Ole! Spaniards shine at World Championships

Back in April, the Spaniards had to play second fiddle to their Mexican cousins at the World Cup in Monterey, finishing a distant second to the hosts in the team race. Not so at the World Championships in Stuttgart. Finishing 1,3,4 in the 20 and 1,5 in the 50, the Spaniards would easily have won the team title, if there were one. What they did do was probably sew up two number rankings for the year. To make the highly successful week even better, they also captured a bronze medal in the women's 10 Km.

To make the highly successful week even better, they also captured a bronze medal in the women's 10 Km.

In that race, Finland's Sari Essayah, fourth in last year's Olympics and second in Monterey, moved to the fore to win in 42:59, leaving Italy's Ileana Salvador 9 seconds back. Spain's Encarnacion Granados was third in 43:21. World Cup winner Yan Wang of China was not in the top ten, nor were any other Chinese, following their 1,3,5 finish in the Olympics. At this point, I don't even know if they were competing. But with their recent strong reemergence, along with the emergence of Chinese women distance runners, their absence would be a mystery. Teresa Vaill topped the U.S. and Canadian contingent with a 46:58 in 22nd place.

In the 20, Valentín Massana, second in the World Cup to Mexico's Daniel Garcia, left no doubt in this one with an overwhelming victory. He entered the stadium more than a half-minute ahead of Garcia and Russia's Mikhail Schennikov, and they were both DQ'd as they hit the track. (Massana knows a bit about the feeling of disqualification having suffered one while in second place with less than a half-mile to go in the Barcelona Olympics.) Giovanni De Benedictis moved on to the silver medal, some 35 seconds behind Massana. Olympic gold medalist Daniel Plaza captured the bronze and Jaime Barroso completed a near Spanish sweep in fourth. Allen James had an impressive race in 17th, two places ahead of Canada's Tim Berrett, warming up for the 50 a week later.

In that 50, Spain's Jesus Angel Garcia, second in Monterey, beat Finland's Valentin Kononen for the gold in a quick 3:41:41. Two-time World Cup winner and Olympic silver medalist Carlos Mercenario could manage only eighth place in this one. He had beaten Garcia by more than 2 minutes in Monterey. Berrett, fifth in Monterey, finished 30 seconds and one place of Mercenario in this one, and has certainly proven his place among the elite 50 Km walkers of the world. For the U.S., Jonathan Matthews continued to impress with his 4:02:52 in 19th place, just over his best of 4:01:36 earlier this year.

We will hope to have more details, including split times, on the races in next month's issue. About the only detail we have at this time is that the sport has once again fallen prey to an ill-informed press. Under a headline "Controversies and Victories in the World Meet", the New York Times said: "The men's 20 kilometer walk became a farce (emphasis your editor's; certainly an ill-chosen word) when a judge disqualified six competitors in the last 400 meters for running, not walking... Massana was already in
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The stadium with a 180-meter lead when Mikhail Schennikov of Russia and Daniel Garcia of Mexico arrived, a few strides apart. The judge immediately flashed a red card at them, meaning both of them were disqualified. Walter Arena of Italy, one of the four others disqualified, was shown a red card one step before the finish line. Walkers may be disqualified for repeated infractions of the rule that requires one foot to be on the ground at all times. In other words, you are allowed to walk, but not run. Slow-motion replays during the women's walk Saturday and the men's walk today clearly showed many walkers who had both feet off the ground at the same time and were not disqualified.

Results:


Morgan captures 25 Km title

Albany, N.Y., Aug. 15 (From Steve Valtor)--In a rare mid-August USA championship race, Gary Morgan had no trouble controlling the field at the USATF 25 Km Championship. Morgan journeyed over from Clarkston, Michigan to take the win in a slowish 2:02:31.

Morgan was challenged by Will Van Axen for the first four laps of the 2500 meter loop. Approaching the 1 hour mark, the junior, looking to cover a fast 20 Km (the distance of the junior championship being contested) slipped off the pace, while Gary continued to grind on to the finish in the warm, but unseasonably hot, midday sun.

