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Regina Jacobs running in her World 1500m record race in Boston (Victah Sailer)

World indoor 1500m record in Boston!

Sunday 2 February 2003

Boston, USA - American Regina Jacobs set a women's World indoor 1500m record of 3:59.98 at the adidas Boston Indoor Games last night (1 February), turning the US Indoor season's traditional opening fixture into a truly great spectacle.

39 year-old Jacobs bettered the previous 13 year-old 4:00.27 world mark of Romania's Doina Melinte by 0.29 of a second, to become the first women to run an indoor sub 4 minute time at 1500m!

If that wasn't enough for one night, Stacy Dragila leapt back into record mode with a marvellous national women's Pole Vault record of 4.71m.

The packed 11 women 1500m field were split on the start line into two groups to prevent collisions, and as the gun fired, Jacobs immediately took the lead. She looked at her watch after 100m to check the pace and then passed 400m (62.3) - having already established a gap to her nearest competitor - and then passed 800m in 2:06.2.

After six laps (2:38.8 at 1000m) Jacobs was still pushing the pace and the audience was screaming and clapping, creating a thrilling

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atmosphere in the Reggie Lewis Centre, which had attracted a sell-out crowd (4000+).

Jacobs passed 1200m in 3:12.0, and now it was really just her against the watch. She certainly appeared to be keeping up the pace in the last 300m, and that was verified when the 'rolling clock' stopped at 4:00.00.



Regina Jacobs
(USA)
(Getty Images)

With the stadium announcer telling the crowd to wait for the official time, seconds later the precise finishing time of 3:59.98 was confirmed. Romania's Elena Iagar finished second in 4:09.91.

Jacobs, who will celebrate her 40th birthday on 28 August, had finally broken the four minute barrier, a mark which she has been so close to so many times before outdoors. Her previous indoor best was 4:03.45 in New York in 2000.

Having been competing since 1977, Jacobs ran 4:00.46 as early as 1988, though her previous personal best at the distance outdoors was the 4:00.35 clocking she set when winning the World Championship silver medal in Seville in 1999. She also took the World outdoor silver medal in 1997, and was World Indoor 1500m Champion in 1995.

Last night, Jacobs' magic sub-4 mark improved Mary Slaney's 23 year old American record (4:00.8), and earned an additional \$25,000 from the meeting organizer for the World record.

"It feels pretty amazing! The hardest part was standing there, waiting to find out if I broke the World record," confirmed an elated Jacobs. "In 2000, I felt like I was in the best shape of my life, and I never knew if I'd get there again. I pushed and pushed, and now I'm back. I'm thrilled!"

"I had 16 weeks of the best training I've ever had. I knew it was possible to break the record, but you have to get up and hope the track gods are with you. Now, the trick is to keep running fast. I've always run fast here. The crowd is amazing, and it's a great track with soft curves."

In the women's Pole Vault, Stacy Dragila started with a vault of 4.31 metres, and took every height until 4.51 with her first attempt. 4.61 came with a second time clearance and then her new American record of 4.71, with her first effort! Then she tried three times at the World record height, 4.76, but was not very close with any of the attempts.

"I think my speed was doing it for me tonight. I was aggressive on the last two steps of my approach, which allowed me to be on a bigger pole," said Dragila. "It gave me a lot of confidence to come out here, knowing what I've been doing in training. This is where I want to be."

Jacobs and Dragila were of course top of the bill but away from this duo's spectacular night of performances, there was a lot else happening.

Maurice Greene won the 60m dash in 6.52, respectively 0.04 and 0.05 ahead of his two countrymen Jon Drummond, and reigning World Indoor Champion Tim Harden. Greene is definitely back, and his main goal for 2003 is the World Championships both indoors and outdoors.

"I'm getting the rust out. I think it was a pretty good race for being my first real competition of the year. I kind of scared myself at the start because I got out of the blocks so quickly, then I hesitated, so I had to pick it up in the middle. I was next to Jon Drummond and he's one of the best starters in the world. I couldn't believe I got out of the blocks like that," confirmed Greene.

Kenya's Bernard Lagat won the men's 1500m in 3:38.15, only 0.19 ahead of compatriot Laban Rotich. The US top middle distance runner of 2002, David Krummyacker, finished third in 3:39.04, and missed the US record by less than a second.

Darvis Patton (USA) won the 200m dash in 20.73, and in the 3000m, college man Alistair Cragg of Ireland surprisingly beat all the Africans to win by almost a second in a new collegiate record of 7:45.22. Olympic 1500 m gold medallist Noah Ngeny (KEN) finished second.

Savatheda Fynes from Bahamas won the women's 60m dash in 7.16, Jenny Adams (USA) the 60m Hurdles in 8.04, just 0.01 ahead of Melissa Morrison. While Ethiopian Meseret Defar took the 3000m in 8:57.22. Tonique Williams (Bahamas) won the women's 400 in 52.57, and Alice Schmidt the 800 in 2:05.75.

The USA Track & Field's 2003 Indoor Golden Spike Tour contains four meetings and next stop is the classic Verizon Millrose Games in New York City on 7 February.

(NB. Women's 1500m splits – unofficial)

Jonas Hedman for the IAAF

RESULTS

USA unless stated

MEN

60m

1. Maurice Greene 6.52
2. Jon Drummond 6.56
3. Tim Harden 6.57

200m

1. Darvis Patton 20.73
2. John Capel 20.91
3. Godfrey Herring 21.52

800m

1. Otukile Lekote (BOT) 1:48.07
2. Derrick Peterson 1:48.10
3. Daniel Caulfield (IRE) 1:48.62

1500m

1. Bernard Lagat (KEN) 3:38.15
2. Laban Rotich (KEN) 3:38.34
3. David Krummyacker 3:39.04

3000m

1. Alistair Cragg (IRE) 7:45.22
2. Noah Ngeny (KEN) 7:46.21
3. Markos Geneti (ETH) 7:4

WOMEN

60m

1. Savatheda Fynes (BAH) 7.16

2. Angela Williams 7.19
3. Chryste Gaines 7.27

400m

1. Tonique Williams (BAH) 52.57
2. Monique Hennagan 52.96
3. Lashinda Demus 53.06

800m

1. Alice Schmidt 2:05.75
2. Brigita Langerholc (SLO) 2:06.22
3. Chantee Earl 2:06.89

1500m

1. Regina Jacobs 3:59.98 (World indoor record)
2. Elena Iagar (ROM) 4:09.91
3. Jenelle Deatherage 4:12.75

3000m

1. Meseret Defar (ETH) 8:57.22
2. Sentayehu Ejigu (ETH) 8:57.88
3. Tirunesh Dibaba (ETH) 8:58.75

60m Hurdles

1. Jenny Adams 8.04
2. Melissa Morrison 8.05
3. Vonette Dixon (JAM) 8.07

Pole Vault

1. Stacy Dragila 4.71m
2. Vanessa Boslak (FRA) 4.41m
3. Melissa Mueller 4.31m

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