IF YOU THINK you’re being abused because you are forced for one reason or another to walk more these days, get a load of Jim Hocking, the man who never once during his 85 years has been nick-named “Hitch.” With the help of Ray Van Cleef, the Hotel New York’s rub-downer par excellence, we have some of Hocking’s feats at hand.

Hocking has walked a quarter of a million miles, without replacements. When he was a sprightly lad of 61 he walked from Times Square to the City Hall in Philadelphia, 97 miles, in 19 hours and 16 minutes. Seven years later he strolled from New York to Chicago in 27 days, 11 hours. It took him only 83 walking days the time he ankled from Coney Island to San Francisco. Sergeant John Walsh, when 61, did the same 3,684 miles in 85 days, didn’t like San Francisco, did an about-face, and walked back. Made nice time coming back: 91 days. Jim Ennis is another who contracted the same curious siege of vagabondia at Coney Island and immediately lit out for San Francisco.

Last year, at the age of 84, Hocking walked from Yonkers to Poughkeepsie, 61 miles, in 13 hours and 40 minutes. On his 84th birthday he legged it from old Teaneck, N. J., his home when not walking, and made it to Bear Mountain Inn, 55 miles away, in 12 hours. Edward Payson Weston, at 75, walked from Minneapolis to New York, 1,546 miles, in 60 days.

So what are you griping about?

Boy, can I use a cab.

N.Y. Daily Mirror, May 31, 1942

Well, there was nothing really big of a contemporary nature to report and since we had a bunch of interesting old clippings Charles Serritella sent along, figured we may as well put them to work. Now, on to recent results:

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PAGE 2 KARCH 1986

If you think it hasn't been long since you received your last ORW and that we should be cutting back this month—you're right. Since I won't be around these parts during the time I am normally producing this tome, you were destined to either get it early or late. To avoid a torrent of nasty letters asking: "Where's my precious ORW?", I decided it would be best to go with the early option. Your editor will be in Clearwater, Florida over the Easter weekend where son Scott and his Bengal teammates will be participating in a soccer tournament. And we plan to stay down there a few more days, which takes us well into April and past ORW deadlines...

As of today (March 18), we have received 18 replies to Elliott Dennan's "Big Question" survey on national championship races. Haven't made any tally of these early returns...

Race walking hit the front page of the Wall Street Journal on Feb. 29 with an article entitled "A Main Requirement To Be A Race Walker Is A Very Thick Skin", by Beatrice A. Garcia. I recall the writer had talked to me on the phone several months ago, but forget now what sort of questions she asked. In any case, the article isn't too bad in tone, but contains quite a few inaccuracies, which Elliott Dennan has already pointed out to the Journal in a letter to the editor. Gary Westfield tells us that the Penn Relays in Philadelphia will conduct a 5 Km Race Walk on Thursday, April 24. (Omitted from the above schedule by some careless editor.) Gary reports: "After many year's absence, we have been approached by Frank Greenberg (TAC VP) to give our support to the event. Frank has guaranteed that we will have at least 10 walkers. Because of the work that Mr. Greenberg went through with a reluctant meet director, and because of the impression race walking can make at this prestigious meet, we should make every effort to be there. The TAC Race Walking Committee has funds available to support this race."

Speaking of the Big Question survey, the following letter comments on the question of national championships:

Dear Jack,

Felt it was time for me to add my comments on national championships, which issue has been debated recently. I find it disturbing that there are a few, but vocal, people who feel the need to cut back on the number of championships at the distances we now contest. They are wrong if they fear performance will be improved by reducing the number held.

At a time when we as a sport are fighting to keep walking events alive in many track and field meets, the NAIA, and on the high school level, it doesn't make sense to be cutting back on the national championships. It helps the overall walking program at all levels by exposing walkers of all abilities to national championships through out the country. It would be very interesting to see what distance was the first national championship people participated in. In my case, it was the 25 Km. I would venture to say that most people were involved in one of the misnamed: 10,000 meter distances. Why did they participate? Chances are it was because it was close to them and didn't require a lot of expense to participate. Most of us are limited by the expense travel, stay, and time off from work. Handicap races does not guarantee higher numbers.

