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Ryun Destroys Keino, 1500 Mark in 3:33.1

by Dick Drake

Los Angeles, Calif., July 8-9--In a weirdly paced 1500-meter race that got off to a dawdling start for a record effort, Jim Ryun unleashed a final 1320 in 2:47.1--almost five seconds faster than three laps has ever been covered in any race--to finish the distance 2.5 seconds quicker than anyone before. Once again proving his versatility to come out a winner and a record breaker off a wide range of paces, the 20-year-old stopped the watches in 3:33.1 to pick off Herb Elliott's 1960 Olympic world record and polished off Kipchoge Keino who offered Jim his most serious competitive challenge in a big-time outdoor race since the 800-meters in this US-Commonwealth meet last year.

Although Ryun later complained of the slow initial pace, he was apparently content at the time as he slipped into sixth (unlike during his latest mile record when he dashed into an early command) through first 100 meters in 16.0 and was only a position up by the 300 reached in 47.5. Then the Kenyan lit out, and Ryun chose to follow in quick pursuit with a 14.0 metric 100 as Canada's Dave Bailey still led at the quarter in 60.5. Ryun was a tenth behind Keino in third at 60.9. The event quickly took on a two race flavor as Keino and Ryun moved past Bailey with a remarkably even but fast series of 14.0, 14.0 and 14.1. Almost exactly a lap after Keino had made his first move, he stepped up the pace again as Ryun clocked a 13.4. Keino led by two-tenths at the half-mile in a now record possible 1:56.8.

While Ryun's near astonishing second quarter of 56.1 (1.5 seconds faster than it has ever been raced in a 1500 or mile) gave the fans the realization that the record was now conceivable, it probably had the effect of slowing the over-all time. Based on the theory of oxygen debt which implies that increasing the pace in the last half of a race (as Ryun did in his mile of 3:51.1) results in the fastest possible time, it can be assumed that Ryun would have run about a second faster at the end had his second lap of 56.1 been reversed with his third quarter of 58.0. Because Keino has less speed than Ryun over a 440 or 880, the 56-second second quarter probably took even more out of the Kenyan. Thus it is possible had the pace increased each lap Keino would have run about two seconds faster than his eventual 3:37.2--which missed his life-time best by 0.4 second enroute to his mile best of 3:53.4.

By the 1320, Ryun had closed the yard gap, moved up on Keino's shoulder and barreled past with a 13.0 100 meters that quickly put him out of the reach of his African threat. The next century went in a tenth slower and finally his last 100 meters took 13.5--stretch which did not come easily. It was not particularly obvious that he was tired or even struggling but he admitted later the home-stretch was tough. But the final 320 yards was even more difficult for Keino who labored through the distance in 42.2 seconds compared to Ryun's 38.1--a split slower than Bob Schul's finish over the same distance in the 1964 Olympic 5000-meter final.

It was a fine effort by Ryun, considering the light smog, the 90°-plus heat on the floor of the 90,000-seat Coliseum, the erratic pace and his long season. But the race was not worth a 3:48.5 mile as the announcer erroneously reported to the fans and members of the press picked up. The mile equivalent was determined by averaging his pace per yard for the 1500-meters and adding on that difference. Considering that he was admittedly struggling down the home-stretch and that each of his last two 100 meters was slower than the previous one, it is not logical to assume that he could have tacked on a 15.4 last 119 yards, 1 foot, 9 inches (about 109.5 meters, or 14.2 seconds per 100-meters). Just imagine an official stepping out on the track and telling Ryun that the race had another 120 yards to go after he had run himself out. As super-great as he is, Ryun simply is not a machine that can be wound up to continue indefinitely at a prescribed pace without physically tiring. At any rate, the Portuguese Tables lists this 1500-meter time worth a 3:51.0 mile--a tenth faster than his present pending mark. Ryun becomes the first to hold both the 1500 and mile standards since Herb Elliott (1958-62).

Said Ryun, "I'm definitely tired after this race. I can't explain it, because I felt real strong all through the race. Coming

around to the tape, I tended to tie up and unconsciously I looked around to see where Keino was. I'm real happy about that time."

