

[PDF] The Perfect Mile: Three Athletes, One Goal, And Less Than Four Minutes To Achieve It

Neal Bascomb - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Perfect Mile: Three Athle

Author: Neal Bascomb

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly The attempt by three men in the 1950s to become the first to run the mile in less than four minutes is a classic 20th-century sports story. Bascomb's excellent account captures all of the human drama and competitive excitement of this legendary racing event. It helps that the story and its characters are so engaging to begin with. The three rivals span the globe: England's Roger Bannister, who combines the rigors of athletic training with the "grueling life of a medical student"; Australia's John Landy, "driven by a demand to push himself to the limit"; and Wes Santee from the U.S., a brilliant strategic runner who became the "victim" of the "[h]ypocrisy and

unchecked power" of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). Although Bannister broke the record before Landy, Landy soon broke Bannister's record, and the climax of the book is a long and superb account of the race between the two men at the Empire Games in Vancouver on August 7, 1954. Bascomb provides the essential details of this "Dream Race" which was heard over the radio by 100 million people while Santee, who may have been able to beat both of them, was forced by AAU restrictions to participate only as a broadcast announcer. Bascomb definitively shows how this perfect race not only was a "defining moment in the history of the mile" and of sport as well, but also how it reveals "a sporting world in transition" from amateurism to professionalism. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From On May 6, 1954, Roger Bannister, a British medical student who squeezed in track workouts between hospital rounds, became the first man to run a mile in less than four minutes. It was a feat that had widely been thought impossible, but within seven weeks an even faster time was posted by the Australian John Landy, setting up a showdown later that year in a race that was billed as the "Mile of the Century." In masterly fashion, Bascomb re-creates the battle of the milers, embellishing his account with fascinating forays into runner's lore. (In the seventeenth century, athletes had their spleens excised to boost speed; in the nineteenth, they were advised to rest in bed at noon naked.) It's a mark of Bascomb's skill that, although the outcome of the race is well known, he keeps us in suspense, rendering in graphic detail the runners' agony down the final stretch.

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