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TRAVEL HEADQUARTERS IN TORRANCE

'Champ's' Track Career Marked by Great Races

(Continued from Page 1-A) which Louie set at the Coliseum on May 19, 1934.

Gets NCAAU Bid

That was a race for the book. Sixteen kids popped off the starting line, with Louis somewhere in the pack. Two Indian boys from the Sherman Institute at Riverside took out from the gun and soon were half a lap ahead. For two laps they held this lead and it looked as if the rest of the boys would have to fight it out for third place.

Then "the champ" started moving up. He was fifth, he was third and then he was leading the pack and he stretched those iron-man legs of his to cut down on the flying tribesmen. In the back stretch of the fourth lap he cut them down, and the Indians dropped out of the race as the pack roared by with Louis out in front and 13 other guys chasing him. At the tape it was Zamperini by 10 yards, with the great Hooper, state champion of Antelope Valley, dropping to the ground completely out.

High school competition from then on was too slow for "the champ" and he began taking on college men. On June 1, 1934 he ran the 1500 meters against

the best college men of the district and won going away in 4 minutes flat, pretty good time for a boy of 17 years. His showing in this and other races earned him an invitation to the NCAAU meet at Lincoln, Neb., in 1935, where on July 3 he tasted defeat for the first time in his racing career.

Race of Errors

Norman Bright of the San Francisco Olympic club, a veteran of the track, was the man who showed Louie the way in the 1500-meter race but who got the scare of his life when this 18-year-old dogged him to the tape with a scant six inches between them.

Bright got another scare from this same lead the following year when the two met at the Compton Invitational in the 5000 meters. Both he and Zamperini had switched to this event in the hope of making the 1936 Olympic team. But for the interference of another runner who was being lapped 50 yards from the tape, Bright would have had to take second place, but it happened to be Zamperini's luck to get behind the San Pedro boy who lost his head. Instead of staying put to let the runners go around him this novice edged off to the right, carrying Louie with him and letting Bright have a clear lane. Zamp finally got clear and met Bright at the tape, which the judges had dropped in their excitement. After a lengthy wrangle, the officials awarded first place to Bright.

Louie and Bright met again in the Coliseum in the preliminary try-outs for the Olympic team, and for the fourth time when both were entered in the final try-outs at Randall's Island at New York. There Louie was announced by the radio broadcaster as the winner, then called second by the judges and next day, after study of moving pictures of the race, was given a tie with Don Lash of Indiana. He made the Olympic team, fulfillment of his four-year dream dating from the 1932 Olympics at Los Angeles when Louie haunted the track and chummed up with the Italian representatives at the Olympic village. He met some of those boys again in Berlin, much to their surprise and delight.

Louis had dropped down in weight to less than 130 pounds that year but on the voyage to Europe the rest and good food put back enough poundage to put him in good shape for the tests that were to follow. So many had entered the 5000 meter race that three heats were necessary to determine the finalists. Louis drew the heat that included the fastest men and placed fifth. His time was 15:02. In the finals Louie placed seventh: time 14:46.8.

Record Still Stands

With his reputation now firmly established as a distance runner of stellar merit, Louie became the "object of their affections" to many of the leading college coaches of the nation. It was a sad day for Jock Nicholson of Notre Dame, maker of many champions, when Louis chose to follow his big brother, Pete, whom he idolized, into U. S. C., and a great day for Dean Cromwell, who now had for the first time a distance man who could show his heels to all comers.

Louie's career as a Trojan track man was studded with many records, at Bovard Field, in dual meets, and in the nation's most important invitational affairs. Some of his marks still stand and one, the intercollegiate record, set at Minneapolis in 1938 when he defeated Chuck Fenske in 4:08.3, will likely stand for some time to come. Louis dropped out of school for one semester in 1940 to take in the big eastern indoor meets, competition that brought him no victories but a lot of satisfaction because he was running against the best in the land—Chuck Fenske, Gene Venske, Glenn Cunningham and others of like ability. In one race which Fenske won in 4:07.4 with Louis second, four men finished under 4:08. A baby's blanket would have covered them all at the tape.

Messages Flood Home

In all his competition Louis made friends, not only among the men he competed with on the track but among followers of the game who saw in him

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Friends Hope 'Zamperini Luck' Holds for Missing Bombardier

(Continued from Page 1-A)

Ill. However, in his last letter home Zamperini gave a different squadron number from that he had previously and he may have been transferred to another bomber crew.

