

## Desenzano to mark Ennis' return to competition - IAAF Combined Events Challenge Preview



**Jessica Ennis, here leading Marie Collonvill , en route to her PB victory in Desanzano**  
(Lorenzo Sampaolo)

The comeback of British Heptathlon star Jessica Ennis will be in the spotlight at the 22nd edition of the Multistars in Desenzano del Garda, the first leg of the 2009 IAAF World Combined Events Challenge.

Ennis, winner in Desenzano in 2007 with 6388 points, will face past winners of the Desenzano meeting like Marie Collonvill  of France (first in 2004 and 2008), Margaret Simpson of Ghana (first in 2003 and 2005) and Karolina Tyminska of Poland (winner with 6178 points in 2006).

Ennis was sidelined by a stress fracture sustained at the Hypo-Meeting in G tzis in 2008 and was forced to miss out on the Olympic Games in Beijing where she could have fought for a medal following a great 2007 season in which she finished fourth at the IAAF World Championships in Osaka with an impressive score of 6469 points. In Osaka Ennis set four PBs with two notable results in the 100 metres Hurdles (12.97) and the 200 metres (23.15).

Ennis, also a Commonwealth Games bronze medallist in Melbourne 2006, started her international career in Desenzano where she competed as a youth athlete. In 2007 the athlete from Sheffield grabbed the headlines in the Italian meeting when she cleared a High Jump British record of 1.95.

Her winning 6388 score broke Denise Lewis' British under-23 record of 6325 points set in 1994.

### **Former winners set to be main challengers**

Experienced French heptathlete Marie Collonvill , seventh at the Olympic Games in Athens 2004, returns to Desenzano as the defending champion. It was the second win in Desenzano for Collonvill  who also won in 2004 with 6228 points.

Margaret Simpson recently returned to competitions winning the African Combined Events Championships in Mauritius in April with 5667 points and will be looking for a qualifying score for the IAAF World Championships in Berlin this weekend in the Italian town overlooking Lake Garda.

Simpson, winner in Desenzano in 2003 (5952 points) and 2005 (6006 points), won the 2005 IAAF World Championships bronze medal in the Heptathlon in Helsinki and the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester and scored a lifetime best of 6423 points in Götzis in 2005.

Tyminska won in Desenzano in 2006 with 6178 points and then went on to finish seventh at the Olympic Games in Beijing with 6428 points and fifth at the 2009 European Indoor Championships in Torino with 4542 points.

Hanna Melnychenko of Ukraine, is another well-known name in Desenzano. The Ukrainian, who is married to Italian Decathlon specialist William Frullani and competes for an Italian club, finished second last year with 6195 points, a PB which she then improved to 6306 points later in the season at the European Cup for Combined Events in Hengelo. Melnychenko finished 14th at the Olympic Games in Beijing with 6165.

Other 6000 points scorers in the field who can fight for a placing in the top-three are Marina Goncharova of Russia (PB 6319 points in Götzis in 2008), Lucimara Da Silva of Brazil (PB 6076 points in 2008 when she finished 17th at the Beijing Olympic Games), and 2009 European Indoor Championships eighth placer Yvonne Wisse of the Netherlands (PB 6098 points in Götzis in 2008).

The best Italian hope is set on Francesca Doveri who had a good winter season in which she broke the national indoor pentathlon record with 4423 points and finished ninth at the European Indoor Championships in Torino.

### **Men's field**

The top favourite in the men's Decathlon is US Jake Arnold. Arnold finished 13th at the 2007 IAAF World Championships in Osaka with 8004 points and set his PB of 8215 points at the US National Championships in Sacramento in 2007.

France will send a good team to Desenzano led by 2007 European Indoor Championships seventh placer Rudy Bourguignon (PB 8025 set in 2005) and Guillaume Barras (the younger brother of international decathlon specialist Romain Barras).

Other top names in the field are Roland Schwarzl of Austria (PB 8102 points), Mikalai Shubiannok of Belarus (PB 8026 points) and Lars Albert of Germany (PB 7933 points).

