The NAAU Senior 25 Km Walking Race, held in Taunton, Mass. on July 22, was captured by New York AC ace, John Knifton, in 2:05:50. We have little on the race itself other than the results, but John's experiences leading up to the race are story enough. Here in his own words is John's sad story with a happy ending.

"The story of my unique preparation for this race really began 2 weeks earlier. Sunday afternoon found me out training. After 7 miles of uneventful walking, I was suddenly set upon by a large, hungry dog, rolled in the road, and my arms generally chewed over. Twenty-eight stitches and 5 days in hospital with intravenous antibiotics later, I stepped gingerly back onto the pavement to continue my aborted training session of the previous Sunday. A few days of gentle exercise with stiff arms in sling convinced me I was in prime condition for the National 25.

"Driving to Taunton on the day of the race, after 120 miles, I was dismayed to find I had left my bag with gear at home. With an hour to race time, I was feverishly borrowing jock strap, shorts and shirt from generous subscribers on the LIAC and North Medford teams. But what about shoes? Ron Kilik takes my size but he was sick. About to give up in despair, a kind gentleman came to my aid with a pair of bowling shoes. Whilst they were half a size too big, by dashing to the drug store and completely taping up both feet, I was able to hobble to the starting line. The rest is history, except to add, the bowling shoes left not a blister after 15 miles even in 80 degree heat.

"My only recommendation after this experience is that since there are far more bowlers than walkers in America, if you ever get stuck in a strange town without walking shoes, go to the local bowling alley, hire a pair of shoes and walk a strike out!"

In his triumph, John defeated clubmate Ron Laird by nearly 2 minutes with the Long Island AC pair of Gary Westerfield and Steve Hayden, finally rounding into some sort of form, occupying the next two spots. Not surprisingly, the NYAC and LIAC took one-two in the team championship. The results:
1. John Knifton, NYAC 2:05:50
2. Ronald Owen Laird, NYAC 2:07:38
4. Steve Hayden, LIAC 2:14:18
5. Tom Knatt, North Medford Club 2:16:13
6. Paul Schell, NMC 2:18:03
7. Dan O'Connor, LIAC 2:19:58
8. Ron Daniel, NYAC 2:26:06
9. Jim Murchie,
Boulder, Colo., July 21—(Special to The ORW from Elisa Haire) — Boulder hosted the Women's National 5 Kilometer Walk today, the first time the event was held with the blessings of the AAW. The event itself, the product of several years of lobbying at the national conventions, proved itself worthy of all the attention and effort required to be granted the status of a national championship.

Quantity, as well as quality, were evident in the field of competitors, 19 women representing eight states (Alabama, California, Colorado, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, New Jersey, and New York) aged 14 to 30 clearly indicated that race-walking is gaining in popularity and quality as a competitive sport for women.

The high quality of the performances of these women more than justified all the time and energy that went into creating this event. Seventeen-year-old Sue Brodock of the Sports United Road Runners, Rialto, Calif., walked the metric mile in the very fast time of 27:39.9 minutes and set the national record for women. (Sorry Sullivan, I was leaving town)

Elisa Haire, an 18-year-old New Yorker and protege of OTC 9:10.3, was second with a time of 27:43.5. Eberle 9:29.5, Portia 9:39.3, and Sue Brodock 27:39.9 (8:30, 17:27, 26:42) were the top three finishers in this event. The weather was a mild 75 degrees but the altitude probably explains the 70 second difference between this and Sue's 1972 American best of 26:29.

Brodock captures first women's 5 km title

Eberle 9:10.3, Portia 9:39.3, and Sue Brodock 27:39.9 (8:30, 17:27, 26:42) were the top three finishers in this event. The weather was a mild 75 degrees but the altitude probably explains the 70 second difference between this and Sue's 1972 American best of 26:29.

Elisa Haire, an 18-year-old New Yorker and protege of OTC 9:10.3, was second with a time of 27:43.5. Eberle 9:29.5, Portia 9:39.3, and Sue Brodock 27:39.9 (8:30, 17:27, 26:42) were the top three finishers in this event. The weather was a mild 75 degrees but the altitude probably explains the 70 second difference between this and Sue's 1972 American best of 26:29.

