

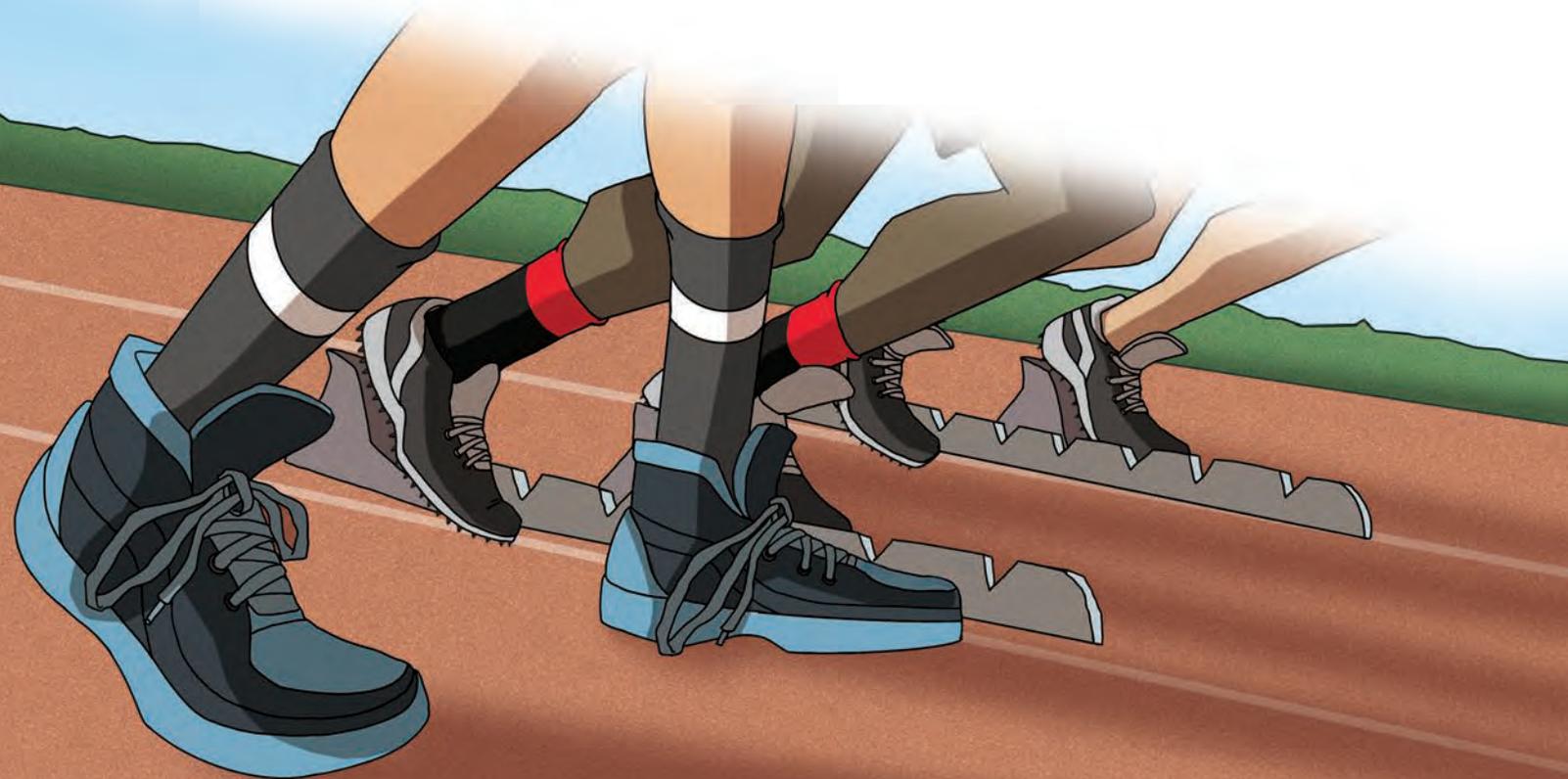
My coach tells me the race is in an hour. As I walk toward my dressing room, I think about my first big race.

In high school, my friend invited me to a track competition. I had not run a race for years, but I thought it would be fun to try something new.

The other athletes were dressed in racing gear. I didn't have the right clothes, but I didn't let that bother me.

Everyone got into position on the starting blocks.

I had never even heard of those before, so I stood at the start like I was standing at first base getting ready to steal second.



When the starting pistol went off, I ran as fast as I could — and I won my heat! I had no idea I could run so fast.

I realize I would not be in this stadium today if I did not have the courage to try back then.