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President's Message

HANSJÖRG WIRZ

The summer athletics season in Europe is now over. A lot of activities have been organised as the content of this edition of EAA Update shows. It has been a year of the future generations. The European Athletics Junior Championships and the European Athletics U23 Championships as well as the IAAF World Youth Championships and the European Youth Olympic Festival were important events which offered young European athletes a useful platform on their way to becoming top athletes.

The investment in this kind of competition as well as all the other events organised during the season are important elements for the development and the image of our sport. The competitions are the showcase and the best way to present the athletes to the public.

The IAAF World Championships in Helsinki, organised by our Finnish friends in difficult climatic conditions, have shown the strength of European athletics. But they also delivered some indications as to how important new generations are for the future and what is needed to keep the image of our sport on a high level.

I would like to thank all the organisers for their efforts and their engagement and at the same time I congratulate the federations and the athletes for the results and the medals they have achieved.

In order to handle the different expectations, the needs and the work for a successful future, we had to plan for additional operational capacity in the EAA head office in Lausanne. We are very happy to welcome Christian Milz as our new Director General from September to replace Till Lufft as the General Secretary. Till will step down from his position due to reaching pension age. I would like to express my warm thanks to him for the great contribution he made to European Athletics during many years.

We wish Christian Milz all the best for his engagement with us and with our sport. He has the task to lead and adapt our operational work into a new period. We intend to face the problems, the necessary changes and the challenges of society, marketing and TV in a more efficient way and according to our needs. The head office, with the increased capacity, will play an important role in this procedure.

The preparations for the future have already started, including for next season, with the highlight being the European Athletics Championships in Gothenburg. We are looking forward to it with great expectations and will be able to show our capability next year in Sweden.

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Hansjörg Wirz (SUI) is the President of the European Athletic Association



EAA President Hansjörg Wirz (centre) with new Director General Christian Milz (left) and General Secretary Till Lufft

Helsinki 2005: a week of rain and records

British freelance journalist Matthew Brown reviews the European highlights at the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Helsinki on 6-14 August.

For some, Helsinki 2005 will be remembered as little more than a wet, windy week. "I guess I just came for a rainy holiday," said a disconsolate Maurice Greene as he slouched off the track without running a step after the American 4x100m team failed to get the baton round in their heat.

But not for most. For while the fierce Finnish rain did its best to ruin many of the nine days of the 10th IAAF World Championships, the athletes did their utmost to overcome the weather and produced some of the most memorable performances ever seen at this event.

European athletes were star players in many of the championships' critical moments, not least in setting two of Helsinki's three world records (only Stuttgart in 1993 and Gothenburg in 1995 have had more). And no-one was more star like than Yelena Isinbayeva.

It may have been the most predictable result of the week, but when the Russian achieved her 18th world record, it was still the performance of the championships. Not only did she vault over 5.01m, but she cleared the bar with daylight to spare and won the competition by a massive 41 centimetres. Ironically, the 23-year-old partly had the weather to thank for her latest haul of prize money as the final had been delayed for two days due to the potentially dangerous conditions.

It may have been less foreseen, but another Russian, Olimpiada Ivanova, was no less deserving of her huge pay day. Ivanova set the first world record of the championships when she won the 20km walk in 1:25:41.

The third world record event will also stir joyful memories for Europeans, and for one in particular. Shortly after Cuba's Osleidys Menendez had seemingly killed



Yelena Isinbayeva

the women's javelin final by throwing 71.70m, Germany's Christina Obergföll produced what Athletics International editor Peter Matthews describes as "the greatest breakthrough at the highest level ever made in a major championships".

The 23-year-old university student not only broke Trine Hattestad's European record with a throw of 70.03m, but smashed her own personal best by some five metres, making her the second longest thrower ever with the new specification javelin.

"I just cannot really explain what happened today," the shell-shocked German said after collecting her Silver medal. "I keep asking myself, am I dreaming, or what?"

Obergföll had never placed higher than eighth before at international level, and was so overcome by what she'd done that she could barely throw again in the competition.

Some suggested Carolina Klüft would barely be able to walk, never mind throw, run, jump, or hurdle, such were the injury

rumours circulating before the heptathlon started. Thank goodness she could, for the 22-year-old Swede produced what may be her greatest performance yet to win an epic battle against France's Eunice Barber, securing victory by just 63 points only in the last 80 metres of the final event.

Sweden's other Gold came when high jumper Kajsa Bergqvist completed a remarkable comeback from the career threatening Achilles injury that kept her out of last year's Olympics to win her first global outdoor title.

There was a first title too for Britain's Paula Radcliffe, the undisputed queen of the marathon, who previously had just one Silver to her name from three Olympics and five World Championships. Radcliffe got it right in the end, running from the front in familiar fashion to triumph in a championship record of 2:20:57.

There were some predicted Golds – for Lithuania's Virgilijus Alekna in the discus and Belarus's Ivan Tikhon in the hammer,

for example – and some most unexpected ones, for Dutch pole vaulter Rens Blom and Ukraine's Yuriy Krimarenko in the high jump.

Everyone, even the non Finns, had their hearts set on Tero Pitkämäki winning Gold in the javelin, but a combination of nerves and the appalling weather put paid to his fairy tale. Estonia's Andrus Värnik mastered the conditions to lead a European sweep ahead of Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen and Russia's Sergey Makarov.

The hosts did have their day eventually when the gutsy Tommi Evilä won a Bronze in the long jump on the last weekend.

Unsurprisingly, Russia was the top European nation in terms of points and medals, finishing second in both tables to a young American squad that gave the United States its most successful championships yet.

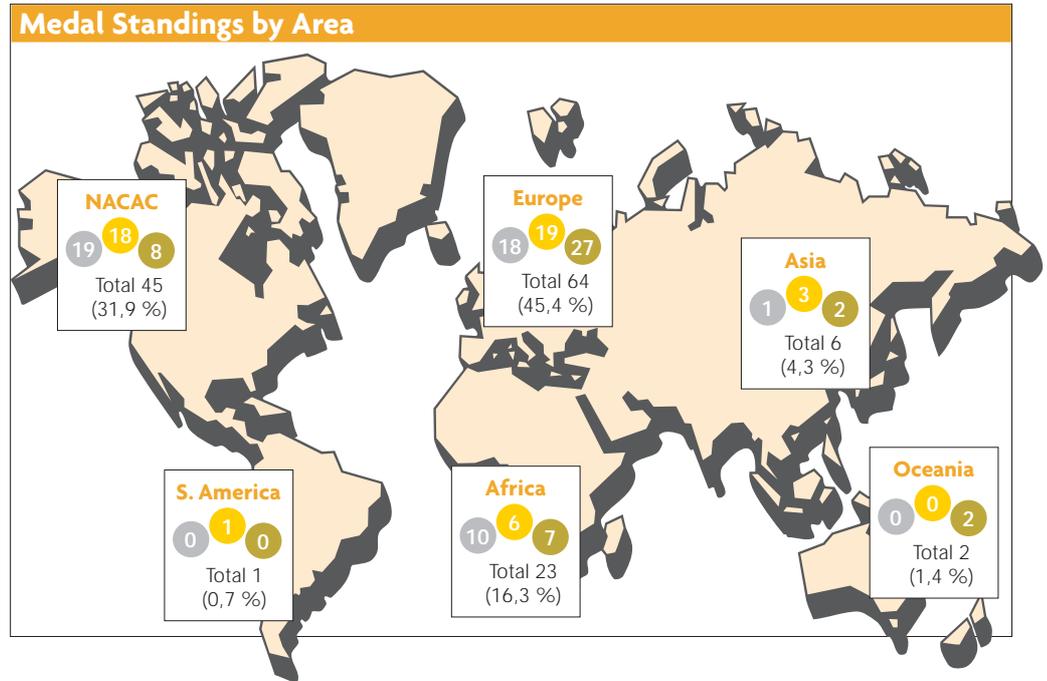
France had a good championships too, finishing second European nation in the points table and third on medals, thanks largely to Ladji Doucouré's thrilling, hair's breadth victory in the 110m hurdles, and a men's 4x100m relay triumph that owed much to the team's well drilled baton changing. Christine Arron's double Bronze

in the sprints should not go unnoticed either.

