



from the editor

E. Garry Hill

WAITER, THERE'S A FLY IN MY OINTMENT! As another Olympic season unfolds, I feel like I've walked into a high-end restaurant and they've handed me a menu with so many must-sample items that I don't know where to start.

And that's just on the sprint page, which is where the track gods have placed the most goodies for 2016.

Consider all these wondrous items to be explored before I place my final order:

•**The World's Fastest Human, or...?** In retrospect, it's hard to believe the April '08 issue carried this note: "Jamaican sprint star Usain Bolt, who showed great promise in the 100 last year, says he won't try a sprint double at the Olympics. 'I need to focus on the 200 and not doubling,' he says."

This restaurant features healthy doses of speed

So, 6 Olympic gold medals and 11 world titles later, I think we're all rather aware of how that turned out. Even though he has had on-and-off injury problems of various kinds the last few years and will turn 30 just after Rio winds up, anybody want to bet against another trifecta? I don't, even though Justin Gatlin, no spring chicken himself at 34 ran him right to the wire in the 100 last year at the Worlds. As exciting as the new kids on the block like Andre De Grasse and Trayvon Bromell might be, I still see them relegated to mere appetizer status.

And I still don't see anybody remotely in Bolt's class in the 200.

•**That scary Team USA men's 4x1.** Bolt will also feature prominently in what will be another bit of high drama, and that's Team USA's attempt to dethrone the Jamaicans in the 4x1. Well, let's hope that the U.S. is even around at the finish (or rather than, shudder, not in the final at all because of some inventive new way to have screwed things up somewhere along the line).

•**The Fastest Woman, SAFP or Schippers?** Bolt teammate Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce is now arguably (there's no argument about him) the greatest of all time in her event, with 2 OG and 3 WC golds in her collection. Her main competition won't come from an American; rather from the great Dutch find, Dafne Schippers.

•**Schippers or Felix in the 200?** Schippers has traded DL-finale wins (and the No. 1 World Ranking) with Allyson Felix the last two years. Schippers is trending upwards and while both will be in their second event, Schippers will have done the 100 and Felix the more taxing 400. Tough call.

•**Felix or Miller in the 400?** Felix was perfect in the longest dash last year, but will she have to hold back some, knowing that she still has the 200 and both relays to come? Bahamian Shaunae Miller, an imposing 6-footer, ran her closest last year and ran only 0.02 off her PR in April.

•**James or Merritt in the 400?** I absolutely love watching these two guys run. Merritt is known for being strong in the second half, but James's push off the final curve is remarkable. By the time you read this you'll know the results of their latest clash at Drake. Coming in, James has a lifetime 11-7 edge.

•**Hey, what about van Niekerk?** At the risk of offending South Africans by my assuming that the 400 gold will go to either James or Merritt, I'll just say that I think that Wayde van Niekerk snuck up on them last year in winning the world title.

Obviously, a lot will come down to lane draw, but I dare say that I'll be shocked if we don't see only the second race ever with a trio of sub-44 times. And I'll even go out on a limb and say this could be the race that knocks Michael Johnson off his World Record perch.

•**OK, I've decided!** At the risk of ODing on so much speed, I'll take a bite of each. Now to work on what I'm going to have for my second course.

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