



## CHAPTER FOUR

### STORIES OF NINE DECADES WHAT HAPPENED 60 YEARS AGO



#### *Košice at the top*

*Košice commemorated 35 years since the founding of the marathon and biggest ace in the field was certainly Russian **Sergei Popov**, the European champion from 1958. He won that title with a time of 2:15:17, which assured him not only gold in Stockholm, but also another first place in the year-end marathon rankings.*

*The runners set off on the course to Seňa on Sunday, 11 October, in sunny weather, with the temperature at 15 °C, and the first notes in the referee's records indicated that they were running quite fast. So fast that at 5 km whispers began to be heard about going for the world record. The pace later slowed, and at the turnaround point Popov was already in the lead. He ultimately left his competitors nearly 6 minutes behind with several surges.*

*His victory in Košice and the final time of **2:17:45.2** brought him a rarely seen hat trick. At the end of the year he again ranked as the fastest marathon runner in the world, thus repeating this unique standing from 1957 and 1958.*

It's also worth noting that the second best marathon performance that year was also run in Czechoslovakia. It belonged to **Pavel Kantorek**, a three-time Košice winner, who on 13 September 1959 won in Ostrava with a time of 2:19:06.

After such results Popov must have certainly been sharpening his teeth for an Olympic medal in Rome one year later. That race, however, was dominated by **Abebe Bikila** and Popov had to settle for 5th place in the Eternal City. Bikila's start in Košice in 1961 and the fates of other athletic legends linked with the history of the Košice Marathon, however, belong among other stories than this one from 60 years ago.

## **RESULTS**

### **Kosice Peace Marathon, October 11, 1959**

#### **Men**

1.	Sergai Popov	URS	2:17:45,2
2.	Denis O'Gorman	GBR	2:23:08,0
3.	Ivan Filin	URS	2:23:55,4