Two national titles were decided in April on opposite coasts with one a mild surprise and the other an old story. In the 35 in Palo Alto on April 3 an old-hand, Wayne Glusker, and a newcomer, Dave Hummelberg, teammates on the West Valley Club, chose to finish together after they dropped a third teammate, Bryan Smazelle. At the finish, the two had a 3:03:50, just 40 seconds ahead of Smazelle. Needless to say, West Valley won the team title. Bob Rosenzance was a close fourth and John Knifton, who won the 1976 title in under 3 hours just 5 months earlier, was fifth ahead of surprise, Bill Ranney. Neal Fyke was disqualified, but I don't know at what stage of the race. Very little detail on this race.

Two weeks later in Old Bridge, N.J., Shaul Ladany won the National 75 for the fourth straight year. As a matter of fact, no one else has ever won the race since it has only been held four times. Furthermore, no one else has yet matched Shaul's time in his initial win in 1974, which he has improved each year. He has improved from 7:25 to 7:22 to 7:13 to a sensational 7:04:47 this year.

In second place was Detroit's onrushing Martin Kraft with an American citizen's record of 7:27:15 in a very well-paced race. Alan Price was walking second in the early stages and then took over in a 50:19 for his third 10 km to nearly catch Ladany. However, he paid the price (is that a pun?) later as he struggled from there and eventually finished 10 minutes back of Kraft in a still not too shabby performance. Gerry Bocci, making one of his infrequent appearances in recent years (I should talk), led Kraft through 20 km but then succumbed to Martin's strong pace and finally finished fourth in just under 8 hours but well clear of Tom Knatt. Tom just edged North Bedford mate Paul Schell.

Ladany took command of the race at the start, as he generally does, and blistered the first 10 km in 52:21. He held very close to that pace through 30 km in 2:38:33, at which point Price was only 7 seconds back. He slowed to 57:13 for his next 10, but Alan had shot his wad by that time and Shaul was on his own. He held a very steady pace at right around 50 minutes per 10 km the rest of the way to shatter his own record.

Ladany was also the winner in the Master's division, with Chris Amoroso, seventh overall, taking second. Winner of the "F" division was Bob Segal, of Hunter College, in 9:17:08. The team title went to North Bedford by a point over Patterson Valley Walkers.


HAI! YOU THINK SOLONIK WAS FAST--CHECK THIS--

Turku, Finland, Feb. 2-Reima Salonen became the first man ever to walk a competitive mile in under 6 minutes on the 170 meter indoor track in Turku—then he went on to finish the 3 Km race. His final time of 11:05.1 far exceeds anything ever done before, either indoors or out. Had he continued to 2 miles, he would have been several seconds under 12 minutes. Salonen, the 20-year-old who was the sensation of last summer's World 50 Km, paced 1500 meters in 5:28.1 (20 seconds under what he thought was his world's best by Todd Scully the same night) and 1 Mile in 8:36.2 and 7:19.6. Second in the race was Eino Rintala in 12:25, which would have been considered very fast in other circumstances. Stig Froberg was third in 12:39.3. A Salonen-Rintala battle in the Lusano Cup final this fall could be most interesting.

OHM BLAMES IT ONCE AGAIN

Colossal goals have become a trademark with the OHM and we managed one of our all time tollpers last month. You recall that picture of Jim Hieting on his way to the MAIA 2-Mile title. Reliable sources (namely everyone around Univ-Parkside) have informed us that wasn't Jim at all but his teammate John Vandenbrandt. Former staff photographer Cathy Drenthenbucher sent us the picture and identification, but having competed against both individuals, a more alert editor would have caught it. Apologies to both Jim and John for all the embarrassment I have caused among their raucous teammates. And Cathy was never really a staff photographer and we will still welcome any pictures she sends. Maybe next month we'll do Sue Brodock identified as Dave Romansky.
OVERSEAS RESULTS

APRIL 1977

Sat. June 11—NAAU Women's 10 KM, San Jose, Calif.


