

## IAAF Combined Events Challenge Arles, France 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2008

In 2007, there were four Oceania representatives on show at the IAAF Combined Events Challenge in Arles. In the 2008 version, held last weekend, there were five.

In 2007 we had Western Australian Kylie Wheeler and New Zealand's Sarah Cowley competing in the heptathlon. The 2008 version saw Cowley once again, but this time round she was joined by compatriot Rebecca Wardell.

In the men's decathlon event New Zealand's Brent Newdick and Queensland's Kyle McCarthy were once again on show, and they were joined by South Australian Jarrod Sims. Queenslander Richard Allan had entered, but his recovery from hip surgery back in October 2007 was taking longer to fully recuperate than anticipated, and Allan was a non-starter.

### Heptathlon

20 women were on the start list, but Katia Damokrane did not start in the hurdles, so the field was reduced to 19. As might be expected for a competition organized and run in France, there were nine Frenchwomen in the field. The other ten starters were Wardell and Cowley from New Zealand (already mentioned above), Italian Francesca Doveri, Laurien Hoos of the Netherlands, Brits Louise Hazel, Julie Hollman and Phyllis Agbo, Canadians Jessica Zelinka and Susan Coltman, and Spaniard Laura Gines.

### Day One

Just as in 2007, strong following breezes were the norm throughout the weekend. As most readers will know, the maximum allowable breeze for record or qualification purposes in a Combined Events competition is +4.0m/s (or the average of the wind readings for all events requiring wind readings has to be a maximum of +2.0m/s).

Heat One was the slowest, time-wise, and had the least following breeze of only 3.5m/s. The field of five consisted of four exotically-named Frenchwomen and the Spaniard Gines. Yezza Zkirim was quickest in 14.13, followed by Yasmina Omrani (14.15) and Marine Sacco (14.44). Gines took fourth in 14.45, ahead of Céline Chélim (15.00).

Wardell and Cowley both drew the Heat Two. Unfortunately for them, the wind reading came up as +6.1m/s!! Great Britain's Agbo handled the conditions best, crossing the line first in 13.65 for 1028 points.

Wardell was next to cross in 13.78s, her first time under 14 seconds, and her first time to score above 1000 points in an individual event (1010 in fact). Close behind Wardell were France's Diane Barras (13.85 – 1000pts) and Wardell's team mate Sarah Cowley (13.86 – 998). Frenchwomen Julie Delevallée (14.07), Alexandra Barlet (14.30) and Latifa Maanane (14.32) filled the minor placings.

In the third and fastest heat, the wind reading measured exactly 4.0m/s. Zelinka's slippery 13.01s was good for 1143 points. She was followed across the line by Doveri (13.55 – 1043 pts), Hazel (13.57 – 1040) and France's Blandine Maisonnier (13.64 PB – 1030). The remaining four places were filled by Hoos (13.68 – 1024), Coltman (13.71 – 1020) and Hollman (13.99 – 980).

After one event, Jessica Zelinka of Canada led from Doveri of Italy and Louise Hazel of Great Britain (1034). Maisonnier was the first Frenchwoman on 1030, just ahead of Agbo (1028), Hoos (1024), Coltman (1020) and Wardell (1010). Cowley was in tenth spot on 980 points, only 2 points behind the second of the Frenchwomen, Barras.

In the high jump Cowley, on the basis of her much better PB, would be expected to move past Wardell on the overall points tally. Such proved to be the case, but Cowley was a little off her best on 1.77m, while Wardell jumped a PB of 1.68m to stay not too far off the pace. The best jump of the day came from Maisonnier, whose 1.80m PB earned 978 points. Cowley was next best on 1.77m (941) followed by Omrani on 1.74m (903). Doveri and Barras cleared 1.71m (867), and Zelinka, Hoos, Coltman, Hollman and Barlet all went over 1.68m (830). Wardell, Maanane and Gines cleared 1.65m for 795 points, Zkirim and Chélim only managed 1.62m for 759 points, while the remaining four competitors managed to clear only schoolgirl heights - Delevallée (1.59m), Hazel and Sacco (1.56m) and Agbo (1.53m).



**Jessica Zelinka – Canada**

*Photo courtesy Lorenzo Sampaolo of the IAAF*

Maisonnier now sat on the rather appropriate score, given it is an Olympic year, of 2008 points after two events. Zelinka trailed 55 points behind on 1953 with Cowley in third on 1930. Doveri was the only other competitor over 1900 points (1910), while the next six competitors were still in the hunt with scores in excess of 1800 points. Wardell was just holding onto the field with a score of 1805 points in 10<sup>th</sup> place.

