

CIS men sweep hammer gold

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Andrey Abduvaliyev won the hammer throw Sunday with a heave of 82.45 meters as the Unified Team of former Soviet athletes swept all three Olympic medals, reports AP.

The silver went Igor Astapkovich with a throw of 81.36 meters, and Igor Nikulin won the bronze with a throw of 81.38 meters.

Javelin gold goes to Germany

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Silke Renk of Germany won the women's Olympic javelin gold Saturday with a throw of 68.34 metres (224 feet, 2 inches), reports AP.

Natalya Shikolenko of the Unified Team was second at 68.26 metres (223-11) and Karen Forkel of Germany won the bronze at 66.86 metres (219-4).

ROK bag gold in archery

BARCELONA, Aug 2: South Korea took the gold and silver medals Sunday in women's archery as Cho Youn-Jeong defeated Kim Soo-Nyung in the head-to-head final round, 112-105, reports AP.

Natalia Valeeva of the Unified Team defeated Wang Xiaozhu of China, 104 to 102 to win the bronze medal.

Witherspoon's injury may let Lewis run relay

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Sprinter Mark Witherspoon's fall in the Olympic 100 metres semifinal will put him out of action for up to a year — and could give Carl Lewis a place in the US sprint relay team, reports Reuters.

US team doctor James Montgomery said Witherspoon tore an Achilles tendon in his right foot in Saturday's spill and would be flown home as soon as possible.

"It is a severe injury that will take a good six to 12 months of rehabilitation," Montgomery said in a statement.

"We have him in a cast and it is possible that he will require further surgery."

Chief US track coach Mel Rosen refused to consider Lewis for a place on the 4x100 metres relay team after he finished sixth in the preliminary 100 metres trials.

But with Witherspoon out of action and no US sprinter managing more than a bronze in Saturday's final, Lewis, the 1984 and 1988 Olympic champion and world record holder, could now be drafted.

He is an alternate to the Rosen-nominated quartet of Witherspoon, Dennis Mitchell, Leroy Burrell and Mike Marsh. Lewis's failure in the trials meant he was unable to defend his 100 metres title in Barcelona.

Witherspoon, 27, veered over and crashed onto the track after appearing to land awkwardly on his left foot at the 20 metre mark. He twisted his right foot as he fell and lay writing in agony before being helped by officials.

Dees promises Jackson hot race

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Britain's Colin Jackson, the fastest hurdler in the world this year, won the first heat Sunday in a sizzling 13.10 seconds, the speediest opening-round time ever, reports AP.

Jackson's time of 13.10 seconds bettered by .01 of a second his mark at the 1990 Commonwealth Games.

"I made a statement to the guys who were watching," said Jackson, the 1988 Olympic silver medalist.

He doesn't doubt he can run faster still. "I didn't think I was running very hard at all," he said. "I had a lot to spare."

Indeed, Jackson — at that point, clearly without competition — seemed to ease up 20 metres from the finish line. His competitors claimed they weren't impressed.

"He could have set a world record," said Tony Dees of the United States. "He would have had the world record, but not a gold medal."

"I'll respond in the final," said Dees, who won his heat in a time of 13.38.

The hurdles semifinals and final will be Monday.

Jackson has made a remarkable recovery from the back injury that forced him to withdraw from the 1991 world championships and undergo two operations in each of the past two years.

He ran 13.06, the leading time of 1992, at London July 10.

"I don't think he can go much faster, maybe a little faster," said American Jack Pierce, winner of his heat in 13.47 and the silver medalist at the 1991 world championships.

"I think he's sending a message that he's ready, but so is everyone else here," Pierce said. "You can't concern yourself with what he's trying to do."



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Latin reign

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Olympic judo had a Latin flavour on Saturday, with Brazil's Rogério Sampaio winning his country's first gold medal in the sport and Almudena Muñoz taking Spain's second title in as many days, reports Reuters.

Like good wine, Christie sparkles with age

BARCELONA, Aug 2: It seems that Linford Christie had to slow down a bit to be the world's fastest human, reports AP.

For 15 years he got better and better. And he kept getting beat.

It was enough to make a man quit. Which he did last year, after he ran the 100 metres of his life, in 9.92 seconds — only to finish fourth behind three Americans at the World Championships in Tokyo.

