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Kip Janvrin's masters debut: world record in M40 decathlon

Posted September 8, 2005



Kip Janvrin, with an open decathlon best of 8462 points in 1996, has been nationally ranked every year since 1989. His marks in the San Sebastian world masters championships August 23-24, 2005, totaled 3698 points on Day 1 and 3827 on Day 2 for an amazing 7525 on the IAAF tables used for international open

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About this capture

Masters Athletics Championships in San Sebastian, Spain. A 2000 Olympian, Janvrin won every event in the San Seb deca except the high jump, and followed that with gold in the individual 400-meter hurdles, clocking 54.68 seconds. For more than a decade, he's been a **track coach** at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Missouri, home of the Mules. But he was a thoroughbred in Spain, and took time to answer a 10-query email questionnaire shortly after his return home.

By [Ken Stone](#)

Masterstrack.com: Was the M40 world record a goal you set recently — or something you've been thinking about for a long time?

Janvrin: I started thinking about this record in 1996. That year I scored 8462 in the US/German duel and the coach was Fred Dixon. He talked about the fact nobody had scored 7000 at age 40 and he said I was the person to do it. The opportunity to set this record was a small part of the reason I have continued to train at this age, the other reason being that I love being around the other athletes.

Your 1500 (in 4:25.87) was pretty impressive, but your high jump (1.80/5-10 3/4) looked low. Any other events you could have done better at? Give details on all events, if possible.

(It) being my first masters meet, I was really unsure what to expect. We did not know exactly when we were going to start and warm up; planning was very difficult. I was unhappy with my 100 (11.56) as the track was wet and the winds were not favorable. A good meet always starts with a fast 100. The long jump was good (6.78/22-3), a season best, and I only took one jump. I was happy with my shot put (14.01/45-11 3/4) even though we only had very small shots to throw.

The high jump has been my most frustrating event as I have gotten older. I just do not have any pop in my legs. If I could have made one more bar, that would have been great. I was disappointed in my 400 (49.46) as well. I ran 48.43 in April and had good training for San Sebastian. We were given a start time and I planned my warm up accordingly. I do a fast 150m blowout 15 minutes before racing. I spent most of my warmup time at the practice track and then came into the stadium and did my 150. Right after I finished, the gun went off for Heat One and I was in Heat Two.

Apparently all agreed to start 15 minutes early, so I raced 5 minutes after my 150 blowout. I knew at 100 meters to go I was in trouble. I really tied up the last 50 meters and thought I might fall down. I had a great race plan that I felt I executed well but was just unable to finish it.

The hurdles were solid as I ran 42-inches (15.40) at my request. I was happy with the discus (42.70/140-1). The pole vault (4.70/15-5) was a little frustrating. I have jumped 4.90 (16-0 3/4) every year since 1988 until this season and this was my last chance. I had not jumped since the U.S. champs and was a little concerned. My warmup was not great and then I had about a 3-hour wait until I jumped. I made 4.50 and 4.70 on my first attempts. At 4.90 I only had one good attempt. I felt that if I was not the only one jumping when I started I could have made 4.90.

I waited for three hours and then I took all five of my attempts in about 10 minutes. The javelin (58.43/191-8) was really good. I hurt my back at the U.S. champs and really did not know what to expect. So this was good. The 1500 (4:25.87) was easy. I only needed to run 5:25 for the record and felt that I could run 4:10 if necessary. I went out conservative, 73, 2:28, and then picked it up as I wanted to make a solid effort. Overall I was happy with the score as it was higher than I scored at the U.S. champs. But as is the nature of the decathlon, you always think you can do better.

What were weather conditions on Day 1, Day 2? I've heard that rain hampered some sprinters later in the meet.

It rained the morning of Day 1. We did not start until 2:00 so we had no problems. Both days were mostly sunny with temps in the mid-70s and slight breezes.

How did the other decathletes regard your participation? Were they envious, supportive, angry that you had just invaded masters from the open ranks?

All the other guys were great and supportive of my record attempt. Part of the reason I love the decathlon is we are all competing against ourselves and the scoring tables as opposed to competing against each other. I really enjoyed being around the other two Americans, Jack Hoyt and Robert Lawson. It was a real relaxed atmosphere.

Do you regard 9000 points (age-graded) as possible for a masters decathlete? Do you have a 9000 in you?

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In one season you went from a top-10 decathlete in USATF to the best masters deca man in the world. What has the transition between these worlds been like?

Really, it just involves the fact that I had my 40th birthday. I trained the exact same way I have for the last 15 years. I still enjoy competing more with the young guys, but at the same time it was nice to have someone older than me in the field. It really was not a transition for me; I treated it just like another meet where I wanted to score as many points as possible.

What was it like to have to pay your own way to a meet (as opposed to living off USATF's dime)? Did you get any financial support from a sponsor?

It was actually more relaxing. When you are part of a USATF team you obviously feel some pressure to perform. I took my wife with me on this trip and we saw most of the city and spent much quality time together that we don't get at home with 7- and 9-year-old boys. I do not have any sponsors. I never really go into track to make money. I did it for the personal challenges and the thrill of competition. When I was getting some USATF performance monies and VISA sponsorship dollars, I felt like I was the luckiest person in the world.

Will you continue to compete in masters meets? If so, what would you like to accomplish on the masters circuit?

That is a good question. For the first time in about 25 years, I do not have a track and field goal ahead of me. I do not know what my future holds. At times I think it would be nice to lose some weight and be the daily jogger but at the same time I am too competitive to run without a purpose. We will just have to see where my motivation takes me.

What can USATF do to encourage more open athletes to enter masters, which now begins at age 35?

That is a loaded question. I know for several older athletes there are just not many chances to compete. Most college meets do not want larger fields and do not cater to older athletes. An idea; I would like to see USATF become more involved with each state's (Show-Me-State-Games) state games track and field and maybe make it a qualifier for the U.S. Masters Championships. We just really need to provide more opportunities for participation.

Some folks criticized shoddy officiating at San Sebastian. What was your experience with the officiating?

I was very fortunate to have Rex Harvey and two US officials overseeing our group of decathletes. They kept us moving from event to event and made sure the events were conducted accordingly. I thought the San Sebastian people did a pretty good job considering the large task they had.

I really struggled the next couple days in the 400 hurdles. I ran 52.02 in college after a decathlon, but the body is different now. Luckily I could run very slow in qualifying and I felt a little better in the finals.

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• About Ken Stone

Ken has followed track as an athlete, writer and webmaster since the late 1960s, and saw most sessions of

