James, Lawrence take national titles

Eugene, Oregon, June 17 and 18—On the afternoon of June 17, Debbi Lawrence overcame a determined effort by Teresa Vaill to take the lead with about 800 meters to go and move on to her fifth national title at 10 Km. Debbi's 45:55 left Teresa, who had led all the way, 9 seconds back at the finish. Surprisingly, Teresa is still looking for her first title at the distance. Debbi, who has won three of the last four years, captured her first crown in 1984. Defending titlist, Deborah Van Orden managed only fourth today, better than 2 minutes slower than last year, as know one could challenge the two leaders. The weather did not seem to be a factor, with the temperature in the mid 70s and moderate humidity, but times were generally slow.

The men took to the road for 20 Km on Friday afternoon, with conditions about the same except for a few more degrees of temperatures (low 80s). But again, the times were surprisingly slow. Allen James moved out quickly and seemed to be in command when he passed 5 Km in 21:12, 42 seconds ahead of leading challenger, Jonathan Matthews. Gary Morgan, Curt Clausen, Andrzej Chylinski, Dave McGovern, and Doug Fournier were grouped nearly a minute in back of James.

Allen continued to stretch his lead, though his pace slowed appreciably. When he went through 10 Km in 43:06, he had 78 seconds on Matthews and the race was essentially over. At 10 Km, Chylinski began a move and was into second by 11 km, was told by the judges to call it a day at about 13 km, leaving Matthews alone in second again. At 15 Km, James had 1:05:42 and Matthews 1:07:09. Clausen was now third in 1:07:53, 13 seconds ahead of Morgan. Fournier was right behind Morgan, McGovern was fading, and Herm Nelson was moving up. Everyone was struggling the final 5 Km. James needed 23:27, but he still stretched his lead slightly. Fournier and Nelson held together better than the rest and moved into third and fourth, as McGovern dropped out.

The races were held on a 2 Km loop, which was entered following 3 laps on the track. The finish was also on the track, where the competitors did 1 3/4 laps after leaving the course. The road was moderately crowned and had a few rough areas. Thanks to Wayne Armbrust for details on the races.


Address all correspondence regarding both editorial and subscription matters to: Ohio Racewalker, 3184 Summit St., Columbus, Ohio 43202.
FROM HEEL TO TOE

The report is that Debii Lawrence missed the World Cup because of the lingering effects of a knee that was sore from walking on the steeply banked Madison Square Garden track at the Indoor Championships in February. Apparently, Teresa Vaill passed up the trip because she got the last time she went to Mexico... And another mistake in our World Cup coverage, this one brought to our attention by Alan Jacobson. We described Axel Naack’s defeat in the 50 as “A not too successful attempt to move up from 20.” Wrong! Back in 1985 he took the bronze medal in the 50 when the Cup was held on the Isle of Man. I can’t blame that mistake on anyone else, just my fading memory. Matter of fact, I thin somewhere in the interim I made a statement about Naack making a successful front eh 50 to the 20... And still on the World Cup, Canada’s Janice McCaffrey was not scratched by Canadian officials, but they could never get the results to comply. She had finisher as the official results showed. Indeed, she never started, and was properly known landmarks, the Mexican brewery responsible for Carta Blanca and Bohemia beer.

Alison and Simon have been friends for sometime, the longest of long-distance relationships between Australia and Guelph. There have been the inevitable speculations about whether she’d change her name or hyphenate it, if the romance developed. Now, we’ll soon know. To cut a long story short, she said yes, leading to a delighted frenzy of hand shaking, back slapping, squeals, kisses, and hugs.” (This event topped a pretty good weekend for the pair. Simon, the 1989 World Cup winner at 50, finished 7th this time, and Alison was 15th in the 10 Km.) . . . With Elaine Ward’s small book Introduction to the Techniques of Racewalking having sold close to 2000 copies, the North American
Racewalking Foundation has now brought a companion video, Basics of the Technique of Racewalking. For Fitness and Competitive Walkers, also done by Elaine. Frank Alongi was a consultant on the video and members of the Southern Cal Walkers provided demonstrations. It's an excellent video, and that's from people other than me, including lan Whaley, Max Green, and Bev LaVeck. The 32-minute video is available from the North American Racewalking Association, P.O. Box 50312, Pasadena, CA 91115 for $25.00 plus $3.00 for mailing. The book mentioned above will cost you $8.00 plus $2.00 for handling. They sell quite a few other goodies as well... Ed O'Connor a racewalker and postdoctoral neuroscientist at Yale University School of Medicine, would like to communicate with other racewalkers through electronic mail. He is doing this now through Compuserve, but would like to broaden the scope. He seeks to exchange training tips, lend moral support, etc. His e-mail number is INTERNET: 72002,3312@compuserve.com.