But Britain's veteran premier sprinter, while quick to anger, had never yielded to frustration for long, and Barcelona beckoned. And on Saturday, he finally got his revenge and his reward, leaving the rest of the pack, including two of those same Americans, in an old man's dust to win the Olympic gold.

His time: 9.96 and a runner's lifetime of waiting.

At 32, he is the eldest winner in history of the most prestigious Olympic race. "From about 60 metres on ... I knew that I'd sewn it up," he said. "Nobody finishes as good as me, apart from Carl, maybe."

Thing is, old nemesis Carl Lewis, who set the world record of 9.86 at Tokyo, wasn't in the race, having failed to make the US sprint team.

But Leroy Burrell and Dennis Mitchell, the other Yanks who ruined his day in Tokyo, were in the blocks alongside him. Burrell had beaten him 10 consecutive races and had arrogantly brushed aside a question the night before about Christie's chance to break the string "Do you really expect me to answer that?" he said.

The answer was clear enough in the still warmth of the mountaintop Estadi Olímpic. Burrell faltered in the blocks after a false start and finished fifth in 10.10. Mitchell was third in 10.04, while Frankie Fredericks earned Namibia's first Olympic medal, a silver, in 10.02. But it was Christie's race, all the way.

His experience was evident throughout the competition. He turned in consistently good times in three preliminary

heats and seemed the only one unbothered by the bizarre number of false starts over the two days. Never known for a great start, he nonetheless answered the gun smoothly, unclogging his 6-foot 3 (1.9-metre) frame with newfound fluidity. For years, he had been so ungainly his coach, Rod Roddan, called him "Horse."

Down the track, he was an image of pure resolve; eyes fixed and wide, lips closed and pursed, arms and legs pumping in perfect synchrony. He had learned from Roddan the simple advice given to Britain's

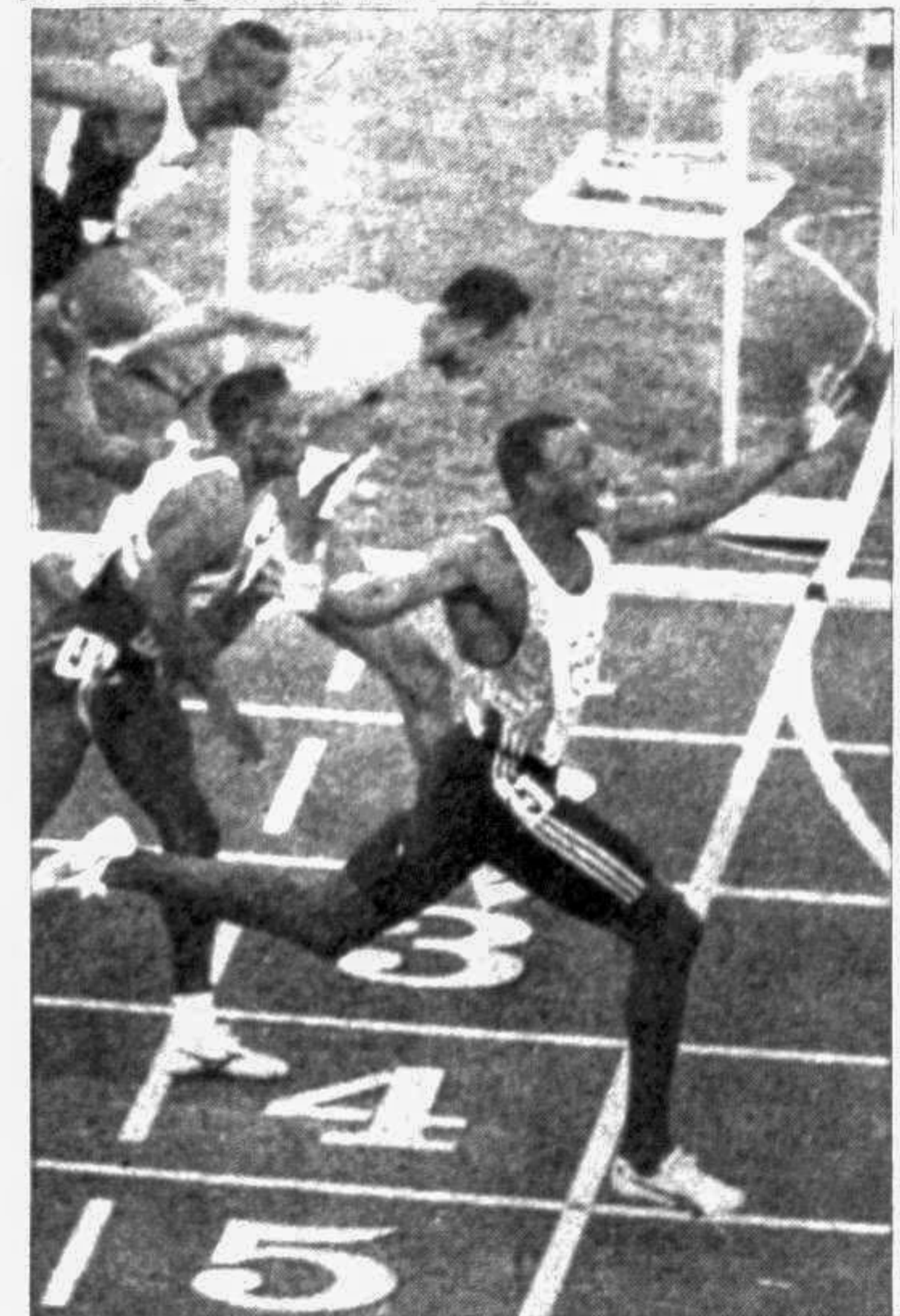
first 100-metre champion, Harold Abrahams. On that day in Paris, in 1924, Sam Mussabini's final admonition to Abrahams was to "only think of two things — the report of the pistol and the tape. When you hear the one, just run like hell till you break the other."

