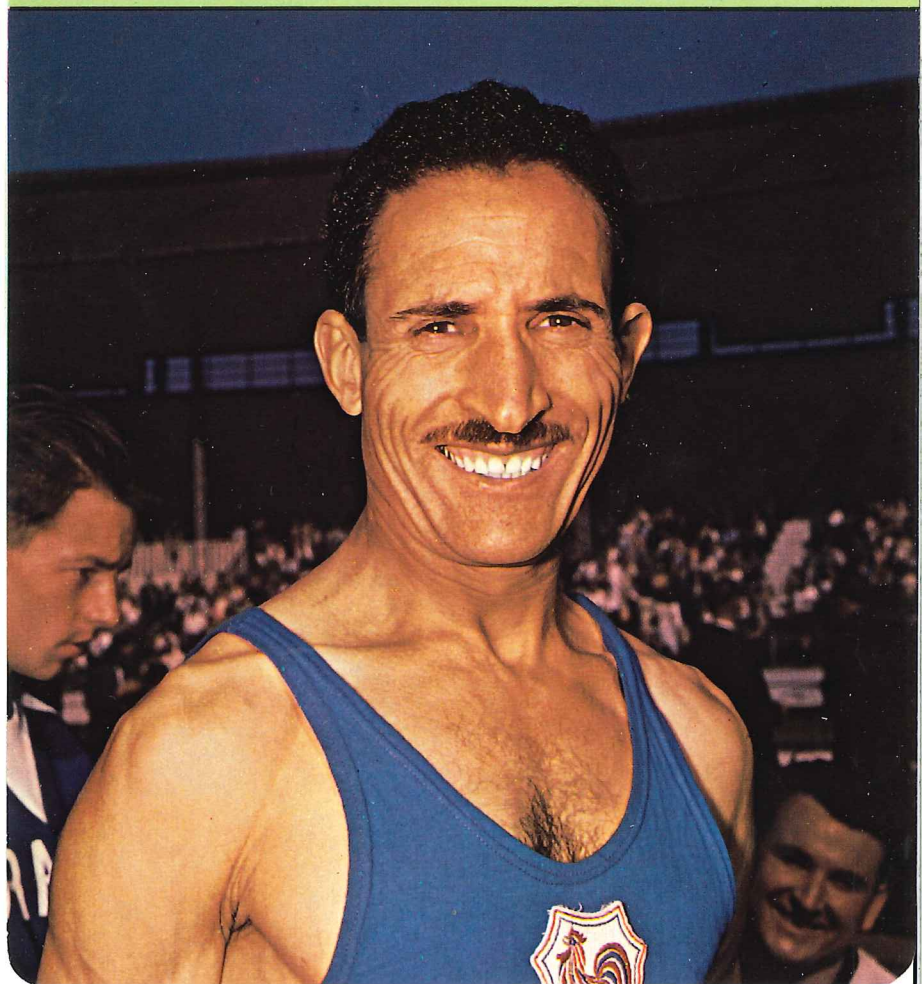


Track and Field



Alain Mimoun



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Alain Mimoun

The Melbourne Marathon Man

A certain Mimoun (Croix de Guerre, 4 mentions), of the 3rd Algerian Rifle-men, was so seriously wounded by a mine at Monte Cassino, that he only just missed having his left foot, which was completely cut to shreds, amputated.

In 1948 he surprised everyone by coming second in the London Olympics 10,000 m, a long way behind Zatopek: this un hoped-for medal was attributed to the heat which had been too much for the other athletes. However, in Dublin, at the end of the 1949 winter, he led home Pujazon in a relentless sprint and emerged the victor of the first of Four Nations Cross-Country, an international competition which he was later to make his speciality.

From that point on, success and top-level performances came in a rush. You can lose count of his thirty national titles, his 80-odd selections for the national team, his French records and his victories in international events. At the very highest level, using his economical stride with which he seemed to float over the ground, he took the silver medals in the 5,000 and 10,000 m at the 1950 European Championships (Brussels), then again at the 1952

Olympic Games (Helsinki), each time behind one and the same man, the "human engine" Emil Zatopek.

In the years which followed, he seemed to lose his edge. In 1965, however, he achieved several important performances. But it was on December 1, 1956, under the hot Melbourne sun, that he was to realize the dream of his lifetime. Out on his own after the half-way stage of his first marathon, Mimoun overcame a weakness which slowed him after the 30-km mark; and it was indeed he who came first into the stadium to be greeted by the applause of the crowd. He waited, prancing around at the finishing line, for the sixth man home. The warm congratulations of Emil Zatopek put the final seal on Alain Mimoun's overwhelming happiness.

ALAIN MIMOUN

Born Jan. 1st, 1921, in El Telargh, ALG

AWARDS AND RECORDS

OG 1948: silver medal, 10,000 m

OG 1952: silver medal, 5000 m
silver medal, 10,000 m

OG 1956: gold medal, marathon

EC 1950: silver medal, 5,000 m
silver medal, 10,000 m

Winner of the Nations Cross-Country 1949, 1952, 1954, 1956

29 times French champion 5,000 m, 10,000 m, marathon, cross-country

Even now, it would be impossible to stop him!