Lawrence betters world mark

Hamilton, Ont., Jan. 10 — It was Debbi Lawrence in a walk. The Wisconsin athlete set a world indoor best time of 5:54.31 in the women's 1500 meter walk at the Hamilton Spectator Indoor Games, bettering Maryanne Torrellas's previous mark of 6:01.16. Torrellas, recovering from knee surgery in the spring, was never a factor, finishing last in the six-woman field. Said Lawrence, "I just try to do my best for myself. I don't really pick out anyone to beat. It's so hard indoors—you never know who'll be there and there's always last-minute scratches.

Lawrence let out a squeal when she learned the official time. The win and the record also gives her 20 more points on the Grand Prix circuit. Victoria Herazo bolted to the fron at the start and led for the first lap before Lawrence hit stride after 500 meters and pulled ahead. Lawrence coasted to a quiet victory by more than 9 seconds. Herazo held on for second, ahead of Calgary's Janice McCaffrey.

Lawrence is gearing up for the U.S. Olympic Trails in June. "That's our biggest competition," said Lawrence. "We don't have a card system or anything where they select now—I'm not on the team. I think it will be really competitive this year. You've just got to do your own thing and hope everything works out."

The results:
1. Debbi Lawrence 5:54.31
2. Victoria Herazo 6:02.84
3. Janice McCaffrey 6:03.08
4. Lora Rigutto 6:19.1
5. Holly Goerke 6:20.8
6. Maryanne Torrellas 6:31.8

Other results

Three international medalists mix it up at Viariggio, Italy in 1967. Larry Young, left, won bronze medals in both the 1968 and 1972 Olympic 50 Km. Abdon Pamich, center, was the 1964 Olympic 50 Km gold medal winner. Ron Laird, right, was third at 20 Km in both the 1967 and 1973 Lugano Cup (now World Cup) races. Laird won this race in 1:28:18.
Triathlon, North York, Ontario, Dec.
Jinjxue 24:38.7) 2. Marilyn Chute (46) 1631 (8:17.8, 17:08.4, 29:29.5) 3. Brigitte Leblanc 1613
(57) 1992 points (7:29.2, 15:55.3, 27:38.4--points are age graded) 2. Roman Olszewski
Marin, Cal., Dec. 22-1. Jim Lenschau 7 mi 1361 yds (47:37 at 10 Km) Walk
Murray Day (27) 1:20:27 (3rd fast) ... 11. Carl Acosta (57) 1:34:22 ... 13. Chris Dreher
Li, China 49:15 2. Tomoko Uchida, Japan 49:41 3. May Kyin Lwan,
Ontario Indoor Championships, Jr. and Sr., Women 3 Km, Men 5 Km, Toronto (C)
Sun. Feb. 9
Long Beach Marathon, 7 am (B) 
Northeast Indoor 3 Km Champ., Providence, RI (I)
4 Mile, Long Branch, NJ (A)
5 Km, New Orleans, 8:30 am (V)
Sat. Feb. 15
5 Mile, Long Branch, NJ, 11 am (A)
13 Mile, Fremont, Cal. (N)
Mon. Feb. 17
3.8 Mile, Brockton, Mass., 2 pm (I)
5 and 10 KM, Wilshire, Cal. (B)
Sat. Feb. 22
2 Mile and 10 Km, New Orleans, 8 am (V)
Indoor 1500 meters, Stony Brook, N.Y. (G)
Indoor 2 Mile, Macomb College, Michigan (O)
Indoor 3 Km, Carbondale, Ill. (D)
5 Km, Albuquerque, NM, 9:15 am (L)
Sun. Feb. 23
Indoor 2 Mile, Arlington, Virginia, 8:45 am (E)
Indoor 1 mile and 3000 meters, Princeton, N.J. (G)
FROM HEEL TO TOE

A couple of additions to the U.S. Women's 10 Km list in the December 1991 issue. We left Peggy Miller off altogether. She had a 51:27 on her way to 1 Hour in the National race in Cambridge, Mass., a time I should have picked up. But place her at 51:27. Mataji Graham had a best of 53:54, not the 55:01 I listed (and that should have been 55:04). For those who missed the earlier note, Dave McGovern is having a Spring Racewalking Training Camp in Tioga, Texas from Thursday, April 2 through
Looking back

