

# Track and Field



*Renate Stecher*



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## Renate Stecher

### *A Kind of Perfection*

Little is known of the life of Renate Stecher. 'My private life is my own', she used to say when she was very famous. If people insisted, this young woman who seemed like a hurricane on the track and who became very shy outside the stadium would then add: 'If you want to know more about me, look at my honors list'. And in fact the figures spoke for themselves.

However, one result will always be remembered: on 20 July 1973 in Dresden, Renate Stecher became the first woman athlete to run the 100 m in less than 11 seconds (10.8).

She made her debut in 1964, at the age of 14 (12.7 secs in the 100 m). She did not think herself particularly gifted but loved sport with a real passion. Her dedication allowed her to win three silver medals at the Leipzig junior European Championships in 1968. She went abroad for the first time in 1969 to the Athens European Championships. Since Karin Blazer was injured, she was made to stay for the 4 x 100 m relay and also to run the 200 m. She won gold and silver respectively. From that time onwards she worked with a

will under the guidance of the trainer Horst Hille. She was then still called Meissner, and did her body-building exercises reluctantly. Her fiancé made her go for long walks on snowshoes in the snow and this was excellent training for sprints.

#### RENATE STECHER

Born May 12, 1950, in Suptitz, East Germany

#### AWARDS AND RECORDS

- 1972 OG: gold medal in the 100 m in 11.07  
gold medal in the 200 m in 22.40  
silver medal in the 4 x 100 m relay (last leg) in 42.95 (with E. Käufer, C. Heinich and B. Stuppert)
- 1976 OG: silver medal in the 100 m in 11.13  
bronze medal in the 200 m in 22.47  
gold medal in the 4 x 100 m relay (second leg) in 42.55 (with M. Ölsner, C. Bodendorf and B. Eckert)
- 1969 ECH: silver medal in the 200 m in 23.3  
gold medal in the 4 x 100 m in 43.6
- 1971 ECH: gold medal in the 100 m in 11.4  
gold medal in the 200 m in 22.7  
silver medal in the 4 x 100 m in 43.6
- 1974 ECH: gold medal in the 100 m in 11.23  
silver medal in the 200 m in 22.68  
gold medal in the 4 x 100 m relay in 42.51

#### World records:

10.8 in the 100 m on 20 July 1973 in Dresden  
22.1 in the 200 m on 21 July 1973 in Dresden  
42.50 in the 4 x 100 m (second leg) on 29 May 1976 in Karl-Marx-Stadt (with M. Ölsner, C. Bodendorf and M. Bloss)