

## 12th Meeting International d'Arles

[06-06-2009 / 07-06-2009]

Arles  FRA

### Simpson to continue comeback in Arles - IAAF World Combined Events Challenge - PREVIEW



#### Ghana's Margaret Simpson long jumping in Mauritius at 2009 African Heptathlon champs (Clyde KOA WING)

Arles, France - Margaret Simpson from Ghana, the 2005 World Heptathlon bronze medallist and 2002 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist, leads the Heptathlon field when the **IAAF World Combined Events Challenge** continues this weekend (6-7) at the **12th Meeting International d'Arles**.

Simpson had her best season in 2005 in which she set the national record of 6423 points in Götzis and then scored 6375 points in Helsinki where she threw the Javelin, her favourite event, a remarkable 56.23m.



Simpson, who took maternity leave to give birth to her first child in 2006, has already competed in two combined events meetings this year in her comeback season. She won the African Combined Events Championships in Mauritius in April with 5667 points and finished tenth in the Multistars meeting in Desenzano del Garda with 5825 points.

Simpson will face Marisa De Aniceto from France, the 2003 IAAF World Youth champion and Greek Aryro Strataki (ninth at the 2006 European Championships who set the national Heptathlon record in Götzis in 2006 with 6235 points.

Also in the field is Italian Pentathlon indoor record holder Francesca Doveri (4423 points in the 2009 winter and ninth at the European Indoor Championships), who performed well in Desenzano finishing sixth with her PB of 5885 points and three individual PBs (13.45 in the 100m Hurdles, 24.75 in the 200m and 6.20m Long Jump).

The men's Decathlon features some of the best French combined events specialists.

The most prominent name is Franck Logel who finished seventh in the Heptathlon at the 2009 European Indoor Championships with 5926 points. Last year Logel finished third with 7947 points in windy conditions.

The other top French names are Rudy Bourgignon (seventh at the 2007 European Indoor Championships who has a Decathlon PB of 8025 points); Mattias Cerlati (PB 7912 points set in Tallin 2007), and Guillaume Barras (PB 7523 points set in Talence 2008), the younger brother of international Decathlon specialist Romain Barras who had to pull out of the Arles meeting this year.

The top foreign entry is Tunisia's Hamdi Dhoubi (PB 8023 points), the African Decathlon champion in 2002 and third placer at those continental championships in 2006.

Franck Logel  
*(Photo courtesy of the IAAF)*



**Diego Sampaolo for the IAAF**

## 12th Meeting International d'Arles

[06-06-2009 / 07-06-2009]

Arles  FRA

Saturday, 06 June 2009

### Frullani and Kouassi the overnight leaders in Arles - IAAF Combined Events Challenge



**William Frullani en route to his Day 1 lead in Arles** (Lorenzo Sampaolo)

Arles, France - William Frullani from Italy and Gabriella Kouassi from France are the overnight leaders after the first day of the IAAF Combined Events Challenge Meeting in Arles.

Frullani, a former European Under 23 bronze medallist in Amsterdam 2001, leads the men's decathlon by 57 points over Franck Logel from France (4004 to 3947 points). Frullani is back to his best form this year after a career ruined by many injury problems. During the 2009 winter he finished sixth at the European Indoor Championships on home turf in Turin with a new indoor Heptathlon Italian record (5972 points). The Italian decathlete, who is married to this year's Götzis runner-up Hanna Melnychenko, entered the Arles meeting this week after fouling three attempts at the opening height in the pole vault in Götzis last week.

The women's Heptathlon is wide open with the top three heptathletes separated by just two points! Kouassi leads with 3488 points to Italian Francesca Doveri (3487) and France's Marisa De Aniceto (3486). Yassmina Omrani from France (fourth 3465), Susan Coltman (fifth with 3456) and Margaret Simpson (sixth with 3434) rounded out the top six positions.

#### **Decathlon**

Logel, seventh at the European Indoor Championships in Turin, took a narrow win in the 100m over Frullani beating him by just 0.01 seconds in 11.13 (832 points) against a strong headwind of -1.6 m/s. Wilfried Gouacide from France clocked the third fastest time of 11.16.

