

Last Name	First Name	Event	Story Overview
Akhwari	John Steven	Distance	Fell and finished last in Olympic Marathon
Ashenfelter	Horace	Steeplechase	Running career interrupted by war, first American to win gold in steeplechase
Austin	Charles	Jumps	Started as a high school senior, he came back from a serious knee injury to set Olympic Jumpsrecord
Bannister	Roger	Distance	Broke barrier of 4 minute mile
Beamon	Bob	Jumps	Overcame childhood problems to set Jumpsrecord in one of great performances in history
Bikila	Abebe	Distance	Ran barefoot to win marathon, survived imprisonment during military overthrow
Boit	Mike	Distance	Lost opportunity at two Olympics due to Kenya boycotts
Brumel	Valery	Jumps	Overcame motorcycle accident and returned to high jumping
Bubka	Sergio	Jumps	Dominate vaulter; was only able to win one Olympic Games
Carlos	John	Sprinter	Wore black glove to represent unity in Black America; was kicked off U.S. team
Clarke	Ron	Distance	One of the greatest distance runners ever, but never won an Olympic gold medal
Coe	Sebastion	Distance	Was unable to win his best and favorite event, moved up and won the 1500 at two Olympics
Connelly	Harold	Throws	His left hand was injured at birth, but overcame injury to set world record
Cunningham	Glenn	Distance	Overcame severe burns as a child in school house fire that killed his brother
Cushman	Cliff	Hurdles	Lost opportunity to win at Olympics when he stumbled over a hurdle, then listed as Missing In Action
Davenport	Willie	Hurdles	Made five Olympic teams, including one as a bobsledder at Winter Olympics
Dillard	Harrison	Hurdles	Denied an oppourtuny because of war, worked 12 years to win his favorite event
Edelen	Buddy	Distance	Moved to England so he could have better competition, won U.S. Marathon Trials by 20 minutes in the heat
El Guerrouj	Hicham	Distance	Although he was a dominant runner, he failed in two previous Olympics, before winning 1500 and 5,000 on third try
Elliott	Herb	Distance	Was undefeated, his coach introduced revolutionary training methods
Ewry	Ray	Jumps	Was told he would never walk again, then won 10 Olympic golds in jumps
Fosbury	Dick	Jumps	Created a new high jumping method, the Fosbury Flop, that revolutionized the high jump
Garett	Bob	Throws	Won Olympic gold in the discus in his first competition
Gray	Johnny	Distance	Unafraid to push the pace, ran at a consistently high level for many years
Halberg	Murray	Distance	Rugby accident left his arm crippled so he turned to running and became an Olympic champion
Jacobs	Franklin	Jumps	Only 5-8 tall, he cleared a high jump bar almost 2 feet over his head to set world record
Jenner	Bruce	Multi-Events	Disappointed by first Olympic decathlon, increased commitment to his training led to gold
Johnson	Micheal	Sprints	Food poisoning slowed him at one Olympics, came back the next Games to win double gold
Johnson	Rafer	Multi-Events	Overcame childhood poverty and a severe injury to back in car accident to win decathlon gold
Joyner	Al	Jumps	Overcame death of mother and underdog role to win Olympic triple jump
Juantorena	Alberto	Mid-Distance	Stepped out of his comfort zone to win 400 and 800 meters double
Keino	Kip	Distance	Advised by doctors not to run, he won Olympic 1500 meters in record time
Kuck	John	Throws	Overcame broken ankle to win shot put
Larrabee	Michael	Sprints	Missed Olympic team in 1956 and 1960 due to injuries, as an underdog won 400 meters
Lewis	Carl	Sprints	Fought discrimination to make five Olympic teams
Liddell	Eric	Sprints	Against his religion to run on Sunday, so he gave up his best event, the 100-meter run and won the 400 meters
Lindgren	Gerry	Distance	Ran up to 200 miles a week, unfortunately injury cost him an Olympic medal
Lomong	Lopez	Distance	Captured by rebels as a youth, escaped and grew up in refugee camp as one of the Lost Boys of Sudan
Marsh	Henry	Steeplechase	Took up new event to become top U.S. steeplechaser
Mathias	Bob	Multi-Events	Only a few months after he took up the decathlon at age 17, he was the Olympic champion
