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From left: Tero Pitkämäki (FIN), Jessica Ennis (GBR), Andrew Howe (ITA), Blanka Vlasic (CRO).

**Waterford Crystal European Athletes of the Year and Rising Stars of 2007**

## European Athletics hosts glittering Awards Ceremony

**On the 12th of October, in the beautiful Mediterranean Conference Centre, Malta, Europe's greatest athletes and the rising stars of the future, gathered with representatives of the entire European Athletics family who took time out from their busy Calendar Conference schedules, to take part in the European Athletics Awards Ceremony.**



This ceremony forms part of European Athletics ambitious plans to grow the European Athletics brand, by recognising and promoting the heroes of our sport and strengthening the appeal of athletics to an ever growing audience.

It is a tough old life being an athlete, hours of painful training, travelling to far-flung destinations, sacrificing time with family and friends, and never relaxing at weekends! Amongst all the blood, sweat and tears, there ought to be a little glamour, and the four outstanding athletes that joined us in Malta certainly brought that...



## Tero Pitkämäki (FIN)

### Waterford Crystal European male Athlete of the Year 2007

Javelin throwing is almost a religion in Finland, and this summer Tero Pitkämäki became the fourth man from his country to win an IAAF World title in the event. Pitkämäki has been 2007's outstanding Javelin thrower, winning 14 out of 16 competitions. His triumphs included not only the gold medal in Osaka but also victories at four IAAF Golden League meetings and the IAAF World Athletics Final.

Pitkämäki proved in Osaka that not only can he throw the javelin a long way - a fact evident since he started throwing over 90m two years ago - but that he could also shoulder the continuing burden of expectation from a nation who had hoped for a home soil podium place two years before in Helsinki, only for him to finish a disappointing fourth.

"That was my dream, to win the gold medal. Our team had not won a medal in Osaka until the Javelin, so I was their last chance. I was a little bit nervous because in the qualification I was not able to achieve the (automatic) standard. My technique was something I was thinking about before the competition. It worked well finally," said Pitkämäki.

Pitkämäki had already won the competition with a superb second round throw of 89.16m and then, when able to relax, emphasised his supremacy by sending the javelin out to 90.33m - the last breathtaking throw of the competition.

It was a triumph witnessed by nearly half of Finland, where legions of athletics fans were glued to their television sets willing his Javelin to fly.

"I have always said that our road is from eighth place, to fourth place to second place, to first," said coach Hannu Kangas, looking back down the path that has brought his pupil a World Championship gold and the honour of being the first Finn to be chosen as Waterford Crystal European Athlete of the Year.

## Blanka Vlasic (CRO)

### Waterford Crystal European female Athlete of the Year 2007

Blanka Vlasic's elevation to the role of Europe's top female athlete was the result of a stunning summer in which she won all but one of her 19 outdoor competitions, a string of victories that included winning gold at the IAAF World Championships in Osaka.

She improved her own national record four times, culminating in a top clearance of 2.07m in Stockholm on August 7, a performance that takes her to equal second on the European all-time list. Only the world record holder, Stefka Kostadinova (BUL), has jumped higher than Vlasic outdoors.

During the course of the season, Vlasic's almost-total dominance over the rest of the women in her event meant that she was able to move the bar up to a World record height at no less than nine outings. Of her 27 attempts at 2.10m (1cm higher than Kostadinova's record which has now been on the books since 1987) several were very close, including efforts at end-of-season meetings in Brussels and Shanghai which showed that she is getting ever more comfortable with the concept of taking her event into new territory.

"Every meeting this year has had the same goals for me. Of course to win, I'm always looking for a victory, but also to jump two metres or higher. However,

the most important thing for me is to enjoy competing; this is one of my years and I'm just trying to have fun," said Vlasic.

There has been fun for the crowds as well, as Vlasic brings infectious enthusiasm to her competitions, showing off with a little dance after a big clearance.

"In every competition, I actually have a different dance. It gives positive energy to people in the crowd. You need to spice it up," joked Vlasic.

Despite all her dramatics, Vlasic admitted that she felt the burden of expectation on her slim shoulders ahead of the World Championships,

"I wanted to win this gold medal so much, I am so relieved. I was the favourite and I had to deal with a lot of pressure, and it is not easy to beat a strong field."

Nevertheless, Vlasic made it look simple, going over 2.03m at the first time of asking (which in itself would have won her the gold medal), and then clearing 2.05m on her third attempt before again taking a tilt at the World record. Vlasic said,

"Every morning now I wake up and just say 'good morning World Champion!'"





## Andrew Howe (ITA)

### Waterford Crystal European Athletics male rising star of 2007

As the reigning European Outdoor and Indoor Long Jump Champion, Andrew Howe's star potential has been evident for a while, but it was his spectacular 8.47m leap under pressure, that finally sealed his right to be known as the European Athletics Rising Star of 2007.

'That jump' in the final Long Jump round of the World Championships in Osaka, broke the long-standing 8.43m Italian record set by Giovanni Evangelisti in San Giovanni Valdarno in 1987, and saw Howe leap from fourth to a provisional gold medal position.

Much chest beating and ripping of shirts ensued until the incredible happened and the more experienced jumper Irving Saladino went one jump further.

Despite narrowly missing gold, Howe was rightly delighted with his silver medal achievement.

"I set a personal best and a national record. The track was excellent, the climate was good and the crowd was very supportive. I just knew I had to jump as far as possible. I needed a big jump. I just had to get it out. Winning a silver medal with a national record at the age of 22 is a big result for me" said Howe.

