OHIO RACE WALKER

LAIRD IN RECORD

Chicago, May 24—Ron Laird apparently likes the new Stagg Field and its Tartan track better than the old Stagg Field. Although he once set a few American records during a 20 miler on the old track, he had a dismal history of failure in the National 10 Km on its hallowed surface. Today, psyched up for another down-to-the-wire fight with Dave Romansky who was unable to make it, Ron was able to cruise easily to a Championship record of 45:14.2 while lapping the field. This was a seemingly effortless performance by Ron and he obviously had much in reserve. In registering his 44th Senior title, he led the New York A.C. to another in a long string of team titles.

Finishing second in his best-ever track 10 was the A.C.'s Ron Daniel. Ron managed to stay reasonably close to Laird in the early going and is so doing, detached himself from the rest of the field after a mile. Although he slowed considerably in the middle stages he managed to rally during the last mile when he saw Steve Hayden starting to close the gap. Hayden was involved in one of the two real races among the leaders, finally losing a tenacious John Kripton in the last mile and preventing a New York A.C. sweep. After being DQ'd in the Nat Osk race last week, Steve worked on his style all week and was rewarded with the ORW style prize.

In another close race, old undertrained Jack Blackburn, beard and all, just held off a fast-finishing Gary Westerfield to cop fifth place. Westerfield bombed out with the leaders and had a 7:14 mile and then folded up. He was down to 8:08 on the third mile and Blackburn passed him shortly thereafter. The bearded one opened up about 30 yards and then stayed there until Westerfield came on in the last two laps and finished 2 seconds back. In the process, he lost Jack Mortland, your old editor, who had closed to within 20 yards and was envisioning catching him and in the process the second place team award. Westerfield's finish gave the Long Island A.C. a 1-point victory over the OTC.

The OTC's performance was boosted by the rapidly improving Paul Reback from Cincinnati, walking his first race for the club. Paul walked a steady race and nipped a fading Ron Kulik right at the finish line for eighth place. Both his place and his 49:54 clocking mark by far the best ever performance by an OTC third man and at his present rate of progress, it may not be long before either Mortland or Blackburn's finish mark the best performance by our third man. The only discouraging thing is that we won this race about three times in the past with a much weaker third man and now when we pack them in, we're only third.

Jim Clinton, showing more speed this year than we can remember, rounded out the top ten. Greg Diebold journeyed from the East and got in just ahead of three other travelers, who had a near blanket finish. The old Philly Flash, Gerry Willwerth, just won this sprint for the tape from Toronto's J. Levy and Howie Jacobsen of the LIAC. After them, the UCTC's Bob Gray, now a very successful distance runner, tried walking for the first time in a long while and nosed out Max Gould at the tape. In all, 21 started and finished the race.

The race was held in sunny, but reasonable cool weather. It was the first time on tartan for many of us, and Blackburn and I both found it agreeable. Much better than the old, shifty all-weather surfaces for walking. The early leader in
the race, albeit reluctantly, was none other than your editor. The race started in the middle of the curve and starting from the eighth lane, I expected the usual mad dash at the start and moved out rather leisurely, expecting to drop quickly to the inside lane. But, no one wanted to move fast, and as we come off the curve, here I was in third place and locked in the second lane. Not being one to relish extra distance, I spurted into the lead to capture the pole for the next curve. Then, slowing the race to my pace, I was quickly passed by Laird himself, and several other eager young cats. The ironic thing is, that in the days when I may have wanted the early lead, there would always be someone wanting it more.

As to the team race, the official results showed the Long Island A.C. and the Ohio Track Club tied, with the seed going to the LIAC by virtue of having the first man in. My tally shows the LIAC 1-point ahead. So, a question to my readers that are more knowledgeable than I. In cross country, of course, although only five men on a team count in the point total, a sixth and seventh man are counted in the places and may serve to push members of other teams back to lesser places. I have never known this to apply to walking and find nothing in the rules to define the situation. However, this may be the cause for the above discrepancy in scoring. The New York A.C.'s fourth man, Ron Kulik, finished ahead of the LIAC's third man, Howie Jacobsen. Does this drop Jacobsen from 10th to 11th in the team scoring and increase their score to 20? Answer me soon, and tell me where you found your answer. Well, here are the results anyway:


Please note that you are getting two issues in one this time, or practically, I found that mimeograph doesn't work too well on the back of the pictures that are included. Since five sheets is the maximum I can mail at 6c and I needed more than the four printed pages this would have left me after including the three pages of pictures, I decided to go big. So this month I give you 12 printed pages, plus the pictures, and in the next issue I will give you one extra sheet, or two pages. So, over these two issues, you will only be one printed page short of what you normally get in three, plus you have the pictures and the controversy that accompanies them. Is that all about as clear as mud. Any complaints--too bad. Just think of all the long, hard hours I am spending to get this extra trash to you this month.