Eight track and field athletes from Oregon colleges have been named NAIA track and field All-American Scholar-Athletes. The list includes racewalker Kristin Thomas (3.85 GPA in sociology) from George Fox College.

From Lori Maynard:

**1994 National Championship Bids**

Hard to believe, but it's that time of year again! Sharpen your pencils, your sponsors, and your volunteers, 'cause the Men's and Women's Race Walking Site Selection Subcommittee (SSS) is welcoming bids for 1994 Race Walking Championships. We have events in new areas of the country this year and hope that this increased experience and success will entice other associations to participate in the hosting of championships. There are relatively simple requirements for staging a National Race Walk Championship: all you have to provide are a certified course, six USA&F certified judges, and a group of people who want to do the job.

If you feel that you have the personnel and expertise, we would like to encourage you to bid for a 1994 (or future) National Championship. Bids should be submitted on a standard bid form and must include a course map and USA&F Certification number for the course. Bid applications not containing the certification map and number will not be accepted. The bid application lists distances available for bid. Any other distances are locked into the respective National Track and Field Championships for that division, thus are not available for bid. Per USA&F rules, I need to receive all complete bids no later than October 1, 1993.

Hosting a National Championship can be a good deal of work, but it also can be a lot of fun and very rewarding. Please be aware that when there is more than one bid for a particular race, the SSS determines the winning bid. If you have any questions or need more information call Lori Maynard at 415-369-2801, or write her at 2821 Kensington Road, Redwood City, CA 94061.

**Thoughts While Cooling Down**

by Steve Vaitones

Within in track and field in recent years, talk of reaching parity among nations has been a frequent topic. While certain events tend to have a larger proportion of the world list from particular nations—the U.S. in the 200, the Soviet block in the hammer, Kenya is some distance runs–there is much diversity at the top. Twenty-nine countries won medals at the World Indoor Championships, which contests only about half the events of the outdoor Worlds. With countries as diverse as Namibia, Qatar, and, of course, the former Soviet republics medaling, there is less and less of a single dominant force in the sport.

A look at the 1992 top 50 performance lists (F&F News) shows this trend has reached racewalking as well. In the 20 Km, 19 countries are represented. Four Soviet republics combine for 17 athletes, and, as one might expect, Russia is #1 with 9. Following is (surprise) China with 6 and the Czechoslovakia and Ukraine with 4.

In the 50 Km, the athletes are spread out through 21 countries. Spain is the leader with 6, while Italy, Poland, Russia, Mexico, and Czechoslovakia tie for the next spot with 4. The U.S. had their single ranker, Carl Schueler, in 50th.

There were 27 countries total with athletes in the men's lists. The average year of birth for the 20 Km was 1966, and for the 50 Km it was 1962, confirming the belief that walkers mature into 50 Km men. Interestingly, only six world athletes made both lists, and two were both top 10s. In comparison, eight of the top U.S. athletes in the 50 were in the top 21 at 20 Km as well. From our U.S. point of view, one surprise may be the few spots now held by the once powerful Mexican program. (Ed. Though it would appear that might change this year.)

As to athletes achieving their top times in major events, twelve men in the somewhat subjective "rankings" (vs list) portion had their season's best best in major performances—four at the Olympics, three at the track races in Fana, and three at the LaCoruna 20 Km. However, compared to U.S. athletes, the top Europeans are competing head-to-head much more often and the quality of field can be responsible for bringing out the best.

In the women's statistics, 15 countries had athletes listed. China and Russia dominated the lists taking over half the spots with 15 and 12, respectively. (The Soviet republics totaled 17.) Additional countries had 3-3-3-2-2-2, and the remainder 1—excluding the U.S.'s Debi Lawrence. The women's average birth year was 1967. This dominance may be due to the event being relatively new internationally. Such events have had a tradition of being led by Russia and China. Look at the women's triple jump—just this year added to the Worlds—and the same situation arises. I surmise, though, that the women's list will reflect the same trends of diverse representation in several years.