Mon. June 13—10 Mile, Detroit (I)

Sun. June 19—1 Hour, Houston, 10 a.m. (E)

Sat. June 25—NAAU Junior's 6 Mile, California, Pa., 11 a.m. (S)

Sun. June 26—20 KM, Midland, Ontario (C)

NAAU SENIOR, JUNIOR, B, AND MASTERS 25 KM, WASHINGTON, D.C.

5 Mile, Detroit (I)

1 Mile, Kenova, W. Va. (F)

Sun. July 2—10 KM, Columbus, Mo., 9 a.m. (B)

Sun. July 3—NAAU MASTERS 20 KM, Chicago (H) (5 KM the day before which I forgot to list)

5 KM, Houston, 10 a.m. (E)

Mon. July 4—NAAU Junior 5 KM, Chicago (H)

2.2 Mile, Denver, 9 a.m. (S)

Sat. July 9—1 Hour, Men and Women, Boone, 7 p.m. (J)

Contacts:

B—Sal Currello, 19031 Capenart Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20760

D—Joe Dana, 1000 Defoe, Columbia, MD 21001

E—John Evans, 5540 N. Braevoak Dr., Houston, TX 77096

I—Dean Ingram, 507 Cobb Blvd., Seattle, WA 98101

J—Mark Kraft, 19173 Donahoe Field, Detroit, MI 48224

K—Evelyn Dornan, 2109 N. Locust, W. Long Br, NC 77602

L—Bob Lawton, U. of Wisconsin-Parkside, Kenosha, WI 53140

M—Mike Allen, 4008 S. Oakley, Chicago, IL 60615

O—Wayne Quaker, 20391 Steven Creek Rd., Cupertino, CA 90114

P—Larry Larson, 9010 Eastern Ave., Racine, WI 53406

R—Doug Walker, 59 Alhambra Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

T—John Harvard, 4957 Velly Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15216

W—Lee Schaefer, 1217 St. Sebastian, Knoxville, TN 37916

LOOKING BACK

5 Years Ago (From the April 1972 ORW)—Out in Seattle Larry Young walked a great 25 KM to win the National title in 1:57:28. Goetz Klopfer tremedus 7:23:10, quite a bit superior to his 75 KM 8:53:12. Newer and more improved was on his 3rd walk, still doing 9 minute miles for the last 10 miles. Bill Walker was second in 2:03:13 with Todd Scully another minute or more. Yet, even in his error this year. He was 4:30:45.5 at 50 KM and 5:53:17 at 40 miles...
Long Island... in the Junior 20 Km (now B) Winnie Falmouth best Leon Jasionowski 1:41:15, to 1:41:55... Greg Dibold upset Ron Daniel in a New Jersey 10 mile 1:16:04, to 1:16:29... Back home in Missouri, Larry Young did a 1:44:34 for 10 Km a week before the 25 and covered 8 mi 415 yds in an hour and a half before the 20. Jerry Brown did a 1:45:17 for 10 Km this week, and did a 1:36:58 for 20 on the track, a half-minute ahead of Floyd Godwin... Overseas, K.H. stadtmiller bettered the World record for 30 Km with 2:14:16. Hans-Georg Reimann did 1:26:16, 14 for 20 km ahead of Lutz Lpkowinski's 1:26:56, and Paul Mikill did 1:26:55 for 20.

Other Results:


From Heal To Toe

Additions to the Bibliography: Wynnham, G.H. et al., "Mechanical Efficiency of a Champion Hiller," South African Medical Journal, Vol. 15, pp. 557-58 (May 22, 1971) (Thanks to Jane Jansen for that one) Lovesey, Peter, "Wobble To Death," Dell Publishers, 1970. (Thanks to Bob Henderson for this one, as he says that he recommends highly, about 6 day races in England around the 1880's.) The National Sporting Goods Association has contributed $2,000 to the price walking Travel Fund and Dean Ingraham says that we all drop them as a note of thanks. We had certainly better end up with this as a humble job, we do. The address is 717 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611. The vote is running 100 percent against Dean Ingraham's suggestion to cut back the number of nationals, according to our mail anyway. Of course that is based on just two letters but they are both stated rather strongly with some sound, albeit still debatable, reasoning. Taken in the order they arrived here, we hear first from Jim Hanley. His letter was addressed to Dean with a copy to the ORW:

"I very strongly disagree with the proposal to eliminate odd-ball National Championship distances.