In the shot put, there was a major re-shuffling of the field. Four women failed to reach eleven metres – Hazel (10.70m), Barras (10.54m), Maanane (10.17) and Zkirim (9.48m). Barras had the most spectacular fall through the field, dropping from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, while Hazel fell from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>. Maanane and Zkirim, who had been sitting on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> dropped to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, at the very bottom of the ladder.

Hoos had the best put – a quite impressive 14.72m for 842 pts. She moved from seventh up to third (2696pts). Maisonnier held onto the lead (2714) with her throw of 12.68m, while Zelinka edged to just two points shy of Maisonnier with her strong put of 13.48m. Coltman threw a strong 13.59m to move from eighth to fourth (2617). Cowley managed only 11.45m and dropped down to fifth, while Wardell, despite being almost a metre down on her best, threw 13.38m to make a strong move up through the field from tenth to sixth. Doveri (11.74m) dropped from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, Omrani (12.14m) from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> and Hollman (12.46m) held onto ninth spot

For the 200s, the breezes varied from +3.5m/s to +4.5m/s. Quickest of all the competitors was Zelinka in Heat Four, who rode a 4.0m/s wind to 23.96s, the only time of the day under 24 seconds, and good enough to not only earn her 985 points, but also to move her into first place ahead of Maisonnier, who had run a 24.72. Wardell, winner of Heat Two, was actually the second-fastest of all the competitors, running a PB of 24.37 with a 4.3m/s following breeze. Hoos (24.80 in Heat Four) and Coltman (24.58 in Heat Two) remained in third and fourth respectively, while Wardell moved up one spot into fifth. Doveri ran 24.63 behind Wardell and Coltman to remain in sixth, but Cowley's 24.83 in the same race saw her drop a spot into seventh. Omrani (25.01 in Heat Two) and Hollman (24.97 in Heat Four) remained in eighth and ninth respectively, while Gines ran 25.16 in Heat Four to shunt Barlet (26.23 in Heat One) from tenth down to eleventh.

At the end of Day One, the standings were:

**Top 8:**

Zelinka 3697, Maisonnier 3627, Hoos 3601, Coltman 3543, Wardell 3503, Doveri 3473, Cowley 3466, Omrani 3416,

**Places 9-16:**

Hollman 3392, Gines 3284, Barlet 3270, Agbo 3233, Barras 3200, Hazel 3192, Sacco 3191, Delevallée 3142,

**Places 17-19:**

Maanane 3107, Chélim 3082, Zkirim 2974

Day Two

Day Two started disastrously for Zelinka. After leading overnight, she failed to have a valid jump in the long jump and dropped from first place to last place in one fell swoop!

Maisonnier seized the opportunity to further cement her spot in the lead, leaping the best jump of the competition (6.44m - PB) to earn 988 points. Despite light tail winds, only three other girls jumped over six metres – Hollman (6.24m), Doveri (6.05m) and Agbo (6.04m). Coltman came close with a 5.99m jump, with Omrani and Barlet next best on 5.93m and 5.83m respectively. In the 5.70 range were Zkirim (5.78), Delevallée (5.77), Hoos (5.74), Sacco (5.74), Maanane (5.74) and Wardell (5.71 – season best). Hazel and Barras were in the 5.60s – 5.67 and 5.66 respectively – but Cowley's below par 5.53 was only good enough to beat two other women – Chélim (5.51) and Gines (5.37).

With Zelinka now out of the picture, Maisonnier was in the lead (4615). Coltman (4389) moved ahead of Hoos (4372) into second. Doveri (4338) moved up a spot into fourth, while Hollman (4316) made a big move from ninth up to fifth. Wardell (4265) dropped to sixth, while Omrani (4244) swapped places with Cowley (4175) in the top eight.

Agbo (4095) jumped three spots to ninth, Barlet (4068) moved up one into tenth, and Sacco (3962) improved by four spots into eleventh, ahead of the closely-bunched Barras (3947), Gines (3947) and Hazel (3942).

Penultimate event - the javelin. Usually you will see some throwers in the thirty metre range, and some in the forty metre range. At Arles the spread was even wider, with one athlete, Zkirim, throwing only 23.95m, while at the other end of the field, Laurien Hoos of the Netherlands speared the implement out to an impressive 51.76m. Rebecca Wardell was the next best of the competitors, but was disappointed with her 42.21m effort, which was well down on her best. Zelinka, showing her competitiveness, climbed out of the cellar with a 41.95m throw, which moved her into 16<sup>th</sup> spot. Barlet (41.06), Agbo (40.24) and Coltman (40.18) were the only others to throw beyond forty metres.