The humble Italian went on to finish his 2007 season in dramatic style, at the World Athletics Final in Stuttgart. After a tentative start in which he jumped 7.84m followed by a foul, Howe confirmed his victory with a third-attempt leap of 8.35m, receiving a standing ovation from the 30,000 spectators who packed the Gottlieb Daimler Stadium.

Howe is the first Italian to win the IAAF World Athletics finals, and even the most cautious gambler can be confident in believing this is just one of many world titles to come!

## Jessica Ennis (GBR)

### Waterford Crystal European Athletics female rising star of 2007

As the smallest, and youngest, of the World's leading Heptathletes, what Jessica Ennis lacks in stature, she more than makes up for in drive and raw athletic talent.

Under the careful coaching of Toni Minichello, the 21-year-old 'pocket rocket' has had an incredible year. Not only has she written her name in the record books on multiple occasions, she has done so against a background of challenges which would have derailed an athlete of lesser character.

Floods, exams and media pressure have all tested Jessica's mettle, yet in the 2007 season alone, she has recorded three Heptathlon personal bests, culminating in a score of 6469 and a fourth place ranking at the World Championships, in Osaka, Japan.

In May, she supplanted the 2000 Olympic champion, Denise Lewis, as the British Under-23 record holder, by scoring a personal best of 6,388 pts to win an IAAF World Combined Events Challenge Heptathlon and equaled the British High Jump record in the process. Then, in Szczecin, in June, Ennis became the

British No.1 for the first time, displacing the 2004 Olympic bronze medallist, Kelly Sotherton, with a personal best score of 6,399 points.

At the British trials for Osaka, she became the first woman for 50 years to complete a winning double in the Sprint Hurdles and High Jump at the national championships, held in conjunction with the trials. In the same month, she also took the 100m Hurdles bronze medal at the European Athletics Under-23 Championships, in Debrecen, Hungary.

Then Osaka saw Ennis win all three track events - the 100m Hurdles (12.97), the 200m (23.15) and the 800m (2:11.39). She beat Sotherton in five events, and set four personal bests (100m Hurdles, 200m, Javelin, and Heptathlon score).

This was only Jessica's first season as a full-time athlete since her graduation in July. This is a young athlete with a very bright future.

"It has been an absolutely amazing season," Ennis said. "It is hard to put it into words."



Want to know more about your favourite athletes? Check out the 5-minute interviews in the Fan Zone of the European Athletics website!

# European Athletics Calendar Conference



The 2007 European Athletics Calendar Conference was held in St Paul's Bay, Malta, from the 11th to the 15th of October. This important event brought together representatives from most of European Athletics Member Federations, senior IAAF officials, the Euro Meetings Board, the Athletes Commission and athlete representatives themselves. Although entitled the Calendar Conference a lot more than the 2008 fixture dates were decided.

Monday the 15th of October saw the 118th meeting of the European Athletics Council. Discussions focused on finalising plans for an additional European Athletics Championships that would take place in an Olympic year, and to decide on the new concept for the European Athletics Team Championships.

Following this, President Hansjörg Wirz, updated the Presidents and General Secretaries of the 50 European Member Federations on these decisions.

## Additional European Athletics Championships

The additional championships are scheduled to take place one month before the Olympic Games commence in London, in five years time.

"The proposals for an additional championship were led by the Council, but follow numerous discussions with our stakeholders regarding the need for more European-wide competition, and I am confident that the event will be a successful and enduring one" said President Wirz.



"We are all aware of the value of an additional European Athletics Championships and I was very happy that the plans were well received by the Member Federations. It is an exciting time for us as we now move into the implementation stage of the planning."

The Championships are planned to take place over five days with the majority of qualification rounds taking place on the Wednesday and early on Thursday, before four intense and exciting evenings of finals over the weekend.

## European Athletics Team Championships

European Athletics Vice President Jose Luis de Carlos, presented detailed plans on the European Athletics Team Championships which will replace the SPAR European Cup competition, commencing 2009.

In summary, the European Athletics Team Championships will have 12 teams competing against each-other, as opposed to eight who currently compete in the European Cup, along with numerous innovations to the rules in both track & field events.

"The concept behind the Team Championships is an exciting and modern one" explained de Carlos.

"The emphasis will be on the country or the team as opposed to the individual athlete, and with both the men and women's points counting towards one team effort, we feel that the competitions will be exciting, energetic and unpredictable" he added.

The European Athletics Team Championships will take place on an annual basis, except in the year of an additional European Athletics Championships.

## Venue decision

A decision on the venue of the additional European Athletics Championships in 2012, is expected to be awarded by the Council in autumn 2008.

The next European Athletics Championships, of course, will take place in Barcelona, (ESP) from July 27 - August 1, 2010.

## Other discussions

The Council also held fruitful discussions on the future structure of the one-day meetings and although a lot more work and discussion is needed in this area. There were positive feelings towards reaching a satisfactory conclusion with all relevant stakeholders in the near future.

Discussions were also held in the area of anti-doping and in particular, the good work being done in this area to educate future generations of athletes on the dangers involved in drug abuse.

