

# Pan Africa-USA Track Meet Very Successful In Durham



**DAVIS CONTINUES STREAK** - Durham: Iris Davis (206) wins the women's 100 meter dash for the USA with a time of 11.40. Next to Miss Davis is Alice Annum (302) for Africa who finished third in this opening round of events of the Pan-Africa-USA International Track Meet. (UPI).

## Largest Crowd To Witness Track Meet In United States Thrilled

BY EARL MASON

DURHAM - More than 54,000 spectators turned out for the Pan Africa-USA International Track Meet staged here last Friday and Saturday at Wallace Wade Stadium on the Duke University campus.

But the joy and excitement they witnessed will linger in their hearts for a long time.

### EARL MASON'S SPORTS VIDEO



#### LITTLE ETHIOPIAN STEALS HEART OF CROWD

DURHAM - The first Pan Africa-USA International Track Meet staged in the United States is history. The end of the two-day meet came to a close just before eight o'clock last Saturday night. But still lingering in the hearts of the 34,000 spectators who turned out to see the Meet is a little Ethiopian by the name of Mirus Afer.

Before the Meet was staged, everybody knew about such great African runners as Kip Keino, Ben Jipcho and John C. Akil-Buwa. They knew what to expect from these runners. But by the time the Meet had ended, the little man from Ethiopia had captured the hearts of track fans from every angle in the United States.

Ifer, who looks like he should be running the sprint races instead of any race of any long distance because of his size, stole the show from the other runners in the Meet. Included in the Meet were such outstanding world record holders as John Smith, Rod Milburn and Keino and Pat Matzdorf.

Ifer, the Ethiopian soldier who is the body guard for Emperor Haile Selassie, turned from goat to hero. It was on Friday afternoon that Ifer had misjudged the finish in the 5,000 meter run and stopped running with one lap to go. Being unable to speak either English or French, there was some misinterpretation at the finish line in the 5,000 meter race Friday. Ifer, whose best time in the 5,000 meter race this season has been 12:52.6, was expected to give Steve Prefontaine of Oregon a run for his money in the three-mile equivalent race Friday evening.

It was a two-man race between Ifer and Prefontaine until two laps before the race was over. When the two runners came across the line with two laps to go, Ifer, thinking this was the last lap, turned on his speed and opened up a 30-yard lead over Prefontaine.

Of course this brought the spectators to their feet. But as Ifer came into the finish line with what he thought was an apparent victory, the starter shot the gun indicating the last lap was coming up. Prefontaine went on to win the race.

This moment of despair was recognized by all in attendance at the Meet but of course nothing could be done about it. As a token of appreciation for his efforts, Dr. Leroy T. Walker, serving as Meet coordinator, made a special presentation of a watch to Ifer for his very fine efforts.

The near 20,000 spectators rose to their feet to give Ifer a standing ovation for his very fine effort which went for naught. But at this time, no one knew that Ifer would return the next day to not only win the respect of those who came out on Friday, but the additional 14,000 also.

Originally, Ifer was not scheduled to run the 10,000 meter which was scheduled to be run at 6:20 Saturday. After the opening races, the spectators were getting in the groove to witness one of the world's greatest distance runners, Kip Keino "do his thing."

However, before time for the 1500 meter race scheduled to be run at 6:05, the man on the public address system announced that Ifer was going to run the 10,000 meters. Of course this brought the people to their feet.

Still not feeling the real thing what was about to happen, all the fans sat back in their seats and watched Keino run away from the field in the 1500 meter race. The fans brought the veteran police from Kenya around the track each time, but this was expected from him.

Before the fans could settle down from the great run by Keino, it was time for the 10,000 meter race. The spectators began to sense the presence of the man, who only 24 hours before, had felt the sting of despair. The row of sentiment began to flow for the little Ethiopian.

And from the time the gun went off starting the six-mile race until Ifer fought off the challenge by Frank Shorter at the tape, the spectators were on their feet cheering Ifer on to victory.

The people who had come from every angle of the globe and from all walks of life, had a chance to really get the feel of the race since it was a race that would be over in a few seconds. The runners had to run 25 1/2 laps before the race was over.

And for 24 1/2 of these laps, Ifer stayed just two steps behind Shorter, the United States champion in this race. But this time, making no mistakes about how many laps were left in the race, Ifer took command of the race when the gun sounded indicating the last lap.

When the gun went off, the Ethiopian opened up a 10-yard lead going around the first turn. On the back stretch, Ifer added some more to the lead making the distance about 15 yards. Then with about 200 yards left in the race, Shorter made his bid to overtake Ifer.

The two competitors battled down the stretch but this time Ifer was not going to be denied. Seemingly, he reached back and got a little something extra and was able to hold on to the lead at the tape.

The track meet was not over at this point, but for most of the spectators, the joy of the two-day Meet was present. The entire attendance rose to its feet to give Ifer a standing ovation. And as he ran a victory lap, the fans continued to clap their hands.

The cheering was not over however when it was time for Ifer to come to the award stand to get his citations. The people again rose for the occasion. They applauded and, of course, Ifer responded by taking a bow.

Spectators who turned out for both days of the activities had seen 32 other events. Fans who only came Saturday saw a new world record set by the women's mile relay team. Still others had other moments of excitement. But the Pan Africa-USA Track Meet of 1971 will be remembered by all for a little soldier from Ethiopia who turned from goat to hero in a matter of 24 hours.



**VICTORY SIGN** - Durham: John Smith (L) UCLA gives the "power" sign to the cheering crowd after winning the 400 meters dash July 16 in the Pan Africa-USA International Track Meet. With Smith is USA teammate Ivory Crockett, Philadelphia, who took a second in the 100-meters dash. (UPI).



**KEINO HITS TAPE FIRST** - Durham: African Olympic gold medal holder Kip Keino tears the tape as he crosses the finish line a good 100 yards ahead of his nearest competitor in the 5000 meters race July 17. Keino's time was 13:37.52. (UPI).

## Olympics Sweepstakes Announced

In the sports world, excitement has already started to build in anticipation of the Olympics scheduled for August-September of 1972 in Munich, Germany.

Upcoming Track and Field events like the Pan-African Games and the Olympic Trials will be testing as well as sharpening the abilities of such track greats as Renaldo Brown, Iris Davis, and John Smith as they compete with other American athletes for a berth in 1972 world-wide competition.

But athletes won't be the only ones hoping for a spot at the Olympics.

Salem cigarettes has announced a "World Games" Sweepstakes which offers 20 lucky winners a trip for two to the 1972 Games, plus hotel accommodations, tickets to various events and \$500 in spending money. Or, as an alternate prize the winners may select \$1,000 cash.

Persons 21 years of age or older can enter the contest between now and October 30 by sending their name and address, including zip code, along with two empty Salem packs to: Salem World Games Sweepstakes, P. O. Box 8242, St. Paul, Minn. 55113.

The 20 winners will be drawn this November by an independent judging organization.

In addition, the first 10,000 entrants will receive a free copy of the "Great Black Athletes" record book, published by Sntbebe Sports, Inc.

The Greater Portland (Oregon) Commerce magazine notes, "U. S. railroads continue as the nation's biggest hauler of freight, carrying 41 percent of intercity traffic. By 1980 they will be expected to handle, at the very least, one third more traffic than now—moving over one trillion ton-miles a year."

Under good timber management, three to five times the normal number of timber crops can be grown, says Georgia-Pacific Corporation.

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