There were also some disappointments. Only three European men made any of the track finals up to 800m and in the long distance races no European man finished higher than eighth. These were also a poor championships for a few formerly

powerful European nations – Great Britain, Italy, Germany and Spain, in particular. But then, Kenya only won one Gold too.

Which just goes to show that athletics is rarely predictable, except when Yelena Isinbayeva is jumping – and even then it's still a thrill.



European Medallists in Helsinki

19 GOLD

Men

Ladji Doucouré (FRA), 110m hurdles
Yuriy Krimarenko (UKR), high jump
Rens Blom (NED), pole vault
Virgilijus Alekna (LTU), discus
Ivan Tikhon (BLR), hammer
Andrus Värnik (EST), javelin
Sergey Kirdyapkin (RUS), 50km walk
France, 4x100m

Women

Tatyana Tomashova (RUS), 1500m
Paula Radcliffe (GBR), marathon
Yuliya Pechonkina (RUS), 400m hurdles
Kajsa Bergqvist (SWE), high jump
Yelena Isinbayeva (RUS), pole vault
Nadezhda Ostapchuk (BLR), shot
Franka Dietzsch (GER), discus
Olga Kuzenkova (RUS), hammer
Carolina Klüft (SWE), heptathlon
Olimpiada Ivanova (RUS), 20km walk
Russia, 4x400m

18 SILVER

Men

Yuriy Borzakovskiy (RUS), 800m
Yaroslav Rybakov (RUS), high jump
Rutger Smith (NED), shot
Gerd Kanter (EST), discus
Vadim Devyatovskiy (BLR), hammer
Andreas Thorkildsen (NOR), javelin
Roman Šebrle (CZE), decathlon
Francisco Fernandez (ESP), 20km walk
Aleksy Vayevodin (RUS), 50km walk

Women

Olga Yegorova (RUS), 1500m
Yekaterina Volkova (RUS), 3000m SC
Monika Pyrek (POL), pole vault
Tatyana Kotova (RUS), long jump
Olga Ryabinkina (RUS), shot
Natalya Sadova (RUS), discus
Christina Obergföll (GER), javelin
Eunice Barber (FRA), heptathlon
Ryta Turava (BLR), 20km walk

27 BRONZE

Men

Rui Silva (POR), 1500m
Pavel Gerasimov (RUS), pole vault
Tommi Evilä (FIN), long jump
Marian Oprea (ROM), triple jump
Ralf Bartels (GER), shot
Michael Möllenbeck (GER), discus
Szymon Ziółkowski (POL), hammer
Sergey Makarov (RUS), javelin
Attila Zsivóczky (HUN), decathlon
Juan Manuel Molina (ESP), 20km walk
Alex Schwazer (ITA), 50km walk
Great Britain & NI, 4x100m

Women

Christine Arron (FRA), 100m
Christine Arron (FRA), 200m
Tatyana Andrianova (RUS), 800m
Bouchra Ghezielle (FRA), 1500m
Constantina Tomescu (ROM), marathon
Emma Green (SWE), high jump
Pavla Hamáčková (CZE), pole vault
Eunice Barber (FRA), long jump
Anna Pyatykh (RUS), triple jump
Vera Pospíšilová-Cechlová (CZE), discus
Tatyana Lysenko (RUS), hammer
Steffi Nerius (GER), javelin
Susana Feitor (POR), 20km walk
Belarus, 4x100m
Great Britain & NI, 4x400m



Germany and Russia win SPAR European Cup

The German men retained the trophy they won last year and the Russian women made it nine in row at the SPAR European Cup in Florence on 17-19 June.

For its 26th edition the SPAR European Cup returned to the Luigi Ridolfi Stadium in Florence, Italy, and after three days of high quality competition it was the German men and the Russian women who emerged victorious.

For the first time at this year's Cup some events were held on Friday evening to create shorter sessions that were better suited to television broadcasting requirements and to allow the longer endurance races to take place in cooler evening temperatures, and that was certainly a wise decision as temperatures soared over the weekend.

There was also another first in Florence, the introduction by the EAA of two Athlete of the SPAR European Cup awards for the male and female athlete who had performed beyond expectations or made

an outstanding contribution to their team's success, or ensuring that relegation was avoided. The inaugural awards were made to Italy's Francesco Pignata and France's Christine Arron.

In the men's competition, Germany amassed a total of 113 points to beat France by nine, with host nation Italy in third with 98. The big surprise was seeing Great Britain, winners four times in the last 10 years, finishing in one of the relegation places. However as the venue for next year's Cup in Malaga boasts a nine lane track they earned a reprieve and will be able to compete in the top division next year. The Czech Republic however, who finished in last place, are relegated to the First League.

Germany's success was largely built in the field events where they took

victories in the long jump, triple jump, shot and javelin as well as top three spots in the discus and hammer. On the track, Tobias Unger ran an impressive 20.36 in the men's 200m but it was not enough to beat Great Britain's Christian Malcolm, who provided one of the few highlights for the beleaguered British team with victory in 20.15 seconds.

Sprinter Ronald Pognon and hurdler Ladj Doucouré were France's most impressive performers. Pognon ran his fastest ever 100m, a slightly wind assisted 10.06 seconds, to see off the challenge of Britain's Mark Lewis-Francis on Saturday, while Doucouré was an easy winner of the 110m hurdles on Sunday in 13.16. There were also victories for Marc Raquil in the 400m and Naman Keita in the 400m hurdles.

Italy took one victory through 2003 world pole vault champion Giuseppe Gibilisco with a season's best of 5.80m. Spain, many people's tip for relegation, were unbeatable in the endurance events, winning all five races and gaining valuable points to contribute towards their sixth place finish.

The Russian women's team were again dominant, amassing 131.5 points to win by 37.5 from Poland. Germany took third place, just one point behind the Poles. Italy and Greece finished in the bottom two places and will compete in the First League next year.

The Russians won 10 of the 20 events over the three days and were never behind in the competition. Triple jumper Anna Pyatykh won the triple jump for the fourth consecutive time with a leap of 14.72m ahead of Olympic Silver medalist Hrisopiya Devetzi (GRE) and World Bronze medalist Magdelin Martinez (ITA).

Poland took victories in the 400m hurdles, pole vault and hammer and set a national



Ionela Tirlea-Manolache (ROM) has made a record 21 starts in the SPAR European Cup



Juan Carlos Higuero (1500m), one of five Spanish winners in the distance races

Athlete of the SPAR European Cup: Francesco Pignata

Francesco Pignata (ITA) threw the javelin over 80 metres for the first time, his throw of 81.67m adding over two metres to his personal best. His third place earned him three points more than expected and was important in helping the Italian team to finish in an unexpected third place in front of their home crowd.

"It was great to break 80 metres here at the SPAR European Cup because I knew how important it was for the team," said Pignata. "I could feel the pressure but I wanted to show that I am able to produce good performances at the most important occasions. Until now 80 metres has been a wall for me. But in the competition I could see, after breaking that barrier once, that it was suddenly easy."

