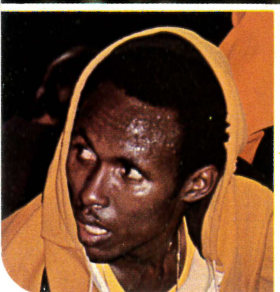
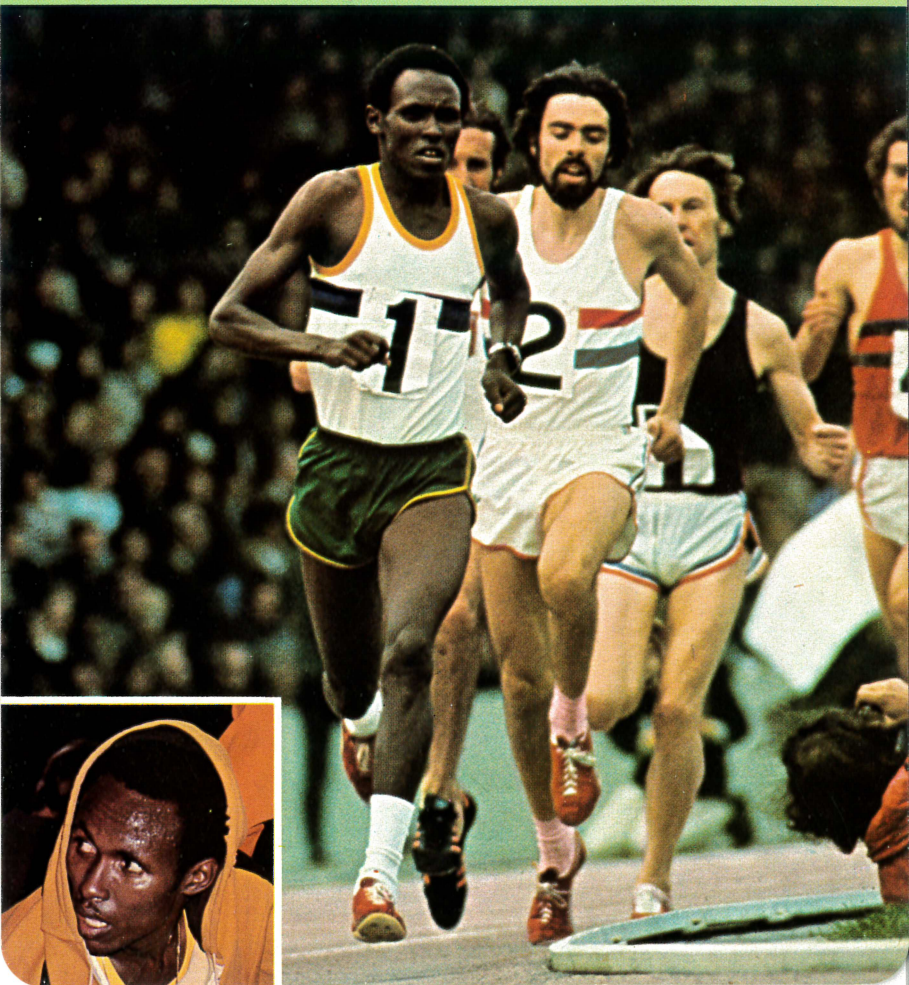


# Track and Field



*Filbert Bayi*



# Track and Field



*If he had run in Montreal...*

At the OG in Munich, the Tanzanian Filbert Bayi, eliminated in the qualifying heats of the 1,500-m and the 3,000-m steeple-chase, disappeared without glory. A few months later, the Second African Games took place in Lagos (Nigeria). It was early in 1973 and Bayi had only just risen from his sick-bed after a bout of malaria. This did not stop him from beating the great Keino in the 1,500 m final. Somewhat bewildered, the uncontested king of the racetrack on the African continent went up to his young vanquisher and said to him "If you train harder, one day you'll be the greatest and you'll beat the world record". After hesitant beginnings, Bayi had started training regularly in October 1971 under the guidance of a technician from East Germany, Werner Kramer, who followed him for two years. As for the world records, Keino could not have spoken truer words. At the beginning of 1974, at the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch (New Zealand), Bayi, leading from start to finish, wiped the distinguished name of the American Jim Ryun off the board. The 1,500-m record (3:33.1), which had stood for seven years, was broken.

## *Filbert Bayi*

The following year, Bayi took possession of another record also by Ryun, in 1967: 3:51.1 for the mile. The little orphan who used to run 16 km, at the age of 8, to go to school, entered into the legend of athletics.

In the same boat as John Akii-Bua, Bayi was the great victim of the boycott of the Montreal OG by the African countries. The statistics give one an idea of how he would have fared against the Olympic champion John Walker. Before Montreal, the two men had met nine times over different distances. Bayi had won five times. Over 1,500 m, they had drawn: one victory each.

### FILBERT BAYI

Born June 23, 1953

### AWARDS AND RECORDS

1973 African Games: gold medal in the 1,500-m (3:37.2)

1974 Commonwealth Games: gold medal in the 1,500-m (3:32.2); 4th in the 800 m (1:45.3)

World records:

1,500 m: 3:32.2 on Feb. 3, 1974, at Christchurch (NZL)

Mile: 3:51. on May 17, 1975, at Kingston (JAM)

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