

World Championship in the same stadium. In the final race against each other, Andersen fell and van der Voort crossed the line first. But he agreed to skate again and this time Andersen prevailed. The Dutch coach and national federation were unsuccessful in their appeal against the organisers' decision. (BVH)



Faina Melnik (URS), *9 June 1945 in Bakota, Khmelnytskyi Oblast/UKR; †16 December 2016 in Moscow. A farmer's daughter, she took up athletics during her studies at the Institute of Physical Culture in Kiev. From 1968 she lived in Yerevan, Armenia, where she was coached by Kim Bukhantsev, himself an Olympian in discus from 1956 to 1964. In 1971 after four invalid throws she produced a world record 64.22 m in the last round to take European Championship gold.

Melnik set ten more world marks, finally extending the record to 70.50 m (1976). Her sequence as world record holder was only briefly interrupted by the Romanian Argentina Menis who threw 67.22 m thirteen days after finishing second to Melnik at the Munich Olympics.

Melnik was undefeated in competition for a three year period. She defended her European title in 1974 but was unexpectedly beaten into fourth place at the 1976 Olympics. In the fifth round she did achieve 68.60 m, which would have been enough for silver, but the throw was disallowed because she had started her turn twice contrary to the rules. At the 1980 Games her

53.76 m in the qualification round was not enough to reach the final.

From 1977 to 1979, she was married to the Bulgarian discus thrower Velko Velev. She subsequently worked as a coach and looked after the Olympic shot put champions Natalya Lisovskaya (1988) and Svetlana Krivelyova (1992). After studying medicine in the 1980s in Moscow she also worked as a doctor. (VK)

Heinz Ulzheimer (FRG), *27 December 1925 in Frankfurt-Höchst; †18 December 2016 in Bad Sooden-Allendorf. Rudolf Harbig, who on 12th August 1939 had run a world record over 400 m in 46.6 sec, thereafter visited Ulzheimer's school in Höchst, where he distributed signed cards. From then on he was Ulzheimer's hero, who began serious sport in 1944 – in that year, Harbig died on the Eastern Front.

Ulzheimer had to wait a long time before he could prove his running talent. The Germans were excluded from the 1948 Games. When they were permitted to start in 1952, the almost 27 year old suspected that these would be his only Games. And he knew how to take advantage of his chance: in the 800 m he came third in a personal best (1:49.7 min) behind Malvin Whitfield (USA) and Arthur Wint (JAM). After the Second World War this was the first German Olympic medal at Summer Games.

The Frankfurt car mechanic, who secured a second Olympic bronze in Helsinki in the 4x400 m relay, was subsequently invited to the indoor season in the USA. There he was the first foreigner to win over 1000 yards in Madison Square Garden. With a further bronze in the 4x400 m relay at the 1954 European Championships ended his sporting career.

He did his examination as motor vehicle service technician and opened a petrol station. In his last 15 years of employment he looked after the Frankfurt Sports Museum, which was closed when the stadium was rebuilt. (VK)

Muruse Yefter (ETH), *15 May 1944 in Awsaja, Province of Tigre; †23 December 2016 in Toronto, Ontario/CAN. Although only 1.61 metres tall, Yefter was a very great runner. Called up to the air force to Addis Abeba, he met his sporting hero Abebe Bikila, who was preparing for his third Olympic Games in 1968.

Yefter first drew attention to himself in an USA vs. Africa match in North Carolina. He won over 10,000 metres. At the 1972 Olympics in Munich he took bronze over the same distance behind the Finn Lasse Viren and Belgian Emiel Puttemans. He might well have been successful also over 5000 metres, but he arrived too late for his heat. An overzealous steward had prevented him from entering to the stadium.

Yefter missed the 1976 Olympic Games, when Ethiopia were one of 15 black African NOCs to boycott the Games. The following year he achieved the 5000 m/10,000 m double at the inaugural IAAF World Cup and repeated his success in 1979. The same year he also won 5000 and 10,000 m at the Soviet Spartakiade. The following year he returned to Moscow for the Olympics.

By now 36 and a captain in the army, he celebrated his greatest triumph with gold over 5000 and 10,000 m. His dream of ending his career in 1984 with an Olympic marathon victory remained unfulfilled. Ethiopia boycotted Los Angeles and also stayed away from the 1988 Games in Seoul.

The father of seven children, he moved to Canada in 1990 to work as a coach. He had always been known throughout the Western world as "Miruts Yifter" and nicknamed "Yifter the Shifter" because of his finishing speed. In fact he confirmed to the author in a long interview that the correct spelling should be Muruse Yefter. His handwritten confirmation is in the archive. (VK)

