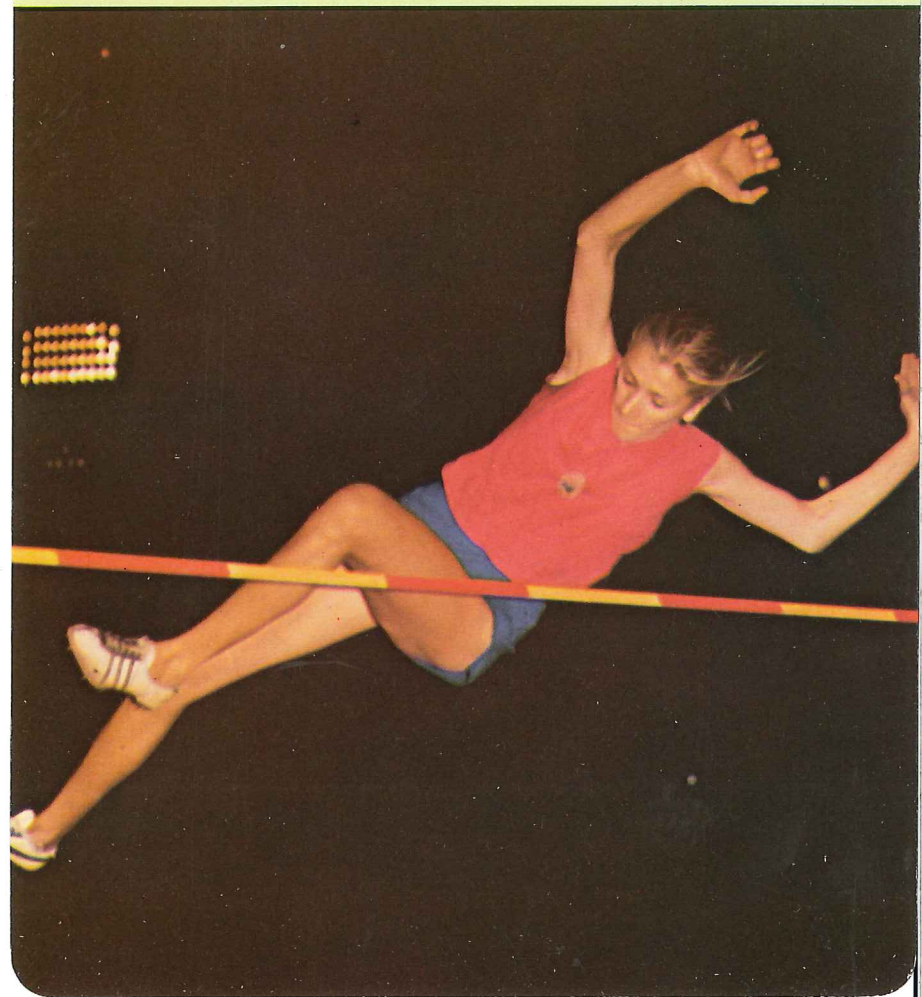


Track and Field



Yolanda Balas



Track and Field



Yolanda Balas

Long-Legged Yolanda

Twice olympic high jump champion, the blond Romanian Yolanda Balas contributed, more than any other athlete, to the development of her specialty. Even if her jumping was not the most stylish (turning face down round the bar), she was extraordinarily supple and had a "made-to-measure" physique with her legs accounting for 1 meter of her 1,86 meters height.

Born on 12 December 1936 in Timisoara, Romania, "Joly" eventually married the man who had been her mentor throughout her sporting career, trainer Ion Soeter. Before she gave up the high jump in 1966 after an injury to her leading leg, she was 16 times Romanian champion, twice olympic champion (1960 and 1964), twice European champion (1958 and 1962), 4 times world student champion and twice winner at the Balkan Games.

In the space of five years she was never defeated in international competition, and she improved her world record 14 times, first on 14 July 1956 in Bucharest with 1,75 m, and the last time on 16 July 1961 in Sofia with 1,91 m.

Yolanda Balas was discovered when she was 12 years old, at a school meeting in Timisoara. Three years later she took her first national title. Having studied psychology, she is now a physical education teacher in Bucharest.

YOLANDA BALAS

Born Dec. 12, 1936 in Timisoara (RUM)

AWARDS AND RECORDS

Her world records:

- 1,75 m, July 14, 1956, in Bucharest
- 1,76 m, Oct. 13, 1957, in Bucharest
- 1,78 m, June 7, 1958, in Bucharest
- 1,80 m, June 22, 1958, in Cluj
- 1,81 m, July 31, 1958, in Poiana Stalin
- 1,82 m, Oct. 4, 1958, in Bucharest
- 1,83 m, Oct. 18, 1958, in Bucharest
- 1,84 m, Sep. 21, 1959, in Bucharest
- 1,85 m, June 6, 1960, in Bucharest
- 1,86 m, July 10, 1960, in Rome
- 1,87 m, Apr. 15, 1961, in Bucharest
- 1,88 m, June 18, 1961, in Warsaw
- 1,90 m, July 8, 1961, in Budapest
- 1,91 m, July 16, 1961, in Sofia

At the Rome OG, in July 1960, she cleared her own height: 1.86 m (6'2")