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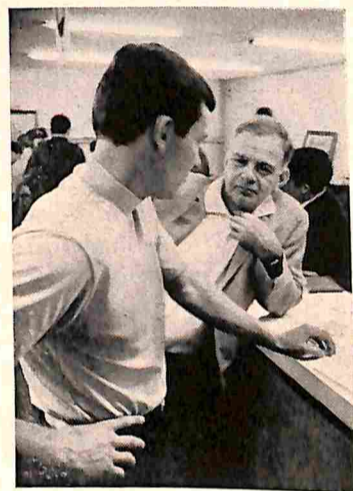
EDITORS' NOTE

Memories of Six Olympics

"Eddie Arcaro, the old jockey, used to say, 'You only win your first Kentucky Derby once.' He won five, of course. I've covered the Olympic Games six times and I know what he means. They're a little like that, only different, because each has a character all its own."

Marshall Smith is just back from the Olympics in Mexico; his article on pole vaulter Bob Seagren appears in the essay in this issue. Our sports editor for 14 years, he left the department to become an articles writer and is now Miami bureau chief and LIFE's regional editor for the South. Since his Olympic score has now risen to six—he covered his first when Seagren had just learned to walk—we asked him for some memories:

LONDON 1948: "I was sports editor for TIME magazine then, and was working hard on a cover story about Mel Patton, the dash man. Mel choked up on the 100 and finished next to last. I was determined he wouldn't do the same in the 200, and I talked my way down into the dressing room. Mel was lying on his back, stiff as a poker, with glazed eyes. I could see the 200—and my story—going out the window. That's the day I won my only Olympic event. The only way I could get him out of his trance was to promise him a trip to Paris. 'I'm broke,' he said, 'I'll pay,' said I. He talked about our spree-to-be for a quarter hour and then walked out, loose as a goose, and won a gold medal. Unhappily for both of us, the trip never came off."



SEAGREN AND SMITH

HELSINKI 1952: "The Finns were marvelous. They kept stopping you and offering drinks, and I didn't blame them. They were under the gun. That was the year the Russians made their great debut and surprised the world. They had a base on Finnish soil a few miles away and kept their athletes there, locked up. I remember, at the opening ceremonies, a German girl in flowing white robes who danced around the field after the athletes had marched. She stole the show for five minutes before somebody caught her and threw her out."

MELBOURNE 1956: "You can judge the special feeling of each Olympics by the interest of the local population. The Australians were absolutely wild about the Games. It was the warmest and most enjoyable of all Games for me."

ROME 1960: "The Romans that year couldn't have cared less—those who could afford it left town to get away from the rush. The Olympics were lost there."

TOKYO 1964: "The Games were precise, stiff and extremely formal. The Japanese have a penchant for over-organization—the government even put the lid on all the hot spots on the Ginza. The moment when Billy Mills broke out of the pack to win the 10,000 meters—a million-to-one shot; he had me goggle-eyed—was the most dramatic event I've seen in any Olympic Games."

MEXICO CITY 1968: "Warm and impulsive, just like the Mexicans—even though somebody forgot to print programs for the first two days of track and field. I discovered for the first time that the pole vault is absolutely fascinating—and that after watching it for seven hours you get more tired than the athletes."

MUNICH 1972 . . . . .

*George P. Hunt*  
 GEORGE P. HUNT,  
 Managing Editor

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# Jackie's Wedding

# LIFE



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