"I already knew that the javelin would be important for the team because I could see that it was one of the last events of the competition. Then, when I was on the field, I saw on the scoreboard that we were between fourth and third. I felt the pressure even more. I knew that I had to do something big, to put the team on the podium. This gave me more strength."



record to finish second in the final event, the 4x400m relay, which secured their second place. Germany had two wins – Olympic Silver medalist Steffi Nerius in the javelin and world champion Franka Dietzsch in the discus.

Two athletes made crucial contributions to ensure that Romania avoided relegation. Olympic 1500m Bronze medalist Maria Cioncan was close to achieving the middle distance double. After taking victory in the 800m in 2:00.88 on Saturday she was edged out in the 1500m by Russia's Yulia Chizhenko, 4:06.76 to 4:07.39. Ionela Tirlea-Manolache, the 400m hurdles Silver medalist in Athens, extended her record as the woman with the most number of starts in the SPAR European Cup to 21, contributing important points to her team in the 200m, 400m and 4x400m relay.

Athlete of the SPAR European Cup: Christine Arron

Christine Arron (FRA) was an impressive winner of the sprint double with times of 11.09 in the 100m and 22.84 in the 200m. She also ran through cramp in the women's 4x100m to ensure that her team finished and the three points they earned were vital to pull France out of the relegation zone.

"This is the first time I have doubled up in the 100m and 200m at the SPAR European Cup and I have never done all three events before so I am pleased to have got a great personal award for my efforts," said Arron. "Last week I was not able to train for four days due to fatigue and I wasn't even sure if I would be able to run, but I had to do it for the team."

"I think it was because of tiredness that I had cramps before the relay, as well as the heat of course. I felt the cramps first at the end of my warm up. I had this same problem once before but then it passed. This time it didn't pass, and it came in both legs. We thought maybe someone else should run but by the time realised how bad I was it was too late – there was no other option but to run. I was scared but I had to do it for my team."



Anna Pyatykh (RUS) won the triple jump for the fourth consecutive time

Promotion the target in athletics' biggest team competition

36 national teams and an AASSE* team competed in the European Cup First and Second League matches across Europe on the weekend of 18-19 June.

* Athletic Association of the Small States of Europe



The men's teams from Finland and the Ukraine and the women's teams from Sweden and Great Britain won promotion to the SPAR European Cup after winning their respective First League fixtures. Both Finland and Ukraine last competed in the SPAR European Cup in Annecy in 2002. Sweden's women make their first appearance in the top division, while Great Britain will return after an absence of just one year.

The competition was close in both the men's and women's Cups at the First League Group A match in Gävle, Sweden. Finland's men won by just two points from host Sweden, though the result could have been different had Sweden not been disqualified from the 4x100m relay. Finland took victories in the 200m, long jump, shot, hammer and javelin while Sweden's Stefan Holm won the high jump in the European Cup for the seventh consecutive time.

The women's event was very much a battle between Sweden and Spain, with the hosts securing victory by three points after a victory in the 4x400m relay in a new national record of 3:31.28. Other winners for Sweden included Susanna Kallur in the 100m hurdles, Kajsa Bergqvist in high jump and Carolina Klüft in the long jump.

The British women were comfortable winners of the First League Group B match in Leiria, Portugal, despite a surprise defeat for Paula Radcliffe over 5000m by Volha Krautsova of Belarus. Radcliffe however had already won the 3000m on day one and contributed 15 points to her team's final score of 134.5, 27 points ahead of Belarus.

The men's competition was much closer, with Ukraine coming through strongly on the second day to win promotion by four points from Greece. Ukraine only scored one individual victory over the weekend, from 20-year-old Vladyslav Revenko who cleared 5.80m in the pole vault. Olympic medallists Francis Obikwelu and Rui Silva pleased the home crowd with victories as Portugal finished fourth.

In the Second League Group A match in Tallinn, Estonia, Norway's men scored 127.5 points to finish 18.5 ahead of Austria, while the women's competition was much closer with just seven points covering the three Baltic states, Lithuania (110), Latvia (106) and Estonia (103).

At the Group B match in Istanbul, host nation Turkey's women were the easy victors by 18 points from Switzerland, but the men's competition was not decided until the final event, the 4x400m relay, when a win for Belarus ensured that they took the title by two points from Turkey.

Paula Radcliffe contributed 15 points to the GB team's victory in Leiria



Robert Harting (GER), Gold medalist in the discus



Laurien Hoos (NED), winner of the heptathlon

Russia top medal table in Erfurt

Russia was the most successful nation at the European Athletics Under 23 Championships in Erfurt, Germany, on 14-17 July.

While Russia won 15 Golds and a total of 31 medals in Erfurt, host nation Germany was also successful, taking 26 medals including four Golds in the throws.

Robert Harting achieved one of the best performances of the weekend with his championship record of 64.50m to win the men's discus. Sabine Rumpf also set a championship record of 60.75m to ensure that Germany achieved the discus double, while Petra Lammert took the women's shot title ahead of her team mate Christina Schwanitz and Annika Suthe won Gold in the women's javelin.

Russia's Golds included a double in the men's 5000m and 10,000m for twins Anatoliy and Yevgeniy Rybakov and a championship record of 20.44m for Anton Lyuboslavskiy in the shot. The Russian women won medals in almost every event and were dominant on the track, winning the 200m, 400m, 800m, 10,000m, 400m hurdles and 4x400m. In the 400m Olga Zaytseva ran 50.72 to break the championship record and beat

Great Britain's Christine Ohuruogu by just 0.01 seconds and she added another Gold and championship record in the 4x400m (3:27.27). Yekaterina Khoroshikh also set a championship record of 71.51m to take the hammer title from home favourite Betty Heidler.

The Olympic medallists in action in Erfurt both came away with Gold medals. Olympic heptathlon champion Carolina Klüft (SWE) defended her long jump title with a leap of 6.79m. High jump Bronze medallist Jaroslav Bába (CZE) cleared 2.29m on his third attempt to win the Gold. Down in third place was Ukrainian Yuriy Krimarenko, who just a few weeks later became world champion.

France's men took Gold in the 100m, 200m, 800m and pole vault and both the men's and women's 4x100m teams were also victorious, the men in a new championship record of 38.95 seconds. Mediterranean Games champion Arturo Casado (ESP) continued his impressive season, taking Gold in a tactical 1500m.

Greece's María Karatamáti was an easy winner of the women's 100m in a new championship record of 11.03 seconds in a race where six of the seven athletes ran personal bests. The top four athletes in the women's 100m hurdles also all ran lifetime bests, led by Estonia's Mirjam Liimask, who took title in an Estonian national record of 12.93 seconds.

The heptathlon and decathlon competitions took place simultaneously over the first two days and one of the memorable moments of the championships was the lap of honour by all the participants after the final event. Aleksey Drozdov (RUS) and Laurien Hoos (NED) emerged victorious at the end of the two days of competition, both with personal best scores. Drozdov scored 8196 points to beat his team mate Aleksey Sysoyev by 107, while Laurien Hoos set a championship record of 6291 points ahead of Lilli Schwarzkopf's (GER) personal best of 6196.

Great Britain took all three medals in the men's 100m, from left to right: Simeon Williamson, Craig Pickering, Alex Nelson



Teenagers put on a show in Kaunas

Over 900 of Europe's most talented teenage athletes from 45 countries competed at the European Athletics Junior Championships in Kaunas, Lithuania, on 21-24 July.



