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Illustrated History of the Pole Vault

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ISBN 978-0-9791746-0-5
Library of Congress Control Number: 2007907658
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Printed in the United States of America
Cover art by Gentan Tani 1799

Thanks to our friends at Nike for their assistance with this project

Illustrated History of the Pole Vault

Jan Johnson, Russ VerSteeg, Ray Kring

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Bloom Field House March 26, 1968

Chapter I: Introduction & Dedications

Several years ago while doing research on the pole vault, we had the good fortune to stumble across Ray Kring's Master's Degree Thesis entitled *An Historical Study of the Pole Vault* (1959) (University of the Pacific) which traced pole vault history from its origins through the year 1959. We read it and loved it. We then located Ray's widow, Millie, (it turned out that Millie lives in California and is practically Jan's neighbor) and began talking with her about the possibility of publishing Ray's history. Millie was more than gracious. She gave us not only permission to use Ray's thesis but also hundreds of newspaper clippings and pictures that Ray had kept in scrapbooks.

So, armed with Ray's manuscript and collection, we began revising the text, collecting photographs, and doing our own research and writing in an effort to fill in the gap of nearly half a century of pole vault history from when Ray's research ended up to the present (current through the 2007 World Championships). Like Ray's original work, ours has been a labor of love. We've tried to maintain his straightforward and clear prose style. We suspect that we've left a lot out, but we hope that this will serve as a useful starting point for anyone who wishes to know more about the rich and exciting history of our event. The athletes themselves, the coaches, and the development of the equipment and rules provide a fascinating story on their own without the need for much editorializing.

We have adopted a standard format for expressing heights in feet and inches. For example we use 17-7 ¼ to express 17 feet seven and one-quarter inches. And we've changed the format for the sake of consistency even in quoted materials. To express metric heights we've simply used the letter "m," for example, we use 5.50 m to express 5.50 meters. When we had access to both feet and inches and metric, we've put the metric in parentheses. Year dates are in bold to enhance one's ability to skim the text for dates.

We'd like to thank several people who have helped in the preparation of this book. As we've mentioned, we owe a huge debt to Millie Kring who gave us permission to use Ray's Thesis and shared pictures and newspaper clippings. We'd also like to thank Bob VerSteeg, Jim Lonergan and the charter members of the International Historical Pole Vault Society for their help in editing. Thanks are also due to Jessica Sullivan, Tim Johnson, Dave Butler, Gerard Dumas, Earl Bell, and George Davies who helped with historical research. Additionally, thanks to Jack Smith for all his time and input during the formatting and publishing phases of this book.

We hope to update this book eventually, so we welcome suggestions for additions. Feel free to make your comments and suggestions at the International Historical Pole Vault Society web site. www.internationalhistoricalpolevaultsociety.com.

The "Introduction" that follows is Ray's introduction written in 1959. We've decided to print it here because it provides such an interesting snapshot of what the event looked like nearly 50 years ago. Additionally we have added information concerning the roots of vaulting in ancient Egypt, Greece, Ireland and the Middle Ages.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy.

Jan Johnson and Russ VerSteeg
November 2007

Jan's Dedications

Pole vaulting for me personally began in the early 1960's while jumping haybales in our barn in Northern Illinois. For me the barn yard was just a kind of gymnasium that offered an interesting distraction from our chores. We would spend hours climbing in the rafters and jumping off of stacked hay bales onto the sandy floor. A couple of years later, I had the very good fortune to go to Bloom



George Hamlin and Jan 1967

High School in Chicago Heights. Little did I know at the time, that I would be coached by a great coach of pole vaulting, Mr. George Hamlin. He would forever shape my approach to the science of pole vaulting.

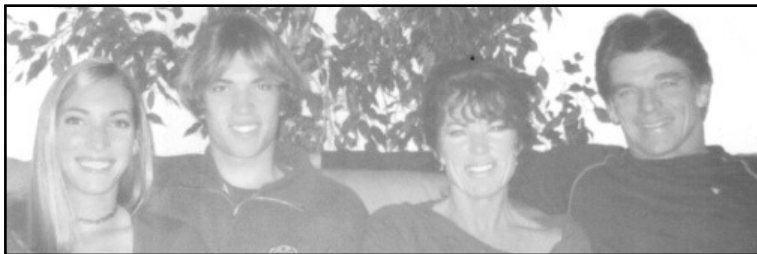
Additionally, my father Carl Johnson had a great hand in helping with making our backyard Johnson runway and vaulting facilities. Since he was a plumber by trade, we always had an abundant supply of pipe and other materials to fashion poles and equipment. Our runway and pit immediately became the focal point of several generations of highly successful Bloom High School vaulters. Looking back on these humble beginnings, I count myself as very lucky to have had two such great mentors in my earliest stages of development.



Carl Johnson

During my early high school years my mom helped me start a scrap book of all my newspaper clippings. These scrap books eventually ended up being pole vault scrap books. Little did I know at the time these scrapbooks would ultimately become the framework for a book of their own. Most importantly, thanks to my amazing wife Jani, and our wonderful kids: Chelsea, and Clay. Without your support and understanding none of this would be possible. Thank you.

Jani Johnson



Chelsea, Clay, Jani and Jan



Tim Johnson National High School Indoor Record 16-7

Russ's Dedications

Pole vaulting has changed my life. Without going into all the details, I owe my choice of high schools, my choice of colleges, my major in college, and my wife,



Jessica Sullivan and Russ

Nina, to the sport of pole vaulting. My father, Bob VerSteeg, has always helped me and encouraged me, starting when I was nine years old when he hammered together a set of wooden standards for our backyard. My mother, Sally Creel, still worries about my safety when I vault, but that's what mom's are for. Nina and our children, Whitney and Carl, have put up with all my craziness and time

that I devote to pole vaulting. I'd also like to thank my high school pole vault coach, Ed McLean, who taught me a great deal and never gave up on me. Pole vaulting currently affects my work. I teach Sports Law and write about the legal aspects of pole vault safety. But most of the time that I devote to it at present is spent coaching.

I've had the good fortune to coach a number of terrific young athletes. But there's one who stands out above all the rest. I would like to dedicate my contribution to this book to Jessica Sullivan. Jess has been almost like a daughter to me. I coached Jessica throughout her four years at the Norwich Free Academy (2004-2007). She won the 2005, 2006 and 2007 class LL Connecticut State outdoor pole vault titles, setting a Meet Record of 11-4 in 2007. She placed 6th at New Englands in 2005 and second in 2006. During the indoor season of 2006-07, Jessica set the Connecticut girls' indoor record on five occasions, topping it off with 11-6 and a victory and indoor record at the State Open in February. Jessica set the Connecticut girls' outdoor record three times in 2007, culminating in an 11-6 effort at the State Open in June. She's the hardest working, most dedicated vaulter whom I've ever coached. Thanks, Jess, I've had a great time coaching you, and best of luck at Notre Dame!

