

## **Speared decathlon champion Sebrle '20cm from death'**

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PRAGUE : Absent-minded Olympic decathlon champion Roman Sebrle has admitted that he only narrowly escaped death when he was accidentally speared by a javelin during training in South Africa.

The 32-year-old Czech's spokesman David Travnicek on Monday told CTK agency that a javelin had plunged into Sebrle's shoulder on Saturday in a training accident.

"If the javelin had hit me 10cm to the left, it would have punctured my lung, 20cm higher the throat, which would have been the worst case scenario," said Sebrele, also the world record holder, on his internet site.

"Just 1cm higher and it would have hit bone, muscle and tendon and that would have been the end of my sporting career.

"I was diagonally crossing the field, totally focused on my own training. I had completely forgotten that the javelin throwers were training at the other end.

"Suddenly there were screams. Before I could react, I was hit. I looked at my shoulder and saw a javelin stuck in it. I was in shock."

According to Sebrele, his wound was 12cm deep but did not penetrate the muscle. He needed 11 stitches.

"At first the wound seemed quite serious but a further examination found that the javelin went between the skin and a muscle without leaving a nasty wound," said Travnicek.

Sebrle is resting in Potchefstroom but may be back in training in the middle of the week.

"We will continue to prepare for the European indoors (from March 2-4 in Birmingham, England)," added Travnicek.

Sebrle, the twice world and European indoor heptathlon champion, will however miss the Tallinn meeting at the beginning of February, his manager Alfonz Juck said. - AFP/de