We are very sorry to report that Larry O'Neill, winner of our first John H. Blackburn Award, has recently lost his wife after a long illness. Larry has graciously written to thank us and his many friends in walking, as he finds just thinking of these associations is helping him to pull back together. He has also found that an occasional walk is very helpful to relieve the tension. I'm sure we all extend our deepest sympathies to Larry and I hope he can find the desire to get back to competitive walking, of which he is uncertain. If you care to write Larry, his address is 233 Fifth Ave. East, Kalispel, Montana 59901.

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Chicago, May 31--Your weary old editor journeyed to Chicago for the second weekend in a row and managed to stagger home a victor in the 4th Annual Captain Ronald Zinn 10 Kilometer race. It was a typical Midwest summer's day—hot and humid, which worked to my advantage as Jack Blackburn's lack of training caught up with him under these conditions. The race was held at its usual site—the cinder track of Hansen Stadium. As the field of 12 started off Ron Laird's meet record of 44:48:66, set in 1967, was definitely not in danger. Your editor cruised through the first mile in 7:43 with Blackburn right on his tail. The race slowed the second mile as we hit 15:36. At this point, the old bearded one started to collapse and as he dropped back, I put in a "torrid" 1:54 lap to make sure he didn't change his mind. I then hung on for 23:23 at 3 miles before the heat got me and I struggled for 8:02, 8:08, and 8:10 on the last three miles. The 3 mile time was 4 seconds ahead of my pace the week before, but the final time was 48.6 seconds slower. Blackburn, meantime, slowed to a virtual crawl but still reeled in with a second place 53:59, down over 5½ minutes from a week before. A very consistent performer.

Bill Walker was walking along in third, and may have given Blackburn a tussle at the finish. But the eagle-eyed Matt Rutyna caught him doing things he hadn't oughta at about 4 miles and Bill retired to the showers. This left third place to Hal Higdon, the Horace Greeley of the marathon world. Hal was having a good race and looking good until he started his last lap in 55 minutes and decided it would be nice to break 57. This was his undoing and he never made it as good old Matt was there to catch him flying down the backstretch. Thus, third place ultimately went to Larry Larson, who I think is the only man to walk in all four races. He laments the fact that his place keeps improving but his time gets worse. I should have such problems. (Whoops, I guess I do, since I won the initial race in 47:39, was third the next year in 47:52 and am now back to first 1¼ minutes slower.) In fourth was Wayne Yarcho, just sneaking under the one-hour barrier. Although, we didn't have an actual club team, the good-hearted Bill Ross awarded the team trophy to "the team from Ohio". Another walker of note, was the UCTC's Bob Woods, who arrived late and didn't count in the standings but was allowed to start after the race was 7 laps old. He showed beautiful, relaxed style in recording 59:39 and can really be tough if he ever trains for walking. Right now he is a middle-distance runner who does his only walking in occasional races. The results:


While Ron Laird was easy to a Championship record in Chicago, Tom Dooley was preparing himself for a big effort the following day that wiped Laird's 10 km record off the books. On the San Francisco State track, Tom whipped through a 44:26:9, setting records for 4, 5, and 6 miles on the way. Apparently everything was in order as concerns judges, officials, etc for the record to be accepted. This wasn't the case, incidentally, for Laird's 5 kilometer record reported last month. Guess there were no judges at that one. Tom went through 1 mile in 6:54 and 2 in 14:00. At this point, Goetz Klopf er was right with him. Goetz then moved out and passed 3 miles in 20:56:6, but dropped out at that point, having received one caution. Tom had 21:05 at 3, 23:15 at 4, 35:34 at 5, and 42:53 at 6. His 5 km time of 21:43 breaks the existing American record, but was unofficial. The 4, 5, and 6 miles times are official. The week before, Klopf er had turned in a 1:54:32 15 mile on the road with
Dooley not participating and Ranney not finishing. Goetz's last mile was 7:21.6. Incidentally, Klopfer's 20 Kilometer time in the December track race reported two months ago 1:34:42, not 1:32:42. Still fast.

Now a rundown of many, many results from round and about, including zillions from jolly old England. Just got 9 missing issues of Athletics Weekly all in one big envelope.

4 Mile, Sonoma State College Track--1. Tan Dooley 28:47.6 2. Goetz Klopfer 29:15 3. Bill Ranney 30:15 4. Jim Lopes 33:23.4 5. Steve Lund 33:41.8 5. Manny Adriano 33:43.4 7. Phil Moors 37:00.6 (Incidentally, this time was reported as 28:47.5, but the rules state that at distances over a mile times are given to the nearest half minute.)

