

Athletic season 2023

In a race with so many contenders, it's difficult to know where to start when weighing up the potential medallists in Budapest. But the man who has won the past two world 20km race walk titles is as good a starting point as any.

Toshikazu Yamanishi led a Japanese 1-2 from Koki Ikeda at the World Championships in Oregon last year and at the World Race Walking Team Championships in Muscat a few months prior. The Japanese duo are formidable competitors, but both have had relatively low-key seasons so far, making their current form difficult to assess. Yamanishi's sole competitive outing in 2023 was a third-place finish in Rio Maior in 1:20:58. Ikeda, meanwhile, hasn't competed since winning the Japanese title in February in 1:18:36. Despite their quiet seasons – which isn't unusual for them – it's safe to assume that when they step on the start line for a major championships, they will be ready to compete for medals.

The same applies to Massimo Stano, who beat Ikeda and Yamanishi to the Olympic title in Tokyo. The Italian triumphed over 20km in the Japanese capital in 2021, then won the 35km gold in Oregon last year.

Having won global titles at both distances, he now fancies his chances at doubling up and is entered for both events in Budapest. The 31-year-old has competed just twice this year, clocking a 10km PB of 39:06 and then finishing third over 20km at the European Team Championships in Podebrady. Both performances are superior to the pre-championships form he displayed in 2021 and 2022, so Stano is certainly one to keep an eye on.

He is one of several men who'll be doubling up in Budapest, with the schedule offering a five-day rest period between the disciplines. The 20km will be up first, though – and, in fact, will be the first title on offer in Budapest – so all athletes will take to the start line with fresh legs.

Perseus Karlstrom, currently world ranked No.1 at 20km, contested both distances in Oregon and earned bronze medals in both. One of the more prolific racers on the circuit, the 33-year-old from Sweden has finished first or second in all four of his 20km races this year, and has broken 1:20 on three occasions.

Spain's Alvaro Martin and Diego Garcia Carrera are also entered for both distances. Martin has won the last two European titles at 20km, while Garcia earned silver in 2018 and bronze in 2022. Martin has had the more impressive 2023 campaign to date, winning seven of his nine races across four different distances, and holding a season's best of 1:18:49. They finished just shy of the podium in Tokyo in 2021, placing fourth and sixth respectively, so are still chasing their first senior global medals.

Other men who'll be doubling in Budapest include Brazil's Caio Bonfim, Germany's Christopher Linke, Ecuador's Brian Pintado, Colombia's 2017 world champion Eider Arevalo and Canada's world and Olympic medallist Evan Dunfee.

Bonfim, the 2017 world bronze medallist, won in La Coruna in what was the most competitive 20km outside of the World Championships, clocking a national record of 1:18:29. Linke, the European 35km silver medallist, has placed in the top five at the past two Olympic Games and at the 2017 and 2019 World Championships.

Pintado doubled up in Oregon, placing fifth in the 20km and fourth in the 35km, so it would only require a small improvement on that for the 28-year-old to reach the podium. Arevalo, meanwhile, hasn't finished in the top 10 over 20km at a global championships since winning the 2017 world title, but a 1:19:23 victory in Dudince bodes well for the Colombian.

Dunfee, who usually performs better at longer distances, showed great speed when winning the 10,000m at last year's Commonwealth Games. He has clocked 1:20:52 for 20km this year, just 39 seconds shy of his PB.

There will also be many athletes entered for just the 20km, including China's Zhang Jun. He heads to Budapest as the world leader over 20km, having won in Taicang in April in 1:17:38. But following that, he placed 12th in Rio Maior and fifth in La Coruna.

Zhang was a precocious teen, earning 2015 world U18 silver and winning the U20 race at the 2016 World Race Walking Team Championships. His best performance as a senior at a global championships remains his eighth-place finish at the Olympic Games.

Other contenders include Kenya's Samuel Gathimba, who was fourth in Oregon, Australia's much-improved Declan Tingay, Italy's European Team Championships winner Francesco Fortunato, and Ecuador's David Hurtado.

