

Zmelik retains decathlon lead

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Robert Zmelik of Czechoslovakia and Spain's Antonio Penalver dined for the Olympic decathlon lead Thursday while gold-medal favourite Dave Johnson struggled with a possible stress fracture of the right ankle, reports AP.

Despite the painful injury, Johnson rallied from ninth place to seventh place overall with a discus throw of 49.40 metres (161 feet, 1 inch).

Johnson, who traditionally is stronger in the second day of competition, began the day falling farther behind Zmelik after the first event, the 110-metre hurdles, which he ran in a mediocre time of 14.76.

"As far as pain goes, it really hurts when I land on it real hard," said Johnson, who limped slightly as he finished. "The hurdles are the worst."

WOMEN'S LONG JUMP

In the women's long jump, Jackie Joyner-Kersey of the United States and Heike Drechsler of Germany easily qualified for Friday's final. Each needed only one leap to reach the qualifying distance of 6.75 metres (22 feet, 1 3/4 inches).

Joyner-Kersey, who last weekend won her second straight Olympic heptathlon title, jumped the exact qualifying distance. Drechsler, who has the longest jump of the season, went 7.06 metres (23-2 3/4) on her only attempt.

Zmelik led the decathlon with 6,183 points after seven events, winning the 110-metre hurdles with a time of 13.95 in the first of five events Thursday.

Penalver, with the partisan crowd roaring in support of every one of the Spaniard's runs, jumps or throws, held second place with 6,122 points. Paul Meter of Germany, the leader after Wednesday's events, was in third with 6,041. Johnson was seventh with 5,885 points.

Johnson said the injury, suffered shortly before the US Olympic trials in June, said he would battle to complete the remaining events—the pole vault, javelin and 1,500 metres.

"If it hurts a lot during the pole vault, if it hurts like a bloody stump, we'll see," he said. "I'll do my best not to let anybody down. It's a bummer, but I'm going to go on."

Johnson, who suffered a cracked bone in his right ankle in 1987, said he iced his ankle and used electrodes to stimulate it Wednesday night. His ankle was taped Thursday as he resumed competition.

While Johnson battled to stay competitive, one of his top opponents—Michael Smith of Canada—withdrawn early Thursday. No reason was given.

Unfit to fight

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Mongolian lightweight Namjil Bayarsaikhan failed a medical for an Olympic boxing semifinal today, guaranteeing his opponent Marco Rudolph of Germany at least a silver medal, reports Reuter.

Karl-Heinz Wehr, general secretary of the International Amateur Boxing Association, said Bayarsaikhan had a badly swollen eye.



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Young's world hurdles record

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Kevin Young of the United States set a men's 400 metres hurdles world record of 46.79 seconds when he won the Olympic final today, reports Reuter.

He beat the previous record of 47.02 set by Ed Moses of the United States in Koblenz in August 1983.

Gwen Torrence, World Championship silver medalist at 100 and 200m and fourth in the 100 here, finally grabbed Olympic gold today in the women's 200m.

Torrence, who angered her rivals by hinting at drug use among the 100m medalists, clocked 21.81 seconds to lead Jamaicans Juliet Cuthbert and Merlene Ottey.

Cuthbert earned the silver medal in 22.02 and Ottey had

to settle for the third Olympic bronze medal of her career in 22.09.

America's Mike Marsh won the 200m title today in emphatic style, but his time of 20.01 was a long way off his near-world record performance in the semi-finals Wednesday.

Marsh dominated the race from start to finish, though Namibian Frankie Fredericks came on strong in the closing metres to win the silver medal in 20.13.

Another American, Michel Bates, running on the inside lane, was third in 20.38.

The final, run into a head wind, was slow compared to Marsh's semi-final on Wednesday, when he came within a hundredth of a second of Italian Pietro Mennea's world record of 19.72 seconds, set in 1979.



Olga Turchak of the Unified Team clears the bar at 1.92 to qualify for the finals of the women's high-jump in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP photo



World record holder Mike Powell of the USA clears 8.14m in the qualification round of the long jump event in Barcelona Wednesday. — AFP photo

Decathlon overrun causes crowd jam!

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Extended competition in the decathlon pole vault created a traffic jam of fans and some unhappy customers at the Olympic track and field venue Thursday, reports AP.