Elisa Haire, an 18-year-old New Yorker and protege of OTC 9:10.3, was second with a time of 27:43.5. Eberle 9:29.5, Portia 9:39.3, and Sue Brodock 27:39.9 (8:30, 17:27, 26:42) were the top three finishers in this event. The weather was a mild 75 degrees but the altitude probably explains the 70 second difference between this and Sue's 1972 American best of 26:29.
JULY 1923

Some Results:


It was all Smitty in the early going as he pulled some 50 to 60 yards clear of the aging and slow starting Doe. However, with his relentless pace, Doe soon started to cut into that lead and pulled ahead with 2 or 3 laps to go. A hard-charging last mile seemed to have him well in command as he did about 9:30 and had nearly 40 yards on the final curve. Smitty then started a belated kick with impeccable style and was only 10 yards back of the unsuspecting Doe at the finish. Not really a bad race for Mr. Smith since one thing and another had allowed him only 3 miles training in the past 2 months. Two weeks earlier we had a 7-mile schedule in Cambridge, Dale Arnold's new hometown. But for one reason and another it would up as a 2-man race, Arnold and Mortland, and with Dale only having been able to train three times all year, it wasn't much of a race. Under a blazing sun, in high humidity, but with some blessed shade and a bit of a breeze, we tackled a rather hilly, primarily gravel course of about 2 1/2 miles (measured by Dale in his car that morning). It was all Smitty for the first two miles and long as Mort also had a 6:50, after missing the first turn around and doing an extra 30 seconds, and just clinging under 15 hours. The important thing is, though, that we got Dale out for a little exercise and he kept his air conditioner into the window. (For those of you who object to these detailed accounts of our insignificant and ill-attended Ohio men, bear in mind that this is still the Ohio racewalker.)

31:56 2. Dr. John Blackburn 39:42. 3. Bob Smith 39:45. Your editor blazed the final mile in 7:53 to shatter the 8-minute barrier for 4 miles. It was all the long training that did it, having covered an unheard of 36 training miles the previous 7 days and having an amazing 117 in for two complete weeks. We absobt a race about 10 minutes before the start without tiring myself unduly. Obviously if I continue this sort of foolhardy nonsense those near the bottom of the top ten had best prepare for a challenge, should I ever chance to travel to a race again. Meanwhile, Doe and Smitty had a real ding-dong battle. It was all Smitty in the early going as he pulled some 50 to 60 yards clear of the aging and slow starting Doe. However, with his relentless pace, Doe soon started to cut into that lead and pulled ahead with 2 or 3 laps to go. A hard-charging last mile seemed to have him well in command as he did about 9:30 and had nearly 40 yards on the final curve. Smitty then started a belated kick with impeccable style and was only 10 yards back of the unsuspecting Doe at the finish. Not really a bad race for Mr. Smith since one thing and another had allowed him only 3 miles training in the past 2 months. Two weeks earlier we had a 7-mile schedule in Cambridge, Dale Arnold's new hometown. But for one reason and another it would up as a 2-man race, Arnold and Mortland, and with Dale only having been able to train three times all year, it wasn't much of a race. Under a blazing sun, in high humidity, but with some blessed shade and a bit of a breeze, we tackled a rather hilly, primarily gravel course of about 2 1/2 miles (measured by Dale in his car that morning). It was all Smitty for the first two miles and long as Mort also had a 6:50, after missing the first turn around and doing an extra 30 seconds, and just clinging under 15 hours. The important thing is, though, that we got Dale out for a little exercise and he kept his air conditioner into the window. (For those of you who object to these detailed accounts of our insignificant and ill-attended Ohio men, bear in mind that this is still the Ohio racewalker.)

31:56 2. Dr. John Blackburn 39:42. 3. Bob Smith 39:45. Your editor blazed the final mile in 7:53 to shatter the 8-minute barrier for 4 miles. It was all the long training that did it, having covered an unheard of 36 training miles the previous 7 days and having an amazing 117 in for two complete weeks. We absobt a race about 10 minutes before the start without tiring myself unduly. Obviously if I continue this sort of foolhardy nonsense those near the bottom of the top ten had best prepare for a challenge, should I ever chance to travel to a race again. Meanwhile, Doe and Smitty had a real ding-dong battle. It was all Smitty in the early going as he pulled some 50 to 60 yards clear of the aging and slow starting Doe. However, with his relentless pace, Doe soon started to cut into that lead and pulled ahead with 2 or 3 laps to go. A hard-charging last mile seemed to have him well in command as he did about 9:30 and had nearly 40 yards on the final curve. Smitty then started a belated kick with impeccable style and was only 10 yards back of the unsuspecting Doe at the finish. Not really a bad race for Mr. Smith since one thing and another had allowed him only 3 miles training in the past 2 months. Two weeks earlier we had a 7-mile schedule in Cambridge, Dale Arnold's new hometown. But for one reason and another it would up as a 2-man race, Arnold and Mortland, and with Dale only having been able to train three times all year, it wasn't much of a race. Under a blazing sun, in high humidity, but with some blessed shade and a bit of a breeze, we tackled a rather hilly, primarily gravel course of about 2 1/2 miles (measured by Dale in his car that morning). It was all Smitty for the first two miles and long as Mort also had a 6:50, after missing the first turn around and doing an extra 30 seconds, and just clinging under 15 hours. The important thing is, though, that we got Dale out for a little exercise and he kept his air conditioner into the window. (For those of you who object to these detailed accounts of our insignificant and ill-attended Ohio men, bear in mind that this is still the Ohio racewalker.)
Brown, Ranney meet stiff competition in Europe