"Those who want to eliminate them are using the same reasoning as those who voted to eliminate the Olympic 50 Km walk.

"Our walkers need all the recognition they can get and nothing does more for an upcoming—not struggling—program than being able to host a National Championship.

"The argument about policing the many events, inspecting entry blanks, etc. holds no weight with me. That's part of the job of the officials involved. As you say, "if they can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

"Besides, such an argument has absolutely nothing to do with the number of championships involved. Local associations can foul up one National Championship just as easily as 20. And if you doubt it, look what happened in the most prestigious race in the last 4 years—the Final Olympic Trials. Prestige of a race has nothing to do with its conduct.

"The argument that no other sports has as many National Championships is not true. Tracks&Field has a few: 100, 200, 400, Pole Vault, Javelin, Discus, Shot, Marbles, etc. and that's just for outdoors. Then the same thing with indoors. Whoops, I forgot the decathlon and relays. (Ed: Comparing all these events is a bit ludicrous, too, Jim, since they are mostly contested at a single site over 2 days—for indoors—and involve completely different skills. No one is going to contest more than two or three events. I really see no analogy to the race walking situation.

"Let's remember that we are a SPORT—not just a few events tucked onto a track meet schedule. As a sport we deserve as many top-level competitions as possible.

"Non-walkers have two or three Indoor meets every weekend that can choose from top-quality competition. Walkers have two or three entire seasons.

"Race walkers can practically be crippled and earn some kind of an International team berth. Only the best two in our sport get that opportunity.

"The National Championships are the race walkers top-level competition. We can have an organized list of National Championships with the ones we have now as the standard distance.

"Let's not go backwards. Let's not give the anti-walking people what they want. Let's look at it another way; suppose we go a little farther and cut out all the events but the 20 Km. (Oh, hell, why cut out one that cut too, and really save everyone a lot of work!"

The other letter from Elliott Deroman, addressed to your editor:

"I would like to voice on record in vigorous opposition to those who would cut down on the list of AAU championship races on the following calendar. I firmly believe that each of them serves a valid purpose; each is a distinct distance unto itself. Furthermore, we are missing the major point that by having 13 nationals, we thereby are able to spread the idea of staging national championship competitions around the USA and thereby enable us to put our sport on display in areas it needs to be put on display in. Certainly I realize as much as anyone that some Nationals, e.g. the 20 and 50 Km, and generally the Indoor meets are more important than others because of the team qualification opportunities offered. Fine and good, let them remain the most important nationals. That is no reason to scrap some of the others. I can understand Chairman Dean Ingraham's exasperation at the problems certain AAU district associations and their local race walking chairmen are giving him. But that is no reason to hit back at the associations and chairmen that are doing the job. What it really indicates is that the preceding AAU convention did not really screen the bids too carefully and awarded them to associations that weren't equipped to handle them properly. I say in these cases: let us examine the track record of all such associations and chairmen and make absolutely sure they are not rewarded with another championship the following year.
is an easy solution to those who complain of the multiplicity of championships in three different divisions, Senior, Class B, and Masters. The easy solution is not to cut down on the number of championships awarded. The easy solution is to cut down on the number of races by arranging to have all the longer events, say from 25 km on up to 100 km, as combined events, with championships at stake in all three divisions. We have done this the last several years at the 40 and 75 km we have staged in New Jersey, and it has been a success. The lure of multiple championships helps guarantee a larger field and also serves as strong incentive for those further back in the pack, who will not qualify for senior national medals by placing in the top six.

