

**PROGRESSION  
OF  
WORLD BEST PERFORMANCES  
AND IAAF APPROVED  
WORLD RECORDS**

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**Cover Photograph: Jesse Owens (USA) shown during his World Record leap of 8.13 metres set in 1935, a record which lasted 25 years.**

7:11.6Y

**Kenya (KEN)** London 05.09.1970  
Naftali Bon 1:49.8 - Hezekiah Nyamau 1:49.8 - Thomas Saisi 1:46.6  
- Robert Ouko 1:45.4, International, Crystal Palace, 15.40 Hr: 1.  
KEN 7:11.6 (all 3 watches 7:11.6), 2. Great Britain (GBR) 7:17.4  
(Martin Bilham 1:50.0, David Cropper 1:49.0, Mike MacLean 1:48.4,  
Peter Browne 1:50.0), 3. FR Germany (FRG) 7:23.6 (Reiner  
Föhrenbach 1:50.2, Anton Adam 1:49.6, Hans Bertram 1:52.2, Gernot  
Schoch 1:51.6)

7:10.4Y

**Chicago Track Club (USA)** Durham 12.05.1973  
Tom Bach 1:50.5 - Kenneth Sparks 1:47.1 - Lowell Paul 1:48.0 -  
Richard "Rick" Wohlhuter 1:44.8, Martin Luther King Freedom Games,  
Wallace Wade Stadium, 16 Hr: 1. Chicago 7:10.4 (all 3 watches  
7:10.4) 2. Villanova 7:30.8

7:08.1

**USSR (URS)** Podolsk 13.08.1978  
Vladimir Podolyako 1:47.0 - Nikolay Kirov 1:47.6 - Vladimir  
Malozemlin 1:47.0 - Anatoliy Reshetnyak 1:46.5, World Record  
attempt, Trade Union Stadium, 19.59 Hr: 1. URS 7:08.1 (all 3  
watches 7:08.1), 2. URS II 7:40.1

7:03.89

**Great Britain (GBR)** London 30.08.1982  
Peter Elliott 1:49.14 - Garry Cook 1:46.20 - Steve Cram 1:44.54 -  
Sebastian Coe 1:44.01, British Games, Crystal Palace, 16.25 Hr:  
1. GBR 7:03.89 (electronic - the 3 hand held 1/100th second watches  
7:03.85 - 7:03.89 - 7:03.92), 2. GBR II (Robert Harrison 1:47.83,  
Steve Caldwell 1:49.06, Chris McGeorge 1:45.89, Graham Williamson  
1:48.84) 7:11.62, 3. GBR III 7:28.66

4 times 1500 Metres.

16:40.2

**IK Göta Stockholm (SWE)** Stockholm 12.08.1919  
Gustaf Peterson - Josef Lindbom - Rudolf Falk - Sven Lundgren.  
National, Stadion: 1. IK Göta (Peterson 4:14, Lindbom 4:14, Falk  
4:08, Lundgren 4:04.20) 16:40.2, 2. Mariebergs IK Stockholm  
17:06.8. \* according to one source: 4:07.3, 0 one report gave:  
4:04.5

16:37.0

**IF Linnea Stockholm (SWE)** Norrköping 02.08.1925  
Helge Adamson - Gunnar Fosselius - Gösta Fosselius - Edvin Wide.  
National, Idrottsparcken: 1. Linnea (Adamson 4:14.5, Gu. Fosselius  
4:10.2, G8. Fosselius 4:06.0, Wide 4:05.2) 16:37.0 (16:36.1 -  
16:36.9 - 16:37.4, the median time was rounded up to 16:37.0), 2.  
SIK Hellas Stockholm 16:47.6, 3. IF Start Örebro 16:50.0, 4.  
Fredrikshofs IF Stockholm 17:06.3

