

Track and Field



Betty Cuthbert



Track and Field



Betty Cuthbert

"Betty, You Beauty!"

How the Aussie newspapers raved in November 1956! "Betty, you beauty!" screamed the headlines. And understandably, too. What a host country needs when staging Olympic Games is something for the home crowds to cheer about. Golden-haired Betty gave it to them three times over. Gold medals in the 100 metres, 200 metres, and 4 x 100 metres relay, with a world record in the relay. Just a few months before the Games, 18-year-old Betty had doubted her ability to make the team, and, a prospective spectator, bought a set of tickets. Then in September 1956 she raced to a new world record of 23.2 sec for 200 metres. She was, of course, selected and so was able to pass the tickets on to her brother. Immediately following the Games, Betty shared in three world relay records in Sydney.

The ballyhoo which surrounded her proved too much for the newly-famous but shy heroine of Australian sport and may even have hindered her progress in the seasons ahead. In 1958, she finished second in the Commonwealth Games 220 yards in Cardiff and took another silver medal in the relay. Injury kept her out of the 1960 Olympic Games,

although she had opened the season well with a world record for 220 yards. She retired in 1961 but soon came back to make what seemed a swansong appearance in the 1962 Commonwealth Games, where she ran in the winning Australian relay team. At this point, the influence of her coach June Ferguson, the 1948 Olympic silver medallist, was instrumental in causing her to move up to the 400 metres, a new distance in the women's Olympic programme in 1964. Despite a foot injury, Betty qualified for Tokyo and in a magnificent final won her fourth gold medal.

BETTY CUTHBERT

Born April 20, 1938 in Merrylands, near Sydney, AUS

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1956 OG:	gold medal in the 100 metres	
	gold medal in the 200 metres	
	gold medal in the 4 x 100 metres relay	
1964 OG:	gold medal in the 400 metres	
1958 CG:	silver medal in the 220 yards	
	silver medal in the 4 x 110 yards relay	
1962 CG:	gold medal in the 4 x 110 yards relay	
World records:		
60 metres:	7.2	(1960)
100 yards:	10.4	(1958)
200 metres:	23.2	(1956)
220 yards:	23.2	(1960)
440 yards:	53.2	(1963)
4 x 100 metres relay:	44.5	(1956)
4 x 110 yards relay:	45.6	(1956)
4 x 200 metres relay:	1:36.3	(1956)
4 x 220 yards relay:	1:36.3	(1956)

New South Wales' Betty Cuthbert prepares for the Empire Games in Perth, Nov. 22, 1962