This invention relates to a starting block device such as used by contestants in a foot-race on a track, for affording a good footing to the racer when he is set at the starting line. I developed a device for this purpose that included an elongated bar or body that was spiked to the ground just to the rear of the starting line, and this bar carried the starting blocks which were mounted for adjustment to different positions on the sides of the bar. The blocks present inclined forward faces against which the toes of the racer's shoes are placed when he gets set to start down the track. One of the blocks is, of course, usually held fixed on the bar in a position considerably advanced with respect to the other block. Here-tofore, we have built the device so that the left block was located and held clamped in advance of the right-hand block, as most racers prefer to have the left foot in advance at the start of the race. With this device as herefore constructed, it was not possible to slide the blocks past each other to reverse their relation, for example, so as to place the right-hand block in advance and the left-hand block toward the rear, although sometimes an individual racer may desire to set the blocks in that way.

One of the objects of the present invention is to construct a starting block device of this kind in such a way that either block may be set in any desired position regardless of the position of the other block; also to construct the device in such a way that the blocks may be slid past each other while being held on, and guided by, the bar.

A further object of the invention is to construct the device so that it is simple and of few parts, and so constructed that the blocks may be readily positioned at any required point on the bar and held there in such a way that they will resist the thrust of the racer's foot when he starts.

A further object of the invention is to improve the general construction of devices for this purpose.

As usually constructed, the forward face of the starting blocks, is formed as a plane face on the block, and the angle or inclination of this face for the right foot is different from the angle for the left foot.

One of the objects of this invention is to provide a block having a forward face which is adapted for use either as a right or a left block, and which at different locations, presents slightly changing and merging graduated angles of inclination so that the racer can find a point at which to rest his toe, that will be most advantageous to him in starting.

Further objects of the invention will appear hereinafter.

The invention consists in the novel parts and combination of parts to be described hereinafter, all of which contribute to produce an efficient starting device for runners.

A preferred embodiment of the invention is described in the following specification, while the broad scope of the invention is pointed out in the appended claims.

In the drawing:
Fig. 1 is a plan of a starting device embodying my invention.
Fig. 2 is a side elevation of the starting device with a portion of one end of the same broken away and shown partially in section to indicate the manner in which a spike or similar fastening may be used to secure the device to the roadway of the track just back of the starting line.
Fig. 3 is a vertical section upon an enlarged scale taken on the line 3-3 of Fig. 2, and illustrating one way in which the blocks may be mounted on the bar in accordance with my invention. In this view the spikes illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, are omitted.
Fig. 4 is a section also upon an enlarged scale taken on the line 4-4 of Fig. 1, and illustrating details of means that may be employed for attaching the two sections of the bar to each other.

In practicing the invention, I provide a bar which may be considered the body of the device, and this bar is adapted to be spiked down on the track near the starting line and so that the bar extends longitudinally of the track. On each side of the bar a starting block is mounted, and each block and the bar are so constructed that each block can be set at any desired point on the bar, means being provided for holding the block on the bar so that the block will resist the thrust of the racer's toe when he starts. The blocks are mounted on the bar in such a way that they can move past each other in a front and rear direction on the bar.

Referring more particularly to the parts, I indicates the bar or body of the device which, in the present instance, is constructed of two sections 1a and 1b, the former of which is disposed upwardly while the section 1b is adapted to lie on the ground as indicated in Fig. 2, the ground line being indicated by the numeral 2. In other words, the two sections 1a and 1b have their meeting faces disposed in a horizontal plane. They are preferably removably clamped together by any suitable means such as the end bolts 3, the heads 4 of which are preferably countersunk
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into the bottom section 10, the upper ends of the bolts being threaded to receive wing nuts 5 that are also preferably countersunk as indicated in Fig. 4.

Referring particularly to Fig. 3, I form two guideways 8 extending longitudinally of the bar, one of these 8 and which being located on one side of the medial plane or longitudinal axis of the bar indicated by the line 7, and the other guideway being located on the other side of this plane. These guideways 6 include a slot 6° of less vertical height than the guideway, and this slot extends longitudinally in the adjacent side face of the bar.

