

# U.S. Masters International Track Team

David H.R. Pain, Director  
Helen L. Pain, Co-director



1160 Via España  
La Jolla, California 92037  
(714) 459-6362

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Dear Fellow World Travelers:

Now that we are home and have had an opportunity to rest up from the rigors of our grand invasion of Europe, we can reflect on the success of the tour. Our initial objective was to tie in our Masters competition in London and Köln with a viewing of the Olympics. This objective failed when too few of us succeeded in getting games tickets. Although we personally did not get to Munich for the games, we are of the opinion that for veteran athletes it is more fulfilling to do than to spectate. We have also come to the conclusion that no sports event can buck the Olympics. Because of this conflict in timing...the Masters Tour received little publicity. Fortunately, the Olympics did not damage our tour directly although we had some anxious moments when the Mayor of Göteborg threatened to cancel our meet due to the unfortunate happenings at Munich.

We hope that most of you thoroughly enjoyed the trip as much as Helen and I did in putting it on for you.

Since this was our maiden tour effort, certain errors and omissions occurred which we wish to avoid in the future. Therefore, we would welcome any critique or comments you might wish to make about the trip and positive suggestions about how successive tours can be improved.

## INVASION OF AUSTRALIA:

While in Europe we discussed with WAL SHEPPARD the plans for a Masters Tour "Down Under." Tentative dates are December 14, 1973 to January 1, 1974... departing from either San Francisco or Los Angeles to Hawaii, Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. Wal is arranging the All-Australian Vets Track and Field Championships for Melbourne; and BUD DEACON will supervise a similar meet in Hawaii. Elsewhere we will engage in cross-country and/or road races. Helen and I are flying to Hawaii and Australia this Eastertime to complete the arrangements. One thing is for sure, and that is that the Aussies proved themselves as capable athletes as the British, and our "Old Boys" will have their hands full. We are confident the Aussies will prove as good hosts as they are competitors.

## WORLD MASTERS TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS - 1975:

At the invitation of our "man in Toronto," (the capable leader of the Canadian Masters) DON FARQUHARSON, we dropped off at Boston and flew on to Toronto where Don took us for a tour of his beautiful city bordering Lake Ontario. Later we met with the Sports Director of the Canadian National Exhibition, KEN TWIGG, who, we hope, will favorably consider sponsoring the first World Masters at the C N E, August, 1975. We will keep you advised in subsequent newsletters as to progress made in this direction.

## MASTERS AAU CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS:

With the approach of the autumn the cross-country season is upon us, and with our A.A.U. Masters Championships once again being presented November 18th, in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The San Diego Track Club - '71 Champs - will defend their title this time reinforced by a newly-turned 40, BILL GOOKIN. Hopefully, more team entries will participate as cross-country is a team sport. Also, we are advised, the Canadians, who came across the border to compete, were ruled ineligible for individual or team awards. If such is the case, this is pettifoggery unbecoming a Masters event. Any team, or individual willing to travel several hundred miles to compete should be eligible for awards.

THE MISSING BOX CAPER:

Some of you may recall we ordered a shipment of scarlet windbreakers air-freighted to London. They arrived one day late. They trailed us to Oslo, via Copenhagen, and ended up, we think, at Köln. We have sent wires and letters to recover the shipment, which, hopefully will return shortly to San Diego, the point of origin. If you did not get your windbreaker, or any other item of equipment previously ordered, please advise us and it will be supplied.

We are re-ordering all items of Masters equipment and should have them within 90 days. Get your orders in now so we can order the correct sizes.

THE MAN WITH THE CALIPERS:

DR. MICHAEL POLLOCK and his lovely wife followed the U.S.Masters from Stockholm to Köln. Dr. Pollock is making a comprehensive study of veteran athletes and is attempting to measure and question as many as possible. If he missed you, drop him a note at Department of Physical Education, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, No.Carolina 27106. Enclosed is his questionnaire which he requests you fill out if not done already.

Some authorities question the wisdom of competitive sport for men over 40. We know they are ill-advised. However, it will take a study, such as Dr. Pollock's, to prove the point. His findings will appear in subsequent Masters Newsletters.