The only real excitement behind the front duel was Alan Simpson's overtaking of Bailey as both clocked 3:41.7. Jim Grelle, who claimed he lacked energy possibly because of the heat, ran 3:43.7 while Oregon junior Dave Wilborn ran well out of the money at 3:51.2.

Here is a comparison of Ryun's and Elliott's 100-meter splits

ELLIOTT (Rome, 1960)		RYUN (Los Angeles, 1967)	
Time by 100m (position)	Split	Time by 100m (position)	Split
14.1 (4)	14.1	16.0 (6)	16.0
28.7 (4)	14.6	31.8 (6)	15.8
43.5 (5t)	14.8	47.5 (5)	15.7
58.6 (5t)	58.6	60.5 (2)	60.5
1:13.1 (6)	14.5	1:14.5 (2)	14.0
1:27.8 (4)	14.7	1:28.5 (2)	14.0
1:42.8 (4)	15.0	1:42.6 (2)	14.1
1:58.0 (4)	59.4	1:56.0 (2)	55.5
2:11.2 (1)	13.2	2:10.6 (2)	14.6
2:25.4 (1)	14.2	2:25.2 (2)	14.6
2:40.0 (1)	14.6	2:39.8 (2)	14.4
2:54.0 (1)	56.0	2:53.5 (1)	58.0
3:07.6 (1)	13.6	3:06.5 (1)	13.0
3:21.2 (1)	13.6	3:19.6 (1)	13.1
3:35.6 (1)	14.4	3:33.1 (1)	13.5
last 100m=14.4		last 100m=13.5	
last 200m=28.0		last 200m=26.6	
last 300m=41.6		last 300m=39.6	
last 400m=55.6		last 400m=53.3	
last 600m=1:24.4		last 600m=1:22.5	
last 800m=1:52.8		last 800m=1:50.5	
last 1000m=2:22.5		last 1000m=2:18.6	
last 1200m=2:52.1		last 1200m=2:45.6	

Even though Keino was no match for Ryun here, his performances here should not be taken lightly considering that he came back the next day to capture the 5000 in an excellent 13:36.8 from world record holder Ron Clarke (13:40.0)--after training for only four weeks. Keino had withdrawn from the meet three weeks ago but was strongly encouraged to re-enter after he posted a 3:55.0 mile at 6000 feet. If he is running this well so underconditioned, he must be considered a distinct threat to Ryun if he chooses the 1500 at Mexico City, roughly the same elevation as where he lives and trains.

Clarke, who injured his groin on Friday while attempting to demonstrate steeplechase hurdling technique over a trash can to Ryun and was a doubtful starter as late as 12 hours before the race, ran back of Gerry Lindgren's medium speed pace as did Keino before jumping into the lead midway through the 10th lap. Keino slipped right in behind, and the two broke the chummy pack that had been engaged in a continuous surge and drop back pattern. Keino can't match Ryun's last lap kick but he can handle anything Clarke can come up with despite the Aussie's new concentration on speed work, and he simply waited until 330 yards remained to move around. Clarke resisted on the back straight, but Keino was in charge.

Keino now claims a 7 and 2 victory margin over Clarke in outdoor finals over three-miles/5000-meters. They have never met at any other distances other than indoors. Keino was satisfied, "Today I did not want to lead. I wanted to wait until the final kick to pass Clarke. It was quite a different race from Saturday."

Clarke, holder of six world records from two-miles to 10 miles, was disappointed he even started the race considering the pain that existed as he warmed up. "I felt like I had to try because this meet means so much to me. Early in the race I felt fine, but when I started to accelerate my legs felt like jelly. I'm sure I shouldn't have run. It was a stupid thing to do, but I've done stupid things before."

Lindgren, never in condition this season after various setbacks, posted a creditable 13:47.8 after coming up with a serious case of blisters. Bob Day, a contender through 7½ laps, dropped out with what may have been a spike wound or a repeat of the foot injury that plagued him for well over a year until this season.

The Kenyan distance troop provided the two day crowds of

23, 786 and 21, 163 fans plenty of thrills as they captured the three longest events. The US men took their counterparts by a 254 to 170 point margin. Of all the nations competing, Kenya scored the fourth highest number of points behind the US, Australia (39½) and England (35) with 31½. Scoring went 7-5-4-3-2-1 for individual events and 5 and 2 for the relays with no points awarded for the decathlon.

