Lewis, Vaill Win Indoors; Wick Edges Nelson In 50

Another race walking season is in full swing with the National TAC Indoor titles and the national 50 Km championship contested just 9 days apart. In New York's Madison Square Garden on February 14, Tim Lewis continued to reign supreme at shorter distances as he withstood a challenge from Gary Morgan to win the National 5 Km title. In the women's 3 Km, Teresa Vaill beat Lynn Weik for the national title. In Atlanta on March 5, Paul Wick hung on to win a close race from Herm Nelson in 4:17:07.

Lewis' winning time in the 5 Km was 20:00.46, leaving Morgan nearly 9 seconds back and Ray Sharp another 20 seconds back of him. Another excellent performance by Tim, who seems untouchable to his countrymen at such distances, but well off his own American record of 19:18.40 set at the World Indoor championships 2 years ago. The first six finishers bettered 21 minutes.

In the women's 3 Km, Vaill turned in a 13:12.34, leaving Lynn Weik about 12 seconds back. Come backing veteran Susan Liers captured third. Vaill was well off Maryanne Torrellas' American record of 12:45.38. Torrellas was entered, but did not compete. Results of the two races:


In Atlanta, Curt Clausen led the 50 Km through the first 20 in 1:34:09, but retired at that point. Ignoring Clausen's hot pace, Wick, Nelson, and the always present Dan O'Connor were locked in a tight struggle. Behind them, eight others were battling for the other two slots on the U.S. team for May's World Cup in Spain.

The leaders passed the halfway point still walking at an 8 minute mile pace (2:04:14 for Wick) with Nelson continually pressing Wick for the lead. O'Connor was beginning to drop off the pace. The race for fourth and fifth appeared to be shaping up as an exact copy of last year's dual for those places between Dan Pierce and Mark Green. However, behind Green, the (to page 3)
NATIONAL INDOOR 5 KM. Tim Lewis (105) crosses the line in New York's Madison Square Garden to win the National 5 Km title. The finish isn't that close. Curtis Fisher and Don Lawrence, the next two across, were both lapped. (AP photo)

pack of walkers, which included Mark Bagan, Mark Fenton, Mike Rohl, Mike DeWitt, Gene Kitts (leading the masters by miles), and Steve Vaitones, had begun to move and were picking up the pace as individuals within the pack tried to break away. By 35 Kms, what had appeared to be a sure trip to Spain for Pierce and Green was now anyone's ticket. Malek moved by first, only to be passed by the veterans Gene Kitts and Mike DeWitt. At 40 Kms, it was clear that anything could still happen as O'Connor was fading and in danger of getting caught by the group that was fighting it out for fourth, with only 14 seconds separating Kitts, Malek, Green, and DeWitt and Pierce still very much in the picture.

With 5 Kms to go, Wick held his largest lead of the day before Nelson came back strong over the last 2.5 Kms. Dan O'Connor retained third with Mike DeWitt coming on strong to secure fourth place by being far the fastest competitor over the last 5. Gene Kitts also had a strong finish to take the final team spot and continue his great string of very consistent performances. To my memory, he will be the first over 40 walker to represent the U.S. in international competition. Of course, Dan O'Connor, at 37, is nearing that age (Thanks to Dave Waddle for the excellent report on this race.)

The results:

OTHER RESULTS

The Ohio Racewalker (USPS 306-060) is published monthly in Columbus, Ohio. Subscription rate is $6.00 per year ($0.00 for First Class Mail, $9.00 for First Class Mail to Canada, and $12.00 for Overseas Air Mail). Address all correspondence regarding both editorial and subscription matters to: Ohio Racewalker, 3184 Summit St., Columbus, Ohio 43202. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Ohio Racewalker, 3184 Summit St., Columbus, Ohio 43202.
MARCH 1989