30 Years Ago (From the Jan. 1962 American Race Walker published by Chris McCarthy)--Ron Zinn had the fast time in the Chicago Holiday 10 Mile Handicap with a 1:21:02, very fast considering the 18°F temperature and snow drifts he had to plow through. Young Illinois Valacis was just a second behind. Valacis had winning mile times of 6:29.7 and 6:43 during the month. Italy's Abdon Pamich set a world record of 4:14:04 for 50 K in the Olympic Stadium track in Rome.

20 Years Ago (From the Jan. 1972 ORW)--Fast early season miling--Ron Daniel had the third fastest mile in history (to that time) with a 6:12.8 in Philadelphia. Ron Kulik, Todd Scully, and Dave Romansky followed in 6:17.2, 6:21.7, and 6:28. Ten days earlier Kulik had beaten Daniel 6:28.8 to 6:29. . . . On the other coast, Tom Dooley did 6:30.5 to beat Esteban Valle (6:38) and Larry Walker beat Don DeNoon 6:41.4 to 6:44. Bill Ranney was a close third in both races. San Rafael high school student, Jerry Lansing, won the National Junior 35 K. The local scene, your editor celebrated his 37th birthday by covering 6 miles 276 yards in 48:36, a new personal best for a 30-year-old.

5 Years Ago (From the January 1987 ORW)--American records fell at the Hoosier Invitational indoor meet in Indianapolis as Maryanne Torrellas did 12:59:28 for 3 K and Paul Weik 20:29.67 for 5 K. Teresa Vaill was just 3 seconds behind Maryanne with Lynn Weik third.

Gary Morgan trailed Weik by 6 seconds and Doug Fournier also went under 21 minutes.

The following from Richard Charles in Texas. He set these down while becoming familiar with his daughter's computer and then received encouragement from several people at the TAC Convention to share them in hopes of getting some agreement-disagreement. The ORW is glad to oblige.


1. The two rules that govern the legal from the illegal racewalker are rather straightforward. The problems arise when people try to apply these rules to racing athletes.

2. Competitive Athletes: They know the rules and try to walk as fast as they can. They can violate the rules or at least not being in violation of a rule while in the zone being observed by a Judge. To the competitive athlete the relation with the judge is one of an adversary. He wants the judge to see him on the edge... always legal... but on the
Coaches vary in their expertise. Some are former Olympic AW... and others are sell

6. COACHES. The coach tends to be an extension of the athlete off the race course. Their presence in the form of coaching and encouragement can be crucial for an athlete's performance.

8. TAC CERTIFIED EXPERIENCED JUDGES. These are TAC Officials who are experienced RW Judges. The amount and degree of experience vary throughout the country. It is wise to assume competence on the bases of a credential issued without enforcing uniform standards.

8. TAC CERTIFIED INEXPERIENCED JUDGES. These are TAC Officials who do not have any RW judge experience. Many times they are the parents or coaches who desire to learn about RW Judging so they can be of greater help to their athletes. For the most part the TAC Certification program will not provide specific training to these people. They would be better off attending a specific RW Judges training clinic. Of course it is important that ALL RW judging follow a prescribed course outline and cover all important points in a standardized manner. Unless those persons responsible for arranging for race judges have a way of inquiring into their experience it is quite possible that the race will be unsatisfactorily officiated. The results are embarrassing to everybody and especially unfair to the athletes.

9. NON CERTIFIED RW JUDGES. There are a number of RW Judges who are very experienced but who have not undertaken TAC certification. Quite a few of them have attended RW Judges' clinics and practice judging at events in their communities. These are the people who need to become TAC Certified Officials. They have first gained RW Judging experience, now with that resume they should apply for TAC Certification.

