

Ohio Race Walker
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Matthews scores impressive 50 Km win

Palo Alto, Cal, Feb. 14 (From Ron Daniel)--"That was fun," said Jonathan Matthews after giving the rest of the field a lesson in 50 Km racewalking. Stripping nearly 11 minutes off his personal best from last year, Jonathan handily won the USAT&F 50 Km National Championship in 4:01:36. It was his first national title and moved him to fourth on the all-time U.S. list for the distance behind Marco Evoniuk, Carl Schueler, and Larry Young.

The 36-year-old Stanford graduate student cheerfully greeted 17 other competitors at the 8:30 am start, for this was his home course and training grounds. The fast, flat 2.5 km loop is just a few miles from home for Jonathan.

While on paper, the latter part of the race looks like a breeze for Jonathan, the early going was anything but a solitary stroll. Herman Nelson took command at 10 Km and stretched his lead to 43 seconds by 27.5 Km. Meanwhile, Matthews, Dave Marchese, and Paul Wick stayed together through 25 Km in 2:02:04. Never far behind was Andrzej Chylinski, and initially, Marco Evoniuk, who dropped out at 22.5 Km.

After the half-way point, Matthews separated himself from his compatriots, but still lost ground to Nelson. But, shortly, Jonathan seemed to shift gears and the fun began. Unfortunately, for Marchese, he began to battle abdominal cramp demons and not have so much fun.

By 35 Km, Matthews had taken a 5 second lead and never looked back. In the style of a Perlov or Mercenario, he walked his fastest 2.5 km lap between 42.5 and 45 km in 11:44. The last 20 Km found everyone except Jonathan settling into their respective positions. Walking negative splits, Jonathan's second half was 1:59:32 with the last 10 Km in 47:33.

Nelson was satisfied with his early season performance, the second place finish and a spot on both the World Championship and World Cup teams. Seemingly content to walk a conservative pace, Chylinski overtook Wick for third position at 30 Km and gradually opened a gap to the finish. Wick, having his best race in a couple of years, finished fourth and looks ready to climb back to the top of the 50 Km rankings where he was in 1989.

Much to his credit, Marchese hung on to fifth, only 30 seconds shy of his personal best. That effort included a 20 minute lap at 35 Km when he stopped to down Pepto Bismol, water, and crackers; a procedure that he reversed a few minutes later. Watch out. Dave is ready for a major breakthrough.

Walking alone for most of the race and finishing sixth was ever consistent, 40-year-old, Dan O'Connor. With the possibility of at least one of the top five finishers making the World Cup Team at 20 Km, Dan could be making an unprecedented ninth trip in a row to the World Cup. The results:

1. Jonathan Matthews, Golden Gate RW 4:01:36 2. Herman Nelson, CLub Northwest 4:09:49 3. Andrzej Chylinski, New York AC 4:14:13 4. Paul Wick, un. 4:16:48

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE
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5. David Marchese, Athletes in Action 4:22:21 6. Dan O'Connor, Stars and Stripes TC 4:27:07 7. Mark Manning, Parkside AC 4:28:34 8. Rob Cole, U.W. Parkside 4:30:38 9. Cliff Mimm, Shore AC 4:31:57 10. Bohdan Bulakowski, Poland 4:37:19 11. Steve Vaitones, Nike Boston 4:46:18 12. Shabar Khmedallah, Eastside TC 5:00:17 13. Mike Korol, Park Racewalkers 5:05:58 DNF: Alvia Gaskill, Jim Lenschau (37.5 Km), Bill McCray (32.5 Km), and Marco Evoniuk (22.5 Km). DQ--Adam Pawlik. Judges: Bob Hickey (Chief), Bob Bowman, Toni Harvey, Darlene Hickman, Sonny Maynard, Gary Westerfield, and Bob Wilson.

OTHER RESULTS

U.S.-Great Britain Indoor Dual T&F Meet, Birmingham, Eng., Feb. 13: Men's 3 Km--1. Martin Rush, GB 11:40.54 2. Darrell Stone, GB 11:51.04 3. Martin Bell, GB 11:54.96 4. Dave McGovern, US 11:57.41 5. Ian Whatley, US 12:13.56 DQ--Ray Funkhouser, US Women's 3 Km--1. Sara Standley, US 13:00.40 2. Victoria Herazo, US 13:08.95 3. Julia Drake, GB 13:18.63 **1 Mile, Providence, R.I., Jan. 16--1.** Joe Light (45) 7:10.0 2. Brian Savilonis (42) 7:10 3. Jim Brochin 8:03.6 4. Justin Kuo 8:04 5. Gus Davis (55) 8:56 6. John Gray (68) 9:27 7. Louis Candido (60) 9:38 8. William Reuben (60) 9:52 Women: 1. Meg Ferguson (42) 9:20 **3 Km, Brighton, Mass., Jan. 31--1.** Steve Vaitones 13:17 2. Kevin Eastler 13:20 3. Mike Hersey 15:34 4. Justin Kuo 15:37 Women: 1. Gretchen Eastler 14:14 2. Meg Ferguson 16:35 3. Lisa Mills 17:36 **3 Km, Providence, R.I., Feb. 7--1.** Kevin Eastler 13:47 2. Mike Hersey 15:00 (Both age 15) 3. Bob Ullman (44) 15:43 Women: 1. Gretchen Eastler 14:38 2. Lisa Mills 16:21 3. Meg Ferguson 18:13 **3.8 Miles, Brockton, Mass., Feb. 15--1.** Phil McGaw (42) 31:00 2. Justin Kuo 31:23 3. Bob Ullman 31:43 4. Dick Ruquist (55) 32:06 5. Ken Mattsson 32:09 6. Paul Schell (55) 33:26 7. Tom Knatt (52) 34:51 8. William Murphy (60) 34:53 9. John Gray (68) 35:09 10. George Lattarulo (44) 35:19 Women: 1. Evelyn Bandlow 37:04 **1500 meters, Stonybrook, N.Y., Jan. 31--1.** Brian Rossi 6:41.9 2. Roberto Gottlieb 6:54.9 3. Michael Dziejma 6:58.9 (1st H.S. boy) 4. Roselle Safran 6:59.8 (1st H.S. girl) 5. Michael Roth 7:06.2 6. Jennifer Pralgo 7:09.1 7. Luis Rodriguez 7:11.7 (2nd H.S. boy) 8. Eugene Herman 7:20.3 9. Tara Shea 7:35.8 10. Robert Barrett 7:54.4 (1st over 50) 11. Jennifer Van Axen 7:57.1 12. Eric Bachthaler 8:09.4 13. David Memmoll 9:09.7 14. Christopher Grace 8:11.1 15. Sharon McGinn 8:12.1 **1 Mile, Stonybrook, Jan. 24--1.** Yariv Pomeranz 6:59.8 2. Brian Rossi 7:10.5 3. Michael Dziejma 7:15.5 4. Dan Leary 7:31.2 5. Roselle Safran 7:31.6 6. Matt Barber 7:33.2 7. Jennifer Pralgo 7:41.2 8. Debra Scott 7:59.9 9. Michael Roth 7:59.9 10. Eugene Herman 8:19.7 11. Eric Wiles 8:23.9 12. Robert Barrett 8:22.4 13. Kayode Dobosu 8:33.4 14. Mark Glancy 8:46.6 15. Susi Coan 8:56.4 **N.Y. Millrose Games 1 Mile, Feb. 5--1.** Allen James 5:50.44 2. Doug Fournier 5:58.66 3. Dave McGovern 6:05.44 4. Marc Varsano 6:05.42 5. Curt Clausen 6:12.26 **Mobil Invitational 1 Mile, Fairfax, Virginia, Feb. 7--1.** Debbi Lawrence 6:20.18 2. Sara Standley 6:35.51 3. Victoria Herazo 6:47.82 **1 Mile, Richmond, Virginia, Jan. 9--1.** Curt Clausen 6:26.5 2. Ray Funkhouser 6:34.4 3. William-Jesse Leggett 7:42.1 4. George Fenigsohn 7:47.3 5. Alan