The President and Council again reiterated their zero-tolerance anti-doping message

## Date changes of meetings

European Athletics Indoor Permit Meeting	Düsseldorf/GER	8 February 2008
European Athletics Premium Meeting	Turin/ITA	6 June 2008
European Athletics Outdoor Permit Meeting	Lappeenranta/FIN	3 August 2008

## Events awarded 2008

ECCC Cross Country	Albufeira/POR	2 February 2008
ECCC T&F Seniors Group A	Vila Real Sto. Antonio/POR	24-25 May 2008
ECCC T&F Juniors Group A	Sremska Mitrovica/SRB	20 September 2008

What strong armed Scandinavian athlete harbours secret ambitions to be an Astronaut?



by finalising the competition regulations to include an additional two-year ban on any athletes convicted of a serious doping offence, and being ineligible to compete in any European Athletics Championships. The news that both IAAF and IOC were looking at creating new regulations based on this initiative by European Athletics last March was welcomed by all.

Elsewhere, the Council agreed the terms of reference and nominations for the Race Walking, Cross Country, Mountain Running, Athletes, Medical & Anti-Doping and Reflection Commissions.

The nominations will be announced when the federations and nominees have been informed and accepted their nominations. It was also agreed that the system for Member Federation support be restructured to simplify the administration procedures.

### Paris, Gothenburg and Dublin selected to host European events

The final highlight of the Council Meeting in Malta, was the announcement of the winning bids for the European Athletics Indoor Championships in 2011 and the SPAR European Cross Country Championships in 2009, followed by the surprise announcement that the European Indoor Championship hosts for 2013 had also been selected.

Paris, Gothenburg and Dublin were awarded the right to host future European Athletics events after much discussion during the European Athletics Council meeting.

"We have four winners here today" said President Hansjörg Wirz, after the votes were counted.

"First of all, Paris, as they will host the European Athletics Indoor Championships in 2011, secondly Gothenburg as they will host the Indoor Championships of 2013, thirdly Dublin, as they will host their first SPAR European Cross Country Championships in 2009 and finally European Athletics, as we have three great cities willing to host our top events"

Paris last hosted the European Athletics Indoor Championships in 1994 while Gothenburg did likewise in 1984.

In other venue decisions, the Council agreed that the French city of Metz, will host the European Cup Race Walking in 2009.

The next meeting of the European Athletics Council will be in April 2008.

## Overview of European Outdoor and Indoor Records set in 2007

(All records as at 19 October 2007)

European outdoor records set in 2007									
Men									
<b>20km Walk</b>	1:17.16	*/+	Vladimir	KANAYKIN	RUS	21.3.85	Saransk	29.9.07	
Women									
<b>Javelin</b>	70.20		Christina	OBERGEFÖLL	GER	22.8.81	München	23.6.07	
<b>Hammer</b>	78.61	*/+	Tatyana	LYSENKO	RUS	9.10.83	Sochi	26.5.07	
<b>Heptathlon</b>	7032		Carolina	KLÜFT	SWE	2.2.83	Osaka	26.8.07	
<b>15 km</b>	46:59	+	Lornah	KIPLAGAT	NED	1.5.74	Udine	14.10.07	
<b>20 km</b>	1:02:57	*/+	Lornah	KIPLAGAT	NED	1.5.74	Udine	14.10.07	
<b>Half Marathon</b>	1:06:25	*/+	Lornah	KIPLAGAT	NED	1.5.74	Udine	14.10.07	
U'23 Men									
<b>Decathlon</b>	8617		Andrei	KRAUCHANKA	BLR	4.1.86	Götzis	26.5.07	
<b>4x100</b>	38.95=		National Team: SCOTT (87), PICKERING (86), FIFTON (85), ELLINGTON (85)			GBR		Debrecen	15.7.07
<b>4x400</b>	3:02.13		National Team: DYLDIN (87), ALEKSEYEV (87), SERGEYENKOV (86), KOKORIN (87)			RUS		Debrecen	15.7.07
<b>50km Walk</b>	3:40:57		Vladimir	KANAYKIN	RUS	21.3.85	Leamington	20.5.07	
U'23 Women									
<b>4x400</b>	3:26.58		National Team: OSHULIKOVA (85), ZADORINA (87), NOVIKOVA (85), LITVINOVA (85)			RUS		Debrecen	15.7.07
Junior Women									
<b>3000m Steeple</b>	9:33.19		Karoline	GRØVDAL BJERKELI	NOR	14.6.90	Neerpelt	02.6.07	
<b>10km Walk</b>	43:17		Anisya	KORNIKOVA	RUS	23.10.89	Leamington	20.5.07	
Junior Men									
<b>10km Walk</b>	40:24		Sergey	MOROZOV	RUS	21.3.88	Leamington	20.5.07	

### European outdoor records set in 2004

U'23 Women								
<b>1500m</b>	4:00.67		Elvan	AYBELEGESSE	TUR	11.9.82	Athina	28.8.04

Note: This performance is better than the current European Record (4:02.24 Dumbavean/ROM) and we have become aware only last year. The reception of proof of the negative doping test could now be confirmed by the IOC.

\* also world record  
+ awaiting ratification

### European Indoor Records set in 2007

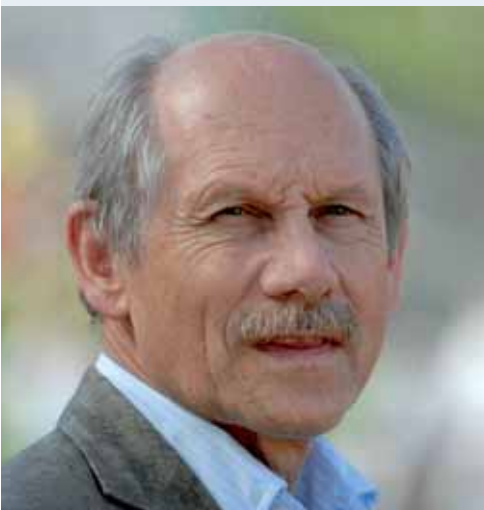
as at 31 March 2007									
2007 Women									
<b>Pole Vault</b>	4.93i	*	Yelena	ISINBAYEVA	RUS	82	Donetsk	10.02.	
<b>4 x 800m</b>	8:18.54	*	A. BALAKSHINA, N. PANTELYEVA, A. YEMASHOVA, O. CHUMAKOVA, BALAKSHINA, N. PANTELYEVA,			RUS		Volgograd	12.02.

