

March 15 2007 £2.45

athletics

WEEKLY

THE WORLD'S NO.1 ATHLETICS MAGAZINE



CROSS FIRE!

Liz Yelling revels in mud to win Saucony English National

Eight-page special from Sunderland



INSIDE:

Pull-out poster to celebrate Britain's record Euro Indoor medal success

Weekend round up includes BUSA Indoors and Hastings Half



Questionable: Flo-Jo's sprint times

Again these are surprising considering the importance of their Olympics performances.

A look at the table of the best women's 1500m performances of all time makes interesting reading since most of the top times are by Chinese athletes. Based on times alone it would have been difficult for Holmes to have made the final of the Chinese championships at Shanghai in 1997.

One of the criticisms of the Chinese runners is that they haven't appeared in world and Olympic events often enough. They did appear at the World Championships at Stuttgart in 1993. Liu Dong won the 1500m in 4:00.5. Qu Yunxia won the 3000m in 8:28.71. In fact the Chinese occupied the first three places with Sonia O'Sullivan fourth.

One of the better known Chinese runners is Wang Junxia, who won the 10,000m in 30:49.30. Wang was first noticed on the world scene when she finished second to Paula Radcliffe in

the world junior cross country over a snowy course in Boston in 1992.

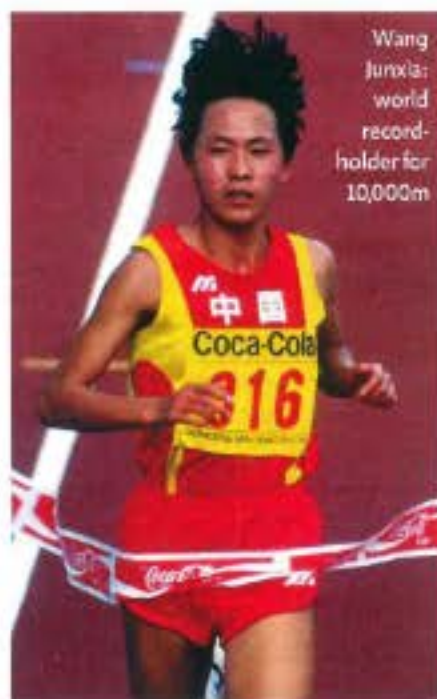
She went on to set the current world record in Beijing a few weeks after Stuttgart with a time of 29:31.78. Radcliffe still has the second fastest time ever of 30:01.09, which she set in that amazing performance in the European Championships in the rain of Munich in 2002.

Wang Junxia has competed internationally on a number of occasions, winning gold over 5000m at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and silver in the 10,000m and has been subjected to drugs testing. Since she has retired she has become a star on Chinese television.

A number of the runners suffered orthopaedic problems and their coach, Ma Junren, spent some time in hospital with psychological problems. He said: "I don't think Chinese runners will be able to shock the world again. Nobody is willing to endure as much hardships as Wang and Qu did. Also I don't think that they can find another coach as clever as me."

It is easy to be sceptical of the Chinese records but there is more to it than that. Women's distance running is still relatively under-developed and there are a huge number of competitors in the distance events in China and Japan.

Out of the current Chinese population of 1.3 billion there is an enormous pool of talent to choose from. And according to accounts of Junren's coaching, he subjected his training group to an unprecedented volume and intensity of training. He coached a group of peasant girls, who



Wang Junxia: world record-holder for 10,000m

Don't pick on throwers

ALAN BERTRAM, coach to 2002 Commonwealth champions Lorraine Shaw and Mick Jones, asks why some records are thought dirty while others are not



HOW much I enjoy the comments, coaching tips and general contributions to *Athletics Weekly* by Max Jones and none more so than those under the heading 'Time for a Clean Start' in the February 1 issue.

In response to his article I make three points. Firstly, by expunging all records set prior to December 31 1990, the world record for the men's hammer of 86.74m set in the European Championships of 1986 by Yuri Sedykh would disappear. It would be replaced by a mark of 86.73m set by Ivan Tikhon of Belarus in 2005. This mark is a mere centimetre less than the mark of Sedykh. Does it make sense? I think not.

Throughout the athletics world Sedykh is a legend and is generally recognised as the doyen of the event. He was the master technician and the athlete with the temperament for the big occasion. Even at the age of 30 the technique of Tikhon leaves quite a bit to be desired and he certainly lacks the panache of Sedykh on the global scene. Surely, it would be quite unjust to have the world record of Sedykh expunged for another a centimetre less and, as I understand it, set in dubious circumstances.

In respect of Max's sympathetic comments pertaining to the talented New Zealand shot putter, Valerie Vili, who has a best of 20.20m. Agreed, she has a considerable way to go to reach the world record of 22.63m held by

Natalya Lisovskaya (wife of Sedykh) but here I point out that at the same age as Vili, Lisovskaya had a best of 20.85m a mere 65cm ahead of the New Zealand athlete.

Lisovskaya is the most successful female shot putter of all-time. An athlete of outstanding stature (190m/95kg) and was extremely well conditioned at her best. But more to that she was a superb technician.

Meanwhile, Vili has considerable work to do to bring her technique up to that of Lisovskaya. I am of the firm belief that Vili can make big inroads and provided she adopts the correct work ethics can be the first female shot putter for some considerable time to hit 22 metres.

Finally, I presume Max will be lobbying for all UK records set before December 31 1990 to be expunged and that means track as well as field.



Yuri Sedykh: hammer world record-holder

trained hard and raced infrequently. There are accounts of them running a marathon a day at altitude and recording 300km per week. Under these circumstances why shouldn't they have been able to produce exceptional performances?

However, just before the Sydney Olympics a number of Chinese runners were withdrawn from the Games at the time when a new EPO test was introduced. Given this, it wouldn't at all be surprising if a new 'Ma's army' emerged in time for the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

There you have it. This is by no means meant to be a definitive check of all world records. Do the Germans have a point? Are some of the world records set in the past so far out of reach that they must be tainted? Or could it be that Koch, Griffith-Joyner and Qu Yunxia were

exceptionally talented athletes who trained exceptionally hard to get the results?

If the German federation gets its way and a new set of records is established then a number of current records could be under threat, including of course the genuine ones. So for example Michael Johnson's fabulous 200m record of 19.32 set in the Atlanta Olympics would have to go. So would Kenenisa Bekele's 5000m record of 12:37.35.

Has anyone ever suggested that there is anything wrong with these records? There is a temptation here to throw the baby out with the bath water.

■ **SOURCES:** *Track Stats* March 2003, *Athletics: A History of Track and Field 2000* and *ATFS Annual 2005*, *Athletics Weekly* December 29, 2005

athletics

October 9 2008 £2.75

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE OLYMPIC SPORT

WEEKLY



**Paula Radcliffe
on Beijing,
New York and
London 2012**

**TYNE
MACHINE**

**Mo Farah wins
mile at Bupa
Great Run
Weekend**

**British
masters
cross relays**

**7-page special
on world's No.1
half-marathon**

Focus on the ...

Continuing our series on track and field events, this week we look at the hammer

HAMMER

AW
basics
advice, techniques
and tips for
beginners

A ball and chain? There seems to be something deeply symbolic about this event. The evolution of the hammer throw has nothing to do with the prison service! However, perhaps there is a little symbolism in the fact that hammer throwers spend many hours practising, only to ultimately release the ball and chain in competition – a bit like convicts being set free from their shackles. Instead, the event originates from ancient games that saw strongmen throw a sledgehammer – or a steel or lead weight that was attached to the end of a cane handle.

What is the event's nature today?

The aim, of course, is to throw the hammer the furthest and a steel ball is attached to a wire and handle. The men's hammer weighs 7.257kg (or 16lb) and is 4ft in length. The women's hammer is 4kg (8.82lb) in weight and 4ft long. Athletes spin the hammer above their head, picking up speed and turning three or four times in a 7ft diameter circle. Longer throws are achieved by a good angle of release and fast speed of the ball.

Who are the best?

The men's event has a long history as it has been in the Olympics since 1900. The women's event was only introduced

into the Olympics in 2000. Yuriy Sedykh of Russia holds the men's record with 86.74m from 1986. The present women's world record is held by Tatyana Lysenko of Russia, who threw 77.80m in 2006.

Harold Connolly of the United States in the Sixties became the first man to break the 70m barrier. In addition to Sedykh, another Russian to dominate the modern era is Sergey Litvinov. The women's event has also been dominated by Russians such as Olga Kuzenkova and Lysenko.