"I was particularly upset by Dean Ingram's inclusion of the 40 and 75 distances on the list of events to be axed. The 40 km has been held in Long Branch; M., with one year out, every since 1963, I believe. It has become a midsummer classic. I personally have sweated long and hard over it. I want to see it continue and so do the many who point for it. As to the 75, we had the most successful race ever at this distance 2 weeks ago. 20 starters and a record total of 17 finished. It was a great indication of interest in "ultra" walking. The walkers were well taken care of. Officials sat out there for hours and hours. I think we proved that the 75 km is a viable national championship distance. There are strong arguments feasible for all the other distance: 25 km is half of 50; 20 km plus 10; 35 km is halfway between 20 and 50, etc. (Ed. I don't really think those are strong arguments, Elliott.) Let's keep them all. They all help our sport.

"As to the different categories, I say keep Class B. It serves a definite purpose. It encourages those who have never won a championship to go out and do just that. It does not relate to the Junior division because a Junior, having won in that division, still needs an incentive of winning against senior competition. In addition, Class B relates purely to those in the 20-39 bracket (who should be the bulk of our fields). They need an incentive. I agree a better name is needed, but can't give you one offhand."

Personally, your old editor doesn't think we would suffer with a few less races. The exposure idea is great but I have never felt we enhance our sport by a "National Championship" with 10 or 12 contestants. I think often the crown with some of the lesser important races. I would have no argument if the 1 Hour, 15 km (together with the 10 km we have three races quite similar), 25 km and 75 km were dropped. The lighter two are different than the 30. In any case, it should help to liven up the NW Committee meeting this fall. Anyone planning any race walking clinics in the Midwest? Sanford Sampson in Marshalltown, Iowa would like to see some. He is an ever ready walker who wants to be sure he is doing things right. The 1977 Shore Athletic Club magazine is now available from Elliott Darrman at 28 N. Locust Ave., West Lone Branch, NJ 07764 for $1.25. It is of interest to all track and walk areas, including a full page of walking photos and a special "Foot Sally page". Martin Kraft that Joe Baret, the walker from Lake Superior College who disappeared after the NAIA meet where he finished fourth in 1:44, 3 days later in 1:41 earlier this year in his conference meet and may have been a legitimate fourth in the botched up NAIA finish...Whoopee! I had one additional response on the Ingram proposal to reduce the number of national championships. Alan Wood mentioned it in his Master's Walker newsletter. Said he supports the plan, although the B category is not check. He also sent Dean issues 2 and 3 of the NW wherein a survey revealed that zero of ten respondents would do away with any classes and four of ten we should have fewer national races...Rich Olson, in Arizona, reports

on a training opportunity that some of you may want to take advantage of. To quote him: "A few months ago, I talked to Rich Haywood who's in charge of Ruman's team in Arizona and he told me that if any walkers are interested in high altitude training he would set up a walking program that could be operated like his running camp. For a set price, things like rooms and board, seminars, recreation facilities (swimming, horse riding, tours, etc.), and all training facilities would be open to the guest. Anyone who wishes to inquire further about what is going on should write Haywood at Box 2186, Mesa, AZ 85206.

THE TECHNIQUES AND TEACHING OF RACE WALKING IN TRAINING (De la technique et de l'enseignement de la marche sportive dans l'entrainement) by Roland Haydych and Dr. Gert Schrader

This article originally appeared in the East German journal "Der Leichtathlet" in April 8, 1976 issue. It was translated to French and carried in the November 1976 issue of "La Marche Balleuse." I have had it translated into English and here it is. It presents a good discussion of the mechanics of race walking, a set of specific exercises, and a lengthy argument for diversified training for the race walker.

