For the seventh year, the Ohio Race Walker is presenting the Dr. John H. Blackburn Award for the most outstanding single performance in U.S. race walking during the preceding year, in this case 1973. With a month still to go, we confidently are announcing Ron Laird as the winner of his inspiring walk in the Lugano Cup 20 Km, reported last month. Written off by some as finally being on the downhill side of his career after many, many years at or near the top, Ron suddenly reemerged with one of the finest races of his career. Passing four men in the final 5 Km he matched his third place finish of 1967 in this prestigious World Championship. That earlier performance went for naught as far as the Blackburn Award went, for it was Larry O'Neill's amazing performance in the first 100 miler in Missouri that inspired us to start the Award that year.

In subsequent years, Ron has had some great races together with some rotten ones, but there has always been at least one really remarkable race by someone else to cop award. In 1968, it was Rudy Halusa's close fourth in the Olympic 20 (and Larry Young's third in the 50 as a very close contends). The next year, Bob Kitchen walked a fast 50 on the track. In 1970, Goetz Klopfer walked a world-class 20 miler on the track, to nose out either a brilliant 50 or 10 by Dave Romansky. Kitchen was back in 1971 with a world's best 35 Km on the track and last year nothing could touch Larry Young's Munich performance, or several other Young races, for that matter. Which reminds me Larry, I have to get that thing in the mail to you. Yes, you do get more than mention in the ORW. A handsome plaque is the award and Larry's has been languishing here for several months, awaiting my trip to Columbia last month, at which time I remembered it about the time I hit St. Louis. Perhaps Ron won't have to wait quite so long, but then I'm not sure I can bear the postage to Germany.

-------------------

RACE WALKING RESULTS, of all things.

Had hoped to have results of the U.S.-Canada dual by this time but it looks like they must wait until next month, so on with other results that have come my way.


1. Jack Blackburn 15:45 2. Jack Blackburn 15:56 3. Kevin Butler 17:38 4. Bob Smith 17:56--times are from memory and not necessarily correct to the second. Kevin bombed out at a speed we old men can no longer attain and went through the 10K about 15-20 yards up with two Jacks in an unaccustomed 1:25. As Kevin came back dropped to 2 minute laps and the mile went in 7:56. The Kort managed to open up the last 2 laps to get close to Kort, who had done a flat out 8:13 mile 3 days before, once again showed his racing ability. Kevin looks very good at speed, and will be tough for any other 14-year olds to handle and with just a little more strength for old men to handle. Blackburn also won a race in Cincinnati on Thanksgiving day over a very short 6 miles in 43 something over Stu, Jim, Smitty, Don, and maybe Duck. Again, with my careful reporting techniques, I don't have much in the way of detail. More results on page 6.
Bucharest race beating Stadteuller, tough Gerhard Speilner, and Ivenchenko but then took only Fourth in the Romanian championships. He had a very impressive leg 25 km at Airoplo-Chiasso, 2 minutes up on Reimann.... Ivenchenko rescued an up and down season with his good fifth at Lugano...

Others merits consideration were Gerhard Speilner who had his very good early races and then may have been injured; Armando Zamboldo, sixth at Lugano but only 12th at Bucharest and well back in the CISM meet; Visini with two good track times but no top competition except his loss to Kannenberg; and Ion Gasiu of Romania, a good third at Bucharest and ahead of Stan in the Romanian championship.

Now the rankings at 50 Kms:

1. Bernd Kannenberg, W.G.
   4:07:56.2 (1) Eschborn 9/16
   3:56:50.8 (1) Lugano 10/13

2. Otto Bartsch, USSR
   4:11:58.0 (4) Ushgorod 4/29
   4:05:53.9 (1) USSR Ch. 7/5
   3:57:10.4 (2) Lugano 10/13

3. Christoph Hohne, E.G.
   4:08:34.3 (6) E.G. Champ. 9/1
   3:57:25.2 (3) Lugano 10/13

4. Gerhard Weidner, W.G.
   4:08:29.2 (1) Karl Marx Stadt 6/10
   4:05:29.0 (1) Prague 7/15
   4:01:58.4 (5) Lugano 10/13

