MORE RECORDS

With five new American records before spring even arrives, 1970 can't help but be the greatest in the history of U.S. race walking. Joining the record binge in March were Larry Walker with a 1:20.2 2 Mile and Dave Romansky with a 1:30:11.8 for 20 km. Reported last month were Ron Leird's Indoor 3 Mile best and Goetz Klopfer's records at 30 km and 20 miles (and we now have more details on that race).

Unfortunately we have no details yet on Larry Walker's fantastic 2 Yrile other than the fact that it came on March 14 at West Los Angeles during a track meet between the S.C. Striders, the Pacific Coast Club, and UCLA. Larry's time bettered the 1:29.2 put up by Rudy Heluza at Walnut, Calif, on April 16, 1966. Hopefully, we will have more detail before we put this issue to bed.

On March 15, Dave Romansky attacked Ron Laird's American 20 km record of 1:31:39.8 on the track at C.W.Post College in Greenvale, New York. With a fantastic effort over the last mile, Dave shattered the old mark and pulled a surprising Steve Hayden to within 26 seconds of the old mark. Actually, Steve, who has evidently taken a front at our rating of him in last month's preview, was a big help to Dave in going as far under the old record as he did. The following report from Charlie Silcock tells the story of the race between these two.

Romansky took the lead right from the start. Hayden was second all the way, gradually dropping back until he was about a half lap behind. He held this position during the middle of the race for several miles until Dave picked up the pace again. With about 2 miles to go, Dave tried to lap Steve and Steve tried valiantly to hold him off. The effort caused them both to go faster and faster with Dave finally getting by near the finish and both sprinting all out. Romansky was unofficially clocked at 6:55 for his last full mile. His twelfth mile took only 7:04 and he had 2:15:53 from there to the finish, which figures to be a 6:26 mile pace! His second half was considerably faster than the first, as shown by the mile splits given below. John Knifton also turned in an outstanding performance in third with 1:35:53, but was no match for the other two on this day. Dave's finishing speed on top of this pace would tend to frighten even the likes of Paul Mihill, one would think, but it apparently didn't frighten stout Steve Hayden who hung right with him. Romansky averaged 7:15.7 per mile, Hayden 7:21.7, and Knifton 7:23.9. Romansky's mile splits were: 7:10, 14:25 (7:25), 21:54 (7:29), 29:17 (7:23), 36:43 (7:26), 44:05 (7:22), 51:29 (7:24), 58:43 (7:14) (8 miles 335 yds. at 1 Hour), 1:05:51 (7:11), 1:13:07 (7:13), 1:20:22 (7:15), 1:27:26 (7:04). He must have been within a second one way or the other of Laird's 15 km record of 1:08:14. Hayden had covered 8 miles 41 yds at 1 Hour. The weather was cloudy and cold (35-40 F). The judges were Henry Leskau, Bruce MacDonald, and Charlie Silcock. Results of the race:

The other record, or records, reported last month with only scant information, including incorrect times, were those of Goetz Klopfen at 30 km and 20 miles. These records were set during a planned assault on the 20 mile record in Seattle on Feb. 22 and the official times were 2:26:39 and 2:37:57. This was strictly a solo effort for Goetz, with the nearest opposition over one-half hour behind. No information on splits. Another truly world class performance by a U.S. walker and when all of these record setters and a few others start banging heads this spring we might really see something. I figure that if I can turn in a 20 km little under 8 minute miles in a fast course, providing they are using the old shopping center course, I should be right there to see one heck-uva finish, albeit a lap behind.