\*also World Record  
+ awaiting ratification

Note: Indoor records which are better than current outdoor records are being considered as European outdoor records if in accordance with IAAF rule 260.18 (a)

Which European Marathon runner has a secret obsession with Julia Roberts?





# A word from the President

*Hansjörg Wirz*

*Another exciting and fulfilling year for the sport has come to an end, during which numerous competitions, both at World and European Championship level, were successfully organised for the new generation of star athletes.*

*Stadiums full of spectators have been entertained by great performances, as young athletes from all over Europe enjoyed the fascinating experience our sport has to offer at the European Athletics Junior & U23 Championships which were held in Hengelo/NED and Debrecen/HUN last July.*

*Along with the competition on the track and field, another important part of this experience was the participation by nearly 1000 athletes, in our new anti-doping education programme, which was very positively received by all.*

*There has been widespread media coverage about the small minority of athletes who continue to cheat and tarnish our sport by taking performance enhancing substances, so we are taking active steps to, firstly, educate the next generation of athletes about the dangers of doping and secondly, to instil in them a sense of fair play and pride in clean, honest performances and endeavour.*

*Like every sports organisation, we are very aware of our responsibilities, not merely in offering sporting activities for the youth of Europe, but ensuring the sport develops in the right direction in order to meet the expectations of modern society and engages more young people. Like other sports, when young athletes are confident in, and the proud of their sport, they will stay with it for life. This is exactly the message we want to spread in the future. As a sport, athletics is fortunate to have a well defined and inclusive life cycle – competitive athlete, coach, official*

*and finally spectator - demonstrating that athletics really is your sport for life!*

*Off the track, European Athletics is facing a number of crucial challenges, but we are satisfied with the decisions taken this year to adapt and change our competition structure, to offer everyone, not only our young athletes, a promising future.*

*However, as you know, the future is not secured with these decisions alone. The strength of our sport will be shown by the implementation of its changes, and by bravely developing, always with an eye on the future.*

*Unfortunately, in our individualised society, the principals of solidarity seem to have lost their value, but this is still a prerequisite condition for our sport to function at its potential. That is why it is so important that we offer our greatest respect and thanks to the many officials, coaches, organisers and leaders whose immense dedication and enthusiasm form the backbone of our sport every day.*

*For the future, we plan to increase our education initiatives to guarantee an attractive programme of activities every year. We firmly believe that training and education is essential not only to ensure a high level of quality within European Athletics, but also as an important source of motivation and demonstration of our appreciation to our participants. This year seminars took place for new leaders, communication managers, one-day meeting organisers and additional sources for EU funding, which were enthusiastically supported by the federations and I look forward to announcing next years programme in the New Year.*

*Along with this, our increased efforts to integrate more women into our sport are beginning to take shape. In all our work we must be aware of the need to recruit and to motivate interested women to contribute to the organisation of the sport. It is abundantly clear and evidenced that their fresh contributions can only be for the benefit of our sport.*

*During the last year some very important decisions were made. These have been well publicised but need further action to turn them into positive leaps! The future is therefore in our own hands and I thank you all for your support and contribution.*

*I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy, active and successful 2008!*

*Hansjörg Wirz, President, European Athletics*



**IMPRESSUM**

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"UPDATE" is published by the  
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**Fans View**

**Athletics fan  
Charles Mitchell  
has his say.**

*I am a fan of sport and athletics in particular. I grew up with a sports-mad father so it is a part of my life! As a spectator and fan of athletics I run a free British based website (www.athleticsresults.co.uk).*

*Now as I approach 50 – a time for retrospection – I look back and remember the Sporting highlights of my life: watching England win the World Cup in 1966, the England V Australia Cricket Tests in the 1980's, Colin Jackson breaking the World Record, Linford Christie winning Olympic Gold, Mary Phillips, Daley Thomson, Seb Coe, Steve Ovett, Steve Cram – the list could go on!*

*Yet there is no use in living in the past, (something athletics has been particularly*

*good at!) While Cricket has introduced floodlit matches, limited over matches, one day Internationals -changes that have brought fresh air into what was becoming a stuffy sport – athletics has been slow to change its approach to the modern sporting world.*

*It is refreshing therefore that European Athletics is now taking active steps to try and rejuvenate the sport within Europe. The change to the European Athletic Team Championships is a big step forward - and as a long-term advocate of the Team aspect of Athletics, I am thrilled to see that we will have a competition based on teams not just the Individuals. I think it will attract a new audience who will support their team, without having to know the name and stats of every individual involved.*

*The move to have an annual European Championship is again highly sensible – creating more public awareness and more opportunities for athlete's to compete, possibly for more athletes to have a chance as well.*

*Athletics has to adapt, and European Athletics are leading the way to increase media coverage, and generate new ideas for competition that will hopefully increase participation in Athletics within Europe.*

*The changes proposed by European Athletics are exciting, and if supported they will help Athletics gain a higher profile with the Sporting public. That is what the sport desperately needs so I for one am lending my support!*

**Have your say! If you have an opinion on anything you have read here or on the website, let us know. Email [media@european-athletics.org](mailto:media@european-athletics.org). Due to the high volume of emails not every mail will be responded to, but they will all be read.**

**In memoriam**

European Athletics is sad to report a number of deaths from within our athletic family this year. Each of the people below contributed in some way to the development of our great sport and their presence will be sadly missed.