Russ VerSteeg



Jessica Sullivan 11-6 2007



Russ VerSteeg 13-8
Broughton High
School Raleigh, NC
March 1975

Ray's Dedications

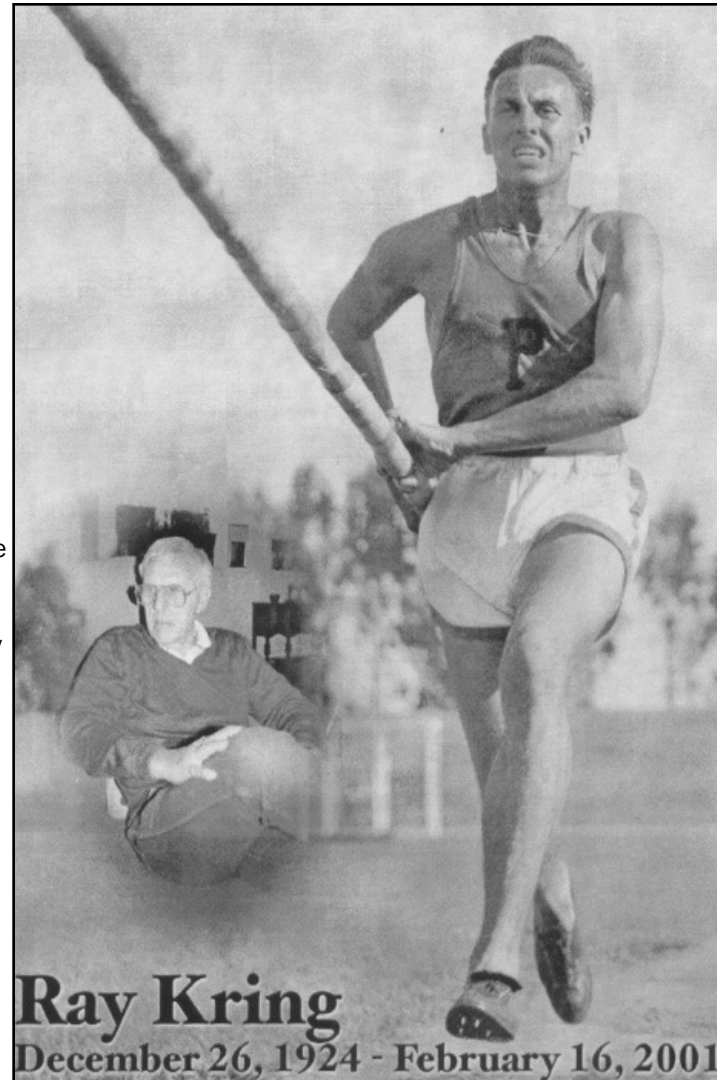
In addition to being a world class pole vaulter, Ray was the long time Track coach and teacher at Hancock College in Santa Maria, California. We know that Ray would have wanted to dedicate his contribution to the book to his wife, Millie, and their 4 kids: Ken, Buddy, Tim, and Becky. So it is with pleasure that we acknowledge Millie's support of Ray's lifelong work in the pole vault. Thank you, Millie, for keeping Ray's work, spirit, and memory alive.

Jan and Russ



Ray Kring Oakdale High
School March 1941

By the Way, that's Ray's picture you see at the end of each episode of "Crossing Jordan", and "Heroes". Ray's son's production company "Tail Wind Productions" produces them both.



Introduction to Ray Kring's Master's Degree Thesis 1959

The pole vault is an event performed in track and field athletics wherein the athlete, with the aid of a pole 14 to 16 feet in length, attempts to clear a crossbar resting on two pegs supported by two standards. The standards, or uprights, are placed not less than 12 feet nor more than 13 feet apart.

The pole vault is the most complicated and technical of all track and field events. Many years are required to master the techniques necessary to become a champion vaulter. The action is so fast, with no more than 1.3 seconds from takeoff to bar clearance, that there is little time to adjust for error. And during this short span of time, the athlete performs over a dozen different muscle movements.

It has been said that the successful pole vaulter must possess many physical and mental attributes. He must have the speed of a sprinter, the strength of a weight man, the spring of a high jumper, the endurance of a distance runner, the balance of a gymnast, and the courage of a boxer. He must possess the determination to stick with it through many failures, for success in this sport does not come easily.

Each time a champion pole vaulter performs, you may be assured that many hours of work have gone before. Many hours of toiling in the hot sun with aching muscles, perspiration stinging his eyes, and his elbows and knees raw from the frequent hard, long drops into the pit. But it was a labor of love and you can be envious of that pole vaulter. For probably in no other field of sport is the satisfaction so great, or the thrill so keen and lasting, as that derived from the accomplishment of clearing a new height in the pole vault.

Today, better than average high school pole vaulters clear between 12-0 and 13-0. A good college vault is anywhere from 13-6 to 14-6, while for international competition the vaulters will clear 14-6 and higher. This was not always the case, however. For we shall see how the best marks of fifty years ago were a full three feet below today's vaults. The purpose of this study is to trace the progress made in the pole vault since man first learned to propel himself upward with the aid of a pole; and to give a year by year account of the best vaults made since the first years of competition.

This study will also present the evolution of techniques employed in pole vaulting, the equipment changes, and the extent of their influence on the progress made in the records of this sport.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Runway: A narrow lane, three to four feet wide, with a surface of dirt, grass or asphalt, that the vaulters run down in making their approach to the pole vault pit. The minimum length should be 125 feet.

Pit: The area 16 feet by 12 feet, piled high with wood shavings to cushion the vaulter's fall.

Crossbar: A bar of wood or metal, which the pole vaulter attempts to clear. The bar is of uniform thickness, either square with beveled edges or triangular in form. If square, the dimensions of the bar shall be 1 1/8 inches in thickness; and if triangular, 1 3/16 inches over each face.

Pole Plant: That part of the vault when the pole vaulter slides his pole into the box just prior to taking off.

Chapter II: Ancient and Early History

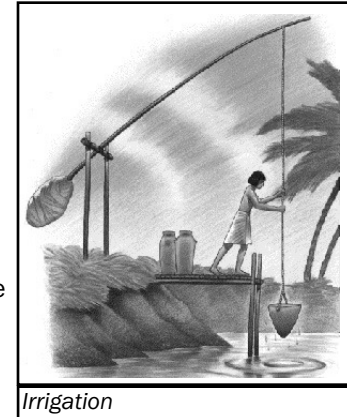
A: Ancient Civilizations Used Poles For A Variety Of Activities

No authoritative evidence proves that any ancient cultures pole vaulted competitively prior to the Tailteann games of ancient Ireland (1829 B.C.). However, artistic representations and other archaeological remains indicate that as early as 2500 B.C. people used long poles for a number of activities such as farming, boating and warfare. Thus, it is likely that farmers, sailors, and soldiers discovered that they could use those poles to as a means to leap over a variety of obstacles.

