

That Athletic Second-Rater . . . Man

*Who would take first place in an Animal
Kingdom Olympiad?*

by John Sidney

PITTED AGAINST most of the sprinters and swimmers of the animal kingdom, man's performance would be below those of a brewery horse in a Derby field.

This was strikingly shown a few years ago when a seal from America "swam" the English Channel in five hours. Man's fastest Channel swim on record is 11 hours, five minutes, set by Georges Michel of France in September, 1925, from Gris Nez to Dover. That seal wasn't trying and M. Michel was! The seal, lured from France to Folkestone by handouts of fish, was captive in a harness and swam around a launch.

Scientifically satisfactory comparison between man and animals is not easily made. Track performances measure the speeds trained athletes can achieve. But when an explorer reports that an animal was flat out at 40 miles an hour, when chased by a car, many imponderables enter. Was the speedometer accurate? What was the animal's age? Was it sick? Was

it representative of its species? When an animal covered a space from one landmark to another in a certain time, did it go in a straight line? How accurate was the timekeeper?

Top sprinter of the animal kingdom is the cheetah of Africa and Southern Asia which can reach 45 miles an hour in two seconds and a top of 60 or even 70. Man's best is poor stuff alongside the cheetah's.

One of the fastest sprints ever made by man was that of the white American runner, Dave Sime, when he set world figures of 20 seconds flat for 220 yards. He was 20 yards inside even time and averaged 22.5 miles an hour. A sprinter needs at least 80 yards to reach top speed. Towards the end of his run Sime conceivably reached 26 miles an hour. A cheetah, if it could be persuaded to compete against Sime, probably could give him 60 yards start and win handsomely. Man's times are, of course, faster over the furlong

than over shorter or longer distances.

The other side of the coin is that Courtney, the winner of the



half mile at the last Olympic Games, or, for that matter, any healthy human male or female, could probably beat a cheetah over 800 yards. The cheetah has no stamina and is exhausted after 300 or 400 yards.

MARTIN JOHNSON, the big game hunter, didn't think much of the cheetah's speed and gave the honors for a dash over 100 yards to the leopard. Against Johnson's opinion there're those of hunters who report the cheetah can run down an antelope—one of the fastest runners of the animal world, with speed possibly up to 50 miles an hour—with incredible ease. For centuries the cheetah has been used to hunt antelope and other game

in India and Persia. It is taken hooded and chained in a low car without sides to the field. When the game is within 200 yards, the cheetah is freed. A. Brazier Howell in *Speed in Animals* (University of Chicago Press) gives speed honors to the cheetah. He thinks Johnson possibly got his poor opinion of the cheetah because it is lazy and doesn't stir unless it has to.

Apart from Johnson there are no other reliable claims for the leopard. Or, for that matter, are there claims for the lion and tiger who are probably exceedingly fast in their rush on their prey from cover.

If the cheetah and leopard fill the top position, the next honors are shared, on the evidence, by the Mongolian gazelle, the saluki (the gazelle hound of Arabia) and the prongbuck of North America.

Roy Chapman Andrews, the American explorer, has written about the gazelle:

In the Gobi we made the first tests of an antelope's speed with our cars. We found that the desert gazelle could reach 60 miles an hour. It could maintain that rate for a mile or two, then dropped to 50 and then to 40 miles an hour. How long it could have gone at that speed we did not discover.

Shackelford and I chased one fine buck for ten miles but the race ended when we got a puncture and he didn't. Of course, the great

speed of the initial dash is to save them from wolves.

The Mongolian gazelle can do 25 miles an hour when a day old.

The saluki is perhaps the oldest known breed of dog. Excavations of the Sumerian Empire (7,000 to 6,000 B. C.) have revealed evidence of saluki type dogs. The saluki's body is similar to a greyhound's, except that the saluki has silky feathering on the ears and tail. In his book *Dogs, Their History and Development* (1929) E. C. Ash credited a saluki with covering 32 yards a second—over 65 miles an hour. Howell, who has done more work than most in this field, asks, not illogically, if the saluki can do 65 miles an hour, why hasn't it superseded the greyhound or the whippet?

SOME GOOD PERFORMANCES are credited to the pronghorn or prongbuck of western North America. The pronghorn is the sole survivor of a family of historic animals which was intermediate between deer and cattle. On a number of occasions they have been found to keep comfortably ahead of a car doing 60 miles an hour for two miles. A young buck was raced along a wire fence at 55 miles an hour—the car's top speed. And a group of young prongbucks in Wyoming did 27 miles in 45 minutes—36 miles an hour.

Several animals have performances in the 40 to 50 miles an hour class. Top claim for a young buck deer is 49 miles an hour, followed by 45 miles an hour for the jack rabbit, another 45 miles an hour for a red fox in front of a car, 42.3 miles an hour for thoroughbred race horses and 40 miles an hour for the Mongolian wild ass.