Starting more conservatively, Philip Dunn moved up to take second place in the 25. Relocated to Lake Placid now that college is behind him, Dunn's 2:07:45 was a solid effort just 2 weeks after his debut at 50 Km (at the Sports Festival--see results below).

Rounding out the medalists was 46-year-old Bob Keating, still able to mix it up with the youngsters in a respectable 2:12:40.

In the junior 20, Van Axen (who in his first attempt at the distance noted that a 20 hurts "a lot more than a 10") was passed with less than two laps go by Al Heppner, who in turn built a lead of up to 100 meters. But, with little more than 1500 meters to go, the PanAm silver medalist rallied to reel in his Parkside-teammate-to-be, who had accumulated two red cards before the gun lap. Van Axen hammered out a minute margin over Heppner in the final mile, 1:42:03 to 1:43:06.

Third was Yariv Pomeranz in 1:46:57, giving the event three good junior times in what is a somewhat out-of-season race. The first time a junior 20 was held (1990), Philip Dunn was the winner in 1:42:15.

It was a Michigan double for US championships, as the USA women's 20 Km title went to Debbie Benton of Dearborn in 1:43:15 behind Canadian record holder Micheline Deneau's unchallenged 1:52:55. Eileen Lawrence earned Masters honors in 2:07:43 in the prelude women's 10 Km, national team walker Melissa Baker led from the gun to win her first junior title in 55:37.

Keating has almost 10 minutes on over-40 challenger Brian Savlons, as he led the New England Walkers to club honors in both open and masters divisions. Reappearing on the walking scene as tops in the 55-59 (and Clydesdale) category was Dave Romansky, 1968 Olympian, whose granddaughter walked the junior 10.

A decent regional field assembled on the State University campus; the only disappointment being the sparse turnout by senior men and women at this well-run event. For the men, attendance at the championships in general continues to drop, with even local state athletes not supporting the event. On the women's side, the numbers were surprisingly small despite the few opportunities for women to race 20 Km in light of the impending addition to the World Cup. Results:


Comments on the Olympic Festival from faithful reader Jane Sweet: When I learned that the 1993 Olympic Festival would be held in San Antonio, I planned my vacation around the three days of racewalking events. The preliminary information that I received indicated the race was scheduled for 8 am on Friday, July 30; Saturday, July 31; and Sunday, August 1. When I arrived in San Antonio, I consulted the official event guide for time and place of the walking events. I could not find a listing. I called the event information number and was told racewalking would be held in Breckenridge Park.

Friday morning, I drove all around Breckenridge Park (3500 acres) looking for the course. I finally stopped and called the event information and was told there were no Olympic Festival racewalking events. They must be sponsored by another organization and they had no information on race. I mentioned that I had been told the day before about the park from the same office. I went to the park headquarters office and was directed to reservations. They had no information, but mentioned that I should call a running store. I called the race store and told me that the women's race would be at Alamo Stadium at 6:30 pm Friday, men's 20 Km at 6 am Saturday in Breckenridge Park, and men's 20 Km at 7 am Sunday in the park.

I had to buy a $12 ticket to see the women's race because it preceded the evening T&F events. The race started at 7 pm with the temperature in the 90s. In spite of the difficulty I had finding it, the race was well run. There were numerous volunteers and officials tracking laps, providing three glasses of water to each walker for each lap, and cooled towels, and two supporters for each finisher. The men's races were free. I probably was the only spectator that was not related to the walkers. The Saturday race began at 7 am.

TO be on the safe side, I asked the officials about the 20 Km. It was to be held at Alamo Stadium at 7 am. Bob Briggs's mother told me that he was asked to compete in the 50 even though he had not trained all year because they were having a hard time finding walkers. (Ed. So, racewalking is still a poor cousin--a few times removed, I suppose--and what else is new.)