MARTTI LAITINEN:

Although several of our Masters suffered muscle pulls and similar injuries (plus DR. ED REINER'S broken foot), our one serious casualty was MARTTI LAITINEN (65) 1107 E. Denny Way, Apt. C6A, Seattle, Washington 98122. He suffered a heart attack during the walk competition at Stockholm and spent three weeks in the hospital there. He recovered sufficiently to make the return flight from Köln and is presently recuperating at his home in Seattle. Via telephone he reports to us that he is doing well and on the way to a full recovery. Martti would appreciate a note from his U.S.Masters friends.

To experience a serious disability in a foreign country is very hard; however, several good things happened as a result of Martti's illness, in particular the involvement of those who rallied around to give him support. CAROLYN O'NEIL went to the hospital and covered during the first critical hours. Later team member DR. JOHN HUTCHINSON, San Francisco cardiologist, saw Martti at the hospital, arranged for specialist follow-up care, and followed his progress by telephone through to Köln. Martti was visited by HELGE JOHANNESSEN'S sister who lives in Stockholm, and PER SUNDELIUS (who put on the Stockholm meet) visited him regularly and advanced the balance of Martti's hospital bill (which has since been repaid, or course). Martti wishes to thank all who helped him during his confinement.

OUR TRAINER:

Besides being a neat fellow, PETER SCOTT, 106 Chipstead Way, Woodmansterne, Banstead, Surrey, England, did a fine job in patching up us "Old Boys" and helping us survive four weeks of competition.

The deal with Peter was \$200.00 fee plus expenses and flight back to England from Köln. All told, his services, including housing (donated by Bud Deacon), meals, and transportation was approximately \$600.00, which has been paid.

We have received a total of \$320.00 in contributions for his services. All who met Peter and availed themselves of his services know what a terrific value we received and how he gave of himself.

For example the first night at Köln he administered to 25 athletes who received either treatment or rub-downs. Approximately 60 of our group have contributed between \$2.00 and \$5.00 toward his cost. If you availed yourself of his services and have not already made a contribution, any you would care to make would be appreciated. Thank you.

THANK YOUS:

For those of you who participated in the tour, enclosed is a list of the names and addresses of the people who were primarily responsible for our competitions in Europe. You may wish to drop them a note of appreciation, or commence a correspondence with a view to continued competition, later trips, etc. Also for the participants of the tour, enclosed is the Roster of all who took the Masters European Tour. Its compilation was lots of work but so many have requested it we couldn't refuse. Also enclosed is the list of walkers who participated in the tour. Let's see that list expand considerably by our next tour.

UNIFORMITY OF IMPLEMENTS:

PHIL PARTRIDGE notes that comparison of results in Division II and III in the Shot, Discus and Javelin are meaningless due to the differing weights of implements used. We anticipated this difficulty and sent a suggested list of implements prepared by CHUCK McMAHON to each meet director. Somehow those lists got lost between San Diego and the shot ring in Köln.

RACEWALKING EVENTS:

At the suggestion of the walkers we will shoot for the 20Km. and 50Km. walks in our next tour. It will be necessary for our present nucleus of dedicated walkers to prevail upon their heel and toe bretheran to join the U.S.Masters so that when a racewalk is included on the program, we will have a strong representation.

MEET RESULTS:

Many of you have asked for meet results. We wish to comply. However, the results of the ASV meet alone ran to 16 pages. Therefore, it will be necessary to recompile and condense these results so that they may be printed in more manageable form. We do not have the Helsinki results. If you have an extra set, please forward them to DAVID PAIN.

As most of us know, our efforts in Europe resulted in numerous PR's and most of the Age Group Records printed by Track and Field News were shattered. The results of our meets are being forwarded to Track and Field News and will be published in a revised issue. We have not printed a long summary of race results as space did not permit it in this issue. In addition, we wish to do some comparison of performances. This analysis will be the subject of a later issue of the newsletter.

U.S.MASTERS v. USSR:

U.S.Senator ALAN CRANSTON on leaving us in Helsinki journeyed to Leningrad and then Moscow. While there he met, at our request, with USSR Sports Officials who expressed interest in a visit by the Masters team and who requested more definitive information about our program.