By the same token, Tom's 10 kilo record reported above must go into the books as 44:27.0. Halpern 1's Pentathlon, some where around San Francisco--1. Larry Green, USAF 14:56 2 mile, 42.0 440, 67:25 8 mile, 1:39 440, 5:15 1 kilo--3350 pts,)


to 17:08 on his fifth lap, he rallied well with a 16:48 on the last one.

Meanwhile, Barry Richardson was also completing his first 20 km in fine fashion. For a fellow out for health and recreation who manages only 2 or 3 sessions of 3 to 6 miles weekly, this former A.A.A. Class III (or is it 3) half miler (reference to the British Standards system, which we might do well to pursue in this country) does jolly well. Today, he went well under his 15 km time of last spring on this course and then hung on for a good 1:58:11. Although walking sort of a rundown race, he never lost style and wasn’t in any great distress at the finish. Barry’s laps were 6:58, 17:14, 17:59, 17:44, 16:39, 19:25, and 19:42. The old master, Clair Duckham, built up an early lead on Larry James and then held on for fourth in 2:11:20. Surprisingly, he then decided he was going to forego the 4-mile run he had been planning on, which was to start a half-hour later. At 62, old Duck must be getting old. Larry foresook his usual bullet start and later fadeout and walked a steady pace for a 2:13:34.

Two other starters. Dale Arnold, who put on the race provided excellent prizes and good chow afterwards, but who hadn’t trained since the Canadian 50, went through the first four laps, and was leading James after 3, before hitting the wall. Bob Smith, from Dayton, was giving the sport a first try and went through the little lap and first big one in 30:24. He then decided to save his energies for the 4-mile run, but promised to be back for more races. He showed good style, which only needs a bit of finesse to be loosened up a bit to get him going well.

Hohne Rolls On

As if he needed to, the fantastic East German, Christo Hohne, proved his greatness once again on October 18, bettering his own world records at both 30 miles and 50 kilometers. He was 4:00:06.4 at 30 miles and 4:08:05 at the end, which is a 7:59.2 average. The last mile and 120 yards was in 7:56.6, which would be just about 7:30 for the mile. Very fast indeed, but not as fast as his finish when he set the old records of 4:02:33 and 4:10:15.8. No details on other finishers at this time.

U.S. Shows Well Abroad

At the personal expense of the athletes involved, the U.S. managed to get a team to Switzerland for the annual Airolo-Chisone road relay. Accompanied by manager-coach Bruce MacDonald, the team of Bill Ranney, Ron Laird, Bob Lowman, Steve Hayden, and Gary Westerfield made a good showing in finishing fourth. The relay consists of five legs of varying lengths over the road between the two small Swiss villages. It is a very popular event in Europe and draws a mixture of national and club teams. This year’s race was won by a strong Italian team, with a group representing the city of London in second, and Sweden third. The total distance is 114 kilometers.

The first leg covers 27 kilometers and is mostly downhill, starting at 6000 feet. Bill Ranney handled the chores for the U.S. on this one starting at 6:30 a.m. in more than just chilly temperatures. Gabriele Nigro of Italy set a new course record of 2:11:52.6 on this one to get the Italians winging to a 2:16 minute lead. Bill came in eighth (14 teams) but left us only 6 minutes back of the fourth place team as he handed over to Ron Laird for a 30 Km. leg. (I say handed over. I don’t know if you carry a baton in one of these affairs or not, or merely touch hands. Maybe one of our experts who were there can tell me.)

The 30 km leg was mostly on the flat and the temperature was up to 45 by the time Ron started off. Ron had the third fastest time on his leg and brought the U.S. up to fifth. His 2:25:08.2 trailed Abdon Pamich’s 2:23:34.6 and Peter Schuster’s 2:24:36. Schuster was walking for a German club, Eitracht Frankforte. Pamich’s leg
Upcoming Races:
NAAU Sr. 20 Km, Pomona, California, 5:30 p.m., Saturday, June 14—this promises to be a very exciting race and one that should be well worth attending. It looks like they are really going all out to make it a very swinging affair. However, I must take exception to their claiming an innovation by having cloth numbers. We had them here at the 15 km, although, on my limited budget they were only an old bed sheet cut-up with numerals in crayon. The cloth numbers are much less bother to the walker and hold up through rain or buckets of sweat.

