

# UPDATE

Newsletter of the European Athletic Association

3|06 October



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## Göteborg 2006 is the benchmark

### Message from EAA President Hansjörg Wirz



The 19th edition of the European Athletics Championships in Gothenburg was a great success, both within the stadium and outside, in the streets, squares and parks of the city.

I would like to say 'tack så mycket', or thank you very much, to the Swedish Athletic Association, the City of Göteborg and the Local Organising Committee for their excellent cooperation with the EAA in staging such a magnificent event.

When they submitted their bid to host the championships, they promised it would be 'more than a sporting event', and it certainly was. There was a fantastic level of interaction between the championships and the host city.

The spectacular opening ceremony on Götaplatsen on the evening of 6 August, which was attended by around 50,000 people, was something special and one of the great moments of the week. The integration of the city continued for the next seven days with concerts and other activities offered as part of the Championships City Festival.

Within the stadium, Europe's top athletes did not disappoint, with hard fought competition and some surprise winners. 270,000 enthusiastic spectators saw 47 European champions crowned. Millions more watched on television and there was live streaming on the EAA website for the first time.

Events such as Göteborg 2006 can help to inspire young people to become involved in athletics which is extremely important for the future of our sport. The partnership agreement with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) that we announced in Gothenburg will assist us in our efforts to bring the benefits of athletics to children and young people.

At the EAA we recognise that society is changing and that staging a sporting event in isolation is no longer enough to inspire people and attract them to our sport. Our events must not stop at the gates of the stadium, but should integrate and touch the public in an emotional way. We are pleased that our efforts in this area led to such a successful event in Gothenburg and we want to continue in this way.

Göteborg 2006 is now a benchmark and we plan to build on its success in staging future events.

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# Gothenburg rocked!



## The 19th European Athletics Championships in Gothenburg on 6-13 August was 'more than a sporting event'.

"Sweden rocks!" No, not a reference to a new Scandinavian heavy metal outfit, nor a description of the tumultuous celebrations that kicked off in the Ullevi stadium following the victories of Carolina Klüft, Susanna Kallur and Christian Olsson, but a text message from a TV viewer watching the opening ceremony of the 19th European Athletics Championships back in the UK.

And Sweden did "rock", or, to be more accurate, Gothenburg "rocked". For if anyone was the real winner of Göteborg 2006, it wasn't an athlete, or a nation, it was the city itself.

The day before the championships began Claes Bjerkne, CEO of Göteborg & Co, had promised "the biggest sporting and entertainment experience in Sweden for a decade". "We cannot let the championships stop at the gates of the stadium," confirmed EAA President Hansjörg Wirz.

And they didn't. Every day thousands of people flooded into the city's streets,

### Facts & Figures

**1288 athletes** from **48 countries** participated in the championships - both record figures

**31 nations** won medals, more than ever before

**11** championship records, **35** national records and **1** European U23 record broken

**270,000 spectators** over the seven days of competition

Over **1 million** visits to the EAA and event websites during the championships

At least **1300 hours** of television coverage watched by **890 million** viewers in **58 markets\***

