

THE MARATHON RACE FROM WINDSOR TO THE STADIUM

THE London Times thus describes the Marathon race at the Olympic games:

If not so intensely dramatic as the finish in the Stadium, the scene along the course of the Marathon route yesterday was one that will not easily be forgotten by those who were privileged to follow the race.

Over 26 miles of roads from Windsor to the Stadium, all—with a few unimportant exceptions in the "real country," where for a few hundred yards there was only a sprinkling of spectators—lined with people. In some cases there were a single row, in others three or four rows; in the towns which one passed through, indeed, over all the last part of the course, when one got on to tram-lines and between rows of houses, the spectators were packed as tightly as possible, and then only leaving a part of the road open, but enough to ensure no discomfort to the competitors. And every one excited to see the runners go by. Many, no doubt, were able to get to the Stadium and see the finish as well; for it was possible to do so from many points of the course, notably Uxbridge, Ickenham, and Ruislip. But the great majority only just saw the runners pass. It was a memorable day, and there seemed to be a feeling that this, after all, was a thing to be seen in one's own country probably only once in a lifetime; for it will be many years before the revived Olympic games are again held in England. As one went past, too, one noticed, of course, all kinds of nationalities and color; a "turbaned" Turk near Ruislip was watching with intense interest; Japanese, Indians, and negroes were scattered here and there.

A glorious hot July afternoon, with hardly a breath of wind, ideal for a bathe or a game of cricket, perhaps, but terrible for a feat of endurance of "wind," stamina, muscle, and feet, and the task of the men—26 odd miles over roads in many and with the sun blazing down for long times together—seemed to the writer perfectly appalling.

As we followed the race in a motor-car, now near the leader, now alongside the second or third, or further back, it was amazing to see how many of the men seemed comparatively untroubled by the conditions. Early in the race several had a word to say as we passed, but later on it became a more grim performance, and one could sympathize with what the men must be feeling.

Windsor presented an animated appearance long before the race started. The officials, easily distinguishable by the green ribbons round their hats, were here, there, and everywhere; there was suppressed excitement in the air, and the talk was all of the race. Shortly after 2 o'clock—a large crowd had then collected—the competitors began to file leisurely up to the gates close to the East Terrace, from where the start was to take place. Lord Desborough, the value of whose work in connection with the Olympic Games cannot be over-estimated, traveled down by the 10.55 from Paddington to Windsor, and was early on the scene. It seemed a long time waiting until half-past two, the time when the 55 starters—57 were expected, but two scratched just before the race—were to be sent out on their long journey; for every one was by now keenly excited.

The Start

It was just after the half-hour when the Princess of Wales started the race—the men were grouped in four rows—by pressing an electric button which gave the signal for the pistol to be fired, and so the men were off for the Marathon race of 1908—distance 26 miles 385 yards—which will become famous in the history of athletics.

After the first outburst of excitement one could settle down and take some stock of the surroundings. Down to Barnespool-bridge and on through Eton one could see little of the competitors ahead. Eton turned out in force to see the men go by—the famous wall where so many historic games have been fought out was crowded—and the boys seemed most interested, if not wildly enthusiastic. On the long stretch of road past Agar's Plough to Slough, some of the motor-cars which followed the race were able to get past the hindmost runners, and of course as time went on the gaps widened out.

Slough to Uxbridge

The crowd at Slough again was very great,

and then, after crossing the canal-bridge, three miles from the start, where Jack (United Kingdom), who had led at two miles in 10 min. 11 sec.—very fast time surely for such a race—was still ahead in 15 min. 42 sec., followed by Price and Lord (both of the United Kingdom), the course went into real country skirting Langley-park on the way to the Crooked Billet, about half-way between Slough and Uxbridge. In this stretch Jack fell back, and before reaching Uxbridge Lord took the lead, followed by Price, Duncan, one of Great Britain's most fancied representatives, Hefferon, of South Africa, and Tom Longboat, the famous Canadian Indian. Even in this part of the course there were all along cheering spectators. The whole establishment of one or two



(Italy) and Appleby (England), no less than five minutes ahead. They have passed Harrow and are on a very dusty part of the road. Five minutes is a long lead so far on in the race. But the three in front will soon be coming to those three trying miles which begin at Wembley Park with the tram lines, and to men who have been traveling at such a pace anything may happen. At the 20th mile Hefferon is still leading, with the Italian second, and Hayes third, the first American to join the three in front. We are getting nearer and nearer to the finish.

Just for a few minutes there is a wild frenzy of enthusiasm, as Taylor, by a magnificent spurt, catches the leader in the team swimming race just in the last few yards, and

last turn. The goal is in sight, though his closed eyes cannot see it. He is surrounded by officials almost, if not quite, supporting him, urging and cheering him on. If they were not there he would fall. He cannot run straight. And yet 50 yards from the end he suddenly bursts into a pathetic, almost a horrible, parody of a spurt, drops again ten yards from the tape, rises, staggers forward over those last terrible few yards, and has reached the goal.

