

An Original New-Year's Eve Race at Sao Paulo

(see our photo-plates in the present edition)

Every year at the appointed time of 23.30 p.m. of the last day of the year, an original race takes place in the streets of Sao-Paulo. A race on foot of course ; this race which is placed under the high patronage of the biggest sport newspaper published in South America, *La Gazeta d'Esportiva*, covers a distance of 7,400 m. This New-Year's Eve athletic event attracts an enormous crowd when a very big field of competitors gather there, amongst whom, very often one finds the most famous world known runners. For instance, Emile Zatopek who won the race in 1953.

This race traces its origin as far back as 1924 when 60 athletes competed. It was placed under the supervision of the paper *Gazeta d'Esportiva* and authorized by the Sports authorities affiliated to the International Amateur Athletic Federation. Owing to its perfect organization, this sporting event

under the aegis of amateurism, is attended by several hundred athletes who are all very anxious to participate. The *Gazeta d'Esportiva* does not receive any subsidy and the athletes are awarded medals of silver-gilt, silver and bronze for their victories. The Associations or Federations of the first three winners are given challenge cups.

Since 1945, this race assumed an international character and its attracting athletes from all over the world, inasmuch that, at the initial stage, the race was run only by competitors belonging to South America. Thus, ever since 1949, the winners of this race have been Europeans as shown by the following honours list :

- 1949 : Viljo Heino (Finland)
- 1950 : Lucien Theys (Belgium)
- 1951 : Erik Krucziky (Germany)
- 1952 : Franjo Mihalic (Yugoslavia)
- 1953 : Emile Zatopek (Czecho-Slovakia)

1954 : Franjo Mihalic (Yugoslavia)

1955 : Ken Norris (Great Britain)

From the beginning of the month of December the preliminary heats are held in twenty Brazilian States. To gauge the outstanding success and popularity of this race, we need only mention that 4,800 runners entered the race in 1955 and that 280 contested the final race on New-Year's Eve. The record of this event was established by Zatopek with 20' 30" 4/10. (It is difficult to speak of records in this event

for the distance varied at times from 5,500 m. to 8,800 m. ; therefore let us say that Zatopek won the record "on 7.300 m." — This race has been run already 31 times since 1925, Ed). This race has grown beyond the compass of being a national manifestation, it has become a world event.

Dr. Ferreira Santos

(Member of the International Olympic
Committee for Brazil.)



Le départ impressionnant des 280 athlètes qui ont pris part à la course de Saint-Sylvestre à Sao-Paulo et dont nous parlons dans le présent bulletin. (Course de 1955).

Course de Saint-Sylvestre à Sao-Paulo.

L'édifice de « A Gazeta Esportiva » à l'avenue Casper Libero où a lieu chaque année le départ et l'arrivée de cette fameuse course. Notre cliché: à quelques minutes de l'arrivée.

