

foot which manifests itself as a very sore arch, is more common among large runners. It also stated that certain types of knee injuries and back problems are more likely to be found among the heavyweights.

"I have never seen any scientific studies or statistics to confirm what was asserted in that article," says Dr. Kent Davenport, a Honolulu orthopedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine, "but when you consider the fact that the force of impact during running is three to six times a person's body weight – as much as 12 times when running downhill – it seems logical to assume that there is some truth to it. I'm more concerned, however, about the 110-pound runner who tries to do too much than I am about the 200 pounder who trains within reasonable limits."

Heat Problems

Davenport also mentions the problems with handling heat and says that the heavyweight runner is more likely to have difficulties with the heart because of the extra effort required to pump the blood through more tissue. "Just from general observation, you can conclude that smaller runners have an advantage in distance running," Davenport remarks, "but look at (Robert) de Castella (winner of the World Championship marathon). He is a thick-legged 155 pounder at 5-foot-10 – heavy by elite standards. It's hard to say how much of a disadvantage the extra muscle is."

Another exception to the rule is Ken Shirk, aka "Cowman," a 39-year-old sometimes construction worker from Salinas, Calif. Carrying 198 pounds on a 6-foot-3 frame, Shirk has recorded a 2-hour, 48 minute marathon. On the other hand, while a very respectable time, is not going to win any marathons.

Editor's Comments

Mike Tymn's comments in the above article are still quite true today. I would like to point out that there are a few exceptions among big men who have run the marathon and they are definitely exceptions and should be given due credit. Bodyweights in lb:

151 lb – 175 lb (79 kg) 2:06:16 Daniel Njenga KEN 154;
176 lb -200 lb (91 kg) 2:12:50 Peter Maher CAN, 190;
201 lb-225 lb (102 kg) 2:32:32 Christopher Claude, 220, '08;
226 lb-250 lb (113 kg) 3:12:58 Joshua Binder USA 226, '00;
251 lb-275 lb (125 kg) 3:12:20 Mark Lafair, 270 '05;
276 lb-300 lb (136kg) 4:01:52 Ken Ryba 285;
301lb + (137 kg +) 5:14:35 WayneNelson-Stastny, 305.

October 2002



LOU ZAMAPERINI: THE ULTIMATE SURVIVOR

Lou Zamperini was especially enthralled with the gold-medal winning performance of figure skater Sarah Hughes in the winter Olympics this year. "She wasn't there to win the gold, she was there to perform and do her best," said Zamperini, a 1936 Olympian at 5000 meters. "That's the way it should be. It's the way it used to be. When I went to the Olympics, making the team was the most important thing. It was an opportunity to travel and meet athletes from other countries. It was the camaraderie that was important. If you happened to win a gold medal, that was great, but it was a secondary goal and you didn't lose sleep over it if you didn't win. Now, it's all about money and athletes are driven by greed, not by soul. I think television is mostly to blame. It's sad in a way."

I met with Zamperini, now 85, in his Hollywood, Calif., office last November to interview him for an article that appeared in the April 2002 issue of *Running Times*. In that article, I mentioned that Zamperini's 1956 autobiography, *Devil at My Heels*, is being updated and that a movie of his life story is being planned. I called him to get an update on the publication date of his book and the status of the movie when we began talking about the Olympics, still in progress at the time, and about winning.

Golden Memories

Although Zamperini didn't bring back a medal from the Berlin Olympics, he brought back memories worth much more than gold. Only 19, Zamperini finished eighth in the 5000 final in Berlin, but his 56-second final quarter apparently gave the crowd quite a stir. German Chancellor Adolf Hitler was so impressed that he asked to have the young American brought to his box. "Ah! The boy with the fast finish," Zamperini recalls Hitler's reaction when he shook his hand.

With a final time of 14:46.8, Zamperini had closed about 50 yards on the leaders during that last lap. The race was won by Gunnar Hockett of Finland in Olympic record time of 14:22.2.

The Olympic team had journeyed to Europe on the SS Manhattan. It was Zamperini's first time on a boat and the food, especially the sweet rolls, were too good to pass up. "I gained 10 to 12 pounds on the 10-day trip over there, and I continued eating in the Olympic Village," Zamperini explained his performance. "Because of the extra weight, I didn't feel comfortable when running. During the final, there were two packs and I hung back with the second pack, well behind the first pack, which had all the great Finns."

As he started the final lap, Zamperini recalled his brother's words about "a minute of pain being worth a lifetime of glory," then shifted gears. He does not recall being disappointed with his eighth place finish, as he hadn't really thought that much about winning. He was there for the experience, satisfied that he had done his best on that day even if he might have done better without the extra poundage.

The Fuhrer's Flag

A few days later, Zamperini and two other athletes were walking around town when they saw Hitler and his entourage pull up in a vehicle in front of the Reich chancellery.

Zamperini spotted a flag with the Nazi swastika hanging from a pole in front of the chancellery and decided he wanted it as a souvenir.

"The guards would march to the corner, turn about, march back, and then do their goose step around again," Zamperini recalled with some amusement at his youthful stupidity. "I figured I had about 30 seconds to get across the street and get away. But the flag was higher than I had anticipated. I couldn't reach it."

As Zamperini was about on his third jump, the guards had turned around began shouting at him. "I didn't understand German, but I knew what they were saying wasn't pleasant," he continued. I jumped up in the air and clutched the tip of the flag with my fingers, and it ripped from the pole. I fell on my butt, got up, and ran. But then I heard a crack like a gunshot.

With the guard's rifle leveled at him and the guard yelling "Halten Sie," Zamperini put on the brakes. "I did the smartest thing I ever did in my life. I halted."