Sixten Borg SWE  
Helmut Ebert GER  
Beat-Marie Homen FIN  
Maria Kwasniewska-Maleszewska POL  
Andy Norman GBR  
Yelena Romanova RUS





# The Year

# 2007

*"I wake up every morning and say, 'good morning World Champion'"*  
 Blanka Vlasic, Croatian World High Jump Champion

*"This is a sport where you need a lot of passion, but which can make you a lot happier... I want to see a lot more people doing it!"*  
 Andrew Howe (ITA), Waterford Crystal European Athletic Male Rising Star of 2007.

*"In athletics, what you put in, is what you get out... there is no hiding... it's all down to you... and your coach of course!"*  
 David Gillick (IRL), European 400m Indoor Champion.

*"I knew I was in a good shape, but I did not dare to believe that it was soooo good! I feel extraordinary, this is amazing. I am rejoicing! When I cleared 2.03m I said to myself 'Mamma mia!' I thank God for this - he gave me the power to go on!"*  
 Antonietta Di Martino (ITA) on winning the High Jump silver medal in Osaka







*"It is crucial that the championship doesn't stop at the doors of the arena and in this, Birmingham achieved great success."*

*Hansjörg Wirz, President, European Athletics*

*"It is these feats of endurance, speed and technique, that makes them the heroes of our sport, and inspirational ambassadors for the development of athletics in Europe"*

*Christian Milz, Director General European Athletics*

# of European Athletics



*"We've got to excite young people into taking up track and field and being more involved in the sport. We've got to make sure the format of the sport and the way it's presented is attractive to new audiences."*

*Sebastian Coe, IAAF Vice-President.*

*"My main reason for wanting to work in athletics was because it was the sport that placed fair play and honesty above all else, it was the sport that was accessible to everyone, and at the root of all other sports. My dream for my children, and for the rest of their generation, is that they will grow up still believing these ideals."*

*European Athletics Director General, Christian Milz*



*"This is crazy! This is my third World title - I had some tears of joy in my eyes after the competition. It is very surprising for me as I am the second oldest in the field and today I beat all the young girls."*

*World Discus Champion, Franka Dietzsch (GER)*

# Education activities supporting our Member Federations

**Thanks to a generous IAAF grant, European Athletics was able to organise a series of seminars in 2007 to benefit key Member Federation personnel and the organisers of Europe's top one-day meetings.**



## New Leaders Seminar

**04 October 2007**

The first seminar in this ambitious programme was a one-day seminar for new Presidents and General Secretaries from European Athletics Member Federations.

15 recently-appointed Presidents and General Secretaries from 11 different Member Federations, gathered at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland to take part in the New Leaders Seminar.

The aim of the seminar was to show federation leaders appointed in the last two years how they fit into the big picture of the sport in Europe and discuss how they can optimise their working relationship with the European Athletics Head Office.

After an overview of European Athletics' strategy and structure, from Director General Christian Milz, each of European Athletics Head Office Managers briefed participants on their areas of responsibility.

European Athletics Treasurer, Karel Pilny, then gave a detailed presentation on the work of a national federation, which included practical advice based on his experience of 23 years as President of the Czech Athletic Federation.

"This seminar was a great way for us to welcome the participants to the European Athletics Family and start a dialogue that will help them and us to be more effective in our roles," said Milz, "I think everyone found the day useful and, as you would expect, they were all impressed with the venue."

## One-day meetings seminar

**27-28th October 2007**

The second seminar was held in the cultural Spanish city of Barcelona, where over 40 meeting organizers from Europe and beyond spent two days discussing and debating the future of one day meetings in Europe.

The seminar included an overview of European Athletics' strategy in the area of events and competition, given by President Hansjörg Wirz, then presentations by experts in key issue areas affecting meetings in European Athletics' Premium and Permit system, and extended discussions.

In addition to Wirz, European Athletics was represented by Vice President Jose Luis de Carlos, who chairs the Competition Committee, and Director General Christian Milz.

"Increasing the quality of the one-day meetings and restructuring the competition programme in Europe are key elements of our strategy for the coming years," said Milz. "It was important to bring the organisers together, brief them on our plans and get their input on any issues related to how the system will look or function."

"I was delighted with the high turnout and the serious approach of all the participants. I was particularly impressed by the willingness of the directors of the bigger IAAF meetings in Europe like Zurich, Brussels and Stockholm to share their expertise and make suggestions to organisers who might have only one-tenth their budget to work with."

"This weekend showed me again that we have common interests in strengthening the brand of the Premium and Permit meeting structure and raising the profile of athletics."

## Funding Projects through the European Union

**1-2nd December 2007**

As we go to print, the third seminar in the series is taking place in Papendal, Netherlands, looking at "Funding Projects through the European Union". The seminar series will finish on the 1-2nd December, when an impressive number of representatives responsible for the communication within their Member Federation, will meet in Nymburk, Czech Republic to examine the fine art of communication. A full report of both these seminars will be on the European Athletics website.

