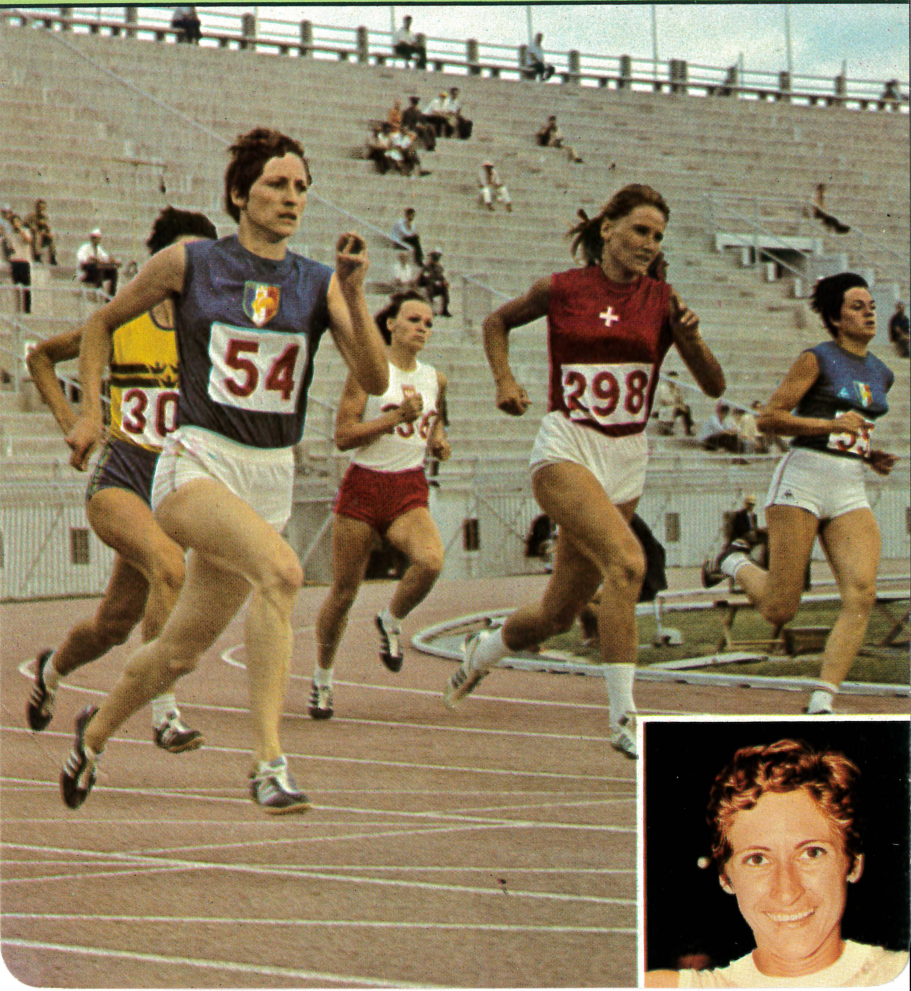


Track and Field



Nicole Duclos



Track and Field



Nicole Duclos

1969—a Great Moment in Time

Nicole Duclos was a phenomenal case in the history of French athletics. Virtually unknown on the international, and even the national, scene at the start of the 1969 season, a few months later she was in fact the European champion and woman world record-holder. In several races she had surpassed her own personal best performance, from 55.9 sec to 51.7 sec over 400 m. And better still, she had made such good progress that she had several times beaten the Olympic champion, Colette Besson. The running style of the two French girls made their encounters particularly spectacular: the more Colette made a fast start and forced herself to hold on to the end, the more Nicole finished like a cannon-ball after a careful start.

Beginning in 1964, Nicole Salavert was first noticed in the 800 m in the junior class, which brought her the title of French champion. Colette Besson's success at the Olympic Games in Mexico rewarded intensive training and opened up fresh perspectives for Nicole. Her marriage with Michel Duclos, who had charge of her training and with whom she

made a harmonious partnership on and off the track, also contributed to her sudden success. After interrupting her career for the birth of her little girl, her return to competitive running was quiet, and she was eliminated in the semi-finals at the Olympic Games in Munich. It is true that several much faster athletes had appeared in her event, especially the East Germans. Since then, smiling still and as modest as ever, Nicole Duclos has wisely returned to her provincial life. A former employee of the Brive town council, she hopes to become a teacher of physical education.

NICOLE DUCLOS

Born Sept. 15, 1947, at Périgueux, France

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1969 ECH: Gold medal in 400 m in 51.7 sec
Silver medal in 400 m relay in 3 min 30.8 sec (with Bernadette Martin, Eliane Jacq and Colette Besson)

World records: 51.7 sec in the 400 m, 18 Sept. 1969 at Athens
3 min 30.8 sec in the 400 m relay 20 Sept. 1969 at Athens (world record shared with Great Britain)

Nicole Duclos (54) elbow to elbow with the Swiss girl Uschi Meyer