Have there been any classic clashes?

The 1986 European Championships in Stuttgart was a cracker as Sedykh and Litvinov pushed each other to a world record that still stands today. Litvinov led during the opening rounds with 85.74m before Sedykh unleashed three efforts over 86-and-a-half metres.

Is Britain any good?

This country does not have a superb tradition of hammer throwing, but at Commonwealth level English athletes have tasted great success. The 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, for instance, saw victories by Crawley's Mick Jones and Sale Harrier Lorraine Shaw, both of whom were guided to gold by British coach Alan Bertram.

Other leading British hammer throwers during the modern era include



Lorraine Shaw took Commonwealth hammer gold in Manchester in 2002.

Howard Payne, Chris Black, Dave Smith and Paul Head. In the women's hammer, Shaw has dominated the UK landscape during the brief history of the event.

Is the event simply dominated by huge athletes with brutish strength?

Not really, although that helps. Size and strength is important, but so is a great technique, plus speed, relaxation and mobility in the circle. In full flight, there are few more aesthetically pleasing sights than a top hammer thrower in action.

Hammer throwers need great all-

round strength to maintain a good posture during the throw, with the feet shoulder-width apart and the knees bent. With the arms extended in front of the chest, the athlete establishes a triangle with the shoulders, chest and arms – and part of the art of being a good hammer thrower is the ability to hold a good position while spinning at speed and battling centrifugal force.

Generally, it is best to concentrate on a horizontal action in the preliminary movements, whereas in the delivery the emphasis is more on lifting than driving.

Given the nature of the event, it is also very rhythmic. Like almost everything in life, too, practice makes perfect. But it is no good instilling bad habits. The first thing to do if you like the idea of taking up the event is to find a good coach to give you a practical session in learning the basics.

Certainly, the event is worth the effort to master. Throwing the hammer is not only great to watch but also gives you a very dynamic feeling – and much satisfaction if the hammer flies a long way.

Where can I find out more?

The Hammer Circle is the home of the Association of British Hammer Throwers. The website www.hammer-circle.co.uk includes coaching advice and information.

Hilly climb to new heights

THE Marathon Fresh, one of Hilly's most popular and long-standing socks, has recently undergone a technical improvement, with the introduction of Merino wool.

The cushioned sock provides shock absorption and is suitable for training and racing. It is also antimicrobial and includes all the key features required in a technical sock – a seamless toe construction, arch grip support and Y'heel.

Hilly Clothing was formed by the famous runner, Ron Hill, in 1992 – and with a PhD in textile chemistry he had the perfect background for the job.

■ CALL 0161-366 8207 or see www.hillyclothing.co.uk



Sport-specific stretching guide

PHYSIO and sports scientist Christopher Norris has produced a handy, reader-friendly book called *Stretching for Running*.

There have been many books written over the years on stretching, but this one focuses on specific stretches for runners and is also a handy pocket size.

The book is also easy



to read and full of clear, colour images and bite-size sections to dip in and out of.

Explaining beginners' stretches through to intermediate and advanced movements, the book also includes parts on self-assessment and how to treat common injuries.

■ PUBLISHED by A&C Black. Cost £7.99

athletics

November 13 2008 £2.75

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE NO.1

WEEKLY

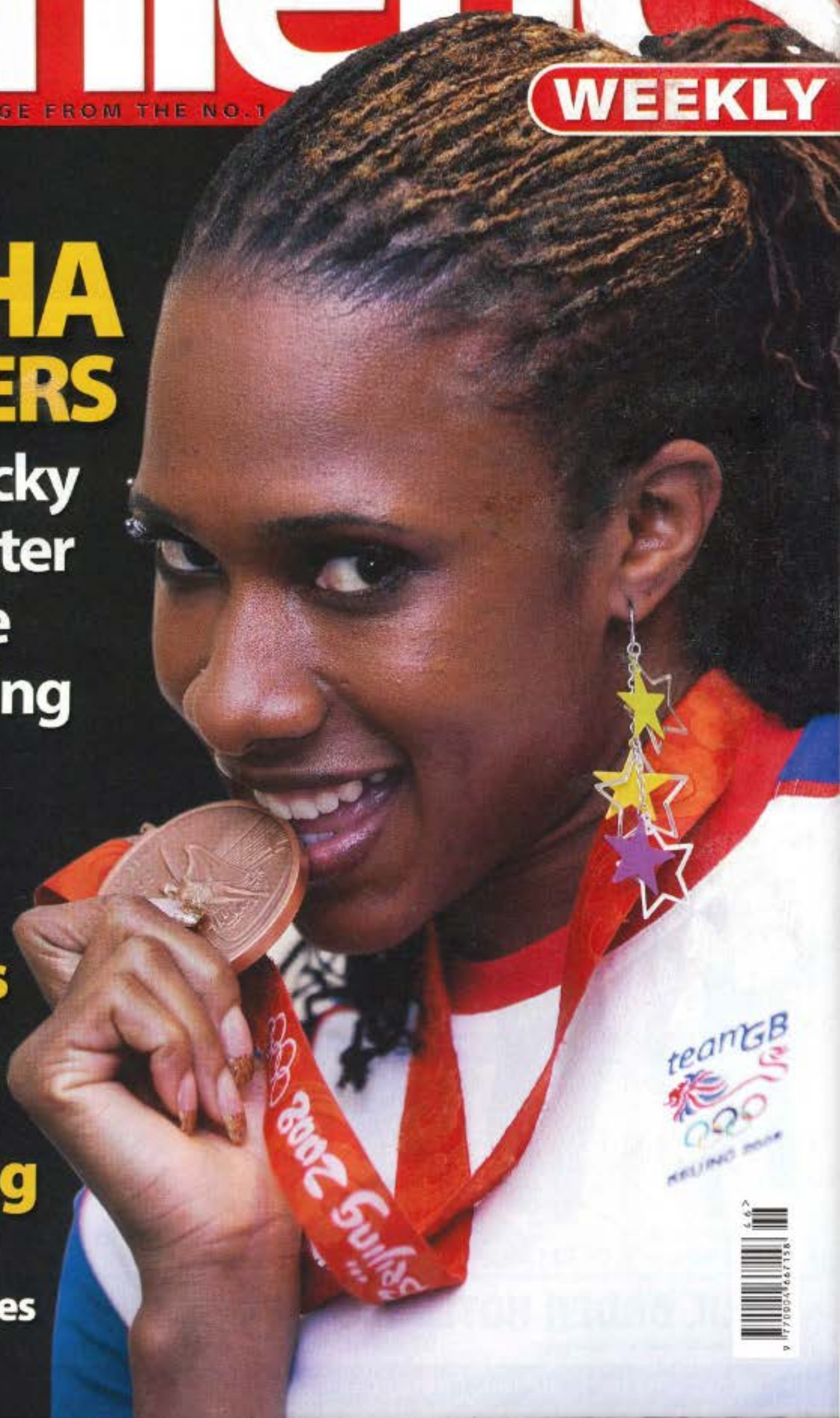
TASHA DANVERS

On her rocky rollercoaster ride to the 2008 Beijing Olympic podium

U17 men's rankings

Stretching special -

See centre pages



ABAC reasserts pressure group status

THE Association of GB Athletic Clubs has ended its third year by declaring itself as the "only truly democratic (athletics) body in the UK".

Better known by its acronym "ABAC", it has positioned itself as the alternative choice to UK Athletics. It has also made it its mission to challenge the official governing body.



Mike Winch: left UKA post to join ABAC



Proposals to change age-group dates were scrapped after pressure was applied by ABAC

Among its successes, ABAC claims:

- More than 135 clubs have signed up to its road running arm – the Association of Running Clubs (ARC) – a figure that involves more than 13,000 individual members. Linked to this, ARC has issued 275 race permits in its first 18 months and all are insured under a policy set up by ARC. "Additionally," the ABAC report says, "the lack of bureaucracy and

simplicity associated with holding ARC races continues to attract more member clubs as word of its successes spreads."

- Mike Winch left his post as vice president of UKA and joined ABAC as a committee officer. There, he is responsible for new coaching initiatives.
- Feeling that UKA's plans for 2012 success are inadequate, ABAC has

written its own strategy and sent it to the Government.

- In the last year the combined membership of ABAC and ARC has increased to 238 clubs.

In addition, it has put together a petition against a Sport England policy aimed at tackling obesity levels. The petition, signed by 74 clubs, argued that it was better to encourage competitive sport at grassroots.

