

# Track and Field



*Grete Waitz-Andersen*



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## Grete Waitz-Andersen

### *Revenge at Dusseldorf*

The Norwegian girl Grete Waitz-Anderson almost abandoned athletics completely after her defeat in the women's 1,500 m semi-final of the Montreal Olympic Games. With these Games in mind, she had trained as never before. Her elimination in the semi-final earned her severe criticism from her country's press. However, her time of 4 min 04.8 sec constituted a new Norwegian record and it was better than the 4 min 05.5 sec which was to give the Russian Tatiana Kazankina victory in the final.

Grete Waitz-Anderson, a teacher in Oslo, had been the object of high hopes before the Olympics, as she had dropped the 3,000 m world record to 8 min 46.6 sec. But this distance was not to figure in the Olympic program. The 1,500 m proved to be too short for her.

It was, however, over the 3,000 m that she would take her revenge, at the time of the First World Cup meeting in Dusseldorf in 1977, where she dared to beat the Russian Ludmilla Bragina, who had smashed her world record for the distance in 1976 (8 min 27.1 sec). If the World Cup had gone her way, the same did not apply in the 1978 European

Championships in Prague. Having led almost from start to finish in the 3,000 m, she had to yield before the astonishing Russian Svetlana Ulmassova and before the Rumanian Natalia Marasescu.

Grete took up athletics on the advice of a neighbor, Terje Pedersen, who was none other than the first javelin thrower to have exceeded 90 m. Having seen the girl running for her amusement in the stadium where he was coaching, he persuaded her to join his athletic club. His judgment was proved right. In June 1975 his pupil broke her first world record.

#### GRETE WAITZ-ANDERSEN

Born Oct. 1, 1953, in Oslo, Norway

#### AWARDS AND RECORDS

Gold medal for the 3,000 m in the World Cup in Dusseldorf in 1977

1974 ECH: bronze medal in 1,500 m

1978 ECH: bronze medal in 1,500 m

World records:

3,000 m in 8 min 46.6 sec (1975), then in 8 min 45.4 sec (1976); in 1978 she ran the distance in 8 min 32.1 sec, a time considered as a world record, given that Ludmilla Bragina's performance (8 min 27.1 sec in 1976) had not yet been officially confirmed

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*Grete Waitz-Anderson after her victory in the 3,000 m of the 1977 World Cup in Dusseldorf*