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**PREVIEW: MEN'S LONG JUMP - IAAF WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS DOHA 2019**

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Juan Miguel Echevarria will start clear favourite to become the first Cuban world long jump champion since four-time gold medallist Ivan Pedroso reigned supreme from 1995-2001.

The world No.1 announced his arrival as a global star in 2018, securing the world indoor title, leaping into the world all-time top 10 with 8.68m and jumping a mighty wind-aided 8.83m in Stockholm.

This year the 21-year-old has been no less impressive, registering a monster – and again wind-assisted – 8.92m in Havana before going on to take the Pan American title and later the Diamond League crown in Zurich with a world-leading 8.65m.

His main opposition is likely to be the charismatic defending champion Luvo Manyonga. The South African has not quite touched the heights of previous seasons but has still performed consistently well and a season's best of 8.37m indicates the 27-year-old Olympic silver medallist will once again be a factor.

Manyonga's compatriot Ruswahl Samaai, the world bronze medallist, will also be a threat in Doha. Four times an IAAF Diamond League podium placer this season, he is so often there or thereabouts and is likely to feature.

Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece has proved the king of Europe over the past couple of seasons, snaring senior European indoor and outdoor titles plus the continental U23 crown. His

championship record is to be respected and it will be interesting to see how he responds on the global stage.

Tajay Gayle, winner at the IAAF Diamond League meeting in Shanghai, is another enjoying his best season to date. A PB of 8.32m in London and a handy third-place finish at the IAAF Diamond League final in Zurich further underline the Jamaican's credentials.

Just under a year away from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Japanese long jumping is looking in rude health led by 2014 world U20 bronze medallist Shoutarou Shiroyama.

The 24-year-old jumper claimed victory in Heusden with a windy 8.32m and followed this up with a national record of 8.40m in Fukui to move to third on the 2019 world list.

Further buttressing the Japanese challenge is world U20, Asian and World University Games gold medallist Yuki Hashioka, who has soared out to a PB of 8.32m this year. The third string Japanese athlete Hibiki Tsuchi is also a quality performer with a best of 8.23m.

In recent seasons China has developed a growing reputation in the men's long jump and once again they look to mount a prominent showing.

Asian Games and Asian Championships silver medallist Zhang Yaoguang, with a best of 8.25m, looks to be a threat as does 2016 world indoor bronze medallist Huang Changzhou. The Chinese challenge is complete by 2015 world bronze medallist Wang Jianan, who is still aged just 23.

In eight of the past 16 editions of the World Championships the USA has secured men's long jump gold but on current form it looks a stretch that they will add a ninth title.

Olympic champion Jeff Henderson leads their team but apart from an early season leap of 8.38m at altitude he has struggled to come close to this mark and finished fifth at the US Championships. His teammates Trumaine Jefferson (8.18m) and Steffin McCarter (8.25m) have shown ability but lack consistency and have limited international experience.

Also competing in Doha are European indoor silver medallist and Stockholm Diamond League victor Tobias Montler of Sweden and Zarck Visser, who leapt 8.41m during his domestic South African season but has yet to register an eight-metre jump internationally this year.

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