ON WITH THE RESULTS

AUGUST 1993

PAGE 6

MAKE CONTACT WITH THESE RACES

Sun. Sep. 5 North American Masters 15 Km, Albuquerque, N.M., 7:15 am (L)
Mon. Sep. 6 15 Km, Washington, D.C., 9 am (HH)
Thu. Sep. 10 5 Km, Metairie, Louisiana (M)
Sat. Sep. 12 National 40 Km Senior Men, Masters Men and Women, Ft. Monmouth, N.J. (A)
Sun. Sep. 12 5 Km, Long Beach, Cal. (B)
10 Km, San Francisco (BB)
Sat. Sep. 18 National 5 Km Championships, Men and Women, Kingsport, TN(T)
5 Km, Columbia, Missouri, 5 pm (U)
5 Km, Manchester, NH (CO)
1 Hour, Warren, Michigan (Z)
Sun. Sep. 19 5 Km, New York City, 10:30 am (T)
1 Hour, Alexandria, Virginia, 9 am (HH)
Sat. Sep. 25 National 10 Km and 100 Mile, Xenia, Ohio (V)
Sun. Sep. 26 Castino Alongi Invitational, 3, 5, 10, and 20 Km, Dearborn, Michigan (E)
Portland Marathon, Portland, Oregon (OO)
Sat. Oct. 2 8 Km, Kalamazoo, Mich. (F)
10 and 20 Km, Columbia, Missouri, 7 am (U)
3 Km, Naperville, Illinois (FF)
3 Mile, Seattle, 9 am (C)
Sun. Oct. 3 National 1 Hour and 2 Hour, Cambridge, Mass. (CC)
5 Km and 12 Km, San Francisco (BB)
Sat. Oct. 9 Half Marathon, Sacramento, Cal. (C)
North Region Race Walk Championships, Illinois (FF)
Sun. Oct. 10 5 Km, Metairie, Louisiana, 8:30 am (N)
North Region Race Walk Championships, Illinois (FF)
10 Km, Albuquerque, NM (L)
Sat. Oct. 16 5 Km, Davenport, Iowa (N)
3 and 10 Mile, New Orleans, 8 am (M)
Metropolitan 30 Km, New York City, 9 am (G)
Sun. Oct. 17 1 Hour, Alexandria, Virginia, 9 am (HH)
Detroit Marathon (Z)
Sat. Oct. 23 5 Km, Picayune, Mississippi, 8:40 am (W)
Fri. Oct. 29 5 Km, Metairie, Louisiana, 7 pm (M)
Sun. Oct. 31 5, 20, and 50 Km, Columbus, Ohio (R)
National 30 Km, Atlanta, Georgia (Y)

OUTSTANDING MASTERS PERFORMANCES
(Compiled by Bev LaVeck)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dist.</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name and country</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 Km</td>
<td>20:55</td>
<td>Gary Little, New Zealand</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12/7/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Km</td>
<td>27:48</td>
<td>James Grimwade, Great Britain</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7/12/87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Km</td>
<td>40:08</td>
<td>Willi Sawall, Australia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8/28/82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Km</td>
<td>47:48</td>
<td>Carlo Bomba, Italy</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9/2/84</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Km</td>
<td>55:01</td>
<td>James Grimwade, Australia</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>9/27/87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Km</td>
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<td>Tom Dainty, Australia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4/25/81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Km</td>
<td>1:21:36</td>
<td>Willie Sawall, Australia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7/4/82</td>
</tr>
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Thoughts and comments from Ron Daniel: Eugene Nationals: It was about 10 degrees warmer each day where I was standing. This is no surprise. With the races being the qualifier for the Olympic Festival, the toughest team to make might just have been the West women’s 10 Km walk squad. Seven competitors (Standley, Armenta, March, Wilkinson, Herazo, Bustos, and Stoyanowski) from the West (about 1/3 of the field), all from California high schools and four living in the Pacific Association. The DON Quixote Convention: I understand Gene Dix’s intent with his proposal; however, a DQ’d walker in a race can severely alter the dynamics of the event. You could have the dq’d walker acting as a pacemaker for someone, a walker not in trouble with the judges pushing extra hard to catch a walker who is already dq’d and winding up with his or her own dq, etc. Offering a little slack, I’d go along with the proposal if it were restricted to nonchampionship caliber races. That is, a local race where the race director is trying to develop interest. I’d only extend the courtesy to novices one or two times maximum. Also, the dq’d walker should still remove his or her number, the other walkers should be informed of the dq, and the dq’d walkers finishing time not recorded or published. You’ve already heard the litany about racewalking being a technical sport, a definite distinction needs to be maintained. This is not necessarily bad, only if it leads to the same lack of success. For example, it’s not like you’re going to get the same type of success as in, say, pole vaulting. Once you get over the hill, you’re on your own. What you have is a group of athletes who are good at what they do. What you don’t have is a group of athletes who are just good at it. This is not to say that there isn’t any room for improvement, but simply that the sport is not as competitive as it once was. We’ve always needed more money, a superstar or two, and a self-sustaining feeder system. But one thing’s for sure, if we don’t get serious, we’re going to get further behind. 

