

Track and Field



Guido Kratschmer



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New World Record Holder

Having begun with the 110-m hurdles at the age of 14, an event in which he became the national junior champion and then the West German champion in 1978 (13.90 sec), Guido Kratschmer of West Germany broke two famous records in the decathlon in the space of two years. Firstly, in 1976 he raised from 8,319 points to 8,381 the German record total which had been set nine years earlier by Kurt Bendlin, whose performance had in its time constituted a world record. Then in 1978, with 8,498 points, he improved the European record set by Nicolai Avilov (8,454 points), whose achievement had enabled him to become the Olympic champion in Munich as well as establishing a new world record. In the meantime Guido, who considered himself weak in the shot and in the discus, had put on 16 lb (7 kg) of muscle.

It was in 1974 that this giant from Mainz, who resembles Bendlin in some respects, recorded more than 8,000 points for the first time, which figure denotes an international standard. In that year he won the bronze medal at the Rome European Championships with a total of 8,132 points. He was very strong in the first five events (100 m, long jump, shot,

high jump and 400 m), but was to do even better in 1976 at the Montreal Olympic Games. He was well ahead at the end of the first day (4,333 points, against Avilov's 4,315 and the American Bruce Jenner's 4,298) and in fact finished second, improving his personal best from 8,381 to 8,411 points. At that time he considered giving up competing, since the rigorous training program which he had followed for a long time (three sessions, totalling four hours, daily) had begun to be a burden. It was fortunate that he decided to carry on, since he was to become world record holder in June 1980 with a total of 8,649 points, beating the record of 8,622 points established by Daley Thompson some weeks ago.

GUIDO KRATSCHEMER

Born on Jan. 10, 1953, in Grosssheubach, Bavaria, West Germany

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1976 OG: silver medal, 8,411 points
1974 ECH: bronze medal, 8,132 points
World record: 8,649 points set on June 13-14, 1980, in Bernhausen (W. Germany): 100 m: 10.58 sec; long jump: 7.80 m; shot put: 15.47 m; high jump: 2 m; 400 m: 48.04 sec; 110-m hurdles: 13.92 sec; discus: 45.52 m; pole vault: 4.60 m; javelin: 66.50; 1500 m: 4:24.15

Guido Kratschmer: eliminated in the first event, due to an injury, at the 1978 ECH in Prague