I. Ancient Egypt

Ancient Egyptian engineers clearly understood the mechanical advantages of poles and ladders by the 4th and 5th Dynasties of the Old Kingdom (circa 2500 B.C.). Relief sculpture depicts the use of such devices for siege warfare to surmount enemy walls, and it is certain that they employed a variety of scaffolding technology to construct their lofty pyramids and elaborate temples. In addition, because Egyptian farmers developed a network of irrigation ditches and canals to channel the Nile's inundation, it is likely that some enterprising farmer must have occasionally picked up a pole and used it as a makeshift lever to cross an irrigation ditch.

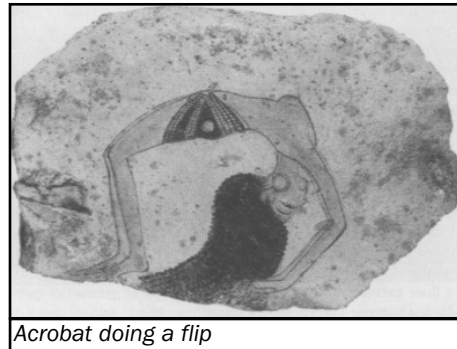
But even more intriguing - and analogous in some respects to early pole vaulting in the modern era - was the art of pole climbing in ancient Egypt. Several relief sculptures show what appears to be acrobats climbing poles as part of a religious ceremony or ritual devoted to the god Min. According to Wolfgang Decker in his book, *Sports and Games of Ancient Egypt*, this cult practice existed as early as the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 B.C.). Therefore, it is fair to say that humans have been trying to defy gravity by means of mere agility and a pole since as early as the Old Kingdom in Egypt!



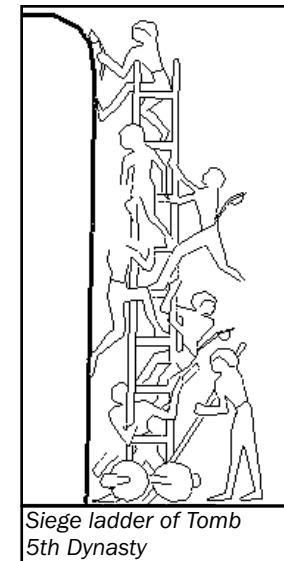
Irrigation



Spear fishing



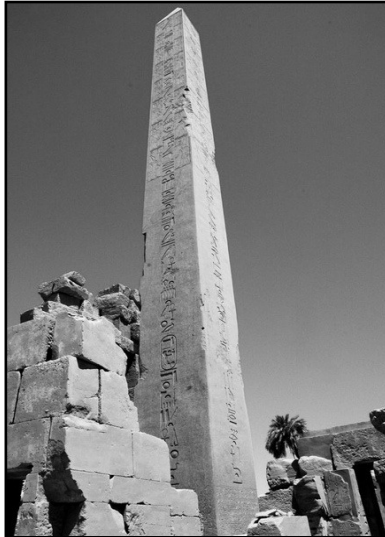
Acrobat doing a flip



Siege ladder of Tomb
5th Dynasty



*Ramses II breaks through the troops of Amurru defending the city of Dapur in the Orontes Valley 1274 B.C. (From the Ramessesum)
Note the use of ladders*



Egyptian Obelisk



Ancient Mayan Stilts



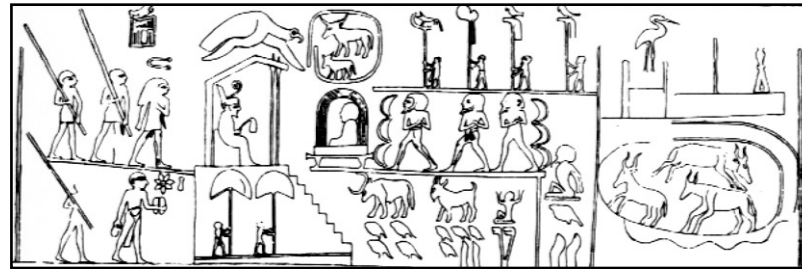
Egyptian with a pole



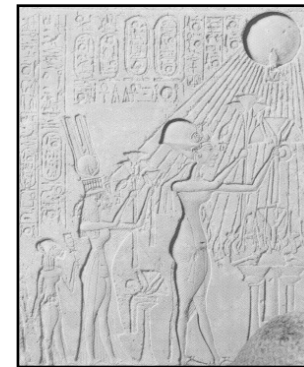
Pole climbing for the God Min,
Temple Pylon, Luxor



Egypt



Club head of Egyptian King Narmer (predynastic)



Pharaoh Akhenaton
worshipping sun god Aten



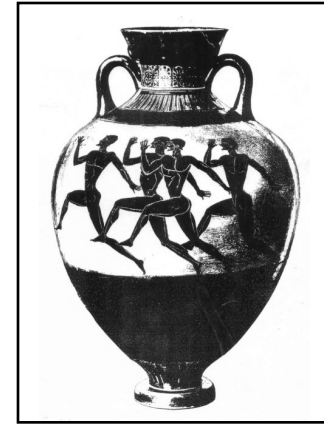
Canal jump

II. Ancient Greece

Although very little has been written about pole vaulting in ancient Greece, it is evident from paintings found on vases taken from excavations that the art of leaping with a pole was known to the Greeks of the Fifth Century B.C. The fact that the Greeks were familiar with the general principles of pole vaulting is further borne out by GutschMuths in a passage from the ancient writings of Greece. *Nestor, to avoid the charge of the wild beast, placed his spear in position and, with great effort leaped into the branches of a nearby tree, then, secure in his position, he looked down on the enemy he had escaped.*

According to Cromwell, the Greek word for pole vaulting is translated literally as spear high jump. Gardiner also makes some reference to the event when he says:

Nor is there any evidence for the pole jump. The poles so frequently represented on the vases are merely blunt spears used for practice. A pole or spear was used, as we have seen, in vaulting on horseback, but not as far as we know for jumping.



It seems then, that although the principle of pole leaping was understood by the Greeks of ancient times, they did not see fit to place it as an athletic event in their Olympic Games. It is interesting to note that in Gardiner's book, a photograph of a vase shows a youth preparing to vault onto the back of a led horse, and he is grasping the pole in exactly the same manner as would a modern day pole vaulter. Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso) was a Roman poet born about 43 B.C. He's most famous for his work called the *Metamorphoses*... a work filled with Greek and Roman mythology. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book 2 lines 785-86, the Latin text says: *...haud plura locuta fugit et inpressa tellurem reppulit hasta.*

The standard English translation by Rolfe Humphries says:

She [Minerva] said no more, but with the spear as lever, Spurning the loathsome ground, took off for Heaven.



