


TNT-Fortuna Combined Events Meeting
[15-06-2011 / 16-06-2011]
Kladno, CZE 

Day One

Thursday, 16 June 2011

Chernova and Draudvila the overnight leaders in Kladno – IAAF Combined Events Challenge



Tatyana Chernova and Karolina Tyminska in Kladno (graf.cz)

Kladno, Czech Republic – Top Russian heptathlete Tatyana Chernova and, quite unexpectedly, Lithuanian Darius Draudvila were the leaders after Day 1 (15) of the 5th **TNT-Fortuna Meeting**, the third stop of the **IAAF World Combined Events Challenge**.

Chernova played her favourite's role very well on the first day of action, tallying 3882 points thanks to personal bests in the 100m Hurdles and a would-be personal best in the 200m. In the men's competition, it's not Andrei Krauchanka nor Leonel Suárez, but Draudvila who is the surprise leader in the Decathlon. Draudvila, whose best major result was a sixth place finish from last summer's European Championships in Barcelona, tallied 4225

Draudvila in early command, both others remain well within striking distance - Decathlon

Draudvila kicked off with a 10.84 (+0.3 m/s) dash in the 100m, losing only to Eduard Mihan of Belarus by 0.01. (Later Mihan did not start in the Long Jump). Also running in the first heat, Roman Sebrle, showing that his recent injury has cost him some speed, clocked 11.32. Running against -2.4 metre per second headwinds, Krauchanka clocked 11.37 and Suárez 11.17. Five sprinters were separated by just 0.03, including another Cuban Yordanis García.

Pictured right: Darius Draudvila
(Photo: graf.cz)



The best Long jump came from Krauchanka who leaped 7.51m, followed by Dutchman Hans Van Alphen (7.45m) and Carlos Chinin (7.39m) of Brazil. Chinin moved into second position behind Draudvila who held the lead by jumping 7.27m. Frenchman Gael Querin (7.36m) and Kévin Mayer (7.34m) also produced good efforts, as did local youngster Michal Stefek (PB 7.30m). Sebrle meanwhile only reached 7.21m after encountering some problems with his Achilles' tendon, which limited him in the next events.

The strongest man in the field, Dmitriy Karpov, produced the best effort in the Shot Put result with 16.69m, which elevated him to second place. Draudvila hit a 15.61m lifetime best and maintained his lead. Three others managed to break the 15-metre line: European champion Romain Barras (15.22m), Van Alphen (15.04m) which moved him into third, and Sebrle (15.03m).

Chinin and Suárez cleared 2.07m in the High Jump, the brightest moment of the day for the Cuban world silver medallist. Five competitors cleared 2.01m: PBs for Einar Larusson of Iceland and Stefek, his second PB of the day. Draudvila was 3 centimetres short of that result, but still held the lead ahead of Chinin and Karpov, who like Draudvila topped out at 1.98m. Sebrle cleared 1.89m but bowed out after three tires at 1.95m, obviously not sure on his feet.

An excellent 400m came from Díaz, at 47.96 the only performance under 48 seconds. There was also very solid running also by Querin (48.65), Mayer (48.66), Willem Coertzen (48.87) of South Africa and Van Alphen (49.00). The top names finished just a few hundredths of a second back, but still under 50 seconds – Chinin, Draudvila and Karpov, were separated by just 0.39. Sebrle wasn't able to run faster than 54.33, closing the first day far behind his teammates lead by Stefek (12th) whose 49.44 was his third personal best of the day.

Draudvila ended the day with 4225 points, 148 ahead of his result in Götzis late last month. His rivals in Kladno are much closer. Chinin, who has never broken the 8000-point barrier, trails by 61 points with a 4164 tally. Karpov (4143) is another 21 points behind. Van Alphen, García, and Coertzen ended the day with scores of around 4100, promising a tense conclusion on day 2. We can also expect attacks from the back by Barras or more likely by the excellent javelin thrower Suárez, who are currently lying in eighth and ninth, respectively, both less than 200 points behind. Sebrle ended the day 19th and it's unsure whether he'll continue.

"It wasn't bad day," Draudvila summarised. "The shot put was very good, the 100 metres wasn't bad, either. Some events I may have done better the long jump and 400 metres, but I like being the leader. There are many very good athletes here and every point helps me overall. I'm looking forward to tomorrow." Draudvila added that he's recently been working on improving in the Discus and Javelin throws.