In the high thirty range were Maisonnier (37.64), Omrani (36.83), Hollman (36.00) and Delevallée (35.14), while at the lower end of the range were Sacco (34.72), Gines (34.66), Hazel (34.23), Chélim (33.66), Barras (32.81), Doveri (32.14), and Maanane (30.55).

Hoos' massive throw had nudged Maisonnier down into second, 29 points in arrears. Coltman lay in third a further 137 points back, and seemingly out of contention for the gold or silver. Wardell was only 85 points behind Coltman, so she still had a shot at a medal finish. Hollman was only another 68 points behind Wardell, so while shooting for a podium finish, Wardell would also have to watch her back.

The rest of the field seemed to be bunched in groups. Doveri on 4855 was only 4 points ahead of Omrani, while Agbo (4767) was only 11 points ahead of Barlet, with Cowley another 34 points behind. Sacco (4528) was only 16 points ahead of Gines, and Hazel (4499) and Delevallée (4496) were only four points apart, with Barras a further 19 points back. Zelinka (4402) would be running the 800m for pride, while Maanane (4365), Chélim (4331) and Zkirim (4120) had little chance now of finishing anywhere other than in the final three placings.

In the first heat of the 800m, the girls occupying positions 11 to 19 (with the exception of Zelinka) were seeded to run together. This would involve six of the French women, plus Laura Gines of Spain and Louise Hazel of Great Britain. However, Hazel and Chélim chose not to start.

Delevallée won the heat in 2:22.05 from her compatriot Zkirim (2:25.05) and Gines (2:25.50). Then followed the French trio of Barras (2:27.36), Maanane (2:27.85) and Sacco (2:36.21). As expected, this heat had no bearing on the overall outcome. Delevallée finished in 12<sup>th</sup> place overall (5292), followed by Gines (5262), Barras (5203), Sacco (5145), Maanane (5085) and Zkirim (4876). Hazel and Chélim were relegated to a DNF listing.



**Rebecca Wardell** (courtesy of Rebecca Wardell)

For the main heat, Wardell had calculated that she would have to beat Coltman by more than six seconds in order to snare the bronze. With her relatively poor performance in the javelin spurring her on, Wardell charged around the two laps in a new PB by almost five seconds, stopping the clocks at 2:10.00. Zelinka displayed her obvious talent to finish second in a time of 2:12.61. This proved good enough to move her up from 16<sup>th</sup> after the javelin to 11<sup>th</sup> at the conclusion.

Maisonnier, in her effort to regain the lead from Hoos, ran the very good time of 2:13.06. Coltman could manage only 2:19.58, so Wardell had snagged the bronze. Hoos could muster only 2:29.85, so Maisonnier's goal of being a French winner of this famous French event was realized. In fact, Wardell fell only 21 points shy of stealing the silver from under Hoos' nose.

Doveri (2:16.23) and Cowley (2:16.78) were the next quickest behind Zelinka. These times provided enough points to keep Doveri in sixth, while seeing Cowley move up from tenth into eighth place. Hollman (2:19.18) finished ahead of Coltman, but her time was insufficient to change her position in the overall rankings (5<sup>th</sup>). Omrani's 2:24.06 was quick enough to maintain her position of seventh. Barlet, who had started the race 11 points behind Agbo, ran just quick enough (2:26.45) to beat Agbo (2:27.71) by 16 points and move ahead of her. However, Cowley's good run pushed them back into 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively.

In a great result for Oceania athletes, Rebecca Wardell and Sarah Cowley had both finished in the top eight, with Wardell bagging a bronze medal to boot.