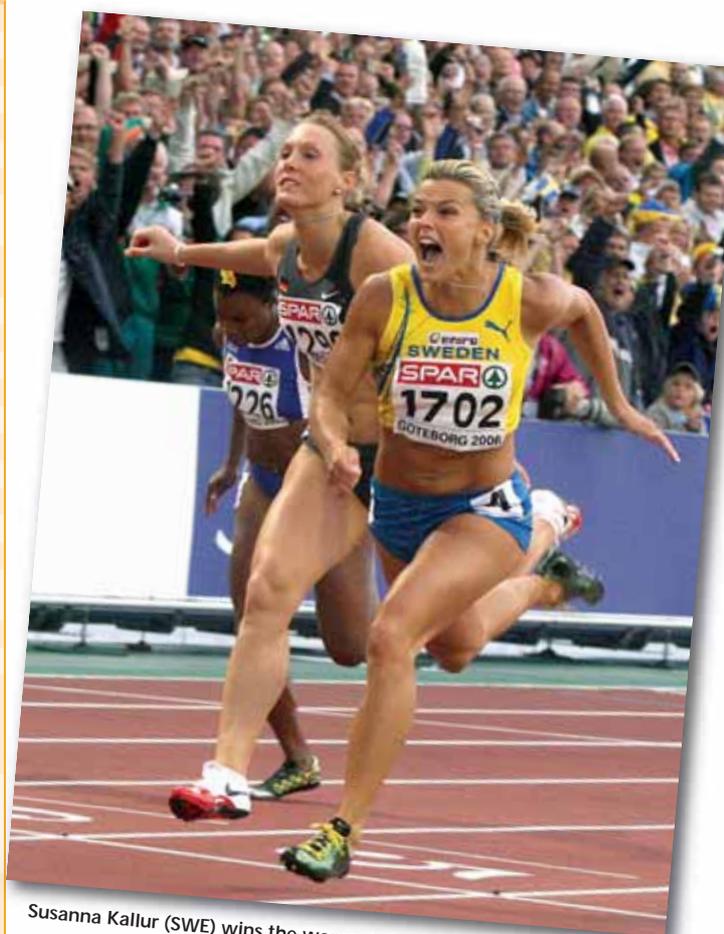
\* interim figures which will increase



HRH Crown Princess Victoria declares the championships officially open

European Champions 2006

Men		Women
Francis OBIKWELU (POR)	<b>100m</b>	Kim GEVAERT (BEL)
Francis OBIKWELU (POR)	<b>200m</b>	Kim GEVAERT (BEL)
Marc RAQUIL (FRA)	<b>400m</b>	Vanya STAMBOLOVA (BUL)
Bram SOM (NED)	<b>800m</b>	Olga KOTLYAROVA (RUS)
Mehdi BAALA (FRA)	<b>1500m</b>	Tatyana TOMASHOVA (RUS)
Jesús ESPAÑA (ESP)	<b>5000m</b>	Marta DOMÍNGUEZ (ESP)
Jan FITSCHEN (GER)	<b>10000m</b>	Inga ABITOVA (RUS)
Jukka KESKISALO (FIN)	<b>3000m</b>	Alesia TURAVA (BLR)
	<b>Steeplechase</b>	
Stanislav OLIJAR (LAT)	<b>110m/100m Hurdles</b>	Susanna KALLUR (SWE)
Periklis IAKOVÁKIS (GRE)	<b>400m Hurdles</b>	Yevgeniya ISAKOVA (RUS)
Stefano BALDINI (ITA)	<b>Marathon</b>	Ulrike MAISCH (GER)
Andrey SILNOV (RUS)	<b>High Jump</b>	Tia HELLEBAUT (BEL)
Alex AVERBUKH (ISR)	<b>Pole Vault</b>	Yelena ISINBAYEVA (RUS)
Andrew HOWE (ITA)	<b>Long Jump</b>	Lyudmila KOLCHANOVA (RUS)
Christian OLSSON (SWE)	<b>Triple Jump</b>	Tatyana LEBEDEVA (RUS)
Ralf BARTELS (GER)	<b>Shot Put</b>	Natallia KHORONEKO (BLR)
Virgilijus ALEKNA (LTU)	<b>Discus</b>	Darya PISHCHALNIKOVA (RUS)
Ivan TIKHON (BLR)	<b>Hammer</b>	Tatyana LYSENKO (RUS)
Andreas THORKILDSEN (NOR)	<b>Javelin</b>	Steffi NERIUS (GER)
Roman ŠEBRLE (CZE)	<b>Decathlon/Heptathlon</b>	Carolina KLÜFT (SWE)
Francisco Javier FERNÁNDEZ (ESP)	<b>20km Walk</b>	Ryta TURAVA (BLR)
Yohan DINIZ (FRA)	<b>50km Walk</b>	
Great Britain & Northern Ireland (Dwain CHAMBERS, Darren CAMPBELL, Marlon DEVONISH, Mark LEWIS-FRANCIS)	<b>4x100m</b>	Russia (Yuliya GUSHCHINA, Natalya RUSAKOVA, Irina KHABAROVA, Yekaterina GRIGORYEVA)
France (Leslie DJHONE, Idrissa M'BARKE, Naman KEÏTA, Marc RAQUIL)	<b>4x400m</b>	Russia (Svetlana POSPELOVA, Natalya IVANOVA, Olga ZAYTSEVA, Tatyana VESHKUROVA)
Italy (Ottavio ANDRIANI, Stefano BALDINI, Danilo GOFFI, Francesco INGARGIOLA, Giacomo LEONE, Ruggero PERTILE)	<b>European Marathon Cup</b>	Italy (Rosaria CONSOLE, Bruna GENOVESE, Anna INCERTI, Marcella MANCINI, Deborah TONILOLO, Giovanna VOLPATO)



Susanna Kallur (SWE) wins the women's 100m hurdles

bars, parks and squares to sample the 'EM experience', filling the city with a festival fever.

In the Ullevi stadium itself, even the bad weather couldn't dampen the atmosphere as some 30,000 people turned up for evening sessions, the vast majority wearing or waving the famous yellow and blue of the host nation.

They weren't disappointed. Klüft, Kallur and Olsson delivered world class performances to bring Sweden three gold medals, as many as it won in Munich four years ago and three more than in 1995 when Gothenburg played host to the World Championships. Along with Johan Wissman's 200m silver and two high jump bronze medals, the golden trio contributed to the host nation's biggest medal haul at a European Athletics Championships since 1946.

What's more, Klüft's victory came with a championship record, one of 11 to fall throughout the week. Two of these led to the Swedish fans' only disappointments,

the defeats of high jump favourites Stefan Holm and Kajsa Bergqvist. Both lost to brilliant performances from unheralded athletes, as Andrey Silnov of Russia and Tia Hellebaut of Belgium leapt higher than they had ever done before, and higher than anyone had done at a European Athletics Championships.

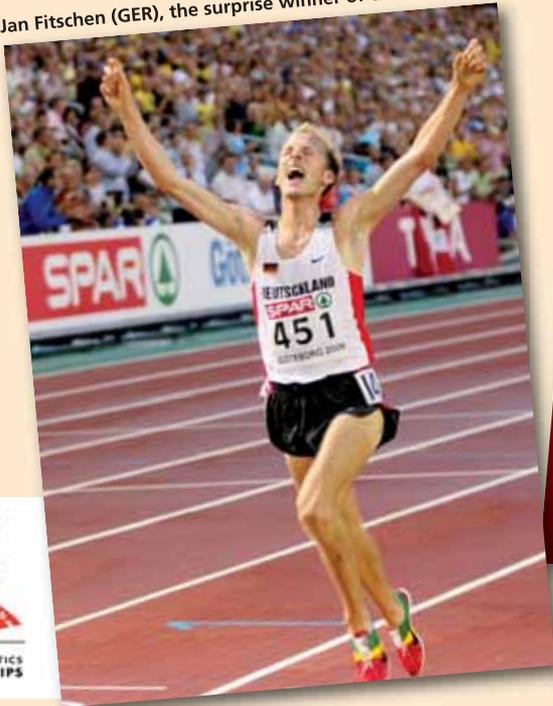
Six of the championship records fell to Russian athletes, one of whom, Yelena Isinbayeva, completed a 'grand slam' of major titles by adding the European to her World and Olympic pole vault crowns. Lithuania's discus thrower Virgilijus Alekna also completed a full set, while Klüft's victory was the first in her second cycle of senior championship victories.