Additional education activities to support European Athletics' Member Federations are staged throughout the year by the IAAF's Regional Development Centre in Moscow.



# Armenia leaps against adversity

**Twenty years ago a 22-year-old Soviet long jumper, Robert Emmiyan, had a very good year.**

He took top honours at the European Cup in Prague and won a World Championship silver medal in Rome. However, his best jump that year was a massive 8.86m leap in Tsakhadzor, in his native Armenia, which landed him in the history books with a European record that stands to this day.

That 8.86m has done a great deal more than fill a line in the statistics books. It made Emmiyan the single most successful athlete in Armenian history; a national hero in a country now independent and desperately in need of positive role models. It also fixed the long jump as "the event" in the minds of all Armenians.

Enter the Armenian Athletic Federation's tireless President Sargis Khachatryan. Building on the tradition established by that jump, Khachatryan and his dedicated federation colleagues have created "The Robert Emmiyan Cup", the country's showcase athletics competition, which marked its sixth edition in Gyumri City in September.

This festival of long jumping, draws Armenia's best jumpers as well as top competitors from the likes of the Czech Republic, Germany, Georgia, Israel, Iran, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. In a region where facilities and equipment that clubs in wealthier countries would take for granted hardly exist, there is a magical feeling about the event.

The runway and landing pit are lined on both sides with spectators in temporary grandstands and decorated with flowers. Dignitaries are welcomed to the opening ceremony according to strict protocol. A brass band plays. The male officials wear jackets and ties. And in the evening there is a banquet for everyone involved.

Part of the magic is Emmiyan himself. Now working as a coach based in Qatar, he regularly returns to his homeland as the guest of honour at the event bearing his name. His presence attracts the national media, raising the profile of the sport, and inspires the legions of school children taking part in age group competitions alongside the senior stars.



Robert Emmiyan

This year's Cup produced top quality performances, even if Emmiyan's record remained safely intact. The men's competition was won by Alexander Yashin (RUS) with 7.74m ahead of Mohammad Arzandeh (IRN) 7.71m and Jochai Halevi (ISR) 7.62m. The women's competition, added for the first time in 2006 with a grant from European Athletics, went to Natalia Lebusova (RUS) who jumped 6.80m ahead of Oxana Zhukovskaya (RUS) 6.77m and Anna Bogdanova (RUS) 6.46m.

For Khachatryan and his team, the Cup is the focus of their efforts to develop the sport and an inspiration for other federations facing difficult conditions.

A stadium with proper synthetic track or a full programme international meeting are far off dreams for now. But with the best resource they have, that one jump, together with vision, team spirit and hard work they are keeping the sport alive and, if you will, creating a take-off board for the future.



Robert Emmiyan today, (2nd on the left) with representatives from European Athletics and the Armenian Athletic Federation including President Sargis Khachatryan (2nd on the right).

For all the answers and lots more facts about your favourite athletes, check out the European Athletic 5-minute Interviews in the Fan Zone of our website.



# Director General, Christian Milz in the Hot Seat

**Kirsty Anderson, newly appointed Communication Co-ordinator for European Athletics, talks to Director General, Christian Milz, about the busy year that has passed and the exciting new future for European Athletics.**

**2007 has been a really busy year for our sport from both an events and administrative perspective. What would you say have been some of the highlights?**

I think 2007 has been a milestone year with many highlights that demonstrate that European Athletics and its Member Federations are ready to embrace the challenges necessary to take athletics into the 21st Century.

2007 saw two outstanding European events starting with the Indoor Championships in Birmingham in March. This event rose to the challenge of building on the successful integration of elite sport with the public of the host city that we saw in Gothenburg; ensuring this was not just a city with a Championship, but a Championship City.

Birmingham delivered this whilst also achieving some of the highest TV and audience figures that we have seen for an

Indoor Championship in recent years. This trend was repeated in Munich, in June, when almost 30,000 spectators enjoyed two days of nail biting SPAR European Cup action inside the city's historic Olympic Stadium.

This encouraging interest in our sport can also be seen in the sizeable increase in traffic on our website, where our daily hits have more than quadrupled in the past 12 months and thousands of fans and media representatives are now actively interacting with features like our 'Athlete of the Month' polls.

Another highlight was the introduction of the Waterford Crystal European Athletics Rising Star Awards, and the attendance of all four high profile athletes at this year's Awards Ceremony at the Calendar Conference in Malta.

The IAAF World Championships in Osaka saw many impressive European performances, despite difficult hot and

humid weather conditions, and off the track, a near unanimous European vote saw our target of nine European representatives being voted onto the IAAF Council.

Following our President's discussions with most of these new members, I am delighted to say that we are keen to foster positive working relationships for the ultimate benefit of our sport in the future.

However, my personal highlight of this year would have to be the European Athletics Congress in Cannes, where we elected a new Council and two new Vice Presidents, who have brought a new, fresh and motivated direction to European Athletics. However, I was delighted that at the highest level of our organisation, two stable and crucial figures remain – our President Hansjorg Wirz and Treasurer Karel Pilny – both of whom were elected to remain by an overwhelming vote of confidence.

Cannes saw our Congress make crucial decisions on a number of new initiatives to develop our sport and ensure its relevance in the 21st century; dynamic changes to competition formats, a focus change from a purely events driven elite athletics organisation, to an accessible governing body interested in promoting athletics for all, and of course there was the groundbreaking anti-doping legislation that was approved by Congress and then adopted by other sporting organisations around the globe – hitting home the message that Europe will not tolerate drugs in any form in our sport.

