

Duplantis sets another Diamond League record

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Havana, April 20 (JIT) -- Swedish pole vaulter Armand Duplantis set his eighth world record today by clearing 6.24 meters at the Xiamen athletics meeting in China, the first stop of the Diamond League 2024.

His first record in the Asian Giant was achieved with four jumps. "Mondo" started cleanly over 5.62 meters and in the same way he jumped over 5.82 and 6.00, as a preamble to another appointment with history.

Faithful to his tradition of surpassing himself in every competition, he asked to take the bar to a height that seemed unreachable, until this Saturday. Perfect technique marked by the execution of each movement

at the right moment, especially when he exceeded the height, preceded a descent to the mat with euphoria on his face.

In the last four years the Scandinavian prodigy has added seven centimeters to the world tops in the specialty. The progression began in the French town of Torun, when he surpassed the 6.16-meter mark then held by host Renuad Lavillenie by one centimeter.

Mondo's story increasingly resembles the legacy written in the 1980s by Ukraine's Sergey Bubka, when for 10 years he dominated the specialty at will, taking the world record from 5.84 to 6.14 meters.

"Exciting to start the season like this," said the Swede shortly after his most recent feat, just three months away from defending his reign at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

"He's becoming the true champion we all want him to be," commented American Sam Kendricks, his escort now with 5.82 meters. Third place went to host Bokai Huang with a leap of 5.72 meters.

In Xiamen there were other important moments, perhaps as previews of what could be expected of a season that will have Paris 2024 as its climax. One of them was American high jumper Shelby McEwen, who cleared 2.31 meters to set the record for the meeting and beat Qatar's Olympic champion Mutaz Essa Barshim in the process.

Host Lijian Gong also set a new record for the competition after taking her bullet to 19.72 meters. Dominican Marileidy Paulino (50.08) dominated the 400 meters and Puerto Rico's Jasmine Camacho-Quinn (12.45 seconds) the 100 meters hurdles, taking the top time for the event.

To the list of new record holders of the Chinese competition were added the Ethiopian Lamecha Girma, who won the 5 thousand meters with 12:58.96 minutes; the American discus runner Valarie Allman (68.80 meters); the Kenyan Beatrice Chepkoech thanks to a time of 8:55.40 minutes in the 3 thousand meters with hurdles; and the Cuban Pedro Pablo Pichardo, who competes for Portugal, winner of the triple jump with 17.51 meters.

The Ethiopian Gudaf Tsegay (3:50.30 minutes) scored a personal best and season leader in the 1,500 meters; and the American sprinter Christian Coleman closed the program with a victory in the hectometer with a discreet time of 10.13 seconds.

The next segment of the recently inaugurated circuit is scheduled for next Saturday. Actions will continue in China, with the Suzhou 2024 Yangtze Delta Athletic Gala.

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