Other European champions who retained their titles in Gothenburg included Mehdi Baala of France in the 1500m, Israel's Alex Averbukh in the pole vault, Olsson in the triple jump, Czech Roman Sebrle in the decathlon and Spaniards Francisco Fernandez in the 20km walk and Marta Dominguez in the 5000m.



Francis Obikwelu (POR) secures the sprint double

Jan Fitschen (GER), the surprise winner of the men's 10000m



Belgium's gold medalists, Tia Hellebaut and Kim Gevaert

Strictly speaking Francis Obikwelu also retained his title when he won the men's 100m, although the Portuguese sprinter won't see it like that. Of more importance to him is that he lived up to his promise of winning the European sprint double, the first man to do so since Italy's Pietro Mennea in 1978.

Obikwelu's dominance of the men's sprints was one of the features of the week, while Kim Gevaert's matching achievement in winning the women's 100m and 200m was just as impressive. Gevaert, like Obikwelu, finished second twice in Munich, and returned to turn silver into gold on two occasions. Along with Hellebaut, 'princess Kim' contributed to Belgium's greatest ever week in athletics history.

Similarly, Alesia Turava's victory in the first ever women's 3000m steeplechase at the championships contributed to a record medal haul for Belarus. It also completed the first ever brace of victories for sisters at a European Athletics Championships following Ryta Turava's gold in the 20km walk. Together with wins for Natallia Khoroneko in the women's shot and Ivan Tikhon in the men's hammer, the Turava sisters helped Belarus finish third in the medal table.

Not surprisingly that table was dominated by Russia, which finished with 34 medals, 10 more than in 2002, 12 of them gold. As well as victories for their big name athletes,

such as Isinbayeva, Tatyana Lebedeva (triple jump), Tatyana Lysenko (hammer) and Tatyana Tomashova (1500m), Russia enjoyed some unexpected winners such as Silnov, Inga Abitova (10000m) and Darya Pishchalnikova (discus).

Germany's second place in the medal table was a greater surprise as they arrived in Gothenburg with their hopes resting on Kirsten Bolm's ability to challenge Kallur in the 100m hurdles and their veteran discus throwers Franka Dietzsch and Lars Riedel. Bolm and Dietzsch both ended up with silvers, but Germany came away with four golds thanks to Steffi Nerius in the javelin, Ralf Bartels in the shot and most unexpected yet thrilling victories from Jan Fitschen in the men's 10000m and Ulrike Maisch in the women's marathon.

In fact, the distance finals provided some of the moments of the championships. They may not have been run at the blistering speeds we've come to expect from African dominated record chases, but the 5000m, 10000m and 3000m steeplechase finals as well as both marathons provided races that displayed the highest quality competition and nail-bitingly close finishes.

And in the end, that's what championships are about. That and a festival spirit that spills out of the stadium gates and into the streets and bars of the host city. In that respect Göteborg 2006 took the gold.

**By Matthew Brown**

### EAA and UNESCO support European Youth Forum

107 young leaders in athletics, representing 38 EAA Member Federations, took part in the European Youth Forum staged in conjunction with the European Athletics Championships in Gothenburg on 5-10 August.

The forum included a range of seminars, workshops, social activities and, of course, the chance to watch the competition at the Ullevi stadium.

Among the highlights of the forum programme were an inspirational presentation by pole vault world record holder Sergey Bubka and a much appreciated visit by HRH Crown Princess Victoria.

The programme also included workshops on goal setting and values in sport conducted by experts provided by UNESCO and an extended discussion on the future of European Athletics between the participants and a panel of EAA Council members headed by President Hansjörg Wirz.

### EAA Athletes Commission

The following athletes were voted onto the EAA Athletes Commission 2006-2010 in Gothenburg: Jolanda Ceplak (SLO), Stefan Holm (SWE), Mikaela Ingberg (FIN), Manuel Martinez (ESP), Monika Pyrek (POL) and Simon Vroemen (NED). Two additional athletes will also be appointed to the Commission.

The EAA Athletes Commission meets regularly to represent European elite athletes towards the EAA Council and its main task is to address and discuss all matters which are of concern to elite athletes in Europe.

# Europe's juniors brilliant in Beijing

## European athletes won 18 gold medals at the 11th IAAF World Junior Championships in Beijing on 15-20 August.

Europe was once again the most successful of the six Area Associations at the 11th IAAF World Junior Championships in Beijing, China, on 15-20 August, winning 18 of the 44 gold medals on offer.

Estonia provided the unofficial athlete of the championships in the shape of the giant 2.03 metre tall Margus Hunt. He set a world junior record of 66.35m in the discus qualifying competition, the very first event on the six day programme. He then extended it to 66.68m in the fourth round of the final before improving even further to 67.32m with his last effort for a unique feat. No other athlete has ever set three world junior records at the World Junior Championships.

For good measure, Hunt added the shot title later in the week with 20.53m, the first athlete in the history of the championships to do the throws double.

"An unbelievable week. I was fairly confident about the discus and getting a world junior record in that event, training has been going so well. But I wasn't expecting to throw a record in the qualifying rounds, I thought that would come in the final," said Hunt. "But to win the shot, I wasn't expecting that although my confidence was sky high after the discus."



Tezdzhan Naimova

Prior to Beijing, no Estonian athlete had ever won a World Junior gold medal, either in the colours of the old Soviet Union or since independence, but the Baltic nation put the barren times behind them in the Chinese capital with four victories.