What does this mean? Maybe not more than the compilation of a statistics nut. Or maybe that parity is filtering down to our event of racewalking.

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This year's National Invitational in Washington D.C. was honored with the presence of a Byelorussian coach and two walkers from that new country. Tracey Briggs has the following observations on the experience.
The Byelorusslan Trip
by Tracey Briggs

The defining moment of the Byelorusslan's trip, at least for me, came when I was driving them back to Sal Corallo's after a hard workout--quality intervals on the smooth tartak at T.C. Williams followed by a swim in the spacious pool at Chinquapin next door. The coach, Boris, was looking through the video camera playing back the workout footage I'd taped, when Misha, the guy with a 1:21:20 20 Km personal best, said something that broke them all up.

Maxim's translation: "If we had all of this, we'd walk 1:29, too."

And so the cultural/athletic/friendship exchange went. PVTC brought the three of them over to visit, give clinics, and race at our National Invitational, and I'd say the trip turned out even better than we'd hoped for. Best of all, they were all genuinely nice people and very outgoing, and it was a pleasure to get to know them. Somehow, I think we'll meet again.

And, it was a healthy exchange all around. American life clearly fascinated them: They were quite taken with everything from the fresh fruits and vegetables (not available in the winter and spring in Minsk) to Sal and Marjorie's hot tub to the Houston Rockets to our battery-powered pencil sharpener.

It also made us realize how little we know about racewalking. All three of them were very generous with their time, even scheduling an extra clinic so they could work with PVTC walkers on the track. They taught us more than can be published here, but to summarize: They work hard! And, the work smart.

1. What struck me most is that they take very good care of themselves. They don't rush their warmups or cool downs, because they're in a hurry, and they do all of those form exercises and strength drills that we all know we should do but don't do because we're tired or bored or don't have time. They swim and take saunas after hard workouts, and they consider that as important as the walking. (It's interesting that Maxim, who has a high-powered job as an economist, tends to train more like we do, squeezing it in when he can--and his performances have slipped.)

2. For the same reasons, they're also very flexible. Some days, all they do is one or two hours' of stretching and strengthening exercises. When they say low weight/high repetition, they mean it--50 to 100 reps with a bar with no weights, or a half-hour of pulling on a piece of surgical tubing.

3. They're fit all around. We may consider cross-training as a supplement, but they do lots of other sports, particularly on the off season, that they consider essential. They run 25 percent of their mileage, not only for recovery, but also to boost fitness. Just about everywhere they went, people would ask how many miles per week they walked. The question boggled them, because they think of walking as only one component of their training. Plus, their mileage varies substantially during the year.

4. Hard is hard, and easy is easy. Their hard workouts are very hard, but they do them on completely fresh legs. They'll take two or three days before and after hard workouts. Their easy running mileage is so slow I could run with them and consider it easy. When they do some of their recovery walks, they don't really even racewalk; they just walk aggressively without worrying about the straightened knee.

5. They're exacting about technique. They don't keep racewalking when their form is shot; that means the workout was too hard. They'd do some other type of training rather than walk with bad technique.

6. They keep track of everything they do. They keep copious notes on their training and are methodical about using the date to fine-tune their programs.

Overall, I think we tend to have more money than time, and they have more time than money. (It isn't just the treadmills, heart monitors, and fancy weight equipment they often lack; I saw Boris timing that speed workout with the second hand of his wristwatch.) But paradoxically, they probably train more efficiently because all of their training is so controlled. Boris watches every step those guys make, and while he seemed to be somewhat of a teddy bear, it was clear that Maxim and Misha are used to seeing a much sterner side of him. I'm sure he can be a real taskmaster.

I'm not sure their overall method would work in the U.S.--certainly, a lot of Americans would balk at such regimentation. But they shared a lot of training knowledge, and I think everyone was able to take home something valuable.

The Don Quixote Convention

Recently, the Ohio Racewalker published a number of letters and commentaries dealing with racewalk rules. I do not disagree with the two racewalk rules, but have a reservation about their application in reference to neophytes and older walkers (50+).