ABAC has also met the chief executives of UKA and England Athletics – Niels de Vos and Mike Summers respectively – and they claim their pressure has led to some of the proposals in Jack Buckner's competition review being shelved.

But most of all, ABAC continues to put pressure on UKA, questioning its performance at every turn. For example, ABAC has analysed athletes' rankings from 1998 to 2008 and found that since the birth of UKA there has been no improvement in men's standards and only some in women's.

Sedykh's throws masterclass

YURIY SEDYKH, the world record-holder and former Olympic champion hammer thrower, ran a masterclass at the London Regional Throws Centre, Perivale Park, for around 50 hammer throwers last weekend.

As well as giving some top-level coaching and describing his training methods, Sedykh provided individual feedback to every athlete on their technique with advice on improvement.

A dozen or more coaches attended, including Lorraine Shaw, Alan Bertram and Malcolm Fenton, plus athletes such as Zoe Derham, and the overwhelming view, despite some very bad weather, was that it was extremely worthwhile.

The event was the brainchild of Jamie Bath, regional rotational throws coordinator, who also arranged video sessions for feedback on the day and for subsequent recording on to disc for athletes to make use of in their training with their clubs and coaches.

This event followed on from Sedykh masterclasses held in Birmingham over the last two years. Unlike the other Birmingham sessions, this was open to

the whole range of hammer throwers from raw beginners to international athletes. It was this broad cross section of abilities that led Bertram to comment that this was the best of the six Sedykh masterclasses he had attended – high praise considering that list included the IAAF seminar held at Szombathely.

For each technical session the athletes were organised into three groups. While one group worked with Sedykh at the circle, the other two were taken through drill sessions. The event finished with a lively question-and-answer session.

Bertram said: "I've been involved in Sedykh masterclasses in Hungary, Scotland, Birmingham twice and Loughborough. I've no doubt this was the best I've attended and that includes the presentation to the world hammer throwers in Hungary."

Bertram, who coached Shaw and Mick Jones to Commonwealth gold, added: "I like the way people mucked in and it was very relaxed. Yuriy communicated his points well. He was excellent with the athletes."

Birmingham Half off to great start

THE inaugural EDF Birmingham Half Marathon, which took place last month, was a huge success and will act as a great taster to the IAAF World Half-marathon, which hits the city in October 2009.

The 13.1-mile race, which was the first major road race to be staged in the city for more than 20 years, received nearly 9000 entries and an estimated 50,000 spectators lined the route.



Andi Jones (596) off to a flyer in Birmingham

Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "This event has certainly put Birmingham on the road running map. We are now looking forward to staging the World Half-marathon Championships next year and we hope that next year's EDF Energy Birmingham Half-marathon will attract thousands more runners."

The winner of the men's race was Andi Jones in 65:42. The 30-year-old Salford Harrier won £1000 and said: "It was a very competitive field so to have come out on top is very pleasing. It's a race I'd definitely run again. The support from the people on the course was outstanding."

The women's race was won by Birhan Dagne from Belgrave Harriers in 77:40.

The start of the race was slightly delayed by the organisers to give all the runners a chance to arrive at the start after poor weather in the morning led to traffic congestion in the local area, but the sun shone as the runners made their way to the city centre.

athletics

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE NO.1 OLYMPIC SPORT

October 1 2009 £2.75

WEEKLY



MILE HIGH

Baddeley shocks the field in Big Apple

ROAD RELAYS

North and South coverage

CROSS COUNTRY GUIDE

Fixture list for the winter



Q And the jumps – what was your view of them?

A For the men, no technical changes in long jump, and indeed the standard has dropped, with Saladino going AWOL with a schoolboy error. This could have offered a real opening for our men, alas ignored. The women's event was pretty dismal, with the winner Brittney Reese the only athlete to show any real speed on the runway.

Men's triple jump has gone backwards in performance, with no technical changes, often poor quality of running and board-judgement, and there has been similarly little movement in the women's event.

The best high jumper in any technical sense was almost certainly a woman, Blanka Blasik, who was also the best in competitive strength. Here it is worth asking how GB could have three finalists in Beijing in the men's event and no competitors at all in Berlin.

Steve Hooker's performance must surely rank with that of Usain Bolt. Knowing that he only had a couple of vaults in him, succeeding at an entry-height so close to his PB was one of the great performances of athletics history. Conversely, Yelena Isinbayeva's decision to enter at 4.70m was inexplicable, as was the BBC's decision to interview her immediately afterwards. From our point of view, I think that Kate Dennison and Steve Lewis took a big step forward.

Q So on to the throws – your opinions please on Berlin

A Men's shot was probably the best competition, with Tomasz Majewski's conventional O'Brien technique losing out to Christian Cantwell's rotational, which is surprisingly stable. I believe there was one Russian woman using a step-back (there were two Germans doing so in Beijing) but I saw no rotational in the women's shot.

Few of the men's hammer throwers seemed to be in balance going into the final turn, none showing the rock-solid delivery of a three-turn Sedykh. This was pretty poor stuff, in contrast to the smooth balanced turning of the women.

Javelin has seen no real technical change, if anything a slight decline, but men's discus is stable, with a group of technically excellent throwers at the top, and the same is true of the women.



The Caster Semenya incident has questioned the sport's interpretation of gender

Q With no British athlete in Berlin, what about the decathlon?

A Decathlon always has lessons for the coaches of young athletes, which means most of us. For what we see is a series of necessarily modest techniques (what I call "intermediate" techniques) which often produce excellent results. Thus we see 11.2 sprinters jumping around 7.80m in long jump, and javelins thrown from the withdrawn position going out to around 70 metres, essentially intermediate techniques. Thus it was in Berlin. I was very impressed by the two Cubans.

Q What is your opinion on the Caster Semenya issue?

A The IAAF have been honest in admitting that they handled it very badly. But this situation serves to show that gender is almost certainly much more complex than we had imagined. This being said, sport's definition of gender may have to ignore some of these complexities, otherwise women's sport may prove to be unworkable.

Q Are we beginning to see a sort of polarisation of events?

A Yes, in the sense that Jamaica and the USA are dominating in sprints and hurdles, East Africans in the distances, Europeans in all throws except the men's shot, with a spread in the jumps. There will always of course, be exceptions, but that seems to be the general trend. There has been a definite weakening in American men's athletics, which has always had a wasteful system – if indeed it can be called a system at all – but what they have is a clutch of strong female distance runners coming through. And European athletics is weak, though the Germans have come back well from a poor Beijing.

Q Can we come to worldwide standards. How are they in general?

A Standards do not appear to be rapidly rising – unlike in swimming and cycling. I therefore believe that we can place a high volume of British athletes in finals in 2012. That should be our aim, not only for the athletes themselves, but because the British public, who fund us, will want to see this in London in 2012 – lanes in finals occupied by British athletes.

Q With our funding, should we have made a greater impact?

A No nation has seen, in the past decade, a greater increase in funding than we have, and I would be dishonest were I to claim that it has been effectively deployed. I had always believed that professional leadership would bring us into the Promised Land. I was totally wrong in that belief. But, as I have said earlier, that is water under the bridge.

Q Do sports like cycling have anything to offer us?

A Cycling and rowing are what might well be called singular sports, in that they call upon a narrow range of skills and capacities, unlike athletics, which is essentially a set of separate sports. They can therefore focus all of their stars on one facility. What we can take from them is their attitude, their tough-minded approach, and this can be applied in every event. I think that Charles van Commenee has that approach.

Q Can it work with our distance runners?

A I think there is no reason to conclude that it can't.

I feel that is dangerous for athletics to base its future on the talents of one man, however talented

TOM McNAB on Usain Bolt

Q Is this something that our endurance "task force" can look at?

A Yes, but I feel that this group needs a few top coaches, people like George Gandy and John Anderson, who have been there and done the business.

Q What is your opinion on the series of foreign coaching appointments?

A I'm very optimistic. What we need is a major cultural shift at all levels, and these appointments may serve to provide exactly that shift.

Q Would this happen in athletes' own clubs?

A Yes, because that is where most of our coaching takes place. We must see our coach education programmes change at the teaching/instruction/early coaching level, which is the area in which most of our coaches work. And we must guide clubs towards better means of organising their coaching, and to get their coaches to work in teams. So it is not a highly technical issue, at least not for the bulk of our coaches. We must train them for the contexts within which they work, and to improve those contexts, so that they are able to work more effectively.

