BIG, BAD BEARDO!

Worthington, August 31--The bearded giant, also known at various times as the cigar-smoking fat man and the great Red Duck, strode out of the Northland, without his Blue Ox, to capture the final race in the Tour of Ohio Series—the now famed Labor Day 6 Mile 536 Yard Handicap (held the day before Labor Day). Starting 11 minutes after the gun and behind everyone except handicapper Jack Mortland, the guru of the walking world (also known as Jack Blackburn, by the way) had caught the entire field early in the last of the four laps and went on to win by over a minute. Blackburn's time of 50:25, almost exactly 8 minutes per mile, was quite commendable in the very hot, sticky conditions. As a matter of fact, this was the hottest race of the series.

Paul Reback held on to slightly over half of the 1½ minute advantage he had on Mortland at the start and passed the rest of the field to capture second. In the process, he captured second place in the point standings for the six-race series, nosing out the vacationing Barry Richardson by one point. Mortland, finishing third here, already had the series wrapped up with victories in the first five races.

Wayne Yarch o, who was tied with Reback coming into the race, missed his chance when he dropped out with 2 laps to go. Blackburn, in only his second tour race, tied his father, the doctor, for fourth in the series. The Doc walked a strong race today in fourth place. In another tight series finish, Dale Arnold easily beat Larry James today to finish one point ahead of him. The races were scored 7 points for first, 5 for second, 4 for third, 3 for fourth, 2 for fifth, and 1 for finishing.

In today's race, Blackburn hardly needed the generous one minute handicap Mortland gave him. As a matter of fact, it should have been reversed, since he won by 63 seconds on time. Actually, the whole handicap turned out to be rather useless, since the only difference between actual finishes and places on time was Reback's beating Mortland. It is hard to imagine that this could be any fault of the handicapper since I was the handicapper. Well, here are the results (with actual times shown and handicaps in parentheses):


Three weeks earlier, the fifth race in the series was held over 5 miles on the Ashland College track, in, of all places, Ashland, Ohio. Host Chuck Newell was rewarded with the largest field of the summer—10 eager walkers, including great-with-child Jeanne Bocci. (Not too great at 4 months, however.) Jack Mortland scored a rather easy win in a not-very-spectacular 39:49. After a 7:50 mile he did three 8 flats and then kicked home with 7:59. Jerry Bocci, just getting back in shape, hung close for 2 miles in 16:00 but then gradually slowed down to 8:32 on his last mile. Karl Herschenz was third in a race he came to watch. He had broken a bone in his foot shortly after his fine 35 km in Pittsburgh and had had the cast off only about 10 days. ith only a few strolls behind him he still couldn't
getting in the race and did quite well. The real race was for fourth. Barry Richardson, Wayne Yarcho, and Doc Blackburn were on each other's heels the entire distance and entered the last lap neck and neck. However, the younger Richardson exploded a 1:58 with very good style, and left the old cats well in his wake. And Yarcho was just a little too quick for the doctor as both of these second-half century gents bettered 9-minute miles. Chuck Newell, in about his third walk since last year's 50 km in Frisco, and that includes one other race, bombed out in 9:05 and then managed to hold close to 10 minute pace in a commendable performance. Dale Arnold led Larry James all the way for 8th place, although Larry was starting to pull him back at the end. The pregnant Mrs. Bocci went through 2 miles in 19:07, with a 9:05 first mile. The results:


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AMERICANS ABROAD

Ron Laird had another very successful trip to Europe this summer and Tom Dooley, although expressing dissatisfaction with his performances, did well in his own right. Ron left for Europe with the Western Hemisphere team that competed against Europe in Stuttgart. Ollan Cassell and Dan Ferris had requested a walk for this meet but the Europeans did not want it. So Ron had a week or so to train before the U.S.-West German meet in Augsburg August 5 and 6. Dooley, who is summering in England, joined the team in Augsburg. Three days before the meet a Volksmarch was arranged for them by an old friend of Bob Hima's, who Ron had contacted. Two young West Germans, one the Junior National champion, joined them for the 10,900 meter spin mostly on a dirt path through the pines. Described as a very rough course by both Ron and Tom, Laird covered the course in 47:52, about 6 minutes ahead of the course record. Klaus Springer, the Jr. champion, finished just ahead of Dooley, who treated the race purely as a training spin.

