

Track and Field



Dave Sime



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The Blue Angel of Sprinting

Considered as the natural successor of the fabulous Jesse Owens, Dave Sime did not have such a dazzling career as his peer. In particular, no Olympic title ever rewarded his rare talents.

Born in 1936, he had played only basketball, American football and baseball when, at the beginning of 1954, he ran a 100 yards for fun in all his footballer's clothing. The time he made (9.8 sec) seemed so incredible that Bob Chambers, his trainer at the University of Durham (North Carolina), refused to announce it. Chambers then made it his job to convert him to athletics, which he did in 1955, the year in which, however, he was offered \$60,000 to become a professional baseball player.

In 1956, the "blue angel", as he was to be called, had a number of successes: the world record in the 100 yards (9.3 sec) was equalled twice, world records in the 200 m and the 220 yards hurdles which he brought to 22.2 sec, world record in the 200 m and the 220 yards in a straight line beaten in 20.1 sec. Better still, in June, Sime became the first man to run 200 m in 20 sec. Even if this was still in a straight line, such a performance was unheard of.

Glory seemed certain for this phenomenon at the Olympics in Melbourne when he cracked up in the turn of the 200 m in the US Championships. From then on, the way was open for Bobby Morrow, who pocketed the three titles (100, 200 and 4 x 100 m) awarded in advance to Sime. A new opportunity presented itself with the Rome Olympics. But he met in his path a man with dynamite in his calves, the German Armin Hary. Sime was beaten over 100 m. He did not qualify in the 200 m and the USA were disqualified in the relay.

DAVE SIME

Born July 25, 1936, in Paterson, New Jersey

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1960 OG: silver medal in the 100 m in 10.2 sec
World records:
9.3 sec in the 100 yards on 19 May 1956 at Raleigh (North Carolina), on 9 June 1956 at Sanger (California) and on 18 May 1957 at Raleigh
20 sec in the 220 yards and 200 m in a straight line on 11 May 1956 at Durham and on 9 June 1956 at Sanger (time taken for the longer distance)
22.2 sec in the 220 yards and 200-m hurdles on 5 May 1956 at Durham (time taken for the longer distance)

Dave Sime: a sprint king with no gold medal