Bonnie Stein notes in the Walking Club of Georgia’s newsletter, Walk Talk, that racewalking has made it in the New Webster’s Colletage Dictionary. They sell it as one word, no doubt accepting the precedent set by the ORW many years ago. In response to the letter from Marjorie Holmes last month regarding judging at the National Senior Sports Classic in Baton Rouge, Richard Charles in Austin, Texas writes: “Marjorie Holmes is a fine athlete whose views I value and thus wish to clarify the role of the Racewalk Judges at the National Senior Sports Classic. It is true that some entrants..., may be discouraged from continuing the sport.” Don’t blame the judging. As Marjorie knows (she’s a RW Judge) racewalking involves two rules, and three judges acting independently, must report a rule violation in order for that athlete to be DQ’d. As Chief Judge, I instructed the judges to be fair, consistent, and to judge all athletes by the same rules. But one thing’s for sure, if we don’t get serious, we’re going to get further behind. 

there is probably little chance for acceptance of racewalking as a sport. Besides, what would be the incentive for the athlete? Sure, it would be great to have the continuity of racewalking in the high schools followed by the opportunity to racewalk while in college. The potential for success is obvious. But, without the program already in place, the next best focus would be on a local level. I say make scholastic racewalking an Association effort and let the National Committee focus on the National Team. Well, I guess we’ve all fantasized on winning a big lottery! As for Paul’s strawman budget plan, it would swallow up $800K in a year. Meanwhile, if I were to dream up a fund raiser, I’d start with those millions and millions of fitness walkers, get them to donate a buck each, send them a thank you certificate for supporting the National Team, and really have some serious money to run a program. Now, how to get them to send in a buck? Clearly, if the solution to our funding problem were simple, we’d have stumbled on it by now. But, back to reality. First, we have to decide what is our goal: if we’re looking for international medals, then we don’t need tens of thousands of participants, but we need a well-focused elite athlete selection system. However, without reasonable incentives (not just prize money) and firm commitments from the athletes, no lasting progress would be achieved. It takes a unique individual to go into the sport and the carrot should be golden. And now, we’re back to those darn budget problems. Also, while I don’t ascribe to the notion that the current U.S. racewalking community doesn’t have any capable coaches, I do believe that whom ever took the job wouldn’t be successful if they weren’t given total control over the team. That would include training schedules and authority over selections for representing the U.S. at competitions. Can you imagine the team all living together for most of the year. Quite a commitment, don’t you think. National Team selection should be based on standards not just rankings, with continuous improvement a must. Provisions by the National Committee could include proper training facilities, housing, opportunities to compete internationally, and stipend payments for performing well and showing improvement. Obviously, you can’t get a full-time qualified coach on a volunteer basis (unless he just the big one and wants the job). Whoops, here we are needing money again. So, how do we get the money? Marketing...Image...Advertising. Take your pick. They’re all crucial. Maybe even more so than development. Without success here, we’ll continue at a poverty level subsistence and you can’t attract the superstars, athletes or coaches, with that. Hope this doesn’t sound like I’m dousing Paul’s dream, but the reality is that there isn’t much new. We’ve always needed more money, a superstar or two, and a self-sustaining feeder system. But one thing’s for sure, if we don’t get serious, we’re going to get further behind. 