**DIEBOLD FIRST IN IC4A**

New York, March 7-Greg Diebold scored a narrow victory in the IC4A (Intercollegiate Amateur Athletic Association of America) 1 mile walk outdistancing Clarence Buschert on the final lap. The race, in its tenth year, was held in Madison Square Garden and attracted 11 walkers from Eastern colleges. Diebold continued his consistent walking and recorded a 6:41.0, beating Buschert by 1 second. The meet record is 6:18.3, set by Ron Zinn in 1962. This was also an American record at the time. It's a good thing for the sport that this walk is included in a collegiate meet, and that it draws a good field, but unfortunate that it is not a scoring event. The results:


**DENVER MEET**

Last month we left two nomadic walkers in Columbus, Ohio, where they had both bettered the American Indoor 3-mile record, on their way to Denver for their third race in as many days. Having competed in New York on Friday night (A 1 mile) and in Columbus on Saturday afternoon, with little sleep between, and then having flown to Denver on Saturday night, one would expect them to be a bit weary and incapable of anything too startling over a 15 km route. Such was the case with Ron Laird, not yet in the best of shape anyway. But not with the up and coming Floyd Godwin, who conquered fatigue and the mile-high altitude, to record a 1:08:55.4 on a certified (AAU) running course. The weary Laird was left 6 minutes in his wake after hanging fairly close for about 3 miles. Karl Herschenz finished third and indicated that he is rounding back into shape after a long layoff. Results:


Two weeks later, the well-traveled Laird again journeyed to Denver to do battle with his new nemesis (while Larry Walker shattered the 2 mile record back home). Saturday (March 14) saw Laird come home first in an indoor two mile at the U. of Colorado Invitational in Boulder. This race went much as the 3 mile in Columbus had, with Laird opening up early in the last half mile and then barely withstanding a last lap assault by Godwin. Laird had 13:59 (remember the altitude) and Godwin was given 14:01 when the second place watch didn't stop, but was only 3 or 4 yards back. The results of this one:

The next day it was 6 miles on the road and Godwin easily best Laird over the longer haul, pulling steadily away to record 43:16. This race was in Denver, on the same course used for the earlier 15 km.
7. Jim Bentley, Missionary 55:55.6 8. Marc Schmidt, VTC 58:18.6
11. Brad Bentley, Missionary (9 yrs old) 64:31.3.

FRAC: THE FRISCO AREA:

First, on Kloeser's 20 km back in December (1:32:24), which we never had much on; the splits show that Goetz was ahead of the pace Romansky set in his record through through 8 miles. But he started to fade at the same time that Dave started to storm. Goetz's mile times were:


50 km, Father Air Force, March 15--1. Goetz Kloeser 4:37:12

AND MORE RESULTS:

20 Mile (track), Long Beach, Feb. 7--1. John Kelly, Striders 3:03:29

While in this area of the country, let me urge you to get your own RACE WALKING STATISTICS, including times from 1 mile to 50 km, from: Jim Hanley, 17214 Palby Way, Menlo Park, Calif. 94026. Better of fact, let me remind myself. Cost----were 1.25.


Turning now to the local scene (and back to the other typewriter), our first outdoor race of the season was a scheduled 10 miler on the track. On a cold (28 F), very windy, leave-your-sweat-suit-on-boys, day only three stalwarts turned out. Deciding that it would be inhumane to ask our time keeper and lap counter (Mrs. Dr. Blackburn) to sit unprotected by the side of a windswept track for an extended and that it would be equally cruel to ourselves to go round and round that windswept track for 10 miles, we transferred the race to the road and humanely shortened it to 4 laps (6 miles 536 yds.) This allowed said timekeeper to remain warm and snug in the VW bus and lessened our misery by nearly four miles. It was decided on the starting line to make it a prediction race and Barry Richardson magnanimously made all three predictions --- 9 minute miles for himself, 8 for Portland, and 10 for Doc Blackburn. On this basis, Barry scored an easy win with superbly controlled walking to record 56:39 and an 8:59.1 average. Doc lost his head completely, covering the distance in 61:30 or 9:45 per mile and Portland was nearly as bad with 49:19 for 7:49.3. This did give me the satisfaction of a new official course record, bettering Blackburn's 9:30 in the 1966 New Year's Eve race. Of course, one must realize that Laird and Romansky were probably about 4 minutes faster in last year's 15 km and four others were well under this time in the same race and that Westerfield Hayden, and Bocc are faster in last fall's 7 mile, but since no lap times were taken, I can still lay claim to the record. Huzzah!