5. Benjamin Soldatenko, USSR
   4:01:23.0 (3) Moscow 7/5
   4:01:33.6 (4) Lugano Cup 10/13

Little comment necessary here as the Lugano Cup competition pretty well decided the rankings with all the top men there and everyone walking well. We have moved Weidner ahead of Soldatenko off his world record race and excellent collection of top times...Selzer, too, had quite a collection of times and may have hurt himself with two fast 50's in the six weeks prior to Lugano...Grigoriev is the only non-Lugano competitor to crack the top ten with a fast early race in which he beat Bartsch and Bendarenko. He failed in the Soviet Championships and did not get to Lugano.

SECON ANNUAL U.S. RANKINGS

While in the ranking business, let us for the second time do the same job as above on the U.S. walkers. This is a much easier job than that messy 20 above as there were few races and everyone was quite familiar. First, the 20:

1. Ron Laird, NYAC
   1:34:15 (1) Santa Barbara 4/15
   1:36:37 (3) Minak 7/23
   1:39:11 (28) Lugano Cup 10/12

2. Todd Scully, Shore A.C.
   1:35:14 (4) Santa Barbara 4/15
   1:32:23.6 (7) Lugano Cup 10/12

3. Peter Selzer, E.G.
   4:02:35.6 (3) Karl Marx Stadt 6/10
   4:02:01.4 (6) Lugano Cup 10/13

4. Gerhard Weidner, W.G.
   4:02:10.4 (6) Lugano Cup 10/13
   4:04:10.4 (1) E.G. Champ. 9/1

5. Sergei Bendarenko, USSR
   4:04:36.6 (2) Ushgorod 4/29
   4:07:51.6 (7) Lugano Cup 10/13

6. Peter Selzer, E.G.
   4:08:34.3 (6) E.G. Champ. 9/1
   4:04:06.4 (1) Weinbohla 9/30
   4:00:27.2 (1) Hamburg 4/8 (tr)

7. Sergei Bendarenko, USSR
   4:01:33.6 (4) Lugano Cup 10/13
   4:02:35.6 (10) Karl Marx Stadt 6/10

8. John Scott, NYAC
   4:15:58 (6) Moscow 7/5
   4:12:05.4 (1) Prague 7/15
   4:01:33.6 (4) Lugano Cup 10/13

9. Vittorio Visini, Italy
   4:02:25.2 (2) E.G. Champ. 9/1
   4:07:51.6 (7) Lugano Cup 10/13
   4:01:58.4 (5) Lugano 10/13

10. Floyd Godwin, Colo. TC
    4:09:25 (1) Boulder 9/1 (tr)
    4:01:58.4 (5) Lugano 10/13
    4:00:27.2 (1) Hamburg 4/8 (tr)

11. Floyd Godwin, Colo. TC
    4:09:25 (1) Boulder 9/1 (tr)
    4:01:58.4 (5) Lugano 10/13
    4:00:27.2 (1) Hamburg 4/8 (tr)

12. Bill Weigle, Colo. TC
    4:09:25 (1) Boulder 9/1 (tr)
    4:01:58.4 (5) Lugano 10/13
    4:00:27.2 (1) Hamburg 4/8 (tr)

Again, the National race was rather decisive. However, Knitton's great Lugano effort moved him ahead of Weigle and Godwin moved up a couple of notches with his Lugano race and a good track effort in Boulder. It just occurred to me that I have made these rankings without yet having the results of the US-Canada race held in Boulder a couple of days ago (as I type this). If these results make any alterations in the above, I'll put them in next month.

The Ohio Race Walker is a monthly publication of Mortland Enterprises, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. Subscription rate is $3.00 per year or $3.00 for 10 years. Address all correspondence to your friendly editor and publisher, Jack Mortland at 318A Summit St., Columbus, Ohio 43202.

Anyway knowing the current addresses of Milt Place, Peter Sutyak, Dennis McPherson, Ron Brown (of Mass.), Joseph Connolly, Bob Woods, Chris McCarthy, or Jim Clinton please let me know. All of their OHCA came back to me with things like moved, left no address; addresses unknown; moved, not forwarding; etc. stamped on them. Woods is a particularly desperate situation because he just started his subscription and probably thinks I never received his payment.
Without Larry and Tom, the team excelled themselves to get an equal fourth and there is no doubt in my mind that a clear third place is well within your compass in the near future if not at this very time.

