

for and about
The Younger Set

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Photo Photo by ED WALKER

"I THINK ABOUT my start, about getting out in front of the park, about getting to the tape first," Karen Dennis, 15, and quick off the mark, is one of the standouts sparking the boom in competitive track and field events for girls.

THE LITHE AND LIVELY Girls Who Run Like Boys

Always the trouble has been that it is impossible to run like a girl and get anywhere, except to the church on time... By the accepted schoolgirl's technique, her thighs move forward in a short, stiff swishing motion. Her knees remain low, as though broken or restricted by a tight skirt; the lower legs describe half circles away from the body, independent of the direction of the thighs. The hips remain rigid, but the chest and shoulders make a westerly half circular movement, like a washing-machine agitator. The arms are bent at the elbows in a purposeful manner, but the forearms and hands are not communicating and tend to fly up at scary angles. The fingers are splayed, completing a motion excellent for flapping the bus or drying the fingernails. The eyes bulge forward. The head rolls dangerously. It is an altogether lovely exercise in ineptness, an American girl running like a girl.

—Sports Illustrated magazine, May 10, 1961

By MARY ANN DAMME
Free Press Staff Writer

When the starting gun sounds Monday at the Ohio Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) track championships at Dayton, the first ones off the starting blocks are likely to be some lithe and lively Michigan lassies. Girls track, long a forgotten sport in the United States, is booming in Michigan for three reasons:

- 1) Interest generated by televised successes of Olympic stars like Wilma Rudolph and Olympic gold medal winner.
- 2) The efforts of a handful of dedicated coaches who think girls should have a crack at competitive sports.
- 3) The hard work of some talented teenagers who are willing to forego after-school fun for sweaty practice sessions on the cinders.

"An area as big as Detroit must have a Wilma Rudolph in it somewhere," said wily Jim Bibbs, Ecorse High School track coach and mentor of a copy of eager girls who hope to take team honors at the Dayton meet.

Girls' Track Clubs Growing

Under the guidance of Olympic gold medal winner Hayes Jones, Michigan chairman of women's track and field for the AAU, the number of girls' track clubs in the state has mushroomed from four last year to 13 today, with about 300 girls participating.

At least two of the girls are prime prospects for the next Olympic team.

KAREN DENNIS, a 15-year-old Chaney High School sophomore, placed second in the 225-yard dash at the indoor national AAU meet at Akron, Ohio last year and third in the same event at the outdoor national AAU meet at Hanford, Calif.

FRANCES KRAKER, an 15-year-old senior from Ann Arbor, currently holds the girls' national championship for the 550-yard run.

Karen, a quiet and pretty girl who likes to dance the "jerk" when she's not pounding the cinders, was encouraged to run by her father, Thad Dennis. Her was a standout high jumper and sprinter at Northwestern High School and Eastern Michigan University.

"The hardest thing, she said, was keeping in training trim. 'It's easy to eat pop and potato chips and french fries,' she said. 'Then when I go home and mother has dinner ready, I don't eat.'

Sometimes studies keep her up past bedtime, too. 'She'd be the world's fastest human if she'd eat and sleep right,' quipped her coach, Mr. Bibbs.

National Champs Largely Unsung

One of his relay teams, including Karen, Carolyn Coleman, a 16-year-old freshman at Ecorse High; Charlene Bussak, a 17-year-old Northern High junior; and Linda White, a 16-year-old Ecorse freshman won the 440 relays at the AAU national indoor meet.

FRANCIE KRAKER, daughter of an Ann Arbor ologopath,

Lean, Litely And Lovely

Last anyone get the idea these are a bunch of Amazons with physiques instead of figures, listen to these comments from their coaches:

"Sports don't make you big they make you down and trim you up," said Mr. Simmons. "All of our girls are shaped, feminine girls."

Said Donald Minichella, principal of Seltzer Elementary School in Ulica and coach of the "Lites": "That's an old wives tale. Our girls have very cute figures, and I don't think any of them lack dates."

TO MAKE SURE she doesn't collect more than her share of those "Amazons", cracks, green-eyed Franice refuses to cut her long blond hair, which she wears in a flip.

"It gets in my eyes sometimes when I'm jogging," she said, "but if I get it out the guys would make fun of me. 'You've got to keep a feminine', sometimes it's hard when you're hot and sweaty and covered from head to foot with cinders."

Girls Need More Competition

Karen and Franice and some of the other girls admitted sometimes it was hard to stick to training when other teams are out having good times, but they listed some obvious compensations:

"This is where we meet most of our friends," said Karen, and a glance at the beaming of onlookers at the Ecorse High track proved her point.

One of the biggest problems for the budding track stars, according to the coaches, is lack of competition.

"Franice is running against the watch more than anything else," lamented Coach Simmons.

THE COACHES, under Hayes Jones' leadership, are trying to fix this. Six girls' meets, known as the "Six Girls", are scheduled in the

Pizza's In, But Order Salad Too

WASHINGTON (AP)—An Agriculture Department nutritionist contends that the teenage girl is the poorest member of the whole family. The teenage boy also needs an improved diet.

Dr. Evelyn Spindler, nutritional for the department's Federal Extension Service, says there is nothing wrong with a teen-ager eating a hamburger on a bun, if he drinks a milkshake at the same sitting, and consumes an even salad, or a banana. She says such a meal, or snack, is better than a soft drink and potato chips.

Parties should be planned in advance by Mom and the Dr. Spindler has been point-

TEEN-AGE MAIL

Organize a Teen Club For After School Fun

BY DOROTHY RICKER

Dear Mrs. Ricker: I am writing for a large majority of teenagers in our town. We think if we had some kind of teen club, where alcoholic drinks were not served, there would be fewer teens getting into trouble.

because they know what goes on at most of them.

JOANIE

Dear Joanie: Teen-age parties can be fun, successful and trouble-free if they are planned intelligently. Most teen-mishaps occur

if properly chaperoned. When parents permit their offspring to have a party they have a responsibility to the young guests and to all the other parents.

Parties should be planned in advance by Mom and the

Here Are Nation's Top 20 Recordings

Here are the nation's top-selling 45 r.p.m. singles, according to Billboard, the international music-recording news weekly.

1—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

2—**Sam Cooke**, "Bring It On Home to Me" (A&M)

3—**Johnnie "Johnny B. Goode" Goode**, "Johnny B. Goode" (Mercury)

4—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

5—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

6—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

7—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

8—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

9—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

10—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

11—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

12—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

13—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

14—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

15—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

16—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

17—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

18—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

19—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

20—**Ray Charles**, "I Got a Feeling" (Atlantic)

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