Vera Sokolova (RUS), winner of the 10,000m walk in a world junior record

The 2005 European Athletics Junior Championships, which were attended by the President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus, started with a bang on the first evening when Russia's Vera Sokolova set a world junior record of 43:11.34 to win the women's 10,000m track walk. Her team mate Andrey Ruzavin was also in impressive form in the men's walk, beating the 18-year-old championship record to win in 39:28.45 and go third on the junior all-time list. Their Golds were two of eight and a total of 24 medals won by the Russian team to top the medal table.

Great Britain and Northern Ireland also had a good championship, finishing in second place in the medal table with six Gold and 14 medals in all, while Germany won 16 medals including five Gold. Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland all took three Golds each.

Great Britain were strong in the men's sprints, taking the clean sweep in the 100m, led by Craig Pickering who beat his team mate Simeon Williamson by just 0.01 seconds in 10.51. In the 200m, Julian Thomas and Wade Bennett-Jackson took the Silver and Bronze behind Germany's Daniel Schnelting and there was another Silver for Martyn Rooney in the 400m. Their team mate Greg Rutherford was in impressive form in the long jump, leaping a UK junior record of 8.14m to take the title.

Croatia won two Golds in the 400m, with Zeljko Vincek taking the men's race in a national junior record of 50.15 seconds and World Youth Silver medallist Danijela

Grgic the women's. Milan Kotur added another Gold in the men's 400m hurdles. The women's 400m hurdles was a great race between Czech Zuzana Hejnová and Russia's Yekaterina Kostetskaya. Both athletes were given the same time, 55.89 seconds, a new championship record and also national junior record for Hejnová, with the Czech being awarded the Gold.

The Czech Republic's other Golds came from Remigius Machura in the men's shot and reigning World Junior champion Denisa Šcerbová in the women's long jump. Hungary did the hammer double with Kristóf Németh and Noémi Németh (no relation) taking the titles. Kristóf Németh's winning throw of 78.85m was a championship record. 2004 European Junior Cross Country champion Barnabás Bene added a third Gold for Hungary in the 5000m.

Poland's Iwona Brzezinska upset the home crowd by winning the women's 100m ahead of Lithuanian favourite Lina Grincikaite and she added another Gold in the 4x100m. Her team mate Marcin Chabowski showed his class in the men's 3000m steeplechase with an impressive victory in a championship record of 8:40.88, leading six other athletes to personal bests.

There was also a championship record for Margus Hunt of Estonia with 62.19m to take Gold in the men's discus. Despite some difficult weather conditions Belarus's Andrei Krauchanka came close to breaking the 8000 point barrier (7997) to win the decathlon by over 300 points.



Mikk Pahapill, the men's individual winner in Bydgoszcz

Estonia and Belarus top combined events nations

170 of Europe's best all-round athletes competed at the European Cup Combined Events on 2-3 July, with Estonia's men and Belarus's women winning the Super League in Bydgoszcz.

The surprise individual winner of the European Cup Combined Events Super League in Bydgoszcz, Poland, was 22-year-old Estonian Mikk Pahapill who scored 8149 points, adding an incredible 923 points to his personal best. His dream competition led the Estonian men to team victory, retaining the title they won last year. Russia were second and Spain third.

The women's team competition in Bydgoszcz was close, with Belarus winning by 120 points from the Ukraine and pre-event favourites Russia in third a further 19 points back. The individual winner was Tatyana Alisevich from Belarus

who had an excellent second day to score a new personal best of 6173 points.

The world's leading heptathlete Carolina Klüft was in action for Sweden in the First League match in Jyväskylä, Finland. Klüft was a clear winner of the individual competition with 6688 points ahead of 2004 Olympic Silver medallist Austra Skujyte of Lithuania who scored 6206. It was Estonia, however, who took team victory by 82 points from Sweden, with Italy in third.

The men's competition was much closer as Czech Tomáš Dvořák and Hungarian

Attila Zsivóczy both scored 8105 points and both had the same number of individual event victories. Finally it was Dvořák who was announced the winner by virtue of having the highest points score in an individual event, 903 in the 110m hurdles. Zsivóczy, however, led his team to victory ahead of hosts Finland and the Czech Republic.

The Second League took place in Maribor, Slovenia, where Belarus won the men's competition by nearly 1400 points from Greece and Sweden. The women's title went to Switzerland ahead of Hungary and Latvia. The individual winners were Aleksandr Parkhomenko of Belarus with 8025 points and Latvia's Jesenija Volžankina with 5437.

The Belarus women's team, winners of the European Cup Combined Events Super League

European Cup 10,000m

Spain's Juan Carlos de la Ossa and Germany's Sabrina Mockenhaupt were the winners of the European Cup 10,000m in Barakaldo, Spain, on 2 April.

De la Ossa became the sixth Spanish winner of the title in an excellent new personal best of 27:27.80 which still tops the 2005 European 10,000m rankings. His team mates Carles Castillejo (28:06.88) and Ricardo Serrano (28:19.20) both also ran lifetime bests to take second and third. Spain was the clear winner of the team title for the fifth time ahead of Portugal.

The team positions were reversed in the women's event with Portugal winning ahead of Spain. Individual winner Sabrina Mockenhaupt ran a personal best of 31:21.28 to finish well ahead of former Olympic 10,000m champion Fernanda Ribeiro of Portugal who clocked 32:03.22. Russia's Viktoriya Klimina also set a new personal best of 32:04.57 to finish third.



Juan Carlos de la Ossa



Aleksey Voyevodin was the winner of the first race of the day, the men's 50km, in a new meeting record of 3:41:03 ahead of his team mates Sergey Kirdapkin and Yuriy Andronov. The Russian 1-2-3 meant that they were clear winners of the team competition ahead of France and Italy.

In the men's 20km race, reigning Olympic champion Ivano Brugnetti from Italy was disqualified at the 16km point while leading, leaving the way clear for Ilya Markov to take the title in 1:20:50, four seconds ahead of Spain's Juan Manuel Molina. Markov and Vladimir Stankin, who finished third, led Russia to the team title ahead of Spain and the Ukraine.

Future world champion Olimpiada Ivanova was an easy winner of the women's 20km in 1:28:18 from Portugal's Susana Feitor, who went on to take the Bronze medal in Helsinki, and Italy's Elisa Rigaud. However the disqualification of two of Ivanova's team mates meant that Portugal took the team title by one point ahead of Italy with Romania in third – the only title of the weekend that did not go to Russia.

The junior men's 10km race was won by Andrey Ruzavin in 39:57 ahead of Italy's Giorgio Rubino and his Russian team mate

The start of the men's 20km race



Russians dominate in Miskolc

Russia dominated the 6th European Cup Race Walking in Miskolc, Hungary, on 21 May, winning all the individual titles and all but one of the team titles.

Aleksandr Prokhorov. The junior women's race was a rematch of the Russian championships with Vera Sokolova taking the title in 44:18 ahead of team mate Tatyana Kalmykova, with Belarus' Yelena

Rusak in third. Germany and Belarus were second and third behind Russia in the junior men's team competition and Belarus and Italy filled those two positions for the junior women.

Double Gold for Austria in Heiligenblut

A record 163 athletes from 28 nations took part in the 4th European Mountain Running Championships in Heiligenblut, Austria, on 10 July and it was two athletes from the host nation who took the titles.

The 2005 European Mountain Running Championships took place in driving rain on the lower slopes of the Grossglockner, the highest mountain in Austria.

In the women's race, last year's Silver medalist Andrea Mayr took the title over a tough 10km course with a total climb of 1335m. She dominated the race from the start and won in a time of 1:07:42, nearly two minutes ahead of pre-race favourite and defending champion Anna Pichtrova from the Czech Republic. Angelina Joly-Flückieger of Switzerland finished third.

