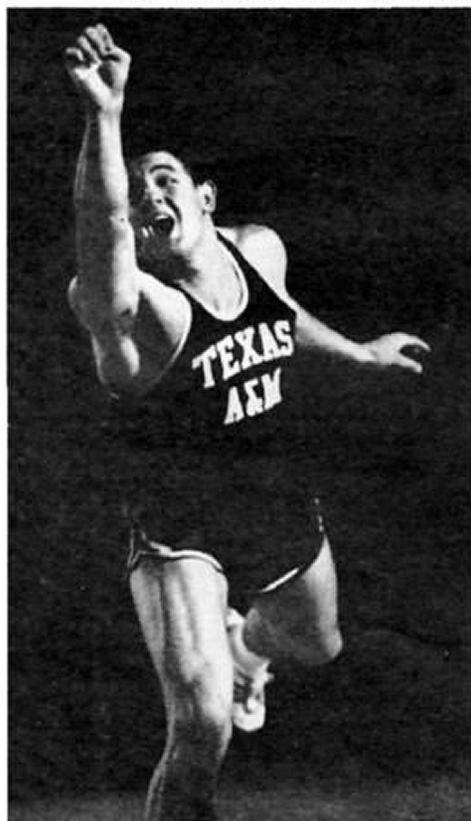




LEVIATHANS among weight men, Dallas Long (above) and teen-ager Randy Matson are moving toward a record 70-foot heave.



AANNNGHHH!

The whales grunted mightily at the Coliseum Relays in Los Angeles and put the shot with commensurate effect as a grateful crowd ohhhhhed

There was a time, not long ago, when the very suggestion of a shotput competition sent track and field enthusiasts scurrying for the popcorn stand. Those silly enough to stay at their seats would giggle as the whales—shotputters are known as whales because they are the size of three-bedroom Cape Cod cottages—"aannnnghhhed" in final agonies of exhalation and pushed their shots into the air. Compared with the soaring results achieved by discus and javelin throwers, the shotputters' efforts seemed hardly worthwhile.

All that changed, however, when Parry O'Brien began coming to meets almost 15 years ago. O'Brien's idea of what a shotputter should be was simple and direct: Be Outspoken. Be Colorful. He succeeded admirably (or not so admirably, according to your own taste) in both departments. And because he could, with a distinctive and dynamic style, also put greater distance between himself and the 16-pound steel ball than anybody ever had, he brought a new dimension to the event: glamour. Now shotputters get their pictures in the paper. Little children want to be like them. They get introductions by spotlight. Their throws are performed, as they were last week in the Los Angeles Coliseum, to the roll of drums, distracting as that might be, and when they go "aannnnghhh" the fans go "ohhhhhh" and stay firm in their seats.

And Parry O'Brien? Parry is putting the shot pretty much the way he did as a two-time Olympic gold medal winner, and getting ignored because he pretty much gets his colorful, outspoken ears pinned back by baby whales like Dallas Long and Randy Matson. O'Brien did 62 feet 3¼ inches last week at the Coliseum Relays, which was five feet better than he did in winning his first gold medal in 1952 and almost two better than his winning put at Melbourne in 1956. But it was not for Parry O'Brien

that the people passed up popcorn—and the chance to get momentary relief from a chilling southern California night—to watch the shotput. The attraction was the expected prodigies of the man-child Matson and the world champion Long.

Naturally, in an Olympic year at a meet of influence there were other attractions: Robert Hayes vs. Henry Carr in the 200-meter dash, for example, and big names (John Pennel, Ralph Boston, Hal Connolly, John Thomas, Rex Cawley) in almost every event. But Long was encountering new challenger Matson for the first time outdoors, and one of these two one of these days is going to put the shot 70 feet. Anticipating meet directors are already marking off the perimeter lines to 70 feet, which would have been laughed at only a few years ago.

Matson presumably has been heading in that direction ever since he was 14 and smashed the fender of his dad's car with a playful backyard toss of a 12-pound shot. "Gee, Dad," said young Randy, "if the car hadn't been parked there it would have gone 60 feet." That was in Pampa, Texas, where Randy grew up to be studious, gentlemanly, bland-mannered and a classic example of what a Southwest Conference football coach looks for in a tackle. Matson is now 19, 6 feet 6½ inches, 244 pounds and a prominent part of the skyline at Texas A&M. His coach there, Charley Thomas, put Matson on a weight-lifting program when he arrived last September. Matson has since added 20 pounds and three inches to his chest, and there is room for expansion in every direction.

Three weeks ago in Texas he smashed another fender, Dallas Long's NCAA freshman record, with a throw of 64 feet 10½. "I do not attempt to change Randy's style," said a smiling Charley Thomas. "I just keep him happy."

In his Los Angeles hotel room, lounging with teammate-runner Ted Nelson,

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an hors d'oeuvre by comparison, Matson awaited his contest with what he referred to as "the big boys" and said he had slept well and eaten well but was nervous. "I'll be happy to finish second," he said. He just could not imagine beating Dallas Long if Long came close to his world-record throw of 65 feet 10½ inches.

Two weeks ago Long did 66 feet 7¼ in Fresno, Calif., but that will be disallowed because a raised steel rim was not used in the throwing circle. It is outrageously unfunny that meet directors discover these flaws in their facilities after a significant record has been exceeded.