The pole vault was the last event of the morning session and began on time about 1:30 pm (1130 GMT) with a few thousand fans gathered at one end of the stadium.

As the event continued, it became apparent that it would not end in time to empty the stadium before the evening programme scheduled to begin at 5:30 pm (1530 GMT) with the decathlon javelin competition.

At 4:30 pm (1430 GMT), with the decathletes still vaulting, officials announced that the morning session was over and asked the crowd to leave. Only a few did. The majority remained as the competition continued as the announcement was repeated six times.

Police appeared in the stands, attempting to clear the crowds. Those who left were not happy about the situation.

Eckart Seybold and his wife, Ingrid, of Stuttgart, Germany, had tickets for both morning and evening sessions. "The timetable is bad," Seybold said. "It is not good organisation."

Yolanda Aguiar of Barcelona complained, "I want to see. I don't want to leave."

Rudiger Steinbach drove 15 hours from Karlsruhe, Germany, for the session.

"It's not fun to hear that way," he said. "You can't believe the anger we have. If it happened in a little country, it would be OK. But this is the Olympics. This should be a festival for understanding among people of all nations. This is only for the money if they kick you out that way."

Regine Meter, a German who lives in Interlaken, Switzerland, said, "You know, I don't want to go. It's in the middle of the competition and three Germans are still in it, trying to get higher. It looks like a mess everywhere. That's why they want to clear the stadium."

As the evening crowd entered the stadium, fans who were in their seats from the morning session were escorted to the exits. "Do not worry," an organising committee official said. "We have a flexible system."

Watts strolls to 400m gold

BARCELONA, Aug 6: On a big day for athletics, American Quincy Watts ran the second fastest time in history to win the men's 400 metres gold.

It was Watts' second Olympic record in three nights. In the semifinal on Monday Watts, 22, had set an Olympic record of 43.71 seconds.

Watts, who won by a huge margin from compatriot Steve Lewis, looked set to break Butch Reynolds' four-year-old world record of 43.29 seconds. But he struggled in the final stages and finished in 43.5 seconds.

Kenyan Samson Kitur took the bronze medal.

Kenya's William Tanui won the men's 800 metres in a thrilling sprint finish, passing teammate Nixon Kiprotich in the last few metres to finish in one minute 43.66 seconds.

Marie-Jose Perec of France won the women's 400 metres final in 48.83, the fifth fastest time in history, and Sally Gunnell passed American Sandra Farmer-Patrick in the final straight for a surprise gold medal for Britain in the women's 400 metres hurdles. Farmer-Patrick clocked 53.69 sec while fellow American Janelle Vickers won the bronze in 54.31.

Olga Bryzgina of the Unified Team finished behind Perec to claim the silver in 49.05 sec followed by Ximena Restrepo of Colombia who clocked 49.64 for the bronze.

Lithuania won their first gold medal in the men's discus. Romas Ubartas, silver medalist in the Soviet team four years ago, threw 65.12 metres on his fifth attempt to snatch victory from defending champion Jurgen Schult of Germany.

Carl Lewis struck a psychological blow in the qualifying round of the long jump. He set 8.68 metres in his first jump to outdo his main rival, world record holder Mike Powell, who also reached Thursday's final with just a jump of 8.14 metres.

Moroccan Khalid Skaïw was given one of the worst receptions for an Olympic champion when he finally stepped up to receive his 10,000 metres gold medal.

The capacity crowd of 63,000 erupted in boos, jeers and whistles at the Moroccan, initially disqualified for receiving help from a lapped runner, then reinstated on appeal.

Richard Chelimo, the Kenyan who finished second, was given a standing ovation. His agent squashed suggestions that Kenya's runners would boycott the remaining track events in protest.

TANUI LIFTS MORALE

Gold medalist Tanui said his victory and teammate Nixon Kiprotich's second place in Wednesday's race had lifted spirit and put the team back on track for a big medal haul in the middle distance events.

"I think we did a lot of good by winning gold and silver after the controversy in the 10,000 metres. We have lifted morale in the team again," Tanui said on Thursday.

Tanui said "the incident is certainly not out of our minds, but now our team is happy and we have put everyone in the right spirit for the remaining races."

