

ATHLETES AND THEIR BODIES

JUST as Nature has endowed certain individuals with great mental gifts — some being mathematicians, some poets or musicians — there are others who by reason of their physique have a natural aptitude for definite forms of sport. Admittedly, body structure alone does not insure success, but it has a marked influence which may be developed by training and practice.

Tall men are adapted for long jump, hammer throw, shot put and middle distance running.

Strong, massive men are fitted for wrestling, and other feats of strength, but not for running. They are mostly short of stature. Tall wrestlers are successful only if they are also heavily built. Gymnasts and weight lifters are likewise among the short men.

Football players, swimmers, boxers and sprinters are about average height.

Hurdling, middle and long distance running are easy feats for slender men.

Since gymnastics strengthen and broaden the chest, trained gymnasts are recognized by their broad shoulders and astonishing chest measure, narrow

hips and sturdy legs. In contrast to them, those with long legs, narrow chest and small torso, are good high jumpers.

Long distance runners owe their endurance to their lithe and slender physique, while Marathon runners come from the ranks of those with short legs and squarely built bodies. It is interesting to observe in connection with the latter that the victors are usually not young aspirants, as is generally supposed, but older men with abounding vitality and endurance.

The best sportlike figure is represented by the all-round athlete because of his harmonious, well-balanced body and average height. One-sided sport has its drawback in the overdevelopment of certain sets of muscles creating apparent malformations.

For example, swimming, due to excessive use of the chest muscles, tends to produce an abnormally developed formation of the swimmer's front chest wall.

Strength, endurance, speed, and courage are all required in football and boxing, as well as in skiing. But football players, with their narrow shoulders

and broad hips and strong leg muscles, sometimes appear bow-legged.

The boxer, in his typical boxing position, his strongly developed back muscles, short legs and long arms, seems to be hunchbacked. Skiing, also, is likely to produce the same defect, because in the skier's effort to maintain a firm grasp on his guiding sticks, he holds his shoulders very high and well forward, giving him a round-shouldered appearance.

It is evident from the foregoing that physique does give advantage in competitive sport, but from the standpoint of pub-

lic health generally, and the preservation of a harmonious body in any one-sided sport, it is necessary to cultivate a compensating form of athletics.

Yet competitive sport is an important factor in sustaining public interest and for strengthening the resistance of youth. It trains them to take risks, and fosters courage and resolution. Even if one who trains for a record may suffer physical injury, the athlete must be looked upon as the pioneer of natural health and sound habits of life. No goal is ever reached without sacrifice!—*Dr. G. A. Schiller, condensed from Gesundheitswacht, Berlin.*

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Historics

BROWN (after a night out): "When I arrived home last night my wife was awake and promptly went off into historics."

JONES: "You mean hysterics."

BROWN: "No, historics. She dug up all my past history."
—*Parade.*

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Castor Oil for Dad

JACK—"Could you fix me a dose of castor oil so the oil won't taste?"

DRUGGIST—"Certainly! Won't you have a glass of soda while waiting?"

JACK—"I don't mind." (And drinks the soda.)

DRUGGIST—"Something else?"

JACK—"No, just the oil."

DRUGGIST—"But you just drank it."

JACK—"Oh, I wanted it for dad!"—*The Watchword.*