Q What about schemes like 'Fun to Fulfilment'?

A Many of our clubs have, with the under-12s, become playgroups, rather than schools of athletics where skill-learning is the primary aim, with enjoyment a by-product.

This has been compounded by watered-down adult programmes for the instruction of children in the 12-15 category. We need a national syllabus for beginners, and to train our coaches to formally deliver it. And we must move away from clubs judging themselves in terms of league-performance, and move towards them as vehicles for individual achievement.

So a big cultural shift is required here.

athletics

THE BEST OF THE WEEK FROM THE NO.1 OLYMPIC SPORT

WEEKLY



BABY BOOM

New mum Pavey
seeks top return
in Manchester

**IAAF Diamond
League preview**

**Chris Thompson
interview**

**Ennis versus
Ohuruogu
at Great
CityGames**

County champs round-up

• **NEWS** • **COACHING** • **RESULTS** • **FIXTURES**



J Thomas (Sutt) 5.67/0.6; 2 C Risman (G&G) 5.00/1.0. **TJ (b):** C Risman (G&G) 10.34/-1.0. **DT (b):** 1 C Letheby (Walton) 32.65; 2 L Bettis (DMV) 29.99. **HT (b):** C Letheby (Walton) 32.53. **JT (a):** C Letheby (Walton) 32.62.

U15
100 (b) (2.3): 1 V La Fon (Herne H) 12.57; 2 C Papa (Walton) 12.9; 3 L Brako (Croy) 12.94. **100: SF1 (1.7):** V La Fon (Herne H) 12.60. **H2: V La Fon (Herne H) 12.60. 800 (a):** 1 R Bourne (Ton) 2:20.10; 2 R Dingemans (G&G) 2:20.87; 3 M Sharples (AFD) 2:25.46; 4 L Drummond (E&E) 2:27.20. **800: H2: 1 R Bourne (Ton) 2:22.74; 2 R Dingemans (G&G) 2:23.09. 1500 (b):** 1 R Bourne (Ton) 4:51.66; 2 H Preedy (AFD) 4:56.88; 3 S Foreman (S Lon) 4:58.30; 4 L Chapman (AFD) 4:59.23; 5 M Sharples (AFD) 5:03.20. **75H (a):** 1 E Nanson (AFD) 11.69; 2 S Irving (Croy) 11.81; 3 L Brower (Cley) 12.18; 4 C Papa (Walton) 12.22; 5 S Richards (E&E) 12.27. **75H: 1 L Brower (Cley) 12.08; 2 C Papa (Walton) 12.22; 3 S Richards (E&E) 12.40. H2: 1 E Nanson (AFD) 11.76; 2 S Irving (Croy) 11.84. SP (a):** 5 S Irving (Croy) 10.35.

U13
100 (a) (-0.3): M Bruney (B&B) 13.39. **100: H2: M Bruney (B&B) 13.54. 200 (b) (1.6):** 1 M Bruney (B&B) 27.23; 2 K Sealy (Herne H) 28.58; 3 K Francis (Woking) 28.72. **200: H2 (0.4):** M Bruney (B&B) 27.46. **H2 (1.1):** 1 K Sealy (Herne H) 28.45; 2 K Francis (Woking) 28.58. **800 (b):** 1 L Lafreniere (G&G) 2:27.07; 2 K Shiel-Rankin (AFD) 2:28.69; 3 K Phillips-Darke (S Lon) 2:32.41; 4 C Robinson (Reig) 2:35.34; 5 T Myall (AFD) 2:36.19; 6 V Picken (Herne H) 2:36.35; 7 L Hoad (Reig) 2:37.68. **800: H2: 1 L Phillips-Darke (S Lon) 2:33.37; 2 L Lafreniere (G&G) 2:34.68. H2: T Myall (AFD) 2:38.39. H2: 1 K Shiel-Rankin (AFD) 2:32.88; 2 L Hoad (Reig) 2:35.36; 3 V Picken (Herne H) 2:38.26. 1500 (a):** 1 K Shiel-Rankin (AFD) 5:05.16; 2 V Picken (Herne H) 5:17.27; 3 T Myall (AFD) 5:17.61; 4 M Pocock (AFD) 5:18.12. **LJ (b):** 1 M Bruney (B&B) 4.89/-0.1; 2 C Last (Woking) 4.49/-0.3. **SP (a):** 5 MacE (Walton) 7.79. **DT (b):** 5 MacE (Walton) 23.80. **JT (a):** K Barrow (AFD) 29.61.

SUSSEX, Crawley

AS so often over the past 30 years, Mick Jones stole the headlines at these championships that bucked the recent trend with larger entries in many divisions, Martin Duff reports.

The 46-year-old former Commonwealth champion, in his first competition of the year, threw 68.89 metres to set a new world M45 record. After a couple of throws well over 67 metres, Jones unleashed his best in the third round to break former Olympic champion Yuriy Sedykh's 67.74 set in 2001.

After a year out with injury, Jones was relieved to be back. "My neck was half-broken, then I broke my foot and started training 14 weeks ago. So I'm now training as much as in previous years," said Jones. "The Commonwealth Games qualifying standard is 72.20m and I'm fourth best Englishman this year already and I haven't done a strength base yet."

Elsewhere, records were of a more parochial nature and one of the best came from Josh Grice in the under-17 800m. More or less leading most of the way, the 16-year-old had Jon Ketley on his shoulder until they entered the finishing straight when he powered away to clock 1:55.7, 0.4 the 1984 record.

There was another championship best for Louisa James in the under-17 hammer of 53.00m.

Elsewhere on the track, variable wind played havoc with performances, but Carley Wenham stood out with a senior women's sprint double.

(a) = 8th; (b) = 9th

Men

100 (b) (nwi): L Fulham (Worth) 11.0. **400 (b):** M Sinclair (Craw) 49.5. **800 (a):** 1 R Graham-Watson (WSEH) 1:53.0; 2 C Johnson (Craw) 1:53.8; 3 C Dodd (E'ne) 1:54.7; 4 M Peel (Craw) 1:55.7; 5 M Burchett (Worth) 1:56.2; 6 S Baldock (Hast, M40) 1:57.3. **1500 (b):** 1 S Harrison (Craw) 4:00.8; 2 S Baldock (Hast, M40) 4:11.8. **5000 (a):** 1 M Durnigan (Swan) 15:05.1; 2 J Baker (Chich) 15:45.1. **400H (a):** S Parsons (unatt) 56.0. **PV (a):** D Ingram (B&H) 4.30. **SP (b):** B Hall (Craw) 12.67. **DT (b):** 1 S Cooke (NEB) 49.96; 2 B Hall (Craw) 40.51; 3 G Power (Herne H, M45) 37.79. **HT (a):** M Jones (Belg, M45) 68.89 (67.59, 67.17, 68.89, 67.31, 66.42, 65.81) (World M45 rec). **JT (a):** C Baker (Worth) 57.60.

M40

TJ (b): A Haines (Craw) 11.37/0.8

M50

5000 (b): P Witcomb (B&H, M60) 18:29.8. **3000W (a):** 1 J Richards (Steyn, M60) 13:57.0; 2 R Penfold (Steyn, M65) 17:01.5. **TJ (b):** 1 B Morris (E'ne) 10.78/0.2; 2 B Slaughter (E'ne) 10.53/1.0. **HT (a):** 1 B Slaughter (E'ne) 36.50; 2 M Bale (Hay H) 31.65.

U20

200 (a) (nwi): M Dorrington (B&H) 22.8. **400 (b):** 1 S Rodger (Craw) 49.5; 2 M Dorrington (B&H) 49.8; 3 D Patyey (Hors BS) 50.7. **800 (a):** 1 A Smith (B&H) 1:56.3; 2 J Thomas (Hast) 1:57.2; 3 T Marsden (Worth) 1:58.3; 4 C Mills (Hurst C) 1:59.3. **1500 (b):** 1 A Clarke (Hast) 3:58.5; 2 J McCarthy (B&H) 4:04.1; 3 A Smith (B&H) 4:05.6; 4 M Thomas (Hast) 4:07.1; 5 W Gray (B&H) 4:08.1. **5000 (a):** 1 A Clarke (Hast) 15:12.2; 2 R Skelton (Hast) 16:09.3. **110H (b) (0.9):** 1 C Finnmore (Hurst C) 14.8; 2 M Hewitt (B&H) 15.0; 3 J Beckett (Bright C) 15.8; 4 M Baker (Hors BS) 15.8. **400H (a):** 1 G Grainger (Chich) 56.6; 2 G Cooper (B&H) 57.1. **HJ (b):** 1 J Kent (Hors BS) 2.00; 2 T Gardner (E'ne) 1.90. **PV (a):** 5 Brown (Lewes) 4.30. **LJ (a):** S Rodger (Craw) 7.02/1.5. **TJ (b):** T French (B&H) 13.55/1.2. **DT (b):** 1 L Braidon (B&H) 43.50; 2 M Gue (Bright C) 39.04. **HT (a):** 1 M Lasiz (Craw) 54.25; 2 S Evans (Worth) 48.25; 3 M Evans (Worth) 47.96. **JT (a):** S Rodger (Craw) 48.06.

