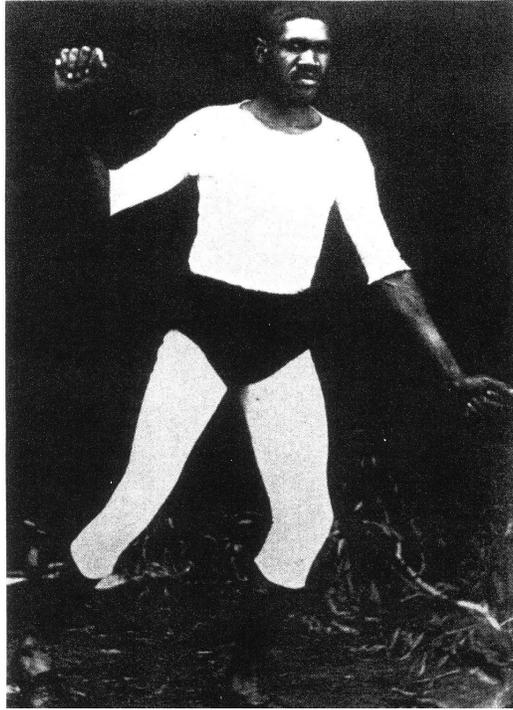


FORGET USAIN BOLT OR CARL LEWIS-

CHARLIE SAMUELS (1863 - 1912) IS THE FASTEST MAN WHO EVER LIVED!



Following his older brother George, Charlie Samuels became a professional runner in the early 1880's. He was an average height of 175cm, but his legs were extraordinarily long for his body, giving him a stride of 2.25 metres. In the 1880's he broke every Australian and world sprinting record from 100 yards to 440 yards, but was always denied them. Officials often claimed that Charlie's times were due to short tracks or faulty timing equipment, but the real reason was that he was the wrong race to be holding any world or Australian track record.

In a series of match races in 1887 against the world champion Englishman Harold Hutchens, Charlie was unbeaten. He was also unbeaten against Tom Malone who was at the time the World Record holder for 120, 130, 150, 175 and 440 yards. In 1886 Charlie ran an amazing 30 seconds flat for 300 yards and in 1888 he shattered the 100 yards world record, running the incredible time of 9.1 seconds. This equates to a 100 metre time of 9.9 seconds and would have seen him pip Carl Lewis 100 years later for the gold medal in the 1988 Olympics. And just remember, neither Carl Lewis nor Usain Bolt ever ran the sort of times Charlie did on grass tracks or sandshoes. Charlie's achievements are the stuff of legends, but he remains virtually unknown and has never been inducted into the Australian Sports Hall of Fame.