Race walking is not generally a part of the program of youth sports groups but rather includes people who train for years in this discipline to attain success. They generally have a thorough knowledge of race walking technique and training. Our idea, however, is that race walking should have its own place in general training programs. For this, it is not really necessary to develop high performances at competitive distances. Rather, race walking would be used to animate training and to familiarize children with another movement. With technique assimilated, race walking can then serve to develop endurance. At the same time, adding to the number of walkers will increase the chances of finding young athletes who could be trained for competition.

In this report, we address several development in technique and training in race walking with this more universal development in mind.

Technique

The motion of race walking is a repetitive cycle, basically quite simple. To study the development of movement, it is necessary to divide the simple step into typical phases. These phases are: front support phase, rear support phase, rear spring phase, and forward spring phase.

A detailed analysis of the phases may be undertaken by considering the following essential points: designation of the beginning and end of a phase, function of the phase, and description of the movement of the legs, hips, and trunk as well as the waist and arms. The first phase in our observation is the front support phase.

Front Support Phase. The front support phase begins with the heel of the bounding leg on the ground (in front support) and ends as soon as the support leg is in vertical position according to the body's center of gravity (see Figure 1). (All figures at the end)

The function of this phase is to provide a favorable orientation leading to the following phases; i.e., absorbing the weight of the body, offering a stable support surface, and offering a tension at suitable favorable for muscles.
With the placement of the heel, the springing leg becomes the support leg. At this moment it is slightly bent at the knee to allow a slight slowing down. For competition, in the position of complete tension, the articulation of the knee is found as it moves to the vertical. For the body, this provides a greater support and one thus obtains a stable position by the fact that the foot moves rather rapidly from heel to toes.

At the moment of heel placement, the hip on the side of the support leg is leading forward. During front support—with the elevation and rotation of the support leg—it goes from its lowest to its highest position. To keep the body balanced while it is on one leg, movements of the corresponding hip are necessary. By this, the body's center of gravity is repositioned above the support leg. This position causes a curvature in the spinal column, which continues in the scapular girdle.

At the beginning of this phase, the shoulder girdle assumes a position opposite to the pelvic axis (torsion). At the end of this phase, this torsion at the top and bottom of the body disappears. The angle of the arm—approximately 90° at first—becomes obtuse at the end of the phase. The arm moves diagonally forward (the flat at the middle of the body); the hand is slightly closed.

Rear Support Phase. The rear support phase begins when the support leg is in the vertical position according to the body's center of gravity, and ends when the foot loses contact with the ground (see Figure 2).

The essential task consists of developing an optimal support force, which produces positive acceleration of the body in forward movement.

The knee joint remains taut for as long as possible after the position attained. The foot is thrust onto the toes. To keep contact with the ground as long as possible, the heel stays in its highest position until losing contact. The point of the foot should not turn either out or in.

The hip turns toward the rear losing its perpendicular position compared with the body's vertical axis. It moves from the highest to the lowest position and thus shifts to the side of the support leg. During this phase, there is also a change in the trunk's position in the relationship of the hip to the spinal column. To maintain balance, the muscles which support the spinal column return from an oblique to a vertical position above the center of gravity. The center of gravity at the end of the phase is again vertical, between the legs. The shoulder comes forward from its lowest position by a rotation around the body's vertical axis. The arm continues this movement, at the same time moving forward, up and inward (the hand at the level of the sternum). The elbow angle is again reduced to 90°. The hand is slightly closed and extended.

Rear Spring Stage. The rear spring stage begins as the toes leave the surface of the ground after support. It ends as the joints of the foot, hips, elbow, and shoulder are superimposed, after oscillation in front of the leg (see Figure 3).

The function of this phase is to offer a recuperation time and to guarantee sufficient relaxation to the muscles.

The leg goes forward, supple and slightly bent. The foot must again be flat and directly ahead. With the oscillation, the movement of the hips is again around the body's vertical axis. In vertical position, it reaches the lowest position on the side of the moving leg. The position of the upper body is straight during this phase. The shoulder, which was in its extreme forward position at the beginning of this phase, is above the joints of the foot and hip at the end. The angle formed at elbow level opens and reaches its maximum at the end of the phase.

