

Track and Field



Peter Frenkel



Track and Field



Peter Frenkel

A Record-chaser

From 1970, this stylish walker from Potsdam specialized in pursuing track records. Alas, he was rapidly to see his world record times improved upon by the West German Bernhard Kanenberg and his fellow East German Karl Hans Stadtmuller. By 1 January 1976, all that was left to him was the 7-mile record (47 min 49 sec).

It was only rather late in the day that he took to competitive walking, on the advice of one of his club friends, Hans Joachim Kustak. Peter Frenkel then made Dieter Lindner (silver medal in the 1964 Olympics) his idol.

Rewarded for his perseverance, Peter Frenkel went to Munich for the 1972 Olympic Games to discover in himself the heart of a great champion. In the last few kilometers, he attacked the Russian Vladimir Golubnichi, to finish with a lead of 12.08 sec, beating the Olympic 20-km record (1 hr 26 min 42.4 sec) at the same time. At Montreal in 1976, he was prominent among the veteran-athletes in the only walking event in the games, and showed again his tactical sense. He led up to the half-way mark, several meters

clear of the Mexican Daniel Bautista, but he then fell back to third place, and witnessed the fall of his last record. It was strange that this pupil of Hans Joachim Pathus never won a European Championship title. A citizen of Potsdam, where his profession was that of a designer and decorator, Peter Frenkel did however, reach that 1972 peak in his career despite a handicap he suffered for several seasons (pain from his Achilles' tendon) in his early days as a runner. After an eclipse in 1973, the East German came to the fore in 1974 when he beat the world 30-km record, which he held for only one month before it was snatched from him by his compatriot Hans Karl Stadtmuller.

PETER FRENKEL

Born May 13, 1939, at Eckartsberga, East Germany

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1972 OG: gold medal in the 20 km walk
1976 OG: bronze medal in the 40 km walk
World records: 20-km walk in 1 hr 25 min 50 sec
on 4 July, 1970 at Erfurt
2 hours track record with 26.658 km (16 miles
993 yds) on 11 April, 1971 at Berlin

Peter Frenkel behind the Greek Varagiorgos (51) and the Russian Golubnichi (831)