

IAAF World Combined Events Challenge

Decastar

Talence  FRA

19.09.2009 – 20.09.2009

Saturday, 19 September 2009

Kasyanov and Dobrynska, the overnight leaders in Talence



Nataliya Dobrynska in Talence in 2008 (Hans van Kuijen)

Talence, France – The 33rd edition of the Décastar meeting in Talence, near Bordeaux started in rainy conditions. Although not the last meeting of the **2009 IAAF World Combined Events Challenge** – two more meetings will be held later this year – the overall standings will not be influenced by results after the Décastar meeting.

The Challenge offers a total prize purse given by the IAAF of US\$202,000, equally divided for the top 8 men and women. For the winners of the Challenge US\$30,000 is available.

In Decathlon, the first 2 in the standings: World champion Trey Hardee (USA) and runner up of the World championships Yordanis Garcia (CUB) finished their season after Berlin, and there is no doubt that they will keep their top positions also after this meeting.

In Heptathlon, the top position is held by German athlete, Jennifer Oeser but she is only 16 points ahead of Ukrainian Hanna Melnychenko. The most likely candidate to win the 2009 IAAF World Combined Events Challenge is Natalya Dobrynska. A score of 6254 points in Talence would be enough to take over the leading position.

Decathlon

Due to the raining conditions at the start of the meeting athletes could not come close to their season's best performances in the 100m. Oleksey Kasyanov (UKR) was the fastest in 10.73sec, and only one other athlete – Andres Raja (EST) – could go-sub 11 seconds.

Kasyanov, who was the overnight leader in the Decathlon at the World championships in Berlin, again made clear that he is the strongest athlete in the field during the first day. In Long Jump he cleared an impressive 7.73m, only 7 centimetres less than in Berlin. Mikk Pahapill (EST), who had 3 foul attempts at the World Championships, jumped 7.47m this time. In his personal best Decathlon at the Olympic Games in Beijing he leapt only 7.05m, so the Estonian has made a big advance on his PB.

Belgium Hans van Alphen was next best with a 7.40m effort, 1 centimetre ahead of the 2003 World champion Tom Pappas.

After 2 events: 1. Kasyanov 1914 pts, 2. Pahapill 1765, 3. Pappas 1749

The Russian bronze medalist of Berlin, Aleksandr Pogorelov, showed again he is the strongest decathlete in Shot Put. This time his distance was 16.24m, ahead of Tom Pappas with 15.86m.

After 3 events: 1. Kasyanov 2723, 2. Pogorelov 2592, Pappas 2592

Two athletes, Pappas and Sysoyev, cleared 2.06m in High Jump, of which was Aleksey Sysoyev the event winner. Pappas was better than the overall leader, Kasyanov, by 6 centimetres.

After 4 events: 1. Kasyanov 3526, 2. Pappas 3451, 3. Pogorelov 3423

In the 400m, Oleksey Kasyanov won this third event of the day. With his winning time of 48.62 seconds he totaled 4405 points for the day, 150 points less than he managed at the World championships. But of his main competitors, statistically five have stronger second days.

After 5 events: 1. Kasyanov 4405, 2. Pappas 4267, 3. Pogorelov 4196

Local favourite, Romain Barras, is already more than 300 points behind his best first day score of this season. The 25th 8000 score of his career is now out of sight for this season.

Heptathlon

As in the Decathlon also at the start of Heptathlon it was still raining in the Bordeaux region. The first event, 100m Hurdles, was won by Hanna Melnychenko. She is one of the three Ukrainian athletes, who dominated the Challenge meeting in Götzis- Austria, earlier this year. At the World championships in Berlin they all could not win a medal and finished 4th, 5th and 6th. Today Melnychenko with a 13.57sec run was ahead of US-athlete Diana Pickler with 13.60.

In the High Jump, the Olympic champion Natalya Dobrynska showed again her abilities in passing 1.86m, so equaling her best performance in this event set in 2006 at the European championships.

The best performance in this event today was produced by former high jumper Sharon Day (USA) who cleared 1.89m. And with Lyudmyla Yosypenko also clearing 1.86m it was a high level competition.

After 2 events: 1. Yosypenko 2.077, 2. Day 2063, 3. Pickler 2052

The Olympic champion Natalya Dobrynska doesn't seem to be showing the same tiredness as the rest of her opponents at the end of the season. In the Shot Put she produced 16.48m, more than 2.5m ahead of the second athlete, Sonja Kesselschläger. After 3 events Dobrynska was already 162 points ahead of her season's best performance, set in Götzis end of May.

After 3 events: 1. Dobrynska 2995, 2. Day 2801, 3. Yosypenko 2798

The final event of the first day, the 200m went to Lyudmyla Yosypenko with a winning time of 24.02sec and she was far ahead of the other competitors and climbed to second place after the end of the first day.

After 4 events: 1. Dobrynska 3881, 2. Yosypenko 3777, 3. Day 3687

Two athletes are making their career farewells. German, Sonja Kesselschläger and France's Marie Collonvillé. For Collonvillé it is very special to have this career end in Talence. It is her 14th appearance in this meeting. "I could not have a better place to stop where this public has supported me so much during these years. It is great for me to have my farewell here."

