

Beamon's Great 27'2 3/4", 52'3" Tops Indoor Wind-up

At this schizophrenic time of year when track is divided between indoor and outdoor action, there's plenty to talk about in both spheres.

By this late stage in the indoor season, it's becoming repetitive to say Bob Beamon is this issue's standout. But there's no other way to describe his performance at the NCAA championships. The El Paso sophomore's Friday night efforts started with a world record 27'2 3/4" in the long jump. That added 1 3/4" to his eight-week-old mark. Later that night, Beamon took two triple jumps and won the title with 52'3". The over-blown Jim Ryun-Dave Patrick 880 duel didn't come off. Ryun passed it up in favor of an even sterner test. He took on Gerry Lindgren at two-miles and ended the Washington Stater's eight-race NCAA winning streak, 8:39.0 to 8:40.8. Fans at Detroit came away convinced of the awesome talent possessed by Villanova's Larry James. Running his third race of the day, James zipped a 47.0 open quarter--easily the best ever on an 11-lap track. The next day he anchored his school's mile relay with 46.6.

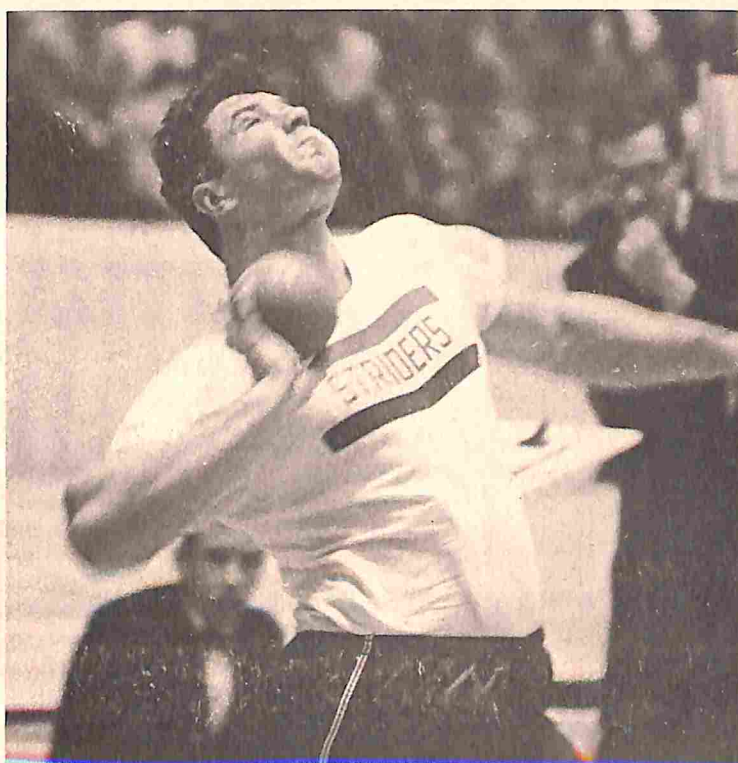
In other meets, Michigan prep Herb Washington gave Charlie Greene a terrific battle in the USTFF 50. Charlie had to tie the world record of 5.1 to beat him. The 17-year-old Washington also had 5.1. Bill Hurd's 29.8 300 at the Western Michigan Relays was the fastest ever recorded, and Tom Randolph also dipped under the old mark (which he co-held at 30.0) with 29.9. European records by Wolfgang Nordwig (17' 3/4" pole vault) and Andrzej Badenski (47.0 400-meters) highlighted the European Indoor Games.

Discus throwers are off to a brilliant start. George Puce has thrown in two meets and already has moved up to third on the all-time list with 211'3". All his throws but one in the series at Reno were over 200-feet, which is startling when you consider his previous lifetime best was 200'0". Jay Silvester reached 199'11" in Australia. Parry O'Brien indicated he's back in good discus form with 191'11". Gary Ordway threw 190'5" at the same meet, a Long Beach all-comers affair that also included a 272'3" javelin toss by Larry Stuart.

Relaying began moving into the spotlight with the approach of April's major relay carnivals. Southern California, with its world record 440 unit intact, already is down to 39.7. The same team also has run 1:23.6 for two laps. Lamar Tech so far has the top mile quarter with a 3:07.5 clocking. Texas (3:09.5) and Rice (3:09.7) also are below 3:10.0.

Gary Knoke started his year with a 50.3 400-meter intermediate time. Ed Caruthers opened outdoors with a 7'2" high jump.