Each of the Kenyans won his event with a distinctly different approach. Keino's 5000 win was the best, and he took it with a strong final lap. On the second day, Naftali Temu, the upsetter of Clarke in the British Empire Games last summer, spurted away from Van Nelson after two-miles reached in 9:24.2. In a lap he had 25 yards on the field and maintained a 220 yard advantage the last two miles to win in 29:01.8. Despite the presence of two sub-8:37 steeplechasers, the steeple field simply wasn't able to keep pace with Benjamin Kogo as he slowly increased his lead first gained in the second go-around. Kogo, surprisingly adept at the water jump and at hurdling the barriers, finished in 8:39.8 as Conrad Nightingale gave the US a surprisingly second in 8:44.2--his fifth fast race in six weeks. Although Pat Traynor hung far back of Kogo's easy pace, he outsprinted England's Maurice Herriott, 8:46.4 to 8:46.8, with a kick that is beginning to draw special note.

Thanks to an auto show which closed Tuesday evening but not before causing the top four inches of the Coliseum track to shift and then crumble, this arena essentially came up with an entirely new track. Officials were forced to completely dig up the entire track and re-roll the surface, and the result was the best-ever sprinting in the long history of the stadium--despite the fact that workmen were still toiling past midnight on Friday evening. Less than a week earlier, it had been announced that a Tartan track would be installed in time for next year's US Olympic Trials--primarily because the track was so notoriously slow.

All three short flat races, the high hurdles and both relays were notable for their fast times and competitive closeness for first. The intermediate hurdles was certainly quick but it was not tight at the tape.

The 100-meters was the first open running event for men, and it set the meet off on an unpopular beginning. Both Willie Turner and Jim Hines were eliminated for double false starts. A goodly number of the crowd showed its track ignorance by hotly booing starter Les Heilman, and even an LA scribe had the audacity to comment, "Perhaps in a meet of this sort the rules could be waived for the good of the show." Turner, jittery from lack of experience, and Hines, faced with another showdown with cool Charlie Greene, neither apparently accustomed to starters holding athletes in the set position until all are motionless, were caught beating the gun. Heilman, recall starter Chip Armstrong, head US coach Jim Bush and members of the T&FN staff all concurred the two had disqualified themselves.

Hines was the first to get caught, and Greene walked back to the starting line with the Texas Southerner to reassure him that he himself would be no threat here and that Hines should play it safe and wait out the gun. Then it was Turner who fled too soon. Turner repeated the error the third round and was out. Greene went over to console him. The fourth time put Hines out of action, and the crowd wildly objected although Hines offered no protest. It was his first scratch for false starts in his career.

Off to the far side of the track, Greene was kneeling--almost as though in pain or in contemplation of pulling out himself. But neither was the case. He was feeling the pressure of being the only re-

maining American in the field against impressive Lennox Miller after his only training in two weeks had been the four false starts. Never was Greene involved in any of the infractions--in fact, he has been charged with only one false start in his career. Ever since the AAU meet, Charlie had been stationed at Ft. Lewis, Wash. in conjunction with his six week Officers' Training Camp. Up at five ever morning, forced to lug a 12-lb. pack, a rifle, heavy boots and a helmet and never permitted to recline, they were never finished with their assignments until at least seven in the evening and usually not until midnight. On Thursday night, his unit did not finish maneuvers until 3:00 a.m. and then each member had to clean his rifle for an hour. Charlie hadn't wanted to compete here in the first place.

Charlie was off well in the fifth try and led Miller until 70-meters, but the fresh Jamaican had more of the right stuff and equal led Bob Hayes' arena record of 10.1 for 100-meters. Greene was pleased with his 10.2 second place.

Miller explained, "I got an unusually bad start but I guess that was to be expected after all those false starts. My biggest advantage was not being next to Greene."

