

Athletic season 2023

There's a lot at stake for each of the major contenders for gold in the men's 3000m steeplechase. For Lamecha Girma, this would be the right time to stamp his authority as one of the greatest in the event by adding the world title to his world record, having claimed silver medals at the 2019 and 2022 editions of the World Championships, as well as the Tokyo Olympics.

Also, no Ethiopian has won gold in the event in World Championships history. Instead, the Kenyans have dominated, with 13 gold medals claimed over a span of 18 editions of the competition. So Girma, who tops the global top lists with his astonishing world record of 7:52.11 set in Paris, would aim to enter the history books as the first athlete from his country to break that jinx.

For the Olympic and defending world champion Soufiane El Bakkali, who is the highest ranked in the event, setting a PB and meeting record of 7:56.68 at the Rabat Diamond League in a World Championships year – the second fastest time this year – underlines his depth and capacity to retain his gold medal from last year. He is also the only non-Kenyan African winner of the event and has all three shades of medals in his kitty.

Getnet Wale, who is second on the world rankings and comes to Budapest with a PB of 8:05.15, which he set while finishing second to the Moroccan in Rabat, finished fourth in Doha and Oregon as well as at the Tokyo Olympics. This would be the moment to step up and win a medal.

The 20-year-old Simon Kiprop Koech is out to prove that he's ready to rub shoulders with the big boys. The bronze medallist from the 2021 World U20 Championships and new Kenyan champion stunned Olympic bronze medallist Benjamin Kigen to win his first senior race at the national championships in Nairobi. Unbeaten in his eight races over the distance this year, Koech smashed his PB to 8:04.19 while racing to his first ever Diamond League victory in Monaco. His new lifetime best helped him qualify for the World Championships.

He is in good company with teammates Abraham Kibiwot (who was third in Rabat), and Leonard Kipkemai Bett, as the duo are also ranked among the top five in the event, with the former coming with a PB of 8:05.51 and the latter a season's best of 8:09.45. The trio will aim to return Kenya to winning ways.

Girma and El Bakkali have clashed in three global finals, and the Moroccan currently has the upper hand with a 2-1 lead. Both athletes have met only once this year – at the Doha Diamond League – where the 22-year-old Ethiopian triumphed over his rival in the 3000m, with El Bakkali settling for fourth. A month later, Girma would run an imperious race to shatter Saif Saaeed Shaheen's world record of 7:53.63 set in 2004. That was his second world record in 2023, Girma having also smashed Daniel Komen's 25-year-old world indoor record in the 3000m in Lievin, with a time of 7:23.81.

It would appear that the title is Girma's to lose, though he is yet to race since accomplishing his mind-blowing feat in Paris, and it remains to be seen what he has up his sleeves when he takes to the track in Budapest. However, the potency of El Bakkali's fighting spirit and famous kick towards the finishing line cannot be taken for granted.

Abrham Sime was part of the line up at the Monaco Diamond League won by Koech. Sime was inspired to a PB and the eighth fastest time in the world (8:10.56) after finishing third, while New Zealand's George Beamish stormed to an Oceanian record of 8:13.26 in fifth place.

One of the youngsters to keep an eye on is seventh-place finisher at the Tokyo Olympics, Ryuji Miura, who sped to a Japanese record and the seventh-fastest time in the world (8:09.91) in the historic race in Paris where he secured second position. The 21-year-old will be looking forward to putting up a strong showing as he makes his World Championships debut. He was followed by Spanish champion David Arce, who clocked a PB of 8:10.63 in third.

so far 13 runners <8 minutes - Girma, Shaheen, Kipruto, Koech, Boulami, Barmasai, Kemboi, Kiptanui, El Bakkali, Mateelong, Kosgei, Jairus Birech, Wilson Boit Kipketer
OH: 8:15.00