I see no practical reason to arbitrarily eliminate any national championship that is now being contested. Yes, there may be years that all distances do not have a championship, but there should be every attempt to find hosts within a reasonable time after the bidding. If we do not allow bidding at the conventions, we as a sport will lose not only championships, but sponsors, support, and interest of loyal and willing people. These are the things the sport can least afford to sacrifice.

Ray Funkhouser

LOOKING BACK

20 Years Ago (From the March 1966 ORW)—Rudy Halusa launched what proved to be probably his most successful year in race walking (although his fourth place finish in the Mexico City 20 Km 2 years later in probably the single highlight) with a storming last lap to nip Don Denoon in the National Indoor 1 Mile. In Albuquerque’s altitude, DeNoon’s very fast early pace proved to be his downfall. Going through 1 mile in 3:30 and 2:02 in 3:06, DeNoon was nearly 50 yards up on Rudy, who had 1:38, 3:18. However, Rudy maintained his pace, while DeNoon staggered through a final quarter in 1:53. Gaining 20 yards on the final lap, Halusa caught his struggling opponent at the line to win in 6:09.2. Ron Daniel was third in 6:12.3 with Larry Walker fourth...

15 Years Ago (From the Oct. 1971 ORW)—In National Junior Championships (not age-related in those days, you just couldn't have won a national), Wayne Glusker beat Mike Ryan and Jerry Lansing at 1 mile in 4:02 and 4:06.2; and won the 5000 M in 14:56.2. He had the same 1 mile time in 1970 when he was a junior.

Wayne Glusker is a very thick skin...

Ron Daniel won the 1971 1 mile indoors in 4:19.8. He had a 6:37.6 for 1 mile in Albany, engine "Knute"
10 Years Ago (From the March 1976 ORW)—In the National Indoor meet, veteran Ron Laird captured the 2 mile in 13:17.0 and Sue Brodock won the women's 1 mile in 7:12.7. Although he controlled the race throughout, Laird was only 1.6 seconds ahead of Larry Walker and Todd Scully at the finish. Ron Daniel and Dave Romansky were also under 13:50 in a tight finish. The Ohio Track Club's Laurie Tucholski was second to Brodock with a 7:39.6. Laird and Scully jogged to Leningrad with the U.S. track team but couldn't quite cope with the Soviets. Yevgeniy Yesyukov won in 20:23.8 (5 km) with Alexei Troitski close behind in 20:31.6. Scully had 21:06.2 and Laird 21:55.2. Jim Heiring won the NAAC 2 Mile in 14:07.3, breaking his own meet record. Carl Schueler was second in 14:49. On his way from Leningrad to Mexico, Mr Laird stopped off in Springfield, Ohio for a friendly 6 mile, winning handily in 14:39. In a battle of aging Jacks, Mortland beat Blackburn 49:39.5 to 50:00. Laurie Tucholski finished 2nd to Brodock with 7:39.6. Larry Walker won the 1A Times Mile in 6:28.1.

5 Years Ago (From the March 1981 ORW)—Little of lasting significance reported in that issue.

One other interesting item in that ancient March 1966 issue worth repeating now:

From the book Track Athletics, by Albert Lee, Harper Brothers, New York, 1966: "One Mile Walk (p. 41)—This event is the least athletic of any on the schedule and will be doubtless dispensed with in a year or two. There are few exercises for the general run of men any better than walking...but "Athletic" or "Heel and Toe" walking is exaggerated, artificial, and of no particular benefit. It is not harmful, of course, because it is exercise and all normal exercise is beneficial... (p. 45) Walking has fallen somewhat into disrepute of late, because unscrupulous athletes, proficient in the heel-and-toe method, can frequently run without appearing to alter their form, and when the judge of walking is not at their very heels, they travel rapidly, but unfairly, over the course. But this is not sport?