Price 8:13.9 6. Paul Cjaka 8:17.2 7. Judy Goldston 8:47.5 **2 Mile, Washington, DC, Jan. 10--1.** Curt Clausen 13:54 2. Valerie Meyer 19:13 3. Dan Kornhauser 19:36 4. Nancy Whitney (57) 19:45 5. Bill O'Reilly (67) 20:07 6. Claude Letiem (45) 20:08 **5 Km, Coconut Creek, Florida, Jan. 31--1.** Eric Schmook 23:29 2. Bob Fine (61) 28:13 3. Jerry Gomes (60) 28:39 4. Bob Cella (55) 29:16 5. Max Gould (75) 32:17 Women: 1. Linda Stein (45) 27:15 2. Shendell Duffner 28:33 3. June Marie Provost (59) 29:44 **5 Km, Miami--1.** Bob Cella 28:12 2. Gerald Gomes 28:58 Women: 1. Linda Stein 27:14 2. Tamar Shendell 27:48 3. Donna Pape 28:00 4. Sarah Perry 28:14 5. Sondra Vladem 28:20 6. Carla Wahlstrom 29:19 **5 Km, Boca Raton, Florida--1.** Bob Fine 28:47 Women: 1. Shellah Reed 30:22 **5 Km, Miami--1.** Eric Schmook 23:43 2. Dave Clarke 26:50 3. Bob Cella 28:20 4. Matt Cucchiara (49) 29:00 5. Gerald Gomes 29:03 Women: 1. Linda Stein 27:26 2. Sondra Vladem 29:01 3. Elizabeth Nelson (42) 29:02 4. Donna Pape 29:17 5. Sara O'Bannon 29:29 **5 Km, Miami, Jan. 10--1.** Stanford Blake (44) 28:49 2. Bob Fine 28:52 3. Gerry Gomes 29:10 Women: 1. June-Marie Provost 29:58 **5 Km, WinterPark, Florida, Jan. 16--1.** Burns Hovey 26:36 2. Chuck McLaughlin (50-59) 26:51 3. Steve Christlieb (40-49) 29:16 **8 Km, Lake Mary, Florida, Jan. 23--1.** Chuck McLaughlin 44:22 2. Steve Christlieb 46:19 **Women's 1/2 Marathon, Miami, Jan. 17--1.** JuneMarie Provost 2:18:12 2. Nicole Swift 2:29:19 **Marathon, Miami, Jan. 17--1.** Lee Duffner (56) 4:34:23 **5 Km, New Orleans, Jan. 30--1.** Sidney Holmes 29:04 2. Eva Beck 31:29 **10 Km, New Orleans, Feb. 7--1.** Ed Whiteman 53:47 2. Sharon Lewis 59:39 3. Sidney Holmes 61:04 **5 Km, New Orleans, Feb. 7--1.** John Powers 28:38 2. Vince Salto 30:14 Women: 1. Bonnie McAfee 31:12 **3 Km, Milwaukee, Dec. 19--1.** Will Preischel 13:17 **1600 meters, same place--1.** Al Heppner 6:47 2. Pete Williams 7:43 Women: 1. Kelly Watson 7:42 2. Michelle Rohl 7:45 **1600 meters, Milwaukee, Jan. 8--1.** Steve Frey ? Women: 1. Michelle Rohl 7:50 **3 Km, Milwaukee, Jan. 15--1.** Rob Cole 12:37 2. Len Becker 13:40 3. Steve Frey 17:33 Women: 1. Ali DeWitt 15:31 2. Renee Wilderhold 17:55 **5 Km, Denver, Dec. 12--1.** Mike Blanchard 25:51 2. Bob DiCarlo (58) 28:32 3. Daryl Meyers (50) 29:19 4. Marianne Martino (42) 29:39 5. Charlie Corder (49) 29:40 **5 Km, Denver, Dec. 19--1.** Mike Blanchard 27:25 **Women's 10 Km, Honolulu--1.** Lynn Welk Campilli 48:24 (I guess this name is telling us that Lynn has made a major move in life) 2. Ann Meyer 58:50 **Rose Bowl 10 Mile Handicap, Pasadena, Cal., Jan. 24--1.** Richard Ashton 1:19:46 2. Fran Bustos 1:26:06 3. Chris Dreher 1:26:22 4. Carl Acosta 1:34:58 (1st over 55) 5. Ray Kraus 1:38:09 6. Lorraine Miller 1:38:20 7. Dave Snyder (49) 1:40:00 8. Jaye Hanley (52) 1:40:34 **3 Mile, same place--1.** Adam Mendonca 27:00 2. Steve Leitner (46) 27:55 3. Steve Avellaneda 29:34 4. Stuart Ray (50) 30:14 Women: 1. Donna Cunningham (46) 27:43 2. Margie Alexander 30:03 **20 Km, Stanford, Jan. 10--1.** Jim Lenschau 1:39:19 2. Cindy March 1:43:10 3. Therese Iknolan 1:57:44 4. Sally Focacci (42) 1:57:45 **1 Mile, Salem, Oregon, Feb. 1--1.** Vance Godfrey 6:41.8 2. Dave Thomas 7:21 3. Jim Bean 9:11 Women: 1. Erin Taylor 9:10 **10 Km, Champeog State Park, Oregon, Feb. 6--1.** Steve Renard 49:42 2. Brian Finlayson Masters--1. Jim Bean 59:40 2. John Hanan 61:00 3. Dusty Moller **1500 meters, Eugene, Ore., Jan. 30--1.** Andrew Herman 6:17.5 2. Steve Renard 6:30.9 Women: 1. Annette Swearingner 8:21.7 Masters (separate race)--1. Steve Renard 6:27.5 2. Bob Brewer 7:40.4 **5 Km, Seattle, Jan. 1--1.** Sara Klautt 28:59 2. Steve Fredrickson 30:01 **5 Km, Seattle, Jan. 8--1.** Stan Chraminski 25:31 2. Glenn Tachiyama 25:57 3. Bob Novak 26:11 4. Bruce Harland 28:38 5. Bev LaVeck 29:43 **1 Mile, Seattle, Jan. 16--1.** Stan Chraminski 7:42.5 2. Bob Novak 7:56 3. Bev LaVeck 8:43 4. Sarah Klautt 8:52