With this issue, the Ohio Race Walker launches its sixth year of publication and who would have thought in March 1965 that we would come this far. The ORW was actually the brainchild of old Jack Blackburn who conned me into doing his typing and most of the writing for him. We started out mailing free copies to friends around the state and in some of the provinces. By the time of our second issue in April, we claimed nine paid subscribers, a few contributions, and a lot of leeches. Most of the latter paid eventually and we dropped the others. We have had a gradual increase in circulation over the years and with a recent upsurge due to some help from Charlie Silcock are now over 160.

That first issue was a five-page ditto production. The feature story was a Doc B Blackburn win in the first New Year's Eve Handicap on Dec. 31, 1961. We also found your editor edging Blackburn in the first indoor walk ever held in the Central Ohio area, both returning 11:10 for 2 miles. This was held on a 16-lap, hardwood, completely circular track. Four weeks later B Blackburn had his revenge, exploding a 7:02 second mile to win an outdoor 2 miler 11:21 to 11:21. We issued the following statement of policy, which hasn't CHANGED MUCH THROUGH THE YEARS: (I didn't really mean to capitalize that and no particular emphasis is intended):

"With the thought that too little is written about the sport of race walking, we bring you the first issue of the Ohio Race Walker. On these pages each month you will find complete news coverage of walking in this state, plus any results we receive from elsewhere, together with features and commentary on race walking in general. In short, any information on the sport that we come across, and is of significant, will be passed on to you, the reader. (And one comes across so little on race walking it is hard to imagine anything of too little significance.)

"Our purpose is mainly to present information and news on the sport (and to keep our names in print) and we are not planning any crusading-type journalism. However, when controversy arises in any way regarding our sport, we will not hesitate to take a strong editorial stand. At the same time, we will make our pages available for the opinions of others, though they may disagree with our own."

This policy has changed little over the years. The names Mortland and Blackburn are still scattered boldly and indiscriminately through our pages. Our coverage has expanded but we retain the name Ohio Race Walker and try to keep some of the local
flavor. We have taken some editorial stands, sometimes unpopular, although we have recently been accused of neglecting our duty in this regard as pertains to the present national leadership. We continue to welcome commentary from our readers and enjoy serving as an open forum to air the dirty linen of the race walking world. We hope that in another five years we will still be cluttering up the U.S. mails.

OUR READERS COMMENT:

From Elliott Denman on the Hihalo story:

"It was interesting reading about Bill Hihalo's exploits but I believe they belong in the fiction dept. and should not be mingled with the straight news." (Ed. I resent such slanderous insinuations that the ORW ever carries straight news.) "You mention he was on the 1948 Olympic team. Not so. 50K men that year were Weinaeker, Deni, and Ernie Crosbie." (Ed. Another fiddle-finger-of-fate reward to your editor for his usual careful research.)

From George Shilling on the same subject:

"Bye the bye, the notes on Hihalo were most interesting. The judges must have been judging his professional races from a submarine."

The above reactions pretty much parallel my own to the Hihalo saga. However, I would still like some comment from knowledgeable readers who may have some first hand dope on the conduct of these races. Even second or third hand.

From Charlie Silcock on the handicap race controversy:

"On the subject of handicap races I'd like to say something. I think they are necessary to the development of the sport. They help complete the picture of race walking, which includes national championships, regional championships, district association championships, open races, annual events, handicap races (both indoors and out), age-group walks, development walks, Junior Olympics competition, women's competition, etc.

The only legitimate complaint about a handicap walk might be indoors in such annual track meets as the K of C Games, the former NYAC Games, Madison Square contests or the like. There, now that sufficient fast, legal, closely bunched fields can be invited, it is unnecessary to have a handicap walk. In fact, a handicap event in such big meets is not very highly thought of by the fans whether walking or a running race. In the days when Henry Laskau and Ron Laird completely dominated the mile events, the walk would have been a "ho-hum" event unless it was handicapped and that made sense. The only mile indoor walk in the Garden I got into was a handicap, so it may seem strange I don't go along with some walkers that they should be retained.