III. Ancient Spears - Some of the Earliest Vaulting Poles?

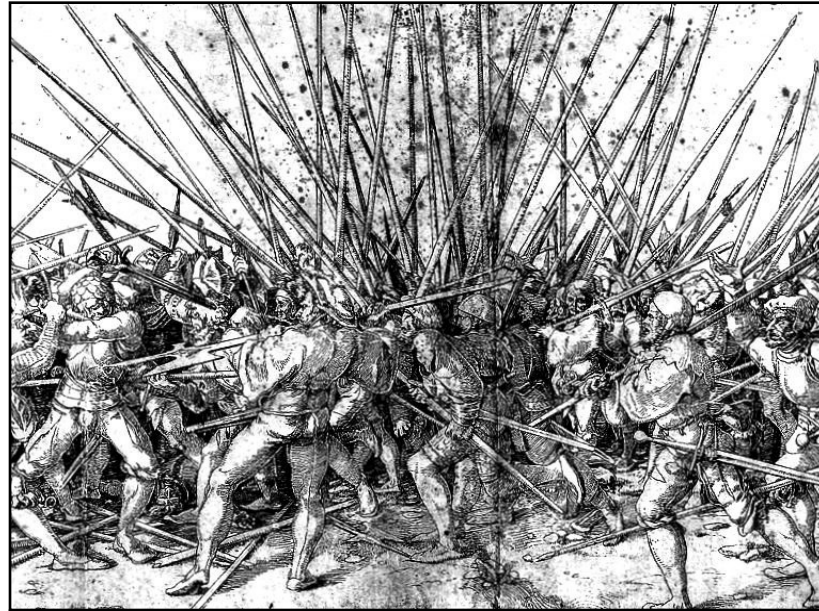
Ancient and Medieval spears and battle poles came in many shapes and sizes. Given the length and strength of many of these weapons, it is logical to assume that, at some point, soldiers must have discovered that they could also use them as tools to negotiate ditches, small streams and creeks, and low walls. As battle tactics changed, the designs of these implements also changed. Some of the depictions of those spears in ancient art bear a striking resemblance to early vaulting poles in the modern era in the 19th 20th Centuries A.D.

Below is a brief list of some of the types of spears whose length and strength might have made them usable for vaulting obstacles.

1) Doru. The doru was a type of spear in general use in the Hellenistic World (i.e., roughly speaking, the period of several hundred years following the conquests of Alexander the Great: 330-150 B.C.). Although accounts of the weapon's length vary, historians estimate that many were between 2.1 and 2.75 meters long.

2) Xyston. The xyston was a type of a long thrusting lance in ancient Greece and Macedonia. It measured about 3.5-4.25 meters long and was probably held by cavalymen with both hands.

3) Pike. The pike was a two-handed pole-weapon. It was a very long thrusting spear, used extensively by infantry both for attacks on enemy foot soldiers and as a counter-measure against cavalry assaults. Unlike many similar weapons, the pike was not intended to be thrown. The pike was an extremely long weapon, usually 10 to 14 feet (3 to 4 meters) long. But some were as long as 20 feet (6 meters). The extreme length of such weapons required a strong wood such as well-seasoned ash for the pole, which was tapered towards the point to prevent the pike from sagging on the ends. Although very long spears had been used since the dawn of organized warfare, the Macedonian sarissa was the earliest recorded pike-like weapon used in the tactical method described above. The Macedonian phalanx of Philip II (Alexander the Great's father) used the sarissa with great success. Likewise, the Hellenistic armies that followed in the footsteps of Philip and Alexander dominated warfare for several centuries using the sarissa in a phalanx formation. European armies - primarily foot soldiers wielding them, deployed in close order - used pikes from the early Middle Ages until around 1700 A.D.



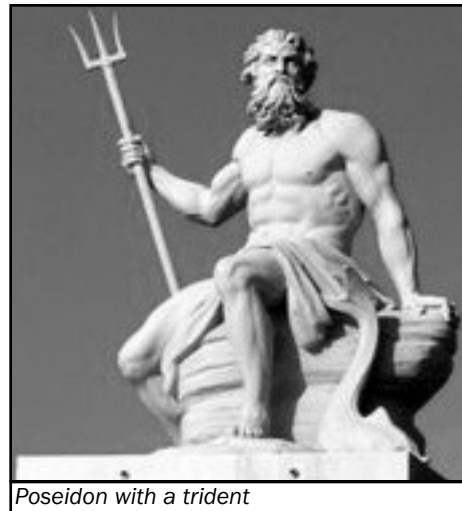
Swiss and Landsknecht pikemen fight at "push of pike" during the Italian Wars

Ancient Spears - Some of the Earliest Vaulting Poles? (continued)

4) Hasta. The hasta was the standard spear used by Roman Legionaries.

5) Trident. The trident was a three-pronged staff or spear. The French word's origin is from Latin tridens, from tri "three" and dens "tooth." Both spear fishermen and soldiers used tridents. With it, a fisherman could skewer multiple fish at once. As a weapon, the military liked its long reach and ability to trap other long weapons between its prongs to disarm an adversary.

6) Yari. The yari were Japanese straight-headed spears. Yari measured anywhere from 3-20 feet (1-6 meters). The longer versions were called *omi no yari* while shorter ones were known as *mochi-* or *tae yari*. Ashigaru (foot soldiers) typically wielded the longest yari, while the samurai usually carried the shorter versions. Yari shafts came in many different lengths, widths and shapes, typically made of hardwood (nakae) and covered in lacquered bamboo strips.



B. Pole Vaulting in Ancient Ireland and France

The pole vault was an event contested in the ancient Irish Tailteann Games as early as 1829 B.C. Given the topography of the Irish countryside, it is likely that the need to cross streams, brooks, and other obstacles prompted the ancient Celts to try using poles to jump over those natural barriers. Such a practical use logically led to incorporating the pole vault into sporting contests.

The Irish *Book of Leinster*, written in the twelfth century A.D., describes the Tailteann Games held at Telltown in the County Meath from 1829 B.C. to 554 B.C. Those same games appear to have continued in a revived form even until 1166 A.D. The Tailteann Games included in events such as stone throwing, pole vaulting, high jumping, the geal-ruith (triple jump), the gaelbolga (dart throw), and the Roth-cleas (throwing a wheel). The traditional founding date for the ancient Greek Olympic Games, by contrast, is over one thousand years later, 776 B.C. The existence of the Irish Tailteann Games, thus, suggests that organized Olympic-type sports might have come to England directly from Ireland, rather than from Greece and Rome.