The winner of the team title was also a surprise, with Great Britain and Northern Ireland taking the title ahead of favorites Italy in a close race. Both teams scored 34 points but the third British scorer finished one place and four seconds ahead of Italy's third runner. The Czech Republic took Bronze.

Florian Heinzle took the title in the men's 13km race which featured a climb of 1520m. He crossed the line on the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe in 1:11:36, 40 seconds ahead of German Helmut Schiessl who took Silver after a tough battle with defending champion Marco de Gasperi from Italy. Italy, who have dominated the team competition in this event in recent years, took the title again ahead of Great Britain and France.

Winner of the women's race, Andrea Mayr (AUT)



European Athletics Extraordinary Congress & Calendar Conference



This year's European Athletics Calendar Conference takes place on 13-15 October 2005 and is being held in conjunction with an European Athletics Extraordinary Congress at which the main topic for discussion will be the new EAA constitution.

The Calendar Conference and Congress take place at the Nordica hotel in Reykjavik, the largest hotel in Iceland.

Conference delegates and accompanying persons will have the opportunity to participate (at an additional cost) in a number of different sightseeing tours, including trips to the Blue Lagoon and the Golden Circle, deep sea fishing and whale watching, and an off-road Jeep tour.

Further information is available at: www.fri.is/EAA

Nordica Hotel
Reykjavik

Programme

Thursday 13 October

16.00–18.30	Euro Meetings General Assembly
20.00	Euro Meetings Dinner (by invitation only)

Friday 14 October

9.00–17.00	EAA Calendar Conference
12.00	Lunch
15.00–17.00	Balkan Athletic Association Meeting
19.00–20.00	EAA Welcome Cocktail for new Presidents /General Secretaries of EAA Member Federations
20.00	EAA Dinner (by invitation only)

Saturday 15 October

9.00–12.30	European Athletics Extraordinary Congress
13.00	Press Conference (followed by Press Cocktail)
13.00–15.00	Lunch
15.00–18.00	Head Coaches' Meeting
15.00–18.30	EAA Reflection Commission Meeting
20.00	LOC Dinner for all participants



Agenda

for the European Athletics Extraordinary Congress

1. Opening of the Congress
2. Roll Call and Announcement of votes present and voting strength
3. Appointment of Scrutineers
4. Approval of the Congress Agenda
5. Approval of the Minutes of the 19th Congress in Ljubljana/SLO 2005
6. President's Address
7. New EAA Constitution
8. European Athletics Calendar Conference 2007
9. Miscellaneous
10. Closing of the Congress by the President



SPAR European Cross Country Championships

The 2005 SPAR European Cross Country Championships take place on Sunday 11 December in Tilburg, the Netherlands.

Provisional Timetable

- 12.00 Junior women, 3 laps, 4830m
- 12.30 Junior men, 4 laps, 6500m
- 13.50 Senior women, 4 laps, 6500m
- 14.30 Senior men, 6 laps, 9840m

The Course

The races will take place in the Leijpark in the south of Tilburg, which is named after the little Leij river which runs along its southern edge. The course is relatively flat with a Bailey bridge forming an artificial obstacle. The athletes will run between three and six laps.

Five time SPAR European Cross Country Champion Sergiy Lebid (UKR) and 2003 Bronze medallist Aniko Kalovics (HUN) visited in the course while in Tilburg for

the Brabants Dagblad Tilburg Ten Miles at the beginning of September. Lebid said: "It is a good cross country course. I like it and I think it should be quite fast as long as it is not too muddy."

LOC Contact

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More information about the event is available at www.tilburg2005.org



Aniko Kalovics and Sergiy Lebid training on the course in the Leijpark

Category	Loops	Total
Junior Women	1 x 1490m, 2 x 1670m	4830m
Senior Women	1 x 1490m, 3 x 1670m	6500m
Junior Men	1 x 1490m, 3 x 1670m	6500m
Senior Men	1 x 1490m, 5 x 1670m	9840m



- 1 Parking
- 2 Toilet
- 3 Public
- 4 Sponsor Presentation
- 5 Public Catering
- 6 Video Wall
- 7 Ceremony
- 8 Ceremony Room
- 9 Passing Bridge
- 10 Tribune
- 11 Athletes Changing-Take in Room
- 12 Call Room
- 13 Youth Athletes Room
- 14 Athletes Finish Room
- 15 Guest House / VIP
- 16 Broadcasting NOS
- 17 Press Interview Room
- 18 Technical Point
- 19 Press Centre (250m)

European Athletics Championships 2006



The EAA's showpiece event, the European Athletics Championships, takes place in Gothenburg, Sweden, on 6*-13 August 2006.

* The opening ceremony will take place in the city centre on Sunday 6 August. The competition starts on Monday 7 August in the Ullevi Stadium.

The Event

The Göteborg 2006 opening ceremony will take on place on the evening of Sunday 6 August in Gothenburg city centre, the first time the European Athletics Championships have been opened outside the stadium. In the days before the Championships and during the event itself a Championships City Festival will take place in the city, featuring entertainment and food inspired by the many different European cuisines.

The athletics competition starts on Monday 7 August in the Ullevi Stadium. There will be morning and evening sessions on the first five days of competition, with afternoon sessions on the final Saturday and Sunday. The women's 3000m steeplechase is included in the Championships for the first time.

Tickets

Tickets can be bought from the event website www.goteborg2006.com or by telephone on +46 31 61 2006 (enquiries

but not bookings can also be sent to tickets@goteborg2006.com).

Three ticket packages are available:
Full Track – 7 days, 7-13 August
Spin – 4 days, 7-10 August
Highlights – 3 days, 11-13 August

Prices range from €90 for the lowest category Spin or Highlights package to €640 for the top category Full Track package. Individual day tickets will go on sale next year.

When booking tickets the Championships City Pass can also be purchased, which entitles the holder to free admission to Gothenburg's museums, sightseeing tours, free travel on public transport and discounts in selected stores as well as other exciting offers and surprises. Packages including accommodation are also available.

Partners

As well as the EAA's Official International Partners – SPAR, SEIKO, EPSON and EUROVISION – 11 National Partners have pledged to support the event.

Official Partners: Telia, Vattenfall
Official Suppliers: Puma, SAS, Securitas, Schenker, Nordic Sport, Teleca
Official Media Partners: Dagens Nyheter, Göteborgs-Posten, Sydsvenska Dagbladet

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For more information about the European Athletics Championships 2006 go to www.goteborg2006.com



The Göteborg 2006 mascot Allwin with Swedish athletes Emma Green, Carolina Klüft and Kajsa Bergqvist at the recent Finnkampen event in Gothenburg

Development cooperation in the Caucasus



Participants in the Caucasus Federations Workshop in Tbilisi, Georgia, May 2005

EAA Vice-President Valentin Balakhnichev and Development Committee Chairman Janez Aljancic are currently leading an initiative to promote the development of athletics in the Caucasus.

In May, the two travelled to the region to assess the situation there and co-chair a five federation workshop hosted by the Amateur Athletic Federation of Georgia in Tbilisi. Aljancic also attended Armenia's top international event, the Garnik Ghukasyan Memorial in Asharat, which received a grant from the European Athletics Support Programme.

In a diary of his week long visit entitled 'Our Caucasus Mission', Aljancic writes "what we encountered was both shocking and uplifting" as he describes

the problems the sport faces in the region and the efforts being made to overcome them. (To read Aljancic's diary in full visit www.european-athletics.org and click on 'Development'.)

A follow-up meeting, at which the federations appointed Balakhnichev to lead work on the creation of a regional cooperation association, was held in Helsinki during the IAAF World Championships in August. The group also agreed to co-ordinate their competition calendars and develop plans for joint training camps.

