

MEDICINE

Sports Medicine Advice

► TEN ARTICLES and three editorials on sports medicine appearing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Nov. 17) provide a kind of medical warm-up for the Olympic Games in Australia.

The highlights are:

1. General warming-up, including massage, hot showers and general exercise, aimed at raising body temperature does not improve athletic performance. This was found in a series of experiments on athletes at Springfield, Mass., by Drs. Peter V. Karpovich and Creighton J. Hale of Springfield College.

2. The chief value of the training table and such foods as rare meat and special desserts is psychological, helping the athlete by providing some sense of security and reassurance. Drs. Theodore B. Van Itallie, Leonardo Sinisterra and Fredrick J. Stare of Harvard School of Public Health department of nutrition, Boston, report. The best diet for an athlete, they state, is one he enjoys and which provides a variety of nourishing foods in amounts adequate to keep his proper weight. The meal immediately before the contest should be one

the athlete picks himself, since he knows which foods he can eat without discomfort while under the emotional stress that may cause loss of appetite and even nausea.

3. Better medical supervision of athletic practice and events would prevent many sports injuries, Dr. Augustus Thorndike, chief surgeon of Harvard University's athletic department, reports. Athletic rules and regulations need changing and existing rules need better enforcement, especially in high school and sand-lot playground activities, he states.

4. Athletes live just as long and die of the same causes as non-athletes, a survey of 1,130 athletic letter winners and 1,130 non-athletes attending Michigan State University and born between 1855 and 1919 showed. The survey findings are reported by Dr. H. J. Montoye, Dr. W. D. Van Huss and Herbert Olson, Andrew Hudec and Earl Mahoney of the university's department of physical education and recreation at East Lansing, Mich.

5. Medical interest in the field of sports and athletics is rising and will become even greater in the future, two editorials in the journal point out.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

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GENERAL SCIENCE

National Academy Began as Social Club

► AN INFORMAL SOCIAL CLUB was the most important factor in founding what is now the major honor society for leading scientists of the nation and the adviser to the Government on all scientific matters by Congressional decree.

Dr. A. Hunter Dupree, visiting assistant professor of history, University of California, Berkeley, told the American Philosophical Society meeting in Philadelphia that his historical inquiries show that an informal group organized as the Scientific Lazzaroni, named after the homeless idlers of Naples, worked for a decade before the Civil War to bring about the national organization which was founded in 1863.

The National Academy of Sciences is generally thought to have begun primarily as a war agency founded by President Lincoln.

Dr. Dupree finds that the group of scientists headed by Alexander Dallas Bache, taking advantage of a temporary legislative opportunity in Congress and overriding the warnings of Joseph Henry, saw the act founding the National Academy through both houses of Congress without exciting either publicity or debate.

The Lazzaroni group had to breast the criticism of those who had been omitted from the original list of scientists honored by membership, and at its organizational meeting in New York it had to fight off objections to an oath of loyalty to the Union.

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