

Devers blasts Torrence

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Gail Devers, the Olympic 100-metre sprint champion, on Wednesday called rumours that she used performance-enhancing drugs "frivolous falsehoods" and blasted a US teammate for prompting the speculation, reports AP.

As soon as Devers won the gold medal Saturday, doping rumours began after comments from American sprinter Gwen Torrence, who finished fourth. Torrence said two of the medalists were using performance-enhancing drugs.

Torrence didn't specify which athletes, and later backed off from the allegations. After facing questions all week on the matter, Devers issued a strongly worded statement denying she ever used drugs and criticising Torrence for her statements.

"I will not defend myself against frivolous falsehoods and anonymous inquiry," Devers said. "I have worked very hard to get where I am today. I resent any accusations that would remotely associate me with the use of performance enhancing drugs."

Devers, trying to become the first woman to win both the 100 and the 100-meter hurdles, said the US Olympic Committee, the International Olympic Committee and the American and international governing bodies for track should "hold Gwen Torrence accountable" for her accusations.

"This kind of slander and defamation of character is the behavior of losers, not winners," Devers said.

Devers, who overcame Graves' disease and radiation treatment that nearly caused her feet to be amputated, said her work ethic is what helped her win.

"I hold myself morally and ethically responsible to the United States and all its fans to present a positive image and be a positive role model, as well as to abide by the rules that govern my sport," she said.

Lisa Ondieki blames bottles

SYDNEY, Aug 5: Australian runner Lisa Ondieki, who collapsed during the Olympic women's marathon in Barcelona, suspects her water bottles may have been spiked, newspapers reported today, reports Reuter.

Ondieki, who started Saturday's race as a gold medal favourite, claimed she could not be certain the bottles, which carried her race number, had not been tampered with, the Australian newspaper said.

She had blood tests after collapsing about halfway through the 42.2 km event, suffering from severe pains in legs and stomach and feeling weak and giddy. The tests revealed an irregular blood profile which she could not explain, newspapers said.

The 32-year-old won silver at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul and gold at the 1986 and 1990 Commonwealth Games.

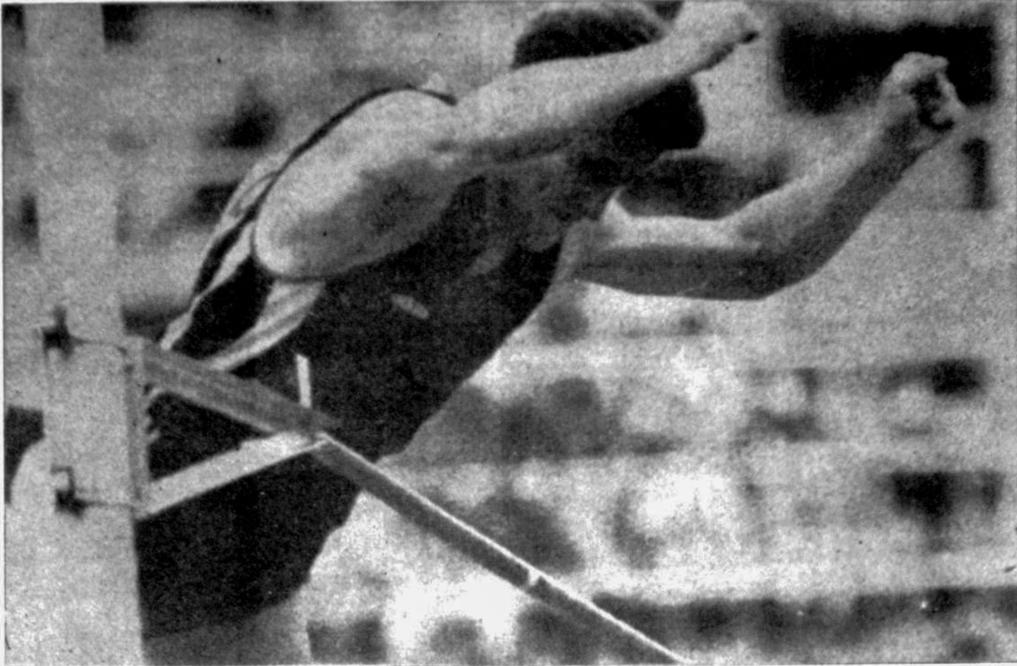
Ondieki was quoted by The Australian as saying a Russian Olympic official had refused to allow Australian management to guard her bottles up to and during the race.



