

Athletic season 2023

Twelve months ago Mondo Duplantis was on top of the world in the metaphorical as well as the literal sense as he headed to the World Athletics Championships in Oregon. Unbeaten in 2022, the peerless Swedish prince of the pole vault had landed the world indoor title with a world record 6.20m clearance and stood 16cm clear of his closest rival on the world outdoor list. He proceeded to claim his first senior world outdoor title with a world record 6.21m. Silver and bronze went to Chris Nilsen of the USA and Ernest John Obiena of the Philippines with 5.94m. "I felt so relaxed and calm going into the championships," Duplantis recalled in a recent interview with World Athletics' Inside Track.

This time, it's slightly different. Duplantis goes into the World Championships in Budapest on the back of rare defeat – only his fourth since 2019. Looking hot and bothered in oppressive conditions at the Monaco Diamond League on 21 July, the world champion and world record-holder finished fourth with a best of 5.72m. "It was just a bad day," he insisted.

The fact is the 23-year-old still leads the 2023 world outdoor list, thanks to the 6.12m he cleared in Ostrava in June. He also, of course, improved his world record to 6.22m indoors in Clermont-Ferrand in February – and he boasts the second best outdoor vault, 6.11m in Hengelo, and five 6-metre-plus outdoor clearances in all in 2023.

The next best on the world outdoor list, KC Lightfoot, set a North American record in Nashville in June, but he and Sam Kendricks, the world champion in 2017 and 2019, finished joint fourth in the US Championships in Eugene on 8 July, failing to make the cut for Budapest.

Of those who could potentially profit from another Duplantis off-day at the World Championships, only Obiena has cleared six metres this year, the man from Manila joining the elite club with an Asian record 6.00m success at Bryggen in Norway on 10 June. Obiena was one of those to claim the Swede's prized scalp in Monaco, finishing second with 5.82m, the same height as third placed Kurtis Marschall.

Nilsen took the victory with 5.92m, equalling his season's best. The US champion has built up a fine major championship record, finishing runner up to Duplantis at the Olympics in Tokyo and at the World Championships last year, and also third at the World Indoor Championships in 2022.

However, Duplantis is a supreme major championship performer, having claimed five successive titles: European, world outdoor and world indoor in 2022 and Olympic and European indoor in 2021. He was 19 when he suffered his last defeat on the big occasion, as runner up to Kendricks at the 2019 World Championships.

"Budapest is the main goal for 2023," he told Inside Track. "That's where I want to be at my best. As long as I can get the gold and defend the title, that would make a good year."

Marschall, the former world U20 and two-time Commonwealth champion from Australia, has had a good year, raising his PB to 5.95m at Sotteville in France last month. So has Norway's Sondre Guttormsen. He joined the six-metre club in March, scaling 6.00m at altitude at the NCCA Indoor Championships in Albuquerque and won the European indoor title in Istanbul. Outdoors, he has cleared 5.90m - as has Turkey's Ersu Sasma.

Other possible podium contenders include Zach Bradford and Zach McWhorter, who claimed selection ahead of Lightfoot and Kendricks at the US Championships. They have cleared 5.87m and 5.86m, respectively.

Piotr Lisek boasts a relatively modest season's best of 5.82m but the 30-year-old Pole – third in 2015, second in 2017 and third in 2019 – showed the glimpse of a return to form with fourth place behind Duplantis, Kendricks and Nilsen in the Silesia Diamond League meeting.

