach only works for maybe 10 to 20 per cent of people,” she says. “Most people do sports for fun. This feeling can make you want to get on the next pole and overcome your fears.”

And, if anyone knows how to do just that with remarkable success, then it is this Greek champion.
Brendan Foster’s love affair with athletics is a never-ending one. Athlete, event pioneer, marketer, television commentator… he has had myriad roles over the years. The sport which has given him so much, and to which he has contributed so greatly, will always be in his blood.

This IAAF World Championships will, however, mark the final chapter of one aspect of a varied and remarkable career. After the final moments are played out at the London Stadium this summer, the former European and Commonwealth champion will hang up his BBC microphone for good and bid a fond farewell to a broadcasting career which first began back in the early 1980s.

Bowing out at a major championships on British soil, and at the venue which was the epicentre of the unforgettable 2012 Olympics (at which he commentated of course), would seem entirely fitting. “That was the plan. I thought ‘I want to leave before they chuck me out!’” he says in that instantly recognisable voice of his.

“Running was my hobby, it wasn’t my career. We were amateur athletes so we all had to work for a living.”

– Brendan Foster

Like the great David Coleman before him, Foster’s distinctive tones have provided the soundtrack to some of the great moments in athletics history. This 69-year-old originally from County Durham has been invited into the homes of millions, adding his own dashes of colour to the sporting pictures being painted on screens across the globe. He speaks with a voice of authority because, when it comes to athletics, he has seen it, done it and designed the race T-shirt.

Although he grew up dreaming of playing football for his beloved Newcastle United, he was captivated as an 11-year-old by the performances of athletes such as Ethiopia’s Abebe Bikila.
and New Zealander Peter Snell at the 1960 Rome Olympics. A seed was planted in his mind. “At weekends, I used to play football in the morning and then run for my club Gateshead Harriers in the afternoon in all the local road races. I used to finish third or fourth,” he recalls. “One day the football match was cancelled because the ground was frozen, so I went home, had something to eat and went to the race in the afternoon. I won it and I thought ‘I like that!’ I packed in playing football when I was around 16 and started running seriously.”

It proved to be a wise choice as Foster began to realise the athletic potential he possessed. In the late 1960s he was selected to run for the British Universities in a race against the English Cross Country Union and the Combined services. “When I looked at the entry list, there were nine runners for each team and I was the ninth-ranked university lad. I thought, ‘Oh no, I’m going to be last here’. So I set off quicker than normal, trying not to be last, and I ended up winning. That was when I realised I could be quite good at running.”

He was right. Those Commonwealth and European titles would follow, not to mention an Olympic bronze medal and world records for two miles and 3000m.

These were not the days, however, of full-time training, lavish appearance fees and endorsement contracts. “Running was my hobby, it wasn’t my career,” Foster explains. “We were amateur athletes so we all had to work for a living.” He started off as a school teacher, then worked in the recreation services for the local authority.

It was in this guise that Foster played a key role in organising a 5k fun run in Gateshead in 1977 – a race to which the origins of mass participation running in Britain can be traced. Then in 1980, as he prepared for his final year as an athlete, he took part in a race in New Zealand called Round the Bays with fellow British athlete Dave Moorcroft. “I said to Dave: ‘I tell you what, when I get back and I retire after the Olympics, I’m going to organise an event like this is in the Northeast of England’. And that’s what we did.”

That event was the Great North Run, the world famous half marathon which now attracts thousands of participants – both amateur and elite – from across the globe.

_A LIFE IN ATHLETICS_

Brendan Foster picks the key moments of his career

**Highlight of his running career**

“Breaking the world record for 3000m at Gateshead was like a dream come true, at the opening of the stadium.” Foster had organised the Gateshead Games to coincide with the regeneration of his local track, at which he lowered the world mark in 1974.

**Greatest commenting moments**

“It’s not the moments, it’s the people. Mo Farah’s performances at the Olympic Games in 2012 were fantastic, while one of my favourites was Kelly Holmes doing the Olympic double in 2004. Haile Gebrselassie beating Paul Tergat in the 2000 Olympic Games 10,000m by an inch was remarkable.”