 However, if a handicap walk is being conducted indoors at one mile (or anywhere else on a track such as 440 yards) scratch men must make their way around the slower men to win. The handicap men do not need to move out and "make way" for the scratch men. That is part of the handicap the scratch man has to overcome. He has no right of way.

There is even some cause to question the thought that in scratch races, whether race walking or running, that any competitor must move out to make room for those lapping him. A recent example of such was (I believe) Kerry Pearce (Ed. Rex Neddaford) running a second fastest indoor 2 mile at the Los Angeles Times Games. He and others claimed he could have gotten the record if slower lapped runners had moved out for him. There is no rule covering this in the R&W rule book that I can find. It has always been a hit or miss thing. Some runners move out because they are courteous and want a guy to have his record--but they are not required to. They can keep to the inside and make the faster men go around if they desire. If meet directors want this avoided, reduce the size of your field so that you can be certain no one will be lapped. In some long distance races this might mean only one competitor. (Ed. A problem on lapped men is that some move out and some don't and the guy coming up doesn't know where to go. And the real problem is those who want to race and hold you out longer than necessary, particularly on turns.)

But handicap walks, particularly outdoors and in development meets, are necessary and interesting from any standpoint. Complacent scratch men have to hustle to win and a newcomer, or less experienced, or less able athlete has a shot at some pots--just like Laird. After all, how much shelf space can a guy devote to hundreds of awards? Let's spread it around a little.
First, some detail on Larry Walker's great walk, with the following release from Jim Hanley:

After 5 years of trying Van Nuys' Larry Walker finally set an American record. Walker led from wire to wire and knocked an amazing 9 seconds off the old record for the 2-mile walk in an exhibition at UCLA. The chemistry teacher at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks clocked 13:20.2, the best time in the world this year and fastest time in the world for the past 4 years.

Walker had the second fastest time in the world in 1967 (13:33.6) and was an alternate on the 1968 U.S. Olympic Team. The 27-year-old athlete praised the crowd, announcer, and fellow athletes for helping him get the record. The results:

1. Larry Walker, Striders 13:20.2 2. John Kelly, Striders 14:44.6

A week later, Larry Young returned to the walking wars in a 4 Mile Handicap at La Verne, Calif. on March 22 and finished dead last. He had the fourth fastest time, however, with 32:55, but started from scratch with Ron Laird and Laird never caught anyone either. The results (actual times shown):


Kuchar Cops Title

Hollywood, Calif., March 15--Bob Kuchar of Occidental College, a surprise second in last year's Senior 50 km, today won the 1970 National A.U Jr. 50. This is the fellow who reportedly appeared out of the woods at South Lake Tahoe last year and disappeared back into them after his second place finish. In today's race he lead all the way and after a challenge from the Shore AC's Dan Johnson over the first 10 km came home nearly three-quarters of an hour ahead. The results:

1. Bob Kuchar, Occidental 5:18:56.6 2. Bob Long, Striders 6:01:34.6
Brenda Whitman went 40 km in 5:14:17 and was sixth at that point.

Summer Training

Funds have been made available by the U.S. Olympic Committee for summer training camps for track and field athletes, including race walkers. The camp for walkers and distance runners will probably be at the U. of Washington and will run for 3 weeks starting sometime in July. Twenty walkers will be selected, 10 at 20 km and 10 at 50 and expenses will be paid. I am not certain at this time if that includes travel. Qualification will be through regional races, which are now being set up. I don't have a schedule for these races, but the races for this region are shown on the schedule of upcoming on a following page. Walkers competing on summer international teams will not be included and 20 walkers will be included providing they meet qualifying standards, probably about 1:50 and 5:20. Where a man qualifies in both races or is unable to attend an alternate will be picked. This will represent an ex-
The news that the Strasbourg to Paris walk is to be held this year after a break of 11 years will gladden those who have witnessed previous races or enjoy watching men tested to the very limits of their endurance in events such as cycling's tour de France.