Here is how the Danish publication Kgangsanayt wished readers a Happy New Year.

PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The Isle of Man last September saw the first appearance in the United Kingdom of the athletes from the Peoples Republic of China, and so it was to prove the ideal opportunity to entrust my wife Heng Hua with the task of conducting an interview, on the seafront at Douglas, with their national coach Mr Wong Kui.

Back in 1957 Wong Kui was China's No. 2, race-walker since when he has been influenced by all nations but in particular the training systems of the German Democratic Republic and Mexican athletes. In our discussions it was quickly evident that it is to the youth of China that Wong Kui looks for his material. He is in control of about 200 girls aged 10-14 years and 300 boys with the popular age being 14-18.

His training disciplines are uniform:

a. Slow, very slow basic technique building up gradually.

b. Relax in the area competitions usually over 2-3 kilometres, then district races before state competitions over 3-5 kilometres and finally national events where girls race 5-10 kilos and the boys 10-20 kilos.

All training sessions commence with 10 minutes jogging followed by 3 minutes concentrated 'heel' work when they raise and flex their heels to strengthen foot placement.

The girls average about 100 kilos a week while the boys undertake 140 kilos. Every session ends with 10 minutes jogging and 15 minutes loosen up exercises.

Wong Kui places great faith in his athletes swimming in the sea to build strength and as a form of relaxation their diet is governed by their comparative poverty and restricted to a rice base with vegetables, fish and fruit. Let no one assume they are privileged - Their success is governed by their hunger for success against all the odds. It is hard, hard work and more hard.

Wong Kui is winter training with no racing from October to February. During this period he has his athletes doing press-ups 50 times each and every day four times while, wait for it, they sit on holding an iron ball (1 kilo weight) in each hand and simulate their walking arm action with 1000 arm movements, completed four times a week.

A typical training day would be:

5.30am. Training for 70 minutes, 12-15 kilos, jogging and exercises.

9.00am. Sleep.

11.00am. Breakfast, School from 8.00 - 12.00.

1.00pm. Lunch.

2.00pm. Main training session: Girls - 14 hours. Boys - 2-3 hours.

8.00pm. Sleep.

The 50 kilos boys do 30 kilos spins twice a week.

The racing season revolves around National Championships in March and October.

Girls: 3 kilos; 5 kilos; 10 kilos; 15 kilos; 20 kilos; 30 kilos;
Boys: 5 kilos; 10 kilos; 20 kilos; 50 kilos.

The squad for major events are selected one year before the event(s) with the final selections made one month prior to the races when the team travels to a training camp near the sea at Thai Lian. Its then back to Peking for the flight to their destination.

In March 1985 the championships were won as follows:

Ladies 10 kilos: Yan Hong (aged 18) 44.14
Mens 50 kilos: Sun Xai Ong 3.54.39

It was the delightful setting of the Isle of Man that these prodigous talents were viewed and they did not disappoint with the girls taking the first 1st, 2nd and 3rd places individually to retain the Eschborn Cup from the outstanding Soviet Union Athletes. Their men showed considerable promise with their first man home in the 50 kilos being Quien Ku 13th in 4:08.23 while as a team they were 6th beating Great Britain. Sadly we did not get a chance to see their 20 kilos athletes as they chose success in the Asian Games and due to lack of finance they could not send a second team.

Whilst accepting theirs is a vastly difference culture and environment the lessons are very clear - hard disciplined training is crucial to progress.
1959, Pittsburgh, July 5
1. Elliott Denman, N.Y. Pioneer Club 5:07:47
3. Lou Neiszlen, Penn AC 5:26:32
4. John Wall, Baltimore X-Country Club 5:30:45
5. Eric Waite, Penn AC 5:33:04
6. Waldemar Grundy, Canada 5:36:00