Did somebody say something about the English race horse Flying Childers? In 1721 Flying Childers is said to have reached a speed of 82½ feet a second—56.2 miles an hour. That is nearly 14 miles an hour ahead of today's official records for race horse speeds.

The two fastest race horse times recorded under approved conditions are a two furlongs in 21¼ seconds by the four-year-old Bob Wade in 1890 and a three furlongs by Galley Slave, a two-year-old, in 32 seconds in 1938. In both instances the average speed for the distance was 42.3 miles an hour.

But that isn't the whole story in making comparisons between race horses and other animals. Often in the case of other animals only the top speed over a very short distance of 100 yards is recorded. Bob Wade ran over two furlongs and Galley Slave over three—both horses conceivably touched 46 miles an hour and even 50 miles an hour at the peak of their runs.

And both had riders on their backs. As against the handicap of weight, they were guided and urged to speedy efforts. Who knows if the other animals were really flat out?

Roy Chapman Andrews tinned a Mongolian wild ass of the *E. asinus* group to hit 40 miles an hour in a short dash. The ass, a 13-hands stallion, did 16 miles at an average of 13 miles an hour. It is doubtful if any living domesticated horse can equal this. But Andrews' ass had no rider.

Other notable animal sprinters and their time include: greyhound, 36 miles an hour; Mongolian wolf, 36; coyote, 35; whippet, 35.5; giraffe, 32-38; black rhinoceros, 20-25; African elephant, when charging, 24.5.

TWO OTHER NOTABLE sprint stars are not animals but birds. Martin Johnson said that the ostrich can reach a top of 50 miles an hour within half a mile. An Australian emu is said to have averaged 30 miles an hour for 10 miles in front of a car.

Except for his length of limb—which has been acquired chiefly for his upright posture—man is poorly equipped for running. In past ages, man relied more on cunning than on speed, and it is likely that his remote ancestors developed in hilly country where they could take shelter quickly, and not in open plains.

Dr. William K. Gregory of the American Museum of Natural History some years ago measured the limbs of various fast animals and found what is possibly an interesting relationship. In the fast animals such as deer and horses the lower bones are longer in proportion to the upper than those of slower animals.

Dr. Gregory thinks that deer and horses achieve their great speed by a rapid snap-quick stride. A good parallel is a golfer using a No. 1 or No. 2 wood. If Dr. Gregory is right, here is a useful guide for picking Olympic sprint stars of the future.

Man has pitted himself against race horses, with a few wins and many defeats. When Jessie Owens returned to America after the 1936 Olympic Games where he won the 100 and 220 meters (and the broad jump), he took to racing horses. He won several times, but never over distances greater than 100 yards. A race horse can cover 220 yards in 15 or less seconds. The best time by a man, as noted earlier, is Dave Sime's 20 seconds.

Arthur Martin, who won the 1947 Stawell Easter Gift (Australia's professional event with a £500 purse), had two matches against horses, a year or so ago. In a 100-yards sprint against the race horse, Stenelaus, Martin was a long way behind at the finishing tape. But he beat a crack pacer, Black Chrys-

tal, by three yards over the same distance. After the two matches, Martin summed up:

Man can beat a galloper over 60 yards; after that it is the horse's race.

Man can dead-heat with a trotter or pacer over 100 yards, and win if luck is with him.

Over very long distances a top human runner could possibly defeat a horse.

Zatopek has run 12 miles, 809 yards in an hour, and 15 miles in one hour, 16 minutes, 26.4 seconds.

When it comes to broadjumping, man puts up a better show. Jessie Owens won the running broadjump title at the Berlin Games with a leap of 26 feet, 5 5/16 inches. A year earlier he had set new world figures at 26 feet, 8 1/4 inches. Those leaps are in the class of the acknowledged jumpers of the animal world. Only a handful of men have cleared 25 or 26 feet—an average leap for an average kangaroo at speed. The kangaroo, incidentally, doesn't jump 26 feet at every leap. His big leap is followed by one or two shorter ones, about ten feet, as he recovers balance and prepares for another large jump.