Few readers will have heard of this race, which has an illustrious past, for it was previously organized by the Union Francaise Marche, which was not then recognized by the International Federation. This year, however, as both bodies of French walking have been amalgamated the event will be held under IAAF laws.

The race was created in 1926 by Emile Anthoine and held until 1937: it was revived in 1949 and last held in 1959. Originally from Paris to Strasbourg, the course was reversed in 1952. The distance has varied between 503 and 554 km, but generally averaged 520 km—about 323 miles. The fastest race was in 1953 when Gilbert Roger recorded 66 hr 50 min (he won by just 8 min!) for 515 km—an average of over 3 3/4 mph.
During the 23 editions of the race there has been a total of 1033 starters and 501 finishers. Some of the 175 men who have participated have been gluttons for punishment: Charles Dujardin completed the course 13 times in 18 tries—his last at 56 years of age.

The most successful man in this grueling event has without doubt been Gilbert Roger, winner in 1949, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, and 1958. As the winner receives a car as a prize, he made quite a financial success out of his endeavors! Roger (born in 1914) is quite unique in that he holds every intermediate record for the race from 50 km (4 hr 48 min) to 72 hours (537 km). His success was based on his ability to start at over 10 km per hour (6.4 mph) and open up a large lead and then rely on just two hours or so sleep made up of half a dozen 20 minute stops during the near three days duration of the event.

That the overall standard improved amazingly over the years is fully confirmed when one realizes that in 1926 some 8 days were allowed as a time limit, while from 1957 only 76 hours were allowed to elapse.

Perhaps the most dramatic race occurred in 1959. Roger knew Edmund Guny, 8 years his junior, to be his most dangerous rival and he built up a lead of over an hour. Guny and Louis Godart, Jr. joined forces and the gap was gradually whittled away until with just 70 km to go the three men were together—an unprecedented event in the annals of the event. Roger was not yet finished and at 478 km he was 9 min ahead of Guny and 16 min clear of Godart. Guny came again and with 14 km to go he caught the "master" and swept to a triumphant victory. Roger accepted defeat (after having led for 515 km), finished 70 min down and announced his retirement. In 1952, however, Martinique-born Joseph Zani (50) led for 530 km before suffering defeat.

When the Strasbourg to Paris was terminated in 1959, due to the ever increasing problem of traffic, it was particularly unfortunate for that year's winner, Edmund Guny, who at 38 was thought to have a great chance of emulating Roger's number of victories.

It can only be hoped that the officials eager to promote a rebirth of this great race see their efforts amply rewarded, both in competitor and spectator appreciation, and that the Strasbourg to Paris again rates with le Tour as an annual "must" for Parisians.

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CENTRAL AMERICAN GAMES WALK

The following is taken from a report by Henry Laskau, who, together with Joe Tierman and Bill Chisholm judged the 20 km walk at the Central American Games on March 2 in Panama. The trials of an international judge when the Latin temperament is involved.

The race-walking competition went off almost in accordance with the time schedule. There were 16 starters from Columbia, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Panama. This is itself is gratifying to see, that race walking now is spreading readily into Central and South American countries. At the start the Cubans tried to take the lead but within a mile of leaving the stadium the Mexicans were out in front. The first disqualification took place at about 2 miles; Bill and I both had a Puerto Rican marked with a caution. Bent knee and absolutely no contact with the ground. Shortly after, one of the Cubans lying third behind Cano and Chavez of Mexico set a very fast pace trying to catch up but lost contact completely and actually broke into a modified run. Bill cautioned him first and advised me of it. He continued to maintain the same pace so that at 5 km he received the second caution from me and was out. He would not stop. Joe gave him the red flag and still he would not stop although I told him in Spanish.