Long found out at the Coliseum that he was no longer the boy wonder of shotputting. He was now, at 23, a daddy for the second time and face-to-face with a younger man's legitimate challenge for the first time. "It's different," he said in the infield as Matson stole self-conscious glances at him from a distance, "but I like it. It makes the competition that much more interesting."

Whereas Matson is still a growing boy, Long has leveled off at 258 pounds, about what he would want to weigh for Tokyo. He wears a size 50 suit, and were you to ask how much inside that suit is firmly packed he could give you these additional figures: he bench-presses 500 pounds and does deep knee bends with 400 pounds across his neck. At present, Long is in his second year of dental school at USC, studying as much as five hours a night to ward off the challenges of pedodontics, crown and bridge dentistry and periodontics, but he manages to work in practice time—often in the dark—putting from a strip of sidewalk near his apartment.

Both Long and Matson use throwing techniques patterned expressly after the style invented by O'Brien, who serves as a sort of international archetype. At the Coliseum Matson preceded Long in the order of competition. Photographers clustered around and were told to please keep their heads down because 26,000 people were dying to see young Randy Matson put it out to that 70-foot mark. The UCLA band, directly behind the throwing circle, plowed into *When the Saints Go Marching In*, a number of dubious appropriateness, as Matson removed first one then another sweat suit covering his Texas Aggie briefs. (On-again off-again is a nuisance game that must be played for good health by field-

event contestants in cold weather.) He towed off his steel ball, the one he has had since junior high school, cradled it under his cheek and stepped into the ring.

Matson: "Aannnnghhh."

Crowd: "Ohh"—and "62 feet 8½ inches," said an official, the best so far of the night.

O'Brien followed with his 62 feet 3¼, then Long shed the satin-blue sweat suit of the Pasadena Athletic Club and made his first throw: 60 feet ¾ inch. He turned away without waiting for the measurement. "Too quick," he muttered, showing his teeth the way a child bares his for inspection. "Too eager."

On his second throw Matson did 63 feet 6¼. The crowd cheered loudly. Then came Long to pass him with a toss of 64 feet 1. Now the pressure clearly shifted to the younger of the young men. "The psychological edge is the big advantage in the shotput," Long has said, and at 19 Matson is still learning his psychology. He fouled the next three times in a row and finished with a 61-footer. Long, meanwhile, followed with a throw of 64 feet 4½, then a 65 feet 5½ that proved to be the winner.

O'Brien wound up third but, true to his paternal instincts, was no more disappointed in himself than he was pleased by his glamorous young successors. "They're getting out there near virgin ground," he said. "The kid [Matson] is great. Very good snap and arm action. Nice long arms. And he's fast. You can't imagine how important speed can be in that little circle. But he needs work on his leg action. He threw a little stiff-legged."

Hayes invades Carr country

Hayes of Florida A&M, the country's fastest sprinter (SI, May 18), went west with the intention of establishing a beachhead at 200 meters for the Olympic Games. His procession of 9.1-second 100-yard dashes make him the best at the shorter distance, so Coach Dick Hill decided to hold him out of all but the 200 meters at the Coliseum.

The 200 meters, however, is where Henry Carr operates. Carr has a butter-scotch skin and a bittersweet temperament. A year ago on the same track he lost the 200 to Hayes in a fighting finish. He said this was certainly no grudge match, however, and that anybody who thought so was imagining things—although no one said anything about a grudge until he did.

"I'm no crybaby," said Carr, sound-

ing suspiciously like one, "but Robert gave me an elbow here last year—not intentional, but he runs that way, you know, with his elbows out, and I believe that's what beat me."

While Hayes waited, pacing the sidelines, Carr ran the 100 meters and finished second to Grambling's Richard Stebbins. It was very close. Carr said he thought he won that one, too, but pointed out that he was no crybaby.

Then he took on Hayes at 200 meters—a fully rested Bob Hayes. In the starting lanes Hayes hopped up and down. "Cold, man, I'm cold," he said. Warmed-up Henry Carr stood still and solemn, looking dead ahead. At the start Carr had a slight edge, but lost it within 20 yards. Hayes moved two yards in front and held there all the way around the turn to the head of the straightaway. Here Hayes tightened, and Carr caught him. The Arizona State junior is lean and long-legged at 6 feet 3, 185 pounds, and his stride is superior. Ahead to stay, he won impressively in 20.6.

"I'm stronger than Robert at that distance," said Carr in the infield. "He's better at 100 yards. I'd be satisfied if he won a gold medal at his distance and I won one at mine. He could stay off my back and I'd stay off his."

A medal of some kind at Tokyo is really the only thing that keeps Carr running. "I don't have any love for track," he said. "It's a means to no end. It's not like other sports that give you a chance to make some money after."

Somebody said he sounded like a young man who knew exactly what he did not want in life.

"I know I don't want to be poor," said Carr. "I come from a bad-side, hard-luck section of Detroit, the kind you don't walk into unless you know somebody. I know I don't want my family living in that kind of poverty. I'm married now. Six weeks. Glenda and I were high school sweethearts, and she makes me study. I've got to think about a future for us. Maybe it'll be pro football, after the Olympics, if I get a good enough offer." Carr plays half-back for Arizona State. He has another year of eligibility.

Later, in the Coliseum press box upstairs, a friend of Carr threw a congratulatory arm over his shoulders. "Good boy, Henry," said the friend. "I won money on you, Baby."

Carr grinned wryly. "See that?" he said. "I win and he makes money. See what I mean?"

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