Medal winners				Relevant records			
2008 Olympic				WR	7:52.11	Lamecha Girma	ETH Paris 9 Jun 2023
1	Brimin Kiprop Kipruto	KEN	8:10.34	WJR	7:58.66	Saif Saaeed Shaheen	KEN Bruxelles 24/8/01
2	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:10.49	Eur	8:00.09	Mahieddine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA Paris 6/7/13
3	Richard Kipkemboi Mateelong	KEN	8:11.01	Afr	7:52.11	Lamecha Girma	ETH Paris 9 Jun 2023
2009 World				Ame	8:00.45	Evan Jager	USA Saint-Denis 4 Jul 15
1	Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN	8:00.43	Asi	7:53.63	Saif Saaeed Shaheen	QAT Bruxelles 03 09 2004
2	Richard Kipkemboi Mateelong	KEN	8:00.89	CZE	8:23.8	Dušan Moravčík	Praha 17/9/72
3	Bouabdellah Tahri	FRA	8:01.18				
2010 Europe				All-time list			
1	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:07.87	1	7:52.11	Lamecha Girma	ETH Paris 9 Jun 2023
2	Bouabdellah Tahri	FRA	8:09.28	2	7:53.63	Saif Saeed Shaheen	QAT Bruxelles 3 Sep 2004
3	Ion Luchianov	MDA	8:19.64	3	7:53.64	Brimin Kipruto	KEN Monaco 22 Jul 2011
2011 World				4	7:54.31	Paul Kipsiele Koech	KEN Roma 31 May 2012
1	Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN	8:14.85	5	7:55.28	Brahim Boulami	MAR Bruxelles 24 Aug 2001
2	Brimin Kiprop Kipruto	KEN	8:16.05	6	7:55.72	Bernard Barmasai	KEN Köln 24 Aug 1997
3	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:16.09	7	7:55.76	Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN Monaco 22 Jul 2011
2012 Europe				8	7:56.16	Moses Kiptanui	KEN Köln 24 Aug 1997
1	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:33.23	9	7:56.68	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR Rabat 28 May 2023
2	Tarik Langat Akdag	TUR	8:35.24	10	7:56.81	Richard Mateelong	KEN Doha 11 May 2012
3	Victor Garcia	ESP	8:35.87	11	7:57.29	Reuben Kosgei	KEN Bruxelles 24 Aug 2001
2012 Olympic				World season list			
1	Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN	8:18.56	1	7:52.11	Lamecha Girma	ETH Paris 9 Jun
2	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:19.08	2	7:56.68	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR Rabat 28 May
3	Abel Kiprop Mutai	KEN	8:19.73	3	8:04.19	Simon Koech	KEN Monaco 21 Jul
2013 World				4	8:05.15	Getnet Wale	ETH Rabat 28 May
1	Ezekiel KEMBOI	KEN	8:06.01	5	8:05.51	Abraham Kibiwot	KEN Rabat 28 May
2	Consesus KIPRUTO	KEN	8:06.37	6	8:09.45	Leonard Bett	KEN Chorzów 16 Jul
3	Mahiedine MEKHISSI-BENABBAD	FRA	8:07.86	7	8:09.91	Ryuji Miura	JPN Paris 9 Jun
2014 Europe (DQ 1.Mekhissi)				8	8:10.56	Abraham Seme	ETH Monaco 21 Jul
1	Yoann Kowal	FRA	8:26.66	9	8:10.57	Samuel Firewu	ETH Monaco 21 Jul
2	Krystian Zalewski	POL	8:27.11	10	8:10.63	Daniel Arce	ESP Paris 9 Jun
3	Ángel Mullera	ESP	8:29.16	11	8:11.12	Benjamin Kigen	KEN Chorzów 16 Jul
2015 World				Europe season list			
1	Ezekiel Kemboi	KEN	8:11.28	1	8:10.63	Daniel Arce	ESP Paris 9 Jun
2	Consesus Kipruto	KEN	8:12.38	2	8:13.89	Victor Ruiz	ESP Paris 9 Jun
3	Brimin Kipruto	KEN	8:12.54	3	8:14.58	Osama Zoghلامي	ITA Rabat 28 May
2016 Europe				4	8:16.81	Djilali Bedrani	FRA Monaco 21 Jul
1	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:25.63	5	8:17.06	Fernando Carro	ESP Paris 9 Jun
2	Aras Kaya	TUR	8:29.91	6	8:18.45	Nicolas Daru	FRA Monaco 21 Jul
3	Yoann Kowal	FRA	8:30.79	7	8:19.59	Karl Beberdorf	GER Székesfehérvár 18 Jul
2016 Olympic				8	8:20.01	Emil Blomberg	SWE Turku 13 Jun
1	Consesus Kipruto	KEN	8:03.28	9	8:21.71	Zak Seddon	GBR Turku 13 Jun
2	Evan Jager	USA	8:04.28	10	8:21.93	El Mehdi Aboujanah	ESP Nerja 18 May
3	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:11.52	11	8:22.00	Topi Raitanen	FIN Paris 9 Jun
2017 World				Czech			
1	Consesus Kipruto	KEN	8:14.12	1	8:30.81	Damián Vích	CZE Yokohama 21 May
2	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR	8:14.49	2	8:38.82	David Foller	CZE Chorzów 23 Jun
3	Evan Jager	USA	8:15.53	3	8:39.94	David Foller	Praha 27 May
2018 Europe				4	8:40.16	David Foller	Praha 5 Jun
1	Mahiedine Mekhissi-Benabbad	FRA	8:31.66	5	8:41.50	Damián Vích	Chengdu 3 Aug
2	Fernando Carro	ESP	8:34.16	3	8:42.80	Tomáš Habarta	CZE Espoo 16 Jul
3	Yohanes Chiappinelli	ITA	8:35.81	4	8:44.91	Tomáš Habarta	Ostrava 2 Jul
2019 World				5	8:46.35	Tomáš Habarta	Praha 5 Jun
1	Consesus Kipruto	KEN	8:01.35	4	8:47.16	Martin Kováčech	CZE Ostrava 2 Jul
2	Lamecha Girma	ETH	8:01.36	5	8:48.20	Martin Kováčech	Praha 5 Jun
3	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR	8:03.76	6	8:49.75	Tomáš Habarta	Bondoufle 21 May
2021 Olympic							
1	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR	8:08.90				
2	Lamecha Girma	ETH	8:10.38				
3	Benjamin Kigen	KEN	8:11.45				
2022 World							
1	Soufiane El Bakkali	MAR	8:25.13				
2	Lamecha Girma	ETH	8:26.01				
3	Consesus Kipruto	KEN	8:27.92				
2022 Europe							
1	Topi Raitanen	FIN	8:21.80				
2	Ahmed Abdelwahed	ITA	8:22.35				
3	Osama Zoghلامي	ITA	8:23.44				