Brazil's Ana Moser (R) prepares to spike the ball at Japan's Kumi Nakada in the women's volleyball quarterfinal match in Barcelona Tuesday. — AFP photo



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Sergei Bubka of the Unified Team clears 5.50m on his first attempt in the pole vault qualifications at Montjuic Stadium in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP photo

Boutayeb's pride almost undid Skah

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Hammou Boutayeb's fierce pride was to blame for Khalid Skah being disqualified after winning the Olympic 10,000 metres, Moroccan director of coaching Lahsen Samsame said Tuesday, reports AFP.

"Nothing was planned. He simply could not accept the idea of being lapped in an Olympic final being watched by millions of people in Morocco," Samsame said. Skah was eventually re-in-

stated as champion but the Kenyan team have appealed in their turn. They insist that Boutayeb deliberately held up Richard Chelimo for the last two laps to allow Skah to rest before his final Dash.

"That is not true," said Samsame. "First, Skah did not need any help. Second you cannot plan anything like that because you do not know how a race is going to develop and third, unfortunately for our country, Moroccan runners have never race as a team like the Kenyans."

Moroccan athletics tends

to be split into three clans grouped around Said Aouita, Brahim Boutayeb and Skah.

Aouita, a multi-world record holder and 1984 Olympic 5,000m champion, was unable to run here because of injury. Brahim Boutayeb, 10,000m champion in Seoul, will be running the 5,000m here.

Hammou Boutayeb, a 35-year-old private in the Moroccan army, does not fit into any of the clans and is known as a maverick runner.

Skah, disqualified for receiving "assistance" from his Moroccan team-mate, was re-

instated 14 hours later when the race jury studied the video of the race.

Samsame claimed the jury allowed itself to be influenced by the crowd's reaction when it disqualified Skah who had been whistled and jeered on his victory lap.

Skah later said he had told Boutayeb to get out of the way. "I spoke to him in Arabic because he could not understand French but he refused to be lapped." "It was a matter of honour," Skah said.

"I think the decision is right. I was the fastest yesterday."

Krabbe caught yet again

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Double world athletics sprint champion Katrin Krabbe has tested positive for drug during out-of-competition tests during the past few weeks, two leading German sports officials said today, reports Reuter.

The officials confirmed independently a report from the German news agency SID that Krabbe and her teammate Grit Breuer had tested positive for steroids during three different tests in the past month.

Asked if the tests from the athletes had tested positive for drugs, one official told Reuters: "I cannot contradict that."

Reacting to the SID report which said traces of a banned steroid had been found in the athletes' urine another said, "I have seen what SID have written and they are not lying. I am

not saying any more than that." Both officials asked not to be named.

Krabbe decided against competing at the Barcelona Olympics. She said the pressure was too great following another drugs affair in which she and two other former East

German teammates were alleged to have manipulated urine samples.

The officials said Krabbe and Breuer had undergone two tests during training in their home town of Neubrandenburg in early July. Dope testers appeared at the track without giving advance warning.

Soon afterwards they were each tested twice again on different days during another training camp in the eastern German town of Zinnowitz.

SID said in a report from the Barcelona Olympics on Tuesday that the three A-samples had tested positive.

The officials confirmed that the B-samples (second samples) would not be analysed

until after the Barcelona Games.

Athletes always give two urine samples during drug tests.

When the first one tests positive, then the second sample is tested to confirm the result before action can be taken.

SID said the samples had contained the anabolic steroid Cenbuterol.

The agency said the B-tests would be carried out in the International Olympic Committee approved laboratory in Cologne under the guidance of doping expert Manfred Donike.

If they prove to be positive, Krabbe and world 400m silver medalist Breuer face a four-year ban.

Krabbe, Breuer and team mate Silke Moeller were cleared of another four-year doping ban in June on a legal technicality.

The three athletes were alleged to have manipulated tests after providing identical urine samples during a training camp in South Africa in January.

But the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) decided not to impose the ban because they said the German Athletics Federation did not have the legal right to carry out random training tests.