Forward Spring Stage. The forward spring stage takes place from the vertical position of the foot, knee, elbow, and shoulder joints until placement of the heel of the springing leg in forward support (see Figure 4).

Its essential role is an active forward oscillation until maximum stride length is obtained. In this phase, the foot goes directly forward. The shoulder in low position (opposite the swinging leg) balances forward without causing complete tension of the knee joint. The other shoulder, in a high position, raises. Optimal length of the step, depending on the walking ability, is fundamental. An exaggerated step, in unnatural fashion, causes forced lowering of the center of gravity and thus leads to useless tension as well as energy consumption in the following phases.

With the lowering of the heel, the springing leg prepares for its support role. At the time of placement, the body is instantly in a stable position. The springing leg absorbs the weight of the body with the leg which was supporting alone (double support phase).

During this phase, the hip turns forward around the longitudinal axis the body to reinforce the amplitude of the springing forward. Simultaneously, at the time of heel positioning, it drops to its lowest point. The center of gravity returns to the middle of the body. The upper body remains straight.

The scapular girdle moves around the longitudinal axis of the body, that is, the free arm in opposition to the springing leg returns toward the rear. The elbow angle again decreases; at the end of the phase, it returns to maximum position behind the body.

Teaching.

The Goal of Basic Training. Our intention of introducing race walking during general athletics training influences the desired goal and the character of training. The young athletes must have acquired an accurate and coordinated motion in the technical sense at the end of training in race walking. The movement must be produced by an average gait, on shorter distances (200 to 400m) and follow the rules of competition, which are characterized by: a naturally ample stride; a tension movement sufficient for knee articulation; permanent contact with the ground; and coordination between the shoulder girdle, the work of the arms, and the movement of the hips.

Once the essential element in regulating race walking is acquired, knowing the placement of the support leg, there remains to be assured the permanent contact, technically correct foot movement, amplitude of hip movement, and activity of the scapular girdle, which produce the necessary fluidity and rational of movement.

If the movement does not appear sufficiently flexible and free, it is not yet economical enough.

The quality of movement improves mostly with increased distances, but also with the demands of increased gait, that is, it remains
The essential characteristic of the methodical progression is thus merit of the arm and shoulder movement of the hip. Space (length characteristic is progressively raising the development of movement both in the didactic process, while not a progressive movement, have a preparatory or complementary function.

The essential characteristic of the methodical progression is thus the total practice of the basic exercise preceding. Raising the degree of difficulty coincides with a second characteristic: the reinforcement of attention on isolated elements of movement. The basic exercises are thus oriented to follow the elements of movement—work of the leg, movement of the arm and shoulder, and movement of the hip. A third characteristic is progressively raising the development of movement, both in space (length of distances) and in time (gait).

Choice of Exercise. Apprenticeship in race walking is divided into three groups of exercises:

- Specific preparation exercise
  - Natural walking with supplementary position exercises
  - Accelerated walking, that is developing a longer stride, for general physical condition
  - Gymnastic exercise: to improve the mobility of the abdominal and scapular girdles and the pliability of the leg muscles.

- Basic exercise
  - No. 1: passing from natural walking to race walking increasing the gait (tension of the leg at the knee)
  - No. 2: coordinated movement of the手臂 and shoulder girdle
  - No. 3: walking with active hip movement.

- Complementary exercise
  - Walking while doing supplementary exercises
  - Walking on an incline and a descent for very short distances
  - Imitating local parts of movement.

Looking then at specific exercises:

A. Exercises for learning and perfecting the work of the leg

1. Natural walking with supplementary exercise such as:
   - trunk rotation left and right with hands joined (Fig. 5)
   - forward and rear trunk flexes (Fig. 6)
   - different length steps
   - steps of different frequency
   - different step positions.