Another of the golds went to triple jumper Kaire Leibak, who put nearly half a metre between herself and the best of the rest of the world. She had already secured victory with her fourth round personal best of 14.05m before bounding out to a massive 14.43m with her final attempt, the best by a teenage triple jumper for six years.

"I'd already won the competition and I was shaking, my arms were shaking, and I was just trying to relax myself," said Leibak. She had subdued her nerves by the time she answered her mobile phone a little while later and found the Estonian Prime Minister on the other end. "That was a surprise. He was offering his congratulations. I hadn't even spoken to my family yet."

Another particularly impressive performance came from Croatia's 400m winner Danijela Grgic, who, at the age of 17, won the 400m in 50.78, the second fastest time in the history of the championships.

"Before this, I have run fast, but nothing like as fast as that. I started out very quick but the last 100m was tough. However, I felt I was going to win from 80m. I'm just stunned with what I managed to do, especially as it was also a Croatian senior record that had been standing since 1974," reflected Grgic.

In such a short article it is impossible to do justice to every European triumph, but a pair of other athletes who have every reason to start thinking about what they can achieve if they return to Beijing for the Olympics in two years time are Bulgaria's Tezdzhan Naimova, who notched up an great 100m and 200m double, and Russia's Tatyana Chernova, who won the heptathlon with 6227

### Medal Standing by Area

Area	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	%
Europe	18	15	18	51	38.3%
Asia	6	8	12	26	19.5%
Africa	9	10	6	25	18.8%
NACAC	8	9	7	24	18.0%
Oceania	2	0	2	4	3.0%
South America	1	2	0	3	2.3%



Margus Hunt

points. Chernova has already advertised that she is hoping to challenge Carolina Klüft's world junior record at next year's European Athletics Junior Championships.

In addition, there should be a special mention for Moldova's Olga Cristea who got her country's first ever athletics gold medal on a global stage when she won the women's 800m.

By Phil Minshull

# Team Europe celebrates best ever World Cup showing

**The overall performances by the Team Europe men's and women's squads at the IAAF World Cup in Athens on 16-17 September were arguably the most successful ever seen by any team in the history of the event.**

## Russian women retain World Cup

Russia proved that they are, without any doubt, the strongest nation in the world of women's athletics when they retained the IAAF World Cup.

They followed up their success in Madrid four years ago by producing a score of 137 points in Athens, the highest ever achieved by a woman's team. The cornerstone of the Cup triumph was five individual victories, including a clean sweep of the jumps.

On the first day, European triple jump champion Tatyana Lebedeva and pole vault world record holder Yelena Isinbayeva produced Cup records of 15.13m and 4.60m respectively to win their events.

Russia's other victory on the opening day came from world 400m hurdles record holder Yuliya Nosova, who came from behind two hurdles from home to win in 53.88 seconds.

Second day victories from Olympic high jump champion Yelena Slesarenko at 1.97m and European long jump champion Lyudmila Kolchanova with 6.78m helped secure the Russian women's place on the top of the podium.

The other star performer from the four individual European nations competing was Polish hammer thrower Kamila Skolimowska, who defeated Russia's world record holder and European champion Tatyana Lysenko. The 2000 Olympic champion won with a second round throw of 75.29m, a Polish and Cup record.



Team Europe won the men's competition with a total of 140 points, four points ahead of the United States, while the women scored 128 points to finish second to holders Russia by nine points.

"Of course, the difference in points was bigger when the men last won the World Cup in 1981 but I think this is the best result seen at the event by any team," said Karel Pilny, Team Europe Head of Delegation and the Treasurer of the European Athletic Association.

"The reason I am saying this is that Europe has changed a lot and the world has changed a lot since 1981, both politically and geographically and also in terms of athletes. If you take these factors into account, in my opinion, this is the best performance by any team, not just men, but the men and women combined."

Four individual victories, all of them in field events, will remain the abiding memory of the men's triumph although, in such a tight contest, every competitor's contribution was crucial.

Team Europe was two points in front after the first day with 76 points, with victories from Czech high jumper Tomas Janku and German shot putter Ralf Bartels as well as five second place finishes.

Janku, the European Athletics Championships silver medallist, was the only man clear at 2.28m and turned the tables on the man who beat him in Gothenburg, Russia's Andrey Silnov. "Winning was a nice surprise because there were some other good jumpers in the field. This is a great end to a great season," reflected the 32-year-old Czech Army sports instructor.

Bartels sent the shot out to 20.67m with his fourth and last effort to move from third to first in the final round. "I have been very lucky this year. I won the European Athletics Championships by two centimetres and the World Cup by seven centimetres," said the grinning giant German.

At the start of the second day, victory in the discus by Lithuania's Virgilijus Alekna, the Team Europe men's captain, provided

## Final Standings

### Men

1.	Europe	140 points
2.	USA	136
3.	Africa	116
4.	Asia	110
5.	Americas	104
6.	Russia	89
7.	France	79
8.	Oceania	78
9.	Greece	44

### Women

1.	Russia	137 points
2.	Europe	128
3.	Americas	117
4.	USA	101.5
5.	Poland	97
6.	Africa	96.5
7.	Asia	85.5
8.	Oceania	73
9.	Greece	60.5



Andreas Thordkildsen

a guiding light for the rest of the squad to continue where they left off overnight. His third throw of 67.19m ensured that he won by more than four metres.

"I am happy about the win but not so much with my performance. It is the end of the season and I am a little tired, but I like the shine of gold and always want to win," said Alekna, who was later to step up and receive the World Cup on behalf of Team Europe.