1960, Pittsburgh, July 3
1. Ronald Laird, NY Pioneer Club 1:14:09
2. John Allen, Buffalo AC 1:25:19
3. Bruce MacDonald, NY Pioneer Club 1:25:22
4. Jack Blackburn, Ohio TC 1:27:14
5. Adolph Weinacker, USAF 1:28:26
6. Leo Sjogren, Finnish-American AC 1:29:19

1961, Long Beach, N.Y., April 23
1. John Allen, un., Buffalo 1:28:20
4. Carl Kurr, Penn AC 1:29:13
5. Bruce MacDonald, NY Pioneer Club 1:30:52

1962, New York, N.Y., May 20
1. Ron Laird, un., Buffalo 1:25:30
2. Vlademar Grundy, Can. 1:26:50
3. Felix Cappella, Can. 1:27:56
4. John Abbate, Penn AC 1:28:46
5. Dave Lakritz, 92nd St. YMHA 1:29:06
6. Bruce MacDonald, NY Pioneer Club 1:30:13

(Temperature in 90s; few survived the course)

1963, Detroit, July 6
1. Chris McCarthy, U. of Chicago TC 1:22:00
2. Ron Laird, NYAC 1:23:04
4. Goetz Klopfer, Detriot Chandler Park TC 1:24:12
5. Leon Jasnowski, Detroit CPTC 1:25:56
6. John Abbate, Penn AC 1:30:10

1964, Seattle, Sept. 5
2. Bruce MacDonald, NYAC 1:25:22
3. Mike Brodie, Pleasant Hill TC 1:25:52
4. Ron Zinn, US Army 1:26:30
5. Dean Rasmussen, NYAC 1:28:10
6. Jack Blackburn, Ohio TC 1:30:31

1965,
1. Dean Rasmussen, US Merchant Marine Academy 5:03:33
2. Bruce MacDonald, NYAC 5:04:51
3. Elliott Denman, N.Y. Pioneer Club 5:05:34
4. Paul Schell, North Medford Club 5:12:36
5. Goetz Klopfer, Wayne State U. 5:20:27
6. Eric Waite, un. 5:24:28

1966, Chicago, October 31
1. Larry Young, SC Striders 4:38:25
2. Alex Oakley, Canada 4:43:06
3. Shaul Ladany, NY Pioneer Club 4:44:03
4. Ron Daniel, NYAC 4:45:10
5. Pat Farrelly, Canada 4:52:10

1967, Chicago, June 10
1. Larry Young, SC Striders 4:33:04
2. Goetz Klopfer, Athens AC 4:44:03
3. Ron Laird, NYAC 4:54:52
4. Ron Kulik, NYAC 4:55:43
5. Jim Clinton, UCTC 5:00:10
6. Tom Dooley, Athens AC 5:08:34

1968, San Francisco, July 14
1. Larry Young, SC Striders 4:12:12
2. Goetz Klopfer, Athens AC 4:18:28
4. Dave Romansky, Philadelphia AC 4:23:10

1969, South Lake Tahoe, Sept. 13
1. Bryon Overton, SC Striders 4:56:07
2. Bob Kuchar, un. 5:05:29
4. Jim Lopes, Athens AC 5:14:46
5. Rich Bowman, un. 5:29:03
6. Larry O'Neill, Glacier SC 5:37:30

1970, Santa Barbara, Sept. 12
1. John Knifton, NYAC 4:35:02
3. Bob Kitchen, un. 4:38:46
5. Jim Lopes, Athens AC 4:43:36

1971, Cedar Grove, N.J., June 12
1. Larry Young, Columbia College 4:18:30
2. John Knifton, NYAC 4:19:23
5. Ron Kulik, NYAC 4:28:29

1972, San Francisco, Nov. 5
1. Bill Weile, Colorado TC 4:22:00
2. Bob Kitchen, Athens AC 4:26:43
5. Larry O'Neill, Montana 5:46:37

No other finishers
1973, Des Moines, Iowa, May 20
2. John Knifton, NYAC 4:30:20
3. Ron Laird, NYAC 4:31:15
4. Jerry Brown, Colorado TC 4:37:18
5. Floyd Cavlin, Colorado TC 4:39:10

