

Track and Field



Ricky Bruch



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An Eccentric Discus-thrower

Capable of squat-lifting 885 pounds which is an exercise involving bending the legs with a bar on the shoulders, Ricky Bruch of Sweden is indubitably the strongest thrower in the world. He is also the most eccentric. You can find him dressed up in drag at a cabaret or strolling on the stadium turf wearing a bowler hat. Though not particularly renowned for his good taste, this athlete loves making an exhibition of himself. Can one suspect him of taking anabolic substances? He loudly and vehemently denies that he does. In 1967, he suddenly returned from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque because, he said, the Americans did not feed him enough. He showed his defiance of the American discus-thrower Jay Silvester by challenging him to hurl three trunks. In short, Ricky Bruch is shunned by officials and adored by the crowds.

This perpetual fantasy does not however prevent him from training rigorously: four hours a day in two daily sessions. In this way, and perhaps by using less orthodox measures, his weight has jumped from 198 to 290 lb

between 1965 and 1971. As for the amazing performances which he has often achieved at Malmö, he has had throwing circles set up in the four corners of the stadium so as to benefit from the wind, taking the trouble before each attempt to beat the world record to telephone Copenhagen Airport to find out the direction and force of the wind. It was worth it to him to be the first man to throw beyond 70 m, on 17 April 1971, a feat which was not recorded because his discus did not quite weigh the regulation 2 kg. Unfortunately, in major international events, his performances have never done him justice.

RICKY BRUCH

Born July 2, 1946, in Malmö, Sweden

AWARDS AND RECORDS

1968 OG: 8th in throwing the discus with 59.28 m

1972 OG: bronze medal with 63.40 m

World Cup 1969: silver medal

World Cup 1972: bronze medal

European Cup 1969: silver medal with 61.08 m

European Cup 1974: bronze medal with 62 m

World records:

68.40 m on July 5, 1972, in Stockholm

68.58 m on Sept. 10, 1972, in Malmö