NAAU Sr. 2 Mile, Miami, June 23
NAAU Jr. 10 Km, Milwaukee, July 4—All you juniors—don't miss this one if you can help it. Larry Larson reports, "On July 4th is being planned what might be perhaps the most unique race-walking event ever seen in this country (in the world???) and it will be a legitimate walk!!! Every year the Schlitz Brewing Co. of Milwaukee sponsors a week-long festival called "Old Milwaukee Days" with the highlight being the world-famous Circus Parade (from the Baraboo, Wis. Circus Museum). This attracts over 300,000 people to Milwaukee and they line the streets of the entire parade route. We are planning the National Jr. 10 Kilometer race walk to be contested over the parade route before the parade itself. Along with the spectator awareness, there very likely will be television and other coverage of the event." So, for further details and entries, contact Larry Larson, 909 Ostergaard Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin 53406.

NAAU Sr. 35 Km, McKeesport, Pa., Saturday, July 12, 1 p.m.—for entry blanks write C.A. Herman, 5001 Louise Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15207.

NAAU Jr. 2 Mile, Milwaukee, Saturday, July 5—a good chance to make two nationals for the cost of one.

And Announcing the First Annual Tour of Ohio Walks: The first event is a One Hour at Worthington High School on June 5, which will have been contested by the time you get this. Other dates, with the distances still to be determined are:
June 23—Cincinnati—write Paul Reback, 603 K Dewdrop Circle, Cincinnati, O 45240
July 13—Van Wert—10 Mile (date might be changed in light of 35 Km National the 12th)—for information write Jack Blackburn, R.R. 2, Van Wert, Ohio.
July 27—Dayton—for information write Dale Arnold, 2120 Ward Hill, Dayton, O 45420
Aug. 20—17—Auburn (haven't heard from Newell to verify that this race will be held)
Points will be awarded in each race of the tour and awards given at the conclusion to the high scorers.

Who knows what has happened to Paul Schell? I got his last ORW back marked unknown. Used the same address as always. Of course, he's paid up through January 1971, so I should care. Certainly shows that Paul is a real optimist. I'd never gamble on this rag lasting that long.

Say, how about some race-walking limericks:

There was a young walker named Dean,
Who forgot to apply Vaseline;
He got raw, he got red,
Would have rather been dead,
For more races he's not very keen.

Or, same thing, another version

There was a young walker named Sweeney,
Who forgot to apply Vaseline;
50 K was the race,
At a hot, chafing pace,
As he finished, he stepped gingerleeny.

Or, for those that remember the Cromwell theory (which we must soon resurrect):

There was a young walker from Erie, Who didn't believe Cromwell theory,
The girls he'd enrapture, Prove his physical stature,
Then win all his races, though weary.
There was a young fellow from Natick, whose behavior was very erratic,
Threw his hips all around, kept one foot on the ground,
He was merely a walking fanatic.

And finally,
There was a young runner from Goorort, Took a fling at the old heel-and-toe sport,
When he flew off the ground, with a skip and a bound,
The judges said, "None of that here, sport".

Which all brings us around to the can of worms that we started to open last month. Apparently at least some think that the judges haven't been saying such things enough. If you will recall the last installment, we published a letter from Jim Hanley discussing what he felt was very poor judging at the Indoor Mile and referring to pictures he had to back up his contention. Your may also recall that we offered little comment at that time but did promise to bring you these pictures and asked for reader opinion on the subject.

On the last three pages of this issue, you will find these notorious pictures, taken at the NA U 1 Mile in Philadelphia. I have received comments from several readers suggesting that I not publish these pictures and some of their reasons for this suggestion are sound. However, I feel that the pictures are revealing and that they do bring to light a sticky situation. The question is, what conclusions can be drawn from the pictures? The next several pages discuss the whole area of judging in some depth, with comment both by myself and several readers. If nothing else, I hope this gets each of you to thinking about the problem, if we conclude that there is indeed a problem, and to reach some conclusions about what can or should be done.

First, a few general comments on the pictures. And the first of these is that I hope those shown in the pictures will understand that there is nothing personal on my part, or on Jim Hanley's part, in bringing these pictures to you. Of the four pictures, only two actually indicate that there may have been anything amiss with the judging. The first picture shown doesn't actually show anyone off the ground. Although it indicates Romansky probably was off, a picture in which one foot is on the ground doesn't prove anything about contact or lack of contact. It certainly couldn't be used for post-race disqualification. The second picture on that page is also meaningless. It shows Ron Daniel clearly off, but since he was disqualified it actually supports the quality of judging. The other two pictures however, leave no doubt. Messrs. Pamich and Romansky are obviously way off.

So, there are the pictures. The question now is, what value should we place on them? Before I go further, let me bring you some of the reader's comments. Then I will offer my own opinions, for what they are worth, and finally, I will give the floor to Chris McCarthy, who has some very interesting and provocative things to say.