**Pictured (left to right):**

Laurien Hoos	NED	2 <sup>nd</sup>	5961
Blandine Maisonnier	FRA	1 <sup>st</sup>	6157 PB
Rebecca Wardell	NZL	3 <sup>rd</sup>	5940

**Other top 8 finishers were:**

Susan Coltman	CAN	4 <sup>th</sup>	5889
Julie Hollman	GBR	5 <sup>th</sup>	5742
Francesca Doveri	ITA	6 <sup>th</sup>	5730
Yasmina Omrani	FRA	7 <sup>th</sup>	5620
Sarah Cowley	NZL	8 <sup>th</sup>	5590

For the IAAF report, go to

<http://www.iaaf.org/WCE08/news/newsid=45264.html>

For the final results of the women's events go to

<http://www.iaaf.org/wce08/results/eventCode=3986/sex=W/discCode=HEP/combCode=hash/roundCode=7/summary.html#det>

### **Pictured right – the Kiwis in Arles 2008**

Rebecca Wardell, Brent Newdick, Sarah Cowley  
(Photo courtesy of Rebecca Wardell)

### **Decathlon**

Just as in 2007, there was another big field in the men's decathlon, with 33 starters. Almost half of these (14) were Frenchmen. The others were a cosmopolitan mix with representatives from Australia (2), Denmark, Egypt, Hungary (2), Italy (2), Madagascar, Mauritius, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway (2), Spain (3), Tunisia and Uzbekistan.

### **Day One**

There were five heats of the men's 100m, and all heats had following winds. These ranged from +3.6m/s for Heat Two to 8.9m/s in Heat Four. The quickest times were posted by the first two place-getters in Heats Four and Five.

In heat five, France's Wilfried Gouacide sped 10.65s with a +5.2m/s following wind. Hamdi Dhouibi of Tunisia clocked 10.69s in finishing second. Gouacide's compatriot Franck Logel ran 10.66s to take out heat four, with Dutch decathlete Eelco Sinthicolaas second, again in 10.69. Australian Jarrod Sims and New Zealand's Brent Newdick availed themselves of the good wind in heat four to record times of 10.81 and 10.83 respectively in finishing third and fourth. Six other runners from heats four and five broke eleven seconds.

Italian Franco Luigi Casiean was the only runner from a heat other than heat four or five to break 11 seconds, winning heat three in 10.79.

Australian Kyle McCarthy managed only 11.40 seconds in finishing last in heat one. Apart from Mauritian Guillaume Thierry, who was a DNF in heat four, McCarthy was quicker than only three other competitors. He'd need to make up a lot of ground in subsequent events.

The field was split into two pools for the long jump, and the winds continued to blow. There were sixteen competitors in Pool A and seventeen in Pool B. Three Frenchmen could not manage to produce a valid effort, and scored zero points – Christophe Pechet in Pool B, and both Rudy Bourguignon and Wilfried Gouacide in Pool A. Guillaume Thierry managed to return to contest the long jump, but jumped only 5.22m.

At the 'pointy' end of the competition, Pool A produced most of the big jumps, with twelve jumpers spanning more than seven metres. Frenchman Franck Logel hit the longest, with 7.54m. Hot on his heels was Spaniard Álvaro Contreras (7.52). Right on his heels were the Kiwi Brent Newdick and another Frenchman Nadir El Fassi, both 7.47m. Newdick has obviously recovered well from a nasty accident several months ago, where he fractured several bones in his face. Several other Frenchmen in this same pool were over seven metres – Nicholas Moulay (7.39), Julien Choffart (7.37), Romain Barras (7.16) and Kevin Chaffre (7.03). Also beyond seven metres were Dutchman Eelco Sinthicolaas (7.20), Hungarian Péter Skoumal (7.13), Spaniard Óscar González (7.11) and Dane Christian Lauge Laugesen (7.08).

In this group, Australia's Kyle McCarthy fell just short of the seven metre mark, with his best effort of 6.98m coming with the benefit of a 5.3m/s tail wind.

In the other pool, only the Norwegian Sommerfeldt brothers, Bjørn Sigurd (7.21) and Knut Harald (7.11) and the Tunisian Hamdi Dhouibi (7.01) could break the 7 metre mark. South Australian Jarrod Sims would have been somewhat disappointed with his sixth place finish in this pool with a best jump of 6.90m.

After two events, Franck Logel of France was the leader (1883pts), from Brent Newdick of New Zealand (1826) and Nadir El Fassi of France (1821). Australians Jarrod Sims (1693) and Kyle McCarthy (1583) were in 12<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> place respectively.

However, the competition now moved from the speed events to a strength and power event – the shot put.

Most of the action happened in Group A. Defending champion Romain Barras put his stamp on the field with the best toss of 14.65m. Hamdi Dhouibi was next best with 14.55m, while McCarthy made his presence felt with a throw of 13.95m, just one centimetre further than Uzbekistani Vitaly Smirnov. Unfortunately, Newdick could muster only 12.99m and finished twelfth in this group.