Wins Two Citations

Army headquarters in Honolulu have refused to comment on the report of the Torrance flyer's disappearance.

He had been on several bombing expeditions, among them the Christmas day raid on Japanese-held Wake Island and has been cited for heroism twice in eight months of intensive action against the Japs. He was awarded the Air Medal and later the Oak Leaf Cluster. In letters home he reported his plane had been badly shot up at times.

The 26-year-old Torrance high school and U.S.C. track hero received wide notice last April when he spent five hours administering emergency first aid to five wounded companions while their battered Liberator bomber limped back to the nearest base hospital from a raid over the Japanese-held phosphate island of Nauru 750 miles northwest of Guadalcanal.

Bomber Badly Damaged

The crewmen were wounded during a five-minute running battle with three Zeros after they had successfully bombed the island. Doctors credited Zamperini and his co-pilot, Lieut. C. H. Cupernell, 28, of Long Beach, with saving the lives of two crewmen who were wounded seriously. One of the five, suffering from a skull fracture, died several hours after the plane made an emergency landing and skidded to a stop with a flat tire.

Photos disclosed the bomber was badly shot up.

"We didn't break any world's speed records on the way back, but we got here," Zamperini said. "What's more, we really let the Japs have it at Nauru before one of the most colorful figures of the sport."

Today letters and telegrams flood the Zamperini home, letters of praise for the boy whose gallantry, good humor and courage on the track won popular acclaim everywhere, and served him well in building a high spirit of comradeship and morale among his bomber crew members.

People who never saw Louis, such as a man of 80 years who wrote to the boy's mother last week, send their sympathy and their prayerful hopes for his safe return to his family, friends and the track that he loved.

Housing Program Cleans up Quake Traces

(Continued from Page 1-A)

will make about 91 apartments available at the sites of formerly wrecked and condemned buildings here.

MacDonnell asks that anyone having any property available for conversion get in touch with him immediately at the War Housing Center, corner of Post and Sartori aves., because there are still 75 priorities available for private conversion projects and about 85 for public conversion.

Graduate Book About T.H.S. Alumni Issued

(Continued from Page 1-A)

key by Homer Bullard and Harry Richart by Barbara Quinby. The Army camps were represented by Albert Winkler with James Johnston reading, Tony Mpine with Oliver Thayer and Lippe Lara's humor by Norma Hammond.

ENJOY DANCING

Dining and dancing Saturday evening at the Trionon were Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Bradford, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Grant of Los Angeles.

In June for the Princeton Invitational meet. He was not so lucky on the ground, however, because in September he suffered two broken ribs and a badly wrenched knee as result of an automobile accident while he was driving back to the university from visiting his parents here.

Trained for Pilot

Then he left U.S.C. early in 1941 and took a job at Lockheed Aircraft in Burbank. He won permanent possession of the huge Frosty Martin mile trophy in the Long Beach Relays March 15 after having previously won that event in 1940 and 1939.

But he wanted to become a flyer in the skies as well as on the ground, so he enlisted as an air cadet at Santa Maria March 19, 1941. However, he was "just a little too energetic on the controls" and was "washed out" as a potential pilot. He returned to Lockheed and was inducted as an Army private Sept. 29.

Wins Promotion

He was sent to Camp Roberts and received his basic infantryman's training in the wire company of the 87th Infantry Training Battalion. In December he was selected to attend a non-commissioned officers' training school at Roberts. He later went back to his original company as an acting corporal training instructor. Then he was ordered to Ellington Field, Texas, for bombardier training.

From Ellington he was transferred to Midland Army Flying School from which he graduated as a second lieutenant in the Air Force. Then he drove home for a brief visit, flew north to Washington for final instruction and went overseas from San Francisco. In Hawaii he was advanced to first lieutenant.

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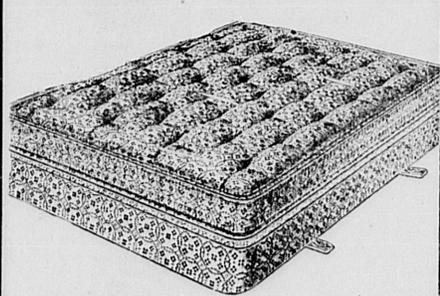
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