Suddenly a motorcycle stopped alongside the road, a Cuban dressed in a training suit jumped off the motorcycle and shouted something like "Gringos, down with Estados Unidos" then became very angry and shoved
us back, actually manhandling Joe and myself, until the Panamanian police took over and put him in his place. Unfortunately by that time newsreel and press were aware of the incident and naturally it became a so called outstanding event. (All that was reported in the US press on the walk.) The race continued and the two Mexicans still had the lead with quite a margin of 150 yards, with the Cuban still refusing to quit in third. He finally stopped at 13 km.

The winner, Campos of Mexico, entered the stadium at dusk with the bright lights shining on him, the crowd was roaring and it seems that race walking has finally been recognized by the public as an equal event to the marathon or 3000 meter steeplechase. Race walking has become popular in Central and South America and will remain on the program.

By personal observations of Campos was that he almost was flagrant, but managed to maintain contact with the ground, which I considered a borderline case. I followed him very closely and at a downhill grade his foot setting was completely off and at that moment I cautioned him at the 17 km mark. (I questioned him later on and he agreed that he was off the ground on the downhill grade.)

As a last remark, we were told that our judging of the walk was outstanding, not only from the competitors but also by accompanying officials and this is not only gratifying but for us race walking judges a feather in our cap.

Henry had the results only for the first three since no other times were taken. The times are surprisingly slow considering the performance of the Mexicans in England early in the winter.


John C. Blackburn, sometime known as Jack, our friend from Van Wert who once planned a walk across the country, will be disappointed to see the following. If he ever does it, he may not even be the first John Blackburn to do so.

London--John Blackburn looks to the first day of April next and says, "On that morning, with one kidney and in aid of transplant research, I will set out with my wife to walk from Los Angeles to New York. May God be with us."

The Blackburns plan the 2789-mile trek to City Hall, Manhattan to help raise international interest in--and funds for--continued research into body organ transplantation. It is their way of thanking surgeons, the pioneers who took a kidney from John Blackburn and used it to save the life of one of his daughters.

Blackburn, an artist, has every mile of the route strictly scheduled. The shortest daily hike will total 23 miles. The biggest haul will be the 2-day 97-miles from Indio to Blythe across California desert.

They are confidently determined to complete the marathon. For months they have trained every day under the guidance of a man who already has jogged across the United States, former British Olympic runner Bruce Tulloh. And they will be accompanied all the way by medical advisers, in truck and trailer.

Journeys end in New York is set for June 25. Then John and Maude Blackburn will be joined by their three children, including kidney recipient Victoria, for a 10,000-mile tour of the United States lasting about 6 weeks.

Another item of interest, from the March 16 New York Times:

The one book that everyone has himself is an autobiography, and the one dance is his individual walk. Consciously or unconsciously, the ambulatory motion has been refined within each person from the first tottering steps into its adult efflorescence. Steve Paxton has made
natural walking the subject of his dance "Satisfyin' Lover" and he presented it yesterday afternoon at the Loeb Student Center of New York University with a cast of 42.

"Satisfyin' Lover" is a parade across space performed by as many or as few performers as the choreographer wishes. In the center of the transversed area are three chairs on which individuals sit at various spaced occasions. The progression is from left to right, and as soon as they have made their crossing, the performers disappear from sight. Mr. Paxton sends his people across in staggered clumps and subtly draws attention to the variety of expressive motions conveyed by a walk. I was particularly taken by the similarities of a mother-daughter combination, Patricia and Leslie Mason, who bridged the generation gap kinetically and unselfconsciously. The walk is a marvelous projective technique and in the hands of a trained observer it could easily replace the personal-history questionnaire.

NYU officials were not pleased by Mr. Paxton's intention to do a version of the dance in the nude, and he canceled his Tuesday night performance as a result. In the first part of yesterday's concert, he gave a lecture detailing his reasons.

I'm sure a few race walkers would liven up the dance. Particularly if we could get, say Jeanne Socci and Brenda Whitman, into the nude version.

OHIO RACE WALKER
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