The federation did not have a clause in its regulations allowing for random tests.

The tests carried out in the last few weeks are not believed to have been ordered by the DLV but by the German Sports Federation and are therefore legal.



KATRIN KRABBE

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A tearful reconciliation

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Derek Redmond and Linford Christie, British heroes of the Barcelona Games, had a tearful reconciliation on the track of the Olympic stadium, Redmond said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Redmond, cheered on by more than 60,000 spectators when he hobbled round the track on Monday to complete his 400 metres race after collapsing in pain with a torn hamstring, said he and the 100 metres gold medalist had made up past differences.

"Linford came up and put his arms round me and we embraced," he said. "Tears started and we both broke down."

There had been bad feeling between the two since Christie attacked the British world champion 4x400 metres relay team, of which Redmond is

part, saying: "They are not my sort of guys."

Redmond said: "Everyone knows Linford and I have not always seen eye to eye and there was still a little bit of friction between us this week."

"But what Linford did shows me his heart isn't made of stone. It's changed my views on him completely — he's a big softie really."

Of his father Jim, who dashed out of the stands to help him round the track, he said, "I'm not sure how he did it was the first time I've heard my dad use of four-letter word as he shouted at the officials who were trying to get me off the track."

"When he put his arms round me, he said, 'You don't have to put yourself through this', but I said 'I've got to finish this race together.'"

"So he looked at me and went, 'okay, we started your career together, we're going to finish this race together.'"

Magic provides the inspiration

BADALONA, Spa-In, Aug 5: Magic Johnson, back in top gear after a knee injury, sparked the US "Dream team" to a 115-77 rout of Puerto Rico on Tuesday and a place in the semifinals of the men's Olympic basketball tournament, reports AFP.

Lithuania earned the dubious honour of playing the steamroller NBA superstars in the semifinals by beating Brazil 114-96 behind 32 points from 7ft 4in (2.24 m) center Arvydas Sabonis and 29 from Arunas Marculionis.

In the other semifinal, Croatia, 98-65 winners over Australia on Tuesday, will meet the unified team, who beat Germany 83-76 despite 32 points by Indiana Pacers forward Detlef Schremp.

Johnson, starting for the first time since straining a muscle in his right knee against Croatia on July 27 and missing two games, provided the inspiration for a US team obviously lacking motivation.

With the score 15-0 and just 4:19 gone, Puerto Rican head coach Raymond Dalmau had seen enough and called time out.

His players settled down and reeled off a 13-2 run against the "Dream Teamers" to make the score 17-13.

That was the single bright stretch for Puerto Rico, which trailed by 27 points, 67-40, at half time.

In the second half, the Puerto Ricans were reduced to Hall Mary shots from three points range, hitting only eight of 28 for the game.

One consolation for Puerto Rico may have been that the 38-point final deficit was exactly the same as when they lost 119-81 to the best of the NBA in the qualifying round in Portland Oregon, just over a month ago.

Trailing the gritty Germans 54-53, the CIS scored 11 unanswered points to take a 10 point lead with seven minutes to go.

Tikhonenko, who finished with 26 points, scored the last six points of that run and scored six of their next eight points while front court mate Alexander Volkov controlled the boards to help seal the 83-76 victory.

Detlef Schremp, and NBA star with the Indiana Pacers, poured in 32 points for Germany.

Australian Captain Philip Smith simply could not contain Petrovic, who went one-on-one against the smaller guard, flying past him on drives to the hoop and backing him into set up high percentage jump shots.

Croatia, who led 41-31 at the half, came out roaring after the intermission and outscored Australia 16-3 to build a comfortable cushion.



SALLY GUNNELL... women's 400m hurdles gold

Zmelik leads decathlon

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Gold-medal favourite Dave Johnson barely stayed afloat in the decathlon Wednesday, receiving a fourth chance in the shot put after an official ruled he fouled on all three of his throws, reports AP.

but said his third throw was fair. He said his left foot was on the side of the toe board, a barrier at the edge of the throwing circle, which is allowable.

It is a foul if a competitor's foot goes on top of the toe board or leaves the circle.

After the red flag went up, Johnson immediately protes-

LATEST: Gunnell wins gold for Britain.