As Christie himself puts it: "Time is your enemy. The aggression is what carries you. ... I look straight ahead. ... My vision actually becomes blurred. You cut off everyone."

Four years ago, Christie, who emigrated to Great Britain from Jamaica as a child, ran



Gail Devers of the US hugs coach Bob Kersel after winning the women's 100m dash clocking 10.82 seconds on August 1.



British sprinter Linford Christie crosses the finish line followed by Frankie Fredericks of Namibia (silver, lane 3), Dennis Mitchell of the USA (bronze, lane 4) and Bruny Surin of Canada (4th, lane 1) in the men's 100m dash in Barcelona Saturday. Christie clocked 9.96 secs. - AFP photo

Devers' deed — stranger than fiction

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Barely more than a year ago, Gail Devers couldn't walk to the next room. Her father had to carry her, reports AP.

Now she's the fastest woman in the world.

When the 25-year-old sprinter from the United States won the women's 100 metres Saturday in Barcelona, she wrote the final chapter of an incredible Olympic comeback story.

It was a triumph that must have seemed impossible to those who saw her ravaged body over a 2 1/2-year struggle with Graves disease, a life-threatening thyroid condition.

President Bush and his wife Barbara also are afflicted with the disease, although their condition was diagnosed much sooner in its development that Devers' illness was.

In 1988, she was one of the nation's most promising young sprinters. She won Pacific-10 Conference titles in three events and was the National Collegiate Athletic Association 100-metre champion.

That's when she began to feel something was wrong. Her weight fluctuated from 95 to 135 pounds. She didn't know why her body was betraying her.

She made the Olympic team, but failed to advance

past the 100-metre semifinals in Seoul.

She began having migraine headaches. She had no stamina.

No one knew for sure what was wrong. One doctor said she had a cold. Another said she was tired. Several suggested the problem was all in her head.

Her physical therapist, Bob Forster, first mentioned Graves disease, caused by an overactive thyroid, when he saw her at the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle.

He noticed a pronounced bulge in her eyes and a goiter on her neck.

Finally, Graves disease was diagnosed and doctors began bombarding her thyroid with radiation.

The doctor said I was two weeks away from the cancerous stage," she said.

She became nauseated. Some nights she would sleep for 12 or 14 hours. Other times, she couldn't sleep at all.

The treatment, and the misery, continued for more than a year.

