



CHAPTER FIVE

STORIES OF NINE DECADES WHAT HAPPENED 50 YEARS AGO



Africans have been winning in Košice for more than 50 years now.

*That's how it is. In addition to the victory of the Ethiopian Demissie Wolde exactly fifty years ago, there is also **Bikila's triumph** from 1961, and so today's dominance of runners from East Africa really has had its own form in Košice for **more than 50 years**.*

*In the autumn of 1969 disagreeable weather again dominated, as it had several times in this decade. However, it didn't discourage the hundred elite runners who had met the qualification time, so that on Sunday, **5 October 1969** they set off on the course thickly lined with spectators.*

*Hungarian Gyula Tóth, the winner from 1966, began to set the pace, but he clearly overestimated his power, and in the second half of the race he slowed considerably and in the end faded to ninth place. Aside from **Demissie Wolde**, the field also included his countryman Medhin, and their cooperation and frequent alternating of the pace eventually tore the lead group apart. This tactic proved to suit Wolde the best, and he went on to enjoy a victory by*

nearly 2 minutes, thus confirming that he belonged among the biggest favourites, especially given his 10th place in the Tokyo Olympics from 1964.

It should be added that he never surpassed his winning time in Košice during his career, even though he tried, among others, another Olympic Games, this time in Munich in 1972. There he earned an 18th place finish with a time of 2:20:44. And to round things out, we should also mention that Demissie Wolde is the younger brother of Olympic champion **Mamo Wolde**, who took the gold at Mexico in 1968.

If we look once more at the results from Košice in 1969, we see that only 6 runners did not finish the race, that Czechoslovak runners finished in only two of the first twenty places, and that few Košice natives started the event. **Vincent Juhás**, representing the club Slávia VŠT Košice, finished in 57th place. Vincent took part in the marathon many times in subsequent years. His last start was on 5 October 2003. On that day, however, he was unable to reach the finish line.

RESULTS

Košice Peace Marathon, October 5, 1969

Men

1.	Demissie Wolde	ETH	2:15:37,0
2.	Donald McGregor	GBR	2:17:33,2
3.	Christopher Wade	SWE	2:17:52,0