"Our aim," says Balakhnichev, "is to raise standards in the region through increased cooperation."



EAA announces 2006 Science Awards

To encourage research leading to the promotion and development of athletics, the European Athletics Association is inviting scientists, academics and coaches to enter their work for the fourth European Athletics Science Awards. The awards include prize money to a total of 20,000 Swiss Francs.

The biennial competition is open to individuals or project teams from European countries that have carried out original research on any aspect of athletics.

Awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places will be made by an EAA appointed Jury, which will be chaired by Vice President Agoston Schulek. The Jury will include one member nominated by the European Athletics Coaches Association.

The winning individual or team leader of the winning project will be invited to receive the award at a ceremony on the occasion of the 2006 European Athletics Calendar Conference.

The top prize in the 2004 edition of the awards, which attracted a record entry of 28 papers, was won by Eugeny Wrublevsky of Russia for his paper entitled "Individual Approach to Women's Training in Speed and Power Track and Field Events".

Entries for the 2006 European Athletics Science Awards must be received at the EAA office in Lausanne by 1 May 2006.

For entry procedures and further details visit www.european-athletics.org and click on 'Development'.

EAA Staff Update

Director General



Christian Milz

Following an extensive recruitment process, Christian Milz has been appointed as the new EAA Director General and started work in the Lausanne office at the beginning of September. Christian is Swiss, his mother tongue is French and he also speaks English, German and some Italian.

Christian, who holds a degree in economics, was previously working in banking and for the past six years has been employed by IMG Suisse as Vice President. At IMG he was responsible for the contract with the International Ski Federation (FIS), including the EBU contract for the Nordic and Alpine World Skiing Championships in 2001, 2003 and 2005. He also gained considerable experience in event management, marketing and international sport (working with equestrianism, rowing, golf and football as well as skiing) and in other relevant areas.

Christian took part in athletics before playing football for several years and now enjoys running and has completed a number of marathons.

Christian is looking forward to using the expertise he has gained at major sporting events and in finance and commerce to bring added value to European Athletics in cooperation with the EAA President, Council and Executive Committee and the head office team.

Competition Manager



Célia Mendes

Célia Mendes joined the EAA at the beginning of June as Competition Manager. She is Portuguese and was previously working at the Portuguese Athletics Federation as Deputy General Secretary and as a member of the Competitions Department. She began her involvement in athletics as a judge in 1989 and from 2000 to 2002 she was also a member of the National Judges Council.

In addition to Portuguese, Célia can speak English, French and Spanish. Her main responsibility is to manage the EAA competition system which includes official rules and regulations, proposals for rule changes, coordinating the competition committee and various other working group meetings and other related matters.

EAA Events 2006-07

2006		
05.03	3 rd European Athletics Indoor Cup	Liévin/FRA
18-19.03	6 th European Cup Winter Throwing	Tel-Aviv/ISR
15.04	10 th European Cup 10000m	Antalya/TUR
17-18.06	European Cup 1 st League Group A	Prague/CZE
17-18.06	European Cup 1 st League Group B	Thessaloniki/GRE
17-18.06	European Cup 2 nd League Group A	Banska Bystrica/SVK
17-18.06	European Cup 2 nd League Group B	Novi-Sad/SCG
28-29.06	27 th SPAR European Cup	Malaga/ESP
01-02.07	European Cup Combined Events Super League	Arles/FRA
01-02.07	European Cup Combined Events 1 st League	Yalta/UKR
01-02.07	European Cup Combined Events 2 nd League	Monzon/ESP
09.07	5 th European Mountain Running Championships	Upice/CZE
07-13.08	19 th European Athletics Championships	Gothenburg/SWE
10.12	13 th SPAR European Cross Country Championships	San Giorgio su Legnano/ITA

2007		
02-04.03	29 th European Athletics Indoor Championships	Birmingham/GBR
12-15.07	6 th European Athletics Under 23 Championships	Debrecen/HUN
19-22.07	19 th European Athletics Junior Championships	Hengelo/NED
09.12	14 th SPAR European Cross Country Championships	Toro/ESP

New EAA anthem

At its meeting in Ljubljana in April, the EAA Council approved a new EAA anthem composed by Armenian composer Gevorg Manasyan.

At the request of the Council, the President of the Athletic Federation of the Republic of Armenia, Sargis Khachatryan, had arranged a competition amongst Armenian composers to create an official anthem for the EAA. Manasyan was the winner of the competition and Khachatryan attended the Council meeting to introduce the proposed anthem.

Following the Council's approval of the anthem Khachatryan said: "Armenia has a great tradition in classical music with many internationally known composers such as Aram Khachatryan. The Armenian people will be very happy that our country could contribute this anthem to the European Athletic Association."

The new EAA anthem will be used at the opening and closing ceremonies of EAA events and on other official occasions.



Sargis Khachatryan (left) with the composer of the new EAA anthem Gevorg Manasyan

European Athletics Indoor Cup 2006



The 3rd European Athletics Indoor Cup will take place on Sunday 5 March in Liévin in northern France.

The European Athletics Indoor Cup was introduced by the EAA as a project event in 2003 and the future of the competition will be considered after the third edition next year. The European Athletics Indoor Cup is a team competition similar to the outdoor SPAR European Cup and takes place in alternate years to the European Athletics Indoor Championships. Spain's men and Russia's women were the winners of the inaugural event in 2003 and in 2004 Russia retained the women's Cup and France was victorious in the men's competition.

Qualified Teams

The teams who finished in the top six positions at the SPAR European Cup plus the winners of the European Cup First League Group A and B matches in 2005

Qualified Teams

MEN	WOMEN
Finland (+)	France
France	Germany
Germany	Italy
Italy	Poland
Poland	Romania
Russia	Russia
Spain	Sweden (+)
Ukraine (+)	Ukraine
(+)	

are qualified to compete in the European Athletics Indoor Cup. However, the Italian women's team, who finished seventh in the SPAR European Cup, will compete in Liévin following the withdrawal of Great Britain, the winners of the First League Group B match, as their leading athletes will be in Australia for the Commonwealth Games.

European Cup 2006: Groupings

SPAR European Cup Malaga/ESP, 28-29 June

MEN	WOMEN
Finland (+)	France
France	Germany
Germany	Great Britain (+)
Great Britain	Poland
Italy	Romania
Poland	Russia
Russia	Spain (+)
Spain	Sweden (+)
Ukraine (+)	Ukraine

1st League Group A Prague/CZE, 17-18 June

MEN	WOMEN
Austria (+)	Belarus
Belarus (+)	Belgium
Belgium	Czech Republic
Czech Republic (-)	Finland
Estonia	Ireland
Norway (+)	Italy (-)
Sweden	Latvia (+)
Switzerland	Switzerland (+)

2nd League Group A Banska Bystrika/SVK, 17-18 June

MEN	WOMEN
Andorra	Andorra
Bosnia&Herzegovina	Bosnia&Herzegovina
Iceland	Croatia (-)
Ireland (-)	Iceland
Israel	Israel
Latvia	Moldova
Moldova	Norway (-)
Slovak Republic (-)	Slovak Republic

1st League Group B Thessaloniki/GRE, 17-18 June

MEN	WOMEN
Croatia	Bulgaria
Greece	Greece (-)
Hungary	Hungary
Netherlands	Lithuania (+)
Portugal	Netherlands
Romania	Portugal
Slovenia	Slovenia
Turkey (+)	Turkey (+)

(+) promoted
(-) relegated

2nd League Group B Novi Sad/SCG, 17-18 June

MEN	WOMEN
AASSE*	AASSE*
Albania	Albania
Armenia	Armenia
Azerbaijan	Austria
Bulgaria	Azerbaijan
Cyprus	Cyprus
Denmark	Denmark
Georgia	Estonia
Lithuania	Georgia
Luxembourg	Macedonia
Macedonia	Serbia & Montenegro (-)
Serbia & Montenegro (-)	

*AASSE = Athletic Association of the Small States of Europe

Note: As the stadium in Malaga has nine lanes, the EAA Council took the decision that nine teams would compete in the 2006 SPAR European Cup.