Tommie Smith had been engaged in the same ROTC program as Greene--but for three weeks instead of two--and he was even further out of shape. Add the facts that he had lost more times than he had won over this distance on this track and that he was facing Hines who had beaten him a month earlier here, and you may end up calling this 200 Tommie's greatest race. He not only beat Hines by a tenth but his 20.2 clocking for 200-meters was two-tenths faster than either Coliseum stadium record for 200-meters or 220-yards converted. The first four finishers contributed to the greatest mass finish in the history of the event, as John Carlos and Edwin Roberts were caught in 20.4 and 20.5. At either distance, these were the fastest second, third and fourth place finishes in history--improving on the great NCAA finish of this year. Smith was charged with one false start before getting a reasonably good start but fading badly around the turn. He was no better than fourth coming off the curve--an amazing five yards down on Hines. He has never trailed by so much, and conversely never made up so much ground in so short a race. It had looked impossible.

Said Smith, "Those last 70 yards it felt like my knees were touching my chin. I just managed to nip him at the tape, and was fortunate to do that, since Hines has a big chest and a strong dip at the finish." Hines revealed, "I might have pushed a little too hard too soon. I was fatigued, very tired, at the end."

San Jose State teammate Lee Evans had talked a world record effort in the 400-meters for sometime but he came up with a cold when he couldn't shower soon enough after a recent workout. He went out notably slowly, particularly against fast starting Vince Matthews and Jim Kemp. Coming off the final curve, Evans was as far off victory as Smith. Both he and Canada's Don Domansky, two yards farther back, made their move at the same time--but it was more a case of Matthews and Kemp fading than any great overhaul that gave Evans his 45.3 win. It had even looked that Matthews might have won yet he was credited with a 45.6 clocking after slowing down in the last five yards. Domansky ran 45.8 as Kemp slipped to 46.2.

Evans admitted he was lucky to win. "I noticed Vince was trying up a little, that's when I went all out."

The 800-meters provided one of the biggest thrills of the meet. It was fast and competitive. Larry Kelly jetted into the lead immediately, and there was little change of order through the first 400-meters which he hit in 51.8 four yards ahead of Noel Clough, Wilson Kiprugut, Wade Bell, Dennis Carr and Chris Carter. Clough, the Australian winner of the Commonwealth 880 last summer, darted ahead on the backstretch but it wasn't long before Bell began his patented and usually expected move with 250 yards to go. Face contorted and chest ballooned, Bell angled outward and dashed forward. Clough had had it by the curve, and Kiprugut was past him and coming on Bell. The homestraight battle was a dandy, even though Kiprugut, who surged almost even, could never pull ahead.

Bell, who desperately desires a confrontation with Ryun this summer in Europe over 800-meters as well as 1500-meters, established himself at least as an early co-favorite for the Olympic title after improving his AAU 880 time of 1:46.1 to a metric 1:45.0. Bell remains in fourth place on the combination 800/880 all-time list. Kiprugut established a life-time best of 1:45.2 for the fastest second place finish ever. Carr made his usual on the curve move that brought him to the finish with a clear third in a life-time best of 1:46.3 as Kelly, who appeared to die, resurged after the turn to hold off Carter, 1:47.3 to 1:47.5. Clough, without competition for four months, came home in 1:47.6.

Bell, who came by 400-meters in 52.4, commented, "I was right where I wanted to be at the quarter. The race was a little faster than I anticipated it would be. That's just about as fast as I could have run right now. I wasn't worried about the time because I was

Bulletin Board

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running to win. I started my kick a little earlier than I wanted as I didn't know how fast Clough was--and I started going when he did. Then, when I passed him, I did not want to stop accelerating. I cured myself of a bad habit of looking around for other runners which causes me to ease up."

Ron Whitney, a 1:48.6 half-miler and 47.1 quarter-miler, finally became one of the world's best intermediate hurdlers time-wise as well as competitively as he reduced his 440 hurdle time from 50.1 to 49.3 for the 400-meter version. He now ranks fourth all-time, and is looking forward to his meeting with Italy's Roberto Frinolli which should establish the favorite for the Olympic title. Whitney appeared to be in trouble early in the race, as Aussie Gary Knoke, the 49.7 hurdler bound for Oregon to continue his education, had made up a stagger by the second hurdle. Russ Rogers, the high hurdler turned dedicated intermediate hurdler who thought he could run 49.5 and win here, along with normally late season bloomer Roger Johnson were also ahead of Whitney by the 220 post. Rogers took Knoke on the curve, but now Whitney was coming as he often does around the turn. Whitney didn't move into the lead until the eighth hurdle, but he was running an even pace, in full control and taking a regular 15 strides over each 36-inch hurdle. He simply put distance between himself and the field with every step.