10. GENERAL. In the interest of uniform judging let's attempt to resolve some questions. When is an athlete on the "verge" of violating a rule? What signs may alert a judge that the athlete is on the "verge" of a violation? Do we all agree that an athlete on the "verge" of a rule violation should receive a Warning call? If possible should the judge give the athlete more than one Warning? Or should the judge ignore giving future warnings to the same athlete even though the athlete is on the "verge"? Certainly if the athlete maintains continuous contact and his leg is straight in the vertical upright position (support phase), he's a legal walker. Is the judge correct to view the athlete's rading style to determine if he's on the "verge" and thus entitled to a Warning Call? Some judges give Warning Calls for Bent Knee when the athlete's knee is "softly bent" as distinct from a very obvious "hard bent" knee? Do you agree or disagree? What would you Call?

I believe that every athlete who enters a judged racewalk is entitled to be judged according to the same standard and in the same manner by each judge. The athlete at the back of the pack is entitled to the same fair treatment. He or she has paid their fee and that includes the services of the RW Officials. When judges give athletes the "benefit of the doubt" when there is no doubt, they are not being fair. That athlete continues to be unfairly judged and then is rudely awakened when participating in "games away from home". In an attempt to be "kind" we have done that athlete a great disservice and certainly have hurt the sport.

Do you think it's time to: 1) Have Instructor Trainers who will train and qualify RW Judging Clinic instructors? 2) Have a continuing education workshop for the various levels of judges (including experienced non-certified judges)

Should judges be compensated for 'out of pocket' expenses? Historically RW Judges were considered like any other volunteer, they served without compensation. This is still the case where a judge lives in the city where the event is being held. However, should judges be asked to both volunteer their time and the money it takes to travel to a distant city and lodging at that city the night before the race (remember the early starting times and desirable pre-race judges meeting)? Race Directors must consider arranging for judges early in their planning phase and include them in their budget. Of course if we were all blessed with many judges on the local scene we could continue to be regarded as other local volunteers. If a budget item for Judges is not provided then we reach for judges with "deep pockets" (under the present system not necessarily the best qualified), but even worse the race goes unjudged or judged by unqualified persons. There are advantages to exposing competitors to different judges in their own town; this may be better than expecting all athletes to travel to out of town races.

The above ramblings are just some thoughts concerning RW Judging...not all by any means...YOU NO DOUBT CAN ADD.
The following Elaine Ward interview with Olympic hopeful Allen James appeared in the January issue of Southern California Racewalking News.

Ed. What were your top 20K performances in 1991?
Al. The Olympic Festival was definitely Number 1 with a time of 1:26:23, and then the Alongi International with a time of 1:26:33.

Ed. Going by your 10K time of 42:33 during the One-Hour Postal here on Dec. 21, your next 20K may be between 1:25:00 and 1:25:30. You have six and one-half months to make the Olympic qualifying standard of 1:24:00. Is there any leeway with this standard?
Al. It works this way. If two or three men meet the 1:24 qualifying standard, they will all be able to go to Barcelona. If only one qualifies, only one will be eligible for the Games. If no one meets the 1:24 standard, then the winner of the Olympic Trials next June will go. However, if someone has met the 1:24 standard prior to the Trials, he will go if no one makes the standard at the Trials.

Ed. Which leads to another question that I have been asked on occasion. Usually, the membership in international racewalking teams is decided by one event—the TAC Outdoor Track and Field Championships. How do you feel about having everything hinge on one event, or do you think there is merit in having team membership determined by a point system involving three, four or five races?
Al: You have to keep in mind that racewalking is part of track and field, and the way we qualifying our men and women for international competition is the same as it is for all the other track and field events. Having one Trials race is basically fair in a democratic society. Perhaps countries that can evaluate their athletes up to one month before the Olympics can send better athletes, but the athletes don't have any security.

Ed. In other words, if you had your choice, you feel that having one race decide all is better than having three or four events where the finish placements of the different walkers are totalled in a point system to determine team membership.
Al. Not necessarily. I mean I like the point system. Cycling uses it to determine levels of competitors. It would be a good idea, but it isn't possible as things are presently set up with Track and Field.

Ed. What effect do you think the dissolution of the Soviet Union will have at the Olympics. Al. It depends what the Commonwealth is able to do. At present, there is some talk of them fielding a joint Olympic Team. However, there are now 13 separate countries rather than one, and there were many outstanding Soviet Racewalkers. Who knows where Mikhail Sennikov or Andrei Parlov or any of the others are from. They probably are from different Republics, so you may end up having 20 or so ex Soviet walkers in an Olympic walking event rather than just three.