Gouacide took the lead after two events with 1703 points thanks to his win in the Long Jump with 7.27m (878) beating Logel and Frullani who both jumped 7.08m. After the Long Jump Logel was second with 1665, just two points more than Frullani.

Gouacide won the Shot Put with 14.71m (772) and increased his lead with a total score of 2475 points after three disciplines. Frullani finished third in the shot with 14.35m (750) and took second place with 2413. Logel produced a best release of 12.44m and faded into sixth in the overall ranking with 2298 points. Morad Souissi from Algeria, fifth after two events with 1604, moved up into third place with 2353 thanks to his 14.33m toss.

Frullani cleared 2.00m (803) notching up the win in the High Jump and moved up to first place with 3216 points with a gap of 142 points over Logel. The Frenchman cleared 1.97m bouncing back from the below-par performance in the Shot Put. Gouacide could not clear higher than 1.76m and faded into third with 3068 ahead France's Rudy Bourguignon (3040) and Mored Souissi (3023).

Logel ran the second fastest time in the 400m with 48.76 and closed his gap on Frullani to 57 points at the end of the first day (4004 to Logel's 3947). Morad Souissi was the fastest man in the 400m with 48.62 (879) and overtook Gouacide (51.60) to take overnight third place by 92 points.

### **Heptathlon**

Doveri, ninth at the European Indoor Championships, took the win in the 100m Hurdles in 13.48 (1053), just 0.03 seconds off her recent event PB set in Desenzano del Garda. Other heptathletes who scored more than 1000 points were 2003 World Youth Champion Marisa De Aniceto from France (13.77, 1011), her compatriot Gabriella Kouassi (13.79, 1008) and 2005 World bronze medallist Margaret Simpson from Ghana (13.81, 1005).

Doveri cleared 1.69m in the High Jump, one of her weakest events, and lost the leading position to De Aniceto who clinched the win in this discipline with 1.78m (953) and went to the lead with 1964 points. Doveri was overtaken by France's Vanessa Gladone who also cleared 1.78m and took overall second place with 1914 points.

Kouassi, fourth after the High Jump with 1887 points, took the win in the Shot Put with 13.53m (763) and climbed to first place with 2650 points overhauling De Aniceto (11.87m). Coltman from Canada, sixth after the High Jump, improved her ranking to third place ahead of Doveri thanks to her 12.84m toss. The Italian, who put 11.88m, was ranked in fourth place with 2548 points, 15 ahead of Simpson (12.37m).

Kouassi ran 25.54 (838) and managed to defend her lead by just one point over 200m winner Doveri who clocked 24.44 (aided by a tail wind of +2.3 m/s) in the third heat (939 points).



Gabriella Kouassi  
*(Photo courtesy of the IAAF)*

### **Diego Sampaolo for the IAAF**

## 12th Meeting International d'Arles

[06-06-2009 / 07-06-2009]

Arles  FRA

Sunday, 07 June 2009



### **Sweep for France in Arles – IAAF Combined Events Challenge**

**Arles winner Marisa De Aniceto** (Lorenzo Sampaolo)

Arles, France - French combined events specialists Rudy Bourguignon and Marisa De Aniceto claimed a double win for the hosts at the IAAF Combined Events Challenge meeting in Arles.

Bourguignon scored 7699 points beating Algerian Decathlon champion Morad Souissi (7658) and Frenchman Franck Logel (7464 points). De Aniceto set a new PB of 5945 points beating Margaret Simpson from Ghana (5872) and Francesca Doveri from Italy (5840).

#### **Bourguignon comes from behind – Decathlon**

Overnight leader William Frullani of Italy clocked 14.72 (884 points) in the 110m Hurdles and increased his lead to 66 points over Logel (14.79). The ranking did not undergo significant changes in the top three positions with Frullani leading with 4888 points over Logel (4822) and Souissi (4812). Roger Skeed from Great Britain produced the fastest time with 14.39 to move into fourth (4704).

Frullani lost his lead after his 34.50m in the discus and was overhauled by Souissi who threw 41.64m and went to the lead with 5516 points to Frullani's 5442. The Discus Throw went to France's Rudy Bourguignon who brought his total score to 5396 thanks to his 46.36m throw to move up to third.