"When I was down to the lowest level," she said later, "it was bad. My face was constantly peeling. My feet were huge."

Her eyes were bulging.

"That's when I stopped looking in the mirror," she said. "I felt like a creature."

She wanted to give up sports, but her coach, Bob Kersel, wouldn't let her.

In February of 1991, she resumed training. It was too soon. Her feet, burned and swollen by the radiation, continued to give her problems.

She shuffled around on the track, her feet bleeding so bad that when she took her socks off at night, a layer of skin would come off, too.

One doctor told her she had athlete's foot. Finally, another saw how serious the problem was. He said if she had gone two more days without treatment, her feet would have to be amputated.

"Every day I cried," Devers said in an interview with the Los Angeles Times. "The pain was so excruciating it hurt with every step. That's when they put me under house arrest."

She promised not to get on her feet for any reason for three weeks. Her father carried her to the bathroom.

By mid-April, she was jogging again. In May, she was jumping over hurdles.

And at the World Championships last fall in Tokyo, she won the silver medal in the 100 metres and ranked No.2 in the world.

"Athletics saved her life," Kersel said. "It was something she could hold onto."

Now she can hold onto an Olympic gold medal, too.

A most historic race

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Linford Christie did not set a world record when he won the Olympic 100 metres final on Saturday — but the race itself made track and field history even before it started, reports AP.

Never before had seven men who had all run under 10.00 seconds, competed in the same race, making the Olympic final the fastest of all-time in terms of competitors.

Christie, 32, who won the race in 9.96 seconds became the oldest man in Olympic history to win the 100m. He was four years older than Allan Wells of Britain, 28 when he won in Moscow in 1980.

The other medals Saturday went to Frankie Fredericks of Namibia, second in 10.02 and American Dennis Mitchell third in 10.04.

When the eight runners came to their blocks in the Montjuic Stadium only Bruny Surin of Canada had failed to dip under 10.00 seconds. He ran 10.09 to finish fourth, four hundredths outside his personal record.

The World Championship 100m final race in Tokyo last year was the fastest ever run with six men clocking under 10-seconds with American Carl Lewis running a world record time of 9.86 seconds.

Christie's winning time on Saturday of 9.96 seconds would have only given him joint sixth place in Tokyo.

He ran a European and Commonwealth record time of 9.92 in the Tokyo final, although it is impossible to compare one race with another.

The Tokyo final was run with a slight following wind, Saturday's race was run in almost windless conditions.

From a Commonwealth perspective the race was also significant.

Six men — Christie, Frankie Fredericks (Namibia), Surin (Canada), Olapade Adeniken and Davidson Ezinwa (Nigeria) and Ray Stewart all come from Commonwealth nations — and, if Christie, who will be 34 by then, hasn't retired, all of them are likely to meet in the 1994 Commonwealth Games final in Victoria, Canada.

A breakdown of the split times in Saturday's final shows Surin of Canada led through the first 40 metres in 4.72 seconds, with Christie joint second at that stage with Fredericks (both 4.74 seconds).

Christie surged in the last third of the race, clocking 6.52 secs for 60m, 8.22 secs for 80 meters and 9.96 for victory.

Joyner-Kersey widens the lead

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Defending champion Jackie Joyner-Kersey won the long jump and widened her lead in the seven-event heptathlon Sunday, and British hurdler Colin Jackson indicated he's on track for another Olympic sprint medal, reports AP.

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races each on Lake Banyoles northeast of Barcelona.

After early Sunday events, the Unified Team of former Soviet athletes had 24 golds and 57 medals in all. The United States added a 16th gold medal in canoeing, and tallied 50 overall.

Germany had 14 golds and 39 medals in all, ahead of China's nine and 28.

Joyner-Kersey, an American who won the 1988 Olympic heptathlon gold medal with a world record, pulled away in the long jump portion — the fifth event of seven — with a leap of 7.10 metres. The versatile Joyner-Kersey also is the defending long jump champion.

Irina Belova of the Unified Team of former Soviet athletes was closest behind at 6.82 metres. She moved into second place overall at 5,103 points, 239 behind Joyner-Kersey.

Germany's Sabine Braun, runner-up after Saturday's four events, fell to fourth.

