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from the editor

I CAN'T QUIBBLE WITH THE Hall of Fame credentials of any of the new members of the new IAAF (see p. 38) and USATF (see p. 40) classes. They all belong on any roster of the sport's all-time greats. There are just too many holes in the overall picture and some don't belong there *yet*.

That the USATF hall has gaps is understandable. The whole thing started out as two unrelated HOFs in the '70s, having nothing to do with the federation. And it can be argued that good-old-boy politics played too big a part in the early selections. Thus it is that many deserving superstars still don't have the status they deserve.

To USATF's credit, it realized a decade back that there was an imbalance in the whole process, and split the selections into "veterans" and "moderns," ensuring that a fair share of the oldtimers found their way in.

It's just a process that's not going fast enough for me. Enshrining just a couple of names a

year from a century of competition isn't closing the gap quite quickly enough for my liking.

That the IAAF hall has gaps is even more understandable, given that there have only been two classes inducted so far, the first numbering 24, the second a mere dozen. To recap, check out this list of 36 legends:

Men—Abebe Bikila, Sergey Bubka, Seb Coe, Adhemar da Silva, Harrison Dillard, Vladimir Golubnichiy, Michael Johnson, Alberto Juantorena, Kip Keino, Hannes Kolehmainen, Carl Lewis, Noureddine Morceli, Edwin Moses, Paavo Nurmi, Dan O'Brien, Parry O'Brien, Jesse Owens, Viktor Saneyev, Yuriy Syedikh, Peter Snell, Daley Thompson & Emil Zátopek.

Women—Iolanda Balas, Fanny Blankers-Koen, Betty Cuthbert, Babe Didrikson, Marjorie Jackson, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Stefka Kostadinova, Natalya Lisovskaya, Svetlana Masterkova, Marie-José Pérec, Irena Szewińska, Grete Waitz & Junxia Wang.

Obviously, track & field has a long and storied history, and you can't please everybody right off the bat, but in my humble opinion, too many superduperstars haven't gotten their due.

In the March '00 edition of *T&FN* our panel of international experts chose the top athletes of the millennium, 10 of each sex. No fewer than 6 of those haven't yet been enshrined. On the men's side it's only No. 10, Dutch Warmerdam. On the women's side it's Nos. 4 (Marita Koch), 6 (Heike Drechsler), 8 (Tatyana Kazankina), 9 (Shirley de la Hunty) and 10 (Tamara Press).

The omission that bothers me the most is Warmerdam, since I would argue that he belongs ahead of Bubka as the greatest vaulter ever. I also find it incomprehensible that the greatest men's high jumper ever, Valeriy Brumel, hasn't been tabbed. I could go on and on (like my choice for best 200 man ever, Tommie Smith), but you get my point.

Yes, I'm sure that these worthies will get their due in short course, but to me they have been snubbed in a way that should never have happened. When the IAAF did its inaugural class, it ensured that all geographical areas and all event groups were represented. That's wonderfully PC and even makes decent marketing sense, but it offends my sense of what a HOF is all about. And what the first class named is all about, which is the honor of being super-special.

Both halls—particularly the IAAF's—would make me a lot happier if they'd simply induct larger classes for a few years. Color me selfish, but before I shuffle off this mortal coil I'd like to see a truly representative international HOF with all the names that "belong" there.

Simple made-up-on-the-spot-math: let's conservatively say that each of the 22 standard men's events should average 5 HOF members each. And—through no fault of their own, but a shorter history is a shorter history—let's say the women's 21 events should average 3. That makes for 173 members, minus the 36 already in is 137. At a dozen a year it's going to take 12 years before the HOF even gets current. That's too slow a pace for my liking.

Where's a rabbit when you really need one?

**The IAAF & USATF
Halls Of Fame need
more members**