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Karlsruhe, 29. Januar 2022

**28.01.2022**

Messe Karlsruhe

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## INIT INDOOR MEETING Karlsruhe: Top sporting performances from Karlsruhe could be seen all over the world

**First over six metres: World record holder Armand Duplantis sets new meeting record to kick off World Indoor Tour Gold / Live broadcast in 71 countries worldwide**

In front of an enthusiastic crowd of 1,000 spectators, the athletes at the INIT INDOOR MEETING Karlsruhe showed world-class athletics in a series of events yesterday evening at the Karlsruhe Exhibition Centre. With numerous best performances as well as an enormous worldwide spectator response, the INIT INDOOR MEETING was a complete success both in terms of sport and media at the start of the indoor athletics season and the World Indoor Tour Gold.

The highlight of the evening was set by world record holder **Armand Duplantis (SWE)** in the men's pole vault with a mighty leap over 6.02 metres – no one has ever jumped that high in Karlsruhe before. "Tonight was very special – especially because we haven't really had spectators in the previous years. The interaction with the fans is a completely different experience," said the world record holder after the competition in front of an enthusiastic crowd that pushed him to be the first jumper in Karlsruhe over the 6-metre mark. "Next week I will compete in Berlin. I think it's time for a world record in Germany," Duplantis concludes about his next sporting goal.

Only by a hair's breadth was a meeting record that has stood since the last century, when long-distance legend Haile Gebrselassie (Ethiopia) ran the best time over 3,000 metres in January 1998. Last night, his compatriot **Berihu Aregawi** was just four hundredths of a second slower and came closer than anyone before to the new meeting record.

After the youth and regional races, which traditionally kick off the INIT INDOOR MEETING, **Halimah Nakaayi** from Uganda secured the first international victory of the evening. In the women's 800 metres, she beat the two German runners Christina Hering and Tanja Spill into second and third place in 2:02.81. "It was a good competition, I really enjoyed competing in front of so many spectators, it really spurred me on. Thank you for the great support here in Karlsruhe!", Halimah Nakaayi praised the incomparable atmosphere of the INIT INDOOR MEETING.

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In the men's 800 metres, last year's winner **Elliot Giles (GBR)** crossed the finish line first again – with 1:46.78 minutes he was five hundredths of a second faster than Sweden's Andreas Kramer. "I just love this event!", Giles enthused. "The crowd is fantastic. The Germans do it really well, every time I run in Germany," Giles continues.

In the short distance, Spain's Maria Isabel Pérez won the women's 60 metres with a personal best in 7.21 seconds ahead of Patrizia van der Weken (LUX) and Tristan Evelyn (BAR). **Anna Kielbasinska (POL)** won the women's 400 metres: She crossed the finish line in 51.92 seconds ahead of Phil Healy (IRL) and Lieke Klaver (NED) with a new world best as well as a personal best. **Pascal Martinot-Lagarde (FRA)** also set a new world best in the men's 60 metres hurdles in 7.54 seconds. In the women's 60-metre hurdles, the finish photo had to decide: **Danielle Williams (JAM)** won by a razor-thin margin ahead of France's Cyréna Samba-Mayela – for both athletes, the 7.84 seconds clocked set a new personal best.

The women's high jump competition ended with the same height and thus two winners: **Emily Borthwick (GBR)** and **Imke Onnen (GER)** managed a new world best with a set over 1.91 metres, for the Briton the height also means a personal best. "When I jumped over 1.91 metres, I really had to pull myself together to not start crying. After such an injury phase you simply lack self-confidence, so such a high score is unbelievably good", Imke Onnen said happily after her success in Karlsruhe. "The cheers in the hall gave me the decisive kick, especially at 1.91 metres," Onnen concluded.

It was also exciting in the men's long jump, which **Thobias Montler (SWE)** won in the end with 8.02 metres. Montler was also full of praise for the Karlsruhe meeting: "It was a really good competition. The atmosphere was great and the starting field was excellent". Erwan Kornate (FRA, 7.98m) and Maximilian Entholzner (GER, 7.92m) also came close to the 8-metre mark. In the men's triple jump **Andreas Pantazis (GRE)** won with a new world best of 16.79 metres ahead of Nazim Babayev (AZE) and Max Heß (GER).

The final decision of the evening came in the women's 1,500 metres and was an all-Ethiopian affair in the end: With a new world best of 4:02.12 minutes, **Axumawit Embaye** was ahead of her compatriots Hirut Meshesha and Freweyni Hailu. Last year's winner Katharina Trost (GER) had to settle for 7<sup>th</sup> place in spite of a new personal best time in this fast race.

The organisers of the INIT INDOOR MEETING Karlsruhe also look back on a successful evening. "Despite the continuing difficult situation, both for us as organisers and for the athletes, we have seen great performances from highly motivated athletes this evening," said Sports Director Alain Blondel after the award ceremony. "Personally, I am of course

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particularly pleased that we have set another mark after the meeting record in the pole vault last year – finally the 6 metres have been cracked in Karlsruhe!”, Blondel continued. Martin Wacker, Meeting Director and Managing Director of the organising KME Karlsruhe Marketing und Event GmbH, was also satisfied: “It's insanely good to finally have an audience in the hall again! And I am thrilled to see what kind of atmosphere even 1,000 people can create – in a hall where we normally accommodate 5,000 spectators,” Wacker said last night. “The INIT INDOOR MEETING Karlsruhe is a flagship event for our city. The international response was already tremendous in the preliminary coverage, and with perfect live images from Karlsruhe in 71 countries worldwide, the meeting is priceless advertising for Karlsruhe,” Wacker continues.

For more information on the INIT INDOOR MEETING Karlsruhe, please visit [www.meeting-karlsruhe.de](http://www.meeting-karlsruhe.de) and the meeting's social media channels:

[www.facebook.com/IndoorMeetingKarlsruhe](http://www.facebook.com/IndoorMeetingKarlsruhe)

[www.twitter.com/INDOOR\\_MEETING](http://www.twitter.com/INDOOR_MEETING)

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