In Group B, Jarrod Sims placed third (13.09) behind Spaniard Óscar González (13.23) and Dutchman Eelco Sinthicolaas (13.09).



When the dust had settled from the shot put, El Fassi was the new competition leader with 2523 points. Dhouibi (2509) had moved up from seventh to second, and right on his heels Romain Barras (2505) had moved from tenth up to third!

Logel (2503) and Newdick (2493) dropped to fourth and fifth respectively. Sims (2366) had moved up one spot into eleventh, while McCarthy (2308) jumped five places into 17<sup>th</sup>.

In the high jump, Newdick, Sims and McCarthy all cleared 1.96m for 767 points, but there were six athletes who leaped higher. Nicolas Moulay was best with 2.08m. El Fassi, Logel and the Dane Christian Lauge Laugesen all jumped 2.05m. Álvaro Contreras from Spain scaled 2.02m, and Julien Choffart cleared 1.99m.

Frenchmen now filled the first five places overall – El Fassi (3373), Logel (3353), Barras (3272), Choffart (3268) and Moulay (3266). Newdick (3260) had dropped to sixth, but was only 12 points from third!

Sims (3133) and McCarthy (3075) continued to climb through the field, to 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> respectively.

There were six heats of the 400m, and the Oceania athletes all performed well within their respective heats.

Newdick won heat 1 in a time of 51.28. McCarthy placed second in heat 2 in 50.95, and Sims won heat 6 in 50.48.

The windy conditions didn't assist for good times in the 400m event, and the only athletes to run under 50 seconds on the day were Laugesen (49.69) and Sintnicolaas (49.91).

**Pictured right:** Franck Logel of France  
*Photo courtesy Lorenzo Sampaolo of the IAAF*

At the end of Day One, the top six were still the same athletes, but the order had changed:

Logel (4160) was back in the lead from El Fassi (4132). Moulay (4077) had moved to third ahead of Choffart (4068), and Barras (4053), who had dropped to fifth.

Newdick remained in sixth, but had passed 4000 points for the day with his score of 4017.

Sims (3926) remained in tenth, but McCarthy (3846) had edged one place higher again into 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Day Two**

By the start of Day Two, the number of competitors had been reduced by seven to 26. Wilfried Gouacide had retired after he failed to record a distance in the long jump. Rudy Bourguignon, who had also scored no points in the long jump, withdrew after the shot. Spaniard Victor Ruiz and Hungarian Attila Szabó also withdrew at this time. Mauritian Guillaume Thierry lasted one event longer, and when Italian Paolo Mottadelli failed to finish the 400m, it was odds on that he wouldn't be competing on Day Two. Such proved to be the case.

Kyle McCarthy was the first of the Oceania athletes to appear, in heat two. He finished fourth in 15.30s to earn 814 points. Jarrod Sims placed fifth in heat four, but his time of 15.39 only earned 803 points. Brent Newdick was in the last and quickest heat, finishing third in 14.46s, for a solid 916 points.

Frenchman Moulay (4842) dropped out of the top five, allowing Newdick (4933) to move up a spot into fifth. Logel (5042) still led the competition from El Fassi (5037), while Barras (4995) had moved up into third ahead of Choffart (4958). Sims (4729) and McCarthy (4660) both lost one spot, moving down to 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> respectively.

The discus was conducted in two groups, with Newdick appearing in Group A, and Sims and McCarthy in Group B. The big mover in Group A was Uzbekistan's Vitaly Smirnov, who had the best throw of 44.03m, and was the only thrower in the entire competition to hurl the platter beyond 44 metres. Behind Smirnov, the current top five in the competition remained close. Barras (43.23), Logel (43.11), Choffart (43.08), Newdick (42.16) were all within about a metre of each other, and El Fassi (41.28) less than a metre further back.

McCarthy and Sims appeared in Group B, which was won by Norwegian Bjørn Sigurd Sommerfeldt (41.86). However, McCarthy mustered 41.13m for second, earning 688 points. Sims managed only 37.25m for ninth place in Group B, but only twentieth overall not a happy event for him!

The order of the top five remained unchanged – Logel (5770), El Fassi (5728), Barras (5725), Choffart (5685), Newdick (5642). Dhouibi (5507) had jumped from eighth to sixth, and Smirnov (5490) had moved into seventh shunting Moulay (5465) down to eighth. McCarthy (5348) had made another move upwards. He now sat in tenth spot, while Sims (5338) had slid one more rung down the ladder into twelfth position.



