

Track and Field



Geoff Dyson



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The Coaching Scheme Started Here

Organized coaching came to British athletics rather late. That it arrived at all and subsequently became the driving force that it has been for the past 30 years is largely to the credit of Geoff Dyson. A veritable power-house of drive and energy, Dyson started as lecturer at Loughborough College in 1938 and during World War II commanded Army Schools of Physical Training in East Africa and in the Mediterranean. In 1947 he was appointed Chief National Coach to the AAA and up to his resignation in 1961 was responsible for the training of more than 3,000 British coaches as well as for organizing and conducting courses, conferences and senior coaching examinations. The annual Loughborough Summer School was virtually the mecca of all who wished to make a career in athletics coaching.

Alongside his administrative and other duties as Chief National Coach, Dyson found time to personally coach a number of outstanding athletes. The most famous of these was probably Maureen Gardner, Olympic 80-metre hurdles gold medallist in 1948, who was to become his wife. Shot putters John Savidge and Arthur Rowe and

steeplechaser John Disley were also guided to the top by Dyson.

During this period, Dyson was coach to Britain's teams at the Olympic Games of 1952, 1956 and 1960. Himself a good high-hurdler, Dyson's work was always naturally associated with track and field athletics in the main. But his services have in fact embraced the wider field of physical education, a subject upon which he has been in demand as lecturer on nearly every continent for many years. In 1963, he became Director of the Royal Canadian Legion's Sports Training Plan which busied him organizing coaching clinics in all ten Canadian provinces. He returned to England in 1968 as Director of Physical Education at Winchester College. His book *The Mechanics of Athletics* is required reading in many universities. In 1978, he was Technical Director at the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, Canada, where one of his own athletes, former Commonwealth Games pole vault gold medallist Geoff Elliot, holds an important coaching appointment.

GEOFF DYSON

Born June 22, 1914, in London

Ready for Rome, Dyson returns to coach for the 1960 British Olympics Team