Mike Marsh of the United



Kenyan runner William Tanui (L) crosses the finish line first in the men's 800m race in Barcelona Wednesday. His teammate Nixon Kiprotich (R) won silver and Johnny Gray of the US (C, rear) the bronze. — AFP photo

Mike Johnson blames Spanish food

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Michael Johnson blamed his shock Olympic 200 metres failure on a plate of suspect Spanish food, reports Reuter.

The American world champion and overwhelming title favourite lacked his normal sparkle in Wednesday's semi-finals, trailing home sixth and out.

Johnson said his training had been interrupted by a virus he picked up after a restaurant meal in Spain last month.

"For a week after that I was suffering from diarrhoea, a high fever and lost a lot of energy and strength," he said.

"I was hoping to get faster and sharper as I went on here. But it did not happen. In my mind I was still afraid that the sickness had taken some of my strength. When I came down the home straight I did not feel like Michael Johnson. It did not feel there."

Johnson, whose upright style with little knee lift and rapid short strides had delighted crowds around the world, is used to coming off the bend in front.

But for the first time for a long time the American had runners in front of him.

But he was philosophical. "I am disappointed that I have not done my best. But life goes on. The sun will shine tomorrow. In fact it is probably shining now," he said.

IOC sends US doper Logan home

BARCELONA, Aug 6: An American hammer thrower was kicked out of the Olympics Thursday after he became the first US athlete in 16 years to fail a drug test at the Games, reports AP.

The International Olympic Committee on Wednesday said American Jud Logan had tested positive for clenbuterol, a banned anabolic steroid that can be used to treat asthma.

Before leaving Barcelona Thursday, Logan, 33, said he used clenbuterol from October 1991 until February 1992 because it was recommended to him as "as safe alternative to steroids."

But he said he immediately stopped using clenbuterol when he learned it was placed on a list of banned substances.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation must now decide whether to impose sanctions on Logan. A telephone message to the IAAF's press office wasn't immediately returned Thursday.

IAAF rules state that any athlete testing positive for anabolic steroids faces an automatic four-year suspension.

In another Barcelona drug case, the IOC announced Wednesday that women's marathoner Madina Biktagirova of the Unified Team tested positive for the banned stimulant norephedrine.

Biktagirova, 27, who finished fourth in the event, returned with her coach to her native Belarus before the test result was made public. The first to be disqualified from the Games was Wu Dan, a female volleyball player from China who tested positive for the stimulant strychnine.

The IOC commission questioned US Olympic Commi-

Synchro-swimming gold for US

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Kristen Babb-Sprague of the United States won the synchronised swimming Olympic gold medal Thursday. She tallied 191.848 points, reports AP.

Sylvie Frechette of Canada won the silver with 191.717, Fumiko Okuno of Japan the bronze with 187.056.

tee officials about Logan's case for an hour Wednesday night.

"There was a considerable amount of discussion with regard to all the medications this athlete has had, which have been numerous because of various conditions he has gone through, including asthma," said Dr LeRoy Walker, head of the US Olympic delegation.

"If anything," Walker said, "there was a doubt about what type of a metabolic process would occur with regard to all the other things he was taking, and he's been taking a number of them."

The IOC says clenbuterol is banned because it is related to an "androgenic anabolic steroid." The product has properties used to treat asthma, but also is an anabolic agent which promotes muscle growth, according to the IOC.

Clenbuterol is available as a licensed asthma drug in Germany, but not in the United States. Katrin Krabbe, the women's world sprint champion who skipped the Barcelona Games, tested positive for clenbuterol in Germany last month, officials said Wednesday.

"It is an effective anabolic agent in animals," said Arnold Beckett, a member of the IOC panel. "It is probable to say it would do the same for humans."

Orin Richburg, Logan's track coach while at Kent State University, said he would have a hard time believing Logan used banned substances. "This is not one of the kinds of things he did," he said.

Jeff Logan said from his home in the United States that his brother did not have an asthma condition, but was taking the substance before it was banned.

"When it came on the (banned substances) list in April, he ceased taking it immediately. Jud said it was a common antihistamine, used by a lot of athletes, used forever, that is supposed to allow athletes to recover faster," he said.

He said his brother knew of 50 athletes who use the product.

Jud Logan is the American record-holder in the hammer throw, with 81.9 metres (268 feet, 8 inches) in 1988. His best throw in the Olympics this week was 79 metres (259-2).

"Not in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be in fourth place," Logan said at the time.

