

Making the choice of the No. 1 intermediate hurdler in the world this year will be no problem. Mr. James Doyle Bolding II fills the bill quite nicely.

What a season! One of the best ever:

- A world record over the barriers at 440-yards (48.7) and an American record at 400 (48.1, the equal second-fastest clocking ever).

- The year's top four times, three of the best six ever, 10 under 49 to give him 11 of the 27 (41%) ever run.

- Conqueror of every worthy opponent, including world record holder John Akii-Bua, former record holders Ralph Mann and Dave Hemery, Commonwealth and European Champ Alan Pascoe and French star Jean-Claude Nallet.

- Winner of 21 out of 22 finals, and that sole blemish must be viewed with a jaundiced eye. That was at Oslo's King Games, when Bolding's blocks came out of the track and Mann won.

- Not to mention a new flat 400 PR of 45.3 to rate fifth among Americans for the year and an outside shot at World Ranking in that event also.

The all-time sub-49 (metrical) list (†=440y minus 0.3 seconds):

47.8	John Akii-Bua (Uganda) '72
48.1	Dave Hemery (GB) '68
48.1	Jim Bolding (PCC) '74
48.3	Bolding '74
48.4	Ralph Mann (BHS) '72
48.4	Bolding '74
48.5†	Mann '70
48.5	Mann '72
48.5	Hemery '72
48.5	Akii-Bua '73
48.6	Jean-Claude Nallet (Fr) '70
48.6	Jim Seymour (BHS) '72
48.6	Dick Bruggeman (Ohio TC) '72
48.6	Bolding '74
48.8	Geoff Vanderstock (BHS) '68
48.8	Bolding '73
48.8	Alan Pascoe (GB) '74
48.8	Bolding '74
48.8	Bolding '74
48.8	Bolding '74
48.8	Pascoe '74
48.9†	Wayne Collett (UCLA) '70
48.9	Mann '71
48.9	Bolding '74
48.9	Bolding '74
48.9	Bolding '74
48.9	Nallet '74

A 1968 graduate of U.S. Grant High School in Oklahoma City, Bolding took his talents to Oklahoma State for four years, where he was a standout on various Cowboy relay squads.

His intermediates career didn't even begin until he was a junior, when his quick progress brought him to third in the NCAA and a PR 50.3. By '72 he took a Midwest Triple Crown, was a disqualified second in the NCAA, runner-up in the AAU and sixth in the Olympic Trials. His best dropped to 49.8.

The acceleration to the top continued last year, as running under the aegis of the Pacific Coast Club he lowered his PR to 48.8m and nabbed the No. 2 spot in the World Rankings behind Akii-Bua. With PR lowerings of 0.5, 0.7 and 0.7 the last three years, next year also promises to be great.

An articulate, soft-spoken sort of guy, Bolding rates as one of the few current stars who is also a real "track nut." A man who knows his facts, he incurred the unending wrath of the T&FN staff by stumping us on the simple question of who the second vaulter was to clear 17-foot indoors. We'll get even.

T&FN: A little tired after the tour?

Bolding: Yeah, the last swing was

T&FN Interview

JIM BOLDING

by Garry Hill

about a five-day affair, with three meets (Zurich, Innsbruck and Berlin). I could tell the old wheels were going about then. Those last few hurdles got pretty tough.

T&FN: You were trying hard for No. 10 [under 49] at Berlin [photo right]?

Bolding: Exactly. After about five or six I started looking at the races for the rest of the summer. I knew there were going to be some really good places to run. Some are so great to run in, no matter if there's someone to run against or not. I thought, heck, 10 sounds like a nice round number.

T&FN: What was your toughest race, other than the King Games, which...

Bolding: Which we don't even want to talk about.

T&FN: Which we don't want to talk about?

Bolding: Ah, I don't care. I think the one I worried about more than anything was Milan, of course, with Akii-Bua and Mann; and the race in Nice, the French Championships, because Nallet was really looking tough in the prelims. He was gliding along, and I thought, "Oh-oh, he's gunning for this one."

T&FN: What was with Akii-Bua? He certainly didn't do anything.

Bolding: I don't know. He kept telling everybody that he wasn't in shape yet. He was doing his usual strange workouts, running up and down the spiral staircase in the hotel. After Milan, he said he was going home for two weeks of training, and that he'd be back for Siena and Turin, but no show.

T&FN: Precisely what happened at King?

Bolding: Well, I set my blocks and took a couple of practice starts. But during the actual start, I went one way and my blocks the other. The whole thing jumped out of the track. I looked back and they were sideways on the track. I went down it threw me off so much.

If I'd been smart, I either wouldn't have run the race, just stood up (he'd probably have called it back) or I'd have changed my stride pattern. I work at 14 and it's just not that hard to do. But when you're thinking race, if you fall down you just get up and take off again.

It put me back on the first five hurdles. I ran my usual strides, 13 for 4, 14 for 2 and 15 for 4, but I was having to

reach for the first five or six. I actually caught him [Mann] on the eighth hurdle, and we were on the 10th together, but I was maxed.

T&FN: Would it have been different if you'd gone out in 14s?

Bolding: I like to think so. It definitely would have left me a little stronger at the end. Whether or not I could have gotten the speed up early I don't know.

T&FN: When you go into a race, how do you decide what your stride pattern is going to be? You do use different patterns.

Bolding: This year I stuck with the 13-14-15 almost exclusively, except for cinder tracks, where it's impossible for me to get 13; or if I do I'm killing myself doing it. It has to be 14 and 15 there. Or, if the wind is really tough down the backstretch and I have to struggle to get 13, it isn't worth it. I can save up and be strong at the end, so I use 14.