The match race in Augsburg was a 10 km on the track. The opposition consisted of Bernhard Nermerich and Julius Mueller, both very capable internationalists. Laird was very much concerned about them and really pushed out with 6:43 and 13:38. At 2 Dooley was in fourth place with 13:51. Laird continued to push and the others were forced to drop back as he hit 20:50, 27:58, and 35:05 before slowing down the last mile to record 44:07.4 for the 10 km. Dooley, meanwhile battled hard and caught Mueller at 3 miles and Nermerich at 3½. Nermerich was too strong over the last 4 laps though and coped the second spot in 44:43.2. Tom came home in 44:55 (according to him, 44:45 according to official reports.) Mueller flew through at the end (literally according to Tom) to nearly catch Dooley with 44:59.2.

One week later, the American pair was in London for a 20 km in the U.S.-Great Britain meet. Two days before Laird took part in a 6 miler in Battersea Park and won easily with a course record 44:56. In the 20 km, Paul Mihill did not complete, saving himself for another international match. Laird was apparently at his best and it may have been a very interesting race had Paul been there. As it was, Laird broke the race open after 5 kilometers and won by over two minutes. The race was not limited to match competitors, and Shaun Lightman and Goetz Klopfer, competing as guests, actually finished second and third. In the match, Peter Fullager and Bill Sutherland, of G.B., finished ahead of Dooley, who still turned in a very good 92:41.

Laird led at 5 kms in 22:43 with Fullager in fourth at 22:49 (excluding Lightman and Goetz, who were probably somewhere near. [Dave splits for only the four match competitors.) Then Ron bombed the next 5 in 21:37 to pass 10 in 44:20, 62 seconds ahead of Sutherland. Dooley was in third with 45:54 and Fullager fourth in 46:10. Ron had 66:50 at 15 and better than 2 minutes over Sutherland.
Tom hit a bad patch in here and was fourth in 70:16, 41/2 seconds back of Fullager. Sutherland then blew up over the last 5 and Tom just missed catching him. Lightman walked a tremendous race, just 3 days after winning the 38 mile Hastings to Brighton. Klopfers had easily his best 20 kilometer and continues to amaze us with his speed. With this win over Dooley, he certainly ranks as the number two U.S. walker of the year, regardless of distance. Laird's final time of 90:26 is probably second only to his performance in Bad Saarow in 1967. Although he has had two other faster times (Poland 1965, Italy 1967) both were on unquestionably short courses. Certainly Ron is as strong and fast as ever this year. He indicated this further by coming home a few days later and winning the National 40 in Long Branch. (See story later in this issue. I don't have any details on that race at all yet but want to get as much of this done today as I can. Both Blackburn and Arnold were out there but can't tell me much about it so I have an S.O.S. out to Elliott Deman.) The results of the London race: 1. Ron Laird, U.S. 90:26 2. Shaun Lightman, Guest 92:42 3. Goetz Klopfers, Guest 93:16 4. Peter Fullager, G.G. 93:47 5. Bill Sutherland, G.B. 94:39 6. Tom Dooley, U.S. 94:41. (Laird's time broke Smaga's course record.)

**KING SHAUL**

Shaull Ladany, representing his native Israel where he is residing again, swept both races in the Maccabiah Games, setting two records in the process. The 10 km. was a new event—he had to set a record there. Howie Jacobsen represented the U.S. well with a second and a third and Max Gould captured a third and fourth for Canada. The other Canadian, Joe Levy, had the misfortune to be disqualified in both races. Both races were held on the track. The results:


Thanks to John Markon for the results. John also reports an interesting sidelight to the Ladany character: "These were sent to me by my old training buddy Shaul. But then he was everybody's training buddy. Prior to the Olympic Trials, he would train three times daily with three different people, each of whom had no knowledge of the other two parties and workouts. Apparently he is still in great shape, and as a consequence of the games can be considered 'world's fastest Jew' in race walking that is. I failed to qualify because of a certain omitted surgical procedure at birth."

My sincere apologies to Freddie Timcoe, who I have most grievously wronged, through my own stupidity. Fred was indeed eligible for the National Junior 35 Km title and most deservedly won it. One becomes ineligible for Junior races by winning either a Junior or Senior title, or by making an Olympic team. Making other International teams has nothing to do with it. I picked up the latter fallacy some time early in my career and had never bothered to check it, I guess.

A few of our "elder" members are taking to the running wars for relaxation. In July, Bill Walker won an over 30 track 2 mile in Detroit with 11:30 and Jerry Bocci finished third in 11:41. Last week, Jack Blackburn powered to an 11:29 win in an over 26 2 mile on a hilly cross-country course. And Hortland finished 8th in an open 3 mile cross country run in 19:20 on what had to be a long course.