Jerry Brown and Bill Ranney have spent the past 3 weeks on tour with the U.S. track team walking excellent races but running into very stiff opposition. We have below, hand reports on their first two races in Munich and to the one in Torino.

Munich, July 13—Well the first one is over—thank the Lord! You can’t imagine how impressive Kannenberg is. He is quite legal, suspiciously strong and fast.

The race started at 6:45 under cloudy and cool conditions. Kannenberg and Weidner shot into the lead with a 1:37 lap—I followed, then Mayr and Jerry. We passed 1 and 2 miles in the same position. I was still on the outside, then took the outside and was 1-2. Jerry got within 5 yards of Weidner at 5 km then he slowed and Weidner picked it up. Cautions to Mayr (2), but he was a non-scorer, and Jerry, but he looked fine the last 3 miles. Final times indicate the caliber of the race: 1. Kannenberg 43:48, 2. Weidner 44:13.2, 3. Brown 44:56, 4. Ranney 45:45—Mayer 44:40/48 in exhibition.

We did some partying after and really enjoyed the exchange of talk. We can take in beer with the best of them!

Torino, Italy, July 19—We raced our second 10 km of the tour last night on the Tartan track of the Torino Stadium. The weather was warm (about 85°F) and humid, even though we didn’t start until 9:30.

The two Italian walkers were Visini and Zambaldo. At the gun they shot out very fast with a 1:14 lap and continued to come through a mile under 7:00. Bill and I didn’t start out quite as fast, coming through 4 laps (1600 meters) in 7:10 (Bill) and 7:11/7:12 respectively. The Italians continued to increase their lead up to about 2 miles. Weidner was walking about the same pace as me for the rest of the race. Visini fell down 3 km and Zambaldo was walking about the same pace as me for the rest of the race. Zambaldo got away from Visini 3 miles in. Visini pulled away from Zambaldo at 4 miles and go to within 20 yards of Bill with 5 laps to go. Bill showed a little more of his form and wouldn’t let the 5:00 go. (Note: the cleanest, ultra-conservative SW does not normally print such observations but it’s just the help you get these days) pass him, so they didn’t let us.

There were 5 Italian judges and Bruce MacDonald. Zambaldo got one caution, but that was all. The whole race was decided in the first 5 km as they did where they built 90 percent of their lead. They had the ability to go out at a blistering pace, but relaxed enough not to go into debt that would hinder them later in the race.

Bill was disappointed that the race wasn’t 20 km as was supposedly the planned distance. I can’t say that I was disappointed as I enjoy walking on the track and 10 km suits me fine. Maybe 10 was better as we will have a 20 km in Russia. Results: 1. Visini 44:12 2. Zambaldo 44:40 3. Brown 45:36 4. Mayer 44:09. Jerry 46:45 (7:11, 14:28, 21:57, 29:01, 36:25, 43:46). Ranney 46:46 (7:10, 14:27, 21:52, 29:19, 36:47, 44:12) these are 4 laps splits, not 1 mile. 5 Kms were Brown 22:44, Ranney 22:50

BACK TO MISCELLANEOUS RESULTS


Jerry Brown and Bill Ranney have spent the past 3 weeks on tour with the U.S. track team walking excellent races but running into very stiff opposition. We have below, hand reports on their first two races in Munich and to the one in Torino.
Rogues Gallery of U.S. Race Walking. Members of the 1972 Olympic team pose for the camera. From left to right: Goetz Klopfer, Steve Hayden, Bill Weigle, Larry Young, and Tom Dooley. (Photo courtesy Tom Dooley)

Hans-Georg Reimann, E.G., Peter Frenkel, E.G., and Vladimir Golubnichiy, USSR fight for the lead with 4 Km to go in the 1970 Lugano Cup 20 Km race. Reimann won this one with Golubnichiy second and Frenkel third. (Photo from Race Walking '71)
Jerry was not particularly impressed with the style of the Soviet walkers. Although apparently legal, they were rather ragged and bouncy. As a matter of fact, only the Germans, Kienberg and Weidner, impressed him with their style during the trip. Regarding what he saw in the USSR, he has always been impressed with the Soviet walk and 5-mile race world records when they are on home ground. I saw the same thing as Jerry the first time I competed there in 1962 and knew something of people they have used in other meets over there. The second time I was there (1965) they were very, very serious about the meet, knew that Ron Laird could be tough, and just used their two best walkable walkers, Agapov and Khrolovich, who happened to be smooth artists and very strong. They also threw a course of at least 21 km at us, perhaps to take advantage of that strength. Regardless of all that, Bill and Jerry had a very good trip, walked well, and undoubtedly gained a lot of valuable experience.

