

The Perfect Distance



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Steve Ovett and Sebastian Coe presided over the golden era of British athletics. Between them they won three Olympic gold medals, two silvers, one bronze and broke a total of twelve middle-distance records. They were part of the landscape of the late seventies and early eighties -- both household names, their exploits were watched by millions. As far apart as possible in terms of class and upbringing -- Ovett is the art student, the long-haired son of a market-trader from Brighton, a natural athlete; Coe's formative years were spent under the rigorous training routine of Peter Coe, a self-taught trainer who referred to his son as 'my athlete' -- their rivalry burned as intense on the track as away from it. The pendulum swung between the pair of them -- each breaking the other's records, and, memorably, triumphing in each other's events in Moscow in 1980 -- for the best part of a decade, until the final showdown at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984 ... The Perfect Distance is both a detailed re-creation and a fitting celebration of the greatest era of British athletics.

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目录:

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