16:26.2

**Turun Urheiluliitto Turku (FIN)** Stockholm 12.07.1926  
Frej Liewendahl - Elias Katz - Nillo Koivunhalo - Paavo Nurmi.  
International, Stadion: 1. Turun (Liewendahl 4:07.0, Katz 4:03.3,  
Koivunhalo 4:08.4, Nurmi 4:07.5\*) 16:26.2 (16:26.1 - 16:26.2 -  
16:26.3), 2. IF Linnea Stockholm 17:04.8, 3. SIK Hellas Stockholm  
17:24.0, 4. Fredrikshofs IF Stockholm 17:25.1, 5. Djurgårdens IF  
Stockholm 17:59.3, 6. Södermalms IK Stockholm 18:06.8, \* these  
were the most reliable "splits" as reported in "Idrottsbladet", in  
other reports, times quoted were as follows: 4:06.7 and 4:06 for  
Liewendahl, 4:04 and 4:03 for Katz, 4:09, 4:09.5 and 4:10 for  
Koivunhalo, 4:06, 4:07 and 4:07.7 for Nurmi

16:11.4

**Turun Urheiluliitto Turku (FIN)** Viipuri 17.07.1926  
Frej Liewendahl - Elias Katz - Nillo Koivunhalo - Paavo Nurmi.  
National, Papua Sports Ground: 1. Turun 16:11.4 (16:11.2 -  
16:11.3 - 16:11.6, rounded up from 16:11.3 to 16:11.4), 2. Viipuri  
16:37.4, 3. Tampere 16:44.0

15:55.6

**Great Britain (GBR)** Köln 30.08.1931  
Aubrey Harris - Harry Hedges - John Cornes - Reginald Thomas.  
International Match, GER - GBR, Müngersdorfer Stadium, 18.10 Hr:  
1. GBR (Thomas 3:53.5), 2. GER (Hans Wichmann, Fritz Schilgen,  
Friedrich Schaumburg, Helmut Krause) 16:06.0

15:55.4

Magyar AC Budapest (HUN) Budapest 20.08.1939  
András Csaplár - Sándor Ratónyi - Mihály Iglói - Miklós Szabó I

15:54.8

**Finland (FIN)** Göteborg 17.09.1939  
Pentti Salovaara - Martti Salovaara - Toivo Sarkana - Nillo  
Hartikka. International, Slottskogsvallen: 1. FIN (P. Salovaara  
4:03.7, M. Salovaara\* 3:59.3, Sarkana 3:54.2, Hartikka 3:57.6) 2.  
15:54.8 (15:54.6 - 15:54.7 - 15:54.8, rounded up to 15:54.8) 2.  
Sweden (SWE) (Lennart Nilsson, Ingvar Haglund, Arne Andersson, Åke  
Jansson) 16:07.4 3. Norway (NOR) 16:07.6. \* the Salovaara's were  
twin brothers, as were Gunnar and Gösta Fosselius (SWE), see above  
at 16:37, 02.08.1925.

15:42.0

**Brandkärens IK Stockholm (SWE)** Göteborg 03.08.1941  
Åke Jansson - Hugo Karlén - Henry Källarne - Bror Hellström.  
National, Slottskogsvallen, 19.15 Hr: 1. BIK (Jansson, later  
Spångert 3:56.0, Karlén 3:58.0, Källarne, formerly Jonsson 3:55.6,  
Hellström 3:52.4) 15:42.0 (15:41.8 - 15:42.0 - 15:42.6), 2. Gefle  
IF Gävle 15:49.8 (Gunder Hägg the anchorman 3:49.2), 3. Örgryte IS  
Göteborg 16:06.8, 4. IFK Göteborg 17:00.0