3 Km, Australia, Jan. 12--1. Stefan Johanssen, Sweden 11:13.4 2. Tim Berrett, Canada 11:26.5 3. Allen James 11:34.7 (US best) 4. Andrew Jachno 11:35.8 5. Nick Ahern 11:45.9 6. Simon Baker 12:01 **10 Km, Canberra, Aust., Jan. 26--1.** Kerry Saxby-Junna 43:46.9 2. A. Manning 46:20.4 3. J. Jones 46:25.4

Dated results from Europe: 20 Km, Switzerland, Sept. 5, 1992--1. Stefan Malik, Czech. 1:20:57 2. Victoras Meskauskas, Lithuania 1:21:31 3. Peter Malik, Czech. 1:22:32 **5 Km, Reims, France, July 3--1.** Robert Korzenowski, Poland 18:17.22 (World's best) 2. Jose Urbano, Port. 19:06 **Women's 20 Km, Gradisca, Italy, Oct. 4--1.** Anna Marie Sidotl 1:36:54 2. Perrone 1:36:56 3. Giordano 1:37:06 4. Alfridi 1:39:42 **Women's 20 Km, Moscow, April 25--1.** Tamara Romanova 1:31:58 2. Ludmila Ljubomirova 1:32:21 3. Yelena Fedoreva ? 4. Zinaida Sviridenko 1:32:51 5. Yelena Fedorova 1:34:03 6. Marina Kozneva 1:34:55 7. Alfiya Gallullina 1:37:15 8. Ludmila Savinova 1:37:23 9. Galina Anisimova 1:37:25 **Women's 5 Km, Helsinki, Aug. 30--1.** Sari Essayah 21:00.40 2. Madelene Svensson, Swed. 21:36.83 **20 Km, Balassagyarmat, Hung., Sept. 19--1.** Gyula Dudas 1:22:08 2. Plotnikov, Russia 1:22:45 3. Koslow, Ukraine 1:23:04 4. Markow, Russia 1:23:27 5. Valnauskas, Lith. 1:23:31 6. Pasteruk, Ukraine 1:23:46 **100 Km, Besancon, France, Oct. 18--1.** Victor Cinko, Byelorussia 9:06.17 2. Ivo Majetic, Bye. 9:53:32 3. Ranato Cortinovis, Bye. 9:57:21 **100 Km, Bar-de-luc, France, June 23--1.** Igor Plotnikov, Russia 9:32:40 2. German Skurygin, Russia 9:33:07 3. Theiry Nuttin 9:38:08 4. Sergei Perschin, Russia 9:51:35

COMPETITIVE EXPERIENCES IN YOUR FUTURE?

Sat. Mar. 6 20 Km, Salem, OR (X)
 Sun. Mar. 7 Indoor 1500 meters or 1 Mile, West Point, N.Y. (C)
 2 Mile and 10 Km, Westwego, Louisiana, 8 am (M)
 Los Angeles Marathon, 8:45 am (B)
 Sat. Mar. 13 5 Km, McMinnville, OR, 9 am (X)
 5 Mile, Arlington, Virginia, 9 am (J)
 5 and 10 Mile, Miami, 7:30 am (Q)
 1 Hour, Houston (O)
 5 Km, Dallas (EE)
 Sun. Mar. 14 2 Mile and 10 Km, New Orleans, 8 am (M)
 5 Km, New York City, 9 am (C)
 10 Km, Marlboro, Mass. (I)
 5 Km, Cooper City, Florida, 7:30 am (Q)
 20 Km, El Paso, Texas (Z)
 10 and 20 Km, Houston (O)
 10 Km, Marlborough, Mass. (I)
 Mon. Mar 15 National Masters Indoor 3 Km, Bozeman, Montana (Y)
 Sat. Mar. 20 3 Km, Syracuse, N.Y. (F)
 2.8 Miles, Evansville, Indiana, 9 am (AA)
 5 Km, Miami, 8am (Q)
 1 Mile, Houston (O)
 20 Km, Tacoma, Wash. (C)
 Sun. Mar. 21 20 Km, Long Beach, CA, 8 am (B)