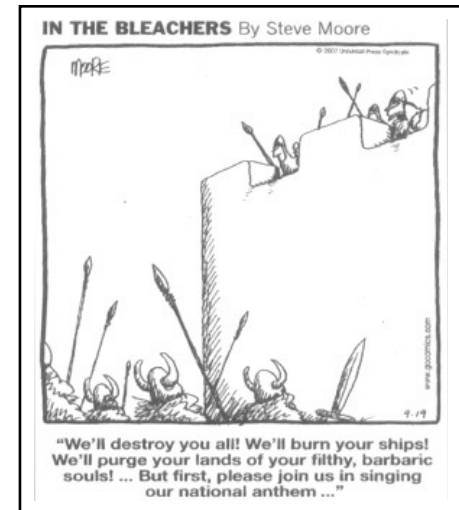
The old Norman family name "Scales" dates to the time of William the Conqueror (1066 A.D.), when men who used long poles and ladders to negotiate rock fortresses and walls were called "scalers".



Battle of Hastings 1066 (Bayeux Tapestry)



Fox Hunt



C. The Middle Ages and Renaissance

I. Introduction

After the collapse of the Roman Empire in the late Fifth Century A.D. and the onset of the Middle Ages, there is a lapse of almost eight centuries before we again find any mention of the pole vault. This could be considered one of the mysteries of history. Perhaps one of the reasons for the absence of pole vaulting, or for that matter, any athletic competition, was the state of wars, violence, and confusion that existed throughout the world during medieval times.



However, during the Middle Ages, a form of vaulting was used by professional runners who were employed as messengers. These messengers, or heralds, often carried long stout staffs which served them in two ways. As Ramy B. Deschner in his interesting book, *The Evolution of Sports*, says:

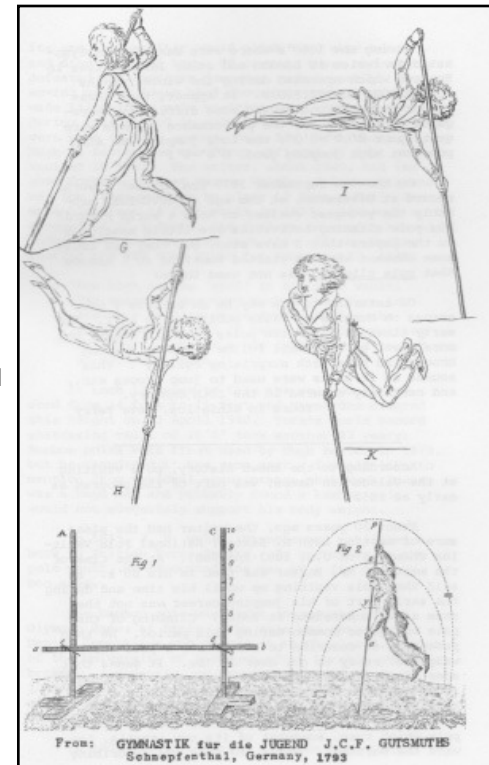
One end of the staff was cleverly contrived to hold "emergency rations" – a few ounces of wine, and a bit of bread and cheese. Primarily, however, the staff was used to assist the runner in vaulting obstacles in his path – for in those days of poor roads and widespread brigandage, a cross-country route often proved not only quicker, but considerably safer.

And here, in the Medieval runner, we find the predecessor of the modern ...pole vaulter...

GutsMuths, in 1792, published a book entitled *Gymnastik furdie Jugend*, in which he had the following to say about the pole vault:

An indifferent leaper cannot pass a bar higher than himself; he may be said to leap well who is capable of clearing a bar as high as he can reach with his fingertips; but many learn to exceed this. Hence we have a standard for classing leapers. I have seen many boys and youths leap over a bar from 2 ½-3 feet 2 inches higher than their own heads, and one of five feet two inches high clear a bar eight feet from the ground.

From this statement one may gather that some of GutsMuths's students vaulted well over 9-0; and this was ten years before the start of the nineteenth century. However, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* states that as a sport, pole-vaulting made its appearance in Germany in the first part of the nineteenth century, when it was added to the gymnastic exercises of the Turner by Johann C. GutsMuths and Frederick L. Jahn. Thus, German youths coached by GutsMuths, were clearing heights in excess of 8-0 and 9-0 at least seventy years before vaulting became an athletic contest anywhere else in the world.

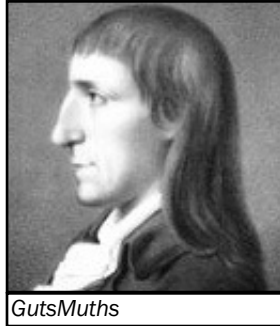


II. Johann Christoph Friedrich GutsMuths

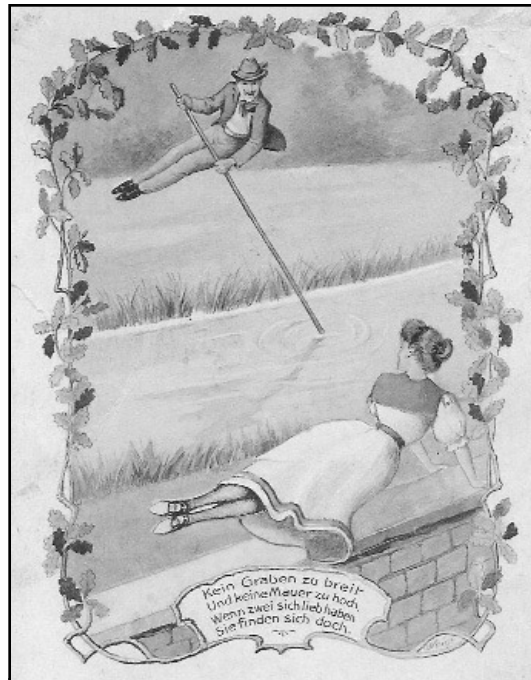
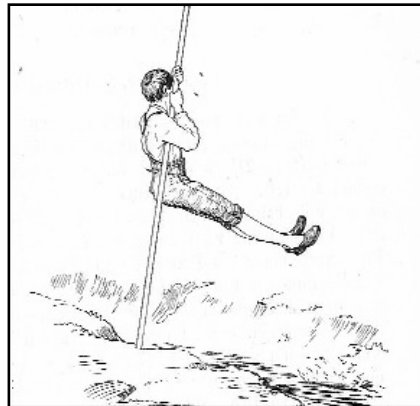
The Father of Modern Pole Vaulting

I am convinced that it is scarcely possible to acquire by any other mode of exercise, what may be accomplished by pole vaulting; and that strength and pliability of body, courage and presence of mind, preservation of equilibrium and accuracy of eye are promoted by it in an extraordinary degree; whence I cannot but wish, that this exercise may by no means be omitted in a plan of physical education.
J.C.F. GutsMuths - 1802

In his book first published in German in 1792 he describes the design of jumping standards, the general principles of pole vaulting, the length of the approach run, and even offers advice on the recommended hand grip! For this reason, many have called him the father of modern pole vaulting. GutsMuths was a teacher at the famous Salzmann Institute in Germany during the Age of Enlightenment.