15:38.6

**Malmö AI (SWE)** Norrköping 22.07.1945  
Gösta Jacobson - Sven Stridsberg - Lennart Strand - Gunder Hägg.  
National, Idrottsparck, 19 Hr: 1. Malmö (Jacobsson 3:55.5,  
Stridsberg 4:00.6, Strand 3:50.2, Hägg 3:52.3) 15:38.6 (15:37.8 -  
15:38.6 - 15:39.2), 2. Gefle IF Gävle 15:55.4, 3. SIK Hellas  
Stockholm 16:05.2, 4. Örgryte IS Göteborg 16:07.0, 5. IK Göta  
Stockholm 16:17.2, 6. Redbergslids IK Göteborg 16:20.4, 7. IK  
Mode Stockholm 16:20.8, 8. GIF Tjalve Norrköping 16:31.0, 9.  
Stockholms Studenters IF 16:31.2, 10. IK Vikingen Göteborg  
16:34.4, 11. Valdemarsviks IF 16:46.0, 12. IFK Linköping 17:08.4

15:34.6

**Gefle IF Gävle (SWE)** Karlstad 27.07.1947  
Olle Åberg - Ingvar Bengtsson - Gösta Bergkvist - Henry Eriksson.  
National, Tingvalla Stadium, 15 Hr: 1. Gefle IF (Åberg 3:52.0,  
Bengtsson 3:56.0, Bergkvist 3:53.5, Eriksson 3:53.1) 15:34.6  
(15:34.0 - 15:34.6 - 15:34.8) 2. Malmö AI 15:56.8, 3. Örgryte IS  
Göteborg 15:57.6, 4. IK Göta Stockholm 16:00.4, 5. Kvarnsvedens  
GIF 16:12.2, 6. SIK Hellas Stockholm 16:17.2, 7. Gefle IF II  
16:19.4, 8. Turebergs IF Sollentuna 16:20.2, 9. Lv 2 IF Linköping  
16:36.0, 10. Nynäshamns IF 16:52.2, 11. IF Göta Karlstad 16:53.4

15:30.2

**Gefle IF Gävle (SWE)** Gävle 03.07.1949  
Ingvar Bengtsson - Gösta Bergkvist - Olle Åberg - Henry Eriksson.  
National, Strömvalle Stadium, 14.30 Hr: 1. Gefle IF (Bengtsson  
3:52.6, Bergkvist 3:52.7, Åberg 3:51.9, Eriksson 3:53.0) 15:30.2  
(15:30.0 - 15:30.2 - 15:30.6) 2. Turebergs IF Sollentuna 16:04.8,  
3. Malmö AI 16:10.0, 4. Gefle IF II 16:15.0, 5. Alltå GIF 16:47.2,  
6. Åsarna IK 17:35.8. IK Göta Stockholm disqualified (16:04.8)

15:29.2

**Hungary (HUN)** Budapest 23.09.1953  
Sándor Garay - Ernő Béres - István Rózsavölgyi - Sándor Iharos.  
World Record attempt, Népstadium, 17.10 Hr: 1. HUN (Garay 3:49.0,  
Béres 3:58.2, Rózsavölgyi 3:50.8, Iharos 3:51.2) 15:29.2 (15:29.1  
- 15:29.2 - 15:29.5), 2. HUN II 16:17.6 (József Kovács ran 3:51.8.  
If he had run in the first relay instead of Béres, the World Record  
would have been considerably better)

15:27.2

Great Britain (GBR)  
London  
Ralph Dunkley - David Law - Gordon Pirie - William Nankeville.  
International, White City Stadium, 20.45 Hr: 1. GBR (Dunkley 3:53.4, Law 3:50.0, Pirie 3:50.2, Nankeville 3:53.6) 15:27.2 (15:27.0 - 15:27.2), 2. Sweden (SWE) 15:29.0 (Ingvar Ericsson with 390 temperature 3:53.4, Olle Åberg 3:49.2, Tore Lundberg 3:51.9, Sune Karlsson 3:54.5), 3. FR Germany (FRG) 15:40.8