Rogers faded slightly, and it appeared that both Johnson and Knoke would overtake him in the stretch. But Rogers came back strongly, Johnson maintained his pace but Knoke slipped all the way to fifth behind fast-finishing Andy Bell. The first four all recorded best-ever, Rogers at 50.0, Johnson at 50.2 and Bell at 50.2.

Whitney commented, "I had no problems along the way, it was a very even race all the way. It may look like I had a big spurt at the finish but I don't think it was so. I'm in the best shape of my life, and that's why I didn't waver at any place. I didn't especially like the outside line when I got the assignment but since I won I guess I really do like it."

The two relays were probably closer than most would have expected looking at the best times of the constituents.

The 400-meter relay squad only included one of the 100-yard finalists in the AAU: Jim Hines. And coach Bush was subjected to considerable criticism, but Greene did not wish to run and Turner, George Anderson and Larry Dunn arrived too late to get in much baton exchange practice. Richmond Flowers was also considered but he has always anchored and couldn't master passing the baton. As it was, the team he went with had six days of work together. Bush selected two hurdlers, Earl McCullough, possibly the best relay man in the business out of the blocks, and the lead-off man on Southern Cal's two-time record setting unit, and Ron Copeland, whom Bush took from his own squad in the belief he may be one of the best curve runners. In the second spot was Jerry Bright, who didn't make it past the trials at the AAU 100 but is an experienced baton artist from his high school days at Castlemont High in Oakland.

The passes on both sides were hardly better than mediocre, and certainly none of the US passes earned a gold star. It was only because Hines had a two yard lead at the final exchange that the US won as Commonwealth anchorman Miller actually gained on Hines to pull his aggregation to within a tenth of the US's 39.0 which tied the existing world record. The Commonwealth's 39.1 has been exceeded only on four occasions and ranks as the best-ever second place time.

Bush was hopeful of a world record in the 1600-meter relay, and his squad probably would have murdered the mark established here last year if Tommie Smith and Lee Evans had been up to par. As it turned out, the US had all it could handle from the gutty Commonwealth team.

Vince Matthews posted the fastest-ever lead-off leg with a smart 44.9 to give the US a nine-tenth lead after Clifton Forbes' surprising opener. Kenyan Daniel Rudisha contributed an important leg that reduced the deficit by a tenth after Kemp's 45.5. For perhaps the first time in memory, Smith was actually outraced, 46.2 to Gary Eddy's 45.9 that brought the Commonwealth within five-tenths of the US. Before the race, Domansky told his UCLA but now opposing coach Bush that he thought his team could win. He produced the fastest split of the eight sprinters with a 44.6 to Evans' 45.0. Only six quarter-milers have run faster relay legs than Domansky. The times were still good as the US won by a tenth in 3:01.6. If Smith and Evans had come close to their bests (43.8 for 400-meters and 44.2 for 440-yards), the US would have run a sub-2:58.0 time.

McCullough was charged with his almost typical one false start but as usual was out ahead of the pack by the first hurdle on the legal take. But Flowers enjoyed one of his best starts of the outdoor hurdle season and his superior hurdling technique brought him the lead by the second barrier--which he held until the eighth hurdle where Willie Davenport, undefeated since a year ago this month, surged ahead. McCullough also overtook Flowers off the last hurdle but Flowers' strength resulted in his avenging his pair of

losses this season to McCullough. Davenport and Flowers both clocked 13.6 and McCullough 13.7 as they ran into more than a three mile per hour breeze after a remarkably close race throughout.

Davenport was pleased to have won. "I finished strongly, but I didn't get going real good until the eighth hurdle. I've been sluggish for several weeks because I haven't had enough time to work what with summer school. I was lucky to win."

What was billed as the world championship for the decathlon with three entries each from the US, West Germany and Commonwealth resulted in world record holder Russ Hodge withdrawing after his patella (knee cap) broke loose, requiring surgery the following morning, and pending world record holder Kurt Bendlin scratching before the competition began with a hurt hamstring muscle first injured at home and aggravated in Los Angeles.

