

# from the editor

*E. Gary Hill*

MR. PEABODY HERE. Sherman, please set the Wayback Machine to... 1971. OK, dear reader, I can feel your eyes glazing over already, but please bear with me. This isn't one of those torture-the-kids stories about walking to school 3 miles through the snow where it was uphill both ways (actually, I did do that, but we'll leave the tale of tortured topography for another time).

Bear with me as I chronicle what was surely my personal best domestic meet-going schedule ever, way back more than 30 years ago. A time when indoor track was viable nationwide and collegiate competition didn't come any better than a Pac-8 dual meet. To live in the Bay Area was truly heaven, with a plethora of meets little more than an hour's drive distant.

Why the year  
1971 should  
inspire you in  
2003

My season:

January 22: San Francisco's Cow Palace: an SRO crowd of 13,185 watched Randy Matson beat his own World Record in the shot but lose as upstart Al Feuerbach went 3 inches farther at the All-American Invitational.

February 13: Athens Invitational, Oakland. March 6: Stanford-Oxy-Fresno State. March 13: Cal-San José State. March 20: Stanford-San José State. March 27: Oregon State-San José State. April 3: Cal-Oregon State-Arizona State. April 17: Stanford-Oregon State. April 24: Cal-Washington State (choosing the alma mater over big Stanford-USC clash).

May 1: Cal-UCLA in the afternoon; San José Invitational at night followed by dinner with Norwegian miler Arne Kvalheim, who had run 3:58.1 in bitter cold.

May 8: Stanford-Cal in The Big Meet in the afternoon with a warpaint-daubed Don Kardong leading Stanford to what would be its last victory for a quarter-century; a quick private-plane ride courtesy of Pitch Johnson for Fresno's West Coast Relays in the evening.

May 29: California Relays in Modesto; meet doubled as the Cal JC Champs.

June 6: Into Pitch's plane again to Eugene for the Oregon Twilight. An allergy-plagued Jim Ryun finished 10th in an aborted comeback attempt.

June 17-19: Drive to the Northwest for the NCAA Championships in Seattle, then a short week's vacation splitting a Nationals-double. Collegiate Records by Sid Sink (steeple) and Jacques Accambray (hammer).

June 25-26: AAU Championships in Eugene. Pre-mania reaches new heights; WRs for John Smith (440) and Rod Milburn (120H).

July 2-3: U.S. vs. USSR and World All-Stars at Cal. Attendance 17,000 and a turn-away 22,000 as Pat Matzdorf shocked with a WR in the high jump.

So, why—other than the indulgent pleasure of “nyah-nyah; I was there and you weren't”—did I give you this drawn-out chronology?

First, because I want the younger generation to know—and the older to remember—what kind of track viewing was once available, and what we should all be aspiring to recreate. But mainly it relates to the We Think article on p. 45, entitled “Road Trip.”

Good track begets good track. And your viewing pleasure increases exponentially if you see great track repeatedly. U.S. track may never make it back to the state it enjoyed in '71 (and there are those older than me who would surely say that that year paled in comparison to, say, '56), but next year provides an uncommon opportunity for at least those on the West Coast to enjoy a grande bouffe in the track-viewing department. And even if you live elsewhere, you can sample some incredible stuff with relatively little effort. As the Think says: beg, borrow or steal, but try to find a way to enjoy next year's incredible sequence of high-level meets.

PS—can somebody explain how I stayed married through all that?