This, for me, was the realisation of all the hopes and objectives presented in the 2005 European Athletics 'Need for Change' document, an excellent piece of work initiated by our former Council. I find it hugely encouraging that we are an organisation that can recognise our problems and move swiftly and efficiently to execute change.

**The Congress and then the Council Meeting at the Calendar Conference in Malta has brought about some big announcements that could change the face of athletics in Europe. Can you tell us a bit more about the thinking behind the new European Athletics Championship structure and the European Athletics Team Championships?**

First of all let us be clear, these changes are revolutionary, but at their heart is not a wish to change 'athletics' it is a wish to change how we present athletics.

**“2007 has been a milestone year”**



The Director General was put through his paces by future Cross Country stars, Alexandre and Julien Milz.



Fair play, honesty, accessibility and great fun; Athletics your sport for life!

We have to change our competition structure and our calendar in Europe to make them more meaningful, easier to understand and most importantly – more exciting!

By holding European Athletics Championships on every even year we will create more visibility and awareness of our sport, which means more exposure for our athletes, better television for European broadcasters and audiences, and more stars to inspire the athletes of the future!

The re-branding of the European Cup into the European Athletics Team Championships is much more than just a name change. The entire competition format is changing to a team focused event that better meets the TV requirements with a simpler, more gripping product.

The programme will contain the same 21 men and women's events, but the competitors will be part of a league system, with 12 teams in the Super League, 12 in the First League, and 8 in the Second League, with any remaining teams competing in the Third League.

This system creates an easy means of ranking Member Federations, and adds an additional challenge to nations to strive for promotion, and avoid relegation between Leagues.

We truly believe that these changes will bring a new dynamism and simplicity to our sport, but we are under no illusion that a great deal of work must be done between now and 2009 and 2012 to get these changes working well for everyone.

**These competition format changes and this year's groundbreaking drug's ban policy have helped position European Athletics as a forward thinking and World leading governing body in sport. What new developments can we expect in 2008?**

Well 2008 is already shaping up to be a very busy year. Now that the initial research has been done, and the decisions made, the hard work really starts. The coming year will be a period of planning, testing, experiencing and listening to the valued feedback of all our stakeholders.

However that is not to say we are taking a back seat on the development front! There are three key areas we will be pushing very hard in 2008:

- The development of a new brand and communication strategy that will ensure that our communication within the European Athletics family and beyond is as effective as possible.
- Developing the European Athletics brand to be more inclusive

and appealing to a wider variety of audiences, but with a particular focus on young people and women.

- Continue our trailblazing work in the field of anti-doping legislation and education.

Athletics is **the** original sport, universally enjoyed on both a spectator and participation level across Europe. We know that its events and facilities can bring huge economic benefits to communities. We know that Athletics is one of the 'Greenest' sports around. We know it has the power to change lives for the better by encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and social interaction, by developing character and giving people from all walks of life the opportunity to challenge themselves and take on responsibility. We know that fun exercise for young people, is the best possible weapon for fighting the growing obesity epidemic brought on by the games console generation of children with totally sedentary lifestyles.

We know all this, but in 2008, we want to let everyone else know this! There is absolutely no point in developing one of the most exciting, socially enhancing sport activities, if only an elite few know enough about it to enjoy it, so that is why European Athletics will be trying very hard in 2008, and beyond, to make athletics as attractive, accessible and transparent as possible.

**Finally Christian, you became a father for the third time this year, what do you think today's children can look forward to enjoying from athletics in the future?**

My main reason for wanting to work in athletics was because it was the sport that placed fair play and honesty above all else, it was the sport that was accessible to everyone, and at the root of all other sports. My dream for my children, and for the rest of their generation, is that they will grow up still believing these ideals.

Roger Federer, Thierry Henry, Axel Lund Svindal, Laure Manaudou; all these sporting heroes are athletes, and it is these core athletic skills of running, jumping and throwing that have created all our sport stars, and entertained and amazed us for generations.

I think that the changes we are making now will create a cleaner, more appealing, environmentally friendly, accessible sport. Athletics is a 'Sport for Life', and I hope that my children will enjoy the social, educational and healthy-lifestyle benefits that we all know that athletics, even in its simplest form, can provide.

# An Executive Christmas Wish List...



**Hansjörg Wirz (SUI) President**

- ★ I wish that our sport will continue to bring pleasure to an increasing number of people.
- ★ I wish all our Member Federations a successful Olympic year and hope that they reach their goals.
- ★ I would like to thank everybody for their great work and wish in the coming year we can count on this valuable support and pleasant team work.

*"Ich wünsche allne ä schöni Wiehnacht und en guete Rutsch is neue Jahr!"*

**Have you ever wondered what the most powerful figures in European Athletics wish for at Christmas? The latest Games Console? An All-action Barbie? Chocolate? Socks? We took an exclusive peak at European Athletics Executive Committee's letters to Santa, and this is what we found...**

**Svein Arne Hansen (NOR)  
Vice President**

- ★ I wish that European athletes are very successful in the upcoming Olympics in Beijing and that athletics continues as the number one Olympic sport.
- ★ I wish that more children and young people come to enjoy our great sport successfully.
- ★ I wish that athletics continues its strong fight against doping cheats.

*"God Jul"*



### **Karel Pilný (CZE) Treasurer**

★ I wish for European athletes to win more than 50% of the medals at the Olympic Games in Beijing, with the tough competition from China, the USA, Africa and all the rest of the world this will not be an easy wish!

