

# Track and Field



*Dave Moorcroft*



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## Dave Moorcroft

### *A Gallop for Godiva*

To be a British miler of the same era as Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett is to live in heady times. Dave Moorcroft of Coventry Godiva Harriers has found this to be true at first hand. In fact, although overshadowed by them both at his favourite distances of 1 mile and 1,500 metres, he has demonstrated, if anything, an even more remarkable versatility over road, track, and country. Landmarks in his considerable career include the AAA indoor junior 1,500 metres title in 1971, the fastest leg in the National Road Relay in 1973, and second place in the 9-mile English cross country in 1976.

Coached by John Anderson who also advised, among others, sprinter David Jenkins, Moorcroft started serious athletics at the age of 16. He was 22 when he first broke four minutes for the mile in 1975, also winning the 1,500 metres that year for Great Britain against Sweden. He opened 1976 impressively, taking the AAA indoor 1,500 metres before finishing runner-up to Bernie Ford in the National Cross Country. He was seventh in the Olympic 1,500 metres in Montreal, Ovett having been eliminated in the heats. Then on his return to London he took the Emsley Carr mile in 3 min 57.1 sec ahead of Filbert Bayi of Tanza-

nia, the former world record holder, and Brendan Foster.

Halted by a back injury in 1977, Dave wintered in New Zealand where, with his wife, he did some teaching. Winner of the 1978 AAA 1,500 metres, he chose the Commonwealth Games as his prime target while Ovett conserved himself for the European a month later. In Edmonton Dave rounded nicely into form. He had beaten a classy field in the Gateshead Games, clocking a personal best mile time of 3 min 56.6 sec a few weeks earlier. The Commonwealth Games final saw him decisively beat Bayi and John Robson for the gold medal. In Prague for the European Championships he won a bronze medal behind Ovett and Ireland's Eamonn Coghlan.

In 1979 Dave further improved his mile best to 3 min 54.4 sec in ninth place in the Golden Mile in Oslo, after winning the European Cup semi-final in Malmo.

#### DAVID MOORCROFT

Born April 10, 1953 in Coventry, England

#### AWARDS AND RECORDS

1978 CG: gold medal, 1,500 metres in 3 min 35.5 sec, Edmonton

1978 ECH: bronze medal, 1,500 metres in 3 min 36.7 sec, Prague

*Dave Moorcroft has Coe and Ovett as middle-distance rivals*