

Il 24 settembre abbiamo pubblicato la prima parte della storia personale del discobolo statunitense Bob Fitch. Lo spunto ci era venuto da una ricerca del nostro Marco Martini che aveva puntato la lente d'ingrandimento sui confronti fra Fitch e i nostri Consolini e Tosi. Navigando qua e là, ci aveva incuriosito la personalità di Fitch, che dopo essere stato discobolo di eccellenza (primatista mondiale nel 1946 con 54.93) aveva lasciato una impronta indelebile come insegnante e innovatore nel golf. Abbiamo lasciato in sospeso per qualche giorno il lavoro di Marco che pubblichiamo oggi, in duplice versione inglese e italiana. Qui sopra un ritaglio de "La Gazzetta dello Sport" con un articolo firmato da Gualtiero Zanetti, titolare della rubrica di

atletica a quel tempo, futuro condirettore prima (1960) e direttore poi dal 1961 al 1973. Se fate un doppio click sul ritaglio si ingrandisce consentendone la lettura, la qualità non è buonissima.

This is the second part of a research on the US discus thrower Bob Fitch. The Italian historian Marco Martini, ASAI vicepresident, investigated on the matches between Fitch and Adolfo Consolini and Beppe Tosi, during the years 1946 and 47. You can read here the English and the Italian version

. For whom interested to read the first part this is the link

Bob Fitch and the italians / Bob Fitch e gli italiani

In June 1946 a clash between the fresh discus throw world record holder Bobby Fitch, and the two best throwers in Europe, Adolfo Consolini e Giuseppe Tosi, was highly expected (see article from La Gazzetta dello Sport) in Italy. The american had just stripped Consolini of the world record he had set earlier in the season (54.23 in April) with a «cannon-shot» of 54.93. The two Italians looked in the best shape of their life; Consolini was eager to challenge him, and Tosi, who in 1946 set a personal best of 52.33, too. But the clash never materialized in that year, and became reality only in 1947, when Consolini and Tosi, for different reasons, were not at their best. Bob easily defeated both of them:

Prague

24-7-1947

1. Fitch 51.22, 2. Consolini 50.14

Wien

16-8-1947

1. Fitch 52.68, 2. Tosi 47.52

The interest for the US thrower increased day after day during his tour through the Old Continent. A clipping from an Italian newspaper about his best performance of the year, 54.80 (54.86 is a mistake) in Istanbul, gives evidence of that. The rivalry Fitch-Consolini was a topic of conversation even in France (see Miroir Sprint 29 Juillet 1947).

It wasn't only a matter of results and about who could prevail, but also of technical approach. The Italians threw with a wide arc of ever increasing speed, based on co-ordination of movements; the yankee used a hop to cross the circle and, whirling on himself with a tremendous increase of centrifugal force, suddenly unleashed the implement often risking to lose balance. This style was elaborated by Jim Kelly, coach at the university of Minnesota, where Fitch had attended his collegiate years, and it was commonly known as «Minnesota whip». Kelly was later chosen ad a head coach of the track and field athletics US team for the 1956 Olympic Games. The sweet spinning style of Adolfo and Giuseppe was the result of the teachings of Boyd Comstock (born in Washington DC), head coach of the Italian team before World War II. Even after the war he kept sending letters from the United States of America to Italy criticizing that kind of method; Giorgio Oberweger, former discus thrower under Comstock guidance and by then head coach of the national team, totally agreed with his mentor. Moreover, also the personal coaches of Consolini (Carlo Bovi) and Tosi (Renato Magini) had always insisted on the orthodox style.

Slightly younger in comparison with the Italians (he was born in 1919, Adolfo in 1917, Giuseppe in 1916), Bob had raised to the role of top discus thrower in his country in 1942, his senior collegiate year. At the university of Minnesota he was also a keen football player, and after the war he kept competing in both sports. At the same time he started to study to become coach of football and golf, the latter being another sport he had a liking for. Probably realizing the economic advantage of such a choice, he turned professional as a player and coach of football and golf, sacrificing his possibilities at discus throwing.

| He had certainly proved to be a great discus thrower and a good competitor. But, how great? |
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| The 10 world best performances at the end of 1947 / Le 10 migliori prestazioni mondiali a fine 1947 |
| 54.93 |
| Fitch (USA) |
| Minneapolis |
| 8-6-1946 |

| 54.66 | | |
|-------------|------------|--|
| Fitch | | |
| Brno | | |
| 18-8-1947 | | |
| 54.64 | | |
| Gordien (US | A) | |
| Örebro | | |
| 20-8-1947 | | |

| 54.56 | |
|-------------|--|
| Fitch | |
| San Antonio | |
| 29-6-1946 | |
| 54.40 | |
| Gordien | |
| Oslo | |
| 25-7-1947 | |

| 54.23 | | |
|---------------|-----|--|
| Consolini (IT |]A) | |
| Milano | | |
| 14-4-1946 | | |
| 54.19 | | |
| Fitch | | |
| Los Angeles | • | |
| 13-6-1947 | | |

| 54.10 | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| Gordien | | |
| København | | |

11-8-1947