Hans van Kuijen for the IAAF

Sunday, 20 September 2009

Double triumph for Ukraine at IAAF World Combined Events Challenge in Talence



Natalya Dobrynska long jumping in 2009 Decastar in Talence (Hans van Kuijen)

Talence, France – Ukraine's Oleksiy Kasyanov and Natalya Dobrynska, the overnight leaders in the Decathlon and Heptathlon, ended up the victors in the 33rd edition of the Décastar meeting which is part of the 2009 IAAF Combined Events Challenge but in both cases it came down to the last events.

Decathlon – Kasyanov kept it till the end

The second day started as the first day in rainy conditions but this did not negatively affect the results in 110m Hurdles.

The two Estonian athletes in the field, Mikk Pahapill and Andres Raja, who ended the first day close to their personal best first day performances continued their competition both with PBs in the 110m Hurdles. Raja finished in 13.90sec ahead of his countryman, the European Indoor Heptathlon champion, in 14.14. The overnight leader, Oleksiy Kasyanov lost valuable points by finishing in 14.51.

After 6 events: 1. Kasyanov 5315, 2. Pappas 5204, 3. Raja 5155

Pascal Behrenbruch (GER), who was after 6 events already more than 400 points behind his personal best in the Decathlon, took the victory in Discus Throw with 48.97m ahead of Pahapill with 48.48m.

It was starting to become a close battle for the overall victory in Decathlon. At this point taking the best 2009 result of the top 4 athletes in the remaining events (pole vault, javelin and 1500m) there was potentially only 1 point's difference between the four athletes.

After 7 events: 1. Kasyanov 6062, 2. Pappas 6021, 3. Pahapill 5934

The weather conditions had improved a lot by the start of the Pole Vault and an interesting competition was the result. Pahapill, Aleksandr Pogorelov (RUS) and Rudy Bourguignon (FRA) surpassed a height of 5.02m. As the leader since the first event, Kasyanov produced a PB of 4.82 allowing him to still lead after 8 events.

After 8 events: 1. Kasyanov 6918, 2. Pahapill 6851, 3. Pappas 6846

But the leader in the standings had his weakest event, the Javelin Throw, still to come and with a best of just 49.75m, with his main competitors all producing throws over 60m he dropped to fourth place. With a 65.13m release, the German, Pascal Behrenbruch, took his second event victory of the day.

After 9 events: 1. Pappas 7611, 2. Pogorelov 7607, 3. Pahapill 7589

But at the start of the 1500m, 4 competitors were still in the race for victory.

In the 1500m, Kasyanov closely followed the stronger runners in the field and increased his lead by a big margin on the others who were still in contention for the overall win. The Frenchman Gael Querin was the strongest at the end and passed the finish line in 4:10.57. Kasyanov was fourth in 4:23.49, enough to win the Decathlon overall.

Kasyanov's total was 8291pts, with Pahapill 8255, and Pappas bring in third, 8199.

In total, six athletes passed the 8000 points mark; Pahapill and the Belgian Hans van Alphen produced personal best performances.

Heptathlon – Dobrynska for Yosypenko

The rainy conditions at the start of the second day produced below par results in the Long Jump.

The overnight leader in Heptathlon, Olympic champion Natalya Dobrynska, could not continue her strong performances from the first day. She started with a modest jump of 6.15m and fouled on her second attempt. In the last attempt she improved to 6.33m, but far away from the 6.73m she had achieved earlier in her season's best Heptathlon in Götzis.

Her fellow countrywomen, Lyudmyla Yosypenko, produced a leap of 6.19m. She was very satisfied with this as she could keep the gap with Dobrynska within limits. Russia's Tatyana Chernova produced the winning distance in this event with 6.41m.

After 5 events: 1. Dobrynska 4834, 2. Yosypenko 4685, 3. Melnychenko 4560

With a 51.30m Javelin Throw on her first attempt Yosypenko showed that she was in winning mood. She improved her personal best with this throw by almost 3 metres. As Dobrynska could only produce a distance of 43.34m she lost the overall leading position to Yosypenko. Both were separated after the javelin by only 5 points in the intermediate standings which meant a gap of only 0.4 seconds in 800m.

Chernova proved again that she is a strong second day athlete. With 51.92m she produced her second event victory of the day.

After 6 events: 1. Yosypenko 5570, 2. Dobrynska 5565, 3. Chernova 5419

Dobrynska who had proved in important championships that she can run a strong 800m and immediately took the lead in the last event. Knowing that she had to compensate only 0.4 seconds she did not give Yosypenko any change to come close to her. In 2:13.07 she passed the finish line ahead of all her rivals and secured the overall Heptathlon victory.

Her winning total was 6485pts from Yosypenko's 6423, and Chernova's 6306.

2009 IAAF World Combined Events Challenge

The remaining 2 competitions in the 2009 Challenge, les Jeux de la Francophonie next month in Beirut and the Asian Championships in Guangzhou in November, will not influence the top of the overall standings which are led by USA's World champion Trey Hardee (Decathlon) and thanks to her victory in Talence by Natalya Dobrynska (Heptathlon).

Hans van Kuijen for the IAAF