He said he expected questions after he made the best Olympic hammer throw showing by an American Harold Connolly won in 1956.

"If you do the ultimate, people are going to wonder. It's true for any athlete," Logan said earlier.

A winner of four outdoor titles, Logan was at his third Olympics. He finished 14th in 1964 and was eliminated in the qualifying round in 1968.

The last Americans to test positive in the Olympics were weightlifters Marc Cameron and Philippe Grippaldi at the 1976 Games in Montreal.

Hero's welcome awaits Susi, Kusuma

JAKARTA, Aug 6: Indonesia's first Olympic gold medalists and newest national heroes return home next week to a city parade and a lot of money, reports Reuter.

Indonesia, a country of 180 million people, had never won an Olympic gold medal until Susi Susanti and her boyfriend Allan Budi Kusuma took the two badminton singles titles this week in Spain.

The Daily Jayakarta reported today that Bambang Trihatmodjo, a son of President Suharto, and nine other businessmen were raising money for the two.

It quoted leading local businessman Ciputra as saying "The couple would get one billion rupiah (about 4,91,000 dollar) each.

"I'll save (the money) for my future. . . No savings would be a problem because my only skill is badminton," Susanti told the daily.

The couple are also promised a house and car.

But the 21-year-old Susi has said she wants to continue her career before getting married.

Croatian cagers in men's final

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Drazen Petrovic made two free throws with nine seconds to play Thursday to give Croatia a 75-74 victory over the Unified Team and a berth in the gold medal game, reports AP.

Petrovic's free throws gave Croatia (6-1) its first lead since 54-53 with 12:17 to play and capped a comeback that was fueled by missed opportunities by the Unified Team.

After Petrovic made the free throws, the Unified Team had two more chances. But Vladimir Gorin failed to convert a lob pass under the basket with three seconds left and, after the Unified Team got the ball when the rebound went out of bounds off Croatia, Alexander Volkov threw up an airball from 13 feet at the buzzer.

Volkov missed the front end of five 1-and-1s in the last 4:44.

Croatia, who lost only to the United States, will play the winner of the second semifinal between the United States and Lithuania, in Saturday's gold medal game. The Unified Team (5-2) will meet the loser of that game for the bronze medal.

Two free throws by Valeri Tikhonok with 6:15 left gave the Unified Team a 68-60 lead. Croatia scored the next six points to get within four with 4:02 to play, but the Unified Team scored six of the next eight points, four coming on rebounds after Volkov's misses on free throws.

Two free throws by Petrovic with 1:03 left made it 74-70. After Volkov missed again with 42 seconds left, Toni Kukoc hit a 3-pointer with 33 seconds left—just his second field goal in nine shots in the game—to bring Croatia within one.

Volkov was again fouled with 24 seconds and he missed again. Petrovic made his two free throws 15 seconds later for the deciding points.

Petrovic scored 28. Dino Radja added 19 points and 11 rebounds for Croatia, while Kukoc finished with 10 points and seven assists.

Volkov had 20 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Unified Team.

Hosts Spain beat Angola 78-75 to take ninth place.

CIS rally to beat US 8-5

BARCELONA, Aug 6: The Unified Team overcame a 3-1 deficit and beat the United States 8-5 in Olympic water polo Wednesday behind two goals from Dmitri Apanassenko, reports AP.

The victory gave the Unified a 4-0-0 record in first-round play and the lead in Group A. The United States fell to 3-0-1 and will face Germany with a possible medal-round berth at stake.

In other first-round games Wednesday, in Group A: France routed Czechoslovakia 14-8 and Germany drew with Australia 7-7.

In Group B, Cuba outlasted the Netherlands 11-9, Hungary beat Greece 12-7, and Spain fought to a 9-9 draw with Italy.

The United States led 2-0 after one quarter on goals by Erich Fisher and Chris Humbert, and 4-3 at halftime.

The momentum shifted in the second half as Apanassenko got his second goal and Alexandr Ogorodnikov got his first, giving the Unified Team a 5-4 lead after three periods.

In the last period, the Unified Team stopped the Americans, and got two goals in less than a minute from Vladimir Karabostov and Alexandr Kolotov. The Unified Team, made up entirely of Russians, ended their scoring on a penalty shot by Sergei Markotch with 1:20 remaining.