WHAT WAS THE TRIP TO EUROPE LIKE (AS HELEN SAW IT):

Like the hardest month of my life! But the most rewarding! Planning and caring for more than 200 friends for four weeks is WORK and there is no other word for it. The exhaustion of traveling, making lists, carrying supplies, answering questions, running to and from banks, rescheduling and updating, and just the general hassle, were all offset by the cheery smiles, exuberant greetings, hospitable welcomes, blueberry stains, thrilling performances, red roses, names in lights, silver and crystal, and genuine love spread throughout six foreign countries.

Coming home to a two-day kitchen cleaning was balanced by finding a spotless garage and appliances-which-hadn't-worked-for years back in commission. A case of laryngitis which forced a withdrawal from society allowed time to regroup and planning time for the Christmas-in-the-South Pacific tour...in addition to reading the many letters from tour friends.

THANK YOU all who joined us for the first U.S.Masters Track and Field tour. The rest of you, please don't miss the trip in '73.

You might like to know what some of your friends thought about the tour. Courtesy both U.S. Mail and PHIL and ELIZABETH PARTRIDGE. PETE MUNDLE (Calif.): "...superlative tour...It all came off beautifully. It's by far the best tour I've been on, better than those who have had much more experience at it." EVELYN and GEORGE BRACELAND (Pa.): "We both enjoyed our trip immensely. Even if it were possible to have changed anything, we wouldn't know what to change. It was a perfect vacation." CLAUDE HILLS: (Pa.) "I never knew that track was so much fun and the competitors are the finest sportsmen in the world. What a fine bunch of fellows to be with." KEN CARNINE (Calif.): "The new feeling with a better conditioned body, the competition, trips, and the great new friends make the horrors of training worthwhile." JOHN YOUNG (Canada): "It has been terrific to observe and to run with men who have the common interest of maintaining health through jogging and competitive running." JACK GREENWOOD (Kansas): "It's nice to be on this trip with so many great people." HAL COLEN (N.Y.): "I'm jumping with joy to be with such a group. But I do wish I could jump a little further and/or higher." BUD DEACON (Hawaii): "Am enjoying tremendously the association this trip affords with all my 'old' friends and the making of new ones." THANE BAKER (Texas): "Have truly enjoyed this tour and the great people on it. Wish wife were here." JACK GRAY (Can.): "The trip has been marvelous." PETER SCOTT (England): "Feel grateful and honoured to have been associated with this trip as trainer. Look forward to further meets with British Vets along." ALPHONSE JUILLAND (Calif.): "Traveling with fellow athletes is most pleasant." BILL STOCK (Calif.): "This has to be the trip of trips." ROLAND ANSPACH (Ohio): "It is a trip of a lifetime. We will never forget it." GEORGE and SALLY PUTERBAUGH (Oregon): "I'm glad to have had the chance to come on this trip and swing with so many great guys and gals." WIN and LEOTA McFADDEN (Calif.): "We feel it was a rare privilege that we were able to be a part of this great group. There were many experiences that could have happened no other way." EARL CRANGLE (Canada): "The more I think about the trip the more I realize 'How Sweet It Was.'" BOB FINE (N.Y.): "Aside from being battered, bruised and lost from orienteering, the trip has been a ball." ELSIE and DON STILES (Canada): "It has been a pleasure to be part of this tour and to make friends with other Canadians, Australians and the many smiling Americans." A. PUGLIZEVICH (Calif.): "I hope this type of competition continues for many years." WALT McCONNELL (N.J.): "Looking forward to New Zealand, Australia, and Hawaii." JOHN GILMOUR (Australia): "Hope to meet you one day in Australia." ETC....ETC....ETC....

Congratulations to BILL ANDBERG, who returns "the conquering hero" and as "the Gray Ghost of Anoka" will be Grand Marshal of their Hallowe'en Parade.

Thank you all for your inspiring letters and kind thoughts...

#### MASTERS EUROPEAN REFLECTIONS:

After more than two years of effort to convince not only our U.S. Masters to go on a one-month tour of European competition but also our Canadian and Australian counterparts plus making two trips to the continent to convince skeptics there that we really meant business, it is hard to evaluate objectively a project which came about solely because one person felt it should happen, assumed it was the propitious time, and that others would concur. Since everyone involved - who in toto numbered several thousand individuals - did cooperate on a purely voluntary basis, one must conclude from that standpoint that the Masters tour was an unqualified success.