15:21.2

Hungary (HUN)  
Budapest  
László Tábori - István Rózsavölgyi - Ferenc Mikés - Sándor Iharos.  
World Record attempt, Népstadion, 19.30 Hr: 1. Honvéd (Tábori 3:50.6, Rózsavölgyi 3:48.8, Mikés 3:54.4, Iharos 3:47.4) 15:21.2 (15:20.8 - 15:21.2), 2. HUN II 16:49.6

15:14.8

Hungary (HUN)  
Budapest  
Ferenc Mikés - László Tábori - István Rózsavölgyi - Sándor Iharos.  
World Record attempt, Kinizsi Ground, 15.15 Hr: 1. Honvéd (Mikés 3:52.0, Tábori 3:46.6, Rózsavölgyi 3:48.4, Iharos 3:47.8) 15:14.8 (15:14.8 - 15:14.8), 2. Budapest Team 15:44.2

15:11.4

German Democratic Rep. (GDR)  
Poznan  
Siegfried Herrmann - Klaus Richtzenhain - Siegfried Valentín - Helfried Reinnagel. International, 18.15 Hr: 1. GDR (Herrmann 3:47.5, Richtzenhain 3:48.5, Valentín 3:44.0, Reinnagel 3:51.4) 15:11.4 (15:11.2 - 15:11.4 - 15:11.6), 2. Poland (POL) 15:33.0 (Jerzy Brzuskowski 3:53.6, Jerzy Chromik 3:51.5, Kazimierz Zimny 3:52.5, Marian Jochman 3:55.4), 3. GDR II (Libertus Stamer, Hans Grodotzki, Alfred Döring, Herrmann Buhl) 15:50.0

15:04.2

France (FRA)  
Versailles  
Jean Clause - Robert Boge - Michel Jazy - Michel Bernard. World Record attempt, Montbaouron Stadium, 20.40 Hr: 1. FRA (Clause - 15:04.2 - 15:04.4), 2. FRA II 15:53.4

14:58.0

German Democratic Republic (GDR)  
Potsdam  
Manfred Matuschewski - Jürgen May - Siegfried Herrmann - Siegfried Valentín. World Record attempt, Lortschiffhafen Stadium, 20 Hr: 1. GDR (Matuschewski 3:44.0, May 3:45.5, Herrmann 3:44.1, Valentín 3:44.4) 14:58.0 (14:57.9 - 14:58.0 - 14:58.0), 2. GDR II 15:50.2

14:49.0

France (FRA)  
Saint-Maur  
Gérard Vervoort - Claude Nicolas - Michel Jazy - Jean Wadoux. World Record attempt, St. Maur Stadium, 20.35 Hr: 1. FRA (Vervoort 3:41.8, Nicolas 3:44.2, Jazy 3:40.8, Wadoux 3:42.2) 14:49.0 (all 3 watches 14:49.0), 2. FRA II (Jean-Luc Salomon, Pierre Toussaint, Maurice Lurot, Serge Cottreau) 15:19.8, 3. FRA III 15:54.4

14:40.4

New Zealand (NZL)  
Oslo  
Tony Polhill - John Walker - Rodney Dixon - Dick Quax. International, Bislett Stadium, 19.25 Hr: 1. NZL (Polhill 3:42.9, Walker 3:40.4, Dixon 3:41.2, Quax 3:35.9) 14:40.4. Not ratified, as the second man, John Walker was paced for three laps by Byron Dyce (JAM) who ran without a baton.