Chernova and Tyminska wage close duel - Heptathlon

From the opening 100m Hurdles event, the women's competition become a duel between Chernova and Karolina Tyminska of Poland. Chernova showed her potential by running an excellent personal best of 13.32 (-0.5 m/s), a major improvement on her 13.47 previous best. On the other hand Tyminska looked very good as well finishing only 0.03 behind Russian favourite. Two

other competitors ran under 14 seconds - Aiga Grabuste of Latvia and South African Janet Lawless - also in the same heat.

Chernova followed with another win in the High Jump clearing 1.83m. New Zealander Sarah Cowley succeeded at 1.80m to move into third overall. Meanwhile Tyminska jumped 1.74m along with Lawless – a PB for the latter - while her teammate Izabela Mikolajczyk, local Katerina Cachova and Helga Thorsteinsdottir (PB) all cleared 1.77m.

The Shot put was a minor loss for Chernova, whose momentum was halted with a 13.22m best. The victory went to Dutchwoman Jolanda Keizer who reached 14.65m. The only other woman with a 14-metre effort was Tyminska (14.41m) while Thorsteinsdottir (13.68m), moved into third.

In the final event, Chernova and Tyminska raced neck-and-neck in the 200m, with the Russian prevailing in 23.32 (+2.5) with a strong finish. Tyminska ran well, clocking 23.52. Latvian Grabuste won the other heat (+0.7) with 24.42 ahead of Cachova's 24.75, PBs for both.

It looks like we have two races here in the Heptathlon. Chernova leads with 3882 points, 174 over her Götzis result with Tyminska still in contention at 3823, just 59 points behind. Three hundred points down one can see the struggle for third place with Grabuste leading that race with 3558. Keizer and Cachova are not very close to Latvian, but still in the game with 3400+ tallies.

"I'm very happy to finish with my personal bests," Chernova, the reigning Olympic bronze medallist, said. "I think I have done what I could. A few weeks ago in Götzis I made a lot of mistakes in many events, that's why I came here to do better results."

The multi-eventers were greeted nice conditions, mostly sunny and warm weather and a solid crowd in Kladno, a city of 70 thousand located west of Prague in central Bohemia.

Michal Procházka for IAAF

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Day Two

Friday, 17 June 2011

**Chernova impresses with 6773pts tally in Kladno
IAAF Combined Events Challenge**



Tatyana Chernova en route to a big personal best of 6773 in Kladno
(Jan Kucharčík - atletika.cz)

Kladno, Czech Republic – Tatyana Chernova of Russia took a big Heptathlon victory while Cuban Leonel Suárez triumphed in the Decathlon at the 5th **TNT-Fortuna IAAF World Combined Events Challenge** meeting on Thursday (16).

Chernova, the 2008 Olympic bronze medallist, lived up to her star billing, scoring a massive personal best and meeting record of 6773 points. Setting up a strong duel at the upcoming World Championships, her tally was just 17 shy of world leader Jessica Ennis. Suárez, the reigning world silver medallist, followed up on a slow first day with a strong and fast finish to win the Decathlon with 8231 points.

Chernova's consistency pays - Heptathlon

Latvian Aiga Grabusté made an excellent start on day two, leaping a 6.65m personal best in the Long Jump, moving into third place. Not hitting the take off board, overnight leader Chernova was well shy of her superb 6.82m leap from Götzis last month but with her 6.59m best was one centimetre better than her main rival, Pole Karolina Tyminska, who remained in second place. Besides the top three, only New Zealander Sarah Cowley sailed beyond six metres, reaching 6.03m. Local hope Katerina Cachova managed 5.85m to sit in fifth place.

Chernova all but sealed her overall victory in the Javelin Throw after reaching 52.00m even, shy of her 54.49m PB but five metres better than her best effort in Götzis. Helga Thorsteinsdottir of Iceland also threw beyond 50 metres, reaching a PB 50.84m, with Cachova producing the third best mark at 44.89m. The Icelander climbed to sixth place, while losing 69 points on her Czech rival and 50 on Dutchwoman Jolanda Keizer. More drama could have been expected from positions four to six than among the top three where Polish Tyminska (40.17m) and Grabuste (43.13m) safely held spots two and three before the final event.

The 800m was a celebration of two best heptathletes. Tyminska took a gun-to-tape victory in an excellent 2:08.33 with Chernova behind her in 2:10.62. There were three personal bests in the faster heat with Thorsteinsdottir, Grabuste and Cachova all finishing under 2:14.