Franka Dietzsch



Team captain Virgilijus Alekna raises the World Cup

Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen then ensured the Team Europe triumph in the penultimate event by hurling the javelin out to 87.17m with his first effort and no one else could get near the mark of the 2004 Olympic champion. "Athens is obviously a very special place for me," said a happy Thorkildsen.

German throwers Franka Dietzsch and Steffi Nerius were the driving force behind Team Europe on the first day of the women's competition, with their victories keeping the team in contention to add to the titles won in 1977 and 1994.

Discus thrower Dietzsch opened with a throw of 64.56m, which alone would have been good enough to win by nearly three metres, and then produced a massive 66.07m in the second round. "I was the first woman to be competing for Europe and I wanted to give the team a good start," said Dietzsch, who won at the 1998 World Cup when she was wearing a German vest.

Nerius also won the javelin with her second effort, sending the implement out to 63.37m, although her third round effort of 62.08m would also have sufficed for victory.

At the halfway point, the Team Europe women were third with 60 points, five behind both leaders Team Americas and second placed Russia.

On the second day, Alesia Turava from Belarus was the only Team Europe winner, taking the steeplechase in its first appearance in the World Cup in 9:29.10. But four second place finishes meant that the women's team moved into the runners up spot in the overall standings.

By Phil Minshull

## Team Europe Performances

Men			
Event	Athlete	Position	Performance
100m	Francis Obikwelu (POR)	2nd	10.09
200m	Francis Obikwelu (POR)	4th	20.36
400m	Daniel Dabrowski (POL)	5th	45.61
800m	Bram Som (NED)	2nd	1:45.13
1500m	Ivan Heshko (UKR)	2nd	3:53.33
3000m	Jesús España (ESP)	6th	7:50.09
5000m	Jan Fitschen (GER)	4th	13:45.38
3000m St	Jukka Keskisalo (FIN)	4th	8:29.42
110m Hurdles	Stanislav Olijar (LAT)	4th	13.15
400m Hurdles	Marek Plawgo (POL)	3rd	48.76
High jump	Tomas Janku (CZE)	1st	2.28
Pole vault	Alex Averbukh (ISR)	=5th	5.50
Long jump	Andrew Howe (ITA)	2nd	8.12
Triple jump	Marian Oprea (ROM)	3rd	17.05
Shot put	Ralf Bartels (GER)	1st	20.67
Discus	Virgilijus Alekna (LTU)	1st	67.19
Hammer	Ivan Tikhon (BLR)	2nd	80.00
Javelin	Andreas Thorkildsen (NOR)	1st	87.17
4x100m	Dwain Chambers (GBR) Dwayne Grant (GBR) Marlon Devonish (GBR) Mark Lewis-Francis (GBR)	2nd	38.45
4x400m	Rafal Wieruszewski (POL) Kamghe Gaba (GER) Daniel Dabrowski (POL) Andrea Barberi (ITA)	5th	3:03.90
Women			
Event	Athlete	Position	Performance
100m	Kim Gevaert (BEL)	4th	11.24
200m	Kim Gevaert (BEL)	2nd	22.72
400m	Vanya Stambolova (BUL)	2nd	50.09
800m	Rebecca Lyne (GBR)	4th	2:00.97
1500m	Daniela Yordanova (BUL)	4th	4:02.97
3000m	Krisztina Papp (HUN)	6th	8:51.15
5000m	Sabrina Mockenhaupt (GER)	6th	15:34.61
3000m St	Alesia Turava (BLR)	1st	9:29.10
110m Hurdles	Susanna Kallur (SWE)	2nd	12.77
400m Hurdles	Tetyana Tereschuk-Antipova (UKR)	4th	54.55
High jump	Tia Hellebaut (BEL)	2nd	1.97
Pole vault	Martina Strutz (GER)	4th	4.40
Long jump	Naide Gomes (POR)	2nd	6.68
Triple jump	Olha Saladuha (UKR)	6th	14.16
Shot put	Natallia Khoroneko (BLR)	4th	19.06
Discus	Franka Dietzsch (GER)	1st	66.07
Hammer	Maryna Smalyachkova (BLR)	5th	68.93
Javelin	Steffi Nerius (GER)	1st	63.37
4x100m	Anyika Onuora (GBR) Emma Ania (GBR) Emily Freeman (GBR) Joice Maduaka (GBR)	8th	47.61
4x400m	Mariyana Dimitrova (BUL) Nataliya Pyhyda (UKR) Ilona Usovich (BLR) Vanya Stambolova (BUL)	4th	3:22.35



# Birmingham 2007: eight national sponsors signed up

Eight National Partners and Suppliers have signed up to support the 29th European Athletics Indoor Championships to be staged at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham, UK, on 2-4 March. The total national sponsorship value for the event now stands at £240,000.

The Championships will also be supported by the EAA's long standing International Partners, SPAR, SEIKO, EPSON and EUROVISION.

The UK's biggest insurance company Norwich Union, is one of the National Partners for the event. As the major sponsor of the national athletics federation, UK Athletics, the company is extending its support of athletics at all levels in the UK.

The second National Partner is Intersport, the largest sporting goods retailer in the world, which will provide the clothing for the volunteers working on the event.

The National Suppliers for the event are the University of Birmingham, Highland Spring, Hire Intelligence, Birmingham Post and Mail Limited and Heart fm.

The University of Birmingham will host the opening dinner of the Championships in its prestigious Great Hall and support the volunteer programme. Hire Intelligence will provide computers and TV monitors, while Highland Spring will be the official water supplier. The Birmingham Post and Mail will be the official newspapers for the Championships and Heart fm the official radio station.