U17

100 (b) (1.6): 1 L Cullen (Worth) 11.2; 2 H Clarke (E'ne) 11.3. **100: H2 (2.1):** L Cullen (Worth) 11.5. **H2 (2.1):** H Clarke (E'ne) 11.4. **200 (a) (1.4):** 1 H Clarke (E'ne) 22.8; 2 D Du (Craw) 23.0. **200: H2 (1.2):** H Clarke (E'ne) 23.3. **400 (b):** J Ketley (E'ne) 50.3. **800 (a):** 1 C Grice (Phioe) 1:55.7 (CBP); 2 J Ketley (E'ne) 1:58.9; 3 O Smith (Chich) 2:01.0; 4 W Durkin (Phioe) 2:02.8; 5 E Dodd (E'ne) 2:03.7. **1500 (b):** 1 L Goodliffe (Lewes) 4:14.6; 2 E Dodd (E'ne) 4:14.8; 3 W Durkin (Phioe) 4:15.3; 4 R Driscoll (Ton) 4:19.3. **100H (b) (2.7):** J Auburn (B&H) 14.1. **PV (a):** J Moore (Chich) 3.35. **DT (a):** A Vermes (B&H) 38.05. **HT (b):** R Duke (Worth) 56.07. **JT (b):** A Coombs (Hast, U15) 44.96.

U15

100 (b) (2.5): 1 J Surridge (E'ne) 11.9; 2 M Gino (E'ne) 12.1; 3 J Sutton (Worth) 12.1. **100: H2 (2.7):** 1 J Sutton (Worth) 12.2; 2 E Lockwood (Worth) 12.2. **H2 (1.8):** J Surridge (E'ne) 12.2. **200 (a) (0.9):** 1 J Harvey (E'ne) 23.8; 2

J Surridge (E'ne) 24.6. **200: H2 (2.3):** 1 J Harvey (E'ne) 24.7; 2 J Surridge (E'ne) 25.0. **H2 (2.8):** J Sutton (Worth) 24.9. **800 (a):** 1 J White (E'ne) 2:07.6; 2 L McWilton (E'ne) 2:08.6. **80H (b) (0.4):** 1 D Reed (Bright C) 12.2; 2 R Spivey (E'ne) 12.9. **HJ (b):** R Spivey (E'ne) 1.66. **PV (b):** M Woodward (Hors BS) 2.65. **SP (a):** E Lockwood (Worth) 12.22. **DT (a):** E Lockwood (Worth) 32.37. **HT (b):** 1 J Lasiz (Craw) 45.68; 2 W Cox (Worth) 34.81.

Women

100 (a) (1.2): C Wenham (Craw) 12.5. **200 (b) (2.0):** C Wenham (Craw) 25.4. **400 (a):** C Wenham (Craw) 59.5. **800 (b):** P Aukett (S8) 2:10.8. **1500 (a):** 1 P Aukett (S8) 4:27.0; 2 R Ogden (Worth) 4:35.0; 4 C Neale (Steyn, W35) 5:00.8. **100H (a) (nwi):** 1 F Bennett (M&M) 15.0; 2 R Jennings (Hors BS) 15.6. **PV (b):** S Smith (Craw) 3.65. **LJ (b):** H Morton (Hors BS) 5.34/2.2 (5.08/0.9). **TJ (a):** A Onions (Ports) 10.83/nwi. **SP (b):** L Buxton (Bled C) 11.58. **DT (b):** 1 S Hewitt (B&H) 33.21; 2 J Davison (Worth) 33.11. **HT (b):** 1 J Davison (Worth) 48.13; 2 A Hopcroft (Hurst C) 43.55.

W45

3000W (a): S Sowerby (Steyn) 16:30.4. **PV (b):** A Duke (Worth) 2.65. **HT (b):** 1 A Morgan (E'ne) 23.46; 2 J Denyer (Hay H, W55) 22.28.

U20

100 (a) (2.7): 1 A Radcliffe (Hay H) 12.6; 2 E Lovell (Hast) 12.7. **800 (b):** A Fowle (Worth) 2:17.5. **1500 (a):** B Saville (Worth) 4:38.5. **100H (a) (nwi):** 1 E Lovell (Hast) 15.6; 2 P Wilson (B&H) 15.6. **400H (b):** P Wilson (B&H) 67.3. **PV (b):** L Strickland (Hors BS) 3.35 (CBP). **LJ (b):** 1 E Lovell (Hast) 5.50/1.5; 2 P Wilson (B&H) 5.36/2.2 (5.26/1.6); 4 V Lipscombe (B&H) 5.12/1.6. **LJ (a):** A Radcliffe (Hay H) 5.19/2.1 (5.05/1.4). **DT (b):** E Kirk-Oudubini (B&H) 32.38. **HT (b):** R Baines (Craw) 35.55. **JT (a):** 1 L Aljilmohammed (E'ne) 37.22; 2 J Challen (Hurst C) 34.89; 3 S Whiting (B&H) 33.48.

U17

300: H2: K Body (B&H) 42.7. 800 (b): 1 K Bird (Chich) 2:21.5; 2 A Ashbee-Simmonds (Craw) 2:23.5. **1500 (a):** 1 A Ashbee-Simmonds (Craw) 4:55.8; 2 M Smith (Lewes) 4:58.6. **300H (b):** 1 N Burgess (Hors BS) 48.0; 2 L Milnthorpe (Hors BS) 48.5. **HJ (a):** 1 B Brown (Chich) 1.62; 2 K Lambert (E'ne) 1.62. **PV (b):** E Blackwell (Lewes) 3.15. **LJ (b):** 1 K Hardcastle (Chich) 5.43/0.2; 2 N Burgess (Hors BS) 5.17/2.4; 3 G Harrison (B&H) 5.10/1.7; 4 Coker (Hurst C) 5.04/2.3. **TJ (a):** 1 K Hardcastle (Chich) 10.55/nwi; 2 G Harris (B&H) 10.40/nwi. **HT (b):** 1 L James (Hast) 53.00 (CBP); 2 E Marshall (Worth) 33.92. **JT (b):** 1 G Hailstone (B&H) 40.73; 2 H Webb (Hors BS) 33.28.

U15

100 (a) (3.3): 1 B Close (Worth) 12.4; 2 G Cook (Worth) 12.4; 3 S Spinner (Worth) 12.8; 4 M Mann (E'ne) 12.9; 5 A Short (Worth) 13.0. **100: H2 (1.4):** G Cook (Worth) 12.9. **H2 (1.7):** 1 S Spinner (Worth) 12.9; 2 M Mann (E'ne) 12.0. **200 (b) (0.6):** 1 B Close (Worth) 25.8; 2 S Spinner (Worth) 26.5. **200: H2 (3.3):** 1 G Hook (Worth) 26.2; 2 S Spinner (Worth) 26.5. **800 (b):** 1 G Baker (Hast) 2:24.5; 2 A Hosier (Hay H) 2:25.8. **1500 (a):** G Baker (Hast) 4:53.4. **75H (a) (1.0):** J Brewster (Hors BS) 12.4. **HJ (a):** R Pettit (Craw) 1.53. **PV (b):** 1 H Turner (B&H) 2.65; 1 N Lee (Lewes) 2.65; 3 J Brewster (Hors BS) 2.45. **HT (b):** 1 N Lee (Lewes) 31.11; 2 E Baker (Worth) 26.32. **JT (b):** 1 J Veitch (Hors BS) 29.87; 2 R Lloyd (E'ne) 29.17.



A long jump of 6.29m was enough to give Jessica Ennis one of three county titles in Sheffield

YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE, Sheffield

Triple warm-up for Ennis

JESSICA ENNIS had a useful workout on her home track, winning the 100m and long jump and finishing runner-up in the shot, Roger Norton reports.