Jackson ran the fastest opening-round 110-metre hurdles in Olympic pit history — 13.10 seconds, or .01 faster than his winning mark at the 1990 Commonwealth Games.

"Perhaps the world's fastest hurdler this year took heart from compatriot Linford Christie."

Christie, who won the men's 100-metre gold medal Saturday, was his event's silver medalist at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul behind a U. S. star — just like Jackson.

"I made a statement to the guys who were watching," said Jackson. "I didn't think I was running very hard at all. I had a lot to spare."

The hurdles final is Monday. Brazil, facing a win-or-go-home situation, clinched the final quarterfinals spot in men's basketball with an 85-78 victory over Germany.

In the round of eight, Brazil joined the star-studded U.S. team — its gold medal seemingly in pocket — and Croatia, Germany, the Unified Team, Australia, Lithuania and Puerto Rico.

Italy's Abbagnale brothers were denied a third consecutive gold in the coxed pairs by British brothers Jonathan and Greg Searle, and Garry Herbert. Carmine and Giuseppe Abbagnale and Coxswain Giuseppe Di Capua finished 1.15 seconds behind the British, and ahead of the Romanian bronze medalists.

Italy got some consolation from Fabio Casartelli, who out-sprinted Dutch cyclist Erik Dekker, on the last lap to lead a trio of unheralded riders in the men's 194.4-kilometre Olympic road race. Dainis Ozols of Latvia took the bronze.

In a vineyard valley west of Barcelona, Casartelli covered 12 laps on the Circuit de Sant Sandurri course in four hours, 35 minutes and 21 seconds, one second ahead of Dekker and three ahead of Ozols.

The U. S. team of Scott Strausbaugh and Joe Jacobi won gold in the men's double canoe slalom. Miroslav Simek and Jiri Rohan of Czechoslovakia won silver, Franek Adison and Wilfrid Fergues of France took bronze.

Kazumi Watanabe of Japan won the silver and Marco Venturini of Italy won the bronze.

Torrence cries sour grapes

BARCELONA, Aug 2: Defeated American sprinter Gwen Torrence claimed that two of the three Olympic medalists in Saturday's 100-metre dash had used performance-enhancing drugs. All three denied it, and one called her a sore loser, reports AP.

"In Seoul, I knew I didn't have a chance at a medal because only two runners and myself were clean," said Torrence, who finished fifth in that race and wound up fourth Saturday. "Then I come back here and I think there were not clean in the 100 here."

Torrence did not use names but said two of the three were medalists.

Later, Torrence amended her statement when she found out the order of finished was different than she at first thought.

"Three of the eight athletes in the race were dirty. Gail is clean. I hope she comes back and whips their butts in the

hurdles," Torrence said.

The gold medalist, Gail Devers of the United States, said she had never used performance enhancers. She said she chose not to use beta blockers while recovering from the side-effects of Graves' disease, even though it would have helped her, because she knew she would have been tested positive and would have been banned.

"I'm clean," she insisted. Her coach, Bob Kersel, walked into the post-race news conference from an adjoining room to defend Devers.

"Gail Devers has been tested almost as much as my wife, Jackie Joyner-Kersey," he said. "Anybody who thinks Gail has taken a performance-enhancing drug can kiss my ass."

Devers beat Juliet Cuthbert of Jamaica by just one-hundredth of a second, with Irina Privalova of the Unified Team another one-hundredth of a second behind in third.

"I think Gwen is a sore loser," Cuthbert said.

"I can speak for myself — I'm totally, 100 per cent clean."

She had a bad day, she's very upset, so I can understand her saying maybe the people who beat her today are not clean. I know I'm clean and I'll take a blood test."

Privalova dismissed the allegations as well. "Everybody has different reactions to winning and losing," she said.

Torrence made her remarks to a small group of reporters. She did not seem angry.

"I would prefer to be blood tested," she said. "Blood test in front of the media, so everyone knows the results. I have a little boy I have to look at every day. I would never cheat."

"I don't think a Ben Johnson-type thing will happen here. Everyone knows what they're doing before they get here," Torrence said. "I just don't understand how it can be done, but apparently it can be done."

"It's frustrating because I work so hard and try so hard and hope it'll work out in the end, and unfortunately it doesn't."