Ed. There may be some funding problems, but you never know. Governments often put the arts and athletics before other needs
Al. I think athletics generally may suffer, but I do not think racewalking will suffer at least in the short-term. The Soviet walkers were doing well enough and are determined enough that the best will probably show up at the Olympics one way or another.

Ed. Let's go back to you and the American situation. You are presently walking in the 1:25 range. What do you have to do now, to meet the 1:24 Olympic qualifying standard?
Al. At this point, the primary requirement is to do real consistent training week in and week out. In the past I would tend to be lazy and if I needed to skip a workout, I would. But now consistency is crucial.

Another factor which has a lot to do with succeeding involves motivation. At the Convention in New Orleans, we discussed motivation in a meeting for the racewalking athletes. Gwen Robertson (a national team coordinator) discussed the pictures she had
taken at the World Cup in San Jose. The form and technique of the Americans were pretty comparable, if not even better than some of the other walkers who were minutes ahead of us. But you look into the winners' eyes and you have a different story. There is a lot of drive and hunger in their expression. There was an intensity that you don't see in our eyes. Our lack of intensity registered in our performances.

Ed. What will create that intensity or hunger?
Al. I believe you really have to see why you are competing internationally. I think in national competitions, you feel a little of it because you realize there is an opportunity of being a good American. But in international competitions, you allow yourself to be second rate by conceding that they are better. So basically, you become satisfied with being a good American rather than being the best you can be.

Ed. Is personal pride involved?
Al. It has a lot to do with pride and the inner fire it takes to motivate yourself day in and day out to be the best. I could probably go through the rest of next year at the level I am at now, really not train any harder, and still be among the top five in this country.

Ed. But you want to be Number 1?
Al. I don't just want to be Number 1 in America. That is the crux. It is relatively easy to be a good American and be in the top three or even Number 1, but for too many years, we have been looking at just that rather that at being good in the Olympics and in the rest of the world.

Tim Lewis has had the best times ever by an American, walking in the 1:22 range. But he was never challenged. There was no one here to push him to go faster. So now, Tim and I are trying to set up our schedules to try to push each other, to do something that the women have been doing - getting out there and banging heads with each other. That is why the women are doing so well. They go to races and create a real competitive atmosphere which the men haven't been doing. We have not been racing against each other enough.

Ed. How many 20K's are you planning to do before the Olympic Trials in June?
Al. I am planning to do two, and don't think I would do more than three. If I do two, the Trials will be my third race, and the Olympics would be my fourth.

Ed. The St. Patrick's Day in March will be your first race. When will you do your second?
Al. I would like to go to a major international competition in Norway next May to gain this experience, but money is a problem.

Ed. What kind of interval and long-distance training will you do in preparation?
Al. At this point, I will probably do two days a week of intervals totaling 15K. That would be 5x 3000 meter or 3x 5000 meters. That is one form. I will also do 10x 1000 meters for my speed work. Long distance will generally be done on the weekend going anywhere from 15 to 22 miles. Then I will do two moderate days and a ten miler at a pretty good pace. This will average 50 to 65 miles a week.

Ed. There are a lot of good 20K walkers in our country today. How do these men feel going into the Olympic year? Is the Olympic fever catching on?
Al. Yes and no. I think there are a lot of discouraged walkers. It is one thing to have a tough standard which seems achievable as opposed to a standard that seems unachievable. There are a lot of good 20K walkers in the 1:30 to 1:31 range and over ten under 1:30. These men are simply trying to make the Olympic Trials. They know they can't get their time down enough to have a chance for the Olympic Team, and unless they are looking ahead to the Olympics in Atlanta in 1992, it is easy for them to get discouraged and consider dropping our

Ed. Do you feel that you can meet the 1:24 standard for the 20K?
Al. I feel it is achievable. The tough standard has been a motivator for me, but it will not be easy.

Ed. One thing for sure, all your Southern California friends and fans will be rooting for you, and doing whatever they can to assist your success.