

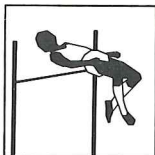
Track and Field



Victor Saneev



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A Long-lived Fame

At the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games' the Russian Victor Saneev won his third consecutive olympic triple jump title. Only the American Al Oerter, four-times olympic discus champion in 1956, 1960, 1964 and 1968, has bettered this record run. You have to go a long way back to find a series of wins to match Saneev's. It was done by the American John Flanagan, who took the hammer gold medal in 1900, 1904 and 1908. Victor Saneev is regarded as some kind of a phenomenon by the specialists in sporting medicine who follow him: "To have withstood the strain of so many triple jumps, his ankles must be made of iron!"

He is a magnificent athlete, weighing 81 kg and 1.88 m tall, and his technique must, obviously, be flawless. No other jumper in the world can boast of having so often passed the 17 m mark.

From the time of his first international win, in 1967 in the European Cup at Kiev, he has only been beaten twice in a major competition. In 1971 in Helsinki and in 1978 in Prague, he had to settle for 2nd place in the European Championships. But Saneev's best jump of the season 1971 was 17.29 m

and no-one was going to do better that year.

The world record which he set on 17 October 1972 at Soukhoumi in the USSR with 17.44 m, was taken off him in 1975 by the Brazilian Joao de Oliveira, who jumped 17.89 m at the Mexico Olympic Games. At these Games, the world record was broken 5 times in less than 2 hours; it was one of the most memorable finals of the Games, and the explanation for this sequence must surely lie in the Mexico altitude. A year later in Montreal, Saneev settled the argument about who was the better when he won his third olympic title, while de Oliveira could only manage the bronze medal. When you talk to him about the world record, Saneev will not say more than: "If that record is going to go, it will have to happen at altitude."

VICTOR SANEEV

Born Oct. 3, 1945, in Soukhoumi, USSR

AWARDS AND RECORDS

OG: gold medal, 1968, 1972, 1976

European Champion 1969, 1974

Has beaten the world record three times: 1968: 17.23 m, 17.39 m; 1972: 17.44 m

At the Mexico OG, he twice beat his world record; Montreal OG gave him this third gold medal