

Track and Field



Jean-Claude Nallet



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Almost Every Talent

The son of a railway-worker in a large ironworks center in France, Jean-Claude Nallet was a man of so many talents that it took a long time for him to choose which to pursue. Very small in size, he could already clear 5'10" in the high jump, excelled in the long jump and was not bad in the discus throwing and javelin. He also jumped hurdles quite happily and could have been a talented basketball player when, at the age of 17, he ran a 250 m in 27.7. sec. From then on, the choice seemed to be in favor of the 400 m. And in fact, having obtained the bronze medal in the 200 m at the European Championships in Budapest, he did devote himself to this distance, and in 1968 beat the old French record (45.7 sec as against 45.9 sec in 1960). However, as he was not sufficiently fast or strong to play the top world roles, he tended towards the 400 m hurdles. His success was immediate: at the France-United States match held at Colombes in 1970, he beat the American Ralph Mann in 48.6 sec (beating the national record by 1.71 sec).

He became European Champion the following year, but serious artery trouble hindered his performances in 1972 and prevented him from competing in 1973.

The great hope of French athletics then seemed lost for ever. However, beginning a deserving comeback, he added a silver medal to his impressive European collection, in 1974, in Rome. The Montreal Olympics were, however, to perpetuate his reputation as a psychologically delicate athlete.

JEAN-CLAUDE NALLET

Born on March 15, 1947, at Champdor, France

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1976 OG: 5th in his semi-final of the 400 m hurdles in 50.08

1966 ECH: bronze medal in the 200 m in 21'

1969 ECH: silver medal in the 400 m in 45.8

gold medal in the 4 x 400 m in 3 : 02.3, with Bertouid, Nicolau and Carette

1971 ECH: gold medal in the 400 m hurdles in 49.2

1974 ECH: silver medal in the 400 m hurdles in 48.94

Personal records: 10.4 in the 100 m, 20.6 in the 200 m, 45.1 in the 400 m, 48.6 in the 400 m hurdles

Jean-Claude Nallet: an impressive physique but delicate nerves