The 20 Km boys were superb with Ron strengthening my opinion that he could have been (or still could be) another Cumbrich. He hung in on the front half and then powered through in the last 5-7 km. Let's hope he keeps injury free, steers clear of the German Froulans, and really concentrates and dedicates right through to Montreal. Sensation of the meet was Todd Scully. All the English fans were convinced he would have to die after his explosive start but he hung in all the way with the greats. What a character! After a grand last leg in the relay he compliments and enthusiastic about my effort, some 8 minutes slower.

Bill, a favorite with the English girl supporters--sorry Ron, they don't all go for those baby faced 35-year-olds--had a tremendous relay walk after suffering stomach wise in the 20 km. Talking of the relay, Bob Henderson walked a cracker on the mountain stage and how about the Italian girl friend! The 50 km did a thorough job, John looking the part and getting near the elite guys. Bob took a gamble off with the big boys and hung on gruelling while Floyd and Bill came through together with Floyd taking it off in great shape near the end. A real treat for me until the next time.

The great thing about these words is that in the first place Colin says things very sincerely and he is always quite candid in his comments. In this particular place he had to be quite disappointed over the performance of the British for whom he had predicted a possible third, and finally, he is always "a real treat" for our guys when they get to meet him at one of these affairs. He is as knowledgeable and enthusiastic as you will meet in the sport and is always boosting our boys as much as the British in his side-of-the-road exhortations. As a matter of fact, I spent a good deal of the day during the 1967 Lucano 50 in East Germany with Colin and must admit he did considerably more in offering support and encouragement to our guys than I did, somewhat to my shame, I guess, but much to Colin's credit. He really bowled Jerry Brown over this year by recalling his races in the mid '60s as Regis Brown. Who in the U.S. ever heard of Regis Brown, let alone some dude over in England. A few more words on Colin's enthusiasm in the following Ron Laird Odyssey, which describes Ron's experiences leading up to Lucano and the Lucano-Airolo-Chiasso races.

**Flown from New York on September 6 for London. Stayed with John Lees for about 2 weeks but didn't have any races. Got in some good training and then went to Paris for a 25 km road race. I'd never raced in France before and found the experience unique because of the enthusiasm of the many people who came out to watch us go by. A sound truck up in front of us kept up a steady combination of advertising and racing talk. The start was on a track and out onto a 5-lap city street course. I stayed with a group of five others for just over 10 k's and then pushed hard all the way to open up 6 minutes on second place. There was a cold, hard rain most of the last half. The reception afterwards was again enthusiastic and loaded with awards. Never saw so much merchandise. Everyone got tow or three items. (Obviously the source of his enthusiasm. Ron won this race in 2:04:56.)**
There was a 20 km race the next day but the people driving me got lost and we got to the start 25 minutes too late. Could have won if I had picked up some more miles the next day. The next morning I took a train up to Hamburg to visit my twin brother who was an engineer for Messerschmitt Aircraft. The cold weather in London, Paris, and Hamburg was a great change from the heat and humidity of the N.Y. area where I'd stayed for 3 weeks before coming over. Had done a 1 hour time trial by myself on a London track just before going to Paris and managed 8 miles in 32.7 years. My brother put me up and I slept and trained the day away as usual. Hadn't raced for 2 years and that had sort of become the routine of my existence. Phoneed Hans Koch, who ran Zinn and I had raced against in the US-WG 10 km match back in the summer of '63. (Also you and Jack Mortland in Augsburg in the summer of '65.) He told me to go racing, trains, and organize races in Northern Germany. He speaks good English and is a real help to anyone interested in our sport. They had a 20 km race on the 3rd lap and just kept on pushing. Came through 5 km in 22:20 and 10 km in 45:45. Had 1:06:35 at 15 and 1:31:54.4 at the finish for my second best ever on the track. Koch came second in 1:37 plus.

