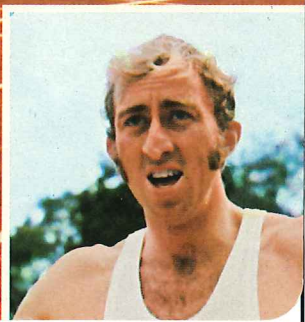
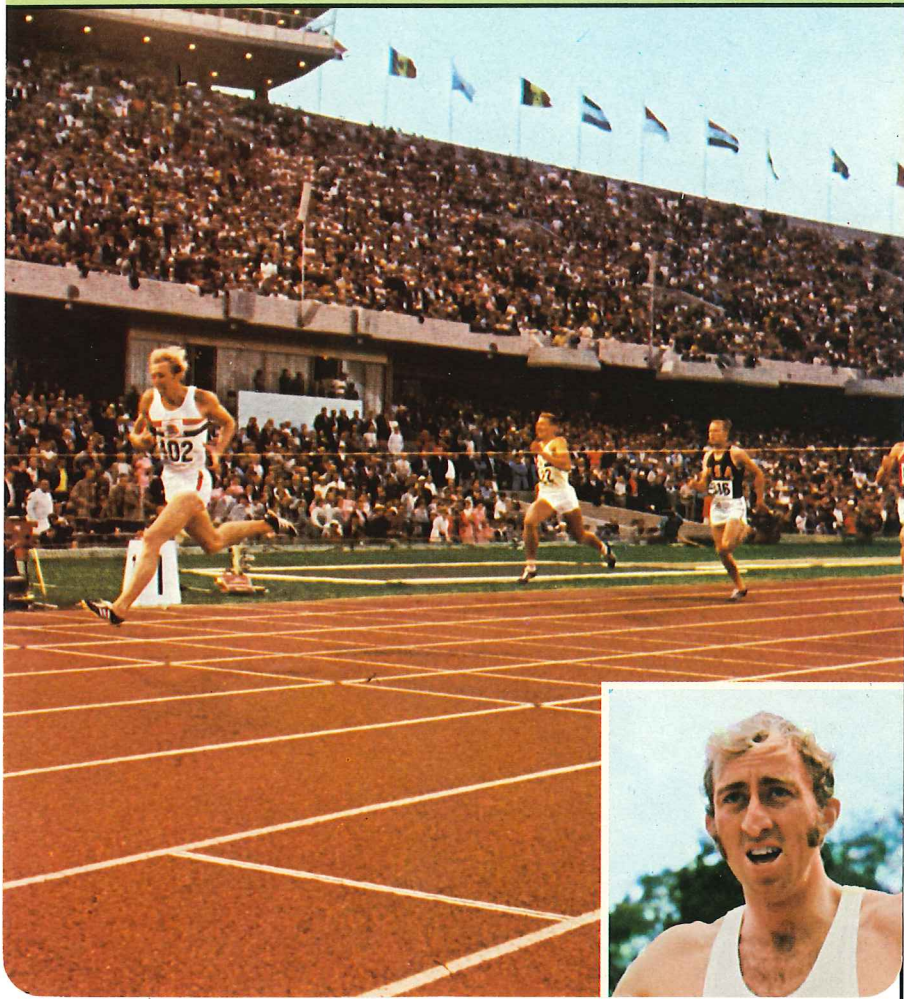


Track and Field



David Hemery



Track and Field



David Hemery

Britain's Greatest Ever Hurdler

When David Hemery triumphed at Mexico City in 1968 he was the first English track athlete since 1932 to win an Olympic gold medal in world record time. At the time he seemed the epitome of all that it takes to reach the summit of athletics fame, but as a boy his frail appearance had belied the immense potential. He first started hurdling at the age of 5 when the breakwaters on the beach near his home at Frinton, Essex, provided natural obstacles. Hemery really began to develop in his teens which he spent at school in America. He returned to London to win the AAA Junior 120-yards hurdles title in 1963. He had already met Fred Housden, whose coaching was to perfect his hurdling technique; while in the States he was motivated in his fitness training by Billy Smith at Boston University and in 1966 he captured his first major title, the Commonwealth Games 120-yards hurdles in Kingston, Jamaica.

He had already tried the longer distance but did not really impress over the 400 m hurdles until 1968 when he took the American collegiate title

before returning to London to win his place in Britain's olympic squad.

Hemery won the 400 m hurdles final at Mexico City by eight yards, the longest winning margin in any track final up to 800 metres in the previous 8 Olympic Games. After a break from athletics in 1971, Hemery decided to defend his olympic title at Munich in 1972 but was able to finish only third for the bronze medal. He also collected a silver medal in the 4 x 400 m relay, completing his full set of olympic medals.

As a professional Hemery became the winner of the first British "Superstars" contest in 1973, bringing him before a large TV audience.

DAVID HEMERY

Born July 18, 1944, in Cirencester, Glos., GB

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1966 CG: 120-yards hurdles gold medal
1968 OG: 400 m hurdles gold medal
1969 EC: 110 m hurdles silver medal
1970 CG: 110 m hurdles gold medal
1970 World Student Games: 110 m hurdles gold medal
1972 OG: 400 m hurdles bronze medal
1972 OG: 4 x 400 m relay silver medal
World records:
1968 400 m hurdles: 48.1
1972 300 m hurdles: 34.6

Insert. After winning the 400 m hurdles at Mexico 1968