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

Saturday, 09 May 2009

## Ennis impresses in first day of comeback in Desenzano del Garda – IAAF Combined Events Challenge



Jessica Ennis in Desenzano del Garda (Lorenzo Sampaolo)

Desenzano del Garda, Italy - British Heptathlon star Jessica Ennis made a superb comeback to competitions at the Multistars - **IAAF Combined Events Challenge** meeting - in Desenzano del Garda with an impressive 4003 points at the end of day one, a score which indicates a possible attack to the 6500 points barrier in the second day.

Ennis produced a very good display in the opening 100m Hurdles event where she clocked 12.98 (wind + 0.7 m/s) for 1127 points missing her PB set at the IAAF World Championships in Osaka by just 0.01 seconds. Her favourite Italian venue where she won with a solid 6388 points tally in 2007 marked a very good return for the Briton who was sidelined from most of the 2008 season by a stress fracture in her right foot.

Hanna Melnychenko is second after four events with 3716 points, ahead of Uzbekistan's Yuliya Tarasova (3631 points) and Yvonne Wisse from the Netherlands (3628 points) in a tight contest for third place.

The men's Decathlon produced a major surprise with Czech Pavel Baar taking the overnight lead with 4033 points. The fight for first place is wide open with South African William Coertsen in second place with 4022 points, just 11 points behind Baar. One of the favourites, Jake Arnold of the USA and the 2007 NCAA champion, is in third with 4020 points. Stanislav Sajdok from Czech Republic and Daniel Awde from Great Britain round out the top five respectively with 4013 and 4001 points in what promises to be a very close and hard-fought competition during the second day of competition.

### Ennis dominating - heptathlon

Ennis missed her 100m Hurdles PB by just one hundredth of a second with her 12.98. "It was a nice surprise after a long time without competitions. I was nervous before the start," said Ennis.

Ennis won her favourite event beating Melnychenko (13.40), Italian indoor pentathlon record holder Francesca Doveri (13.45) and Jana Koresova from Czech Republic (13.56).

Ennis, who scored her PB of 6469 points in Osaka when she finished fourth at the World Championships, continued her comeback to top form with a good 1.90m leap in the High Jump increasing her overall lead with 2233 points, 11 points ahead of her PB pace. Ennis jumped 1.90 (1106 points) in her second attempt before three attempts at 1.93, two centimetres off her British high jump record and the Multistars event record set in 2007. The Heptathlon star from Sheffield came very close to clearing 1.93 in her third attempt.

Melnychenko backed up her overall second place with 2018 points with 1.78m in the High Jump. Francesca Doveri cleared 1.75m to take third overall place with 1974 points ahead of Koresova (1957 points). Last year's Multistars winner Marie Collonvill , seventh after two attempts, was forced to drop out of the competition after suffering from an injury during the High Jump where she cleared 1.75m.

Ennis threw beyond the 13m barrier in the Shot Put with 13.19m (40 cm off her recent event PB set in a Shot Put competition in Derby last week) and continued to keep her PB pace. She was 95 points ahead

of her PB schedule with just the 200m to be run on the first day. Melnychenko kept her second place thanks to her best release of 13.11m. Russian Nadezhda Sergeyeva, ninth after the High Jump, climbed into third place thanks to her 13.86m effort which earned her second place in the Shot Put behind event winner Marina Goncharova from Russia who put 14.07m.

Ennis easily won the final 200m with 23.49 maintaining her 6530 points pace before the second day of competitions. Tarasova produced the only major change to the overall lead taking the overnight third place with 24.39 in the 200m (944 points), while Sergeyeva clocked 25.28 and was overhauled by Yvonne Wisse who finished the first day in fourth place just three points behind Tarasova.

“The shot put was disappointing, especially after improving my PB to 13.59 last week. My goal is to qualify for the World Championships in Berlin. A further improvement to my PB would be a bonus,” said Ennis.

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

Saturday, 09 May 2009

#### **Decathlon – Baar carries narrow advantage into day 2**

The men's Decathlon 100m went to Czech Republic's Stanislav Sajdok who clocked 10.90 (883 points). His countryman Baar took the first place in the penultimate heat in 10.91 (881 points) for overall second place in the first event.