FROM HEEL TO TOE

TAC/USA National Championship 1989 Youth Road Racewalk will be held the weekend of May 28-29 in Cincinnati. A novice judging clinic and a coaching clinic are scheduled for Sunday followed by a welcome by Vilissa Sedlak, a member of the U.S. Senior Racewalk Team. The races will be from 7:45 am to noon on Monday. In conjunction with event, there will also be a 5K race open to all master division racers on Sunday, May 28 at 8 am, followed by a fitness walk at 9:30 am. If you are a walker, competitive or recreational, young or old, they have a race for you. Make arrangements to come to Cincinnati and celebrate Memorial Day with walkers from all over the country. The event has a national sponsor, Partridge Meats of Cincinnati. This sponsorship will be a major benefit to all competitive youth racewalkers in the country. For additional information, call or write: Ray Braudis, P.O. Box 214, Columbus, MO 65205. A racewalk judging
at a college or university can do this and encourage interested students to do work in this area as part of their studies." ... All masters walkers should be aware of the World Veterans Championships in Eugene, Oregon, from July 27 to August 6. This is the first time the meet has been held in the U.S. The only qualifying standard for this meet is age (40 for men, 35 for women). One week earlier, the U.S. TAC National Masters meet will be held in San Diego. For further information on the World Games write World Vets Games, P.O. Box 10825, Eugene, OR 97440 or call 503-687-1989. Walking distances are 5 and 20 km for men; 5 and 10 for women. Contact for the U.S Masters meet is Dixon Farmer, 8453 Sunrise Ave., La Mesa, CA 92041, 619-469-1010. We noted a couple of months ago that NBC's Bob Costas had sent a very warm personal reply to our letter regarding coverage of the Seoul Olympic walks. Jim and Hally Hanley also received a very nice personal letter from Bob in response to their letter to him complaining about the negative manner in which the Olympic walks were presented on TV. Bob said that during the Olympic coverage he was just trying to be light-hearted and he apologizes if he was insensitive to the race walkers and viewers. From press information prior to the LA Times meet put together an excellent press packet in seeking publicity for the sport: "Did you know that research done by scientists at the University of Wisconsin and other institutions showed race walkers to be among the most fit of all athletes? In cardiovascular measurements, national class race walkers ranked right up there with marathon runners and cross country skiers. They surprisingly far out performed baseball and football players as well as sprinters and high jumpers on these tests! (Ed.) Surprising to the press, perhaps, but certainly not to those of us in the sport."

And race walking at high speeds burns off far more calories than running according to Columbia University. At 5 miles per hour, runners burn 480 calories to 530 for race walkers; but at 7 miles per hour, runners burn 650 compared to 960 for the race walkers. (Athletes will be hitting over 10 miles per hour in tonight's competition or better than 6 minutes per mile!) (Ed.) Again. Not to be nit picky, but I've never thought the kind of comparison made above is quite fair—although good for espousing the benefits of race walking. But no one who is running at 7 miles per hour is going to take up walking and suddenly be walking at 7 miles per hour—more like 5 miles per hour. A fair comparison would be calories burned walking at 7 miles per hour versus running at 10 miles per hour, a comparable effort. Probably then the figures for calories burned will be about the same, which still shows that walking is every bit as good an exercise as running.

COMMENTARY ON OUR GREAT "JUDGING CONTROVERSY" ISSUE

From Ron "Flight Phase" Laird, four time Olympian and insightful student of the sport:

I especially enjoyed your dissertation on judging. As you know, I've had an avid interest in this subject for some time now. It was good to have you review all the old opinions from past years on the subject. I get the impression that many walkers are either ignorant or do not want to accept the fact that when people race walk, they automatically lift off the ground. And it doesn't take a heck of a lot of speed to accomplish this. I always think of a relaxed 7:20 to 7:30 per mile pace would do it. Sure wish some biomechanics lab would do a scientific study on this. Went to see the LA Times Indoor Games a couple of weeks ago. Gary Morgan looked respectable to the human eye in winning around the time of 6:07. However, when a friend's pictures came back from the lab there were some great shots of him hanging in air at least 3 to 4 inches off the plywood track. Even of the lapped walkers was caught in the same position, but with more like a 2 inch break. On lots of frame by frame viewing of the Korean 20 Km race,

I see plenty of daylight under all the leaders, especially the medalists. But, then they were going the fastest so should display the most obvious flight. I'm sure you'll get a ton of mail concerning all of this in the weeks and months to come. Let me get to the point: I feel the rules must change and have tried to revise them as follows:

Race walking shall only be judged by the human eye. It shall be a progression of steps so taken that unbroken contact with the ground appears to be taking place. At each step, the advancing foot of the walker must appear to make contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground. During the period ... (The last sentence in the present rules about leg straightening is fine.)