Bill Toomey, who showed remarkable resilience after early spring surgery on his knee, was disappointed in his performance. He led with 4125 at the conclusion of the first day but could not muster sufficient points the second day to prevent Germany's Hans-Joachim Walde from winning, 7992 to 7779. Toomey started the second day with a good 14.9 in the high hurdles but slipped badly in the next three events. He managed only 126'10" in the discus (compared to his best of 153'3"). Walde threw 151'4", then beat Toomey in the pole vault, 13'9½" to 13'1½", and javelin, 228'4" to 198'6", for a substantial lead. Walde came close to his best in the 1500 with a 4:38.4, but Toomey was once again off at 4:34.1. Horst Beyer wound up third with 7712. Wales' Clive Longe first set a new Commonwealth record of 7392 simply because he finished the 1500 11.7-seconds ahead of New Zealand's Roy Williams, who took the record with 7438 in fourth.

And this finally brings us to the field events, which were better than expected because of a tougher battle from the Commonwealth but still generally inferior to most of the running events.

Ralph Boston continued a domination over his Olympic conqueror in a manner that must be unprecedented in history. Boston's first two jumps measured 27'¾" and his worst was his last at 26'3¼". The 1964 Olympic champ Lynn Davies could only pull off two legal efforts, his best measuring 26'1¾". The two have met four times outdoors since Tokyo. In each meeting, Boston's worst mark has exceeded Davies' best. And not once has Boston fouled. The surprise of the competition was Aussie Allan Crawley, who improved his best from 25'10¾" to 26'6" after a 26'¾" effort on his first trial. Fifth place was a healthy 26'6¾" as the jumpers leaped into a breeze.

One of the guttiest performers of the meet had to be Art Waer, whose right knee has been greatly weakened by an injury sustained in mid-May at Fresno. Going into the final round, he was in third place with a mark of 52'8¼". He pulled out a 53'7" leap right after Nigeria's Samuel Igun had improved to his best-for-the-meet of 53'.

Bob Seagren and Dick Railsback were both off in the vault, but Paul Wilson was up to the occasion as he cleared the second highest height of his career at 17'5". He passed through to 16'1". He made that and 16'8" on his first attempts, but required two jumps at 17'5". He missed thrice at 17'9". The competition began at 13' in deference to the Commonwealth competitors, and the jumpers were permitted no more warm-ups after the vaulting began. Which possibly accounted for the staleness of Seagren (who also suffered from overdose of cough medicine in treatment of a bad sore throat) and Railsback, but they had better learn to cope with it since it will be even more of a problem during the Olympics. Seagren went only 16'1" and Railsback 15'8" for roughly their worst efforts of the year.

Ed Caruthers took the high jump with fewer attempts than Australian Lawry Peckham as both cleared 7'1¼". Randy Matson took revenge on Neal Steinhauer for his loss a week earlier in Honolulu as Matson won with 67'1½" but Steinhauer slipped to third at 63'11¼" behind Dave Maggard's life-time best of 64'1¼". The depth in this field event was the best of the meet as sixth went at 60'4". Rink Babka took the discus title in one of the most topsy-turvy seasons in recent history. His last four throws of 198'7", 195'2", 202'3" and 203'1" all exceeded Jay Silvester's best of 194'1". George Puce, who broke four vertebrae the last week in May, came back unbelievably to throw 193'5" and beat AAU winner Gary Carlsen (184'3"). Ed Burke returned long enough from a summer tour in Europe where he had just demolished world record holder Gyula Zsivotzky, to easily capture the hammer at 225'0". England's highest placer in the meet was Howard Payne, whose 204'9" exceeded George Frenn's below par 204'0". Delmon McNabb led a surprise one-two-three sweep of the javelin with a life-time high of 269'3". Ron Laird and Larry Young went one-two in the 20,000-meter walk

100 (wind ok), Miller (Jam) 10.1; 2. Greene (US) 10.2; 3. Horworth (Aus) 10.5; 4. Lay (Aus) 10.8; two false starts: Turner (US) Hines (US).

200 (wind ok), Smith (US) 20.2; 2. Hines (US) 20.3; 3. Carl

