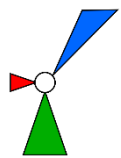


1388 GA

bncdoc.id	BMM
bncdoc.author	Christie, Linford
bncdoc.year	1990
bncdoc.title	Linford Christie: an autobiography.
bncdoc.info	Linford Christie: an autobiography. Sample containing about 41623 words from a book (domain: leisure)
Text availability	Worldwide rights cleared
Publication date	1985-1993
Text type	Written books and periodicals
David Lee's classification	W_biography

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<p>Key:</p> <p><u>Footprint</u></p> <p><u>ConEn1</u></p> <p><u>Footprint</u></p> <p><u>ConEn2</u></p> <p><u>Footprint</u></p> <p><u>ConEn3</u></p>	<p>course, and I had the confidence of the first two rounds now, of having the second fastest time behind Carl and of beating Ben. I had gone to bed about midnight. I believe in going to bed when you are really tired, not when you think you should. Then you usually lie there just staring at the ceiling, thinking about everything that could go wrong. I got up and dressed quickly and as quietly as I could, but Colin was awake and he mumbled a 'good luck' as I headed for the door. I managed some breakfast, met up with Colin's coach Malcolm Arnold who was taking me down to the track, and we walked in the sunshine to where the buses waited to run the shuttle to the Olympic Stadium. I was still feeling pretty good within myself. At the warm-up track, which was alongside the stadium, I had my usual massage and began my leisurely warm-up. I could see some of the other sprinters jogging around - Carl, Ben, Ray, Calvin - and gave one or two a wave. I went to the first Reporting Area in good time. Here the officials checked your number and gave you your side number, for the photo finish. Then we walked through to another room, under the stand, where they checked us again, politely but methodically. After about five minutes we went into the final check room where we stayed for what seemed ages, most of us in our pre-race trances now, nobody speaking, just moving about, staying loose. Occasionally I glanced at the TV screen that was showing events already taking place. Then we went outside, into the stadium, through a last security gate, into the bright morning sunshine. The adrenalin was pumping but I knew that I could control it, knew that it was necessary to a good performance. I even had the audacity to think that I was going to win. I thought that Ben hadn't had anything left when I had beaten him in the second round the previous day. They kept us hanging around for a while. My mind was a blank; I automatically went through some drills and some stretching. <u>Then they called us to our marks. Ben got away to a really fast start and there was no heading him. About ten metres from the finish I knew that I had qualified and eased, finishing second ahead of Dennis Mitchell.</u> I felt elated at beating Dennis, he was rated a medal hope. I saw from the clock that Ben had run 10.03, not as fast as Carl, who had gone below ten seconds again. I watched</p>
	<p><u>the re-run of the race</u></p>
	<p>on the big stadium scoreboard, checked that <u>I had run second</u> and then went back under to collect my kit from the airless, sweat-filled room where it had been taken from the start. I was in my first Olympic final. All the world wanted to see this race. About half a billion people in total were gathered around television sets. The pre-race hype had been worthy of any world heavyweight boxing match, on a par with Ali and Frazier. In Britain, as a grey day dawned, half a million peered, red-eyed, at their screens. In Australia, in Melbourne Park, a hundred thousand people sat waiting for the Victorian Football League Cup Final, and while they waited the 100 metres was to be relayed on the stadium scoreboard from Seoul. Past champions</p>

	<p>also watched, wondering if history would be made on this day. No man had won the Olympic 100 metres twice in the modern celebrations of the Games. Now Carl Lewis, the champion from Los Angeles, had that chance. The 1980 winner, Allan Wells, sat in a television studio in London; in Dallas, Texas, the man rated by some as the fastest of them all, Bob Hayes, the 1964 champion from Tokyo, sat watching and waiting, memories stirring in him; and Harrison Dillard watched from Cleveland, Ohio, the oldest living sprint gold medallist, winner at London's Wembley Stadium in 1948. In the stands in Seoul was the Russian Valeriy Borzov, winner in Munich in 1972. The stadium was packed beyond capacity; in every nook and cranny people crammed together, standing four deep on the walkways and filling the steps between the seats. Coaches and managers of the finalists were now gripped with the tension of the approaching moment of truth, like expectant fathers at the birth, now impotent, their work done. And that tension spread to every tier of every stand as the eight finalists - three Americans, two Canadians and one each from Jamaica, Brazil and Britain - came into the stadium. We had a one-and-a-half-hour wait between semi and final. Joan Watt, our physiotherapist, gave me a massage. She is a lovely lady as well as a great physio, and we chatted away as she worked on my legs. I sat around for a while, talking to people. I didn't feel at all tense and I suppose that I have to thank Carl a little bit for that. Some weeks beforehand, I think perhaps when we were in Japan, I had read an article that Carl had written in which he said that in the Zurich race in August, when he had trounced Ben,</p>
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