14:38.8

FR Germany (FRG)  
Köln  
Thomas Wessinghage - Harald Hudak - Michael Lederer - Karl Fleschen. Invitation race during half-time of football match: FC Köln - Werder Bremen, Müngersdorfer Stadium, 19.30 Hr: 1. FRG (Wessinghage 3:38.8 - Hudak 3:39.1 - Lederer 3:44.6, Fleschen 3:36.3) 14:38.8 (all 3 watches 14:38.8), 2. FRG II (Michael Karst, Peter Belger, Karl-Heinz Seck, Alfred Wunderlich) 15:46.2, 3. FRG III 16:16.7

4 times 1 Mile Relay

The Times before establishment of the IAAF

19:27 3/5 Yale University (USA) Philadelphia 25.04.1896  
E.H.Lewis - C.Buckingham - B.Betz - H.Turnbull. Penn Relays, 5 times 1 mile relay, won by Penn U. At 4 miles Yale led (Penn's time at 4 miles was 19:28.0)

18:28 1/5 Pennsylvania Univ. (USA) Philadelphia 24.04.1897  
William Quicksall 4:42 3/5 - Alexander Grant 4:46 2/5 - Edward A.Mechling 4:37 - George Orton (CAN) 4:32 1/5, Penn Relays: 1. Penn 18:28 1/5, 2. Yale 40y behind.

18:25 3/5 Univ. of Michigan (USA) Philadelphia 29.04.1905  
Harry L.Coe - Horace Ramey - Floyd Rowe - Irving K.Stone. 2. Yale ("only losing after the nearest kind of race" - New York Times).

18:10 2/5 Univ. of Michigan (USA) Philadelphia 28.04.1906  
James W.Maloney 4:31 4/5 - Horace Ramey 4:32 3/5 - Harry L.Coe 4:31 1/5 - Floyd Rowe 4:34 4/5, Penn Relays: 1. Michigan 18:10 2/5, 2. Yale 18:24 2/5e

18:08 4/5 Irish-American AC (USA) New York 10.09.1909  
Thomas Collins - Frank Riley - Joseph Bromilow - Abel Kiviat. Celtic Park, N.Y.

17:55.0 Cornell University (USA) Philadelphia 29.04.1911  
C.A.Hunger - Herbert Putnam - Tell Berna 4:22.0 - John Paul Jones 4:19 4/5, 2. Pennsylvania 20y behind. Penn Relays

IAAF Era  
17:51 1/5 Boston A.A. (USA) Boston 17.06.1913  
Harry Mahoney 4:35.0 - Eugene Marceau 4:29.0 - James Powers 4:26 4/5 - Oscar Hedlund 4:22.0. Old home week celebration, March Field, Lafayette College.

17:51 1/5 Cornell University (USA) Philadelphia 29.04.1916  
Gilbert Taylor - John Hoffmire - Vere Windnagle - Daniel Potter. Penn Relays: 2. U. of Wisconsin. Leaders splits: 4:30 3/5, 4:27 3/5, 4:26 1/5, 4:26 4/5.

17:45.0 University of Illinois (USA) Des Moines 29.04.1922  
Howard Vates 4:27 2/5 - Bruce Patterson 4:25 2/5 - Gordon McGinnis 4:28 3/5 - Russell Wharton 4:23 3/5. Drake Relays

17:37.8 University of Illinois (USA) Lawrence 18.04.1931  
William J. Gould - Henry C. Carrison - Robert D. Woolsey - Paul B. Evans. Kansas Relays

17:21.4 Illinois AC (USA) Chicago 23.08.1923  
Edward Krogh - Ray Baker - Ray Watson - Joie Ray. Listed until 1970 as 23.06.1923

17:17.2 USA London 15.08.1936  
Charles Hornbostel - Eugene Venzke - Archie San Romani - Glenn Cunningham. International Match, British Empire - USA, White City Stadium, 16.35 Hr: 1. USA 17:17.2 (all 3 watches 17:17.2), 2. Empire

17:16.2 Indiana University (USA) Philadelphia 24.04.1937  
Mel Trutt 4:22.2 - James Smith 4:24.0 - Thomas Deckard 4:22.8 - Donald Lash 4:17.1, Penn Relays, Franklin Field: 1. Indiana 17:16.1 (17:16.1 - 17:16.1 - 17:16.4, rounded up to 17:16.2), 2. Cornell