

Track and Field



Karl Hans Riehm



Track and Field



Karl Hans Riehm

The Second Man to Throw Farther than 80 m

After the Russian Boris Zaichuk, the West German Karl Hans Riehm became in 1978 the second man to throw the hammer farther than 80 m. He achieved this at his second attempt, after having just completed a week's course in the Black Forest. It had taken him twelve years to reach this point, since he started hammer-throwing in 1966 when he was 15, at that time sending a 5-kg ball a distance of 36.44 m. However, Riehm had already hit the athletics headlines in 1975, at a competition where he threw further than the previous world record (76.66 m) six times. This did not prevent him being defeated at the Montreal Olympics, where he could only manage to come fourth, behind three Russians. And yet Riehm was doing his military service that year and had all the time he needed for training.

This is no longer the case today. An architect/decorator in his home town of Konz, near Treves, he has in addition to look after the family carpentry business. So he cannot allow himself to be distracted if he is to keep to his training program: two hours' throwing a day, plus two hours of general fitness training. The

hammer-throwing circle which he has installed only a few steps away from his home is therefore a great help to him. Relatively small and light for a hammer-thrower, Riehm has come to the top of world athletics by perfecting a style which has won the admiration of all the experts. His great strength is his dynamism in the ring. And also his determination to win. His weakness is his muscular frailty. He suffers frequently from back pain, and he had to have an operation at the end of 1973. On that occasion he had trouble too with his knee tendons. This hindered his progress in 1974. But he has made up for lost time in fine fashion since.

KARL HANS RIEHM

Born May 31, 1951, in Konz, West Germany

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1972 OG: 10th with 70.12 m

1976 OG: 4th with 75.46 m

1978 ECH: 3rd with 77.02 m

World records:

78.50 m on 19 May 1975 at Rehlingen

80.32 m on 6 Aug. 1978 at Heidenheim

Karl Hans Riehm: he is not a man who rises to great occasions