Frenchmen Wilfried Krantz and Christophe Pechet, who had been in 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> spot at the end of the discus, retired from the competition at this point and did not start in the pole vault.

Fourteen vaulters competed in Group A, and eleven in Group B, following the withdrawal of Krantz and Pechet. Hungarian Péter Skoumal, with a PB of 5.30m, showed his class here, clearing 5.05m for the best height of the day. However, as he had started the event in eighteenth position, even this good performance could only move him up into twelfth. The leading four Frenchmen all vaulted reasonably well. Logel and Barras both cleared 4.95m (as did Tunisian Hamdi Dhouibi) while El Fassi cleared 4.85m and Choffart 4.65m. Newdick could only manage 4.35m for 12<sup>th</sup> in Group A. Group B was won by yet another Frenchman Yann Celli (4.65m), while Kyle McCarthy finished third on 4.55m, the same height as the second place getter Knut Harald Sommerfeldt. Unfortunately, Jarrod Sims unhappy competition continued and he could only clear 4.15m for eighth place.

Italian Franco Luigi Casiean and Egyptian Abdallah Mohamed Saad Hamed did not help their causes when they both failed to register a height and earned zero points.

Logel (6665), Barras (6620), El Fassi (6593) and Choffart (6489) still held the top four positions, but Tunisian Hamdi Dhouibi (6402) had moved past Brent Newdick (6358) into fifth. McCarthy (6123) dropped one spot again, down to eleventh, as did Sims (5997) who moved down to thirteenth.

The twenty-five remaining athletes were once again split into two groups for the javelin, with most of the better throwers appearing in the second group. Barras (60.56), El Fassi (60.42) and Smirnov (60.22) were the only throwers to exceed sixty metres, but Choffart (59.71) and Spaniard Álvaro Contreras (59.38) were not far behind.

Kyle McCarthy was the next best in Group 2 with a reasonable throw of 55.67m, but Jarrod Sims could only find 52.49m for tenth place in this group. In Group 1, Knut Harald Sommerfeldt won with a throw of 59.50m, while Madagascan Ali Kame, who to date had not troubled the scorers, threw 57.02m for second. Brent Newdick, however, could find only a 51.66m throw for fifth place in Group A.

The top five still remained the same, but once again their relative positions had changed – Barras now resumed the lead again on 7366. El Fassi (7337) still held onto second, with Logel (7246) dropping from first to third. Choffart (7222) remained in fourth ahead of Dhouibi (7069). Smirnov (7035) moved up into sixth pushing Newdick (6971) down one spot. McCarthy continued his rise, moving up into eighth behind Newdick, on 6796 points. Unfortunately, Jarrod Sims was moving in the other direction – down to fourteenth on 6623 points.

Two heats for the 1500m. The first heat saw all the athletes currently in positions fourteen to twenty-five, while the second heat would seed together all those with a shot at the medals.

In the first heat, Frenchman Alexandre Anty ran an excellent 4:19.10 to win ahead of Guillaume Barras (4:25.70), Péter Skoumal (4:31.43), Óscar González (4:31.99) and Jarrod Sims (4:35.91).

In the 'money' heat, Christian Lauge Laugesen just held out Álvaro Contreras for the win, 4:22.74 to 4:22.79. Nadir El Fassi tried to put as much ground as he could between himself and Romain Barras. He crossed in the very good time of 4:23.80. Would this be good enough to wrest victory from compatriot and defending champion Barras? Smirnov (4:28.02) and Dhouibi (4:28.89) were next. Five seconds further back was a group of six athletes headed by Barras. He crossed in 4:33.75, followed in quick succession by Sintnicolaas (4:34.53), Logel (4:36.73), Choffart (4:36.83), McCarthy (4:37.49) and Newdick (4:38.56).

El Fassi's ten second buffer had not only passed Barras, but gave him the win by almost 40 points. In a great day for the French on their home soil, Nadir El Fassi had won with 8123 points from Romain Barras (8086), Franck Logel (7947) and Julien Choffart (7922).

New Zealand's Brent Newdick finished in seventh place on 7660, with Aussie Kyle McCarthy in ninth place with a new PB (albeit windy) of 7492 and team mate Jarrod Sims in twelfth on 7329 points.



**Pictured above:** Kyle McCarthy (21) leads Brent Newdick (9)  
*Photo courtesy Rebecca Wardell*

Full men's results can be found at

<http://www.iaaf.org/wce08/results/eventCode=3986/sex=M/discCode=DEC/combCode=hash/roundCode=10/summary.html#det>