

# track

August 23, 1995

## IAAF Congress Keeps 4-Year Ban

Göteborg, August 1-3—Despite the IAAF Council's backing of a Russian proposal to halve the minimum ban for serious doping offenses from 4 years to 2, the IAAF Congress voted overwhelmingly to maintain the status quo, 137-49.

Immediately afterwards, 15 nations—including the U.S. and Germany—that supported the change requested that the IAAF pay their legal costs associated with athletes who contest bans in civil courts.

"We could end up with horrendous costs," said a critical IAAF general secretary István Gyulai. "The delegates who were against [the Russian proposal] talked about sending a bad signal and dismissed all other arguments. They did not want to talk about the money and legal problems."

The IAAF has paid \$4.5 million in the last two years to battle athletes with doping disputes. The U.S., France, Germany and Italy tallied up \$39 million in legal fees over the past four years.

Said British federation head Peter Radford, arguing against the reduction, "The principle is to get a level playing field for the athletes and to protect them from those who cheat."

### Other IAAF developments:

- The Germans asked that a "dope-testing passport" plan be put into effect, so that athletes who have not been tested twice in the year prior to a major championships would not be allowed to compete.

- In the wake of the Italian federation's decision not to submit the controversial Pedrosa 29-4<sup>3/4</sup> (8.96) for WR ratification, the Cuban federation demanded a full explanation. The IAAF technical committee has requested that the Italians submit their evidence for review.

- Primo Nebiolo was reelected by acclamation to another four-year term as president, and the four vice-presidents, including Ollan Cassell, were reelected unopposed, as was honorary treasurer Robert Stinson of Britain.

Five new members joined the IAAF Council,

including the first two women ever—Abby Hoffman of Canada and Nawal El Moutawakel-Bennis of Morocco. Helmut Digel of Germany, Bob Hasan of Indonesia and Jean Poczbout of France also were selected.

## U.S. Medal Totals Drop

In Göteborg, American men had their worst World Championships ever, in the total-medals department. True, they won almost a quarter of the golds awarded (see chart in last week's newsletter), but their total of 12 medals ranks behind all previous U.S. totals at the Worlds: Helsinki 18, Rome 14, Tokyo 20, Stuttgart 14.

The U.S. women were down to 7 from Stuttgart's 11 medals, but still ahead of the 6s they scored in the first three editions of the meet. And 5 of the 7 were golds, matching the Stuttgart high.

Overall, the U.S. ended up with its lowest medal total ever, 19. Previous scores: Helsinki 24, Rome 20, Tokyo 26, Stuttgart 25.

Reflecting the ever-global nature of the sport, virtually all the big nations lost ground in Göteborg, as the number of countries providing medal winners rose from Stuttgart's 36 all the way to 43.

Indeed, the top 6 nations from '93 all lost ground. Behind the U.S.: Russia from 16 to 12; Britain from 10 to 5; Kenya from 10 to 6; China from 8 to 1; Germany from 8 to 6. Notable gainers included Belarus (from 4 to 7) and Jamaica (from 5 to 7).

## Kenyans See Failure

Most nations would be happy with six medals in the distances, but Kenya (which won 10 in Stuttgart) is embroiled in a controversy over the nation's failure to do better in Göteborg.

The loudest of the critics is former national coach Mike Kosgei, who was fired in May at a time when rumors were flying that Kenyan athletes might boycott the Worlds.

Said Kosgei, "Poor tactics and bad administration caused the debacle. The coaches accompanying the team are wholly to blame for putting unnecessary pressure on these fine athletes."

"I am surprised that the coaches allowed some athletes to go to Europe for meetings so close to the Championships instead of training at home, where they would keep a close watch."

Kosgei alleged that the Kenyan 800 run-

ners—none of whom made the finals—were told not to take the semis seriously.

A Kenyan paper reported that the 4 x 400 team failed to show for the final after an argument over who would run the anchor.

Many observers noted the apparent lack of expected Kenyan team tactics in some of the distance races. Noted Kosgei, "In a major championship, it is not each athlete on his or her own. It is the team. It is that concept the team forgot."

## IAAF Says No Positives

As the days went by in Göteborg with no news of drug positives, conspiracy theorists began to posit that the IAAF simply must have been delaying such news, in order not to taint the championships.

So much for that theory. The international governing body has announced the good news that the whole meet went by without a single positive. In all, 314 athletes from 59 nations were tested.

The IAAF also reported that as a control it had submitted a number of deliberately contaminated samples to the testing laboratory. The lab came through with flying colors, uncovering all these "positive" samples.

## A Double In Atlanta?

After some earlier rebuffs in his efforts to get breathing room in an Olympic 200/400 double, Michael Johnson got some potentially good news in Göteborg, where IAAF boss Primo Nebiolo said before the meet that if Johnson scored a successful WC double, further Atlanta modifications would be considered.

After Johnson's double triumphs, Nebiolo confirmed to Gene Cherry of Reuters, "We will have to think again about the Atlanta schedule."

Johnson reported he met with Nebiolo, and subsequently said, "I think things will work out. We had a very good meeting."

## More Track On TV

A number of top meets will be gracing the cable soon. Here is ESPN's current lineup (all of the meets are tape-delayed):

Van Damme GP, Brussels—Sunday, 8/27, noon-1pm (all times Eastern).

ISTAF GP, Berlin—Tuesday, 9/5, 8:30-10:30pm.

GP Final, Monaco—Sunday, 9/10, 2:30-4:30pm. To be repeated Monday, 9/25, 4-5:30am.

Also, the IAAF Half Marathon Champs will show on ESPN 2 on Sunday, 10/15, from 3-4pm. As always, check your local listings to confirm the times.

Help! Our evil computer program is revolting against us! That's our explanation for the January dates you'll find on the next two pages.