I believe the procedure of the expulsion from the course could be modified and all competitors should be entitled to their finish time. I call my rules modification the Don Quixote Convention.

In a Don Quixote racewalk, when a competitor receives three red cards from three different judges, the competitor is not removed from the course, but is allowed to continue, finish, and get his or her time. All the competitors with x's on the DQ board also have their name listed on a Don Quixote board with the official time of their finish. They do not qualify for any awards but have the satisfaction of knowing they finished the distance and have an official time. The Don Quixote finish times are also printed in the race results columns of newsletters, following the results of all the legal walkers.

The Don Quixote convention would be especially applicable to newcomers, and old timers. For the athlete, it eliminates the disappointment of traveling a long distance and doing poorly; it allows the judges to make a call without compunction.

I'll field test this judging innovation in Albuquerque at our 15 Km North American Masters race on September 5, the Sunday of the Labor Day weekend and again at our 10 Km race in October.

Yours truly,

Gene Dix

Editor: I'm not sure what satisfaction the athlete gains, other than getting the health benefits of going the full distance. Disqualified athletes are either upset with themselves, or upset with the judges who judged them unfairly (the athlete's perception), and being able to finish the course won't change those feelings. What satisfaction is there in knowing you walked such and such a time if you also know you didn't do it legally? And, unfortunately, there are some personality types who would take advantage of this situation by constantly ignoring the rules, beating everyone in their age group at all events, and then proclaiming loudly that they have proved time and again who is best, but, because of petty jealousies,
The Marathon as Warmup

by Keith Reichley, President Lake Erie Walkers

Think of the summer Olympics and your mind pictures a pack of lean, powerful, and determined marathon runners setting out at the sound of the gun. They start together, but only a select few lead the field at the end. The winner of this grueling endurance event truly triumphs over time and distance.

A few people are aware, however, that the 50 Km racewalk event is five miles longer and, according to those who have done both, by far the superior test of endurance. "The marathon is a good warmup for the 50 K," say four-time Olympian racewalker Ron Laird. Jonathan Matthews, current national champion at 50 Km, calls it a "lot of fun."

For the rest of us racewalking plebians, the marathon distance is still a daunting stretch of road, not to be entered into lightly. Even so, many racewalkers, veterans as well as newcomers, do choose to participate with their running friends.

Ron Laird walked his first marathon in 1959 at an Atlantic City event hosted by the Road Runners Club of America. The course was out-and-back, much of it on the boardwalk. Laird, then a 21-year-old rising star in the world of racewalking, posted a 4:00:02 for this event, which went on to become the New York City Marathon. Out of 17 participants, Laird, the lone walker, came in dead last.

With that out of his system, Ron went on to capture over 60 national titles at various distances. Twice, he won the American 50 Km championship. Ron now travels to various parts of the country giving racewalking clinics and is compiling a series of posters on racewalking technique and judging. He is currently living in Ashtabula, Ohio, and just recently showed us locals how to walk 1500 meters in fine fashion at the Baldwin-Wallace Invitational track meet.

Jonathan Matthews lives in Palo Alto, California. Matthews, a 36-year-old former elite runner and past member (1985-86) of the U.S. Cycling Team, has been racewalking only 4 years. He believes that "it is difficult to compare the running marathon to the racewalking 50 Km, even though the 50 Km is just 5 miles longer. The 50 Km is more of an endurance event. With the 50 Km walkers being on their feet for nearly twice as long as a marathon runner, there is more time for things to go wrong, but also more time to work your strategy. The 50 delivers the features that make a marathon exciting, but to a heightened degree."

The first half of the 50 Km racewalk is typically done within the aerobic range of the athlete, around a 7:30 mile pace. You reporter takes Matthews' word for it that this pace would pass the "talk test." Matthews says that if one has done one's training, one would be able to talk at that pace and keep up a steady conversation with other competitors.

The talking ceases around the 20 to 25 Km mark. In the words of Carlos Mercenario, the Mexican who recently won his second World Cup 50 Km, "this is where the race begins." This was especially true for Mercenario, as the mercury rose to 100 degrees in the latter half of that morning's race. Still, he finished with an impressive time of 3:50. Many observers believe that his performance would have shattered the world record had conditions been more favorable.

