

Track and Field



Abdon Pamich



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180,000 Miles on Foot

Race-walking keeps you young. In the Los Angeles Olympics of 1932, the 50 km title went to Great Britain's Thomas Green, then 39 years old, a railway employee and father of four. Italians took the title in most subsequent Olympics until 1968, when the East-European countries began their formidable assault on European and Olympic titles. Giuseppe Dordoni, for example, was European champion in 1950 and Olympic gold medalist in 1952. Then Abdon Pamich, born in Fiume in 1933, took over, winning the European title twice (in 1962 and 1966) and the Olympic title in 1964.

Abdon Pamich's athletic career spanned nearly a quarter of a century. Like many long-distance walkers he was lean and long-limbed (height 6 ft 1 in, weight 164 lb). He came fourth in the 50 km walk in the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne. Two years later, he became European vice-champion in Stockholm. At the Rome Olympics in 1960, he won the bronze and at the following Olympics, held in Tokyo, he won the gold, the crowning achievement of his career. He was selected for the 1968

Olympics in Mexico (retired) and for the 1972 Munich Olympics (disqualified for infringing the rules, the only blot on his admirable record).

Pamich retired from athletics in 1975 after 24 years and 180,000 miles of race-walking, having set two world records (50 km and 30 miles) and 19 Italian records. For five years, from 1960 to 1965, he was the fastest man in the world over 50 km. He was selected for his national team no less than 54 times and at one time or another carried off the honors in most of the European walking classics, including the Prague-Podebrady race (which he won in 1956, 1961 and 1964) and the Lugano Cup (1961).

ABDON PAMICH

Born Nov. 3, 1933, in Fiume, YUG, but of Italian nationality

AWARDS AND RECORDS

OG 1960: bronze medal in 50 km walk

OG 1964: gold medal in 50 km walk

EC 1958: silver medal in 50 km walk

EC 1962: gold medal in 50 km walk

World records:

30 miles: 4 hr 4 min 56.8 sec, Nov. 19, 1961, in Rome

50 km: 4 hr 14 min 2.4 sec, Nov. 19, 1961, in Rome