Some high-ranking officers came out and questioned Zamperini, who explained that he simply wanted the flag to remind him of the "wonderful time" he had had in their country. One officer went back inside, apparently talked with Hitler, and was told to give the flag to him. Zamperini still has it.

Before the Olympic Games, Zamperini had made a name for himself as a miler at Torrance High School in Los Angeles, breaking the national high school record of 4:23.6, which had stood for 18 years, with a 4:21.2 in 1934. That record would last until 1953.

After the Olympics, he attended the University of Southern California on a track scholarship. There, in 1938, he broke the NCAA record for the mile with a 4:08.3. The world record at that time was 4:06.4. He would later improve his mile time to 4:07.6 indoors, but then injuries along with "too much partying and drinking" began to take their toll.

Real Endurance

Zamperini's story of endurance, stamina, fortitude, perseverance, heart, guts, whatever it be called, did not begin until May 27, 1943, when the Army Air Corps plane he occupied as a bombardier officer, crashed at sea, south of the Hawaiian Islands, while on a rescue mission. He then spent 47 days on a life raft and more than two years as a prisoner of war. His weight would drop about 100 pounds, down to 66 pounds, not much more than a skeleton.

During his 47 days on the raft with two crewmates, Zamperini survived on a few raw fish, several uncooked birds, a couple of shark's livers and rain water. He recalled catching his first bird, an albatross that landed on his head as he was slumped over. "I got him by the neck and killed him, but we couldn't eat it," he said. But a week or so later, he caught another bird and tore into it "like a wild man," eating everything, including the eyeballs.

When their raft was fired upon by Japanese planes, the three men were forced to jump in the water and "play dead." There they came under attack by sharks. "I'd straight arm them and hit them on the snout and they'd take off," Zamperini recalled, adding that one of the three men, the tail gunner, died shortly thereafter, on the 33rd day.

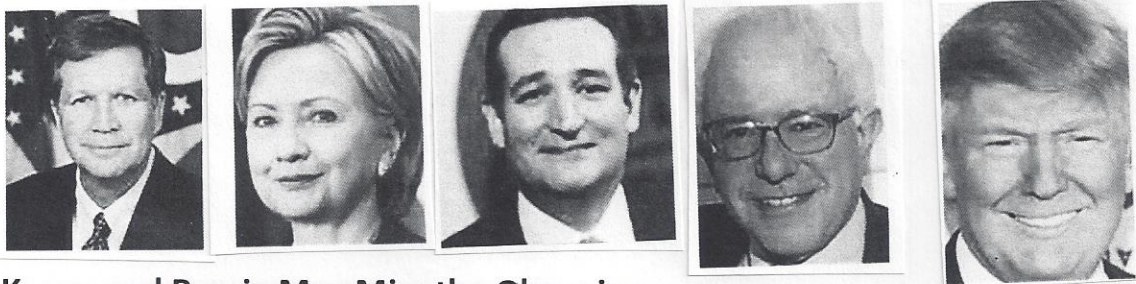
On the 47th day, they were picked up by a Japanese patrol boat and taken to the island of Maloelop and then to Kwajalein, where they were placed in small cages and given leftover fish heads and rice. Back in the United States, it was reported that Zamperini was missing and presumed dead.

Zamperini and the other survivor were put on a ship and taken to Japan, where they spent two winters in a prison, being liberated at the end of the war.

For the past half-century, Zamperini has dedicated his life to teaching physical, mental, moral and spiritual fitness to young people. He founded the Victory Boys Camp in Los Angeles and now spends much of his time lecturing to high school students.

More News and Tidbits

Here are some photos of today's candidates for president of the United States. Look back at Mike Tymn's article on fast-twitch or slow-twitch presidents and decide what you'd want in a president and how you'd classify the following candidates. **Bernie Sanders** ran the mile in 4:40 in high school. **Donald Trump** was at the New York Military Academy where he was a standout in soccer, football and baseball. Arthur Schoenwalder, a classmate, believed Trump was good enough to play pro baseball.



Kenya and Russia May Miss the Olympics

Kenya and its athletes are also in trouble for doping and for now will be kicked out of the 2016 Olympics along with the Russians for the same reasons. Both were given ultimatums by both the WADA (World Athletic Drug-testing Administration) and the IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations) unless they stop using. Russian leaders say they're working on it but still haven't been totally approved by the IAAF. The Kenyan government and federations have ignored the ultimatums. Four officials and 40 Kenyan athletes are under doping investigation. Some runners have even been in races since suspended for drug violations. The Kenyans were given one last chance to respond by April 5. So far nothing. In fact, the Kenyan government has taken a whole month's recess. Unfortunately all Kenyan athletes will be penalized for the actions of Kenyan leadership and those that do partake.

Should Drugs Be Banned?

Here are three reasons given as to why drugs should be banned: 1. They could have harmful side effects. 2. Not everyone has equal access. 3. It's unfair to athletes who have competed without drugs. **Replies:** 1. There are few if any side effects if drugs are taken under medical supervision. One person told me that 6 out of his 10 friends have taken doctor-supervised testosterone for years with increases in strength, stamina and appearance. See also the *British Journal of Medicine*. 2. Access to drugs is universally available; almost every country in the world has access. Those who talk to world class athletes privately will find out the great majority of athletes use; they just don't want to admit that they do too. 3. Athletic advantages are also gained by having enough money to hire a coach, to travel to far-off meets, or having enough time off to train. These all seem to favor people with money. Perhaps the only difference is degree; drugs seem to produce better results faster. Is this an opportunity missed? What do you think? But, if you're going to compete you should follow the rules until/unless they change.