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This meet, the Toronto Maple Leaf Games, was the scene of the first half of GEORGE PUCE's double breakthrough. Here, his shot best zoomed from 62'8" to 64'4". Two weeks later, he exploded with a 211'3" discus toss. It moved him to third on the all-time list. His previous best: 200'0". (Toronto Telegram)

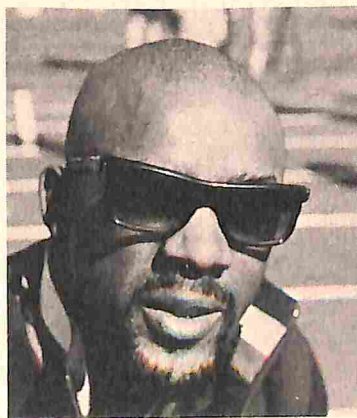
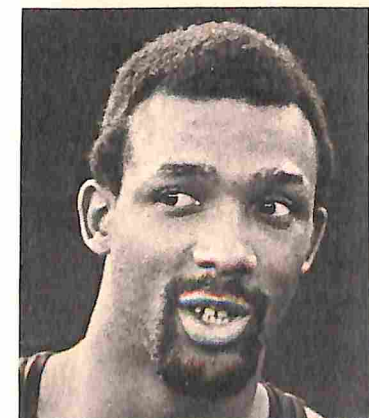
BOYCOTT, WAR

It's Up to IOC, NCAA

Executive board of the International Olympic Committee will meet soon to discuss the controversial IOC decision to readmit South Africa to the Olympics, while on the local front the NCAA still has not given its answer to the proposed settlement of its war with the AAU.

IOC President Avery Brundage bowed to intense pressure from within and without the Olympic movement and called an executive board meeting for April 20-21 in Lausanne, Switzerland. Several courses of action are possible but it appears most likely the board will call for another vote of the entire IOC. The IOC is faced with a boycott of the Games by 42 nations, mostly African, protesting the readmission of racist South Africa. In Mexico, Pedro Ramirez Vasquez, chairman of the Olympic Organizing Committee, said the Games would go on as scheduled, and "we are sure that all will be resolved and that the Games will be a success." Meanwhile, Harry Edwards, leading proponent of a Games boycott by US Negroes, said an international track competition, open to everyone, will be held in an African nation in the late summer. Questions as to details were left unanswered, including the key one of how the meet plans to obtain a sanction from the IAAF, which works very closely with the IOC.

Domestically, the decision of the US Senate-sponsored arbitration board was declared in effect by Chairman Warren Magnuson. The AAU and NAIA have approved the findings but the NCAA and USTFF have not submitted their answer. The NCAA asked 17 questions of the committee and claimed five errors of fact, and wanted time to make its decision after the questions were answered. The feeling remains strong that the NCAA will reject the findings in whole or in part.



The goatee gives away his identity. Otherwise, it would be next-to-impossible at first glance to imagine that both are JOHN CARLOS. He shed his hair the week between the AAU meet and his first outdoors. (Jeff Kroot & Larry Nelson)

PROFILE OF A CHAMPION

Puce: 64'4", 211'3"

Until about a month ago, George Puce considered himself "primarily a discus thrower." Then at the Maple Leaf Games on March 1, he exploded in the shot with a throw of 64'4", an all-time Canadian record. Suddenly he had become a world-class shot putter.

Then two weeks later, he spun himself into Olympic discus contention with a phenomenal 211'3" throw to become the second-longest shot-discus doubler in history. That throw, a Canadian citizen's and British Commonwealth record, came in a great series of 194'0", 209'4", 211'3", 204'8", 202'7" and 201'0" to average a superlative 203'8", nearly five feet better than his previous personal best of 198'10". He becomes the third-longest thrower in history, trailing only Ludvik Danek and Randy Matson. Puce also is second only to Matson as the all-time doubler.

A week before his big fling, Puce gave some indication that he was ready for a long toss when he threw another life-time best of 200'0" from the same Reno, Nevada, circle. Now he says, "If conditions are right in the next couple of meets, I think I can break the world record."

Puce, a 27-year-old Latvian-born Canadian, didn't take up throwing until the relatively advanced age of 19 when he threw 56'2" and 159'0" with high school implements in Toronto. He spent the 1961 and 1963 seasons at the University of Michigan, with a year competing for the Latvian Track Club in between before migrating west in 1966 to compete for the Southern Cal Striders. By then, he had reached over 197-feet with the international discus but still hadn't exceeded 60-feet in the shot. That same year, he placed third in the Commonwealth Games shot put and second in the discus.

Last season, competing for Nevada, Puce finally went over 60-feet in the shot, throwing 60'11 1/4" indoors but slipping to 60'8 3/4" outdoors. This was due in part to a motorcycle accident which injured his neck and kept him out of action from May until the US-Commonwealth meet in July.

At that meet, Puce placed third in the discus at 193'5" and fifth in the shot. He later placed third in both the Pan-American Games and America-Europe matches--the first American to place against the Continentals. Indoors this winter, George had a best of 62'8" before his big put at Toronto.

Puce, 6'4" and 250 lbs. with 10.3 sprint speed, claims a distinction that few if any other athletes can: he holds two national discus records, Canadian and Latvian. "The Latvians in the 'free world' still maintains records for Latvians inside Latvia and in other parts of the world," he explains. If he keeps improving as he has been, he may also be the only trackman to win an Olympic medal for two countries at once.

George, whose given name is Juris, was born Dec. 29, 1940, in Jelgava, Latvia. He is majoring in economics at Nevada and hopes for a career in foreign trade. "I plan to compete as long as I keep enjoying this type of challenge and I feel I can do better," he says. "I get to see different parts of the

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