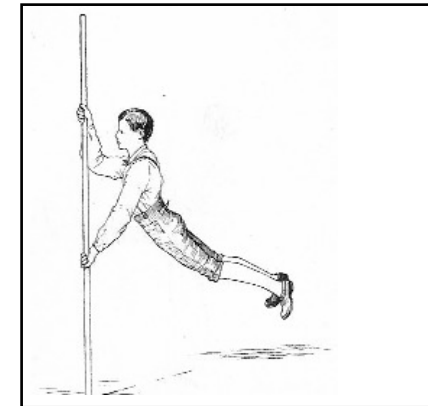
GutsMuths



[There is] no ditch too wide and no wall too high, when two love one another they find one another anyway



Napoleon Bonaparte

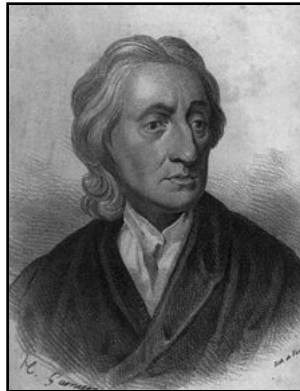


III. Salzmänn Institute, Schepfenthal, Germany (founded in 1784 by Christian Salzmänn)

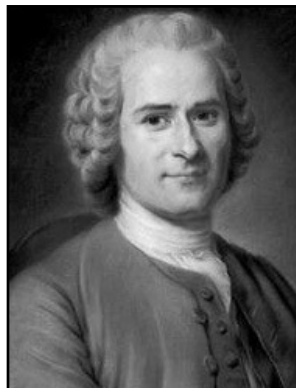
Salzmänn's teaching philosophy was highly influenced by the English philosopher John Locke, and Genevan Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau during the "Age of Enlightenment".



Salzmänn Institute



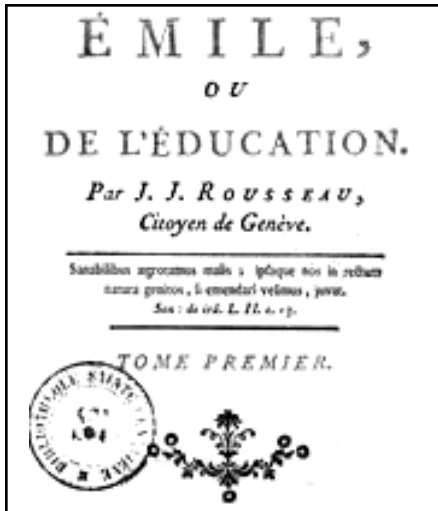
John Locke



Jean-Jacques Rousseau



Christian-Gotthilf-Salzmänn



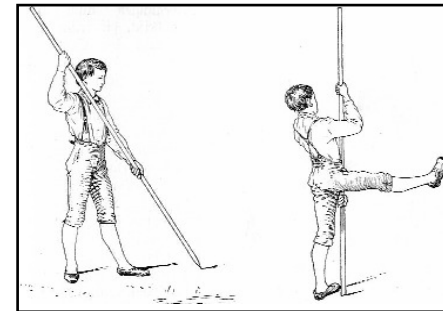
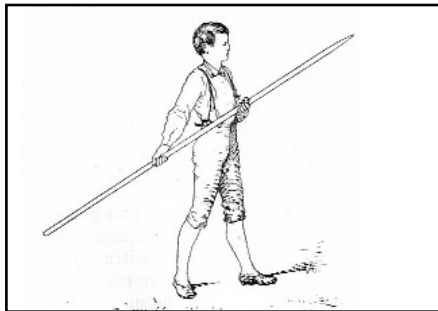
IV. Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1712- 1778

Most historians consider Rousseau's writings landmarks. They are the philosophical basis upon which education was based in the Age of Enlightenment.

Rousseau said that *Emile: or, On Education* (1762) was the "best and most important of all [his] writings". *Emile* is largely a philosophical treatise on the nature of man; it addresses political and philosophical questions regarding the individual's relationship to society, in particular how the individual can retain what Rousseau saw as his natural goodness while participating in an inevitably corrupt society.

In *Emile*, Rousseau attempts to describe a system of education that will enable the "natural man" that he outlines in *The Social Contract* (1762) to live within corrupt society. His writings significantly influenced education in Europe and America.

Emile was banned and burned in Paris and Geneva as soon as it was published. But despite, or perhaps because of this reputation, it became a European bestseller. Furthermore, during the French Revolution, *Emile* served as the inspiration for a new national system of education.



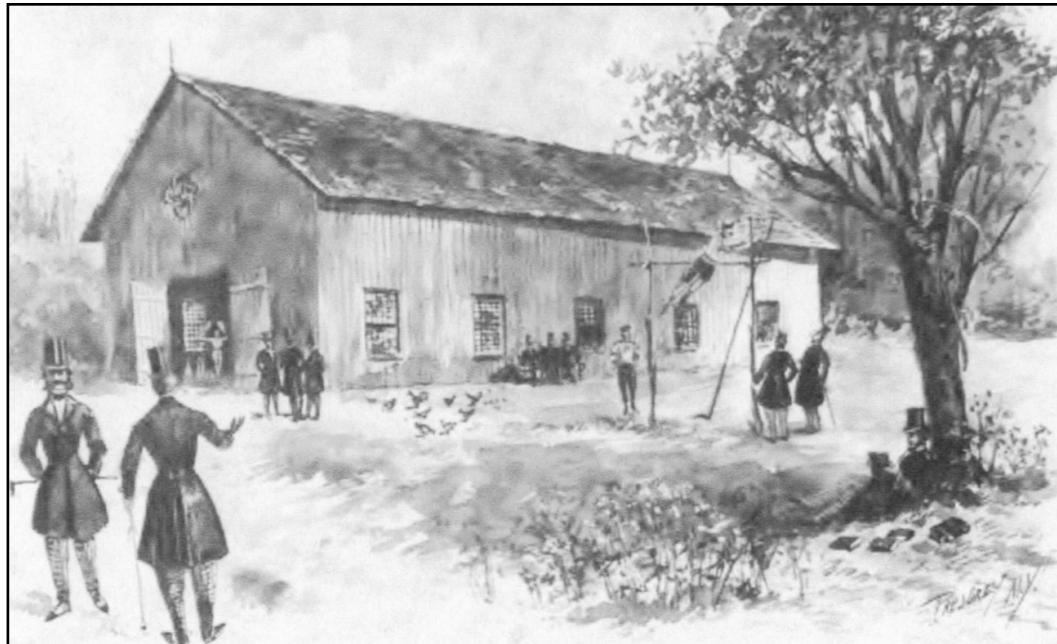
D. England and the United States in the Early 1800's

In his book, *The Mechanics of the Pole Vault*, Richard Ganslen makes the following observations. The London Gymnastic Society of 1826, under Professor Voelker had more than 1300 members. Pole leaping for height and distance was practiced during this period. Reports of records in excess of 10-10 were alleged, but have never been substantiated during this era.