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Other results from scattered clinics and times, in no particular order:
I am quite neutral in any East Coast- west Coast controversy, being from the Midwest where all the good walkers came from. Ron Zinn of course was from Chicago. Ron Neird was born in Kentucky, a sent part of his childhood right here in suburban
Columbus (Grandview), and really hit the top while living in Chicago. Larry Young is from Kansas City and Goetz Klopfen from Detroit. Not to mention internationalists Chris McCarthy, Jia Clinton, and Jack Hortland, Polish internationalist Matt Ruzya. Then there is the still improving Jerry Rocci, the oncoming Paul Reback, and one of the all-time greats, Jack Blackburn. All this plus former stars Akos Szekeley and Art Park. Having now settled where the walking capital actually is, it seems to me that National championships should indeed be that and be available periodically to all sections that have representative. And certainly we can't call Dave Rowensky, Bob Kitchen, Ron Daniel, Ron Kulik, Ray Somers, Gary Westerfield, Steve Hayden, et al. mediocre. It seems to me that the 20 and 50, being the most important races, should be split each year between the East of the Mississippi and West of the same stream. (Say one in Chicago and the other in Des Moines, or St. Louis.) And if you point to all the years that both were east of the Mississippi, I must point out that until Ron Laird emigrated there were only rare and isolated representative walkers out there. Prior to 1964, when the 50 km did go to Seattle, there was really no reason to have a major race in the West. There obviously is now, but not to the exclusion of the East Coast, which if we must discuss things in regional terms, is certainly competitive. And of course, the claim that all the good walkers are in California will probably be discounted by Dooley, Klopfen, and Ramsey, as they have told me that they don't put Snog City in the same state as they live. So there it is, another rambling, meaningless bunch of tripe. But all this regionalistic hoopla has turned me off since I started walking and we were looked on as outsiders when we ventured over the Alleghenys. Why don't people just admit all the good walkers come from here in the heartland and forget about it.

In any case, perhaps we should all take heed from the following article, which appeared recently in a British paper:

Dedicated long-distance walker Tom Lever was hard at it last night—deserving down the road. For 47-year-old Tom is convinced he has become the incredible shrinking man. The further he walks, the shorter he becomes and his rough estimate of 3,000 miles covered in the past two years has cost him two inches in height.

Tom, a demolition constructor from Henrietta Street, Bolton, goes on marathon walks to raise money for research into incurable disease. The discovery that he is shrinking came after a recent visit to hospital. He said last night: "When I first started walking two years ago, I was 5 ft 10 in. tall. When I had the check-up, it was discovered I am now only 5 ft 8 in. One theory is that my muscles are tightening up and making me compact and smaller. I seem to be losing about three quarters of an inch every thousand miles!"

But there was more for Tom last night from the medical world. Sain an orthopedic surgeon in Manchester, "I think he must have had his knees bent and when he was measured the second time. We do all tend to shrink a little as we get older due to a contraction of the joints, but it shouldn't happen to a man his age."

Meanwhile, Tom was on a practice walk—Bolton to Blackpool and back in 20 hours. If his estimate of his rate of disappearance is correct, he has only 102,000 miles left before he vanishes altogether. "My favorite walk is to Blackpool," he said, "but at this rate, I'll be staying there permanently—in a sideshow on the Golden Mile!"

Or, while with the balmy British, How about this from the May 11 Sunday Times:

"Keep a good straight leg, swing your arm sideways, and, whatever you do don't stop," is the considered advice of 65-year-old Russell Wright of Macclesfield, Cheshire, to the 49 men and one woman who this morning will be out to better his time of 3 hr. 14 min. for walking the 12 miles up and down over the moors to Buxton—backwards. Mr. Wright, now a semi-recluse living in a ramshackle terrace-house with two yawning dogs and many-lensed mementoes of his days as a backward-looking breakaway from Macclesfield Barriers, recalls that when he came to a hero's halt over the finishing-line outside Buxton Town Hall in 1950, "I immediately became dizzy and fell flat on my back."
Today's 50 contestants have been short-listed from more than a thousand applicants for a race organized by Granada Television's Nice Time program, with a first prize of a 10-day Mediterranean cruise for two, second of 30 guineas, and third of 15 guineas. Witnessed timings over a forward-walking mile eliminated all women except Mrs. Dorothy Morey of Broadbottom, Cheshire, a 30-year-old machinist in a glove factory who says she attends a weekly keep fit class and is rather hurt that her sons, aged 12 and 8, have opted to watch Daddy stock-car racing at Doncaster instead of him walking backwards.