**Greatest athlete ever?**

“For me it would have to be a distance runner. My list of the all-time greats of distance running would be Emil Zatopek, Paavo Nurmi, Haile Gebrselassie, Lasse Viren, Kenenisa Bekele and Mo Farah.”

Amidst all of this, he worked as the UK boss of Nike, and also launched a broadcasting career. The latter saw him learning tricks of the trade from a grand master in the art – David Coleman. “What I learned from him is that you have to be prepared,” says Foster. “You study the field and the form of the runners to know what to expect so you can talk about it. You can’t just turn up and busk it. I also learned about when to talk and when not to talk. Don’t say anything until you’ve got something to say.”

There should be plenty to talk about when it comes to the 2017 IAAF World Championships. Foster hopes he will be able to wax lyrical about more gold medals for Mo Farah, who will be saying a goodbye of his own as he bows out of major track competition.

Foster has never been someone to look back, preferring to focus on the next challenge ahead. When this husband and father of two grown-up kids does grant himself the odd moment of reflection, however, he is not disappointed. “For me, once you’ve been a runner, the next best thing is to coach the guy who wins the race,” he says. “The next best thing after that is to be the guy who commentates on the guy that wins the race. After that it’s to organise the event where the guy wins the race. And after that it’s to be the friend of the guy who wins the race. So I suppose I’ve been lucky in that I’ve been able to do all those things.”
It took a while for Colombian triple jumper Caterine Ibargüen to find her best event, but since then she’s been unstoppable.

By Jason Henderson, Athletics Weekly

When Caterine Ibargüen took triple jump gold in Rio, the whole of Colombia celebrated the nation’s first-ever Olympic gold in athletics. The loudest cheers of all, though, came from the small town of Apartadó where she grew up. The biggest tears, meanwhile, were shed by the grandmother who raised her.

Ibargüen’s parents split up when she was a child due to the armed conflict in Colombia, leaving her grandmother, Ayola, to bring her up in difficult circumstances. Food wasn’t always easy to find and danger lurked on every street corner, especially after nightfall, but Ayola was determined to give the youngster a safe and healthy upbringing.

So when Ibargüen went on to claim an Olympic gold medal more than 20 years later, Ayola was the proudest and most emotional person in Colombia as the country was enveloped in a sea of yellow flags and celebrations. “Times were difficult but Apartadó has always been full of colour and music,” Ibargüen remembers. “People had so little but they still decorated the streets and danced the rumba. As a child you don’t think about the troubles.”
Ibargüen’s achievement was by no means an overnight success story. For years she focused on the high jump and even flirted with long jump before eventually finding her best event in the triple jump. Her quest for greatness also involved her leaving not only her home town in northwest Colombia, but also her home nation. In her search for success she relocated to Puerto Rico.

When she finally found it, it was greater than she could ever have dreamed. For not only did she win Olympic gold in Rio but she enjoyed an incredible unbroken streak of 34 victories between 2012 and 2016, earning her the reputation as one of the most dominant athletes in track and field.

As a child she played volleyball but her talent in athletics was soon spotted, and it wasn’t long before she was taking part in sprints and jumps events. After growing up with her grandmother, she moved to Medellín, Colombia’s second-largest city, in her mid-teens, and won multiple medals at junior level in addition to competing at international IAAF youth and junior championships in high jump and triple jump.

In 2004 she travelled to the Athens Olympics but failed to make it through the high jump qualifying. Four years later she failed to make it to the Olympic Games altogether and realised something had to change. “I felt depressed,” she remembers, “like I wanted to quit the sport.”

Then came the move to Puerto Rico where she was coached by Ubaldo Duany, a former Cuban international long jumper. From that point onwards she focused on triple jump. “We needed to correct some major technical mistakes, and had to start from scratch,” she says. “It was hard, but I remained optimistic.”

Success did not come straight away but in 2011 she took bronze at the IAAF World Championships in South Korea. In 2012 she won silver at the London Olympics despite pulling her hamstring on the eve of the Games. Since then she has been unstoppable, which is remarkable if you consider she did not discover her true talent for triple jump until she was 27 years old.

