

Track and Field



Ron Hill



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The Human Economy Trial

With more than 40 marathons to his credit, Dr Ron Hill must be the Englishman with the greatest mileage on the clock—other than those who have the advantage of wheels.

Hill's feet have developed more blisters and his lungs ached more painfully than any man's in the history of running.

The catalogue of Hill's international appearances tells a varied story. His first international marathon was in 1962—he dropped out of the European event in Belgrade; in 1966 at Budapest he finished twelfth. His first Olympic marathon in 1964 ended in nineteenth place. In those days he was not really a marathon runner. His national titles on the track had included the 6 miles in 1963 and the 10 miles five times (1965-69). At Mexico City he was seventh in the Olympic 10,000 metres and observers of medium altitude running pointed out that he was the first man home who did not have the benefit of pre-Games training at high altitude. In 1969 Hill, who had travelled long and wearily, arrived. In the sweltering heat of Athens, he overtook the Belgian ace, Gaston Roelants, half a mile from the finish to win by a street.

As he raised his arms at the finish line, his string vest tracing a pattern on his sweating body, Hill knew he was a marathon runner at last. It was his fifteenth marathon, and the marathon is 26 miles 385 yards.

Next year the Commonwealth Games event was naturally his and the Edinburgh crowd saw him stride confidently into Meadowbank Stadium in 2 hours 9 mins 28 secs, the fastest time ever by a British athlete. After that his success was less marked. He was sixth in the Munich Olympics and eighteenth in the Commonwealth Games in 1974. At the age of 39, Ron is still running marathons better than much younger men—and they are glad to hear the advice of the most experienced marathon man ever to make the long journey.

RON HILL

Born Sept. 25, 1938 in Accrington, Lancs., GB

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1969 ECH gold medal marathon 2 h 16:48
1970 CG gold medal marathon 2 h 09:28
1971 ECH bronze medal marathon 2 h 14:34
World records:
10 miles 47:02.2 and 46:44.0, 1968
15 miles 1 h 12:48.2, 1965
25 km 1 h 15:22.6, 1965

Britain's most experienced marathon runner, Ron Hill, at the Maxol Marathon, June 4, 1972