In accordance with my invention, I mount the blocks 8 at these slots 6° in such a way that they are held in the guideway of which these slots form a part, so that they can be slid in a front and rear direction on the bar; and the means for guiding the blocks and holding the same in the guideway, is so constructed that the blocks may be set at any point desired, and held in such a way that they will resist the thrust of the racer’s foot when he starts on the race. In the present instance, for this purpose I provide each block with a bolt 9 that has a head 10 at its inner end, and at this head I prefer to provide an antifriction device or a roller that in the present instance, consists of a narrow disc 11 which is loose on the bolt 9, and which runs in the deep portion of the guideway 6, this portion being of channel form as shown. The outer end of each bolt is provided with a heavy washer 12 to seat against a side face of the block and, if desired, a smaller washer 13 against which a wing nut 14 or similar nuts fastens, being tightened up on the outer threaded end of the bolt. The heads 10 of the bolts are preferably convex carriage bolt heads which will fit into the channel of each guide, and which will do so without projecting past the central or medial longitudinal plane indicated by the line 11. This insures that the two blocks can be moved past each other if desired. In other words, in moving the blocks, each head 10 will slide along in its guideway on its side of a central tongue 18 in each section of the bar that separates the two guideways. The wing nuts 14 are then clamped up.

In Fig. 1 the two blocks are represented as set with the left-hand block forward or toward the starting line, it being understood that the arrow 16 indicates the direction in which the racers will pass on the track. Each block 8 is of substantially triangular form in side elevation, and presents a flat face on its under side to lie on the ground. In accordance with my invention, the forward face of each block, instead of being flat and located entirely in one plane, is formed so that this face presents a projecting toe 11, the upper face 18 of this toe being a gradually changing concave curve, a portion of which may be an arc struck with a radius located about as indicated by the line 19, the upper portion of this graduated curve being substantially tangent to the upper portion of the forward face of the block. In this way the face 18 will present a graduated inclination to the toe of the racer when set against the same, and the higher up the toe is placed, the more abrupt the inclination of this starting face will be.

At each end the bar 1 is provided with spike holes 20 through which spikes 21 may be driven down into the roadway to hold the bar in position and enable it to maintain its position when the blocks receive the thrust of the racer in starting.

Many other embodiments of the invention may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What I claim is:

1. In a starting device for contestants in a foot-race on a track, the combination of a bar adapted to be secured to the ground just to the rear of the starting line, said bar having a guideway located at each side of its longitudinal vertical medi- 
al plane, a block located on each side of the bar and having means located in its corresponding guideway for guiding that block to position the same as required for one of the feet of the racer, a block located on the other side of the bar and having means located in its corresponding guideway for guiding that block to position the same as required for the other foot of the racer, each of said means being located and confined to its own side of the said medial plane so that the said means may be moved past each other when the blocks are being adjusted to their desired position; and means associated with both said first-named means for enabling the same and said blocks to resist the thrust of the racer’s foot in starting.

2. In a starting block for contestants in a foot-race on a track, the combination of a bar adapted to be secured to the ground just to the rear of the starting line for the racers, said bar having a guideway located on each side of its longitudinal vertical medi- nal plane, a block located on each side of the said bar, each block having means located in its corresponding guideway and confined to its side of the said medial plane, whereby said blocks can be moved past each other in adjusting the same to a required position on the bar; and means cooperating with the first-named means for securing the blocks to the bar to resist the thrust of the racer’s feet in starting.

3. In a starting block for contestants in a foot-race on a track, the combination of a bar adapted to be secured to the ground just to the rear of the starting line for the racers, said bar having a guideway located on each side of its longitudinal vertical medi- nal plane, a block located on each side of the said bar, a bolt associated with each block for securing the same on the side of the bar, a roller disc carried on the inner end of the bolt running in its corresponding guideway, and means for holding the block on the bar to enable the same to resist the thrust exerted against the blocks.

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