The short term objectives were obvious - having a good time as a tourist, scoring personal athletic bests, running in a newly discovered park or wood - for the most part were readily achieved as these opportunities occurred repeatedly.

More subtle, and much less expected things happened which will be lasting memories of the trip for all of us ... the delight of attending a genuine English garden party complete with gracious host, spacious grounds, meeting our British hosts, and sharing in the oddity of having a tree planted in our honor by none the less than Sir Roger Bannister ... the sharing of six bath tubs which were only filled once and were used on a communal basis with 250 dusty cross-country runners, the water getting browner as each successive sweaty harrier plunged in ... and later, after the rush, to see our fastidious Augie Escamilla luxuriating in a tub brimming with fresh water... Arriving

at London Gatwich Airport at 5:00 a.m., and trying to figure out what you are going to do with 150 tired people until noon when you can get them into the hotel... Observing the personal agony of Ed Reiner, who, committed to the 400m. hurdles, floundered badly over the last three or four hurdles after sustaining a fractured foot... but determined to finish... The delightful comraderie at the Crystal Palace Stadium Pub where vet athletes of many nationalities were drinking and singing together led by the raucus Canadian team. The antics of a crazy Welshman Elwyn Davies (former London bobby) of Toronto (down from 225 to 175 pounds) who was more of a court jester than an athlete, and who armed with a four-foot inflatable "Chiquita Banana" had London office girls virtually falling out of the windows with its manipulations.

The amazement in seeing a just-turned forty year old Englishman split away from his opponents in the 1500m., who was 60.0 and 2:03 at the 400 and 800m. with a final 3:59.3 for by far the best metric mile we have observed in Masters competition.

The reflection on the personal tragedy of a Graham Parnell, full of confidence, in fighting-cock condition, who while leading the cross-country took a wrong turn and failed to finish; fell on the second water jump of the 300m. steeple and dropped out, as he did in the World Veterans Marathon in Köln after leading ... following a collision with a bike or other obstruction, and knowing few mourned his demise.

Recalling that even those in the seats of power, such as a U.S.Senator, achieve perhaps more personal satisfaction from a distant fourth place and a slap on the back with a "well done, Alan" than they do from accomplishing some major political coup.

Watching a consummately beautiful and naturally coordinated 47-year-old Bill Fitzgerald meet challenge after challenge in each city where we competed come off the last turn and stave off defeat on challenges by far younger runners, finally meeting defeat in our last competition at 1500 in Köln and in so doing running his finest race setting a new U.S.Masters record at 4:10.4. ...Observing the sportsmanship of a Bill Gookin, who, just shy of 40 by 5 days, hung to Arthur Walsham of England in the marathon for 26 miles and then stopped at the Refrath stadium entrance so as not to tarnish the Englishman's victory, a race which Bill could have won and in which, if official, he would have bettered 2:25.

Contending with the loss of 202 pieces of luggage (how can you lose an entire baggage car full of luggage complete with one-half dozen vaulting poles?); slightly hysterical athletes who will willingly subject themselves to the torture of slogging 26 miles through the cold rain, but who cannot walk up four flights of stairs in a German family hotel sans elevator; making room assignments and then being advised that "he snores"...or "smokes". .. or, etc.

Contending with obdurate German meet officials committed to pitting Division II and III athletes against Division I in the finals of the 1500 and 10,000m. (won at Refrath in 14:43.8 and 30:52.8 respectively) and trying to explain that a basic concept of Masters competition is to segregate the Divisions due to fundamental differences in ability.

Suffering through a head cold the day the terrible news came from Munich about the senseless terrorist killings and then being advised by our Swedish host that the mayor was considering cancelling our games as a result.

The personal satisfaction of running bests in the 1500, 800, and 5,000m., and the crowning moment of joy when in finishing a distant third one's daughters - who have cheered you on - support your spent exhausted sweaty frame and loyally proclaim your victory ... you cherish your hard-won bronze medal and see your name in the scoreboard lights ... and above all, knowing your efforts and those of a dedicated wife, have been well-spent, opening new avenues of the good life to others and demonstrating convincingly, together with your team, that growing older can be beautiful, fun, and meaningful.