

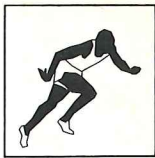
Track and Field



Wyomia Tyus



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Unique Double

What has Wyomia Tyus done that Jesse Owens, Wilma Rudolph, Valeri Borzov and every other sprinter in the history of the Olympic Games has failed to do? Answer: Win two gold medals in the 100 m dash.

As a student at Tennessee State University in Nashville, Wyoming represented the U.S. in the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, where she equalled the world record of 11.2 sec. in a qualifying heat of the 100 m, then ran 11.3 in two other heats before gaining her first gold medal with a time of 11.4 in the finals. Tyus also picked up a silver medal as a member of the U.S. women's 4 x 100 m relay team.

Remaining tough in major competition—she twice equaled the world record of 10.3 sec. in the 100-yard dash—the 23-year-old native of Griffin, Ga., was again wearing the American red-white-and-blue at Mexico City in 1968. In the semifinals, she had won her heat in a time of 11.3 sec., while in the other division, Irene Szewinska, Poland, finished just ahead of Barbara Ferrell, U.S., although both were timed in 11.3 sec. When the final showdown came, spectators were still filing into their seats after scampering for cover from a

rainstorm. Despite the rain-softened track, Tyus was quick getting out of the starting blocks and took the lead half-way through, with Ferrell running just a step behind in the next lane. They maintained that difference all the way to the finish, as Szewinska finished third. Despite the dampness of the track, Tyus had completed the trip in just 11.07 sec, shattering both Olympic and world records.

Before she left the Olympic Stadium, Tyus picked up another gold medal while running the anchor leg for the 4 x 100 m relay team. With Ferrell, Margaret Bailes and Mildrette Netter running ahead of her, Wyomia stopped the timers in 42.87 seconds, again establishing an Olympic and world record, bettering the time she and her teammates had set in the qualifying heat. Wyomia's individual 100 m and the 400-m relay times still stand as American records.

WYOMIA TYUS

Born 1945, in Griffin, Ga.

AWARDS AND RECORDS

AR 100 m: 11.07 sec

AR 4 x 100 m relay: 42.87 sec (with Barbara Ferrell, Margaret Bailes and Mildrette Netter)