

JESÚS ANGEL GARCÍA OF SPAIN – WALKING LEGEND

In the results from the 2009 IAAF Challenge event at La Coruna, the small print shows that 11th place in the men's 20km event was taken by **Jesus Angel Garcia** of Spain. What the report does not highlight is the fact that Garcia, at 39 years of age, had recorded a 9 second PB of 1:23:00. He is one of the true legends of the sport and I thought that he deserved a bit of attention after such a superb performance.

Jesus Angel Garcia, born 17/10/1969 in Madrid, is perhaps the longest standing elite exponent of our sport, having raced internationally every year since 1992, specializing in the gruelling 50 km distance. His PBs are spread over his entire career, from his 10km PB of 40:38, set in 1991, to his most recent 20km PB set last weekend in La Coruna.

5000 Metres Race Walk	19:33.3	Getafe	10/07/2001
10,000 Metres Race Walk	40:43.85	Sabadell	17/07/2004
10 Kilometres Race Walk	40:38	Madrid	17/03/1991
20 Kilometres Race Walk	1:23:00	La Coruña	20/06/2009
30 Kilometres Race Walk	2:08:47	El Prat de Llobregat	18/02/2001
50 Kilometres Race Walk	3:39:54	Podebrady	19/04/1997



Jesus Angel Garcia finishes 4th in the 50km event at the 2008 Olympic Games (photo Jeff Salvage)

His yearly best time for 50km shows his wonderful consistency over a period of 19 years in the toughest event in the Track and Field program.

1991	4:05:10	Valencia	24/02/1991
1992	3:48:24	Badalona	22/03/1992
1993	3:41:41	Stuttgart	21/08/1993
1994	3:41:28	Orense	20/03/1994
1995	3:41:54	Beijing	30/04/1995
1996	3:46:59	Prat del Llobreg	25/02/1996
1997	3:39:54	Podebrady	19/04/1997
1998	3:43:17	Dudince	25/04/1998
1999	3:40:40	Mézidon - Canon	02/05/1999
2000	3:42:51	Eisenhüttenstadt	18/06/2000
2001	3:43:07	Edmonton	11/08/2001
2002	3:44:33	München	08/08/2002
2003	3:43:56	Paris Saint-Denis	27/08/2003
2004	3:44:42	Athina (Olympic Stadium)	27/08/2004
2005	3:48:19	Tijuana	20/03/2005
2006	3:42:48	Göteborg	10/08/2006
2007	3:46:08	Royal Leamington Spa	20/05/2007
2008	3:44:08	Beijing (National Stadium)	22/08/2008
2009	3:46:27	Metz	24/05/2009

Finally, his international appearance list (not necessarily complete but showing the main ones) reads so impressively with gold medals at the 1993 World Championships, the 1995 World Racewalking Cup and the 2001 European Race Walking Cup as well as silver and bronze medals and a whole swag of top ten finishes. His credentials (at least the ones I could find at short notice – I have probably missed a few) include 4 Olympic, 6 World Championship and 5 World Racewalking Cup appearances.

1991	Universiade	20km	5	1:26:17	Sheffield, England
1992	25 th Olympic Games	50km	10	3:58:43	Barcelona
1993	4th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	50km	1	3:41:41	Stuttgart
1994	16th European Championships in Athletics	50km	4	3:45:25	Helsinki
1995	17th IAAF World Race Walking Cup	50km	4	3:41:54	Beijing
1995	5th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	50km	5	3:48:05	Göteborg
1996	26 th Olympic Games	50km	DNF		Atlanta
1997	18th IAAF WORLD RACE WALKING CUP	50km	1	3:39:54	Podebrady
1997	6th IAAF World Championships In Athletics	50km	2	3:44:59	Athína
1998	17th European Championships in Athletics	50km	DNF		Dudince
1999	19th IAAF World Race Walking Cup	50km	4	3:40:40	Mézidon - Canon
1999	7th IAAF World Championships In Athletics	50km	DNF		Seville
2000	27th Olympic Games	50km	12	3:49:31	Sydney
2001	EAA Race Walking Cup	50km	1	3:44:26	Dudince
2001	8th IAAF World Championships	50km	2	3:43:07	Edmonton
2002	18th European Championships in Athletics	50km	3	3:44:33	München
2003	9th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	50km	6	3:43:56	Paris Saint-Denis
2004	21st IAAF World Race Walking Cup	50km	6	3:50:33	Naumburg
2004	28th Olympic Games	50km	5	3:44:42	Athens
2006	22nd IAAF World Race Walking Cup	50km	6	3:46:11	La Coruña
2006	19th European Athletics Championships	50km	2	3:42:48	Göteborg
2008	23rd IAAF World Race Walking Cup	50km	14	3:52:31	Cheboksary
2008	The XXIX Olympic Games	50km	4	3:44:08	Beijing

And yes, two months shy of his fortieth birthday, he will be competing in Germany in the 50km event at this year's World Championships and you would be unwise to disregard him from the final honours list.