The contestants, mostly from the North and under 30, who will be filmed from helicopter and truck for the subsequent scrutiny of some 12 million telly-viewers, will each have a pacer walking forwards behind them to warn them of what lies ahead over a road that goes seven miles uphill to 1800 feet above sea level, then five miles downhill. They will be able to rib them that they have just passed the county boundary sign reading "Welcome to Derbyshire", but will have their work cut out at the outset of the race when the field comes to the 106 stone steps winding down to the valley behind Macclesfield's Gothic Town Hall. A local entrant on a reverse practice run down Step Hill last week commented, "It's like having Reachers at the start of the Grand National at Aintree."

Local opinion about what is billed as "The Norther Ot Bleifeslecam Walking Race" is divided between those who feel it most unfortunate that it coincides with the start of their second-ear festival, highlighting a deep-rooted tradition in choral singing, and those who maintain that walking backwards could do more to cut Macclesfield on the map. At a second attempt on his own record in 1963, Mr. Russell Wright was beaten by a Manchester man, Tony Gerrity, but discounts his time of 2 hrs 47 min. because "he had four pacers assisting him." He now hopes that his torch will be handed on to a Macclesfield man—perhaps David Harrison, 20-year-old manager of a delicatessen, who thinks nothing of a 20-mile Sunday walk over the moor.

"Cramps my only worry—I'm never out of breath, though I like my pint," he says. "My girl friend, a nurse, thinks I'm cracked, but I'd like to see this become an annual event. It could even work up into an Olympic Games event. Why not? Walking backwards couldn't look much sillier than the way they walk forward. (Ed. I'll second that. Unfortunately, I have no report of the result. But if I ever get one, I'll let you know, as I'm sure you write with bated breath.)

Well, sorry, still no results on the 40 and I have to wrap this thing up tonight.

All I know is that it was very hot and guys were dropping out like flies including Mr. Pedraza, that Laird won in something like 3:39 Blackburn thought, that either Kulik was second and Bocci third, or vice versa, that Campos of Mexico was fourth, and that Blackburn was 12th in 4:19. And that's all I know. Maybe by next month I can have results for you, stale though they may be, along with the 25 and the 50. Not much of a newspaper when you don't get the news, is it.

TOUGH CAT OF THE MONTH

Just about room here to throw in a tough cat of the month, which feature we haven't had room for lately. This month we feature the 28-year-old Huty, N.U. schoolteacher, Ron Kulik. Ron has been walking for 8 years with the New York A.C. and has long been a contender at all distances. Last year he qualified for altitude training in the 50 km. and was walking fifth in the final trial when he had to call it a day at 30 km. This year he has concentrated more on shorter distances and captured fourth in the two mile with 14:27. However, he was still strong enough to place high in the 40 km, as noted above. He has always been tough in the board 1 miles and has a best time of 6:39. Other top times include 14:22 for 2 miles, 1:16 for 10 miles, 3:06 for 35 km, and 4:31:39 for 50 km (the latter in San Francisco on a course generally conceded to be short.)

Ron started as a runner and tried walking when someone by the name of walker told him about the sport. He asked his coach for a time trial, did well, and con-
continued from there. In his running days he had best times of 4:58 for the mile, about 10:35 for 2, and around 27:30 to 28 for 5. He once ran the Boston Marathon "for kicks" and finished in 3:12.

Ron's training varies considerably with the time of year. From December to February he trains primarily for 1 mile races and covers from 35 to 40 miles a week. A typical week might go: 2 miles in 14:30 on Monday; 4x880 at 3:25 on Tuesday; 12x300 in 61 on Wednesday; 6 miles at about 50 min. on Thursday; 6x220 in about 40 on Friday; 1 mile race on Saturday; and 20 to 25 miles at 9 minute pace on Sunday. In March he starts distance training and over the next three months averages around 85 miles a week. A typical week might go: Monday—20x220, 45 sec.; Tue.—15 miles in 2:15; Wed.—2 miles of wind sprints; Thur.—18 miles in 2:40; Fri.—1 mile 6:50 to 7:00; Sat.—20-27 miles at 9 min. pace; and Sun.—15 mile stroll. Last year he stepped this training up in July and August and was doing about 100 miles a week, going 10 miles or more each day. After summer races, Ron's training tails off for three months to a sort of catch-as-catch-can thing as he coaches cross country. However he tries to train 7 days a week throughout the year. His training consists entirely of walking, with no running, weight training, special exercises, or other sports activities.

Ron is married and has two children. He plans to keep competing indefinitely. He sees a real need for competent coaches in this country, since he, as do many others, trains by himself and any mistakes he makes go undetected. He advises the young or beginning walker to concentrate on form and not develop bad habits that are hard to break. He suggests getting sound advice from those who know and to be patient. Ron has found race walking very awarding, affording him the opportunity to travel all over the country, to meet new people, and to see new things. Race walking has made him a respected and admired person in his community, for which he is very fortunate.

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