The next day I started work for Messerschmitt. My brother had fixed up a room for me the week before for a job I landed a few days later. Luck was really with me because I got into a fairly easy section along with some English contract workers. These guys had never been more than an hour's drive away but it took weeks to get everything together.

Figure for every month I work, I can live one year on the savings. This great financial situation is hurting my training, but I'm sure going to make that sacrifice. Really hope I can stick it out through the winter but any minute expects me to come up and tell my game is up.

After a week of work, I took a train down near Hanover for a 10 km volksrace. Broke the course record with a 44:35. Half of this was on a rough dirt trail through the forest. Pushed very hard because of the roughness.

The next day I started work for Messerschmitt. My brother had fixed up a room for me the week before for a job I landed a few days later. Luck was really with me because I got into a fairly easy section along with some English contract workers. These guys had never been more than an hour's drive away but it took weeks to get everything together.

Figure for every month I work, I can live one year on the savings. This great financial situation is hurting my training, but I'm sure going to make that sacrifice. Really hope I can stick it out through the winter but any minute expects me to come up and tell my game is up.

The next day I started work for Messerschmitt. My brother had fixed up a room for me the week before for a job I landed a few days later. Luck was really with me because I got into a fairly easy section along with some English contract workers. These guys had never been more than an hour's drive away but it took weeks to get everything together.
our gratitude for their financing of our top walkers to these competitions. Sure had their time continues in the light of what is happening to our sport in the Olympic Games. I'd like to thank Bob Kitchen for giving me the opportunity to compete in the 20 km event.

A FEW RACES IN THE NEXT COUPLE MONTHS

Sun. Dec. 9 3 Mile Hcp., 1320 yd, grade school, Boulder, Col., 1 pm (B)
Sun. Dec. 15 10 Mile, Columbia, Mo., 8:30 a.m. (A)
Sat. Dec. 22 15 Km, Toronto, Can. (X)
Sun. Dec. 30 New Year's Eve 20 km, San Francisco (G)
Sat. Jan. 5 6 Mile, Seattle, 10 a.m. (S)
Sun. Jan. 13 5 Mile, Kenosha, Wis., 11 a.m. (C)
Sat. Jan. 19 6 Mile, Tacoma, Wash. (S)

We will continue our informal races on a bi-weekly basis in this area. If you are going to be around and are interested in a race, contact me for details. For the above races, contact the following:

A -- Joe Duncan, 4004 Deftor, Columbus, Mo. 65201
B -- Floyd Godwin, 935 Ash, Brookfield, Colo.
C -- W. J. Minott, 8606 21st St., Kenosha, Wis. 53140
D -- K. D. Walker, 29 Alhambra, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
E -- Dean Ingram, 507 Cobb Building, Seattle, Wash. 98104

Also, send me your schedules for 1974 races as they are drawn up. The schedule in here will only be as good as you make it -- only your source of race information is from readers.

FROM HILL TO HILL

A follow up to the Don Laird letter above: a recent postcard from Don indicates that he is still working at Messerschmitt, taking home $91 per day, and has learned that if he puts a bottle of boozes on the bosses desk he may be there for years. So he is thinking in terms of a long stay over there and joining a German club so he will be eligible for their nationals with 15 Senior titles. Also reports that he has found a nice room complete with English speaking daughter and piano, which he loves topazz (the piano)....Regarding the Barunyakids who were 1-2 in the World Deaf Games 50 km, one from Poland and the other from Denmark. They are indeed brothers, according to Carl Croneberg in Maryland. Stanislav defeated to Denmark and this meet was the first time the brothers had seen each other in years....Tentative arrangements at the Lugano Cup competition for an international postal match at 10 km between the U.S. and Great Britain. The competition will be in spring and Bruce MacDonald should have further details later....Bruce also reports that the Women's International at 5 km will be in France next year and that the U.S. will be welcomed to make it a world championship if we can get a team there. Every effort will be made to do this, but as of now competitors will have to finance their own way if we do send a team....There also will be a Junior competition for boys with Canada next September at 5 km, with the Junior 3 km Championships in Oregon used as a qualifier. The plans are to add a 10 km when both countries have sufficient depth of talent. So despite the present gloomy Olympic picture, about which we have no more at present, some things are looking up on the international scene.