



## CHAPTER THREE

### STORIES OF NINE DECADES WHAT HAPPENED 70 YEARS AGO



#### *The man who won both in Košice and Boston.*

*In 1948 certain fears predominated that the Olympics in London would create problems with ensuring a quality starting field for the marathon in Košice in the autumn.*

*Luckily, that didn't happen. Swede **Gösta Leandersson** came to Košice with the best resume. At home, in the town of Karlskoga on 5 September, he recorded a superb time of 2:31:12, which put him second in the world rankings. Thus, he came to Košice as the clear favourite, and this reputation proved to be well deserved on 28 October 1948. As early as the 15th kilometre in a competition of 97 runners from 13 countries he took a clear lead, and at the 25th and 30th km he even attacked the course record held by Olympic winner **Juan Carlos Zabala** of Argentina. He didn't break it, but the nearly two-minute lead of Leandersson over the Norwegian **John Systad** at the finish was proof of his dominance.*

*Leandersson was also successful in other seasons. One year later he won the Boston Marathon and in 1950 he returned to Košice and recorded here another first place, this time*

*in a new course record. He also had repeated successes in the marathon at the European championships, finishing 5th in Oslo in 1946 and 4th in Brussels four years later.*

**RESULTS**

***Kosice Marathon, October 28, 1948***

***Muži***

1.	Gösta Leandersson	SWE	2:34:46,4
2.	John Systad	NOR	2:36:43,0
3.	Paavo Laine	FIN	2:38:19,0