5 Km, Austin, Texas (W)
 3 Km and 1500 meters, Ithaca, N.Y. (F)
 Mon. March 22 20 Km and 5 Km, Long Beach, Cal. (B)
 Sat. Mar. 27 15 Km, Columbia, Missouri, 8:30 am (U)
 5 Km, Boynton Beach, Florida, 7:30 am (Q)
 Sun. Mar. 28 5, 20, and 50 Miles, Columbus, Ohio (T)
 National Invitational Race Walks and World Cup Trials, 3, 5, 10
 and 20 Km, Washington, DC, 8 am (J)
 Senior (55 and up) 1 mile and 5 Km, Houston (O)
 Thu. April 1 2.8 Mile, Seattle, 6 pm (C)
 Sun. April 4 1 and 3 Mile, New Orleans, 7:45 am (M)
 Portland Invitational 20 Km and Women's 10 Km, Columbus,
 Ohio (T)
 20 Km, Framingham, Mass. (I)
 Capt. Ron Zinn Memorial 10 Mile, Asbury Park, N.J., 11 am (A)
 5 Km, Miami, 7:30 am (Q)
 Sat. April 10 10 Km, Plainview, N.Y. (G)
 1 Mile, Albuquerque, N.M. (L)
 5 and 10 Km, Washington, DC, 8:30 am (J)
 Sat. April 17 5 Km, Brookings, S.Dak. (BB)
 7 Mile, Miami, 7:30 am (Q)
 Master's 5 Km, Naples, Florida, 8:30 am (Q)
 5 Km, New Orleans, 8 am (M)
 Sun. April 18 10 Km, Kenosha, Wis. (P)
 10 Km, Ashland, Virginia, 1:15 (S)
 5 Km, New Orleans, 8 am (M)
 2 Mile and 10 Km, Houston (O)
 Mt. SAC Relays, 5 and 10 Km, Walnut, Cal. (B)
 Sat. April 24 Women's 5 and Men's 10 Km, Penn Relays (R)
 5 and 10 Km, Miami, 7:30 am (Q)
 5 and 10 Km, Albuquerque, 8 am (L)
 10 Km, Columbia, Missouri, 8 am (U)
 Sun. April 25 5 Mile, Westerly, R.I., 11 am (K)
 Sat. May 1 5 Km, Howard Wood Dakota Relays, Sioux Falls, N.Dak. (CC)
 5 Km, Atlanta (DD)
 5 Km, Miami, 7:30 am (Q)
 1500 meters, Houston (O)
 Sun. May 2 Women's 5 Km, Austin, Texas (W)
 Sat. May 8

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FROM HEEL TO TOE

So far, I have received only one correction to the U.S. lists I published last month, which, I guess, means I should always rely on some one else's compilations. Usually, there have been more omissions than that. Anyway, Phyllis Hansen did a 54:30 at Fort Monmouth, NJ in September, which puts her just ahead of Susan Liers on the list. I don't think we had ever received that result, nor apparently had Bob Bowman, whose list I largely relied on for the one I published. . . Dave McGovern's racewalking camp at the Healing Springs Ranch in Tloga, Texas has been moved to May. The new dates are May 19 through 23. Camp fee is \$525. Contact Dave at 795 Madison Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22903, (804) 295-6586 for more information. Nothing but good reports on Dave's past camps. . . Ron Laird's camp at the same site is still scheduled for April 4-10. The four-time Olympian has a camp designed especially for beginners and those with technique problems, but all ages and levels are welcome. Contact Ron at 4706 Diane Drive, Ashtabula, OH 44004, (9216) 998-1371 for more information. . . The first annual Walking Club Conference, sponsored by Walking Magazine and presented by Walknet, The Walking Club Network, will be held at Big Sur Lodge, Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, California from April 1-4. Racewalking's Mark Fenton is one of the speakers. Contact Walking Magazine, 911 Harcourt Street, Boston, MA 02116 (617) 266-3322 for further information. . . Finally, along this line, Martin Rudow, former National Coach, will conduct a clinic in Clarksville, Tennessee on Saturday, April 3 and Sunday, April 4. Contact Elizabeth Longston, 615-358-2227 for information. Her address is 211 Chelsea Ct., Clarksville, TN 37043. . . Qualifying standards for 1993 National Outdoor Championships: Senior Men 20 Km--1:34:00; Senior Women 10 Km--51:00; Junior Men 10 Km--55:15 (or 5 Km in 25:28); Junior Women 5 Km--28:30 (or 3 Km in 16:00 or 10 Km in 58:00). . . Walks at the U.S. Olympic Festival in San Antonio this

summer have the following schedule: Women's 10 Km (track), Friday, July 30, 7 pm; Men's 50 Km, Sat. July 31, 6 am; Men's 20 Km (track), Sunday, Aug. 1, 7 am.

CONTACT CONTINUED

I have promised to publish Ron Daniel's discussion on the Casey Meyer's proposal to drop the contact rule in racewalking (see November 1992 ORW), so I will do so. In the meantime, I have also received a very lengthy letter from Jonathan Matthews on the subject, which is also quite interesting and merits publication. Ron Daniel's letter was actually written to Bob Carlson (who has published it in his local Frontrange Walker newsletter and who beat me into print with the Meyer's essay), but Ron sent a copy to me, as well. So, here it is.

Dear Bob,

I read with great curiosity the article by Casey Meyers; following is my assessment and comments on the article. I was at first attracted to the article because of its biomechanical/technical content and the applications to racewalking (I have a BS in Applied Physics and an MS in Operations Research, a mathematical discipline). While only being self taught in the biomechanics of racewalking, I sensed, as you did, that the Alexander paper was not a racewalking study. What concerns me is that Casey's article, with its research paper references, would be convincing to readers with non-technical backgrounds. Casey, clearly attempts to overwhelm the reader with technical discussion in order to support his hypothesis.

What is the main point behind Casey's letter? That racewalking lacks stature among other track events and is suffering in growth of numbers because it the object of ridicule and that we can remove this ridicule by eliminating the double contact rule. Casey concludes that "the double contact rule ignores the laws of physics that govern horizontal velocity and the force of gravity" and therefore the double contact rule is unnecessary. He supports his conclusion by citing passages from the Alexander paper.

First, I disagree that the sport is the object of ridicule. More correctly, there is criticism and controversy but usually from sources that do not understand the sport or refuse to be educated. A careful reading of the Alexander paper reveals, as suspected, that it was not a study at all related to racewalking. In addition, any conclusions reached in Casey's letter about loss of contact in racewalking are incorrect.

The purpose of Alexander's paper is revealed in the abstract and Introduction for the paper. To be fair to the readers, I've rewritten them: **Abstract:** Walking and running are interpreted as techniques for travelling with the least possible energy cost. In walking, energy costs are kept low by keeping each leg fairly straight (so that leg length is almost constant) while its foot is on the ground. In running, energy is saved by using tendons as springs to store elastic strain energy at one stage of the step and return it in an elastic recoil at another. Below a critical speed, walking is more economical than running, but above that speed, running is the more economical gait. **Introduction:** The theme of this paper is that people walk and run in the laziest possible ways: we execute our movements so as to minimize energy costs. Current research is making this progressively clearer.

To me, this means that Alexander was trying to explain why a pedestrian would switch from ever-faster walking to a run. This is a question of perceived energy conservation.

To set up his own work in the paper, Alexander lists four experimental research methods (filming, force recording, electromyography, and oxygen consumption) and a non-

experimental technique (mathematical modeling), that can be used to study running and walking. After citing some of the difficulties that are usually encountered with the experimental procedures, he recommends using mathematical modeling. These are all good techniques, with modeling being a useful diagnostic tool if done correctly.