“I had many competitions this month so I didn’t have much power today, but I had a lot of ambitions,” said the 24-year-old Chernova, who finished with 6773 points, 155 better than her previous mark. “The long jump was good but I could have done another personal best if I hit the board. Before the competition I wanted to beat Jessica Ennis’ world lead, and I didn’t expect I could do it after the long jump. Anyway, I tried to throw and run afterwards as best as I could. I’ll be training again hard to do all events perfectly to get a medal in Daegu.”

Second place went to Tyminska, who has never won a medal at a major championships, her best result her fourth place finish at this year’s European indoors in Paris. Her 6516 tally was also a lifetime best and better than the previous meeting record.

European U23 champion Grabuste, with PBs in the 200m, 800m and Long Jump, was third with 6252. In a closer battle for fourth, Czech Cachova prevailed with 5897 points, 41 ahead of Thorsteinsdóttir and Keizer, last scored 5856 and 5804, respectively.

Second day strongman Suárez prevails - Decathlon

Running into a strong head wind (-2.6 m/s), overnight leader Darius Draudvila opened with 14.31 in 110m Hurdles while his closest rival, Brazil's Carlos Chinin, was only 0.02 slower in other heat (-1.5). Yordanis García, with 14.36 in the same heat, narrowed the gap on Dmitry Karpov of Kazakhstan, who held third position thanks to a 14.65 (-1.8) season’s best. Garcia’s Cuban compatriot Leonel Suárez sprinted over barriers 0.02 behind the Kazakh and remained in ninth position. There were solid efforts against the wind by South African Willem Coertzen and Adam Nejedlý, the best Czech at that moment. World record holder Roman Sebrle finished in 16.39, visibly limited by his Achilles’ tendon problem.

Karpov then moved into the lead with a 51.18m season's best in the Discus Throw, the only throw on the day beyond metres. Suárez was next at 45.66m to move up three places to sixth overall. Chinin was the next best at 44.99m, while Draudvila (41.52m) dropped down to third. Sebrle was well back, but produced a solid 43.00m effort.

Karpov held his lead after taking top honours in the Pole Vault, scaling 5.10m. But behind him, propelled by a 5.00m clearance, Suárez moved up another three places to third, still behind Chinin who cleared 4.70m. Frenchman Kévin Mayer and García each cleared 4.90m while Sebrle cleared 4.60, and Czech Frantisek Stanek topped out at 4.80m.

Suárez moved up again after producing the best effort in the Javelin Throw, 67.18m, while Karpov lost quite a bit of ground after his modest 51.82m. Thanks to strong throws Belgian Hans Van Alphen (66.21m) and Coertzen (66.38) of South Africa moved into contention for top-three finishes. Here Sebrle reached 60.81m while at the front, only 32 points separated García (59.84m), Chinin (55.47m), Coertzen and Van Alphen in positions three through six.

The top six completely shuffled their positions after the final 1500m. Especially Van Alphen, who moved up four places while finishing third with a 4:21.78 personal best, finishing behind Frenchmen Gael Quérin (4:14.52) and Kévin Mayer (4:19.79) who both notched PBs. Suárez comfortably finished in 4:27.98 and took the overall title. The strongest Czech was Jaroslav Hedvicak whose 4:30.87 was also a lifetime best.

Suárez scored not perfect but ok result for the win – 8231 points.



Leonel Suárez
(Ales Graf – graf.cz)

“It was great preparation and testing as well before the world championships,” said Suárez, content with his 8231 point tally. “I’m very pleased to win this, although it didn’t look like in during the competition. The competition at this meeting was very even and unexpectedly high.

The runner-up was Van Alphen with a personal best of 8120, who climbed the leader board thanks mainly to personal bests in the final two events.

Just five points separated former African record holder Coertzen (8094) from Karpov (8089), a 2004 Olympic medallist. Even closer was the single-point gap for fifth between Chinin (8068) and García, the first 8000+ performance for the former. France’s European champion Romain Barras (8010) also topped the 8000 barrier in seventh, while the best home result came from Stanek (7470).

Also not to be forgotten, organisers made a tribute to legendary coach Zdenek Vána, now aged 72, who brought plenty of Czech decathletes to world class. Among the many names the two best known include triple World champion Tomáš Dvůrák, now retired and serving for the Czech federation as head coach, and Šebrle, who finished the competition despite Achilles’ tendon problems which nagged him throughout the two days. He was 18th over all with 7343 points.

Michal Procházka for the IAAF