Medal winners			Relevant records			
2012 Olympic			WR	6.21	Armand Duplantis	SWE Eugene OR 24 Jul 2022
1	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.97	WJR	6.05	Armand Duplantis	SWE Berlin 12 Aug 2018
2	Björn Otto	GER 5.91	Eur	6.21	Armand Duplantis	SWE Eugene OR 24 Jul 2022
3	Raphael Holzdeppe	GER 5.91	Ame	6.07	KC Lightfoot	USA Nashville TN 2 Jun 2023
2013 World			CZE	5.83	Jan Kudlička	Praha 22 Jun 2016
1	Raphael Holzdeppe	GER 5.89	Klub 6 metrových má k 11.7.23 24 členů			
2	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.89	All-time list			
3	Björn Otto	GER 5.82	1	6.21	Armand Duplantis	SWE Eugene OR 24 Jul 2022
2014 Europe			2	6.14A	Sergey Bubka	UKR Sestriere 31 Jul 1994
1	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.90	3	6.07	KC Lightfoot	USA Nashville TN 2 Jun 2023
2	Paweł Wojciechowski	POL 5.70	4	6.06	Sam Kendricks	USA Des Moines IA 27 Jul 2019
3	Jan Kudlička	CZE 5.70	5	6.05	Maksim Tarasov	RUS Athina 16 Jun 1999
3	Kévin Menaldo	FRA 5.70	5	6.05	Dmitri Markov	AUS Edmonton 9 Aug 2001
2015 Europe indoor			5	6.05	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA Eugene OR 30 May 2015
1	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 6.04	8	6.04	Brad Walker	USA Eugene OR 8 Jun 2008
2	Aleksandr Gripitch	RUS 5.85	9	6.03	Okkert Brits	RSA Köln 18 Aug 1995
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.85	9	6.03	Jeff Hartwig	USA Jonesboro AR 15 Jun 2000
2015 World			9	6.03	Thiago Braz	BRA Rio de Janeiro 15 Aug 2016
1	Shawnacy Barber	CAN 5.90	World season list			
2	Raphael Holzdeppe	GER 5.90	1	6.12	Armand Duplantis	SWE Ostrava 27 Jun
3	Paweł Wojciechowski	POL 5.80	2	6.07	KC Lightfoot	USA Nashville TN 2 Jun
3	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.80	3	6.00	Ernest John Obiena	PHI Bergen 10 Jun
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.80	4	5.95	Kurtis Marschall	AUS Sotteville-lès-Rouen 7 Jul
2016 World indoor			5	5.92	Chris Nilsen	USA Bydgoszcz 6 Jun
1	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 6.02	6	5.91	Sam Kendricks	USA Westwood CA 27 May
2	Sam Kendricks	USA 5.80	7	5.90	Sondre Guttormsen	NOR Austin TX 29 Apr
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.75	7	5.90	Ersu Şaşma	TUR Rottach-Egern 16 Jul
2016 Europe			9	5.87	Zach Bradford	USA Norman OK 14 May
1	Robert Sobera	POL 5.60	9	5.87	Timur Morgunov	RUS Chelyabinsk 5 Aug
2	Jan Kudlička	CZE 5.60	9	5.87	Piotr Lisek	POL St. Wendel 9 Aug
3	Robert Renner	SLO 5.50	European season list			
2016 Olympic			1	6.12	Armand Duplantis	SWE Ostrava 27 Jun
1	Thiago Braz	BRA 6.03	2	5.90	Sondre Guttormsen	NOR Austin TX 29 Apr
2	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.98	2	5.90	Ersu Şaşma	TUR Rottach-Egern 16 Jul
3	Sam Kendricks	USA 5.85	4	5.87	Timur Morgunov	RUS Chelyabinsk 5 Aug
2017 Europe indoor			4	5.87	Piotr Lisek	POL St. Wendel 9 Aug
1	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.85	6	5.85	Menno Vloon	NED Chorzów 23 Jun
2	Konstadínos Filippídīs	GRE 5.85	7	5.82	Bo Kanda Lita Baehre	GER Düsseldorf 7 Jul
3	Paweł Wojciechowski	POL 5.85	7	5.82	Claudio Michel Stecchi	ITA Madrid 22 Jul
2017 World			7	5.82	Emmanouíl Karalís	GRE Jockgrim 4 Aug
1	Sam Kendricks	USA 5.95	7	5.82	Aleksandr Solovyov	RUS Chelyabinsk 5 Aug
2	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.89	11	5.81	Thibaut Collet	FRA Montbonnot Saint Martin 7 Jun
3	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.89	Czech season list			
2018 World indoor			1	5.60	David Holý	CZE Tábor 29 Jul
1	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.90		5.52	David Holý	Banská Bystrica 20 Jul
2	Sam Kendricks	USA 5.85	2	5.50	Dan Bárta	CZE Praha 12 Jun
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.85		5.47	Dan Bárta	Pižeň 27 May
2018 Europe				5.42	David Holý	Pižeň 27 May
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.05	3	5.42	Matěj Ščerba	CZE Banská Bystrica 20 Jul
2	Timur Morgunov	RUS 6.00		5.40	David Holý	Vyškov 13 Jul
3	Renaud Lavillenie	FRA 5.95		5.40	Matěj Ščerba	Tábor 29 Jul
2019 Europe indoor				5.35	Dan Bárta	Praha 5 Jun
1	Paweł Wojciechowski	POL 5.90		5.35	Dan Bárta	Dessau-Roßlau 17 Jun
2	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.85		5.30	David Holý	Praha 12 Jun
3	Melker Svärd Jacobsson	SWE 5.75				
2019 World						
1	Sam Kendricks	USA 5.97				
2	Armand Duplantis	SWE 5.97				
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.87				
2021 Europe indoor						
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.05				
2	Valentin Lavillenie	FRA 5.80				
3	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.80				
2021 Olympic						
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.02				
2	Chris Nilsen	USA 5.97				
3	Thiago Braz	BRA 5.87				
2022 World indoor						
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.20				
2	Thiago Braz	BRA 5.95				
3	Chris Nilsen	USA 5.90				
2022 World						
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.21				
2	Chris Nilsen	USA 5.94				
3	Ernest John Obiena	PHI 5.94				
2022 Europe						
1	Armand Duplantis	SWE 6.06				
2	Bo Kanda Lita Baehre	GER 5.85				
3	Pål Haugen Lillefosse	NOR 5.75				
2023 Europe indoor						
1	Sondre Guttormsen	NOR 5.80				
2	Piotr Lisek	POL 5.80				
2	Emmanouíl Karalís	GRE 5.80				