On the first day, the world heptathlon champion won the 100m, beating defending champion Louise Bloor. The winning time was a modest 12.10 but conditions were poor with a cold headwind gusting at 4.9mps at the time of the final. In the heat earlier, Ennis had run an impressive 11.82, again with a headwind, though "only" of 1.4mps.

Conditions were better on the second day when Ennis won the long jump. She jumped 6.29m with her third-round effort and had a competent rather than top-class series (6.06, 6.21, 6.29, 6.05, -, x). Again Rotherham-based Bloor was runner-up with 5.99m. Conditions for this event were the best of the meeting, but there was still a headwind and this event was into it, although there were no measurements taken.

Earlier in the day Ennis threw 13.82m for second place in the shot behind her Sheffield team-mate Amy Hill (14.05m), who was battling with a shoulder injury. Ennis has only exceeded 13.82m twice in outdoor competition, and all her throws were over 13 metres. In that context it was a very good performance, although such is the expectation now that 14 metres is the target every time she competes.

After the Bupa GreatCity Games

next weekend, three events at Loughborough the following weekend, she will take on the best in the world in a heptathlon in Gotzis on May 29-30.

Bloor finally struck gold in one of the last events of the meeting, retaining her 200m title into the wind in 24.75.

Hatti Dean, returning to steeplechasing this season, ran a solo 2000m chase in a very fast time of 6:32.72, close to her best despite the conditions and the lack of opposition. Then in the 1500m she destroyed the big field, winning by some 80 metres in 4:33.99.

In the men's events there was a double for Sheffield's Matthew Quine. He won the 400m on the first day in 48.67 and then took the 200m in a personal best of 21.85 on the second day. In the shorter event he beat his Sheffield team-mate Todd Marshall, who had earlier won the 100m. Marshall, therefore, was unable to repeat his double of last year.

Sam Ellis showed a good turn of pace to defeat former champion Rihan Hastey in the 800m (1:52.24).

Matt Lambley (Sheffield) beat his own Yorkshire record in winning the hammer, his best throw of 69.89m being close to his personal best and beating Pete Smith in the process.

Sheffield's Jamie Williamson lost his shot title, finishing in silver medal position with 16.77m, but he won the discus with 49.05. The shot winner gave one of the performances of the meeting. Rimantas Martisuskas throwing a massive 18.10m, not far off the longstanding record of Arthur Rowe (18.96m in 1962).

In the women's hammer Sarah Holt

July 22 2010 £3.95

athletics

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE NO.1 OLYMPIC SPORT

WEEKLY

**30-page
Barcelona
preview**

**Your armchair
form guide
to every
event**

**Christian
Malcolm and
Holly Bleasdale
training tips**

**England
Athletics
Champs
coverage**

**GREAT
SUBS OFFER!
SEE PAGE 50**

JESSICA ENNIS

**Leads British medal hopes at
European Championships**

• NEWS • FITNESS • RESULTS • FIXTURES

Malachowski seeks major crown

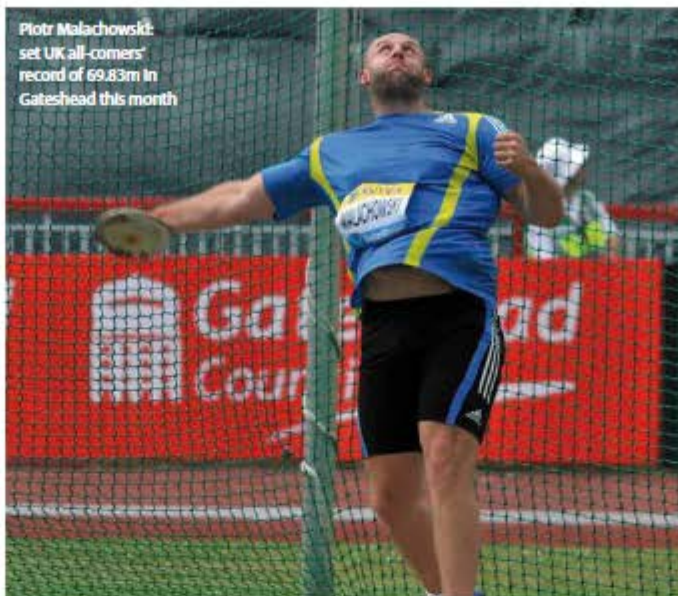
DISCUS

PIOTR MALACHOWSKI will be looking for an improvement on his silver medals from the World Championships and Olympic Games with his first major title. The Pole improved his national record to 69.83m for a UK all-comers' record to win in Gateshead two weeks ago after further notable victories on the Diamond League circuit in Rome and Eugene.

Olympic champion Gerd Kanter leads the world rankings with 71.45m but has been below his best in the Diamond League. Kanter finished second to Malachowski in Rome but was fourth in Shanghai and fifth in his most recent contest in Eugene. On head to heads this year, Kanter trails Malachowski 3-0.

Hungary's Zoltan Kovago opened his campaign with an unexpected victory in Shanghai thanks to his best throw in four years of 69.69m. The 2004 Olympic silver medalist has finished inside the

Piotr Malachowski set UK all-comers' record of 69.83m in Gateshead this month



top three in all of his 10 competitions this year.

World champion Robert Harting of Germany will take confidence from his victory over the in-form Malachowski at the European Team Championships. The

25-year-old, who failed to make the final four years ago in Gothenburg, is ranked fourth in Europe and should provide the sternest test to Malachowski.

Bogdan Pishchalnikov will be looking to emulate his sister Darya's gold medal

AW prediction:

GOLD: Piotr Malachowski (POL)
SILVER: Robert Harting (GER)
BRONZE: Zoltan Kovago (HUN)
 Reigning champion: Virgilijus Alekna (LTU)
 European record-holder: Jurgen Schult (GER)
 74.08m
 Championship record-holder: Robert Fazekas (HUN) 68.83m
 British Interest: None
Did you know? Gerd Kanter set a world indoor discus record of 69.51m last year.

in this discipline from Gothenburg. In May, the 27-year-old improved his PB to 67.23m in his native Russia.

Lithuania's reigning champion Virgilijus Alekna, has been arguably the best discus thrower of the last decade but has struggled with injury this season. The Olympic gold medal winner in 2000 and 2004 has been regularly around the 70-metre line in past years but his 63.73m in 2010 is some 10 metres below his PB.

Kozmus' retirement leaves it wide open

HAMMER

THE shock retirement of world and Olympic champion Primož Kozmus at the end of last year means the contest for the European title will be wide open this year.

Based on the rankings but not necessarily on merit, Slovakia's Libor Charfreitag looks the most likely winner. Charfreitag, who won world bronze in 2007, opened his season with 80.59m and although no one in the world has beaten that this season, his performance level has dropped off.

Belarusian throwers have a reputation for failing to perform to the best outside their homeland, but Pavel Kryvitski dispelled this by winning the European Team Championships last month.

The 26-year-old is the only other European athlete to have surpassed the 80m line this year in a discipline which has struggled standards-wise this year.

Fourth at the World Championships and Olympic Games, Hungary's Krisztián



Krisztián Pars, Hungarian contender

Pars will be looking for a redeeming championship performance.

Pars went into last year's World Championships on the crest of a 19-competition winning streak but the

28-year-old, who also led qualifying, finished without a medal. He hasn't competed as much this season, which might be to his benefit.

Igor Sokolovs has improved his

AW prediction:

GOLD: Pavel Kryvitski (BLR)
SILVER: Krisztián Pars (HUN)
BRONZE: Libor Charfreitag (SVK)
 Reigning champion: Ivan Tikhon (BLR)
 European record-holder: Yuriy Sedykh (URS)
 86.74m
 Championship record-holder: Yuriy Sedykh (URS)
 86.74m
 British Interest: None
Did you know? Yuriy Sedykh is married to world shot put record-holder Natalya Lisovskaya.

Latvian record at least once every year between 2004 and 2009, but the 35-year-old with a season's best of 79.09m has a questionable temperament, having so far failed to qualify for a major final.

Germany's Markus Esser finished fourth in Gothenburg and is very much a contender, along with the Polish duo of Wojciech Kondratowicz and 2000 Olympic champion Szymon Ziolkowski.

athletics

THE BEST COVERAGE FOR OLYMPIC SPORT

WEEKLY

DISTANCE DELIGHTS

Farah and
Thompson
interview

Martyn
Bernard's
training

Five-page Aviva
London Grand Prix
preview

**GREAT
SUBS OFFER!
SEE PAGE 44**

LET'S PARTY!