With racewalking, "it is not always the fastest person nor the fittest athlete who wins," according to Matthews. "Racewalking involves mastery of a complex athletic motion." It's like trying to master a field event, like pole vaulting or the discus, but with the critical element of endurance thrown in.

Matthews enjoys striding along with marathon runners for reasons of conditioning rather than competition. He says that although his typical 3:20 marathon time "wouldn't get one into the Boston Marathon, it would put one around the serious but not incredibly gifted runners."

He consistently passes people starting around the 10 mile mark. "Some of the passed runners are complimentary, while others are not pleased to be beaten by a walker. These are determined to race you and stay ahead."

If you like the marathon and the 50 Km, you'll love this. Mike George of the Northeast Running Club sends along an electronic bulletin board item from Fer-Jan de Vries, a Dutch racewalker and runner. Fer-jan recently participated in the "De nacht van Loop op Zand", a 15-hour racewalk organized by a small village in southern Holland. One hundred twenty-five walkers started, ninety survived. The winner managed to complete 139 kilometers (86 miles) in the allotted time. Our friend Fer-jan finished 113.2 kilometers, good for 21st place.

Ron Laird says that the Dutch are known for producing world class ultradistance walkers, rather than the usual 20 and 50 Km "sprinters."

For the following weekend, Fer-jan had scheduled a 75 Km race for himself. This, no doubt, is the Dutch idea of the cool-down.

(Ed. In this country we have to settle for the occasional 100 miler. Mark your calendar for September 25 when Jack Blackbum hosts the national race at this distance in Xenia, Ohio. 100 mile and 24 hour races are quite popular in England and Holland. In France and Belgium, you will find a lot of 200 km races. In the spring, leading up to the Paris-to-Strasbourg event in June, which, depending on the exact course, is something in excess of 500 Km, and is usually won in the 62 to 63 hour range.)

LOOKING BACK

30 Years Ago (From the June 1963 Race Walker, edited by Chris McCarthy)--Chris himself won the National 50 Km in Detroit with a 4:44:55, nearly 10 minutes ahead of Ron Laird. Jack Blackbum was a distant third. Heat slowed the competitors as the temperature soared to 87 degrees F during the race. . . in the US-USSR match in Moscow, Gennady Solodov Ignored temperatures in the mid 80s to win in 1:53:48, with Vladimir Zorin second in 1:55:00. Ron Zinn and Ron Laird went 15 Km in about 1:12, but then faded badly to finish in 1:41:34 and 1:42:24. . . Jack Blackbum continued his sprint mystri over Jack Mortland, winning the Ohio 1 Mile title in 4:55.5. Blackbum also had a 39:13 for 5 miles and a 31:11 for 4 miles while Mortland was off honeymooning.

20 Years Ago (From the June 1973 ORW)--The National 3 Mile title went to John Knifton in 21:36.4, while Jerry Brown won at 15 Km in 1:12:28. Ron Laird (21:45) and Bill Ranney (21:49) trailed Knifton in the Bakersfield, Cal. heat, and Laird was also second in the 15 (1:14:22), contested in the altitude at Boulder. . . Randy Mimm won the Junior National 10 Km in 51:46. Mimm qualified to compete against the Soviet juniors and thus became the first son of an international walker (Bob, 1960 Olympics) to gain international status (in the U.S., that is). . . Ron Laird won the Zinn Memorial 10 Km in Chicago with a 46:23. The women's title went to Jeanne

10 Years Ago (From the June 1983 JRW)—At the National Outdoor Championships, Jim Heiring and Susan Liers-Westfield both won their third straight title. Susan controlled the 10 km all way to win in 36:31, but Joyce Thome was 2 seconds behind Miller at the finish. Heiring was also in control at 20 (both races were on the track), as he won in 1:26:55. Marco Evoniuk trailed by 50 seconds and Dan O'Connor took third in 1:29:38. Tim Lewis Heiring was also in full control at 20 (both races were on the track), as he won in 1:26:55.

The annual races In Naumburg, GDR went to Soviet Nikolai Polozov (1:22:37) and Ronald Weigel (3:41:31) of the host country. At the recent USATF Convention in Louisville was discussed a lot of programs and goals for the sport of racewalking in the US. A few leaders of the RW community did make a point of suggesting that we examine closely how we spend our money. With this in mind, I have imagined how the RW Community could raise a large sum of money to support racewalking in a way that would both attract and retain potential sponsors like Best Foods/Mazola. It is a lot to think about when we have to put all the stops to get it all right.