As you see, I've added a new sentence about only judging by the human eye at the start. Then substituted "appears to be taking place" for "is maintained" in the next sentence. In the next sentence, something similar is done. Now that should adequately cover what is happening all over the world when it comes to judging our unique sport. We can't ask people to actually slow down when they train and race. We could put weights on their feet to do this like how the javelin was recently redesigned so it wouldn't fly so far. There are walkers who would love to slow down because then they wouldn't have to train so hard. Judging by video would kill the sport because all those who exceeded something around a 1:33 pace for the 20 Km would be disqualified. Relaxed 7:40 to 8:00 pace in the 20 and 50 might even get one pulled out. Perhaps they right back in 1928 when it was eliminated from the Olympics. ... it had gotten too fast and needed to be abandoned as a legitimate athletics event. I shudder to think of the times and styles we will soon witness when the women go at it in Barcelona at the too short distance of 10 Km. There's already a lady out there with a 41:30 for a road 10 Km. That is 1:39 faster than my PR which was set in London back in the summer of '67. And when I did this, it was the fastest road in the world that year.

Things are really getting out of hand. I'm surprised the IAAF and IOC haven't told us to take a long walk off a short pier by now! About the only people walking to the rules nowadays are the masters. At least when the oldtimers start bending their knees, they are easily detected. Let me repeat. The rules have to be changed to allow for loss of contact. But, I really don't want to get carried away on this subject like I did about 2 years ago.

From John Allen, 1960 Olympian, presently rooming with Ron, but not necessarily agreeing with him:

"Midnight, effort, and money has not been for naught. "Change" is the greatest word in the dictionary. Whatever the problem ("Can't do better than a 46:00 10 Km"), ... change!!! Coach, training, more rest—but try a change. Do not lift brothers and sisters. Change, and you will utilize your body like never before. It is my opinion that a large percentage of today's race walkers know that they are off the ground. They train for deception and artistically. I marvel at their "low lift". But, alas, I hear a DQ for a slightly higher lift. I inquire. Judge said: "Yes. I know. But it was the more noticeable of the two" Shocking! I don't want to hear about road/track "surface" as a cause. That's regression. Same about "They only ran for two laps", but they were warned. ... Ron Zinn, old pal, we could use your staunch direction today. They don't make 'em like you champ. I pray we all receive guidance in this matter. No more excuses, and no more procrastination. Get down and "walk". It's catching.
Reflection
by Ron Laird

(Inspired by my reprinting his short stories from Jim Bean's Oregon Walking News, Ron sent the following original story for the ORW to use.)

During my first international tour, I was able to observe many interesting things about my world class track and field teammates. This took place in the late summer of 1968 and took us to Moscow, Warsaw, Budapest, and Athens. Our men's and women's team had all the Olympic events except the marathon run. The only reason a 20 K walk was on the program was because the Russians demanded it. They told our national organizers that a walk wasn't in the meet, there would be no meet. The Russkies did a lot to help develop our program back then from the late 1950s to the mid 1970s when we were having these great competitions between our two countries.

The greatest runner on our team was the quarter miler-hurdler from the Buckeye state of Ohio by the name of Glenn Davis. At the time of this tour, he was going to school at Ohio State in Columbus where our national newspaper is created. He ran and hurdled so well on that tour that he won the Sullivan Award as the top amateur athlete in the country that year.

While watching him warmup and go the start of his races, I was impressed with his professionalism. His actions showed such confidence that he must have made his competitors lose quite a bit of theirs. Davis simply had the attitude and actions of a champion. He certainly was the best in the world at that time, so it made his competitors lose quite a bit of theirs. Davis simply had the attitude and actions of a champion. He certainly was the best in the world at that time, so it made his competitors lose quite a bit of theirs.

Of course, it's seen these antics at other big track and field meets, but it wasn't until my close association with all those stars on that month long tour that I decided to mimic them. By recalling what I'd seen, it wasn't hard to quickly devise some impressive moves. If it's tough for you to beat them physically, some mental tricks can give you an advantage. To be a champion, you must also try to look and act like one.

So often, I have seen my fellow competitors at important competitions looking out of place and confused. I often felt the same way, especially in international meets and indoor races, but did not let my adversaries know. Even though I was a nervous wreck, I tried to act like I belonged there, was serious, confident, and had to come to win.

