

# 2000

## The meeting



For its second year at the Stade de France, the Meeting demonstrates that it is on a par with the prime location. It attracts nearly 60,000 spectators in the Ile de France ground and slips into fifth place in the annual ranking of the IAAF meetings, ahead of meetings as prestigious as those in Berlin and Oslo. The overseas athletes don't disappoint and make a stopover in the capital three months prior to the Olympic Games in Sydney. Cathy Freeman tests her burst of speed in the 200 m, where she stands out from the crowd with a time of 22''62. Bruny Surin and Ato Boldon jostle for position at the start of the 100 m, but they are headed by the American Brian Lewis. Tatyana Kotova lands a jump of over 7 m in the long jump (7.04 m). Meantime Patricia Djaté, the 1,500 m record holder in France, bids farewell to athletics at the meeting on the evening of 23rd June 2000, just as Stéphane Diagana is discovering the atmosphere of the Stade de France.

### The performance

Tatyana Kotova has often thrived in France, particularly on 23rd June. On this day in 2000, she benefits from the heady atmosphere of the Stade de France to improve on her personal best and, above all else, jump further than 7 m for the very first time with a jump of 7.04 m. The young Russian goes on to win the competition, whilst French athlete Eunice Barber, already torn between the heptathlon and the long jump, takes 3rd place with

6.77 m. Two years later, the bronze medalist at the Athens Games does considerably better in Annecy, scoring a personal best of 7.42 m in the European Cup. By pure chance, Tatyana Kotova also achieves this same performance on 23rd June.

### The revelation

Mehdi Baala was not yet 22 when he entered the Stade de France track on 23rd June 2000. However, his third place in the 1,500 m, behind two giants of the sport, Moroccan Hicham El Guerrouj and Kenyan Bernard Lagat, would remain one of the most promising performances of the evening. The citizen of Strasbourg takes the French junior record over the distance. He went on to confirm his progress later that season by snatching 4th place at the 1,500 m Olympic final.

### The anecdote

Algerian runner Djabir Said-Guerni, winner of the 800 m in a time of 1'45''99, knew the Stade de France like the back of his hand, and its surrounding area even more so. Living in Aubervilliers, he lives closest to the stadium out of all the athletes present at the Meeting

### The quote

"I came here to beat my best time and I'm leaving with the French record. All that despite it being my first time running at one of the largest meetings in the world, and in one of the finest stadiums on the planet." Mehdi Baala (France), 3rd in the 1,500 m with a time of 3'33''67

### The public

58,250 spectators

### The records

One meeting record: Ali Saidi Sief (Algeria), 7'27''67 in the 3,000 m.

Three national records: Eli Ezzine (Morocco), 8'03''57 in the 3,000 m steeplechase, Lidia Chojecka (Poland), 8'33''35 in the 3,000 m, Rita Ramanauskaite (Lithuania), 62.69 m in the javelin.