But not with much to spare. Hayes, of the United States, follows him into the Stadium, a long way behind him in time, but comparatively a fresh and strong man, who can actually run, and is fast catching him up. Not quite, however, though he has run a magnificent race. So have several of the Americans. They come in, one after the other, Americans, Indians, Canadians, none of them, happily, in the same dreadful state as Dorando, the Italian, but with a bewildered look on their faces, drawn and pale with exhaustion, as though wondering what they are doing. It seems as if the first Englishman will never come. And all the time the cheering goes on, every few minutes swelling round the course into a louder roar, as one by one they come. For if only one man can win, it is something even to finish in this Marathon race. Dorando was very ill after leaving the track, but it was afterwards announced that he was out of danger.

Successful Protest
The Americans protested against Dorando's win on the ground that he received assistance, and the protest was finally sustained by the council. So that, after all, the unfortunate man had his agonized struggles to no purpose. Altogether the finish of the race was far from satisfactory. The rule about attendants not being allowed on the course was flagrantly broken. The position of those in authority was undoubtedly difficult. It seemed inhuman to leave Dorando to struggle on unaided, and inhuman to urge him to continue. It did not seem right that thousands of people should witness a man suffering as he did. It seemed hard that he should lose the victory after having reached the Stadium so long before any one else. And yet, after all, the race was not to the Stadium entrance, but to the finish in front of the Royal box, and it is extremely doubtful whether, by his own unaided exertions, Dorando could ever have got so far. And the Americans, who enjoyed the signal honor of providing three out of the first five men home, are justly entitled to the special glory of claiming the actual winner.

On the day following the great race shortly before four the Queen arrived, attended by Princess Victoria and the Crown Prince and Princess of Sweden, and, after the breathless series of world's records already recorded, "See the Conquering Hero" was played by the Grenadiers' band, and to a drum and fife march the long line of gold medalists walked slowly along the track into the presence of the Queen. In front of the Royal box a red-carpeted platform had been built on which her Majesty took her stand by the side of the table on which were placed the gold medals in square red leather cases, with the title of the event and "Olympic Games Winner, London, 1908," inscribed upon them in gilt lettering.

"Dorando"

Suddenly, as the Queen was taking the medals from Lord Desborough and handing them to the winners, there was a great shout of "Dorando," and the man by whose name the Marathon race of 1908 will always be remembered came out from the gangway under the track by himself, till he was joined by an Italian admirer bearing the national flag. It was a strange and moving contrast to the scene of the previous day. This little Italian confecturer, 24 hours ago a pitiable, tottering, agonized wreck, looking like an old man on the brink of the grave, but now a quiet, self-possessed, sturdy young man, was the hero of the whole assembly as he made his way to the tail-end of the procession of prize-winners, and the shouts and cheers and cries of applause and sympathy were renewed again and again when it came to his turn to climb up the broad red-carpeted steps, placed almost exactly where he had fallen for the last time at the end of his gallant struggle, and receive from the hands of England's Queen the beautiful cup, her own personal gift, with which her woman's heart had prompted her to mark the sympathy which she felt for his pluck and his disappointment.



DORANDO THE ITALIAN MAKES HIS LAST EFFORT

country houses which were passed seemed to be out to see the sport, while, where there were cross-roads, the motor-cars and carriages drawn up presented quite a picturesque spectacle. The whole countryside had turned out from the oldest to the youngest, and the school children, many of whom were waving flags, were most vociferous in their applause. After about seven miles Duncan was walking, and it was disappointing to find one of Great Britain's champions in trouble so early in the race; but there was a long way to go and anything might happen.

Uxbridge to Harrow

At Uxbridge, as had been expected, there was a dense crowd, but one was soon out again on to the open land known as Uxbridge-common. The intense heat, with the sun beating down, was very much felt here, and it was a relief to get into the more shady roads near Ickenham and Ruislip, where the scene was more or less a reproduction of that between Slough and Uxbridge. The gaps between the runners were beginning to widen appreciably. Near Ickenham Lord seemed to be in some trouble and he gave way to Price, and Hefferon (South Africa) went into second place; Longboat was some way behind, but was going steadily. At last Hefferon got in front. At this time he was running beautifully and seemed quite fresh, and before Harrow was reached he had established a long lead, with Longboat, Appleby (United Kingdom), and Dorando, who had been going most gamely, behind him.