Paul Cajka opinion paper (dreaming): It’s stimulating to read Paul’s opinions on ways to expand the sport of racewalking. If I were new to racewalking, I’d think them unique. However, the reality is that much of what he suggests has already been proposed and much tried. Nevertheless, reviewing past history is not necessarily bad, only if it leads to the same lack of success. For example, it’s not like the school and college thing hasn’t been tried. Witness the old IC4A and the present NAIA activities. Unfortunately, they are not self sustaining, no matter how well intentioned. Also, Paul should be talking to someone like Bruce MacDonald about what it takes to get racewalking into a scholastic program. Bruce labored many years with the New York State program. Yet even with many years of outstanding results, State administrators still find excuses to trash the program. Without a national priority, race walking on a large scale in the school systems just won’t fly. With many U.S. schools cutting back on physical fitness,
Looking Back

25 years ago (From the August 1968 ORW)—Larry Young was hot at the Olympic Training Camp in Lake Tahoe's altitude. He turned in a 1:16:53 for 10 miles, 1:34:42 for 20 Km, and 2:27:46 for 30 Km in separate races. Don DeNoon gave him a close race in the 20 and also did 21:50.5 for 5 Km, beating Tom Dooley by 1.5 seconds. The National 40 Km in Long Branch, NJ featured Dave Romansky in 3:30:34, with Goetz Klopfier less than 3 minutes back. The New York AC won the team title with Ron Daniel and Ron Kulik, and also did 21:50.5 for 5 Km, beating Tom Dooley by 1.5 seconds.

20 Years Ago (From the August 1973 ORW)—The feature story was on the possibility of walking being removed from the Olympics. As it turned out, we did not lose the 50 Km in Montreal in 1976, but it was back again for Moscow in 1980. A lot of hard work by a lot of people over several years prevented something worse happening. Randy Mimm and Mitch Patton were walkers on the first U.S. Junior & Field team to tour in Europe. They had 10 Km races in West Germany, Poland, and the USSR, both turning in the best times in the final meet—49:47 for Patton and 49:52 for Mimm. In Long Branch, John Knifton overcame Ron Laird to win the 40 Km title in a course record of 2:29:45. Ron had 3:31:14. Gary Westerfield and Todd Scully were way back in third and fourth. Shaul Ladany won both the 20 and 50 in the Maccabiah Games in Israel in 1:30:54 and 4:23:31.

15 Years Ago (From the August 1978 ORW)—We were still in Long Branch for the 40, and this time Dan O’Connor prevailed in 3:31:25. Carl Schueller was 8.1/2 minutes back, beating Ron Daniel and Bob Kitchen. England’s Ollie Flynn won the Empire Games 30 Km in Edmonton in 2:22:04. Australians Will Sawall and Tim Erickson were second and third. Jim Heiring, having concentrated on shorter races to this time, moved up to 30 Km with some success, winning the National in 2:30:53. Augie Hirt and John Knifton followed, well behind. Otto Bartsch and Anatoly Solomin won the Soviet titles at 50 and 20 Km, respectively in times of 3:56:36 and 1:23:30—then the second fastest road 20 ever.