2. Natural walking with accelerations (Fig. 7)

   Increasing the gait causes tension of the knee joint. Acceleration should be made keeping in mind ground contact (Fig. 8) and progression without hindrance. Watch particularly the exact tension of the leg, going from spring to horizontal, and the position of the foot by the heel.

- Exercise for the role of hip movement

A. Gymnastic exercise to improve tension and articulation of the knee:
   - Lifting the point of the toes in a standing position (Fig. 9)
   - Flexing the trunk from standing position (Fig. 10)
   - Alternate thrusting in place of the leg bent at the knee (Fig. 11)
   - Same movement, raising the hands at knee level (Fig. 12)
   - Same movement with support of the arms, from an oblique position (Fig. 13)
   - Walking at average gait with accentuated tension of the knee

B. Walking with excessive aid of the scapular girdle
   - Arms are joined behind the head (Fig. 16)
   - Arms are joined behind the chest
   - The shoulders support a baton (Fig. 17)
   - A baton is carried behind the back at elbow level (Fig. 18).

C. Walking with movement of arms and shoulders opposite in which:
   - arms are joined behind the head (Fig. 16)
   - Arms are joined behind the chest
   - The shoulders support a baton (Fig. 17)
   - A baton is carried behind the back at elbow level (Fig. 18).

4. Walking uphill with accentuated arm movement

B. Exercise for the role of hip movement

1. Nature of walking, horizontally, the leg make an arc toward the opposite side (Fig. 23)

2. Walking
   - Walking on a line (Fig. 26)
   - Walking on a line with supplementary exercises (Fig. 27 & 28).
   - Walking on a line exaggerating placement (crossed) of the feet (Fig. 29 a and b)
   - Rotation movement of the taut forward leg (Fig. 30)

(Well, if I am to have room for all the above figures, I will have to save the rest of the article for next month. That is the part that stresses a diversified training program.)
The figures didn't take quite the room I anticipated but there still isn't room for the rest of the article so I will expand slightly on my remarks regarding the number of national championship races.

The thing is that we now have a lot of "so-called Nationals" but in reality most of them are just another regional or even local race. These races can be promoted just as well and do just as much for the sport without the National tag on them. For example, Elliott Denman's National 75, which I am not suggesting we take away from him. But the fact is that the race was very successful for many years as the Eastern Regional 50 Mile Championship. The annual 100 mile in Columbia is, and will continue to be, a most successful race without the benefit of an AAU Championship tag. What needs to be done is to build more local races into prestigious, annual affairs. We can look to road running. Races such as the Boston Marathon, the Bay-to-Breakers, the Camelot 15 Mile, and many more are much more popular than any National races and are doing a lot for the sport.

Our problem with Nationals is, of course, the physical size of the country with top walkers coast-to-coast. Only qualifying races are going to draw a truly representative field and many lesser events aren't going to draw outside the local area at all. My own feeling is that we could do quite well with National titles at 3 Km Indoors, and 5, 10, 20, and 50 outdoors, while building other fixtures into prestigious affairs. Many countries with stronger programs have even fewer Nationals. I'm not suggesting that we cut back that far -- I already outlined the races I feel we can definitely do without -- but I don't think it would hurt if we did.

We might consider adding one race, however, one that would help to boost the sport on a club level. That would be a National road relay. It could either be at a set distance per leg, say 5 times 25 km, or legs of varying distance, e.g. 10, 15, 20, 30, and 50 km. Or we may want to go with more than five legs. In any case, it would encourage clubs to build strong teams with good depth and could become a most popular annual affair. The only problem again being travel distances and the accompanying expense.

In any case, I don't think a cut in the schedule would necessarily be a step back and it would not mean we need to quit promoting the sport. With fewer Nationals, maybe we could concentrate on making them truly Nationals, through expense money or whatever it takes, while at the same time concentrating on building up local races. I don't really think most walkers need the carrot of a "national title" as incentive and I think most realize when they have done well in a true national and when they have done well in what amounts to just another local race. The satisfaction is much greater in the former, even though you may be a few places further back. At least this is my experience.