An additional situation that personally worked best for me was having very little contact with my competitors just before a race to begin. I simply needed to gather my emotions for the hard fast effort that was so soon to get under way. Once that starting gun got us rolling, I desperately felt the need to get so far out in front that no one could see me anymore. I knew that if my lead grew big enough, the others would end up concentrating on their own efforts and those around them.

My motto was "Out of sight, out of mind!"

(Editors comment: Glenn Davis was certainly a good model as far as being a competitor goes. There has been no tougher competitor; he simply was not going to beat the lead I could set against him, but it is more accurate to say I was on the track at the same time as him a few times. But it took Ron a while to learn his lessons of toughness because in the early to mid '60s it was not too difficult to "psych" him before a race. With his concentration broken, he was often an easy victim for lesser walkers, such as Blackburn and Mortland. As to "out of sight, out of mind", that is exactly the expression he used after beating me in the National 25 in Chicago in 1961. Only it was me who had been out of sight so that I was also out of his mind. Trailing about 5 minutes with less than 3 miles to go, he was amazed when he suddenly saw Mortland strolling along in front of him on the final 1 mile loop, and suddenly I was back in mind, and easy prey.

Little had he known how much I was geared to 20 km and not a step further at that time. Did him little good a month or so later when the race was at just 20 km and I got my first trip to the Soviet Union. Glenn Davis was retired, though, and not on that trip. But, Dixon Farmer, who I see is managing this year's National Masters, was one of those in his place in the 400 hurdles.

LOOKING BACK

20 Years Ago (From the March 1969 ORW)-The National Indoor meet was held in Philadelphia, and local hero Dave Romansky zipped by Ron Laird on the final half lap to win in 6:21.9. Laird finished in 6:24.4, with Italy's 1964 Olympic 50 Km gold medalist, Abdon Pamich, third in 6:28.8. The next three spots went to Ron Kulik, Dan Toth, and Jim Hanley. Bob Kitchen won the IC4A mile in 4:41.1 with Greg Diebold also under 7. Pamich won a mile in Albany over Ron Daniels and Kulik in 6:29.9. Out west, Goetz Kloper edged Tom Dooley in a 10K with a 45:40 performance.

15 Years Ago (From the March 1974 ORW)-The IC4A Mile title went to Ellen Minkow in 7:36.1, probably making her the first woman to win a title in a major intercollegiate championship for men (primarily). Bill Hamhn actually finished about 15 yards ahead of her, but was DQ'd, and Howie Palamarchuk left the track with a commanding lead when he mistakenly thought he had been DQ'd. Floyd Godwin beat a strong field to win the National 35 Km title in Huntington Beach, Cal. in 2:55:29. Floyd got away from John Knifton just after 20 Km and won by 4 minutes. Bill Ranney, Carl Swift, Jerry Brown, and Bryan Sazelle took the next four spots but only 20 seconds back, with a 21:04 for 5K. Colin Young presented some interesting views on training for ultra-long races, of which he has finished quite a few (100 miles and longer).

10 Years Ago (From the March 1979 ORW)-The US-USSR 3 Mile walk went to Yevgeniy Yesyukov in 19:03.3. Todd Scully was second in 20:02.2 with Jim Heiring third in 20:36.4. The Soviets put just one man in the race. Neal Pyke won the Pacific AAU 20 mile in 2:35:53, with Bill Ranney less than a minute behind. Pyke also set an American record for 5K with 20:41.6 and turned in a 1:28:06 20 K. The National Master's 2 Mile went to Ron Kulik in an American record 14:13.7.

5 Years Ago (From the March 1984 ORW)-Carl Schueler, edging away after the first 10 Km, held on to beat Jim Heiring for the National 35 Km title in 2:41:26. Heiring, 48 seconds back at 30 km, had cut the margin to 20 seconds at the finish. Vincent O'Sullivan was better than 10 minutes back in third, with Pete Timmons, Gary Morgan, and Wayne Clusker following. Dan O'Connor walked his second fast 20 Km of the year with a 1:25:56 in Long Beach. Vincent O'Sullivan (1:31:34) was second, and Larry Walker (1:33:52) third. Ray Sharp and Tom Edwards both went under 1:30 in New York, with Sharp winning in 1:29:20. We noted that, unbelievably, the ORW was launching its 20th year of publication, which, I guess, means that we are now launching our 25th. I suppose that is even more unbelievable. It takes us, one, certainly don't believe it.)
DIFFERENCES IN MUSCLE USE BETWEEN WALKING AND RUNNING
by Leonard Jansen