In 1834, *Walker's Manly Exercises*, was published. Illustrations in the book depict vaulting as high as a man can reach with outstretched finger tips. A run up of 12-15 strides is recommended with a 3 foot hand spread. It is noted in the text that it is more difficult to "carry the pole over the cord." This seems to suggest that vaulting competitions required the vaulter to take the pole with him! This would seem a logical extension of the procedure one uses in crossing a ditch or stream. Without the pole, how do you get back?



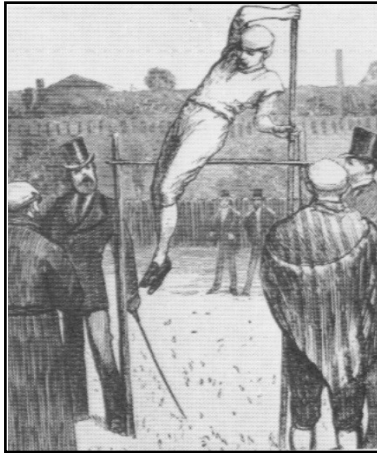
In *British Rural Sports*, by John Walsh, a bamboo pole was recommended, but by the 1875 edition this book does not mention bamboo. Flat discs 4-6 inches in diameter, are suggested to keep the pole from sinking into mud. In a slightly earlier book, *Athletics at Princeton*, vaulting is depicted outside the first Princeton gymnasium (approximately 1859).



Princeton Gymnasium 1859

E. The Birth of Track and Field in England

About the only sports practiced regularly in England during the early part of the nineteenth century were horse racing and wrestling. Very little was done in the way of track and field, as we know it, until 1812, when the Royal Military College at Sandhurst inaugurated



modern athletic sports. However, it was not until about 1840 that Rugby School, Eton College, Harrow School, Shrewsbury Royal School, and the Royal Military Academy of Woolwich, came to the front, following the Royal Military College's example.

The term "athletic sports" did not come into use in England until 1863. Until about 1860, all exercises wherein the feet played the principal part were, logically enough, called "pedestrianism."

The first intercollegiate athletic meet held anywhere in the world was the Oxford versus Cambridge affair of 1864. Descriptions of events in athletic meetings of that time classify the events into two general parts;

running and leaping. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1878 goes on to say: *Leaping may be divided into three principal heads, viz., running high-leaping, running wide-leaping, and running pole-leaping, which are found to be included in nearly every athletic programme. Vaulting, too, is sometimes practiced but belongs rather to the gymnasium than the outdoor athletic arena.*

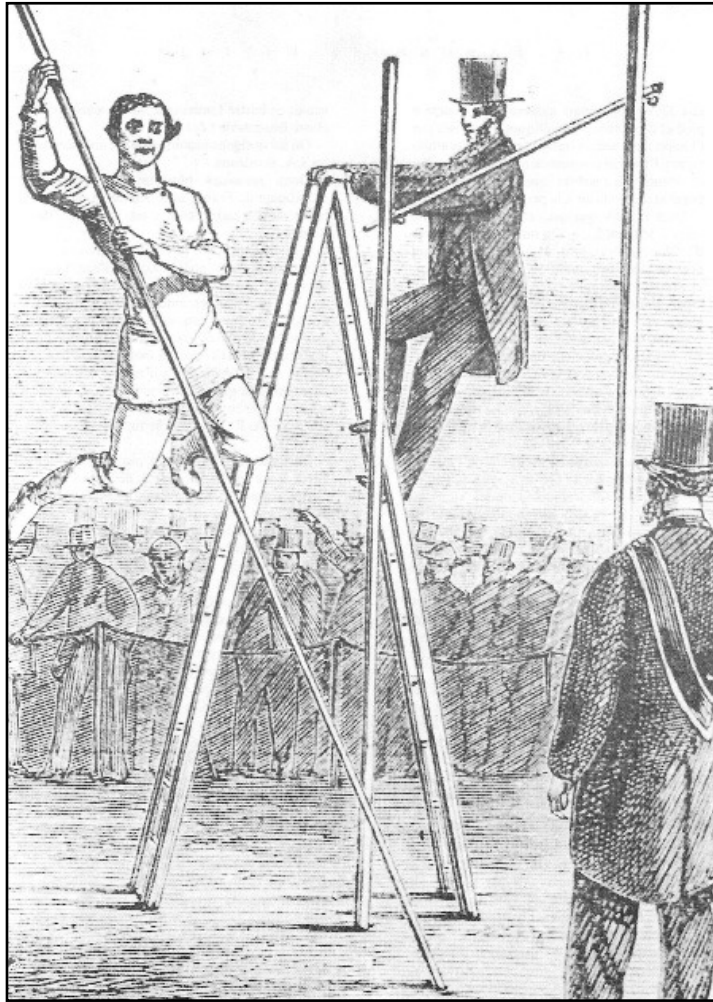


Robert Musgrave
1868 Lake District,
UK 10-10 1/2

We may assume here that their use of the term "running pole-leaping" is a description of the pole vault event as we think of it, and that their use of the word "vaulting" is a reference to gymnastic events such as our modern side-horse.



The first large scale practical use of pole vaulting can be traced to the marshy provinces along the North Sea and the Fens of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk. Because of the many canals that ran through the country at right angles to each other and because of the distance between bridges, a stack of poles was kept at each house to use in vaulting over the canals. This probably gave rise to the event of leaping-with-a-pole for distance instead of height. In America this event was contested as late as 1910. Gradually the change took place from leaping for distance to leaping for height, and the latter event was added to the athletic programs of England in the late 1860's.



Robert Musgrave 1861

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY



ATHLETIC
SPORTS.

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1 AND 2, 1861.

STEWARDS.

R. A. B. MITCHELL, Balliol College, Oxon. Secy.
G. MORFAYNE, Christ Church, Oxon. Treas.
J. R. CARR, Wadham College.
W. C. HARRIS, Exeter College.
F. R. EVANS, Exeter College.

JUDGES.

Rev. W. F. STOREY, St. John's College.
T. F. GARDNER, All Souls College.
REFEREE.
Rev. A. H. FABER, St. John's College.

First Day.