The most surprising story of the 22nd edition of the Multistars is the participation of a Kenyan decathlete. The young Silas Kalonon Cheruiyot, who was born in 1988, entered with a PB of 6726 points, improved his PBs in the 100m with 11.25 (806 points) and came close to his best in the Long Jump leaping to 7.56m (four cm off his lifetime best 950 points) which earned him a surprising win in the second event.

Cheruiyot, who trains at the IAAF Performing Centre in Mauritius, took a brief overall lead after two events with 1756 points. Daniel Awde from Great Britain followed in the overall ranking in second place with 1734 points after running 10.95 in the 100m and leaping to 7.20m in the Long Jump. Baar followed in third place with 1716 points after his 7.09 in the long jump. Not surprisingly Cheruiyot's lead did not last long after the Shot Put where he did not put further than 10.50m and faded into 16th place. German Lars Albert, who was eighth after 11.29 in the 100m and 7.17m in the Long Jump, won the Shot Put with 15.76m (836 points) and took the overall lead with 2487 points ahead of Roland Schwarzl from Austria, second with 2423 points (11.33 in the 100m, 7.33m in the Long Jump and 14.17m in the Shot Put). Baar kept his third place with 2416 points after 13.54m in the shot put.

The high jump produced a major change to the overall Decathlon ranking. Sajdok improved his position moving from 11th to first in the overall ranking with 3320 points thanks to his win in the High Jump with 2.13m (925 points) Albert lost his first place fading into eighth place following a 1.83m clearance. Behind Sajdok, Schwarzl defended his second place just 12 points behind Sajdock thanks to his 1.98m clearance. Arnold cleared 2.04m overtaking Baar for overall third place with 3184 points. Cheruiyot remarkably improved his PB to 2.10m and climbed into fifth place

The 400m produced another major shake-up to the overall lead. Baar ran the third best time in the one-lap race clocking 49.04 (859 points) and took the overnight lead with 4033 points. Willem Coertsen finished second in the 400m and caught up positions moving into second place just 11 points behind Baar. Arnold kept his third place with 49.53 while Sajdok did not run faster than 50.47 and finished the first day in fourth place but everything can happen in such a close contest with a gap of just 32 points between the overnight leader and the fifth placer.

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

Sunday, 10 May 2009

## **Ennis improves to 6587 pts in Desenzano del Garda – IAAF Combined Events Challenge**



**Jessica Ennis on the way to her 6587pt PB tally in Desenzano del Garda**  
(Lorenzo Sampaolo)

Desenzano del Garda, Italy - British Heptathlon star Jessica Ennis tallied 6587 points to break the Multistars - **IAAF Combined Events Challenge meeting** – record in Desenzano del Garda.

The Briton's tally improved her previous PB of 6469 points set at the IAAF World Championships in Osaka where she finished fourth. Ennis eclipsed the long-standing meeting record held by Romanian Liliana Nastase who totalled 6565 points in 1992.

It was a remarkable comeback for Ennis who was sidelined by a stress fracture in her foot which forced her to miss the Olympic Games in Beijing. Her 6587 points score is the third best ever performance on the British all-time list behind Denise Lewis' 6831 and Judy Simpson's 6623. Ennis overtook her rival Kelly Sotherton who scored 6547 points in Götzis in 2005.

Hanna Melnychenko finished runner-up with 6077 points ahead of Yuliya Tarasova (5989 points) and Yvonne Wisse from the Netherlands (5986 points).

American Jake Arnold took the win in the men's Decathlon coming close to the 8000 point barrier with a 7994 score beating Roland Schwarzl from Austria (7913), Willem Coertzen from South Africa (7907) and Lars Albert from Germany (7903).

### **After 2008 injury, Ennis fully motivated**

Ennis opened the second day of competitions leaping to 6.16m in the Long Jump (899 points). The Briton has switched from taking off from her right foot to her left in the competition to reduce the stress on her ankle following last year's stress fracture. Tarasova, from Uzbekistan, won the Long Jump with 6.35m (959 points) and tied the same score of runner-up Hanna Melnychenko at 4590 points.