T&FN: Do you work on hurdling with your "other" leg in training?

Bolding: I usually just work on 14s rather than concentrate on it.

T&FN: If you find yourself behind can you change your stride pattern in mid-race to try and make up ground?

Bolding: I was never behind this year, but I'd probably go to 15. I can shorten my stride and get a bit quicker step going. As far as lengthening it back out, that would be pretty tough.

T&FN: When did you learn to alternate?

Bolding: My senior year, '72.

T&FN: Not many hurdlers were doing it before then. Was it tough to learn?

Bolding: No, amazingly enough. I started to work on it when I got back to school because I had talked about it with some people. I didn't want to go from 15 all the way to 13. I wanted a one-step transition. Also, the 15 (which I used to do all the way), I knew that was no good—I was machine-gunning the first four or five hurdles. I needed to lengthen it out. Actually, I went to 14 before I went to 13. It was just a matter of getting accustomed to that length of stride. I just didn't have the strength to handle 13 the first couple of years.

T&FN: You didn't start to run the intermediates until you were a junior.



Hornshuler

Wasn't this a part of the "master plan"?

Bolding: It was. Coach [Ralph] Tate wanted to push me more towards the highs my first two years, for speed work; plus he figured (and he was probably right) that I didn't have the strength then. It takes a while to develop that. Especially for this race. It paid off in the end though.

T&FN: You've also had coaching help from Dixon Farmer [now an assistant at Washington].

Bolding: Yeah, he's been instrumental in polishing my form as an intermediate hurdler. But it's also important that Ralph held me back like he did. They both deserve a lot of credit.

T&FN: It must have been frustrating, knowing that you were supposed to be an intermediate hurdler.

Bolding: Yeah, we had our problems. All the time I was being recruited, they said, "Hey, any kid that runs the quarter and high hurdles like you, you know what you're going to be."

I'd say, "Yeah, Yeah, know, I know."

T&FN: There weren't any 330s in Oklahoma high schools. How about 180s?

Bolding: Yeah, that was the "hard" race.

T&FN: The 180s are really useful.

Bolding: Sort of like the 60 lows indoors.

T&FN: Hey, former Big 8 champ, you can't talk like that.

Bolding: I know. I hated to say that. You know, my big hookup that year was with Gregg Pruitt [now a star running back with the Cleveland Browns]. Just nosed him at the finish.

T&FN: Yeah, and look what he's

making now.

Bolding (laughing): About a thousand less than me.

T&FN: We were talking about building strength. What's more important to you, speed or strength?

Bolding: For me, it would be strength. I have speed. I've always had speed. It was just a matter of getting strength.

T&FN: That's one of the big differences between this year and last?

Bolding: Exactly. If I had to point to one thing I've done in workouts this year it's hills. Not long hills. About 150-yards long, not a steep incline, about 20 degrees. I start out early in the year with six or seven, then add progressively. I was doing those up until April. Maybe it was psychological help. I think you have to try something different every year.

T&FN: Give me a typical training session.

Bolding: Starting now, I'll do a distance run on Monday: 4-5 miles. Then weights: bench press and bent-arm pullovers; leg pumps on the Universal Gym. I've never really gotten into heavy squats; gotta worry about your knees.

Tuesday would be a long interval workout. A lot of reps, not fast, short intervals. Combinations of 660s and 550s. Wednesday, hills again; Thursday, distance run again; Friday, intervals again, this time on the golf course so there are a few hills again.

T&FN: How about the competitive season?

Bolding: Briefly, two days hurdles, one day away from the track (hills or a long run), two days interval work. For

example, in Athens I ran a 550, 400, 300. I came through the 400 in about 48.5 in the 500 and tried to maintain. Then came back with 51 in the 400, then a tough 300, 33.1 or so. A good recovery between.

T&FN: Is that all you do? How can you run so well without pushing yourself?

Bolding: I get stuff like that from distance runners. But you get one out there and you run his ass off with a couple of quick ones.

T&FN: Were you mad when you didn't make the Olympic Team? [He was sixth.]

Bolding: Uhh, yes. I thought I had a really good chance. The lane draw didn't help me out a lot—I was in one. That probably hurt me as badly as anything else.

T&FN: Who else do you think is tough in the US right now? Other

than the obvious Mann.

Bolding: Collins is always there. Basically the same guys as always. Other than Primeaux last year, who I felt has a lot of potential, he's the only guy I think that can really do it. I don't want to put the other guys down, it's just a matter of opinion. Other runners I talk with are really high on some people.

T&FN: You look pretty good all-time now, with 11 of the 27 under 49.

Bolding: Huh! I didn't know there were that many others.

T&FN: Well, two more at Rome, Pascoe over Nallet, 48.8-48.9.

Bolding: What about the 400?

T&FN: Honz over Jenkins.

Bolding: What happened to that hot-rod German?

T&FN: Herrmann? He was third. You know, he's the guy who wants to come to the US.

Bolding: Hey, there's a hot-bed of guys thinking of coming over here. Rod Dixon wants to come over. He wants a good area, where the climate's similar to New Zealand. So I told him Oklahoma State was ideal.

T&FN: So what are you going to have to do with the rest of your life?

Bolding: Right now, I'm in my last year—hopefully—and I'll have my masters in P.E. to go with the bachelor's in marketing.

T&FN: What does one do with that unique combination?

Bolding: The obvious answer would be coaching, but that's becoming more and more disillusionary every day. We'll have to wait and see. □