Men: Only one team has been relegated from the 2005 SPAR European Cup. As a consequence only three teams have been relegated from the 1st League to the 2nd League. The best 7th placed team according to the IAAF scoring tables (Croatia) stays in the 1st League.

Women: In accordance with EAA Regulation 603.3.1, Spain (2nd in 1st League Group A in 2005) as the host team is automatically qualified to participate in the 2006 SPAR European Cup. As a consequence only three teams have been relegated from the 1st League to the 2nd League. The best 7th placed team (Ireland) stays in the 1st League.

European records set in 2005

Men

3000m SC	8:04.95	+	Simon	VROEMEN	NED	1969	Brussels	26.08.
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Women

Pole Vault	4.93	*	Yelena	ISINBAYEVA	RUS	1982	Lausanne	05.07.
Pole Vault	4.95	*/+	Yelena	ISINBAYEVA	RUS	1982	Madrid	16.07.
Pole Vault	5.00	*/+	Yelena	ISINBAYEVA	RUS	1982	London	22.07.
Pole Vault	5.01	*/+	Yelena	ISINBAYEVA	RUS	1982	Helsinki	12.08.
Hammer	77.06	*/+	Tatyana	LYSENKO	RUS	1983	Mocow	15.07.
Javelin	70.03	+	Christina	OBERGFÖLL	GER	1981	Helsinki	14.08.

U23 Men

110m Hurdles	13.02	+	Ladji	DOUCOURE	FRA	1983	Saint-Denis	01.07.
110m Hurdles	12.97	+	Ladji	DOUCOURE	FRA	1983	Angers	15.07.
Shot	20.84	+	Edis	ELKASEVIC	CRO	1983	Nashville	15.05.
Shot	20.88	+	Edis	ELKASEVIC	CRO	1983	Sacramento	10.06.
Shot	20.94	+	Edis	ELKASEVIC	CRO	1983	Velenje	23.06.
4x100m	38.95	+	National Team		FRA		Erfurt	17.07.

U23 Women

100m	11.03	+	Ivet	LALOVA	BUL	1984	Ostrava	09.06.
100m	11.03	+	Maria	KARASTAMÁTI	GRE	1984	Erfurt	16.07.
1500m	4:03.73	+	Nelya	NEPORADNA	UKR	1985	Athens	14.06.
10000m	32:17.49	+	Tatyana	PETROVA	RUS	1983	Tula	14.06.
Hammer	73.08	+	Yekaterina	KHOROSHIKH	RUS	1983	Tula	14.06.
Hammer	75.95	+	Tatyana	LYSENKO	RUS	1983	Tula	13.07.
Hammer	77.06	*/+	Tatyana	LYSENKO	RUS	1983	Moscow	15.07.
4x400m	3:27.27	+	National Team		RUS		Erfurt	17.07.

Junior Women

Pole Vault	4.48	*	Silke	SPIEGELBURG	GER	1986	Münster	25.08.
10000m Walk	43:11.34	*/+	Vera	SOKOLOVA	RUS	1987	Kaunas	21.07.

*also World Record + awaiting ratification

European Cups Combined Events 2006: Groupings

Super League

Arles/FRA, 1-2 July

MEN	WOMEN
Estonia	Belarus
Finland (+)	Estonia (+)
France	Finland
Hungary (+)	Great Britain*
Italy	Poland
Poland	Russia
Russia	Sweden (+)
Spain	Ukraine

*Due to German Athletics Federation's (DLV) withdrawal of their women's team from the Super League, GBR will not be relegated to 1st League

1st League

Yalta/UKR, 1-2 July

MEN	WOMEN
Austria*** (-)	Czech Republic
Belarus (+)	France**
Czech Republic	Greece
Great Britain*	Hungary (+)
Greece (+)	Italy
Latvia	Lithuania
Netherlands	Netherlands (-)
Ukraine	Switzerland (+)

*Due to German Athletics Federation's (DLV) withdrawal of their men's team from the 1st League, GBR will not be relegated to 2nd League

**As the GBR women's team has not been relegated to 1st League, FRA will not be relegated to 2nd League

***Following its non-participation in the 2005 Super League, the AUT men's team was relegated to 1st League

2nd League

Monzon/ESP, 1-2 July

MEN	WOMEN
Belgium	Austria (-)
Croatia	Latvia
Lithuania	Portugal
Portugal	Slovenia
Norway	Spain
Slovenia	Turkey
Sweden	
Switzerland (-)	

Participating individuals

Azerbaijan
Croatia
Cyprus
Denmark
Iceland
Ireland
Moldova
Romania
Serbia&Montenegro
Slovak Republic
Turkey

Participating individuals

Belgium
Croatia
Denmark
Iceland
Ireland
Israel
Norway
Romania
Serbia&Montenegro
Slovak Republic

(+) promoted (-) relegated

EAA Cross Country Permit Meetings 2005-06

17 October	Velka Pardubicka Cross Country	Pardubice/CZE
13 November	47th International Warandeloop	Tilburg/NED
13 November	Cross Internacional de Amora-Seixal	Amora-Seixal/POR
20 November	Margate International Cross Country	Margate/GBR
20 November	12th Cross Internacional de Soria	Soria/ESP
27 November	Cross de l'Acier	Leffrinckroucke/FRA
27 November	Cross Internacional de Torres Vedras	Torres Vedras/POR
27 November	Lotto Crosscup van West-Vlaanderen	Roeselare/BEL
8 January	52nd Cross Internacional Zornotza	Amorebieta/ESP
22 January	29th Cross della Vallagarina	Rovereto/ITA
29 January	Lotto Crosscup de Hannut	Hannut/BEL



IMPRESSUM

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European Champion Clubs Cup

The 2005 edition of the European Champion Clubs Cup for track and field took place in Lagos, Portugal, on 28-29 May.

In the women's competition Sports Club Luch Moscow won the title for the ninth consecutive time but they had to come from behind as Greek club Panellinios, who finished second, were leading at the end of day one. Spain's Valencia Terra i Mar finished third. Winners for the Moscow club included Nadezhda Ostapchuk (BLR) in the shot and Olga Kuzenkova in the hammer, who went on to win Gold at the World

Championships later in the summer, as well as future European Junior high jump champion Svetlana Shkolina.

The men's title was won by Italian club Fiamme Galle by two points from Sports Club Luch Moscow. The third place finish of hosts Sporting Clube Portugal was in large part thanks to the performances of the club's two Olympic medallists, Francis Obikwelu and Rui Silva, who were both double winners over the weekend.

Youth athletes take centre stage

Two important competitions for Under 18 athletes took place in 2005 – the European Youth Olympic Festival in Lignano, Italy, on 2-8 July and the IAAF World Youth Championships in Marrakech, Morocco, on 13-17 July.

28 different countries won medals at the European Youth Olympic Festival and the medal table was topped by The Netherlands with 4 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze medals. Germany finished in second place with 3 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze and Russia in third with 3 Gold, 3 Silver and 1 Bronze. Estonia and host nation Italy also won 3 Golds.