Ennis dropped some points in the Long Jump but was still inside the pace to break her PB but when she speared the Javelin to a PB of 42.70m (719 points), she was on pace to set the meeting record with one event to go. The top-three ranking did not undergo major changes after the Javelin Throw with Melnychenko second with 5299 and Tarasova (5280) third. Margaret Simpson, the 2005 World bronze medallist, bounced back from a below-par first day where she ended in 14th position with her usual strong performance in the Javelin. She was best of the day with a 50.16m throw, moving her up to sixth place with 5023 points.

Heading into the final event, Ennis needed to run 2:11.39 to break Nastase's meeting record. She exceeded all expectations by winning the two-lap event in a very good 2:09.88 worth 966 points which crowned a perfect weekend in which she won four events (100m Hurdles, High Jump, 200m and the 800m) and showed encouraging results in the events which were considered her weakest disciplines like the Shot Put and the Javelin Throw where she produced respectively 13.19m and 42.70m. She scored 4003 points on day one, her best ever first-day performance.

"Last year I missed everything because of the injury," Ennis said. "This gave me more motivation to come back. I am now in my best shape ever. I came here to qualify for the World Championships in Berlin, so (the personal best) it is a big bonus. I set my javelin PB in a heptathlon competition although I speared to 43 metres in an individual event. The Long Jump was a bit down but I changed my take-off leg this year."

Melnychenko and Tarasova managed to defend their minor podium places despite their below-par times in the 800m where they ran respectively 2:23.39 and 2:28.75. Yvonne Wisse ran 2:11.05 and came very close to threatening third place position which she missed by just three points.

### **With strong second day, Arnold pulls through - men's decathlon**

Czech Stanislav Sajdok, who cleared a very good 2.13m in the High Jump during the first day, won the 110m Hurdles in a solid 14.01 (973 points) taking the overall lead with 4986 points after six events. Jake Arnold from the USA, the 2007 NCAA champion who ended the first day in third place with 4920 points and just 13 points behind overnight winner Pavel Baar, also performed well clocking 14.28 (939 points) and took second place with 4959 points. Roland Schwarzl from Austria went into third place with 4924 points thanks to his 14.27 clocking in the hurdles (940 points). Willem Coertzen from South Africa, second at the end of the first day, ran 14.61 and was ranked fourth with a total of 4919 points. Baar ran 15.37 and faded back into sixth place with 4838.

Arnold, who has a stronger second day, lived up to his favourite role, throwing 44.19m (750 points) in the discus and took the overall lead with 5709 points ahead of Schwarzl (43.72m) who moved up into second place with 5665 points. Lars Albert won the discus with a good 51.04m (892 points) to move up from ninth to third place with 5645 points.

The top-two positions saw Arnold leading over Schwarzl after the Pole Vault where the Austrian beat the American on countback at 5.05m (926 points). After the Pole Vault Arnold led with 6635 points to Schwarzl's 6591. Albert vaulted 4.95m and defended his third overall position with 6540 points.

Coertzen, fourth after the Pole Vault with 6365 points, won the javelin spearing to 64.90m. He reduced his gap on second placer Albert to 79 points and on third placer Schwarzl to just 41 points before a close fight for the podium behind Arnold in the final 1500m race. Arnold, who threw 55.57m in the Javelin Throw, led with 7306 points before the 1500m over Albert (7256), Schwarzl (7218) and Coertzen (7177).

Arnold ran 4:38.71 and took the overall win with a 7994 point tally. The final event was decisive for the second and third positions. Schwarzl (4:37.70) clinched a narrow second place with 7913 points holding off Coertzen (4:32.16) by just six points. Coertzen's score of 7907 is a new South African record. Albert missed the top-three by just four points.

"I am very happy but I am a bit jet-lagged," Arnold said. "The organizers did a very good job. I am getting ready for Götzis. This year I will try to make the team for the World Championships in Berlin. It will be a very tough achievement to make the team against athletes like Bryan Clay and Trey Hardee."

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