Regional Development Agency Advantage West Midlands, which is sponsoring the media centre, the media reception and the social visits programme as well as funding a new athletics track surface for the NIA, is an official Public Institution for the Championships.

Deputy Championships and Finance Director Denis Hurst said: "The European

Athletics Indoor Championships is an extremely prestigious event and we are delighted with the positive response to our sponsorship proposals. As Birmingham staged the World Indoor Athletics Championships in 2003 we have been able to provide excellent evidence of the opportunities and benefits which are available to sponsors of indoor athletics events."

#### Tickets

Nearly 50% of tickets have already been sold. Tickets can be purchased online via [www.birminghamathletics2007.com](http://www.birminghamathletics2007.com) or by calling +44 870 739 2007. Day tickets are priced from £12 to £25 and three day passes from £36 to £60, with concessions available

#### LOC Contact

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For more information visit [www.birminghamathletics2007.com](http://www.birminghamathletics2007.com)



# SPAR European Cross Country Championships

Italian marathon star Stefano Baldini and six time European Cross Country champion Sergiy Lebid from the Ukraine are acting as ambassadors for the 13th SPAR European Cross Country Championships in San Giorgio su Legnano, Italy, on Sunday 10 December.

After winning his sixth title last year in Tilburg, Lebid said "For sure I will go for a seventh title as the next Championships are in Italy, which is my second home. When I am there, I live just 15 kilometres away from where the event will take place next year."

#### LOC Contact

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For more information about the event visit [www.sangiorgio2006.org](http://www.sangiorgio2006.org)



Stefano Baldini wins the 2006 European marathon title



It is now one year since the EAA Council adopted a framework for change aimed at ensuring a successful future for European Athletics.

It is also one year since I took up my post at the EAA and the last 12 months has been a fantastic learning experience for me personally and for the EAA, culminating in our most successful European Athletics Championships to date, with seven unforgettable, magical days in Gothenburg last August!

The City of Gothenburg and its inhabitants have set a new benchmark for host cities going forward and already thoughts are focused on Barcelona in the summer of 2010. The opening ceremony, which took place for the first time outside the traditional surrounds of the stadium, was a fantastic spectacle and brought our sport to a new audience. The Championships City Festival was also a huge success and we believe this is the way forward for the future. We now look forward to seeing the Organising Committees for future European Athletics events rise to the challenge in the same enthusiastic way!

The initial feedback we have received from our stakeholders about the European Athletics Championships has been overwhelmingly positive. The television figures were outstanding, spectator attendances were excellent and 31 EAA Member Federations won medals. The turn out of the stars, despite no prize money being on offer, showed that the athletes view the European Athletics Championships as being of utmost importance and relevance.

Already, discussions have taken place as to how we can be even better in Barcelona in 2010 and it is likely that the championships will take place over six days in order to offer our partners and fans a more compact, attractive and exciting package.

Much debate has taken place recently surrounding the merits, or otherwise, of staging the European Athletics Championships every two years. Naturally, with a topic as big as this, there are a number of considerations which have to be taken into account, including the economic impact, political impact, market forces, the number of cities willing to host the championships, the media and sponsor impact and of course whether the championships would then be perceived as prestigious to the athletes and public.

# European Athletics – taking a long term view

**EAA Director General Christian Milz explains why the ‘European Athletics – the need for change’ project requires patience and a long term view of the ‘big picture’.**



It is worth remembering that the EAA has, in the past, held the European Athletics Championships every two years (1969 in Athens & 1971 in Helsinki) before reverting back to the successful and prestigious four year cycle.

This topic is also being considered by the EAA working group which is studying the competition and calendar structure. The working group, which received input from former Olympic champions Ellen van Langen and Jonathan Edwards, has been working on how to create a link between national, European and worldwide competition calendars and how the competition structure can provide a logical and coherent pathway for athlete development. It must also be easy to understand for the general public. As we have to take into account all interests, including integration into the World Athletics Plan, this process has involved wide ranging consultations with our Member Federations, the IAAF, meeting organisers, sponsors, the media, athletes and athletes representatives.

Gothenburg showed us that athletics is not just about elite competition and when trying to promote our sport we are not only confined to working with the Ministry of Sport in each country. Promotion of the sport cuts across the briefs of many government departments including Health, Tourism, Education and Youth.

Studies show us that the youth of today spend on average 20 hours per week of inactivity in front of the TV, Internet and video games, which is leading to a rising trend in childhood obesity. We aspire to address this and provide an enjoyable, healthy alternative.

At the EAA, we are continuing to work on initiatives in this area. Our priority is to attract more young people to our sport for a number of obvious reasons, including increasing the participant base, adding the benefits of health, education and activity to society and creating the fans, officials, coaches and administrators of tomorrow.

We are also working with potential partners to develop joint programmes to accomplish shared aims and we are very excited about the possibilities of working with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). We are exploring a number of joint project ideas and synergies that will expand the services offered by the EAA as well as opening the door to potential new partnerships.

It will not happen overnight but we must continue to work together for the benefit of the sport and the youth of tomorrow.