Phillips Idowu and the Euro heroes
welcome the world to London

TYSON GAY

Crystal Palace awaits after Bolt win



• NEWS • FITNESS • RESULTS • FIXTURES

Hammer hope for Singapore

MARTIN DUFF speaks to hammer thrower Louisa James ahead of the Youth Olympics in Singapore this month

LOUISA JAMES is one of a number of talented young hammer throwers following in the footsteps of Sophie Hitchon, who won world junior gold in Canada last month.

Now, Louisa competes in the Youth Olympics for Britain in Singapore from August 12-26.

Ever since she began throwing the smallest hammer at the age of 11, Louisa has been competing above her age group with considerable success. Having just turned 16 in July, Louisa not only won the under-20 event in the South of England Championships, but also took the silver medal in the senior event. It has always been like this, as she took the Sussex under-15 title in 2007 when still only 12.

She has broken every UK single age record from age 11 to 15 with the 4kg hammer, the latter this year with 54.87m.

Athletics Weekly: Having improved consistently over the last few years, do you see yourself as a potential member of the 2012 Olympic team?

Louisa: I would love to be part of the 2012 Olympic team, but I will only be 17 when the team is selected so I think aiming for 2016 is more realistic.

AW: Would a more immediate target have been the World Junior Championships in Canada? And what's your target distance this year?

Louisa: As I am competing in the Youth Olympics in Singapore, I am unable to do both. My target this year is 56 metres.

AW: Then what of next year's major events? Which will you go for?

Louisa: I want to do the World Youth Championships, European Junior Championships, Commonwealth Youth Games and all the domestic championships.



Louisa James has set hammer age records throughout her career

AW: Can you describe what sort of training you have done this past winter and how it differs from that in the winter of 2008-9?

Louisa: Three times a week and, during the winter, I train in my back garden. I turn with various weight and lengths. I use medicine balls for core stability and I try to throw at least once a week, although I am unable to throw locally in the winter.

Then, during the summer, I train four days a week and if I'm not competing then I will go throwing. In a typical throwing session I would warm up then throw a 6kg on a short hammer wire, then a full length 3kg for a set of five. I then change to a 5kg on a short wire, then on to a full length 3kg for a further set of five.

AW: You're inspired by your father, Ron, a former national league hammer thrower with Windsor. Can you tell us more?

Louisa: Yes my dad is my coach. However, as I often train without him, he sets me targets and specific areas

to work on. We then discuss how things are going and adjust training accordingly. Without my dad I would never be at the level I am now. My mum's also always there for me, but she knows nothing about throwing!

AW: You compete for Hastings – is that where you train?

Louisa: Yes, but from the end of September until April, I am unable to throw there, so I travel to Lewes or Windsor.

AW: You seem to be setting meeting records wherever and whenever you compete and you always seem to have to move up an age group to get better competition.

Louisa: I always try to raise my performance when I'm in the company of other good throwers. I have lots of nervous energy which normally turns into laughter so I try and use it in a positive way.

AW: Who is your hammer hero?

Louisa: I have three hammer heroes

BROOKS

Brooks Sports are delighted to sponsor *Rising Stars*. Specialising in running shoes and apparel, we are keenly working with *Athletics Weekly* to showcase some of Britain's talented youngsters, out there waiting in the wings and starting to prove themselves.

Visit www.brooksrunning.co.uk to find our specialist products, Brooks dealers, athletes, daily health-related fitness tips and a whole lot more.

The "rising star" featured each week will receive a Podium long sleeve T-shirt, emblazoned with the Brooks and *Athletics Weekly* logos.



as such, all for different aspects of the throw. My first is Sergey Litvinov for his sheer speed when turning, which is faster than anyone I've ever seen. The second is Koji Murofushi for his complete perfection in his technique and, even though he doesn't throw the furthest, it is for his utter commitment to throwing. The final one who I would say is my overall hero is the world record-holder Yuriy Sedykh, who is probably my favourite, because he was a three-turn thrower and so am I. Also, I try to base quite a lot of my technique on his.

■ THE athletics events at the Youth Olympics run from August 17-23. The Brits competing for the European team are: David Bolariwa (100m), Themba Luhana (110m hurdles), Andrew Elkins (hammer), Charlie Grice (1000m), Zak Seddon (2000m steeplechase), Annie Tagoe (100m), Georgia Peel (1000m), Katie Byres (pole vault), Louisa James (hammer), Sophie McKinna (shot), Victoria Ohuruogu (400m), Abi Fitzpatrick (400m hurdles)

Former national coach TOM MCNAB analyses the techniques on show at the recent European Championships

Pictures: Mark Shearman

THERE are probably three distinct ways by which to judge Great Britain's Barcelona results. The first is to review them relative to how many of our athletes met or exceeded their best 2010 performances. The second is to judge it by medal count, and the third to consider performances relative to the 2012 Olympics.

Our excellent medal-count places us just ahead of 1990, when we were admittedly up against much more formidable rivals. Then East Germany alone took 34 medals and the Soviet Union 21. None of the communist bloc outside the old Soviet Union have recovered to anywhere near 1990 levels. All of this political change has meant more space for Western European nations.

All of this being said, Britain is

Barcelona revisited



Relay safe: France took few chances in the 4x100m

undoubtedly on an upward path. Few athletes were below par and more than a few went beyond it. It reflected well on coaches and team management and shows that, whatever our other deficiencies, the athletes we send to major championships come up to the plate.

What has come as surprise to me (as shown in a recent *Sunday Times* article) are the statistics on the correlation between performances at the European Championships and the Olympic

Games. Apparently, we can expect around a quarter of the medals – so four or five. What was also surprising to me was how few individuals winning European have also taken Olympic medals – two out of sixteen (1998), one out of twelve (2002) and zero out of 11 (2006). Few of our Barcelona performances would cut any ice at Olympic medal level.

There has undoubtedly been a cultural shift at the top, and this was clearly flagged up last year in Berlin. What is now required is a similar transformation from top to bottom, from clubs upward, because our voluntary engine simply is not up to consistently delivering either the quantity or quality of service of a modern sport.

But let that fly stick to the wall, at least for the moment. The main purpose of this piece is to look at some of the technical issues which came to my attention during many hours of viewing. I make no claim to comprehensive coverage.

I viewed the European Championships on Eurosport. This afforded me the opportunity to watch wall-to-wall athletics in great detail, enabling me on some occasions to get the psychological "feel" of certain events, and I have attempted to express this in my observations.

Technique

Although there has been a centralisation of athletics techniques over the past 40-odd years (as late as

the 1952 Olympics, there were four distinct high jump techniques), there is still diversity, and at this point I would observe that in my two articles I will try to cover three overlapping areas: the diversity of technical expression, style and technique, technique and skill.

Technical development is not inevitable. Yuri Sedykh's three turns with firm, planted delivery was, in my view, superior to anything that I witnessed in Barcelona. No one in the event vaulted any better, in the technical sense, than Sergey Bubka, and none of the triple jumpers were anywhere near as skilful as Jonathan Edwards.

It may well be argued that these athletes represented no technical evolution, but were simply men blessed with exceptional physical gifts. No – they were, but they were also better technicians.

In looking at techniques, there must first be a clear differentiation between style and technique. Style is simply an individual means of expressing technique, which is fundamental. Thus, the South African high jumper Hestrie Cloete's massive double-arm swing at take-off is a difference in style within the flop, while the straddle is an entirely different technique.

In contrast, in shot we have three quite different techniques: the O'Brien, the rotational and the step-back. And within each of these three techniques are styles. This can be clearly seen in O'Brien, where some athletes start from a static position, others with an active



Dal Greene: near perfect performance in the 400m hurdles

August 19 2010 £2.95

athletics

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE N OLYMPIC SPORT

WEEKLY

**Bedford
Games**

**JESS ENNIS
INTERVIEW**

**Aviva London
Grand Prix**
10-page special

SPEED DEMON

**Tyson packs a punch at Palace
with sizzling 9.78 for 100 metres**



FAB FOUR
Relay legends
light up London





Betty Heidler: Germany's hammer technique matched the men's contest

Here, the French vaultier Lavillenie is our Vlasic, with a superb high plant always appearing to have plenty of time.

