



from the editor

E. Garry Hill

SEB COE PULLED NO PUNCHES in mid-June when in assessing the state of our sport he said, “We have to be more innovative, we have to be braver and more creative in formats.” You can find more on this story in this issue’s *Last Lap* (see p. 46).

Another story in the *LL* section deals with Texas A&M’s in-the-works new facility. It won’t be the first of its kind, but I believe it fits Coe’s innovative-braver-creative train of thought.

Seb Coe wants innovation & bravery? How about the sprint straightaway on the infield?

You can read more about the College Station setup on p. 48, but to capsulize it, it mirrors an indoor facility, putting the sprint straight in the middle of the infield, and also allows for most of the field events to also get some center-stage attention.

It’s no coincidence that we’ve seen this stadium before. That was at LSU, where current A&M head Pat Henry was in charge when the Tigers hosted the ’02 NCAA. In the magazine’s introduction to that meet, I penned these words:

“One of Bernie Moore Stadium’s greatest weaknesses—no long throws on the infield—is also one of its greatest strengths. Long throwers frequently get the short end of the stick, so it’s always sad to see them not in the main arena, although the open-ended construction at LSU does allow for some viewing of the discus, hammer and javelin from the main stands.

“But what is lost in those three events is more than made up for by the rest of the structure, where far more events are contested right in front of all the stands than in a normal stadium.

“Start with the straightaway being on the infield. The people on the backstretch are no longer miles away from the sprint action. Those on the homestretch aren’t blocked by yahoos who crowd the rail or suddenly jump up during a race.

“Likewise, there are the vault and the shot, right in the middle instead of being stuck down near an end zone.

“This is definitely a configuration more schools should be looking into.

“One suggestion though: if the NCAA is going to stage the Nationals in settings like this, schedule the long throws for earlier in the day so they’re apart from the main-stadium action. The crowds will be small but they’ll be intense, and the athletes will respond appropriately. It’s a win-win situation.”

Nobody vents louder than I when sites like Penn, Drake and Sac State banish the long throws to some outside-the-stadium (or worse, remote) field. But my yelling would be all but eliminated with, as I suggested in ’02, some easy-to-accomplish scheduling that allows people to watch both. And if you do that, craft the venue so people can get up close and personal with the throwers. I’m sure they’d much prefer that to being largely ignored in the big bowl.

Back in the day, the California Relays in Modesto was one of the best meets going. My favorite part of the meet was never in the stadium, but in the hours before track got up and going when they staged the discus and hammer on an adjacent field. You could either take a picnic lunch and watch from under the trees some 300ft from the circle, or stand along the sector line. I know those throwers preferred that—with every throw being announced—to being inside the stadium as an afterthought to all the running and jumping going on.

Bringing the fans closer to the throwers fits right in with the taking-it-to-the-streets innovations we have seen at various meets the last few years with street racing on temporary tracks, mall vaulting, train station shot putting and grocery store high jumping. It doesn’t attract huge crowds, but it does raise the sport’s profile.

Forget *citius-altius-fortius*; may Seb’s legacy always be *innovatius-bravius-creativus!*

Track & Field News
The Bible Of The Sport Since 1948
Founded by Bert & Cordner Nelson

E. GARRY HILL — Editor

ED FOX — Publisher

EDITORIAL STAFF

Sieg Lindstrom Managing Editor

Jeff Hollobaugh Associate Editor

BUSINESS STAFF

Janet Vitu Executive Publisher

Wallace Dere Office Manager

Teresa Tam Art Director

WORLD RANKINGS COMPILERS

Jonathan Berenbom, Richard Hymans, Dave Johnson, Nejat K k, R.L. Quercetani (Emeritus)

SENIOR EDITORS

Bob Bowman (Walking), Roy Conrad (Special Projects), Jon Hendershott (Emeritus), Bob Hersh (Eastern), Mike Kennedy (HS Girls), Glen McMicken (Lists), Walt Murphy (Relays), Jim Rorick (Stats), Jack Shepard (HS Boys)

U.S. CORRESPONDENTS

John Auka, Bob Bettwy, Bret Bloomquist, Bill Buchalter, Tom Casacky, Pete Cava, Gene Cherry, Keith Conning, Cheryl Davis, Elliott Denman, Peter Diamond, Charles Fleishman,

John Gillespie, Becca Gillespy-Peter, Rich Gonzalez, Ed Gordon, Ed Grant, George Grenier, Ben Hall, Sean Hartnett, Mike Hubbard,

Dave Hunter, Tom Jennings, Roger Jennings, Tom Jordan, Kim Koffman, Don Kopriva, Dan Lilot, Charlie Mahler, Paul Merca, Larry Newman, Lee Nichols, Jack Pfeifer, Shawn Price,

Harv Rentschler, Kirk Reynolds, Brian Russell, Rich Sands, Kevin Saylor, Charles Shaffer, Jim Spier, Jesse Squire,

Don Steffens, Larry Story, Paul Swangard, Carol R. Swenson, Gary Trigueiro, Jules Trigueiro, Steve Vaitones, Howard Willman, David Woods

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

Steven Downes, Matti Hannus, Ian Hodge, Jonas Hedman, Atsushi Hoshino, Mike Hurst, Mirko Jalava, Paul Jenes, Alfons Juck,

A. Lennart Julin, Duncan Mackay, Peter Matthews, Phil Minshull, K. Ken Nakamura, Bob Ramsak, Sergey Tikhonov, Chris Turner, Mel Watman

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Claus Andersen, Errol Anderson, Greg Armstrong, John Burke, Gladys Chai, Rich Clarkson, Giancarlo Colombo, Tony Duffy, Don Gosney, Jeff Jacobsen, Anthony R. Jones,

Kirby Lee, Bill Leung, Andrew McClanahan, Jiro Mochizuki, Kevin Morris, David Peterson, Victor Sailer, Mike Scott, Mark Shearman, Kim Spir, Cheryl Treworgy