★ I wish for every European federation to hold at least one athletics meeting organised on a trial basis which introduces many rule changes to make athletics more attractive for youngsters.

★ I wish that by the end of 2008 we will meet again, each of us in good health, to celebrate the New Year 2009!

*"Příjemné svátky  
Vánoční, šťastný a  
veselý Nový rok  
2008!"*



### **Christian Milz (SUI) Director General**

★ I wish that we can successfully implement the dynamic changes to competition formats, doping regulations, and our work in promoting athletics for life, so that stakeholders and fans can embrace, rather than fear, change.

★ I wish for young people all over Europe to have the opportunity to recognise, enjoy, and be part of our great sport.

★ I wish that I will have the same dedicated and passionate staff to work with me in 2008, guaranteeing quality team work from a group of people committed to making athletics stronger.

*"Joyeux Noël et au plaisir de vous revoir sur  
et au bord des stades d'athlétisme en 2008"*

### **Jose Luis De Carlos (ESP) 1st Vice President**

★ I wish that 2008 can bring to all the European members their athletics wishes and goals

★ I wish that in Beijing, Europe will increase the number of medals and athletes in finals from the previous Olympic Games

★ I wish that we, European Athletics, are able to make the various athletics movements understand we have a need for change, and that they give us the support and willingness to do it.

*"Feliz Navidad y que  
la paz" impere  
en nuestros  
espíritus*



# Report from the Country

## Preview of the SPAR European Athletics Cross Country Championships, Toro by Phil Minshull

Nearly 500 runners from 30 countries are expected to contest the 14th SPAR European Cross Country Championships, which will be hosted by the Spanish city of Toro on December 9.

Spain won medals at the very first SPAR



European Cross Country Championships in 1994 and it will be aiming for an equally positive outcome when it makes its debut as a host for nearly 500 runners from 30 countries on December 9.

"It's a great honour for this city to host the most important competition of the year in Europe in Cross Country running. We are confident that all local institutions will contribute to the success of the Championships," said Toro mayor Jesús Andrés Sedano recently.

"Our country has the best calendar in the world in these kinds of events, and a long tradition, which has finally received the reward with the celebration of these Championships. Toro was designated as the venue because of its magnificent course, Monte La Reina, which will provide a great backdrop to this year's competition," added the Spanish athletics federation president José María Odriozola.

The Monte La Reina circuit, which is around 11km from the city itself, is a flat parkland course which will delight runners with track speed and skills, especially as the long-range forecast is for dry weather, but it is also in an area of natural beauty surrounded by wooded areas.

The event will be a showcase not just



Spain will be looking for success in front of a home crowd in Toro.

for the city and the surrounding province of Zamora (areas best known for their beautiful wine), but also for European distance running right the way across the age range.

In the sad absence of Britain's reigning senior men's champion Mo Farah, owing to a recent groin injury, the spotlight will once again fall on the ever-green Ukrainian Sergiy Lebid who was the champion for five consecutive years before Farah ended his streak in San Giorgio su Legnano 12 months ago.

"I'm very determined to regain my title and have been training very hard since the start of October to get ready for these Championships," said Lebid recently.

"Last year in Italy, Farah ran extremely well and was a worthy winner but I suffered from stomach problems and was not able to give a good account of myself so I want to show people that I'm still a force to be reckoned on the European stage.

"I have a great deal of affection for the event as I'm the only man to have run in all 13 of the previous Championships and I want to keep that streak going as long as possible," he added.

There could be an unprecedented double if Lebid's compatriot Tetyana Holovchenko can retain the title she won last year. No country has ever taken both the individual senior men's and women's crowns at the same Championships.

Holovchenko improved her personal best times on the track for 5,000m and 10,000m during the summer and so will come to Toro in a confident frame of mind.

Looking to challenge the runners in the senior races will inevitably be members of the traditionally strong French, Spanish and Portuguese teams, as well as, in the case of the women especially, the Russians.

Hungary's Barnabas Bene has proved himself to be an unbeatable force at the Championships in recent years, taking the junior title in 2004 and 2005 before moving up to claim the Under-23 gold medal last year, but France's Nouredine Smail and Russia's Anatoliy Rybakov won the European Under-23 titles over 5,000m and 10,000m respectively on the track in the summer and could upset Bene's ambitions for a fourth successive win.

The women's Under-23 race on paper looks to be wide open but perhaps one particular woman to look out for is The Netherlands' Susan Kuijken, if she decides to cross the Atlantic after finishing third in the high-class American collegiate Cross Country Championships earlier this month.

The junior races could also see triumphs from runners already well acquainted with winning.

Dymtro Lashyn finished sixth in the junior men's race last year but the young Ukrainian looked to have moved up a level when he was an impressive winner of the 2007 European Athletics Junior Championships 10,000m title and will start as the clear favourite to acquire his second gold medal this year.

Another talented teenager is Britain's Stephanie Twell, who won the 2006 European Junior Cross Country gold medal. She is still only 18 but Norway's Karoline Bjerkeli Grovdal, the silver medallist behind Twell in San Giorgio su Legnano and the European Athletics Junior Championships 3,000m Steeplechase winner last summer, is even younger by nearly a year and their rivalry could extend beyond Toro to 2008, when the SPAR European Cross Country Championships will be staged in the Belgian coastal town of Oostende.



The Monte La Reina circuit is great for runners with track and speed skills.