Alexander references an earlier work of his own, where he used mathematical modeling to determine the most economical pattern of forces to determine an economical gait for walking. However, he states, "The model has limitations. It does not permit very rapid fluctuations of force. It does not take account of the possibility that a movement may require one muscle to do positive work while another muscle in the same leg does negative work. It takes no account of the energy costs of developing and maintaining force in muscles, as distinct from doing work." Also, he says, "one of the limitations of the model is that it ignores work done by a leg while its foot is off the ground." Additionally, "Energy might be needed to swing the leg forward, though electromyography suggests not: there is little electrical activity in the leg muscles while the foot is off the ground. Perhaps the leg swings forward passively like a pendulum." There is no discussion of the speed of the walker when these electromyography measurements were made.

The admitted limitations to the model and the statement about little electrical activity in the leg muscles, together, should discount the article as being applicable to racewalking. Anyone who racewalks knows that the leg does not swing passively like a pendulum.

Alexander's simplified (his word) style of walking shows the supporting leg as non-bending, with no ankle flexion, and the hip tracing an arc of a circle during the support phase. During this phase, the center of mass also traces an arc of a circle just above the hip. Because his center of mass is traveling in an arc of a circle, he chooses to evaluate its movement by using the expression for centripetal force. This simplified model leads him to the statement: "man cannot pull himself downwards: he can only let himself fall. For this reason, his downward acceleration cannot exceed "g", the acceleration of free fall. This sets an upper limit to the speed of walking. Any attempt to move faster in circular arcs must fail." This statement and model ignores the dynamics of the upper body, the arms and the swinging leg. For example, in racewalking clinics that I give, I instruct the athletes on how to use their arms, upper body, and a slight lean to counteract upward force vectors during the push-off.

Casey in his article relies on Alexander's circular arc model and centripetal force statement to conclude, "that every walker has a theoretical speed governed by the length of his legs and the earth's force of gravity where it is mathematically (and physically) impossible to have double contact." However, Alexander when reflecting on the speed limit predicted by his circular arc model says, "it applies only to the unrealistically simple style of walking shown in the figure." Alexander acknowledges that racewalkers actually go faster than his model predicts and he explains this trick where, "the athlete bends the lower part of his back, sticking out his bottom as he passes over the supporting foot. This prevents his center of mass from rising as high as in the figure." A statement that shows fundamental lack of understanding of the biomechanics of racewalking. While there are many articles on the biomechanics of racewalking, the Harold Whitlock Instructional Booklet on Race Walking, first published in 1957, has an excellent discussion on the technique used to limit the up and down movement of the center of gravity.

This Alexander model does not set a limit on the speed of a racewalker before loss of contact nor does it explain the mechanics of movement that contribute to lifting. And it certainly does not prove that the double contact rule ignores the laws of physics making the rule unnecessary and irrelevant.

In his simplified model, Alexander can claim that the passive, straight legged walker stores no elastic strain energy in his legs as he walks. This compares dramatically with the runner who, with his bending and straightening at the knee technique, has a great deal of elastic strain energy available. This oversimplification ignores the stretch reflex in the lower calf and psoas (internal hip flexor) muscles of the racewalker and to a lesser degree the muscles of the upper thigh and waistline oblique muscles.

Using Alexander's findings, Casey proposes a straight-legged walking technique that allows lifting because he argues that the principle difference between walking and running is the ability to store elastic strain energy and a straight leg will not do this; therefore, there is no advantage.

What is missing from the principal difference between walking and running is the placement of the foot under the center of mass as the foot makes contact with the ground. This is precisely the technique being attempted by more and more racewalkers as they try to shorten the amount of time that the lead foot is in front of the center of mass and before they can begin to push off.

It is misleading to equate elastic strain energy and the loss of contact in racewalking as running. Loss of contact is simply not racewalking, by definition. Furthermore, the arguments that suggest that a racewalker has no velocity gain while in the air overlook the advantage of the artificially lengthened stride with no slowing of turnover rate and the decreased braking energy loss because of the decreased number of steps. While, in the extreme, the large amount of up and down displacement that might accompany the straight-legged lifting technique would be less efficient, races are not measured in energy expended but in the time elapsed. In fact, walkers allowed to lift would still have a very flat trajectory. Over the short distances, most racewalkers would have adequate energy to lift the whole race and at high rates of speed, contrary to Casey's statement that, "it is almost impossible to run at competitive speeds with a straight knee."

What is overlooked is the reaction of the critics of racewalking who understand that walking is a continuous contact with the ground discipline. To allow loss of contact would open the sport to even more criticism. I also disagree that to only be looking for a bent knee is easier and a missed call is inconsequential. A missed bent knee call is then allowing the walker to have the elastic recoil that was considered to be so valuable. And the ability to discern a marginally bent knee when the "advanced" racewalker is placing his foot under the center of gravity will be difficult. While eliminating the double contact rule appears attractive for the reasons Casey suggests, it is not supported by the athletes themselves, and would do little to enhance the sport.

The sport needs positive exposure promoting the athleticism of its competitors not negative articles pointing out the difficulties. As for using video techniques to judge, we need to be careful in arbitrarily seeking a technology for a solution. We have the ability to detect lifting to almost perfect certainty (hundreds and thousands of frames per second), yet the walker does not have a perfectly flat surface on which to walk. As you stride forward, if the ground has an imperfection (slight dip), your lead foot will not find the ground where you expect it to be and the next step will be a loss of contact. Artificial aids should be practical and available for all levels of racing, not require long periods of review or be more sophisticated than the physical capabilities of the athletes.

Better consistency among the judges will come from better judges training. Better education to everyone in understanding the rules will also help, especially to commentators

that are announcing an event. Let's find a way to improve the sport that we have and not change it for change sake.

Ron Daniel

And from our newly crowned 50 Km champion (excuse the smaller type, I want to get this all in):

Dear Editor,

It is with puzzled amusement over the past few months that I have observed large portions of our nation's racewalking press consumed by serious consideration of an absurd position. Surely the limited periodical space available to our sport would be better spent in insightful articles on the many factors contributing to top performance or on profile pieces of athletes who have managed to achieve such success. But the absurd has its own compelling attraction (witness the growth of sensational tabloid journalism) and so it is with guilty enthusiasm that I jump into the fray with both feet, keeping one on the ground at all times. (Ed. Now that sounds like a physical impossibility to me!)

