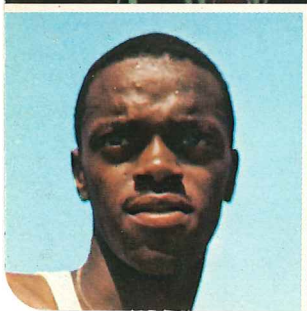
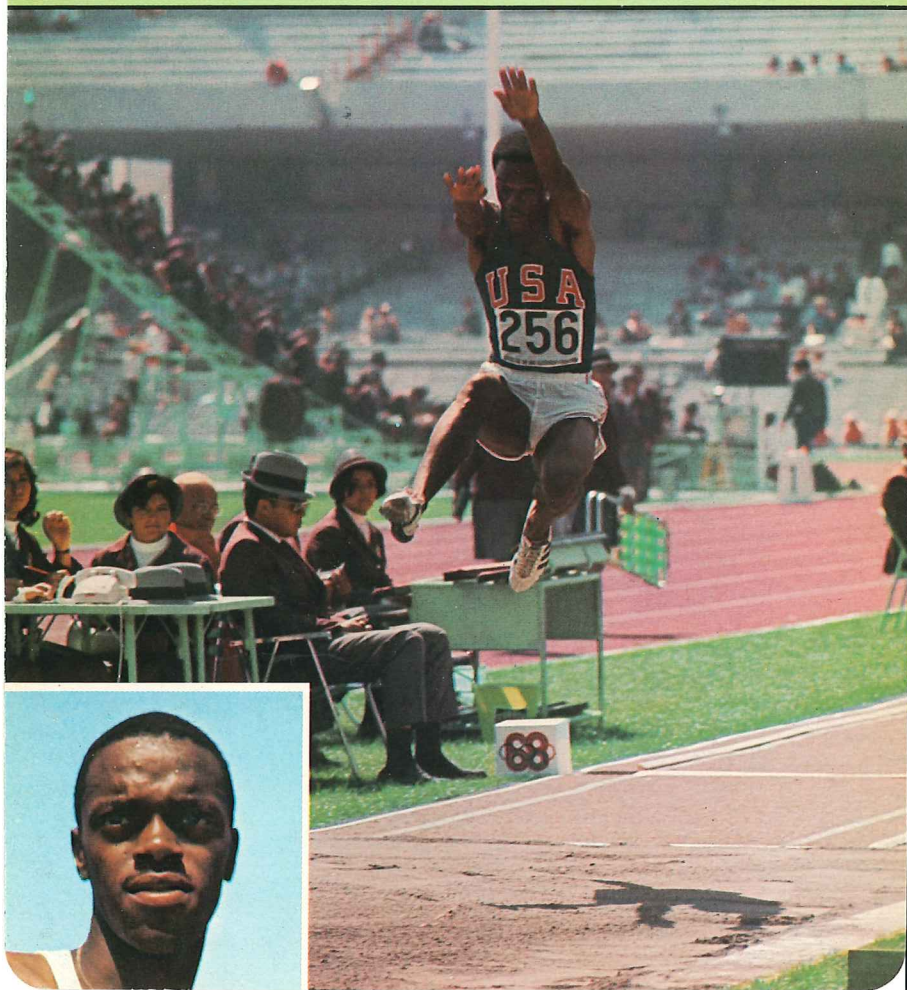


Track and Field



Ralph Boston



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Ralph Boston

Jesse Owens's Successor

A student at Tennessee University, who was 21 at the time, was the first worthy pretender to Jesse Owens' crown in the long jump. He was the black American Ralph Boston, who began his reign by robbing his illustrious compatriot of the world record. On 12 August 1960 at Walnut, Calif., he jumped 8.21 m (Owens' record had stood at 8.13 m since 1935). At the Rome Olympics, in that same year, Boston appropriated Owens' 1936 olympic record, raising it from 8.06 to 8.12 m.

Ralph Boston was to break the world record five times, finishing with an 8.35-m jump in 1965. However, despite this prodigious feat, he has only one olympic gold medal to his credit, won in Rome in 1960. In a rainy Tokyo, in 1964 he had to concede defeat to the Welshman Lynn Davies who won with his last leap of 8.07 m, compared with second-placed Boston's 8.03 m. In 1968, Mexico saw Boston beaten again, not only by the now famous 8.90 jump of Bob Beamon, but also by the East German Klaus Beer (8.19 m as against 8.16 m).

Physically a natural athlete (6' 1" and 189 lb), Ralph Boston has cleared

2.05 m in the high jump, run 14.1 for the 110-m hurdles and 9.6 for the 100 yds. He made his ultimate decision to opt exclusively for the long jump in 1958, when his personal best was 7.42 m. The next year he incorporated the double hitch kick in his jumping and so reached 7.70 m. Already US college champion with 7.76 m, he succeeded in being selected for the 1960 Games with an 8.08 m leap.

Boston would have been a logical choice for the first man past 8.40 m. However, he never completely recovered from a leg injury which he sustained at the end of the 1967 season and which certainly cost him the silver medal at the Mexico Olympics.

RALPH BOSTON

Born May 4, 1939, at Laurel, Mo.

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1960 OG: gold medal in long jump with 8:12 m

1964 OG: silver medal with 8.03 m

1968 OG: bronze medal with 8.16 m

His world records:

8.21 m, Aug. 12, 1960, in Walnut

8.24 m, July 25, 1961, in Modesto

8.28 m, July 16, 1961, in Moscow

8.31 m, Aug. 15, 1964, in Kingston (equalled)

8.34 m, Sep. 12, 1964, in Los Angeles

8.35 m, May 29, 1965, in Modesto

The man who, 25 years later, erased the name of Jesse Owens for the long-jump world record