10 Years Ago (From the August 1993 ORW)—In the first ever World Championship T&F Meet in Helsinki, Mexico’s Ernesto Canto won the 20 Km walk in 1:20:49. He got away from Josef Pribilnek, Czechoslovakia, in the last 2 km to win by 10 seconds. The Soviet Union’s Yevgeniy Yevsyukov beat Spain’s Jose Marin for the third medal. Canadian Guillaume Leblanc was eighth, with Jim Heiring leading the U.S. contingent with 1:25:49 in 19th. Five days later East Germany’s Ronald Weigel won the 50 in 3:43:08, as Min came back to capture the silver in this one (3:46:42). Sergei Junh, USSR, was third in 3:49:03. Marco Evonuk also walked the 20 but dropped in 13th place when he was told he had another long to complete the did not near the end, the first U.S. 50 km finisher in a brilliant 3:56:57. That gave him eighth place. Teresa Vaill won the 5 Km at an International Racewalking Festival on Long Island in 25:10.7. The 10 Km was won by Susan Liers-Westerfield in 52:09. And one of our own racewalking mentors that we repeated then and repeat again now, goes:

Before going out for a stroll.
Heed this advice rather droll,
Put some grease where its needed,
Let this not go unheeded,
Lest your skin pay a terrible toll.

Question: You are timing a 20 Km. Race Walk held entirely or partly on a road course and using a Selko timer. You stop the digital timer and get a time of 1:25:39.09.

How do you record the time?

A) 1:25:37.09
B) 1:25:38
C) 1:25:39

Answer: The correct answer is "C." If you missed it, you are not up on the major new rule change affecting our sport and you better read on!

How to Report Official Walking Times

by Jim Hanley

Sometimes, timers incorrectly report race times and some one has to correct the official results. There is a standard way to write down the official race times as per the IAAF and USA Track & Field rule books, but people sometimes get confused by the wording in the rule books. It is really very easy for the timers to do everything right in the first place, if one can remember a few simple concepts.

1) A decimal point (".") is only used to show part of a second. (1/10 or 1/100 of a second). Colons (":") are always used between hours, minutes and seconds.
All hand-timed races—including race walks—on a track are to be timed to the nearest 1/10 second. Thus, a typical 5,000 meter walk on a track might have a time like 23:10.2. A 20 km. walk held entirely on a track and hand timed would look like 1:35:23.2.

For fully automatic timing on the track, the time is taken and reported to the nearest 1/100 second. For example, 23:10.23 for a 5 km. track walk.

"Fully Automatic Timing" (FAT) equipment is both started and stopped automatically. Examples are the Accutrak and Swiss Timing systems used in the Olympic Games. A timing device which is started automatically but is stopped by hand is illegal for any timing.

Our Southern California Association only uses fully automatic timing for race walks in major meets such as the Mt. SAC Relays, Olympic Trials, etc. Remember, never report hand times to 1/100 second because results to 1/100 second show that fully automatic timing was used.

Modern digital stop watches (including the Seiko and Chronomix) are NOT fully automatic timers so their times must be reported in 1/10 seconds despite the fact that their readouts may be in 1/100 seconds. You must round up. (Under the new rule change the Seiko can be used to time track events or road races, but the old Chronomix cc707 printing timer is now only allowed for road races because it only prints out to 1/10 second.)

Always give the athlete the "un-benefit of the doubt" when rounding up. TAC Rule 37 states that all times not ending in zero shall be rounded up. Thus a 5 km track walk hand timed in 25:52.31 would be rounded up and reported as 25:52.4. You must round up the 1/10 second time to the next higher 1/10.

(Though this rounding up rule seems unfair, it exists so the new rule is consistent with the old mechanical stop watch procedures which called for rounding up in all cases where the watch hand did not fall exactly on the 1/10 mark.)

All road races (including those starting and/or finishing on a track) are timed to the nearest whole second. The Olympic 20 km. walk record is in the book as 1:19:57. It may have been hand timed as 1:19:56.2 or automatically timed as 1:19:56.4, but you round it up to 1:19:57.

In a major new rule change, USA Track & Field now requires that manually operated digital timers (i.e. Seiko and most other modern stopwatches) have at least one more digit than will be recorded. All additional digits after that are to be ignored. Thus, a marathon or road walk time of 2:09:44.08 shall be read as 2:09:44.0 and recorded as 2:09:44. Basically, this change will only affect current procedures when the race is partly or entirely on the road and the one-hundreds are between .01 and .09!