Which absurdity compels my first consideration? Perhaps it makes most sense to consider the absurdity that initiated the current debate. Simply, why would racewalking publications accept an article on elite, competitive racewalking technique from someone who has little relevant personal experience or knowledge in this aspect of racewalking? Has Casey Meyers conducted scientific studies of racewalkers? Has Casey Meyers been trained as a racewalking judge and does he have experience judging elite racewalkers? Has Casey Meyers polled elite racewalkers to find out what they think of judging and the rules of racewalking? No, no, no, no, and no. So why are race walking publications giving over large portions of their pages to this gentleman who has written what I feel is a fine book on fitness walking? (Ed. Good question. I could say to sell papers, but I have no real interest in that. I guess, from this journal's perspective, because it was a well-prepared, if obviously flawed, presentation. I knew it would spark an interesting exchange of ideas--or rather revive a continuing debate--not just current debate-- that, though laying dormant at times, has been ongoing for the nearly 35 years I have been involved with the sport and has filled much space in these pages through the years.)

As a small and friendly community, we welcome newcomers to our sport with enthusiasm. We gladly take time out to teach them the racewalking stride. We encourage them to appear at group workouts. We give them pointers on training and technique. We encourage them to enter races to test the soundness of their form and fitness and to introduce them to the thrill of putting it all on the line, testing themselves against their previous best and against the best of others. But do we also encourage those who are inexperienced in our sport to assume the mantle of expert and publish articles on elite racewalking technique? Apparently, absurdly, we do! (Ed. In Casey's defense, I should say that, while not competing, Casey has spent a lot of time on the fringes of the sport over the past 6 years and has discussed it at length with many of the leading athletes and "personalities".)

I admire the effort Casey Meyers made in his *Aerobic Walking* book. I'm sure that it has done much good, encouraging many sedentary people to begin regular fitness walking. And he speaks approvingly of racewalking in this book. Now it appears that he would like to become involved in competitive racewalking. I would like to encourage this impulse. Those of us who practice it know that it is a great sport. But the only way to truly appreciate competitive racewalking--to become "racewalking wise"--is to practice it. Racewalking wisdom is hard to come by, the result of many hours of body/mind practice.

In one respect, I cannot fault Casey Meyers' enthusiasm. Perhaps he has simply become over-zealous in his beginner's embrace of our sport. I hope he sustains this energy and applies it in the involved learning process of his own beginning competitive racewalking practice.

As a writer, Casey Meyers has apparently assumed that the best way to join our community is as an authoritative critic. Perhaps this is a position that he might one day legitimately assume. But true authority is not so cheaply won. As an interested observer of medical science, I doubt that Mr.

Meyers would pen a missive on surgical technique. His respect for medical mastery would preclude this. I hope it is not a lack of respect for our sport that leads Mr. Meyers to believe that he can assume the mantle of authority at the very outset of his own involvement in competitive racewalking. If this is the case, then this lack of respect would grow from a lack of understanding. It is this same lack of respect rooted in misunderstanding that leads inadequately prepared journalists to inappropriately criticize or even ridicule racewalking. Though I assume he is well-intentioned, it appears that Casey Meyers' naivete regarding racewalking has led him into a similar error. Though Meyers has written two books on fitness walking, he has not had the sort of intense personal apprenticeship in the sport that would be necessary to transform him into an authoritative competitive racewalking critic.

By way of extreme contrast, consider the rigorously respectful student of Japanese wood block printing, who serves a 9-year apprenticeship with an acknowledged master before he dares to craft his own artistic statement. It is not reasonable to expect Mr. Meyers to embody such a high standard of respect and commitment to competitive racewalking before presenting himself as an authoritative critic of it. But it is reasonable to expect that he would personally, regularly involve himself in the competitive racewalking community for several years before he would imagine himself an expert judge of the sport. It is laudable that Mr. Meyers recommends the racewalking style to fitness walkers. But it is another thing entirely to be part of competitive racewalking. Mr. Meyers has not been part of the competitive racewalking community, and yet our racewalking publications have presented him as an expert commentator.

So much for the absurdity of offering a prominent forum to a beginner who proffers himself as an expert. The second absurdity to consider is the position taken by Casey Meyers. Interestingly, he offers this position to counter what he considers to be an absurd position? (Is this why this debate is irresistibly attractive to the normally suppressed tabloid instincts of our otherwise mainstream racewalk media? It is hard to resist absurdity compounded by absurdity!) In his January 15, 1993 letter (Ed. To Bob Carlson, not published in the ORW), Meyers writes:

"...because someone 75 or 100 years ago wrote a rule that says a racewalker must never have both feet off the ground, these study participants [racewalkers caught slightly off the ground by high speed photography] were considered to be running (or lifting). This is absurd."

Could Meyers actually think that the universally accepted commonsense notion that walking involves locomotion in which one foot is always on the ground is a result of a rule-making decision made by some racewalking officials 75 or 100 years ago? Could he think that, 100 years ago, people thought that walking involved a certain amount of time up in the air, free of contact with the earth, during each walking stride? I don't think so. And I doubt that the editors at Funk and Wagnalls were influenced by these racewalking rule-makers when they wrote in their dictionary under walk: "1. To advance on foot in such a manner that one part of a foot is always on the ground."

You see, any ridicule that racewalking now suffers would not be lessened by eliminating the contact rule. The contact rule is not the arbitrary invention of archaic racewalking officials. Walking fundamentally begins and ends with the contact rule. The contact rule is racewalking's survival line. The contact rule is the tether that ties racewalking to reality, to the common-sense definition of walking. To abandon the contact rule is to kill racewalking. If there are committed enemies of racewalking out there, then they should fight for the elimination of the contact rule. Remove the contact rule from racewalking and it no longer will be racewalking. Instead, it will become a stylized form of stiff-legged running, absurd by definition, since it will no longer participate in the grand track and field family, in which people strive to perfect the basic human athletic movements: to walk, run, leap, or throw as fast, far, or high as possible. Racewalking is superb walking, but it is pretty lame running.