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A well-known Texas billionaire's wife decides to take up racewalking and her husband decides to make her new favorite sport a respectable sport. At the recent USATF(TAC) Convention in Louisville we discussed a lot of programs and goals for the sport of racewalking in the US. A few leaders of the RW community did make a point of suggesting that we examine closely how we spend our money. With this in mind, I have imagined how the RW Community could raise a large sum of money to support racewalking in a way that would both attract and retain potential sponsors like Best Foods/Mazola. It is a lot to think about when we have to put all the stops to get it all right.

What would I do if I was handed $100k with a mandate to develop a world class racewalking program? Firstly, I would develop a list of priorities. Mine would be:

1. Expand the talent pool of the sport
2. Make the present team as competitive as possible
3. Publicize the sport of racewalking to the masses
4. Set up a real national organization within USATF for racewalking

Why these priorities? At the present time our sport has a very small talent pool of walkers that compete at Regional and National races. The body of athletes numbers about 4200 men and women. There is a big group of running athletes out there at all ages who could be fine competitive walkers with proper coaching and training. The second part of the plan is the development of a National Intercollegiate Club Racewalking Program in the US. Track coaches in the NCAA and NAIA are overloaded with events already held in intercollegiate track and field events and also limited in the number of assistants they can have. With the lack of interest from college athletic departments, the only way to go into the pool of potential college walkers is with a new program that reaches them through the student activity system. This program will feed directly into the Intermediate Program and help that to grow. Feeding more people from the Intermediate Program to the National Team will help raise the quality level of the Intercollegiate Program and help that to grow.

The second goal of developing the present National Team requires funding for international travel. You can have a mini-camp every weekend there isn't a major race but no camp is a substitute for international experience. Competing in an international event would be the best way to develop our National Team to International level. Allocating $200K for team expenses would allow all of the members of the Senior National Racewalking Team the opportunity to compete overseas and learn how to handle all aspects of international competitions. Some of the funding can also go to camps, since there would still be some need for them. The Junior National Team should get $75K to cover their team costs and overseas opportunities since there are only a few team members and many of them have to work at dance studios along for free trips. The Junior camps would also come out of the team funding, but this would allow the team members to attend at very low cost.

The third priority is developing the present National Team and having the National Team members compete in at least two National Championship Racewalks each year in order to attract more sponsorship to the sport. This much money would go directly into this would allow us to:

1. Have a fund to subsidize the holding of National Championships at all steps or distances in the rules. This recognizes that not all walking events have a high profile event with at least as much perceived stature as the track field. We have plenty for the candidate search and recruitment of a knowledgeable coach capable of leading an International level Program.

After all of this spending that leaves a sizable sum for publicity and administration of the sport ($75K). Our sport doesn't have a really positive image in the sporting media. If we get $100K aside to handle this publicity, we would put out the story that would be noticed by every sports fan. We could even set up a system to attract more sponsorship to the sport. Much money would go directly into this. We could spend $100K on a public relations campaign in the sporting media. If we don't develop interest in racewalking in the schools and colleges, racewalking will start to go the way of shuffleboard and horse races.

Racewalking needs to bring in the younger generation in primary, middle and high schools more than it needs adult fitness walkers. We would spend $100K to develop a nationwide racewalking education program for the nation's school system to be administered by the Associations with overall guidance from the National Team members. National Team members of the program as celebrity instructors to start off programs in cities and associations. This is the first part of the plan to get racewalking growing in the US. The second part of the plan is the development of a National Intercollegiate Club Racewalking Program in the US. Track coaches in the NCAA and NAIA are overloaded with events already held in intercollegiate track and field events and also limited in the number of assistants they can have. With the lack of interest from college athletic departments, the only way to go into the pool of potential college walkers is with a new program that reaches them through the student activity system. This program will feed directly into the Intermediate Program and help that to grow. Feeding more people from the Intermediate Program to the National Team will help raise the quality level of the Intercollegiate Program and help that to grow.

Well, that's my dream for the sport. What's yours? 