Harrow to the Stadium

Nearing Harrow, where, of course, as at Eton, the school turned out in large numbers, the excitement seemed to increase, and for the rest of the course there was a large crowd nearly the whole way. Before Harrow was passed—the road, of course, skirted round the famous hill to Sudbury and Wembley, but there was one rather nasty bit to climb—Longboat was walking. He was second, in front of Dorando, and twice as the latter got near to him he went away at a run; but Dorando eventually got past. And so we had Hefferon with his long lead and Dorando going well in his wake. There were constant questions shouted as our car passed: "What of Longboat?" "Who's third?" etc. Between Sudbury and Harlesden Hefferon kept his lead, but Dorando was creeping up to him, and the last time we passed him before reaching Harlesden he looked in a sorry plight. And so it proved; for in

the remaining miles he was passed by Dorando, who struggled into the Stadium first, practically in a state of collapse, and by J. J. Hayes (U.S.A.), to whom the race has been awarded.

The Scene in the Stadium

The first news of the race at the Stadium came just before 3 o'clock, when it was announced that the leaders at the end of the first mile were an Englishman and a Canadian, W. T. Clarke and A. Burn. Next we heard that the race had been started by the Princess of Wales, and shortly afterwards that the leaders after four miles were T. Jack, 40 yards ahead, J. Price, and A. Duncan, all three Englishmen. A few weeks ago Price did a wonderful run of 25 miles from Coventry to West Bromwich in 2 hours 34 minutes, which is within about 3 minutes of the track record for the distance. At the ninth mile-post he was still one of the first three, the others being C. Hefferon, of South Africa, and another Englishman, F. Lord, who was leading. At the twelfth mile these three were still ahead, with Price in front.

While the runners were toiling Stadium-wards on their long, hot journey, frequent rounds of applause kept bursting from the audience as they watched the pole-jumpers flinging themselves over the bar the height of two tall men from the ground at one end of the course, the high divers shooting gracefully through the air in the centre, and the wrestlers struggling on the mat at the other. But these were only interludes. Even the international teams for the 1,600 metres relay race, who turned out at about a quarter-past four, could not banish the thought of those five-and-fifty runners working their way at record-breaking pace along the hot and dusty roads. Yet when the English, Canadian, and American sprinters were dashing round the course at top speed, the efforts of each fresh runner growing fainter as he got nearer to his appointed goal, the crowd was roused to a louder display of enthusiasm than had yet been heard, and the American victory was very well received.

Meanwhile there was time to think about the time which Price had taken to do the first 12 miles—1 hour 3 minutes 10 seconds. It sounded incredibly fast, a shade over 5 mins. 15 secs. a mile. Not apparently too fast for Hefferon, who was leading at the 18th mile, and again at the 19th, followed by Dorando

a mighty shout went up as the Union Jack for the first time in the day fluttered at the mast-head, quickly followed by another as the Swedish flag announced that Sweden had won the high-diving. And then comes the long-expected finish.

"Clear the Course"

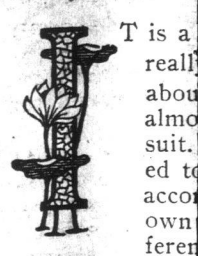
"Clear the course for the Marathon race," comes the announcement through the megaphone. A policeman is waiting at one of the gangways on the further side of the ground. There is a continual clamor of tens of thousands of people talking and shouting. The photographers are kneeling on the grass at the edge of the track waiting for whoever it may be. Most probably Hefferon, who at 21 miles is still leading, followed by Dorando. There is an indescribable thrill of excitement in the air. The judges are clustered round the tape in front of the Royal Box.

The people in the top seats at the north-east corner of the Stadium have turned round to look over Wormwood-scrubs. Twenty-four miles, and still the same two leaders. The pace must have slackened. Five o'clock. They ought to be here. The sound of a rocket! Another! Suddenly at the top of the far-off stand they begin to clap; but it is a false alarm. It is a wonderful moment. All these thousands of people waiting to see one man drag his tired legs over the 200 yards of the track at the end of a 26-mile run—the crowning moment of these great Olympic Games. Suddenly a boom, and then another, and then a pause. Every one is very quiet now. There is a subdued hum which swells into a roar as the timekeepers, in white motor-coats, hurry on to the ground. Silence! Let the megaphone speak. The runners are in sight, South Africa and Italy leading, a mile from home. And then cheers and counter-cheers and bang goes a rocket close at hand, followed by a rush of officials from the Stadium to the course outside.

The Finish

And at last he comes. A tired man, dazed, bewildered, hardly conscious, in red shorts and white vest, his hair white with dust, staggers on to the track. It is Dorando, the Italian. He looks about him, hardly knowing where he is. Just the knowledge that somehow, by some desperate resolve of determination, he must get round that 200 yards to the tape of the finish keeps him on his feet. Fifty yards, and it cannot even do that. He falls on the track, gets up, staggers on a few yards and falls again, and yet again; and then he reaches the

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