## European Cup 2007: Groupings

### SPAR European Cup

Munich/GER, 23-24 June

Men	Women
Belgium (+)	Belarus (+)
France	France
Germany	Germany
Great Britain & NI	Greece (+)
Greece (+)	Poland
Poland	Russia
Russia	Spain
Ukraine	Ukraine

### First League Group A

Vaasa/FIN, 23-24 June

Men	Women
Czech Republic	Czech Republic
Finland (-)	Finland
Ireland (+)	Great Britain & NI (-)
Netherlands	Ireland
Slovak Republic (+)	Netherlands
Spain (-)	Norway (+)
Sweden	Slovak Republic (+)
Switzerland	Sweden (-)

### First League Group B

Milan/ITA, 23-24 June

Men	Women
Belarus	Bulgaria
Bulgaria (+)	Cyprus (+)
Hungary	Hungary
Italy (-)	Italy
Portugal	Portugal
Romania	Romania (-)
Serbia (+)	Serbia (+)
Slovenia	Slovenia

### Second League Group A

Odense/DEN, 23-24 June

Men	Women
Andorra	Andorra
Austria (-)	Austria
Denmark	Belgium (-)
Estonia (-)	Denmark
Iceland	Estonia
Latvia	Iceland
Lithuania	Latvia (-)
Norway (-)	Lithuania (-)

### Second League Group B

Zenica/BIH, 23-24 June

Men	Women
AASSE*	AASSE*
Albania	Albania
Armenia	Armenia
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina
Croatia (-)	Croatia
Cyprus	Georgia
Georgia	Israel
Israel	Luxembourg
Luxembourg	Macedonia
Macedonia	Moldova
Moldova	Montenegro
Montenegro	Switzerland (-)
Turkey (-)	Turkey (-)

\*AASSE =

Athletic Association of the Small States of Europe

(+) promoted

(-) relegated

**Note:** As nine teams participated in the 2006 SPAR European Cup, three teams were relegated to the First League for 2007. As a consequence, five teams were relegated from the First League to the Second League.

The new EAA Member Federations of Serbia and of Montenegro will compete as follows: Serbia replaces Serbia & Montenegro in the First League, Montenegro will compete in the Second League.

## European Cup Combined Events 2007: Groupings

### Super League Men /

### First League Women

Tallinn / EST, 7-8 July 2007

Men (SL)	Women (1L)
Belarus (+)	Belarus (-)
Estonia	Czech Republic
France	Estonia (-)
Hungary	Italy
Italy	Latvia (+)
Netherlands (+)	Netherlands
Russia	Spain (+)
Spain	Switzerland

### First League Men /

### Super League Women

Venue TBC, 7-8 July 2007

Men (1L)	Women (SL)
Belgium (+)	Finland
Finland (-)	France (+)
Great Britain & NI	Great Britain & NI
Greece	Greece (+)
Latvia	Poland
Poland (-)	Russia
Sweden (+)	Sweden
Ukraine	Ukraine

### Second League

Maribor / SLO, 7-8 July 2007

Men	Women
Austria (-)	Austria
Czech Republic (-)	Hungary (-)
Denmark	Lithuania (-)
Ireland	Portugal
Lithuania	Slovenia
Norway	Turkey
Portugal	
Slovenia	
Switzerland	
Turkey	

(+) promoted

(-) relegated

**Note:** The Super League and First League matches have been split to allow a greater number of Member Federations to have both teams competing at the same venue.



The women's podium at last year's European Cup Combined Events Super League

Participating individuals	Participating individuals
Croatia	Belgium
Cyprus	Croatia
Iceland	Cyprus
Israel	Denmark
Macedonia	Ireland
Moldova	Israel
Romania	Iceland
Serbia	Luxembourg
Slovak Republic	Macedonia
	Norway
	Romania
	Serbia

## European Champion Clubs Cup for Juniors

ASC Moscow, led by World Junior hammer champion Yevgeniy Aydamirov and shot put bronze medallist Irina Tarasova, is the top junior club in Europe.

The Russians won both the men's and women's matches at the European Champion Clubs Cup for Juniors Group A match in Moscow on Saturday 16 September. AC Crvena Zvezda Belgrade (SER) finished second and Enfield & Haringey AC (GBR) third in the men's competition and ACP Olymp Brno (CZE) and Blackheath & Bromley Harriers (GBR) completed the podium in the women's match.

The Group B men's match in Castellón, Spain, was won by home club Playas de Castellón, while AD Kronos Ljubljana

from Slovenia took the women's title. The Group C winners in Cottbus, Germany, were the men from Polish club KS Podlasie Bialystok and the women from Ireland's Ferrybank AC.

Three ECCCJ records were set in the Group A match. European Junior 1500m bronze medallist Azra Eminovic (SER) ran a new 3000m best of 9:28.30 and records were also set in the 3000m steeplechase by Briton Jonathon Pepper (9:12.15) and Turk Gulcan Mingir (10:57.87) as it replaced the 2000m distance this year. In the Group B match double World Junior champion Margus Hunt (EST) improved his own ECCCJ record in the discus to 62.57m and World Junior silver medallist Tina Sutej (SLO) raised the pole vault mark to 4.10m.

## New EAA Communication Manager



at the end of September.

Pierce is currently employed as Events and Competitions Manager at Scottish Athletics in the UK, where part of his responsibility

Irishman Pierce O'Callaghan will start work as the EAA's new Communication Manager on 1 November, replacing the current post holder Emily Lewis who leaves

is to lead on all communication, press conferences and promotional plans for major events in Scotland. He has also worked in a voluntary capacity for Athletics Ireland, including as media officer from 2002-2005, and as a freelance journalist.

Pierce represented Ireland internationally in the 20km walk, is a Level II race walking judge and a former race walking coach. In addition to his mother tongue English, he can speak French and German as well as some Italian, Polish and Spanish.



## Student paper wins European Athletics Science Award

Christina Hunneshagen from the German Sport University in Cologne has been named the winner of the 2006 European Athletics Science Award.



The winning paper, entitled "Coaches' Eye" – *Technical analysis and fault finding as an internet application for coaching high jump*, was Hunneshagen's final thesis for her

Diploma studies completed in 2005. The tool described in the paper can be accessed on [www.coaches-eye.com](http://www.coaches-eye.com).