From Ron Laird: "I don't think you ought to send out the picture of Pamich off the ground that Hanley is sending you. This man is one of the greatest athletes race walking has ever had and because of this commands our respect. This picture could hurt our sport if got into the hands of the wrong people. A one mile race on a bouncy wooden track is no place to look for good contact. I'm willing to bet I was off plenty of times but was simply lucky in not getting any photographic proof of it taken. I wish some of us wouldn't get so serious about one mile races. We should concentrate our efforts on the international distances."

From Bob Bowman: "Just a quick comment on the Nat. Indoor 1 Mile controversy. I really hate to see these things get out of hand. After much thought on the subject, I've come to the conclusion that by printing these photos in the ORW you would do more harm for the sport than good. I fully agree with Jim and feel photos are definitely helpful in analyzing people's form and should be sent to the judges involved so they can get a better feel for what's going on. However, I also feel that airing such a delicate thing as to who is a bad walker or judge in the only
national paper we have could set us back instead of helping to advance our quality as well as quantity of race walking in the U.S. Even though I'm often quite upset over East Coast judging and often disagree with Charlie's views on the subject, I feel the place to air this thing out is with the judges themselves. After all, we owe a lot to Bruce and Charlie and they are ones involved here. I was at first in favor of sending the letter and these photos out, now I am not. Neither is Laird by the way. We don't like the idea of exposing a photo of an Olympic 50 km Champ off the ground, when you and I both know that indoor 1 mile walks are unfair to rate individual's walking ability. I, like you, am semi-opposed to 1 milers. However, in order to expose the sport to the public and to keep the event closely allied to the rest of T&F, I'm in favor of them. I always tell our guys to take them with a grain of salt—use them as training, condition indicators, etc. It's for these reasons that I personally voted against sending (or paying out of our own treasury) a Strider team to the National Indoor Meet. I feel Track and Field is an outdoor sport and that we should concentrate our efforts in getting our top people to major outdoor meets and National Championships.

"Anyway Jack, Jim is one of our better people in the sport and I know he means well, but by including these photos in the OFW, I feel we would be slighting people like Charlie and Bruce, who we just can't afford to slight. Also, I feel Jim would suffer. . . . Jim's letter should do the job." (Ed. Well, obviously I didn't take Bob's advise. But I should state that, as with the walkers involved, no offense is meant to Charlie Silcock, Bruce MacDonald, or Henry Laskau.)

From Gerry Willwerth: "Jim makes the statement that 'It is extremely difficult to catch a walker with both feet off the ground in a still photograph.' So what of the poor guys who have to watch a thrashing field of eight or more walkers doing a mile in under 7 minutes, making (or not making) 1/100th of a second contacts, when the human eye can only detect 1/15th of a second actions? The problem seems without resolution, short of eliminating all distances below 50 K (but that sure is arbitrary and impractical, since guys are off in these races, too). Perhaps we must find some way to train judges so they're as competent as officials in the NFL or NBA. Also teach them to adopt the attitude that everyone is running until he proves himself otherwise. So that, like the rule says, no doubt whatsoever is raised in the judge's mind. Make them hate us during the race and use complete 100% objectivity. Of course, they should be our friends before and after the race, offering expert advice and information, based on the training they have received."

Brief summary of conversations with Doc Blackburn: Doc, as always, is completely opposed to one and two mile walks and feels everyone is running. He agrees it is possible to be in contact at such speed but feels you lose it as soon as you start to tire and lose the least control. He agrees with Hanley's ideas on photographic judging. He also made some comments reflecting back to what Gerry Willwerth has stated above, suggesting that perhaps we should start paying judges, just as officials in other sports are paid. Make them professionals and get a professional job. If they are compensated financially, they may be less inclined to avoid those calls that know are going to cause bickering afterwards. Thicken their skin with green stuff, I guess.

From Bill Ranney: "There certainly is no question that the entire country's judging leaves far too much to be desired. When we traveled around the U.S. for the past two summers, we were really shocked by what went on in the different areas. A few areas have strict judges—but only a few! . . . If a judge has the courage to call a walker, or D' him, then the athlete should take it constructively or get out of the game. Having a few judges (like McKay in Boston, or Rosenstein, Carroll, Fekete, and Chisholm) who make a call and then explain why and what can be done to correct the problem. If the athlete doesn't correct the problem after 10-12 months then he should be banned from any National meets. England does this—and that is where walking started! Other sports also cut their competitors that don't live up to standards. I personally am tired of doing what Jim Hanley described—traveling to meets to have people run away."
Now, my own comments. I tend to agree with one thing that comes out of several of the above commentaries, i.e. that the fault shown in these pictures lies largely with the race, not with the judges or the competitors. I don't feel anyone is deliberately cheating, but at that speed, it is impossible for a walker to really know if he is on or off—he knows he is very close. If no one calls him, he keeps pressing and continues pressing and assumes all is okay. It is the judges job then to tell them otherwise. And I feel that they are honestly and sincerely doing the best job they can. Perhaps, as indicated by the pictures, this isn't good enough. But lets look at the job they are faced with. I don't think that it is impossible to walk legally at 1-mile speed, I saw some slow-motion film in Chicago at the 10 taken at Lake Tahoe of guys doing fast 110s that indicates that it isn't. But, obviously you have to be right on the edge, and as Doc indicates the least fatigue can through you right up. However, I do think it is utterly impossible to judge contact objectively at this speed. It must become a subjective decision on the part of the judge based on how he thinks the guy looks. (McCarthy has some interesting comment along this line.)

