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Meta Antenen

Even women's worst enemies must surrender and admit that Meta Antenen is the most representative personality in women's sports. A charming smile, the figure of a film star, unshakable honesty and world level results — that is Meta Antenen, 25 years old, measuring 1,67 m and weighing 57 kg. The will to improve her own achievements all the time fills the young athlete from Schaffhausen. Every year, she manages to achieve a number of excellent results, inspite of an old knee injury and a recent one of the Achilles tendon. Such physical difficulties, however, do not prevent her from bringing to the fore women's athletics in Switzerland.

Already she holds over 30 national records, and this is only the beginning. At the European Championships in Athens in 1969, she was second in the pentathlon in which she far excelled in three events. Two years later, at the European Championships in Hel-

sinki, she again became second and last year she acquired the title of European champion, both in long jump, an extraordinary performance. Meta Antenen as an electro-diagram draftsman was predestined for athletics. Her distinction in this field would have been evident even more, had not some physical frailty set certain limits. In future, she will devote herself above all to long jump and in addition to 100 m hurdles in order to increase her speed. She will be less concerned with the pentathlon, since putting the shot causes her almost unsurmountable difficulties.

In any case, it is encouraging to note how graceful Meta Antenen is. She has not the slightest similarity to the so-called sports-women, above all the specialists in putting the shot, who have nothing feminine to them. Meta Antenen is still single, but spends quite some time looking through her fan-mail. It was lucky for her to get to know Jack Mueller. This coach knew how to make her like efforts which are not rewarded, to teach her to enjoy her victories and to convince her of the necessity of increasing her hours of training. Although this fact played only a subordinate part, for her reliability and integrity are too well known. Without hesitation, Swiss sports journalists put her forward as the best example for young people. She is extraordinarily talented for the various athletic events and has the ability to answer questions from reporters with amazing clarity. The sporting spirit of this modest girl is worth far more than all the gold medals in the world. In her room, amongst records of classical music and books to which she devotes most of her leisure, we find also her diplomas. Her modesty like that of any true sportsman, has not allowed her to

put even one into a golden frame. As a matter of fact, she received the greatest distinction which a girl can desire who gives up a professional career just for the sake of pleasure. In 1971 UNESCO awarded her the Prize for Fair Play. She did not receive this distinction for nothing: At the European Championships in Helsinki, she had reached the top with her five trials. The result was practically certain, for Meta Antenen had beaten by 3 cm the German Ingrid Mickler-Becker who was engaged in the pentathlon at the same time. Meta herself requested that her great rival should have a chance. Thus she lost a well-earned victory. Perhaps, the other, however platonic it may be, is the greater of the two.

Unfortunately, Meta Antenen is an exception for, apart from skiing, womens' sport has not much to boast about in Switzerland. Even in skiing, Meta Antenen might show success, being endowed with so many abilities. In spite of the two gold medals of Marie-

A new Swiss record (Keystone)



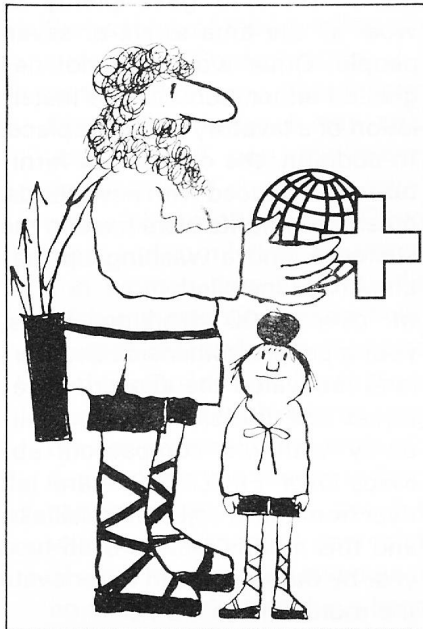
Therese Nadig in Sapporo and the bronze medal of Lise-Marie Morerod in St. Moritz, Meta Antenen

is without doubt number one of her generation thanks to her unconditional application. But who

will be her successor in athletics? The lack is frightening, her domination too overwhelming.

Bertrand Zimmermann

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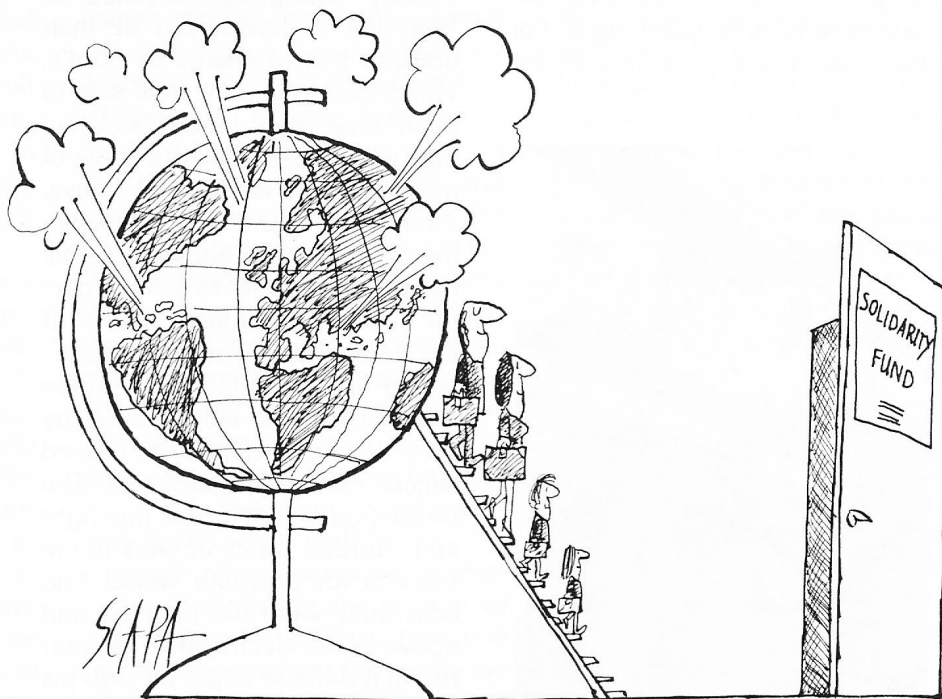
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