Following London her incredible winning streak began and included victories at the IAAF World Championships in Moscow in 2013 and Beijing in 2015. The gold in Moscow was particularly hard fought as, while travelling on a bus to the stadium, she fell sick and passed out after eating a bowl of oatmeal. But somehow she recovered to take the win.

Her unbroken run of victories finally came to an end in Birmingham in June last year when London 2012 champion Olga Rypakova beat her again. But Ibargüen went on to take gold at the Olympics in Rio with a big jump of 15.17m.

Aged 33, time is running out for Ibargüen to challenge the 15.50m world record held by Inessa Kravets of Ukraine. Nevertheless, her best of 15.31m, set in Monaco in 2014, places her No.5 on the world all-time rankings.

“For years she focused on the high jump and even flirted with long jump before eventually finding her best event in the triple jump.”

“People had so little but they still decorated the streets and danced the rumba.”

Caterine Ibargüen (Colombia)

Event: Triple jump

PB: 15.31m

Born: February 12, 1984, Apartado, Colombia

Best results (triple jump):
- 2016 Olympic gold;
- 2015 World gold;
- 2013 World gold;
- 2012 Olympic silver;
- 2011 World bronze.
Athletics runs in Michelle Carter’s family. Her father, Michael, won Olympic silver in the shot put at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984 and last year she went one better with gold in the women’s event in Rio.

It was a great year for the 31-year-old as her Olympic triumph saw her break the US record with a throw of 20.63m. It followed her victory at the IAAF World Indoor Championships in Portland, Oregon, a few months earlier with a US indoor record.

Demonstrating her ability to deal with a high-pressure championship environment, both events were won with thrilling, last-round efforts, too.

It surpassed the achievements of her father, although Michael can point to a sporting career that included, impressively, winning three Super Bowls with the San Francisco 49ers, plus a shot best of 21.76m.

After winning world junior gold in Italy in 2004 and then graduating from the University of Texas in 2007, Carter has worked her way through the senior ranks. At the 2008 Olympics she was 15th and improved to fifth in London 2012. Her first world outdoor medal came with bronze in Beijing in 2015, followed by gold in Rio 12 months later when she became the first American woman to win the Olympic shot put since the event was introduced into the Games in London in 1948.

Her father has coached Michelle throughout her career. “My dad always told us growing up, ‘Inch by inch is a cinch; yard by yard is hard,’” she told the IAAF. “I come to compete; that’s one thing my dad always went over with me. When it’s time to go, it’s time to go. There is no time for thinking, there is no time for second guessing.”

Carter is using her new status as world No.1 to alter perceptions about women’s shot put. She is demonstrating that large, powerful female throwers can be just as glamorous as...
athletes in other events. A qualified make-up artist, she has her own line of make-up called Shot Diva. In addition, she has modelled in ESPN The Magazine’s body issue and she hosts camps called You Throw Girl which aim to boost sports confidence among girls of school age. “Everyone’s body was built to do something,” she says. “I was built to do something, and that’s how I was built.”

Speaking to sports journalist Mary Pilon in The New Yorker magazine, she explained more about her feminist mission. “I think a lot of girls and women shy away from the shot put because it’s not looked at as something a woman would want to do or a woman should do.”

However, she believes the image of the sport is improving. “You know what? We’re girls and we can throw heavy balls and be in the dirt and we look good while we’re doing it. I think it’s bringing more attention to the sport and girls are realising, ‘Hey, I can do this and it’s okay to do this as a girl.’

“For a couple of years, being professional, I kind of questioned myself. Should I wear my false lashes or take the time I want to take so I can feel good when I go out on the field? Because nobody else was really doing that. I thought, ‘No, I’m not going to change what I believe I should look like to fit anybody else’s standards’. I believe if you look your best, you’re going to feel your best; you’re going to do your best.”

Women’s shot put used to be one of the less popular events in athletics. But now Carter is turning it into a stylish and entertaining show that will be one of the highlights at the IAAF World Championships.