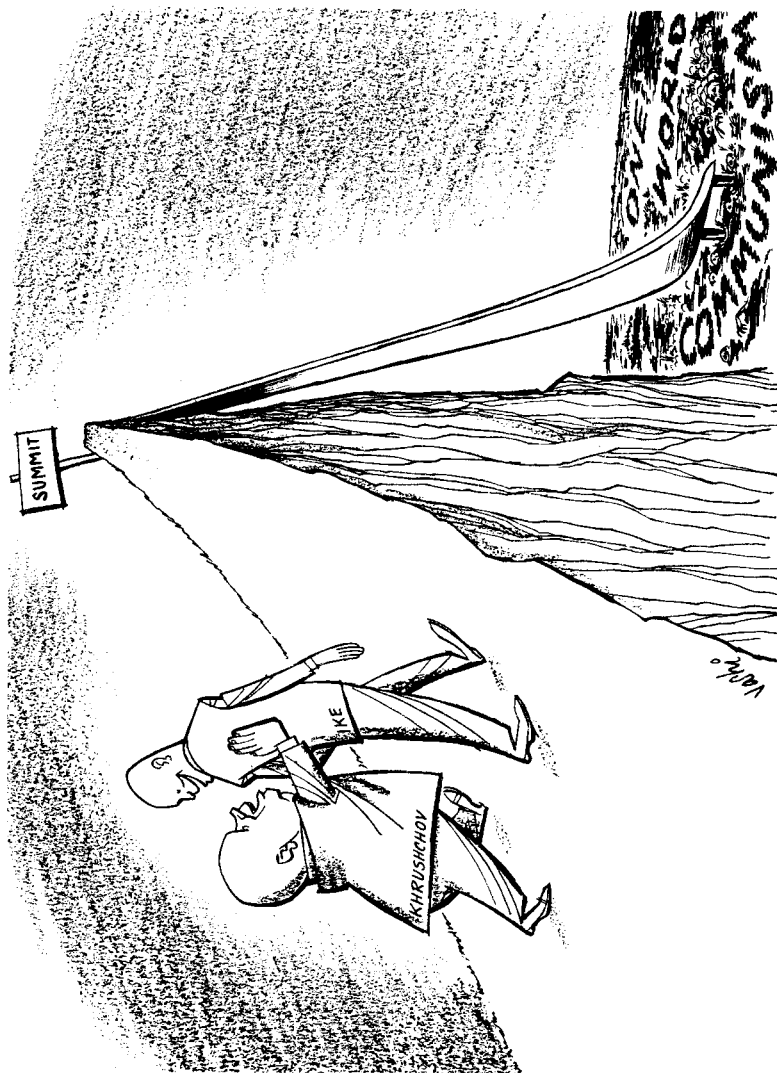
HIGH JUMPING is all the kangaroo's—about nine feet off the ground when pressed. One Australian remembers a wallaby (corresponds to the kangaroo as the pony does to the horse) leaping right

over his head when it was chased by dogs.

Man's best jumping effort is seven feet, 5/8 inch by Charlie Dumas of the U.S.A. The kangaroo's high jumping exploits are unexcelled, except possibly by the little African klipspringer. When startled, this small member of the antelope family, weighing about 20 pounds, leaps eight to nine feet clear of the ground.

Mrs. Carl Akeley recorded in 1929 a feat by a klipspringer doe and her two-thirds-grown young which if proved is nothing less than astounding. The klipspringer and her young spent the day on a sheer rock pedestal 25 feet high with a 20-inch diameter. Daily the two appeared on the rock top, presumably at a single bound. Mrs. Akeley says that the pedestal was narrower at the base than at the top and there were no footholds on its sides. Brush at the base prevented her from telling if the leap was made from a running or standing start. Keen observer that Mrs. Akeley was, it is possible that some foothold escaped her notice. Reluctantly, for we all like wonders, that spectacular feat of the klipspringer and its young must remain unproven.

Man is outrun and outjumped by almost all animals. But, as balm for his ego, he is the best all-rounder and that, together with his superior brain, has given him dominance.



STAY AWAY—U.S.A.
The Summit Leads To Disaster!

STAY AWAY, U. S. A!

by Robert Welch

(Reprinted from *American Opinion*)

WE URGE YOU to spread the alarm: *Stay Away, U.S.A. — The Summit Leads to Disaster.*

As Louis Budenz so brilliantly pointed out and prophesied years ago, "the cry is peace."

There is already peace, of course, in Estonia and Latvia and Lithuania, and Armenia and Byelorussia, and Georgia and the Ukraine. And not just peace for the dead millions that have been murdered, but peace for the living millions that have been enslaved.

There is already peace in Poland and Hungary; in Albania and Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia; in Romania and Bulgaria and East Germany; and of course in Russia itself. Even such resistance as existed in any of those countries has been provoked into showing itself prematurely—so that it could be destroyed, and a more deadly peace bestowed on the remainder of the population.

Except for a few million Chinese here and there, engaged in desperately suicidal rebellion on behalf of freedom, there is peace on all the mainland of China. There is the same peace in North Korea, and North Vietnam, and Guiana, and Guinea, and Ghana. With guns and bayonets and clubs, and with more refined instruments of terror and of torture where necessary, the henchmen of unspeakable Communist murderers like Achmed Sukarno in Indonesia, Juan Lechin in Bolivia, Karim el-Kassem in Iraq, and Fidel Castro in Cuba are bringing more and more peace to their respective countries.

Peace has many faces. There is the morning peace of the grave, for those who during the night have died of hunger and despair; the evening peace of the slaughter house, when the day's slaughtering is done; and the timeless peace of the escapeless prison, after a hopeless revolt has been subdued. The Communist peace (the Cold Peace to which the Cold War leads) is compounded of all three. And the conspirators now expect, after a few more rounds of fraternizing visits and one or two more summit conferences, to be able to impose that peace on the rest of a rapidly surrendering world.