

Swedish Champion Shattered Jinx by Marathon Win

Leandersson Praises Special Shoes, but Felt Better in Trial 2 Weeks Ago

By JOHN AHERN

Karl Gosta Leandersson was in turn the happiest and unhappiest guy in the town yesterday.

He won the Marathon; he broke a jinx that began two years ago when the bite of a wolverine put him out of commission for the year. The jinx kept him out of the Olympics when a stone nearly sliced the big toe off his left foot.

This year his Boston challenge was nearly thwarted by a pulled heel tendon. Yesterday he licked the whammy, but the poor guy had no one to talk to. And he desperately wanted to talk to someone who'd understand him.

Gosta (pronounced Joosta) would have made like an Indian if somebody would make like an Indian with him. But the interpreters who were ready to give out with a Swedish version of the American Wah Hoo were doing full time duty relating Gosta's feelings to a building filled with reporters.

Special Shoes Helped

Herb Forsell interpreted Gosta's first remark. It was "Everything is fine. It is good to let down into a sack for a rest. Please cut off shoes. They hurt a little."

Those shoes were Gosta's top secret until yesterday when interpreters gave it away. He had them made, then he improvised on them. He built up the heels and soles with sponge rubber. He says they helped him considerably.

The new champion also said through Forsell that he felt he was in better form during his tryout over the course two weeks ago. He was afraid of his achilles tendon in his left heel. He claims that kept him from going all out and doing better time.

He was alarmed when the doctor

came over and listened to his heart. But when he found out his pulse beat was only 80, Leandersson turned to Runnar Ohman, his sponsor in Boston, and said in English, "Nize Bostone!"

From there on the Swedish champion seemed confused by questions. And he certainly was confused by the attention showered upon him by press and well wishers. So Ohman, Leandersson's Boston host, took over.

"That boy is what you call marvelous," he said. "All week he slept like a baby. He ate as though there was nothing on his mind. He worried only about his tendon which he hurt running on ice in Sweden."

"When he arrived he told us he wanted to plan his own training," Ohman said. "We told him to do as he pleased. We'd show him the course, help him train, feed him, see that he enjoyed himself and make sure he had everything he needed. He knows more about running than we do. Naturally we would do what he said."

To strengthen the tendon Gosta ran barefoot through the Esplanade, Brookline Municipal and Franklin Park Golf courses before trying the roads. When he said he was ready, Ohman brought him to Hopkinton and started him on the marathon course. Running at night the long-haired Swede crossed the line at Exeter st. in 2 hrs. 27m. 45s. Ohman and Co. were sure the 31-year-old boy needed help from no one.

Leandersson has been on his own ever since he was 14 in his home

town of Tiarp. His father was a farmer and a stern gentleman who had no love for sports. He forbade his sons—there's another boy named Hugo—to participate in athletics. But Gosta would duck out and compete with the other boys in the village. He says he was good in short distances, the javelin and discus.

When Gosta was 26 his father retired. Gosta left home and took a job as a caretaker at Valadalen, a fashionable resort 20 miles from the Norwegian border. He had plenty of time to train on this job.

He became a member of the Ostersund Club in 1945 and that year he won the Swedish marathon and the 25-kilometer championship. In 1946 he had a bad year. The next year was worse. He was bitten by the wolverine he was trying to feed. The bite became infected and Gosta wasn't right for six months. Last year he regained his Swedish marathon title and he was one of the favorites in the Olympic marathon. Then came the cut toe.

While in Europe last Summer Runnar Ohman read about Leandersson. He wrote to the Ostersund Kanraterne Club and asked Leandersson to come to Boston for the B. A. A. marathon. After reams of correspondence the trip was arranged. His friends in his club paid his way to America. His new friends in the Swedish Gymnastic Club Posse of Boston are taking care of his expenses here.

Yesterday he paid off every favor. He won the marathon. He broke his jinx. Last night he finally got a chance to talk and he'll talk for hours to every Swedish speaking person he meets. He'll talk about the Boston marathon the rest of his life.

Ex-Skating Champion Dead

STOCKHOLM, April 19 (AP)—Ulrich Salchow, 71, former world and Olympic figure skating champion, died at his home today.



(Staff Photos by Charles McCormick)

NOBODY CLOSE—Karl Gosta Leandersson had no competition for the last half of the B. A. A. Marathon. Left, Elis Folke, Stockholm sportswriter, offers some water as Karl goes through Auburndale. Center, Karl is way out in front near Lake st., and, right, he begins to show signs of the grind at Cleveland Circle.

FIRST 10 TO CHECKING STATIONS

POS.	FRAM.	NAT.	WELL.	AUB.	LAKE ST.	COOL. COR.	FINISH
1	Jones	Jones	Leandersson	Leandersson	Dyrgall	Leandersson	Leandersson
2	Leandersson	Leandersson	Dyrgall	Dyrgall	Dyrgall	Dyrgall	Dyrgall
3	O'Connell	Dyrgall	Dyrgall	Jones	Bairstow	White	White
4	Lafferty	Lafferty	Bairstow	Bairstow	White	Kelley	Kelley
5	Dyrgall	Horne	Horne	Van Zant	White	Smith	Smith
6	Sheridan	Cote	Van Zant	Collins	Jones	Cote	Cote
7	Norman	Austin	Cote	Kelley	Collins	Austin	Austin
8	Evans	Bairstow	Kelley	Van Zant	Collins	Collins	Jones
9	Morton	Van Zant	Austin	Austin	Austin	Neiding	Neiding
10	Bairstow	Kelley	Lafferty			Neiding	Collins

O'Connell Victor in Canton Race 3d Straight Year

CANTON, April 19—For the third straight year, Ed O'Connell, a Tufts college junior wearing the B. A. A.