As to photography being used for post-race judging, this is a possibility that may deserve consideration. However, I can see a lot of difficulties. As Jim points out, it is very difficult to get a still picture taken at just the right instant to show double contact or lack thereof. And if you do, is it fair to judge a whole race on a single stride? For instance, I got one caution at the 10 km when Mike Riban says I looked back and jumped off as a result. Otherwise, he felt my style was fine throughout. A picture taken at that instant would have shown me off and subject me to disqualification. Also, is it fair to disqualify one man whom the camera catches off while you have no photographic evidence one way or the other on others? I'm not offering answers, but these are questions that would have to be considered.

Movies are, of course, better than still photos, but not very practical. It's a bit expensive to take slow-motion film of an entire 20 km race, covering all competitors, for instance, but would isolated parts of the race be fair? And, even at 64 frames a second, you still don't get the double-contact, or double-lack-of-contact, phase very often. This was again shown in the films I saw in Chicago, with everyone in heated arguments over whether that heel would get down before the toe (while I stood back chuckling at these grown men.) The next frame the heel was down and the toe up. So seldom did you really know. (This further indicates the burden we place on the eyes of our judges and how difficult their job is.) So to really do the job photographically, it would take high-speed photography, probably 200 or more frames a second, and who can afford that. Someone else can tell me just how many feet of film it would take to do just a 1-mile race.

So, to wrap up the pictures. It appears obvious that people were walking illegally in the 1 mile who weren't disqualified. As Laird indicates, with enough pictures we might have caught everyone off. What do we do? One alternative is to forget about races under, say, 10 km, which are not what the sport is really all about anyway. But, as Bowman points out, these races do have certain value in promoting the sport, and from all I hear they are more appreciated all the time. Another alternative is suggested by both Laird and Bowman—just don't take things so seriously. Or we can tell the judges to get extremely tough—throw out anyone that leaves the least doubt, as Gerry Millervih suggests. Of course, no one finishes. Finally, we can go to some very expensive judging device such as high-speed photography, or electronic equipment attached to each competitor. Something that will knock him off the track the moment he loses contact. I sort of go for the second alternative myself—let the guys race that want to at these distances, but don't take it so doggone seriously.

This, however, doesn't clear up the whole can of worms that has been opened up on judging in general. And Jim Hanley and Dick Ortiz are not the only people I have heard from that are upset. So where do we stand on judging?
There is no doubt that the overall standard of judging in this country can be, and should be, improved. If nothing else, we need more judges. But, at any point in time, we must be willing to accept the present level of competence, while working to improve it, and to place our faith in the judges we have and accept their decisions. Otherwise, we aren't going to have a sport. The griping I often hear after races turns me off completely. I regard it as nothing but very poor sportsmanship. I sometimes think that too many people forget that walking is, after all, a sport, and that the ultimate measurement of one's success is satisfaction in one's own performance. I could care less if I am 1st or 10th or with how other guys looked in front of me so long as I can be reasonably satisfied with how I performed. I guess I have never experienced this thing of traveling to a meet only to have people run away from me because I have never been involved in judging while I walked.

I think we can all agree that judging is very difficult at best. So where does anyone get the gaul to think they can judge while walking. Not only judge, but do it better than someone who has nothing else to do and has some degree of experience at the job. Any, yet I constantly hear too many people trying to do it. The griping that results is not going to improve judging, but it might well completely alienate the judges so we lose the few that we have. Certainly, as stated above, the level of our judging can stand improvement and our judges should constantly be seeking this improvement. At the same time, we should be doing all we can constructively to help them; instituting whatever programs we can to develop and improve judges. But when it comes to a race, if we are not willing to leave judging to the judges and to concentrate our own efforts on walking, we have no business in the race. Judges judge. Walkers walk. It's that simple. And after the race we are all friends offering sound, constructive advice to one another, and worrying only about improving our own performance the next time out—be it walking or judging.