The third absurdity to consider is the academic paper that Casey Meyers cites to back his notions about competitive racewalking technique. This paper, quite literally, has absolutely nothing to say that has any relevance for competitive racewalking technique. The paper's author assumes a scientifically desiccated model that has almost no connection to normal walking and has absolutely no connection to racewalking. The most glaring flaws: Alexander's walking model assumes a straight

post-of-a-leg swinging like a pendulum from a pivot point. This is nothing like the complex, highly articulated race walker's toe-foot-ankle-achilles-calf-knee-hamstring-gluteus-hipflexor-hipjoint-abdominal girdle. . . and I've left out many other moving and flexing parts. The absolute differences between running and walking cited by Alexander hold only if one accepts his stick-figure model of walking. In fact, many of the biomechanical factors that he claims are unique to running are also present in walking! Of the three primary levers used in running propulsion, only one--the knee--is severely restricted in racewalking. The complex ankle and hip joints, and their associated muscles and tendons, participate in all of the elastic strain energy dynamics that Alexander falsely claims is a unique feature of the running gait. And to claim that gravity is the main force to consider in assessing the limits of walking speed only makes sense if you consider the leg as a pendulum swinging from a simply joint. But the real-world combination of the complex interaction of the hip drop-rotation, pelvic-girdle and hip-flexor muscle contraction, and shin-foot dorsi-flexion reveal Alexander's gravity-driven, stiff pendulum model of walking gait to be as unlike the racewalking motion as a stick figure drawing is like a real human body.

Now to the implications of the Knicker and Loch paper (which reveals that elite walkers sometimes lift) that Mr. Meyers cites in his January 15th letter. That high speed photography of elite racewalkers sometimes reveals them to be cut off the ground does not mean that we should abandon the contact rule. I have a high-speed photo of myself from my 5 Km race of last season, 20:28 (6:35 mile pace), that shows me firmly planted in the double contact phase. And I have other high speed photos of myself and faster walkers showing us obeying the contact rule. (Ed. Likewise, as I have cited many times, there are movies of 1968 Olympic team members walking 100 meter sprints in times under 20 seconds without losing contact. At least, there were movies. Someone might still have them.) Obviously, it is athletically possible to racewalk fast in compliance with the rules. Casey Meyers argues that it is the biomechanical characteristics of the racewalking gait that should be the criteria for legality, not the maintenance of the contact rule. When you consider that the biomechanics of the racewalking gait are a direct result of athletes attempting to walk as fast as possible while obeying the contact and knee-straightening rules, you'll see that we've come upon yet another absurdity. Abandon the contact rule and we'll soon have to do a whole new analysis of the biomechanics of the newly created stiff-legged running gait. After a few years, we'd likely end up with a lot of very light athletes who have mastered the new art of bounding along in a stiff-legged trot, dramatically re-writing the records as they achieve the maximum amount of efficient glide on each of their strides.

Clearly, if we wish racewalking to survive, if we wish racewalking to remain racewalking, the contact rule must be maintained. More to the point, the whole source of this brouhaha stems from the fact that human observers aided by high-speed, stop-action or slow-motion photography are sometimes able to detect violations of the contact and knee straightening rules that are not being observed by technologically unaided human judges. According to the letter of the law, this should be no problem, since the rule states that the judges must observe the walkers with their unaided eyes. And there are many comparable situations in other sports where this dilemma isn't much of a problem. Slow-motion, instant-replay TV regularly shows umpires and referees missing critical calls that could dramatically influence the games' outcomes. For instance: the star hitter who may have hit a home run to win the game on the next pitch gets called out "looking" on a pitch that TV replay reveals to be clearly out of the strike zone; or TV replay reveals that the rally-ending double play should not have been allowed, since when the shortstop took the feed from the second baseman, he was already in the air, foot off the bag, avoiding the slide of the opposing runner; or TV replay reveals Michael Jordan actually took one step more than the rules allow as he drove down the lane for the thundering slam dunk that won the game. I picked these examples out of the nearly infinite possibilities because these particular situations happen incredibly frequently. And yet, they're accepted by TV commentators and fans usually without any comment whatsoever. In the same manner, experienced members of the competitive racewalking community usually aren't particularly bent out of shape when they see the occasional photo or video footage of some top walker caught in violation of the rules. Athletes straining their limits sometimes can't handle it and break form. Judges are there on the course to catch them if they do break form, but just like the baseball ump and the basketball ref,

the race walking judge isn't everywhere on the "field of play" and his or her perception is not infallible.

Though obvious violations of the rules occur frequently in basketball and baseball and are often missed by the officials, there is no hew and cry within these sports for video-assisted officiating. That's because experienced participants and observers in these sports understand what the standard procedures and practices are in their sport and they realize that, in the long run, "missed calls" by the officials tend to affect all participants equally, and so are inherently fair. They also realize that trying to submit each moment of play to electronic analysis is technically daunting and would likely paralyze the game. The NFL experimented with instant replay officiating for several years and many observers complained that it resulted in timid hesitancy by field officials and intolerable delays in the game. And even still, the video replay officials could only rule on a few types of plays. (Ed. And still didn't seem to always get it right.) Broadcast TV replays regularly revealed all sorts of rule violations (such as holding by the offensive line) that were missed by the field officials and that were not within the consideration of the video replay officials. And again, experienced commentators didn't think it was a big deal. They didn't cry that the sport was being ridiculed because the officials were missing serious violations of the rules that were regularly revealed by slow motion replays.

Having said all that, and realizing the obvious implications of the above examples from other sports for the conduct of racewalking, I believe that--given the breathtaking course of technological innovation--it is likely that racewalking judges will one day utilize some sort of small, portable, rapid-reacting instrument to assist them in evaluating the legality of racewalking athletes. This point is somewhere in the future. Perhaps not within my competitive lifetime. But, this amazingly portable and fast-acting device would also have to be easily within the financial means of racewalkers and judges everywhere. It would be wrong to utilize such devices only in important championships, since their precision would force a new caution into racewalking stride. (Ed. I agree, but as a counter argument, one could cite tennis, where only the elite competitors get the benefits of line judges and, sometimes, "cyclops".) Athletes who found that their once-acceptable form didn't meet the precision imposed by the new technology would have to learn to adapt their racewalking form to the new standard. Times would likely slow somewhat, and new records would have to be established, just as new, shorter records were established with the advent of the new javelin.

But the era of technologically assisted racewalking judging is probably a long way off. So, for the foreseeable future, fallible racewalking judges will continue to make decisions that will sometimes be contradicted by slow motion video and stop-action photography. And only the ignorant and uninformed will get worked-up over it. Just as in the other sports mentioned, those who are familiar with the standards and practices of competitive racewalking will realize that photos and video will sometimes reveal violations of the rules that the judges don't catch. The experienced racewalk commentators on Italian or British TV don't get into a lather over these instances, just as experienced baseball commentators don't over-react to similar instances within their sport. They are aware of limitations of the game. I hate to dump on Marty Liquori and Frank Shorter, who were superb runners and are fine running commentators, but they revealed their inexperience in racewalking by the inappropriate focus of their comments during the Olympic walks coverage. As with Casey Meyers, the enthusiastic neophyte or inexperienced observer doth not an expert commentator make! If NBC had used experienced racewalk commentators to cover the walks, they would have paid attention to the exciting dynamics of the races rather than being consumed with slow-motion criticism of the rules of racewalk judging--which Shorter and Liquori didn't understand in the first place.