Anyone who watches runners and racewalkers moving along can readily suspect that there are significant differences in how muscles are used in doing the two activities. The main difference between them is in the degree that the muscles are used. In racewalking there is a better balance between the muscles used. Running is mostly a pushing/falling activity which is due to the fact that the leg lands pretty much under the center of gravity with each stride. This leaves the body in a continuously unstable situation. This unbalance, along with the magnitude of forces that are needed to counter it, is what makes running such an injury-ridden sport. The human knee was simply not designed to withstand the sort of eccentric loading that you find in running. This is accentuated by running on concrete in shoes made out of unstable "marshmallow fluff" in the soles. Running is, in fact, a very "one-sided" sort of activity in that it uses the muscles in the back of the leg to a much greater degree than the front.

In racewalking, however, the muscles of the leg get a better balance of activity. This is due to the fact that they must not only provide drive to the body, but they must do so starting from a position of heel strike that is in front of the body, and progresses to the classic straight leg in the back. This provides a stiff lever from start to finish. It also makes racewalking more energy intensive for distance moved since the body cannot rely on the stretch reflex of the tendons and muscle groups (e.g. achilleas and gastrocnemius) for some of the propulsion as in running. This is one of the things that makes walking so injury-free--less use of ballistic stretching of muscle groups to get energy back in to the system. Therefore, racewalking is a combination of pulling from the point of heel contact until the foot is directly under the center of gravity-- and pushing/falling from that point until where the foot is removed from contact with the ground.

Specifically, the basic differences in muscle activity used in racewalking and running are as follows:

1. In running the arms are basically used for balance and timing only. In walking there is greater use of the shoulder and arm muscles. These are used to propel the arms from front to back (not side to side) to counteract the hip motion and stay in balance. Some contend that the arms are used as a propulsive mechanism, but I disagree because I don't believe the forces can transmit very effectively down through the body from the arms to the legs. Therefore, the arms counterbalance leg motions but do not add much force to them.

2. The muscles of the back and hips are moved more vigorously in racewalking. This is to help the legs propel the body forward. It also allows for an effectively greater leg length as it causes them to act as if the apex or the triangle created by the legs and the ground were significantly higher. That is, the hip swiveling action increases stride length by moving to the front and back with each stride. This gives the racewalker his characteristic hip motion that allows the smooth action without any bobbing up and down. The hips are used to a lesser extent in running, although one of the most noticeable difference between an elite runner and the average jogger is that the elite runner uses his hips more, and thus get more propulsion in a more fluid manner.

3. The leg muscles, of course, are the primary propulsive muscles in both running and walking. The three major differences in the way that various muscles are used are as follows:

A) Whereas in running the foot is brought forward until the foot is placed under the center of gravity, in racewalking the foot continues on to in front of the body. This means that the muscles in the hip and also the quadriceps must work more to straighten the leg through a greater distance. This also causes more use of the vastus medialis--the innermost quadriceps muscle which is instrumental in the final 15 degrees of the straightening of the knee.

B) The tibialis anticus (shin muscle) and anterior tibialis tendon are used much more in walking than in running. They pull the toe up so that the foot and shoe create a "rocker" for the athlete to roll over. Since a runner doesn't put his foot down in front of the body and lands more or less flat footed, there is no need for development of these in running. Novice walkers feel strain here since those "toe lifters" are unique to the rapid walking movement.

C) The gastrocnemius group (back of leg muscles) acts more forcefully in a walker than in a runner. The racewalker must generate all his ground reaction
forces of propulsion from the contraction of this muscle, whereas the runner can use the muscle-tendon stretch reflex to bound forward into each stride. It is obvious when you watch a walker and runner going along that there is a great deal more muscle activity happening in the racewalker from the neck down through the toes. This is mainly due to the fact that it does take more effort to stay on the ground at all times at racing speed than to lift off with each step.

From another era. Two of the world's best distance walkers in an earlier time: Tom Misson (left) winner of such walks as the 100 km at Seregno in 1958 (9:04:48) and the 50 Km at which this was taken, and Don Thompson, 1960 Olympic 50 Km gold medalist.

John Allen Sportsfotos return with this great shot of National team member and super master's walker, Viisha Sedlak.