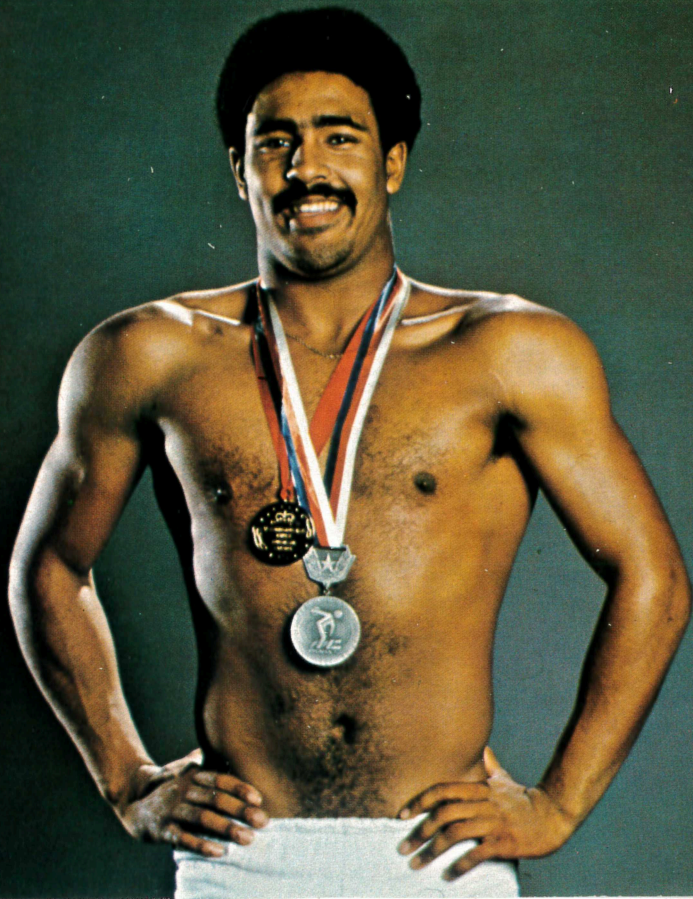


# Track and Field



*Daley Thompson*



# Track and Field



## Daley Thompson

### One Man in Ten

In the last 30 years or more it has never seemed possible that Britain would produce a world class decathlon performer. Daley Thompson caused the experts to think again.

He was born in London of a Nigerian father and Scottish mother. Coached by Bruce Longden, he began to demonstrate his explosive talents when only 16, compiling the surprising total of 6,685 points in his first-ever decathlon in the Welsh Open Championship in Cwmbran. He was only just 18 when he impressed the Montreal Olympic gold medallist, Bruce Jenner, as a likely successor. Since then he has forged on with giant strides, making it ever more apparent that only refinements of technique in the throwing events come between him and the very top. His stamina is such that he seldom seems extended, even after the 1,500 metres, last of the ten-event sequence, which tests the big men of decathlon so cruelly.

In 1977 Thompson romped to a gold medal in the European Junior championship in Sittard with a, for him, unexceptional total of 7,647. In the previous month he had won two decathlons in the space of only a week, both of them in full

senior competition, with totals of over 8,000.

At Edmonton for the Commonwealth Games, Daley was really ablaze. His gold medal performance of 8,467 points, third on the all-time list, was only prevented from being a Commonwealth record by the fact that his 100 metres and long jump were wind assisted. In the long jump, with a fantastic 8.11 m (26 ft 7 1/4 in) he was superior to the individual long jump gold medallist. Three weeks later, despite poor hurdling and pole vault, he won silver in the European Championship.

In 1979 Thompson was foiled of a world record when his pole was lost en route to Flein, West Germany. Using a borrowed pole he failed to score in that event but his first day total was a world best of 4,507 points.

#### DALEY THOMPSON

Born July 30, 1958, in London, England

#### AWARDS AND RECORDS

- 1978 CG: gold medal, decathlon, 8,467 points: (10.50, 8.11, 14.43, 2.07, 47.85, 14.92, 41.68, 4.80, 56.60, 4:25.8), Edmonton
- 1978 ECH: silver medal, decathlon, 8,289 points (10.69, 7.93, 14.69, 2.04, 47.77, 15.28, 43.52, 4.20, 59.80, 4:22.8), Prague

*Daley Thompson: an Olympic medal would complete the set*