Mills	Billy	Distance	As a big underdog, he believed in himself and ran personal best by over a minute to shock the world
Moses	Ed	Hurdles	His college track team did not have a track, but he became unbeatable in the 400-meter hurdles

Nehemiah	Renaldo	Hurdles	Lost opportunity to compete in the Olympics when the U.S. boycotted the 1980 Games
Neider	Bill	Throws	Originally he did not make the Olympic team, but he was placed on the team at last moment and won gold
Neville	David	Sprints	Ran out of lane eight to make the U.S. team, ran out of lane nine to win bronze in the Olympic 400 meters
Nurmi	Paavo	Distance	He revolutionized training with his pace work
O'Brien	Dan	Multi-Events	As the Olympic favorite, he failed to clear a height in Olympic Trials, but came back later to win gold
Oerter	Al	Throws	He set a personal record at four Olympics to win gold, often overcoming injuries
Owens	Jesse	Sprints	Overcame discrimination to win four gold medals in 1936 games
Peacock	Eulace	Sprints	Defeated Jesse Owens seven of 10 times the year before 1936 Olympics, but denied Olympic berth due to injury and war
Pietri	Dorando	Distance	Led marathon until he entered stadium, collapsed, and was disqualified after he was helped across the finish line
Prefontaine	Steve	Distance	Legendary runner who ran gutsy races and died young in a car accident
Redmond	Derek	Sprints	Pulled hamstring in 400-meter Olympic final, limped home with help from his dad
Richards	Bob	Multi-Events	Overcame injuries to become two time Olympic pole vault champion
Rono	Henry	Distance	Set four world records one summer, overcame alcoholism and being homeless
Ryun	Jim	Distance	Known for his grueling workouts; became first high school athlete to break four minutes for the mile
Salazar	Alberto	Distance	Known for his running toughness; made his mark as a marathoner
Saneyev	Viktor	Jumps	Advocate for drug free athletics, during a time drug use was rampant in his country
Santee	Wes	Distance	Sacrificed an opportunity to break the 4 minute mile by helping his collegiate team
Scott	Steve	Distance	Ran 136 sub 4 minute miles, which is the most in history
Schull	Bob	Distance	Nearly died from asthma as a youth
Seagren	Bob	Jumps	Overcame injuries and equipment controversies to medal twice at the Olympics
Shay	Ryan	Distance	Promising young runner who died during the Olympic Marathon Trials
Sheppard	Mel	Distance	Rejected by the New York Police because of weak heart, but was strong enough to win Olympic gold
Shorter	Frank	Distance	Denied Olympic glory when an imposter jumped into the marathon finish
Smith	Christian	Distance	Big underdog who dove across the finish line to make the Olympic team
Smith	Tommie	Sprints	Participated in a civil rights demonstration that led to punishment, but later was recognized as a hero
Stones	Dwight	Jumps	Won 19 national championships but failed to win at the Olympics
Taylor	John	Mid-Distance	First great African American role model in track and field
Thorpe	Jim	Multi-Events	Difficult childhood, won Olympic gold, before having it stripped and later restored
Viren	Lasse	Distance	Was tripped in Olympic 10,000 meters, but got up to win and set world record
Warmerdam	Cornelius	Jumps	Broke 15 foot barrier in pole vault using a bamboo pole
Whitfield	Mal	Distance	Tailgunner during Korean War, trained on military runways before setting world records
Wohluter	Rick	Distance	After he was tripped at the Olympics, he used as motivation to medal at the next Olympic Games
Woodruff	John	Distance	African American who overcame Hitler's propaganda and a tactical racing error to win gold
Wottle	Dave	Distance	Ran an even pace to surprise the field to win 800 meters Olympic gold
Young	Kevin	Hurdles	Made innovative changes to his stride pattern that led to world record at the Olympics
Zamperini	Louis	Distance	Military plane shot down, survived 47 days on raft in Pacific and 2.5 years in prison camp
Zatopek	Emil	Distance	Known for creating interval training; he relied on determination to become a running legend
Zelezny	Jan	Throws	Lost the Olympic gold on the last throw of the competition