1.		FLAT RACE, 100 YARDS.		Time—2 P.M.
FIRST HEAT.		SECOND HEAT.		
Cookson, Merton, <i>w.</i>	Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Hoare, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	King, Oxon, <i>w. g.</i>	
Parrydane, Wadham, <i>g.</i>	Hardstone, Pembroke, <i>g.</i>	Humphreys, Jesus, <i>w. M.</i>	Livesey, Corpus, <i>w. g.</i>	
Estrope, Trinity, <i>g.</i>	Hoop, Brasenose, <i>g.</i>	Jolly, Merton, <i>w. g.</i>	Lycalls, Balliol, <i>w. g.</i>	
Evans, Exeter, <i>g.</i>		Kettlewell, Oxon, <i>w. M.</i>	Magway, Merton, <i>g. M.</i>	
THIRD HEAT.				
Wentwood, Christ Church, <i>w. g.</i>	Park, Lincoln, <i>g. M.</i>	Wood, Lincoln, <i>g. M.</i>	West-Smith, Trinity, <i>g. w.</i>	
Ormsby, Ipswich, <i>g. g.</i>	Philpot, Magdalen, <i>g. p.</i>	Wood, Pembroke, <i>g. g.</i>		
2.		HIGH JUMP.—Three Jumps allowed.		2.15 P.M.
By-Pinnon, Balliol, <i>w.</i>	Chubb, Merton, <i>g.</i>	Leard, Oxon, <i>g.</i>	West-Smith, Trinity, <i>g. w.</i>	
Clutton, Exeter, <i>g.</i>	Jolly, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Price, Oxon, <i>g.</i>	Wylie, St. Edmund Hall, <i>g.</i>	
Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>				
3.		FLAT RACE, 100 YARDS.—Final Heat.		2.30 P.M.
4.		GRADUATES' FLAT RACE, 300 YARDS.		2.40 P.M.
		Exton, St. Alban Hall, <i>w.</i>		
		Entries for this Race may be made on the Ground.		
5.		HURDLE RACE, 120 YARDS, 10 FLIGHTS.		2.50 P.M.
FIRST HEAT.		SECOND HEAT.		
Hill, University, <i>g.</i>	Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Hoare, Magdalen, <i>w. M.</i>	Murray, Jesus, <i>w. g.</i>	
Edelman, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Gillett, Exeter, <i>g.</i>	Layard, Oxon, <i>w. g.</i>	Murray, Oxon, <i>w. g.</i>	
Carson, Pembroke, <i>g.</i>	Goach, Merton, <i>g.</i>	Magnat, Merton, <i>g. g.</i>	Philpot, Magdalen, <i>g. p.</i>	
Parrydane, Wadham, <i>g.</i>	Gooding, Christ Church, <i>g.</i>	Michell, Magdalen, <i>w. M.</i>		
THIRD HEAT.				
Price, Brasenose, <i>g. g.</i>	Boyd, Christ Church, <i>g. g.</i>	Walsley, University, <i>g. g.</i>	Wylie, St. Edm. Hall, <i>g. g.</i>	
Reid, Christ Church, <i>g. g.</i>	Skelton, Wadham, <i>g. g.</i>	Wimber, Worcester, <i>g. g.</i>		
6.		PUTTING THE STONE.		3.15 P.M.
Bull'sk, Exeter, <i>w.</i>	Havas, Jesus, <i>g.</i>	Miles, Exeter, <i>g.</i>	Smith, Wadham, <i>g.</i>	
Chaston, Merton, <i>g.</i>	Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Milford, St. Edmund Hall, <i>g.</i>	Wylie, St. Edm. Hall, <i>g. g.</i>	
Conroy, Pembroke, <i>g.</i>				
7.		HURDLE RACE. Final Heat.		3.40 P.M.
8.		FLAT RACE, ONE MILE.		3.50 P.M.
Allday, St. Edm. Hall, <i>w.</i>	Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Hoare, Exeter, <i>w. g.</i>	Ollivant, New, <i>g. M.</i>	
Fennell, Christ Church, <i>g. M.</i>	Follett, Christ Church, <i>w. M.</i>	Hutchins, Exeter, <i>g. M.</i>	Ridley, Christ Church, <i>g. g.</i>	
Reid, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Hill, Pembroke, <i>w. g.</i>	Moyle, Magdalen, <i>g. g.</i>	Stewart, Queen's, <i>g. g.</i>	
Bull'sk, Exeter, <i>g.</i>	Harrison, Merton, <i>w. g.</i>	Mills, Christ Church, <i>g. M.</i>	Tucker, Merton, <i>g. g.</i>	
Carson, Lincoln, <i>g.</i>	Higgins, Pembroke, <i>w. g.</i>	Morris, New, <i>g. g.</i>	Waller, Lincoln, <i>g. g.</i>	
Care, Balliol, <i>w.</i>	Hilton, University, <i>w. g.</i>	Ogle, Magdalen, <i>g. p.</i>	Warran, Balliol, <i>g. g.</i>	
Dolaty, Merton, <i>g.</i>				
9.		THROWING THE CRICKET BALL.		4.15 P.M.
Follett, Balliol, <i>g.</i>	Jolly, Merton, <i>g.</i>	Murray, Oxon, <i>g.</i>	Wylie, St. Edm. Hall, <i>g. g.</i>	
Gillett, Exeter, <i>g.</i>	Maggill, University, <i>g.</i>	Roberts, Trinity, <i>w. M.</i>	Worsley, Magdalen, <i>g. g.</i>	
Hoady, Oxon, <i>g.</i>	Mollat, Christ Church, <i>g.</i>	Vigors, Pembroke, <i>w. g.</i>		

The first World Record holder in the pole leap, or pole vault, was J. Wheeler with a height of 10-0 set in 1866. R.J.C. Mitchell, in 1868, raised Wheeler's mark to 10-6 ½. To be very technical, these early performers should not be called vaulters, but rather climbers, inasmuch as they actually climbed the pole. Webster, in his book, *Athletes of To-Day* (1929), gives a good description of their technique.

The method employed by the Ulverston men was unique, and for many years the world's record holders came from that small town. Their poles were of ash or hickory, long and heavy, and shod at the lower end with a tripod of iron, forming a three-inch triangle. The weight of the pole necessitated a wide separation of the hands and a slow run-up. At the end of the approach run the tripod was planted some three feet in front of the cross-bar. The athlete then allowed his body to swing up and began to climb. The upper hand was shifted a foot up the pole and the lower hand brought up to it. The climbing continued until the pole passed the vertical position. As it began to fall forward, the athlete drew up his knees and went over the bar in a sitting position, a last backward push preventing the pole from following through to remove the bar.

Also at about this time, organized track and field got its start in Japan. A letter from Mr. Mikio Oda, 1928 Olympic hop-step-and-jump champion from Japan, and incidentally the Orient's first gold medal winner in Olympic competition, mentions the beginning of the sport in the Far East. In 1873, an Englishman came to Japan and introduced track and field, and it has been said that in a field day held at the Naval Academy (then in Tokyo) in 1874, pole vault was included in the day's program. But a painting that dates from about 1800 clearly shows that the Japanese had begun pole vaulting much earlier.

E. Woodburn of the Ulvertson Cricket Club in England was the next man to hold the world record. In 1874 he broke Mitchell's mark by half-an-inch with a leap of 10-7. Woodburn's record stood for only three years as H.E. Kayall set a new world standard by scaling 10-9. This was during the year 1877 and brings us up to the beginning of track and field in America.