Throws

This ability to turn off and keep returning to a "bubble", a sort of technical cocoon, is often severely tested in qualifying rounds of the throws, and this was seen clearly in the hammer, with throwers underrunning and slinging hammers into the net, or over-turning and fouling. The same occurred in the discus, where there were even occasional errors in the angle of attack. Paradoxically, these gremlins seemed to vanish in the finals. The psychology changes.

The women's hammer was a particularly fine competition, with several women, notably Betty Heidler, matching the technique of the men. From the technical viewpoint, one thing was clear, that there was considerable diversity in the swings. Some swung with movement from one foot to the other, others down the left side, and the speed of swing also varied. But whatever variables there were, all throwers locked into a long, loose, solid, balanced position going into the first turn. These are the pillars on which hammer acceleration rests.

Most throwers now use four turns, but no one accurately repeated Yurly Sedykh's locked, statuesque delivery, except Lysenko spinning through.

In the women's discus, almost all throwers deployed the old East German technique – firm left leg, both feet solidly planted. Alas, in the qualifying rounds, many of them seemed to fall

back on the right leg, and failed to extend. The men's event was more varied, but most were spinners with a short block and rotation beyond the left foot. What was also clear was the tendency to make a short backswing going into the turn.

All of the throws were exciting, but none more so than the men's shot, won by a mere centimetre. It is interesting to note that around 60 per cent of the male European putters were rotational, while I saw only one female rotational putter. Rotational putting is still very much the province of American athletes.

Similar to swing variations in hammer, there was in javelin considerable variation in stride patterns after withdrawal, and a mix of linear and rotational, with most women opting for linear. What did not vary was locking into a flat, close spear and a long pull over the left foot. And both competitions showed the mental toughness required by international competitors, particularly Spotakova, who kept lashing out to big distances while clearly in pain.

Combined events

What more can I say about Jessica Ennis? Heptathlon is a tight rope traversed seven times, and never once has she fallen off. It is nevertheless worth observing that had Natalya Dobrynska launched the shot close to 17 metres (worth about five seconds in the 800m), then it would have been a close-run thing.

Let's say that the Ukrainian can shed about another five kilos and manage to hold her shot at around 16 metres. Her weight-loss might gain her a total of around 100-120 points cumulatively in the hurdles, high jump, long jump and 200m. This will give her a slight lead going into the 800m, where she made a surprisingly good showing, even at her present weight.

But hold on. All of that rests upon Ennis staying as she is, rather than as she will be. For her, the big gains can be secured in long jump, where at least 150 points lie in wait for her. For at 11.4 100m speed, she should, with work, go out to close on 7.00m. That is where the big gains lie, for I see only 150-200 points in the other six disciplines combined. If all of this comes to pass, then she can close in on the world record.

The men's decathlon was a simply superb competition, with the result, as in heptathlon, in doubt until the last moment. What is lacking in the present European cohort is athletes possessing sheer speed, a quality which runs through decathlon like veins through a body.

Conclusion

Barcelona has advanced a cultural shift for Britain, taking the nation closer to sports such as swimming and gymnastics in development at international level. It is my firm belief that we must achieve a similar transformation further down, at club level, albeit in a different form.

There is in our clubs a danger of continuing to moan on about the 1997-2007 period. It is, of course, unarguable that vast sums were squandered. It is equally unarguable that we have offered expensive coach education of doubtful value, lacking in practical content. And that we replaced the world's most successful award scheme with one that was barely visible.

But we must put these matters behind us and prepare for the same cultural leap in our clubs that we are making at international level.

In the USA, where most athletics for 11-18-year-olds is offered in schools rather than clubs, they do not confuse athletics with play, recognising that it is a competitive sport. Children absorb this from the outset. Here, in contrast, early club experience is often closer in nature to a playschool.

Thus, children pass through and out of our sport without an athletics education, lacking any rigorous competitive experience. This would be inconceivable in most other sports.

There are big cultural shifts which must be made if we are not to walk backwards into the future and must come from the top through coach education, and from the bottom through club leaders.

We must use Barcelona and the 2012 Olympics as a springboard to create a new athletics ecosystem, one capable of carrying us forward into the 21st century. The status quo is not an option.



Chris Tomlinson: can win Olympic gold if he improves his speed approaching the board

athletics

THE BEST COVERAGE FROM THE NEWS AND SPORT

WEEKLY

**Charlotte
Purdue**

**Sets BMC
record in
Cardiff**

**Diamond League
from Brussels**

**England
Athletics
Hall of
Fame**



RED-HOT RUDISHA

**Kenyan smashes 800m
world record for the
second time in a week**

**GREAT
SUBS OFFER!
SEE PAGE 38**



• **NEWS** • **FITNESS** • **RESULTS** • **FIXTURES**

Rafal's on the up and up

Young hammer thrower Rafal Morawski already has an English Schools title under his belt and has his eye on the 2020 Olympics, writes STEVE ROE

RAFAL MORAWSKI'S telephone was red hot in the days following his success at the English Schools Championships.

The junior boys' hammer gold medallist was asked to attend a school sports day and be photographed with London 2012 mascot Mandeville. He was also asked to attend an Oscars night, at which he won a sports award.

He has enjoyed a meteoric rise in an athletics career that began less than two years ago. Then, after a school sports day success with the javelin, Rafal went to the Ealing Southall & Middlesex track in Perivale, where he would be coached in turn by John Falvey and hammer specialist Jamie Bath.

Both Rafal and Bath, head coach of the West London Hammer School, felt it was the event in which he would excel. This would prove a far-sighted and accurate assessment, because in 32 hammer competitions from April 2009 until now Rafal has finished first in all but



London 2012 Olympic mascot Mandeville gets some hammer tips from Rafal Morawski

five. And this year he has won practically everything of importance, including of course the schools' title at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham.

"I was always being told how hard it would be to win an English Schools gold medal, so for me to do it was a dream come true", says Rafal, who entered the competition as favourite on account of his 60.23m PB (at the time, he has since improved to 61.91m) being the best in the Britain this summer for the under-15 age-group.

After the first round he was trailing and made no progress after getting the red flag in round two. "He tried to launch

it out of the stadium!" recalls Bath.

But the Acton-based teenager went well ahead in round three and thereafter was never in danger of not taking the title.

Of Bath, a Level 4 hammer coach, Rafal says: "He motivates me really well and gets his knowledge across in a manner that is easy to understand."

Although another English Schools title in 2011 is on Rafal's agenda, he knows the opposition will be fierce. "Ashley Gilder will be my main rival next year. He has already thrown 65 metres (with the 5kg hammer) so that shows how good he is."

Rafal is known for his healthy appetite, but it has not made him the archetypal hammer throwing giant. "People are surprised I'm not huge," he says. "I'm more strong and fast, I suppose."

BBC commentator Paul Dickenson, himself a former British hammer record holder, said: "I've never seen someone turn so fast in the circle."

The legendary Yuri Sedykh has been impressed with Rafal, too. The Russian, twice Olympic champion, long-time world record-holder and acknowledged as the greatest hammer thrower in history, has met the youngster twice at hammer masterclass events and speaks highly of him.

Could Rafal make the Olympics? Not in 2012 or four years later. "I'd be too



Brooks Sports are delighted to sponsor *Rising Stars*. Specialising in running shoes and apparel, we are keenly working with *Athletics Weekly* to showcase some of Britain's talented youngsters, out there waiting in the wings and starting to prove themselves.

Visit www.brooksrunning.co.uk to find our specialist products, Brooks dealers, athletes, daily health-related fitness tips and a whole lot more.

The "rising star" featured each week will receive a Podium long sleeve T-shirt, emblazoned with the Brooks and *Athletics Weekly* logos.



young then," he says, realistically. "But in 2020 I would be almost 25 and it would be nice to reach the games in that year."

His coach has no doubt of the boy's potential. "If Rafal carries on the way he is he can go all the way to the Olympics," says Bath.

There could in fact be two members of the family reaching the biggest stage of all, for Rafal's sister, 12-year-old Tara, is already the UK's top ranked under-13 hammer thrower (in U15 competitions) in 2010.



Hammer great Yuri Sedykh takes on Rafal in a computer track and field hammer game

FACT FILE

Name: Rafal Morawski
Born: December 12, 1995
Club: Ealing Southall & Middlesex
Coach: Jamie Bath
Achievements (all hammer):
 2009 (U15): 1st Middlesex champs;
 1st Middlesex Schools
 2010 (U15): 1st Middlesex champs;
 1st Middlesex Schools; 1st English
 Schools; 1st Southern Counties
 PB: 61.91m