“**My dad always told us growing up, ‘Inch by inch is a cinch; yard by yard is hard’.”**

Michelle Carter (USA)

**Event:** Shot put

**PB:** 20.63m

**Born:** October 12, 1985, San Jose, United States

**Best results:**

Faster, higher, stronger. The first across the line, the highest jump over the bar, the furthest throw down the field... the sport of athletics could well be a metaphor for the struggle against the adversities of life. All of which makes it the perfect subject matter for feature films.

No wonder, then, that over the years dozens of films have been made about athletics, in just about every genre you can think of: thrillers, dramas, comedies, rom-coms, a horror, even an animated cartoon. The storylines and the quality of these films vary enormously. But one thing they all share is the message that to be an athlete you have to have fire in your belly, passion in your heart, and lots of dedication.

To save you the nuisance of sitting through substandard athletics movies, we have amalgamated reviews from various movie and athletics websites (including IMDB.com, Athletics Weekly, Ranker.com, Sportsinmovies.com, Letsrun.com, Competitor.com, and Scene-stealers.com) and arrived at the ultimate top five best athletics films of all time.

**THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER**
(dir: Tony Richardson, 1962)

“You can play it by rules... or you can play it by ear - what counts is that you play it right for you.”

This gritty, black and white Midlands drama stars Tom Courtenay as Colin Smith, a young offender who ends up in Borstal for robbing a bakery. Thanks to his prowess as a runner he impresses the school governor who sees his opportunity to win a trophy in the annual cross-country race against the local public school.

So bitter and disaffected is Smith at the way society seeks to oppress him, and so filled is he with class hatred, that he decides the best way for him to get back at the “coppers, governors, poshos, army officers and members of parliament” is by excelling at running. “Running’s always been a big thing in our family,” he proclaims in the opening scene of the film. “Especially running away from the police.”

In a final twist to the tale, however, Smith decides that revenge over his oppressors will be far sweeter if he in fact throws the race at the last minute and loses his governor’s beloved trophy.

**Critic says:** “Richardson’s pot-shots at consumerism and class have lost some urgency, but the nihilistic, punky buzz packs an immortal wallop. Classic.”
(Total Film)
PERSONAL BEST
(dir: Robert Towne, 1982)
“When you run into yourself you run into feelings you never thought you had.”
Immerse yourself in lives and loves of a group of American women training for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. Their hopes are dashed when USA announces its boycott of the Games.
Critic says: “One of the healthiest and sweatiest celebrations of physical exertion I can remember.” (Chicago-Sun Times)

RUNNING BRAVE
(dir: D.S. Everett, 1983)
“The one athlete they least expected overran all their expectations.”
The true story of late 1950s Native American Billy Mills who appeared almost from nowhere to win gold medal in the 10,000 metres at the Tokyo Olympics.
Critic says: “I’m prepared to believe that most of the things in this film happened more or less as we see them happening, especially because Running Brave works on a fairly restrained key.” (Roger Ebert)

WITHOUT LIMITS
(dir: Robert Towne, 1998)
“Pre. His spirit set a pace only his heart could follow.”
This is the biopic of American track legend Steve Prefontaine who campaigned for athletes’ rights. Billy Crudup plays the runner while Donald Sutherland is his famous coach Bill Bowerman. Together they work their way towards the 1972 Munich Olympics. The relationship between them is perhaps the most intriguing element of the movie. Tom Cruise was originally suggested for the role of Prefontaine but, 36 years old at the time, was considered too old. Crudup, on the other hand, had been an accomplished athlete at college and managed to run convincingly during the action sequences.
Critic says: “Both Crudup and Sutherland deliver superb performances in the support of a thoughtful, committed and richly visualised film.” (Netflix)