Medal winners				Relevant records			
<b>2008 Olympic</b>				WR	1:16:36	Yusuke Suzuki	JPN Nomi 15 Mar 2015
1	Valeriy Borchin	RUS	1:19:01	Ame	1:17:46	Julio René Martínez	GUA Eisenhüttenstadt 08 05 1999
2	Jefferson Pérez	ECU	1:19:15	Asi	1:16:36	Yusuke Suzuki	JPN Nomi 15 Mar 2015
3	Jared Tallent	AUS	1:19:42	Eur	1:17:02	Yohann Diniz	FRA Arles 8 Mar 2015
<b>2009 World</b>				CZE	1:19:18	Jiří Malysa	TCH Eisenhüttenstadt 17 06 2000
1	Valeriy Borchin	RUS	1:18:41				
2	Hao Wang	CHN	1:19:06				
3	Eder Sánchez	MEX	1:19:22				
<b>2010 Europe</b>							
1	Stanislav Yemelyanov	RUS	1:20:10				
2	Alex Schwazer	ITA	1:20:38				
3	João Vieira	POR	1:20:49				
<b>2011 World</b>							
1	Valeriy BORCHIN	RUS	1:19:56				
2	Vladimir KANAYKIN	RUS	1:20:27				
3	Luis Fernando LÓPEZ	COL	1:20:38				
<b>2012 Olympic</b>							
1	Ding CHEN	CHN	1:18:46				
2	Erick BARRONDO	GUA	1:18:57				
3	Zhen WANG	CHN	1:19:25				
<b>2013 World</b>							
1	Aleksandr IVANOV	RUS	1:20:58				
2	Ding CHEN	CHN	1:21:09				
3	Miguel Ángel LÓPEZ	ESP	1:21:21				
<b>2014 Europe</b>							
1	Miguel Ángel López	ESP	1:19:44				
2	Aleksandr Ivanov	RUS	1:19:45				
3	Denis Strelkov	RUS	1:19:46				
<b>2015 World</b>							
1	Miguel Ángel López	ESP	1:19:14				
2	Wang Zhen	CHN	1:19:29				
3	Benjamin Thorne	CAN	1:19:57				
<b>2016 Olympic</b>							
1	Wang Zhen	CHN	1:19:14				
2	Cai Zelin	CHN	1:19:26				
3	Dane Bird-Smith	AUS	1:19:37				
<b>2017 World</b>							
1	Eider Arévalo	COL	1:18:53				
2	Sergey Shirobokov	RUS	1:18:55				
3	Caio Bonfim	BRA	1:19:04				
<b>2018 Europe</b>							
1	Álvaro Martín	ESP	1:20:42				
2	Diego García	ESP	1:20:48				
3	Vasily Mizinov	RUS	1:20:50				
<b>2019 World</b>							
1	Toshikazu Yamanishi	JPN	1:26:34				
2	Vasily Mizinov	RUS	1:26:49				
3	Perseus Karlström	SWE	1:27:00				
<b>2021 Olympic</b>							
1	Massimo Stano	ITA	1:21:05				
2	Koki Ikeda	JPN	1:21:14				
3	Toshikazu Yamanishi	JPN	1:21:28				
<b>2022 World</b>							
1	Toshikazu Yamanishi	JPN	1:19:07				
2	Koki Ikeda	JPN	1:19:14				
3	Perseus Karlström	SWE	1:19:18				
<b>2022 Europe</b>							
1	Álvaro Martín	ESP	1:19:11				
2	Perseus Karlström	SWE	1:19:23				
3	Diego García	ESP	1:19:45				
				<b>All-time list</b>			
				1	1:16:36	Yusuke Suzuki	JPN Nomi 15 Mar 2015
				2	1:16:43	Sergey Morozov	RUS Saransk 8 Jun 2008
				3	1:16:54	Wang Kaihua	CHN Huangshan 20 Mar 2021
				4	1:17:02	Yohann Diniz	FRA Arles 8 Mar 2015
				5	1:17:15	Toshikazu Yamanishi	JPN Nomi 17 Mar 2019
				6	1:17:16	Vladimir Kanaykin	RUS Saransk 29 Sep 2007
				7	1:17:21	Jefferson Pérez	ECU Saint-Denis 23 Aug 2003
				8	1:17:22	Francisco Javier Fernández	ESP Turku 28 Apr 2002
				9	1:17:23	Vladimir Stankin	RUS Adler 8 Feb 2004
				10	1:17:24	Masatora Kawano	JPN Nomi 17 Mar 2019
				11	1:17:25	Sergey Shirobokov	RUS Cheboksary 9 Jun 2018
				<b>World season list</b>			
				1	1:17:38	Zhang Jun	CHN Taicang 8 Apr
				2	1:18:29	Caio Bonfim	BRA La Coruña 3 Jun
				3	1:18:36	Koki Ikeda	JPN Kobe 19 Feb
				4	1:18:45	David Hurtado	ECU Taicang 8 Apr
				5	1:18:46	Declan Tingay	AUS Nomi 19 Mar
				6	1:18:49	Álvaro Martín	ESP La Coruña 3 Jun
				7	1:18:59	Francesco Fortunato	ITA Podébrady 21 May
				8	1:19:02	Vasily Mizinov	RUS Saransk 20 May
				9	1:19:05	Brian Pintado	ECU Rio Maior 6 May
				10	1:19:07	Eiki Takahashi	JPN Kobe 19 Feb
				11	1:19:09	Ojan Haifeng	CHN Nomi 19 Mar
				<b>World season list 2022</b>			
				1	1:17:47	Vasily Mizinov	RUS Sochi 31 Jan
				2	1:18:36	Sergey Shirobokov	RUS Sochi 31 Jan
				3	1:18:46	Anton Kurbatov	RUS Cheboksary 21 May
				4	1:18:50	Daniila Martynov	RUS Cheboksary 21 May
				5	1:18:53	Koki Ikeda	JPN Wajima 17 Apr
				6	1:18:54	Caio Bonfim	BRA Podébrady 2 Apr
				7	1:19:04	Eiki Takahashi	JPN Kobe 20 Feb
				8	1:19:07	Toshikazu Yamanishi	JPN Eugene OR 15 Jul
				9	1:19:11	Álvaro Martín	ESP München 20 Aug
				10	1:19:18	Perseus Karlström	SWE Eugene OR 15 Jul
				11	1:19:25	Samuel Gathimba	KEN Eugene OR 15 Jul

