

# Sports of The Times

By ARTHUR DALEY

## More Deadly Than the Male

**A**VERY BRUNDAGE is a brave man of such lofty principles that he deems compromise or expediency a coward's cloak. No sooner had the millionaire ex-decathlon champion been elected president of the International Olympic Committee last July, the first American ever so honored, than he flailed away with his usual vigor at the evils threatening the Olympic movement. He pointed one accusing finger at the curse of "gigantism."

The man is eminently correct, of course. He usually is. The Olympic Games have been paralleling the average government budget, never a cutback, but always an expansion. Much more recently Brundage offered a specific reform. He made the magnificent suggestion that women competitors be eliminated from the Olympics. It's a great idea.

Don't get me wrong, please. Women are wonderful. But when those delightful creatures begin to toss the discus or put the shot—well, it does something to a guy. And it ain't love, Buster.

### Here Come the Amazons

There's just nothing feminine or enchanting about a girl with beads of perspiration on her alabaster brow, the result of grotesque contortions in events totally unsuited to female architecture. It's probably boorish to say it, but any self-respecting schoolboy can achieve superior performances to a woman, champion.

This isn't meant to say that the damsels should return to the swoons of the Victorian era. Sports are good for them but only on a limited basis. Since some way of cutting the Olympic program must be found, this is as good a starting point as any. It has the added advantage of eliminating the extra housing and transportation that they require.

However, the chances are that Brundage's noble suggestion has come a mite too late. When those Amazons from the Russian steppes came muscling into Helsinki last summer to sweep virtually every available event in sight, they left an indelible imprint on the games. Removing the gals now would have all the overtones of a dastardly capitalistic plot.

The female of the species contributed almost a third of the Soviet point total in gymnastics and track alone, a whopping 166 points to America's 11. The Brundage idea is swell. It's his timing that's bad.

### For Men Only

Yet any historian would be glad to tell you that the Greeks knew exactly what they were doing when they invented the Olympics in 776 B.C. Not only did they bar the damsels from competing but they wouldn't even admit them as spectators.

So heinous was the offense that any girl, so overcome with curiosity as dare to attend, was promptly tossed off a near-by precipice to the rocks below. It was a trifle messy but very effective.

But then a gal disrupted everything. There was a fleet Grecian runner named Pisadorus. His father was training him for the Olympic Games



Associated Press  
Nina Romaschkova of Russia hurling the discus in the Olympic trials last July.

when the old man up and died. So mama took over. She trained her offspring.

Did she plant a maternal kiss on his cheek and send him off to the competition? Not mama. She disguised herself as a man and sneaked inside. Well, sir, you can almost guess what happened. Sonny boy won and mama shrieked so loudly in shrill delight that she was unmasked. Some soft-hearted official refused to give her the usual heave off the precipice and, by golly, the Olympics had become co-ed.

### A Dame From Macedonia

By the time the 128th Olympic Games were staged—that should be the year of 264 B.C.—a girl from Macedonia, Belisiche, drove one of the winning chariots, and thus became the first Olympic champion, distaff division. It's a mighty long way from Belisiche of Macedonia to either Nina Romaschkova or Galina Zybina of Russia, both muscular females who would be able to defend themselves at the tackle posts for the Chicago Bears.

There was considerable talk last summer that an 800-meter run should be added to women's track and field. See how insidious it becomes? This event was on the program in 1928 and the gals collapsed all over the place. So fearful were the Olympic authorities of permanent injury resulting from so gruelling a race that it was abandoned. Now they're trying to restore it. Next thing you know there will be a woman's marathon.

The Olympic fathers will not be able to eliminate the curse of gigantism from their show unless they chop away ruthlessly in a relentless return to something approximating the Grecian ideals. Let them also abolish all team sports while they are at it and get back to the fundamental principles of individual competition for men only.