Two of Estonia's Gold medals were won by jumper Kaire Leibak. She broke the championship record with 6.40m to win the long jump and in the triple jump set a new national junior record of 13.47m, which she improved to 13.74m when taking the Silver in Marrakech the following week.

European athletes won 36 medals (30.8% of the medals awarded) at the World Youth Championships. Russia were the leading European nation in fourth position in the medal table with 3 Gold and 5 Silver and Great Britain the next best in



Danijela Grgic (CRO) won 400m Gold in Lignano and Silver in Marrakech before winning another Gold at the European Athletics Junior Championships

ninth position with 2 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze. In all, 15 different European nations won medals at the event.

There were clean sweeps for Europe in both hammer competitions and the girls' heptathlon with the titles going to Hungary's Sandor Palhegyi, Romania's Bianca Perie and Russia's Tatyana Chernova respectively.

British sprinter Harry Aikines-Aryeetey became the first athlete to win the 100m-200m double in the short history of the championships and Golds also went to Russia's Sergey Mozorov and Tatyana Kalmykova in the 10,000m walk races and Greece's Ekaterini Stefanidi in the girls' pole vault.

IAAF World Youth Championships: Medal Standing by Area

Area	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Percentage
Africa	11	7	4	22	18.8%
Asia	8	4	8	20	17.1%
Europe	8	16	12	36	30.8%
NACAC	10	8	9	27	23.1%
Oceania	2	3	2	7	6.0%
S. America	0	1	4	5	4.3%

SPAR and EAA celebrate 10 years of partnership



Ten years ago, SPAR International took the significant decision to become the principal sponsor of European Athletics. This was part of a strategy to expand upon the brand awareness of the world's largest independent supermarket group.

The partnership between SPAR and the EAA continues today and over the last decade the SPAR brand has been increasingly linked with athletics, not only at international, but also at national and community level, with significant benefits for SPAR and also for the development of the sport.

At a press conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the partnership during the SPAR European Cup in Florence, Dr Gordon Campbell, Managing Director of SPAR International, said that such a longstanding relationship between commercial

organisations and sporting bodies was unusual in the fast changing world of sport.

He said: "The relationship between SPAR and the EAA has grown in importance due to a mutual understanding of what each party requires. SPAR has been pleased to have the opportunity to support the professional level of presentation of athletics in EAA events.

"We need to attract younger spectators. Nowadays, spectators must be entertained and the presentation of athletics events will have to be radically changed to attract the loyalty and commitment of a younger generation."

Hansjörg Wirz, EAA President, added: "The EAA has enjoyed a long and successful partnership with SPAR. The continued support by SPAR of European Athletics has assisted the EAA in developing our events over the last ten years and we hope that the partnership will continue to evolve as we face important challenges in ensuring that the sport caters better for fans and athletes.

"SPAR is the title sponsor of two events which are key elements in the European



Dr Gordon Campbell and Hansjörg Wirz at the press conference in Florence

Athletics calendar, the SPAR European Cup and the SPAR European Cross Country Championships. As well as attracting the top stars, these events also offer opportunities for younger athletes to compete in a major championship environment. I am pleased that SPAR is also supporting athletics development programmes at national level as these are key in attracting new participants to our sport."

While SPAR is proud to be associated with EAA events, its support of the sport extends much further. Many SPAR national organisations, in particular SPAR UK and SPAR Finland, are now supporting programmes at junior and community level and helping youngsters to develop a passion for sport. Sports sponsorship is also a key element in SPAR's policy initiative on Healthy Eating and Healthy Living.

Dr Campbell added: "The SPAR brand is increasingly recognised as a global retail brand and the sponsorship of the EAA has contributed in an important way to the awareness and recognition of the brand. The sponsorship of athletics fits well with the values of SPAR."



EAA International Partners



“Is this a dream or reality?”

German freelance journalist Ursula Kaiser talks to new European javelin record holder Christina Obergföll (GER)

It was a moment an athlete doesn't have very often in their career. On the last day of the IAAF World Championships in Helsinki, 23-year-old Christina Obergföll threw 70.03m on her second attempt in the javelin final - that meant the Silver medal and a new European record. She improved the previous record of 69.48m set in 2000 by Norway's Trine Hattestad and in less than one minute the life of this young woman changed totally.

Osleidys Menendez from Cuba had already thrown a new world record of 71.70m in the first round, but this was not a real surprise because she was the big favourite and current world record holder. Christina Obergföll, however, was speechless after her massive throw. She was only the second woman ever to throw more than 70 metres with the new specification javelin. She could neither describe the situation nor her feelings. It was too much.

The blond athlete from Offenburg, a city close to Baden-Baden in the south of Germany, could not believe what she did with her own arms and legs and what she saw on the screen. After her big attempt she sat on a bench while the competition was going on, shaking her head and feeling as if she was in a trance.

“I asked myself, ‘is it a dream or reality?’ I couldn't continue, my legs were shaking and I was unable to move,” the 1.75m tall athlete said after the competition.

She took her last attempt after passing the others, but only for the spectators. And after that she had to answer hundreds of questions because Christina Obergföll was an athlete only a few people had heard of before - except insiders and her opponents of course, and the coach of world record holder Menendez. He said some weeks before: “I am sure, that in two years Christina will be the one who will be the most dangerous thrower for Osleidys.” But he did not expect it to come so soon.

For Christina Obergföll the world started to change. “This is total madness, is it a dream or did it really happen,” she repeated again and again.

The student of English and Sport in Freiburg has a very individual technique. Steffi Nerius, who was number one in Germany until that day in Helsinki wonders: “Doesn't it hurt when Christina throws?” But even though it doesn't look perfect, obviously it is very successful. “It was not a perfect throw,” Obergföll said and laughed. She never thought that she would be able to throw more than 70 metres. “I expected 66 or 67 metres, if everything is good,” she explained.

Her coach, Werner Daniels, who normally looks after jumpers and sprinters, didn't know what to say. He had a strange dream one week before the World Championships: “I saw Christina throwing a world record, but in the warm up instead of in the competition.”

The development of the young lady is unbelievable and astonishing. Three years ago the new European record holder had a bad hip injury. For a long time nobody could find out what had happened and Obergföll, whose boyfriend Christian Nicolay is also javelin thrower, already had thoughts of retiring. “Then we found a doctor who finally could help her,” Daniels said.

After a two year rest, Obergföll started again in 2004 and she qualified for the Olympics, but she didn't reach the final and before she came to Helsinki her best mark was 64.59m. Her biggest international success before Helsinki was eighth place at the 2000 World Junior Championships and the same position at the 2003 European Athletics Under 23 Championships in Bydgoszcz.

Daniels and his Silver medalist have been training together for seven years. “Christina is very ambitious and consistent, she knows what she wants,” said the former long jumper who is still

learning himself about the secrets of javelin throwing. “Christina is my first thrower. We were learning by doing.” It was obviously not the worst idea. Compared with a lot of world class athletes, Obergföll does about half as much training. “The average is 170 throws a week. We open one more drawer every year,” added Daniels.

Obergföll doesn't fear questions about doping because she improved by 5.44m in one competition. “I will answer that behind my result is a lot of power in my body,” the Silver medalist said, “and a lot of will.”

The new javelin star also knows that she will not reach 68 or 70 metres every day, and she is self-confident and strong enough to deal with the pressure. “Nobody should expect that I will throw this in every competition, it is not possible,” she said.

Obergföll hopes that it is a result she will one day reach again. And then it will be not such a surprise as in Helsinki because she knows already how it feels to catch a 70 metre throw. And next time she can enjoy the feeling more and more because she will know it really happened. One moment can change everything...