Bourguignon cleared 4.95m (895) and reached Souissi (4.55m) at the top of the ranking with 6291 points. Logel also vaulted 4.95m and moved up from fifth to third with 6219. Frullani escaped a major scare clearing the opening height of 4.25m only on his third attempt but then managed to advance to 4.35m.

Bourguignon, sixth after the first day, completed his catch-up competition taking the overall lead after winning the javelin with 59.28m. With one event to go Bourguignon led with 7018 points ahead of Souissi (56.48m, 6976 points) and Skeed (55.43m, 6779 points).

Bourguignon secured the overall win after running the 1500m in 4:39.89 (681 points). Logel finished second in the 1500m in 4:36.68 and notched up third place with 7464 points behind second placer Souissi (7658).

For Bourguignon the Arles win was a comeback after a 2008 season plagued by a virus problem. "I came here to peak my form for the European Cup in Poland. It will my first goal of the season," Bourguignon said. "Here I faced a lot of problems especially in the pole vault but I managed to find the energy to win in very difficult conditions. I hope to settle a lot of things before the European Cup. Berlin is in my head but it's not my first priority. If I qualify for Berlin, it would be a big bonus. Otherwise I will prepare for another competition before the end of the season. Last year I picked a virus and I missed the Olympic Games. I thought about giving up but my coach convinced me to continue."



Rudy Bourguignon (photo: IAAF)

### Heptathlon –

After a very close competition with three women split by two points, Italian indoor pentathlon record holder Francesca Doveri took the lead with 4392 points thanks to her good 6.18m leap, aided by a tailwind of +2.3 m/s (905 points) in the Long Jump, which was close to her fresh outdoor lifetime best of 6.20m set in Desenzano del Garda in May. Yassmina Omrani from France, fourth after the first day, improved her position to second with 4308 points. De Aniceto (5.81m) defended her third place with 4278.

The javelin produced a dramatic change to the overall ranking. Simpson, the 2005 World Championships bronze medallist, threw the javelin to 49.93m (859) in her favourite discipline and moved up from sixth to first with a total score of 5052, with a close margin of 12 points over 2003 World Youth Champion De Aniceto who finished second with a 44.92m throw (762). Omrani lost one position but remained in contention for the podium with 4929 points following her 37.56m overtaking Doveri who threw 32.91m in one of her weakest events.

De Aniceto produced a strong performance in the 800m where she finished third in 2:14.16 behind Doveri (2:13.35) and Sand Kangni Thiebaud (2:13.85). Thanks to this time the young French athlete, who was born in Angola but lives in Paris, overtook Simpson who finished second with 5872 points in her comeback season after physical problems and an operation she underwent in 2008.

De Aniceto tried the Pole Vault (PB 3.52m) and started with combined events at the age of 16 and emerged on the world stage in 2003 when she won the World youth title in Sherbrooke.

"I am happy especially with my performances in the 100m hurdles and the high jump," De Aniceto said. "My goal this season is to score 6100 points to qualify for the World Championships. I have still one more chance at the European Combined Events Cup in Poland."

Simpson was happy with her second place. "I was sidelined by a stomach problem which needed an operation and I was forced to take rest for two and a half months," she said. "I have one more competition in Mauritius on 27-28 June to try to qualify for Berlin."

Doveri showed some good performances in her strongest events (100m Hurdles, 200m, 800m and the Long Jump) to tally 5840 points, just 45 points off her PB set in Desenzano del Garda.

"My competition had ups and downs," Doveri said. "I came close to my long jump PB (6.20m outdoors and 6.29m indoors). My hurdles were also good but my weakest disciplines remain the throwing events. I will have two more competitions (the European Cup and the University Games) to try to qualify for Berlin. The qualifying standard set by the Italian Athletics Federation is 6100 points. The B standard is 5900 points but it may not be enough." Doveri competed at the European Club Championships in Castellon, Spain, last week in the 100m and in the High Jump for the Italian Army athletics team.

### Diego Sampaolo for the IAAF