



# **Marathon Crasher: The Life and Times of Merry Lepper, the First American Woman to Run a Marathon**

*David Davis*

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***Marathon Crasher* is David Davis's stunning account of how Merry Lepper became the first American woman to complete a marathon**

At a time when television was pushing male-dominated sports coverage into living rooms across America, women were struggling just to set foot onto the playing field. Barred from officially registering for long-distance running competitions, some women ran anyway, defying the authorities and the rules. Still, no American woman had ever successfully completed sports' ultimate endurance test: the marathon.

That changed in December of 1963, when Merry Lepper became the first. Leaping out of her hiding place in the bushes at the start of the race, dodging cars and infuriated race officials, Merry Lepper challenged the status quo and defeated it, years before the ban on female competitors would be revoked. This is the story of the arduous journey women distance runners had to endure to reach equality with men, and the story of how one woman overcame tremendous hurdles to fulfill a shared dream, paving the way for generations of female marathon runners to come.

This ebook also includes a 17-page excerpt from *Showdown at Shepherd's Bush*, the story of the epic clash at the 1908 Olympic Marathon that jump-started the first marathon mania and heralded the modern age in sports.

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