

Saïd Aouita (MAR)

Born:	2 November 1959
Events:	800 metres/1500 metres/Mile/ 2000 metres/3000 metres/ 5000 metres/10,000 metres
Titles:	1984 Olympic Champion 5000 metres 1987 World Champion 5000 metres 1989 World Indoor Champion 3000 metres
Personal Best:	1985 -1500 metres – 3:29.46 1986 -10,000 metres – 27:26.11 1987 - Mile – 3:46.76 1987 - 2000 metres – 4:50.81 1987 - 5000 metres – 12:58.39 1988 - 800 metres – 1:43.86 1989 - 3000 metres – 7:29.45
World Records:	1500 metres, 2000 metres, 3000 metres, 5000 metres



NSA When and how did you become involved in Athletics?

In 1977 I completed in a 3000 metres time trial as part of my soccer training. I ran 8:01 which at that time was faster than the national record. I was encouraged by a French Professor at the Institute of Sport (Gerard Goriot), to take up athletics more seriously and he became my coach for the next 4 years.

NSA What were the most thrilling moments in your career as an athlete?

Winning the 5000 metres at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles and breaking many world records.

NSA What were the most disappointing moments in your career as an athlete?

Not winning the 800 metres at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul and then not being able to compete in the 1500 metres due to a hamstring injury.

NSA What is your current profession?

I am a National Distance Coach in Australia.

NSA How did you manage the practicalities of the change from Athletics to your profession?

I started coaching whilst I was still an athlete in the 1980's. It seemed to me to be a natural progression from athlete to coach. I

was a role model for many Moroccan athletes and I wanted to pass on the knowledge and experience I had gained as an athlete to help develop a future generation of athletes in Morocco.

NSA Are there any qualities you gained from Athletics that you can use in your current profession?

As an athlete you have to be focused, disciplined, and determined to be successful. As a coach, I use all of these qualities on a daily basis to encourage and develop my athletes to be successful and make the most of their potential.

NSA Do you have a family? Do you encourage your family to practice Athletics?

I have 4 children aged 16, 12, 9, and 3. My children compete at school athletics and I encourage them to keep practicing and have fun.

NSA What are your hobbies and interests?

I enjoy following and watching athletics (IAAF Golden League meets and major championships), going to the movies, traveling, and spending time with my family.

NSA What types of physical activity do you currently enjoy?

I still enjoy running and often go training with my athletes.

NSA Are you still involved in Athletics somehow or do you follow international Athletics?

I am coaching athletes and keep a keen eye on what is happening in the world of athletics. I regularly log on to the IAAF website to keep up to date.

NSA What is your impression of the current state of international Athletics?

The competition structure of international athletics is really good now with many opportunities for athletes to compete. The leadership of the IAAF is also very strong.

The IAAF is a prominent and respected organization on the world sporting stage.

However, the qualification standards for the World Championships and Olympic Games have been lowered substantially over the past 3 years and it is now out of reach for many promising athletes. I would like to see these qualification standards reviewed.

Also, I would like to see the IAAF continue with its tough stance on drugs in the sport.

NSA What advice would you give to young athletes (and their parents) who are interested in joining an Athletics programme?

I love athletics and always encourage young athletes to continue practicing clean sport. I advise them to be patient and work harder and if they are not successful at a young age, they may still be triumphant at a later stage. I was not great as a junior however I went on to have a wonderful senior career.



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