THE JERICHO MILE
(dir: Michael Mann, 1979)
“He’s running for his freedom... and his life.”
Larry Murphy is in Folsom Prison for murder. But, boy, can he run. In fact, he’s so fast, that he’s clocking up four-minute miles – a skill that brings him to the attention of the prison warden who decides to get him trained up for the US Olympic trials. But first of all there’s the rather pressing need to build an athletics track in the prison yard. Not all the prisoners are on song.
Critic says: “Peter Strauss gives one of the great one-off performances in TV history.” (Antagony & Ecstasy)
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BRITISH ATHLETICS
#REPRESENT
britishathletics.org.uk
the gold medal is the 1981 Oscar-winning classic Chariots Of Fire. Sometimes criticised for its patriotic self-congratulation, the Hugh Hudson-directed movie was nevertheless a favourite at the box office. With a star cast, including John Gielgud, Ian Holm, Nigel Havers, Ben Cross and Ian Charleson, and a goose pimple-inducing soundtrack by Vangelis, it won a total of four Oscars, including Best Picture, and inspired university students all over the country to (God forbid!) get up for an early morning run.

The film tells the true story of Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams, two runners in the British team at the 1924 Paris Olympics. “The favoured few, the most powerful athletic force ever to leave these shores,” is how they are described. Liddell is a devout Christian who wrestles between his desire to serve God both as a missionary and as an athlete, while Abrahams is a Jew whose single-minded desire for victory helps him beat his opponents and the anti-Semitic bigots surrounding him. Ultimately, by competing at the highest level both Liddell and Abrahams manage to shake off the demons haunting them.

And what about that beach scene, eh?

Critics say: “From the opening scene of pale young men racing barefoot along the beach, backed by Vangelis’s now famous anthem, the film is utterly compelling.” (The Times)

“From the opening scene of pale young men racing barefoot along the beach, backed by Vangelis’s now famous anthem, the film is utterly compelling.” (The Times)
Good luck to all the athletes taking part from the City of London Corporation
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IAAF MEMBER FEDERATIONS

Code  Name
AFG  Afghanistan Athletics Federation
ANG  Angola Amateur Athletic Association
AUS  Australian Athletics Federation
AUT  Austrian Athletics Federation
BAR  Bangladesh Athletic Federation
BAN  Bahamas Association of Athletic Associations
BAS  Belarus Athletics Association
BFA  Botswana Athletics Association
BHR  Bahrain Amateur Athletic Federation
BEL  Belgian Athletic federation
BEN  Belgian National Athletics Association
BOL  Bolivariana de Atletismo de Bolivia
BRA  Brazilian Athletics Federation
BUL  Bulgarian Athletic Federation
BWA  British Virgin Islands Athletics Association
CAB  Bermuda National Athletics Association
CAM  Cameroonian Athletics Association
CAN  Canadian Athletic Federation
CAY  Cayman Islands Athletic Association
CER  Central Asian Athletic Federation
CFA  Central African Republic Association
CHE  Swiss Athletics
CHN  Chinese Athletic Association
COD  Congolese Athletic Federation
COG  Congo Amateur Athletic Federation
CRI  Costa Rican Athletic Federation
CRU  Cuban Federation of Athletics
CYP  Cyprus Athletic Federation
CZE  Czech Athletic Federation
DEN  Danish Athletic Federation
DNK  Danish National Athletic Association
DOM  Dominican Athletic Federation
DOM  Dominican Federation of Athletics
ECU  Ecuadorian Athletic Federation
EGY  Egyptian Athletic Federation
ERI  Eritrean National Athletic Federation
ESA  East African Athletic Federation
ETH  Ethiopian Athletic Federation
FIN  Finnish Athletic Federation
FIN  Finnish Athletic Federation
FRA  Federation Francaise de l’Athlétisme
FSM  Federated States of Micronesia
GAB  Gabonese Athletic Federation
GBO  Ghanaian Athletics Association
GEO  Athletic Federation of Georgia
GHA  Ghana Athletics Association
GIB  Gibraltar Amateur Athletic Association
GIN  Guinean Athletic Association
GMB  Guineas (Burnabas)
GHA  Ghanaian Athletic Association
GML  Mongolian Athletic Federation
HKG  Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association
HUN  Hungarian Athletics Association
HAI  Haitian Olympic Committee
HND  Hiahntan Athletic Association
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IAAF Prize Money

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Grand Total 7,194,000
The IAAF World Championships would like to thank the following companies and organisations for their support.

OFFICIAL PARTNERS

- TDK
- TOYOTA
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- ASICS

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