

Track and Field



Al Feuerbach



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No limits...

When Al Feuerbach beat the world shot-putting record on 5 May 1973 it would have been hard to find a specialist in the USA who could not count at least one victory over him. Even the Frenchman Pierre Colnard who had met him in 1970 could say he won a match in which the American finished third. By the end of 1969, it is true to say that Al Feuerbach was just the 27th American shot-putter, with a performance of 17.92 m (58'9 1/2"). But the man had will and enough to spare, and, technically, he was no slouch. Consolidating on his speed rather than on his physical capacities, only three of his countrymen were ahead of him in 1970. By the beginning of the following year, his record had advanced three metres in fourteen months.

The little schoolboy who weighed only 160 lb at 17, was, however, lifting 410 lb from the shoulder and getting up with a 530 lb bar on his back. At the end of the tour he had particularly made of Europe with the United States team, he decided to live on his savings with the aim of becoming a great shot-putter. He could see no limits: "What holds back shot-

putters is that they think there are limits. For me there are none."

That didn't stop him being well and truly beaten at the Munich Olympic Games. Refusing to turn professional, he waited four years for his revenge, with the Pacific Coast Club, a Californian club which actually is just an employment agency for stars seeking contracts. A waste of effort! Although he was the leading American at the Montreal Olympics there were three Europeans ahead of him—the East German Udo Beyer, and the Russians, Evgeni Mironov and Alexander Barichnikov.

AL FEUERBACH

Born Jan. 14, 1948

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1972 OG: 5th with 21.01 m (68'11")

1976 OG: 4th with 20.55 m (67'5")

Pan-American champion 1971 at Cali with 19.76 m (64'10")

World record: 21.82 m (71'7") on May 5, 1973 at San Jose, Calif.

Al Feuerbach: a world record which has never been ratified