



MEDIA INFORMATION

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## ISTAF INDOOR 2024 in Berlin: A declaration of love for athletics

**BERLIN.** "Awesome," enthused Malaika Mihambo; "fantastique atmosphere," cheered Zaynab Dosso. The 11th ISTAF INDOOR in Berlin's Mercedes-Benz Arena was a declaration of love for athletics. At the world's biggest indoor meeting, the 12,150 fans pushed the athletes to top performances and celebrated an evening full of highlights with them.

Surrounded by fireworks, Malaika Mihambo raised her arms to the ceiling of the Mercedes-Benz Arena and jumped cheerfully into the air in front of the long jump area. Surrounded by photographers, she had just flown to 6.95 meters in her final attempt at the ISTAF INDOOR in Berlin and was celebrated enthusiastically by the 12,150 fans. No other European athlete has gone further this winter and only one in the world. Of course, the Olympic champion jumped her top distance again in her sixth attempt - as so often in her career. It was also the fourth-best indoor competition ever for the 30-year-old.

"It was amazing again here at the ISTAF INDOOR. It was so much fun to jump in the packed arena," cheered Malaika Mihambo after her brilliant performance and thanked her enthusiastic fans. Her goal before the competition: a new season's best. "I achieved that thanks to the great atmosphere. I'll take that with me into the summer. I've understood what I have to do right." For Malaika Mihambo, it was the last competition of a strong indoor season.

There were other top performances alongside the long jump grand champion. Annik Kälin (Switzerland) and Larissa Iapichino (Italy) landed exactly 6.75 meters three times. As the Swiss athlete achieved this twice, she came second. Mikaelle Assani (6.69 m) and Laura Raquel Müller (6.64 m) followed in fourth and fifth place with strong jumps.

In the pole vault, the spectators were already cheering for a new world lead. In his first attempt, Ernest Obiena (Philippines) only just missed the 6.03 meter mark. This would have improved the annual best mark set the day before by world record holder Armand Duplantis (Sweden) by one centimeter. "I am happy. I still have more potential and want to jump the six meters indoors. The spectators pushed me, it was a lot of fun again here at the ISTAF INDOOR. Unfortunately, I ran out of power at 6.03 meters," said Ernest Obiena. The runner-up world champion was able to console himself with a new Asian indoor record of 5.93 meters. Ernest Obiena improved on the quarter-century-old record set by Igor Potapovich (Kazakhstan) by one centimeter.

Emmanuel Eseme presented himself to the athletics fans in a record-breaking mood. The Cameroonian improved his own national record twice. After 6.59 seconds in the preliminary heat, he even clocked 6.55 seconds on the track. "The crowd was unbelievable, I am so grateful. The





season was perfect because I didn't have any injuries. Now I'm looking forward to the World Indoor Championships, because this is my first indoor season ever," said a jubilant Emmanuel Eseme after his record double. Also in a celebratory mood: Markus Fuchs. The Austrian stormed to a strong second place with 6.60 seconds and only had to admit defeat to the ISTAF INDOOR winner in the last ten meters. Zaynab Dosso stormed ahead in the women's race. The Italian, who had greatly improved in 2024, could even afford a weaker start and won the race in a strong 7.09 seconds. She was followed by Zoe Hobbs (New Zealand; 7.19 sec) and last year's winner Daryll Neita (Great Britain; 7.20 sec). "I struggled with injuries for three years. This year I can demonstrate what I am capable of. I am absolutely thrilled with the ISTAF INDOOR. You won't find an atmosphere like this anywhere else in Berlin," said the Italian enthusiastically about the support in the Mercedes-Benz Arena.

Daniel Roberts (USA) raced elegantly and quickly to the finish line in the 60 meter hurdles. With a time of 7.52 seconds, the World Championship bronze medallist was in a class of his own and won ahead of David King (Great Britain; 7.59 sec) and Job Geerds (Netherlands 7.66 sec). "I stumbled a bit at the start and had to catch up. That worked out. The ISTAF is always a great competition," said the hurdles winner.

Marlene Meier also stormed to a new personal best in the women's race. She finished fourth in 8.09 seconds, missing the podium by just one hundredth of a second. Hungarian champion Greta Kerekes took the win with 8.01 seconds ahead of Nooralotta Neziri (Finland; 8.05 sec) and Veronica Besana (Italy; 8.08 sec).

At the end of the ISTAF INDOOR, the powerful women and men once again amazed the spectators in the legendary and globally unique discus duel. After four rounds, the men won the duel for the second time with 28:22 points. The winning team was led by Kristjan Čeh (Slovenia). The 2022 world champion broke the meeting record twice. First to 64.99 meters and then 65.72 meters in his second attempt. This earned him three extra points in the overall standings. Kristjan Čeh: "I'm proud of my meeting record. It was damn loud here in the arena. A great experience."

Jorinde van Klinken (Netherlands) provided the top result for the women with 63.50 meters. She was closely followed by Olympic silver medallist Kristin Pudenz (63.38 m), Shancie Craft (62.68 m) and Julia Harting (60.61 m). All the men also surpassed the prestigious 60-meter mark: Kristjan Ceh was followed by German champion Henrik Janssen (61.92 m), Daniel Jasinski (61.91 m) and Rio Olympic champion Christoph Harting (60.41 m).

The para-sprinters were frenetically celebrated by the 12,000 fans in the Mercedes-Benz Arena during the first race of the evening. Maxcel Amo Manu pulled away irresistibly from his rivals on the blue sprint straight and won in 7.15 seconds. The Italian thus completed the double victory over 60 meters after the ISTAF INDOOR in Düsseldorf at the beginning of February. He was followed by Olivier Hendriks (Netherlands; 7.44 seconds) and Paralympic champion Johannes Floors (7.69 seconds).





All information on [www.istaf-indoor.de](http://www.istaf-indoor.de).

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If you want to find out more about the ISTAF INDOOR, require logos and image material or have any questions about this media information, please contact:

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