The award was made by an EAA appointed jury, chaired by Vice President Agoston Schulek.

"The jury was impressed with Christina's innovative approach to coach education using information technology," said Schulek. "The tool she has developed has great potential to bring theory and practice together for a large number of coaches wherever they might be in Europe."

Hunneshagen, who currently works as a lecturer at the university, will be invited to accept her award and the 10,000 Swiss franc prize at a ceremony in Varna, Bulgaria, on the occasion of the European Athletics Calendar Conference on 12-16 October.

The fifth edition of the biennial European Athletics Science Awards attracted 26 entries from 14 countries. Further information, including a list of all this year's prize winners is available on [www.european-athletics.org](http://www.european-athletics.org).



## IMPRESSUM

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"UPDATE" is published by the European Athletic Association

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## EAA Cross Country Permit Meetings 2006–07

11 November	51st Omer Besim Memorial	Istanbul/TUR
12 November	48th International Warandeloop	Tilburg/NED
19 November	Cross Internacional de Torres Vedras	Torres Vedras/POR
19 November	13th Cross Internacional de Soria	Soria/ESP
26 November	Cross International de Amora-Seixal	Amora-Seixal/POR
26 November	Cross de l'Acier	Leffrinckoucke/FRA
26 November	Lotto Crosscup van West-Vlaanderen	Roeselare/BEL
7 January	53rd Cross Internacional Zornotza	Amorebieta/ESP
13 January	Cross Ouest-France-Pays de la Loire	Le Mans/FRA
14 January	30th Cross della Vallagarina	Rovereto/ITA
28 January	Lotto Crosscup de Hannut	Hannut/BEL
28 January	White Cross	Belgrade/SER

## EAA International Partners



# Turava sisters make history in Gothenburg



Ryta Turava used to run when she was a teenager. It was hard work, so she gave up until her elder sister, Alesia, began to do well at athletics. That's when Ryta's former coach tried to persuade her to come back into the sport. Ryta agreed, but only if she could walk, because that was easier than running.

In Gothenburg, the sisters from Belarus achieved a double unique in the history of the European Athletics Championships. Ryta dreamed that she would win the 20km walk. Dreaming is easier than actually doing it, evidently, but Ryta's strategy paid off. She won, and then told her sister to start dreaming too. Alesia did, and duly captured the inaugural women's 3000m steeplechase title, making a little bit of athletics history.

Belarus had never previously won any women's track or road title and no sisters had ever won gold medals in the same edition of the European Athletics Championships, but the pair who dared to dream made it two in four days. It was a great sporting moment for their nation, first identified in 980AD, but variously part of Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Germany and the Soviet Union, before independence was declared in 1991. The first appearance of Belarus in the European Athletics Championships was in 1994.

Although she had won the European Under 23 1500m title and set world records in two of her first three attempts at the steeplechase, Alesia reckoned her little sister was the most famous sportswomen in the Dubrovno Vitebsk region, where they live.

Ryta had won silver in the 20km walk at the 2005 World Championships and set a world best for 5000m indoors. "But now, perhaps, I will be as famous as Ryta," says Alesia, who nevertheless admits the sport has been good to her. "My world records brought money with which I bought a flat in Minsk and a car," she added.

Ryta, short for Margarita, explained how she became a walker: "I used to be a runner at first, but stopped for about 18 months when I was a teenager. My sister and her coach persuaded me to go back to the club, that it would be good for me, but I initially started walking because it seemed easier than running."

Victory over Russia's Olimpiada Ivanova, who had beaten her to World gold last year, at the IAAF World Race Walking Cup set up Ryta this summer. "Generally everything has been going well this year, despite a small knee problem in the winter and stomach problems at two races," she said. "I had to drop out of the Race Walking Challenge race in Rio Major, but we later discovered that it was something to do with my gastric juices." The right medication ensured that the problem has not bothered her again.

Ryta's sport fits neatly with her hobby. She keeps and shows dogs, whose name defied translation but the description seems to suggest Rotweilers. "I have four of them," she says. "They are big and originally come from Germany. I don't know what the type is called in English but they are my hobby, like my children. I exhibit them and that is my main interest when I am not race walking."

**Doug Gillon, the athletics correspondent for The Herald newspaper in Scotland, profiles the gold medal winning Turava sisters from Belarus.**



Alesia Turava

"The dogs also accompany her in training sometimes," says her manager, Olga Nazarova.

Neither sister saw the other compete in Gothenburg. "I was too nervous to watch," says Alesia. Ryta's flight home was booked before Alesia ran. "So I watched on TV," she says, "and I was very happy."

Alesia explained about the dreams: "Ryta told me she dreamed she would win the walk, and she did. She told me that I should try to see victory in my dreams, and I did. It feels great. I'm the first European champion in this event. I dared to dream to be champion."

It was only her third steeplechase of the year. "I had injuries to my back, my legs - constant problems. I was injured for two months this year, and sometimes in the past for much longer. That made me very upset. I was in training only in the last three months."



Ryta Turava

She decided to compete in Sweden only after successfully coming through her national championships. "But my fitness was only about 70 to 80 per cent."

That encourages her to feel she may be able to regain the world steeplechase record from Gulnara Samitova. "If I stay healthy for the future, I can attack the world record and run under nine minutes," she said.

Steeplechase success has not blinded Alesia to other possibilities and next season she may focus on the 1500m for the World Championships. As well as winning the 2001 European Under 23 title at the distance, she took European Indoor bronze in 2002, has been a finalist at three World Indoor Championships and finished seventh at the 2001 World Championships.

It seems likely that, whatever the distance, there will be more success in the future for the sisters who dared to dream.