

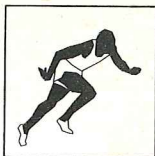
Track and Field



Kipchoge Keino



Track and Field



Kipchoge Keino

The Pride of African Athletics

An English physical education teacher, John Velzian, has been largely responsible for Kipchoge Keino's amazing career in athletics. One day in Nairobi, Keino turned up at a local high school and asked if anyone could coach him. Intrigued, John Velzian agreed, and has never had cause to regret his decision. That was in summer 1961. Nowadays, the Kenyan is one of the most famous middle-distance runners in the world. After winning his second Olympic gold medal in 1972 in the 3,000 m steeplechase (he had already won the 1,500 m four years earlier in Mexico), Keino signed a contract to join the American Mike O'Hara's professional runners, which was disbanded in the autumn of 1976.

With the Ethiopian Abebe Bikila, twice olympic marathon champion, Kipchoge Keino is one of the pioneers of African involvement in international athletics.

In 1964, Keino qualified for the final of the 5,000 m and finished in 5th place, 1.6" behind the gold medalist Bob Schul, and on the heels of Michel Jazy, thanks to a remarkable last lap. Keino is a talented runner who has

had the benefit of altitude training; he has also learned to suppress his instincts and to learn the finer points about competition at top level. He joined the élite of world middle-distance runners on 30 June 1965, when he ran 5,000 m in 13:28.2, just slower than the Frenchman Michel Jazy but faster than the Australian Ron Clarke. Since that day, Keino has been among the favorites to win wherever he has run.

His long career, the quality of his performance and the list of victories to his credit have served as a springboard for a large number of talented African middle-distance runners, who have followed in the wake of this easy, elegant athlete.

KIPCHOGE KEINO

Born Jan. 17, 1940, in Tabsabet-Kapchemoyivo, KEN

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1968 OG: gold medal in 1,500 m
silver medal in 5,000 m

1972 OG: gold medal in 3,000 m steeplechase
silver medal in 1,500 m

World record 3,000 m on Aug. 27, 1965, in Helsingborg:

7:39.6

World record 5,000 m on Nov. 30, 1965, in Auckland:

13:24.2

1968 Olympic Games: Keino leads Tummler (51), Norpoth (36) and Whetton (43) in the 1,500 m.