Now to the word from the guru of American race walking, the father of 50 km walking, editor of the now defunct Race Walker, and a man who once said 7:26.3 was the limit of legal walking (or some such time) since that was as fast as he ever went—Chris McCarthy. Chris goes on as follows:

"When you approached me after the 10 Km Championship in regard to the style prize, my first thought was how eminently unqualified a judge is to make that kind of a decision. When you judge a race you look at feet. There may be a walker attached and he may have good style, but your concern, as a judge, is with locking and contact. The coaches are probably the best qualified to judge style; at least they should be, since teaching good style is an important part of coaching. Our only concern, qua judging is with legality. What goes on upstairs to produce what happens downstairs is not our department. (Coaches on the other hand could hardly be expected to be impartial, since they are apt to have men in the race, judges must be impartial.)

On judging itself, I recently found myself a member of an AAU Rules Subcommittee. Our jurisdiction includes judging rules and if anyone has anything to contribute on this score they would do us all a favor by contacting our Chairman, Charlie Silcock, PO Box 200, Times Square Station, New York, NY. Charlie is very good about distributing information and ideas to all members of his Committee and it is better to get your two cents in before decisions are made than to get them in later—if you can.

As readers of the ORW know, we are now on some variation of the International Race Walking rules. For example, we can now use red and white flags. The red flag is given for a violation of the rules (lifting or creeping) and results in immediate dq. Or should I say inevitable dq. Possibly the walker will not see the red flag until he has finished; but he'll still be dq'd. We also have white flags. These white flags differ from our old warning. Under the old rules you were allowed to lift or creep once. Then you were warned. The second time you were dq'd. Now there is no second time. A violation of the rules results in immediate dq. You need not have had a white flag prior to receiving the red flag. To that extent, the new rules are tougher.

Unfortunately, along with the new rules, we left in the 220 rule! Unfortunate from the viewpoint of clarity. For as things now stand you can be thrown out
at any point in the race with no prior warning; and you can be thrown out in the last 220 with no prior warning. Certainly the second part is redundant.

About the white flags there appears to be confusion. At least I'm confused. Not about what they mean, or why they are given, but about what happens after they are given. We know from the rules that they are given when it appears to the judges that a walker is "in danger" of violating the rules. We also know that he is only "entitled" to one such white flag. But the question arises: What happens to the walker who receives more than one—i.e., more than he is "entitled" to. Is a second white flag the equivalent of a red flag? I would rather think not. If that is the case we will be dq'ing walkers because it appears to the judges that they are about to do something which, if they do it, will result in their being ejected. I refer to wait until they actually do it and then give them the heave-ho. The way I read it, the white flag is a courtesy to which the walker is entitled—once. Should he be fortunate enough to be told more than once that he is in danger, well then, he is that much better off. Nonetheless, he will not be ejected until he is off.

Which brings me to my next point. I would like to see something like this written into the rules: "Whenever possible, a judge or judges, when issuing either a caution or a disqualification, shall inform the walker being cautioned or disqualified the reason why such caution or disqualification is being given. Such information shall be given to the athlete, whenever possible, at the time that such caution or disqualification is given. If it is not possible to do so during the race, the athlete will be entitled to such information immediately following the end of the race."

I'll never forget poor Matt Nytyma, writing all over the world after the 50Km in Tokyo, trying to find out why he was dq'd. As far as I know, he never did find out. Which leaves us with the key question: Why bother to give a guy a white flag, telling him he looks dodgy, without at the same time giving him some clue as to what it is the judges are objecting to? And, of course, the same goes for the red flag. How's a guy to improve unless you tell him what you're throwing him out for. I think most walkers and judges and coaches will support a rule of this sort. I think.

The next point to mention is that we now allow judges to judge from vehicles. I find, talking to athletes, a divided opinion on this. On this score I have concluded that while under certain circumstances it might be useful, it should be clearly understood that under no circumstances should a judge ever attempt to judge from any vehicle that he is operating. But given that a judge is being chauffered, there is the advantage that he can extend his judging zone. (Note: The term "judging zone" is basic to our sport and might well be expanded upon here with profit. Much confusion in our sport exists because too many of us forget that a judge can only cover a miniscule portion of a race at any one time. It is this portion that I call his "judging zone". I define it as a segment of a path the walker is taking, starting about 20 meters before, and extending to 15 meters beyond a point about 10 meters directly in front of the judge. Or more simply put, to judge a walker you should be standing about 10 yards away from where he will pass and you should be able to see him coming for about 20 yards and leaving for about 15 yards.)