Britain won their second athletic gold medal last night when Sally Gunnell won the women's 400m final in a time of 53.23 seconds. Top favourite Sandra Farmer-Patrick of the United States took the silver, according to BBC monitored in Dhaka late last night.

The official raised the red flag on each of Johnson's throws to signify a foul, but the referee overruled the official and ordered the American be given another throw.

The Spanish and Czechoslovakian teams filed a protest against the referee's decision to give Johnson a fourth throw. It was unclear when the protest would be heard.

Fans booed Johnson as he left the shot put area after the fourth throw.

Johnson would have been allowed to stay in the 10-event competition even if he had fouled on all three throws — but the lack of any points in the shot put would have taken him out of medal contention.

The other guy was there and said there was no foul," Johnson told the other competitors as they stood perplexed in the shot put area. "I got another throw."

Johnson agreed that he had fouled on his first two throws,

led to the referee.

His fourth throw went 15.28 metres (50 feet, 1 3/4 inches), a personal best and eighth among all competitors.

It earned Johnson 807 points, leaving him in ninth place overall after three events with 2,525 points.

The leader was Robert Zmelik of Czechoslovakia with 2,695.

The first drug disqualification of the track and field competition was announced Wednesday. Madina Biktagrova of the Unified Team, who finished fourth in Saturday's marathon, tested positive for morephedrine, a banned stimulant.

World champion Hassiba Boulmerka of Algeria and Tatyana Dorovskikh, silver medalist Sunday in the Olympic 3,000 metres, qualified for the semifinals of the women's 1,500 metres. The leading time in the first round was 4:07.40 by Qu Yunxia of China.

Spain beat Ghana in football

VALENCIA, Aug 5: Spain clinched only their second Olympic football medal here tonight when they beat Ghana 2-0 with goals from Abelardo Fernandez and Rafael Berge, reports AFP.

CIS girls shock US cagers

BARCELONA, Aug 5: The CIS women's basketball side shocked the defending Olympic champions US team 79-73 on Wednesday to reach the gold medal game, reports Reuter.

The CIS defence throttled the US attack in the final minutes of the tension-packed, see-saw struggle to snap the Americans Olympic record winning streak at 15 games.

The US won the title in Los Angeles and retained it in Seoul.

SAF meet held in Barcelona

A meeting of the representatives of the National Olympic Committees of South Asia was held in Barcelona yesterday with State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka in the chair, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

The sports officials of South Asian countries who are now in Barcelona for the 25th Olympics, discussed various issues relating to the sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, scheduled to be held here next year.

They expressed their all-out support for successful holding of the Games in Dhaka.

The meeting decided to hold the meeting of the South Asian Sports Federation (SASF) here in the middle of September.

Japan deny US baseball bronze

BARCELONA, Aug 5: Japan won the Olympic baseball bronze medal Wednesday by beating the United States 8-3, reports AP.

The United States finished the tournament with a record of 5-4. Japan went 6-3.

Cuba were to play Taiwan for the gold medal later Wednesday.

It's baseball gold or nothing for the Cubans

HAVANA, Aug 5: Cuban authorities suffered electricity cuts planned for Tuesday so Cubans could watch live television coverage of their formidable national baseball team playing the United States in the semifinals at the Barcelona Olympics, reports Reuter.

State television announced it also hoped to provide live coverage on Wednesday of the Olympic baseball final, and scheduled power outages would be suspended on that day, too.

Since the start of July, Havana and other cities across the communist-ruled island have suffered daily electricity cuts as part of a nationwide energy-saving programme.

Cuba, clear favourites to win the first ever Olympic Baseball tournament, were unbeaten in their first seven games.

Some sportswriters in Barcelona have given the Cubans the nickname the "Other Dream Team" because they appear to be as unstoppable as the "Dream Team" of US basketballers.

Baseball is a national passion in Cuba. "Even if we win 10 gold medals in other sports, if we don't win the baseball gold then it will be as though we had won nothing," one sports journalist in Havana said.

The communist authorities have been forced to introduce stringent energy restrictions because of a nationwide shortage of fuel caused by the collapse of oil supplies from the former Soviet Union.



Puerto Rican basketballer Ramon Rivas Contreras (L) tries to catch the ball in front of US players Patrick Ewing in the USA vs Puerto Rico match in Barcelona Tuesday. — AFP photo