

# Britons make mark on world stage

TWELVE Brits have made it into this year's edition of the prestigious international merit rankings published by *Athletics Weekly* and *Athletics International*.

The lists, compiled by a panel of experts that includes Peter Matthews and Mel Watman, rank athletes on form over the outdoor season, taking into account not only athletes' times and distances achieved but other factors including win-loss records and placings in major events. The rankings are printed in the *AW* annual special issue dated December 30 (pictured right).

As last year, heptathlete Jessica Ennis and triple jumper Phillips Idowu top the merit rankings for their respective events. Idowu was picked as No.1 by six of the seven panellists despite France's Teddy Tamgho having five of the seven best jumps of the year indoors and outdoors. Idowu won two of their three clashes outdoors, including at the



European Championships, in which the Frenchman was only third.

The decision in the heptathlon was more clear-cut. As well as being European champion this year, Ennis topped the world rankings with her 6823 from Barcelona.

Dai Greene, who scored wins at the Europeans, Commonwealths and Continental Cup over 400m hurdles, as well as being high on the world list with his 47.88 PB, is the only other Brit to place within the top three of his event.

The total of 12 Brits on the merit rankings is down one on the corresponding tally from last year.

Michael Bingham, Dai Greene, Chris Tomlinson, Idowu, Jennifer Meadows, Lisa Dobriskey and Ennis retain their top-10 places. Meanwhile, five athletes, including hurdler Perri Shakes-Drayton (sixth) have broken into the top 10.

Perhaps showing the general bias of interest towards distance running in Britain, Mo Farah, who was announced GB male athlete of the year by *Athletics Weekly* and the British Athletics Writers' Association, does not make the top 10 of either the 5000m and 10,000m.

Although he won both events at the

European Championships, 12 athletes this year ran quicker than his UK record of 12:57.94, which he set in August.

Of particular note internationally was the fact that Usain Bolt lost his No.1 ranking in the 100m. Hindered by injuries, the Jamaican – who was the world athlete of the year in both 2008 and 2009 – was second behind Tyson Gay, who beat him in their only meeting in Stockholm.

Also announced in the December 30 issue are the results of a vote among readers of *Athletics International* on the athletes of the year. David Rudisha and Blanka Vlasic polled the most votes for top male and female athletes.

The December 30 edition of *Athletics Weekly* also includes the top marks worldwide and domestically for each event.

British merit rankings, meanwhile, are on pages 44-45 of this issue.

## Hartmann's hands reach into Kenya

GERARD HARTMANN, the Irish physical therapist with the Midas touch when it comes to treating sports injuries, has set up a new clinic in Kenya.

For many years the world's best Kenyan athletes such as Moses Kiptanui and Douglas Wakiihuri have travelled to Hartmann's base in Limerick to find relief for their aches and pains. But now Hartmann has set up a clinic at the High Altitude Training Centre in Iten, Kenya, which is run by former world cross champion Lornah Kiplagat.

The list of athletes that have experienced Hartmann's healing hands over the years includes Paula Radcliffe, Haile Gebrselassie, Sonia O'Sullivan and Kelly Holmes. Yet the Irishman has always had a strong bond with Kenyan athletes, who affectionately

refer to him as "Daktari", or doctor.

Recently, Hartmann and his assistant, Ger Keane, have between them spent up to 12 weeks per year in Kenya, but they plan to expand that to four months and they will also take on another physio in order to have a constant presence there.

Kiplagat benefited from Hartmann's expertise while competing as an athlete and she requested that Hartmann-International Sports Injury Clinic head the physiotherapy department in the college in conjunction with Moy University, which is based in Eldoret.

The opening of the clinic also coincides with UKA's use of the High Altitude Training Centre in Iten as a key centre up to and beyond London 2012.

Gerard Hartmann with Mo Farah (left) and world cross champ Joseph Ebuaya



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