Second Note: We might also profit from a short discussion of what it is that a judge does when he has a walker in his "judging zone". First: It is fundamental to realize that a judge never sees a violation, he infers it, that inference being his judgement. The only exception is really bad creeping; marginal creeping is difficult to place with exactitude—although here, as in lifting, experience helps. Second: What a judge does see, and what makes our sport possible at all, is "floating". When a guy is floating he gives the appearance of being up high; when he is ultralegal, like Laird in this year's 10 km, he gives the appearance of being down "tight" against the ground. Now floating is a matter of degree. A guy can be high and still on the ground. But somewhere along the line he "takes off". It is up to the judge to say just when. On this point judges may differ. And they may be right or wrong (as later revealed by a camera, preferably 64 frames per second, slow motion, or video tape, which is continuous.) Nevertheless, when competent judges are working a race, it is certain that they will know which walkers are marginal, even if they fail to point out on which side of the margin the walker is. Thus, it is entirely possible for a dq'd walker to later come up with films showing that at the instant he was dq'd he was actually on the ground. But I believe that, at least with competent judges, the same films will show that he was marginal, probably very marginal.
The important point here, and we might just as well face it, is this: Judging is not an exact science. All that a judge can do is to detect the marginal walker (but he can do that with certainty) and then make a judgement about where he will draw the line. The moral of this is: With competent judging the good walkers will never be dq'd; the poor walkers will always be dq'd; the marginal walkers will constantly be in trouble. And if fact that is pretty much what happens. The worst walkers either change or I leave the sport. The result is that the worst of those still are around are the marginal walkers. These are the guys who get by here, but not there and cause a lot of trouble all around. Nonetheless, ideally at least, it is the judges duty to let them finish when they look ok and to eject them when they don't. The good judge is not the guy who tosses out the most walkers. He is the guy who tosses out the right walkers and earns a reputation for fairness. (here Chris cites some specific cases, but I am running out of space and he has more of interest to say.)

It has been my experience that whereas a creeper will creep along most of the race—unless you straighten him out—lifting is episodic. Lifting generally occurs for tactical reasons. Guys will bounce to a fast start to gain position; they will sprint when they pass, they will sprint to keep from being passed, they will sprint the last few yards, sometimes even when there is no one near them. And on each of these sprints there is a danger of lifting. Especially if they go into their sprint with a burst. An experienced judge knows this and he is looking for it.

The trouble with the one and two mile walks is that the average pace so fast that any increment in the pace is bound to push a guy to the margin. It is quite likely that Hanley's shots were made during sudden bursts; if those guys looked that bad all the way, then the judging really was bad!

Finally, while on this vein, I might mention that creeping and lifting are not the judges only bane. In addition walkers as a group have a most fanatic repertoire of the oddest gaits, limps; shuffles, hop, leaps, and bounds imaginable. And some that can't be imagined; they have to be seen, for there is no way to describe them. And in each case the judge has to make up his mind if the basic rules of contact and locking are being observed. In this regard, I find it best to concentrate on the feet alone for contact and the knees alone for straightening and not to concern oneself with style problems......(have to leave a little more out)

And maybe I should say something about the psychology underlying the walker-judge relationship. A naive judge, especially if he is an ex-walker who never tried to take advantage of the rules, is apt to think of the walkers he is judging as having a similar outlook. But this may not be the case. It is best for the judge to assume nothing at all, to simply watch for violations and make his decisions from a completely even mind. For example, there are guys who, when cautioned, will not slow down. They may be playing a game of "chicken"; if the judge chickens out and doesn't toss them out the can win or place well up. But that's not the only reason a guy may fail to shape up after a warning. There are others who are willing to risk everything in a do-or-die effort to win. Such a walker, if he does get dq'd is apt to take it as part of the high cost of doing business. In addition, judges themselves might get psyched out if they are awed by a walker's reputation, or if they try to make allowance for the fact that the guy came hundreds, maybe even thousands of miles, at his own expense, in order to compete.

In each of these cases, and all similar ones, the judge is best advised to do his job and let the chips fall where they may. With so many cameras around, these days, the truth will out anyway. In the short run, cameras might cause embarrassment all around when the pictures are released; but in the long run I think they help liberate judges from holding back from doing what has to be done. At any rate, photos such as Hanley's should not be suppressed. To do so only give life to rumors, which are worse than anything the film shows. Our basic ills will not go away by pretending they do not exist......

Again, let me urge anyone with any thoughts on these matters to make their suggestions known to Charlie Silcock, who will distribute them to the Rules Committee.

That concludes Chris's thoughts, and about six pages on the judging crisis. A letter is on its way from Charlie, but obviously there is not room if it were here. We will publish his thoughts next month. And let me reemphasize Chris's admonition that you write Charlie with your thoughts. You can send copies of such letters to me if you wish, but I don't have 6 pages a month to devote to judging.
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