BACK TO THE RESULTS

in one of the three foremost candidates for the 1948 games."

The fact that the Olympic walk is the longest of any championship competition is in John's favor. He was the only one, as the foremost publication on the sport in the country. Good press

The Ohio Racewalker is honored indeed with recent mention in the pages of the Christian Science Monitor, a daily paper of no small repute.

As the foremost publication on the sport in the country. Good press

The Ohio Racewalker is honored indeed with recent mention in the pages of the Christian Science Monitor, a daily paper of no small repute.

We were mentioned as the foremost publication on the sport in the country. Good press

In a June 18 article on the lonely sport of racewalking we were mentioned as the foremost publication on the sport in the country. Good press

July 1973
think this has been generally recognized and the letter of the law has been bent, if not broken, where heat has been a danger. Finally, Ray gives me a chance to scoop the Quao Press by reporting a rumor that the Russian competitors in the 1972 Junior meet were about 22 or 23 years old. If true, he asks, why hasn't it been publicized and does the U.S. intend to protest? .... Angie Hirt offers a suggestion to improve attendance at National walks prompted by the disgraceful turnout for the National 15. He says: "Why not ask on the entry blanks whether it would be possible for the entrant to provide rides for other walkers who could be unable to attend the meet otherwise. A walker who needs a ride could call the meet director and ask if there are any walkers driving the day before or after the meet. Thus we will have to conserve a few goodies available when needed. In the case of the Colorado fiasco, of course, it would have done no good, as Ron Laird was the only one who bothered to come in from outside and he undoubtedly either flew or thumbed.) .... Finally, in this hodgepodge of miscellany, we have the following comments from Frank Dotsch, in Chicago, regarding judging: "I believe that I'm using an easy and effective way to judge when a walker is lifting and I'd like to share it with you and your readers in hopes that either it will gain wider use or someone will prove that it is unfair. I call it the rhythm method and I base it upon the following principles:

1) The front foot has to make contact before the back leaves the ground.
2) A break in motion occurs when a foot either strikes the ground or leaves the ground.
3) These breaks are easy to detect by watching the general motion of a walker from the hips down.
4) That motion coupled with the breaks creates a definite rhythm.
5) The rhythm that is created goes from front to back when contact is being made.
6) The rhythm goes from back to front when a walker is lifting.
7) An individual style has no effect upon the direction of the rhythm.
8) Mechanically speaking it would be impossible to maintain contact if the rhythm were from back to front.

I don't know how easy it is to observe to learn. That problem notwithstanding, the rhythm method has enabled me to catch slow walkers as well as fast walkers off the ground. Contrary to popular opinion, a walker doesn't have to walk at a "fast" pace to be off the ground. Also, the method would have caught all of the offenders in the National 15, but which I didn't know is how easy is the method of observation to learn. That is a suggestion worth considering. The only problem is that about 90 percent of the entrants get their entry in at the last minute so that the information would not be available when needed. In the case of the Colorado fiasco, of course, it would have done no good, as Ron Laird was the only one who bothered to come in from outside and he undoubtedly either flew or thumbed.

5 Years Ago (From the July 1968 Ohio Race Walker) — In a close race, Fenzel captured the National 20 Km in 1:33:00. Only 59 seconds separated the first four with Larry Young second, Don DeNooen third, and Tom Dooley fourth. Twelve walkers bettered 1:40. Two weeks later, Young came back to decimate the field in the 50, pouring it on the second half for 4:12:12 on a course I think it was finally decided was about a half-mile short. Nevertheless, 8 walkers broke 4:30 and 13 were under 4:40 in another fast race. Goots Klopfen was second, Bob Bowman third, and Dave Romansky fourth. The first ten in both races qualified for altitude training and the final Olympic Trials. Ron Laird covered 7 mi in 33:38 yards to beat Martin Rudow in the National 1 Hour in Montana. The East Germans were walking fast back then too as witness a 20 Km: Frenzel 1:26:57.2, Pathus 1:26:58.8, Lindner 1:26:39, Strees 1:27:37.2, Speckling 1:28:33.1.