

# Track and Field



*Herbert McKenley*



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## Herbert McKenley

### "Hurricane Herbert"

All the experts are of the opinion that the Jamaican Herbert McKenley was the most astonishing 400-m runner of all time. However, he was never individual Olympic champion over the distance. He won his only gold medal in 1952 in Helsinki, in the 4 x 400 m relay. Running with Arthur Wint, Leslie Laing and George Rhoden, he made a large contribution to Jamaica's success ahead of the United States in a record time of 3:03.9.

In 1948, at the London Olympics, he had run the first half too fast (20.8 over 200 m). Inevitably, he tired over the last 200 and was overtaken by his compatriot, Arthur Wint. In 1952, in Helsinki, with the 1948 lesson foremost in his mind, he started off at a more leisurely pace. It turned out to be too leisurely, in fact, as he was unable to close the gap between him and another Jamaican, George Rhoden. "Hurricane Herbert" had previously run in the 100 m. In the final he had crossed the line in the same time as the American Lindy Remigino (10.4), who was announced the winner after lengthy discussion and close scrutiny of the photograph.

Born in 1922 in Kingston, Jamaica, Herbert McKenley came to the fore at 18, when he was a student at the University of Illinois, by taking the US junior title over 400 m. But it was not until seven years later that he set his first world record (46.3 for the 440 yards, the equivalent of 46.0 over 400 m). Before turning professional after the 1952 Olympics, McKenley had run 400 m, or 440 yards, 74 times in less than 47.0, between 1946 and 1952, and 16 times in less than 46.2!

In the winning relay at the 1952 Games, he officially ran 400 m from a flying start in 44.8, which corresponds to 45.2 from a standing start.

#### HERBERT MCKENLEY

Born July 10, 1922, in Kingston, JAM.

#### AWARDS AND RECORDS

1948 OG: silver medal, 400 m  
1952 OG: silver medal, 100 m  
silver medal, 400 m  
gold medal, 4 x 400 m relay

#### His world records:

400 m	46.0	June 5, 1948, Berkeley
	45.9	July 2, 1948, Milwaukee
440 yards	46.2	June 28, 1947, Berkeley
	46.0	June 5, 1948, Berkeley
4 x 400 m	3:03.9	July 27, 1952, Helsinki with A. Wint, L. Laing, and G. Rhoden

*While preparing the 1948 OG, he had equalled the world record of 46 sec*