The final absurdity that I'll consider is Casey Meyers' assertion that the unpopularity of racewalking is due to the supposed controversy concerning the judging of the contact rule. Guess what: racewalking is unpopular because most uninformed folks think it looks funny. Listen, here I am, the top all-around male racewalker in the US (ranked 2nd in the 20 Km and 5th in the 50), and up until 4 years ago I stayed away from racewalking because I thought it looked funny. It wasn't until I was 33 that I decided to give competitive racewalking a shot, and this was even though my ninth grade cross country coach was the elite racewalker Larry Walker. Even though I was introduced to racewalking as a 14-year-old, even though I saw the success that Larry Walker achieved, even though I realized that my chances for success were probably far greater in racewalking than in running..even

considering all of this, I had absolutely no interest in being a racewalker. The dang stride looked funny to me. When you try to do it in public, people gawk at you. Have you ever had the misfortune of racewalking past a Junior High right as it is letting out? Do you think that the laughter and verbal abuse that the kids direct at you as you stride past is because they think that the contact rule is absurd and should be eliminated? Do you think that if we eliminate the contact rule that racewalking will, to quote Meyers, "have true credibility in the sports world and achieve the stature of other track events." Just eliminate the contact rule and all those inner city kids who are dreaming of being the next Carl Lewis will suddenly also start dreaming of being the next Tim Lewis. I don't think so. Kids want to look cool, and racewalking doesn't look cool to them.

There is one sure way to increase race walking's popularity, and that is to incorporate it into the school curriculum. If kids were taught racewalking from kindergarten on, if racewalking competitions were held throughout the school levels, if every high school and college track program included racewalking, if every college track program that offered scholarships offered them in racewalking. . . if all of this happened, then racewalking would become considerably more popular in the U.S. than it is today. This is because racewalking's beauty is not superficially apparent to most people. Its beauty grows on you. You begin reluctantly. The stride seems so peculiar at first. But then, through regular racewalking practice, your body begins to be seduced by the rhythm. It's so smooth, so rolling--like flowing water. Gradually you realize that the gait that you first thought was an awkward, absurd, ugly duckling has matured into a graceful swan. And then, you see a top racewalker--either on videotape or in person--and you realize it is beautiful, this racewalking form. You realize that it is a unique combination of athletic grace, speed, and endurance. You dedicate yourself to mastering it. And then you try to go longer and faster. And you are hooked.

I would like to end this with a direct appeal to Casey Meyers. Mr. Meyers, you end your January 15th letter with a sentence with which I can find no fault. "Tragically, the fine athletes who participate in racewalking suffer the most because they are denied the legitimate recognition they so richly deserve." Yes, Mr. Meyers, no respected marathon runner trains with more dedication or intensity than I, and yet I receive almost no remuneration for my efforts and am awarded very little attention or respect outside the small racewalking community. But this state of affairs has nothing to do with racewalking's contact rule. I hope, Mr. Meyers, that you will invest your considerable talents in furthering the racewalking cause, rather than continuing (albeit inadvertently) to work to destroy our beloved sport. We certainly could use a man of your proven energy and resourcefulness within the competitive racewalking community. Apprentice yourself to this sport. Involve yourself bodily in daily practice. Consider the advice of experienced coaches. Train. Race. Learn to be a true connoisseur of competitive racewalking. Perhaps become a judge yourself. After a number of years of such involvement, I'm sure you'll have won, through personal experience, many valuable insights into racewalking. In such circumstances, I will look forward to hearing from you, with great pleasure, in the future.

Jonathan Matthews

And, finally, this plea for sanity from a dear old friend, Matt Rutyna, who came to this country in 1960 and competed for Poland in the 1964 Olympics.

Dear Jack,

Through the years, many letters have been written to the ORW in regard to racewalking and interpretation of its rules. Authors of those letters came up with many suggestions on how to make this sport more colorful and less exposed to criticism. Almost all of them criticize the rules of the sport set by the IAAF making people believe that the rules are killing racewalking, not the poor technique of walkers, dishonest judges, or uneducated and heartless TV sports commentators. That kind of help is nothing less than digging a grave for the sport that has a long and splendid history in the Olympic movement. This kind of criticism and anxiety to change the rules is forsaking the work of many dedicated

people through almost a century, erasing the record holders not by honest walking but by manipulation of the rules. How will we ever compare the achievements in racewalking from one generation to another when rules become changed because some walkers or judges don't understand them; what is there that is so hard and difficult to understand? No lifting, no creeping, these things should be taught by every coach so the athletes will learn them not in big races, but long before they will participate in the smallest ones.

All of us want to eliminate bad things from walking, but we have to start with careless coaching, greedy athletes, dishonest judges who sometimes prefer one nationality over another, and ignorant TV commentators. Leave the rules alone because through many Olympiads they were respected by a great number of walker who were winning medals and fame. Is it that difficult to follow their steps?

People are laughing at the results of the past Olympics without looking deeper at why they were lower than today's. Maybe they were pure amateurs, living in harder times, using less sophisticated equipment, and not using drugs. Let's compare some events of yesterday with today's. How many of today's sprinters running on a dirt track, starting from the holes rather than starting blocks would match Jesse Owens mark of 10.2 in the 100 meter dash? The description of the javelin was changed several times and will be changed again because the stadiums will be too short for that event. And looking at the pole vault, you can't help asking the question, how many of today's pole vaulters would clear 19 or 20 feet using a bamboo pole, and bearing in mind that they have to land on sawdust or sand? (Ed. Or even 15 feet.) We could go on and on with examples of humans pushing for meaningless records, so we stop, and as a big world family of race walkers we ask ourselves, are we going to ruin our sport? For whom and why?

The rules are easy to learn and use, no lifting and no creeping. If we will respect these rules we will be respected by judges and spectators and there will be no danger that our beloved sport may become extinct. People with different beliefs can create their own sport and call it the 20 or 50 Km creeping or lifting, but not racewalking because that sport has a long and beautiful history.

Matt Rutyna