1974, Seattle, Sept. 1
1. Larry Young, Columbia TC 4:25:51
2. John Knifton, NYAC 4:30:50
3. Augie Hirt, Columbia TC 4:32:01
4. Ron Kulik, NYAC 4:36:16
5. Tom Knatt, North Medford Club 4:35:21
6. Bob Bowman, BMS 4:45:20

1975, Smithtown, N.Y., Sept. 20
1. Larry Young, Columbia TC 4:18:56
2. Augie Hirt, Columbia TC 4:20:51
4. Ron Kulik, NYAC 4:25:16
5. Tom Knatt, North Medford Club 4:24:28
6. Ray Somers, NYAC 4:35:12

1976, Columbia, Missouri, August 15
1. Larry Young 4:11:08
2. Augie Hirt, Columbia TC 4:19:44
4. Floyd Cavlin, Colorado TC 4:25:45
5. Bob Rosencrantz, un. 4:31:36
6. Paul Ide, Columbia TC 4:45:14

1977, Columbia, Missouri, August 14
1. Larry Young, Columbia TC 4:19:38
2. Dan O'Connor, NYAC 4:24:06
3. Augie Hirt, U. of Chicago TC 4:25:50
4. Tom Dooley, West Valley TC 4:26:26
5. Bob Rosencrantz, Club Northwest 4:29:23
6. Randy Mimm, Columbia TC 4:32:01

1978, Detroit, Sept. 10
1. Marco Ewoniuk, Colorado TC 4:24:05
2. Augie Hirt, UCTC 4:26:47
3. Carl Schueler, Potomac Valley Walkers 4:29:22
4. Tom Dooley, WVTCC 4:31:36
5. Vincent O'Sullivan 4:34:44

1979, Walnut, Cal., June 15
1. Marco Ewoniuk, Colorado TC 4:10:33
2. Vincent O'Sullivan, Hunter College 4:20:05
4. Augie Hirt, UCTC 4:32:29
5. Wayne Glusker, West Valley TC 4:33:10
6. Carl Schueler, Potomac Valley 4:35:01

1980, New York, April 13
1. Carl Schueler, Potomac Valley 4:06:07
2. Dan O'Connor, NYAC 4:19:06
3. John Knifton, NYAC 4:32:05
4. Alan Price, Potomac Valley 4:38:56
5. Bill Ranney, West Valley TC 4:44:56
6. Brian Savilonis, un. 4:45:22

1981, Seattle, June 7
1. Vince O'Sullivan, East Side TC 4:12:11
2. Jim Heiring, Athletic Attic 4:15:29
3. Ray Sharp, Athletic Attic 4:21:06
4. Glenn Swasey, Canada 4:25:01
5. Wayne Glusker, West Valley TC 4:29:47
6. Steve Pacinovsky, USAF

1982, Washington, D.C., May 16
2. Vince O'Sullivan, East Side TC 4:25:02
3. Chris Knotts, Ohio TC 4:35:09
4. Randy Mimm, Shore AC 4:37:05
5. Mike Doherty, U. of Chicago TC 4:37:57

1983, Monterey, Cal., May 21
1. Marco Ewoniuk, un. 4:01:43
3. Dan O'Connor, Stars & Stripes TC 4:09:29
4. Tom Edwards, Island TC 4:15:52
5. Sam Shick, Athletes In Action 4:17:03

1984, Cleveland, Ohio, April 29
1. Carl Schueler 4:07:23
2. Vincent O'Sullivan 4:10:00
3. Tom Edwards 4:14:39
4. Troy Lingle 4:16:11
5. Mark Piantoni 4:26:17

1985, New York City, May 12
1. Carl Schueler, East Side TC 4:18:07
2. Marco Ewoniuk, Bud Lite TC 4:25:27
4. Dan O'Connor, East Side TC 4:40:04
5. Dan Pierce, Seattle TC 4:42:58