China, Mexico take World Cup team titles; Chinese sweep individual races

Beijing, China, April 29-30—Enjoying the "home court" advantage, Chinese racewalkers performed spectacularly in the World Cup event, held over two days. The Chinese women were completely dominant in the 10 Km event, finishing 1, 3, 4, 12, and 15 to easily take the team title, 16 points ahead of Italy. This came as no big surprise. It was their third team title (the other two were in 1983 and 1985), as they moved up one spot from 1993. (The event is held every two years.)

Much more of a surprise were the Chinese men who won both individual titles—20 and 50 Km, took four of the first 10 spots in the 20, and finished third in the team standings. Mexico, with strong team efforts in both events, won the men's title. It was their fourth team victory, as they defended their 1993 title. They had also won in 1977 and 1979. This ties them with the USSR for second in total titles, behind the five of the German Democratic Republic. Neither of the other two figure to be winning any future titles.

China's men had never performed well internationally before. They were 18th as a team in 1993. However, they have been turning in a slew of fast 20 Km times in domestic races over the past 2 years and certainly showed their mettle in this race.

There were no breakthroughs for the U.S. team, but some solid performances that brought the women into 14th place and the men to 13th. (Compared to 10th and 11th in 1993.)

China's Hongmiao Gao walked away from everyone over the second half of the race to win the 10 Km in 42:19, 13 seconds ahead of Russia's Elena Nikolaeva. At the midway mark, Nikolaeva and Italy's Elisabetta Perrone led in 21:13, with Gao, Russia's Irina Stankina and Australia's Kerry Saxby-Junna just a second back. There were four others within 5 seconds of the lead, but then a gap of another 12 seconds back to the next three. The field was straggling out behind those three, as the pack broke up early.

The Russians led the Chinese in the team standings at the halfway point with Elena Archiniseva in sixth. But both Stankina and Archiniseva were disqualified, and the Russians dropped to third behind Italy. The biggest surprise in the race was Sari Essayah of Finland. Ranked first in the world the past 2 years, runnerup in the 1993 Cup, and winner of the World Championship that same year, she was nearly 50 seconds behind at 5 kms and struggled in for 13th place.

For the U.S. Michelle Rohl, who suffered from dehydration as at the Pan-Am Games, pulled out a 45:55 for 34th place and Victoria Herazo did 46:25 in 42nd.
massana, runner-up 2 years ago, dropped out early in the race. Olympic gold medalist, taking just 19:57 for the last 5 km. Yevgeniy Misyulya of Belarus moved from 11th place at 15 km, walked his fastest 5 km split of the race (19:40) and left Segura way back in third. In 19:32, the Chinese athlete strode smoothly to a 1:19:44 win. Schennikov also had 31 seconds on the field. Increasing his pace, he continued to open his lead slightly and by 35 km was right with Zhao. Kononen and Rodriguez were now nearly a minute back. That left them with just one finisher and dead last as a team. Russia's Valeriy Spitsyn came from 1:30 behind Rodriguez over the last 5 to take fourth and Victor Ginko of Belarus moved up five places in the final 10 km to take sixth. Mercenario never challenged and finished eighth. But, with Sanchez in 11th, the Mexicans led the team race, ahead of Russia and Spain. With a solid third in the 20 Km points, they wound up a walkaway winner of the team title. China had no one to support Zhao in this race and were passed by Italy for second in the team battle. France, with solid performances in both races, was a surprising fourth, and Belarus beat Russia for the fifth spot, no doubt a very satisfying accomplishment for them.

The U.S team was led by those two veterans of uncountable World Cup ventures, Car Schueler and Marco Evoniuk, who both came back strongly this year. Carl was 42nd in 4:06:45, at age 39, and Marco, two years younger, 47th in 4:11:31. Evoniuk went through 25 km in 2:00:19, 72 seconds ahead of Carl, but couldn't sustain the effort as well as Carl. Andrez Chylinski in 52nd with 4:14:14 was within 2 minutes of his Pan Am Games time and three minutes faster than in the 1993 Cup, when he finished 38th. Eugene Kitts, by far the oldest competitor at 47, tore through 20 km in 1:39:28, but payed the price as he did 2:09 for the last 20 and finished 80th in 4:45:04. Jonathan Matthews, hoping for much better things, had a groin injury and had to pull out after a labored 26:20 for the first 5 km. Canada's Tim Berrett, fifth in 1993, was pulled by the judges after 15 km, which passed in 1:07:49 in sixth place.

The results:


OTHER RESULTS


Other Women's Results:


Other Women's Results:


Men's 20 Km, Women's 10 Km, Kenosha, Wis., 6 pm (S)

Sun. June 4
5 Km, Indianapolis (DD)

Weinacker Cup 5 and 10 Km, Windsor, Ont. (W)

1500 and 3000 meters, Houston (N)

Sr. Olympics 5 Km, and 1500 meter, Sacramento (R)

Mon. June 5
5 Km, Denver (H)

Sat. June 10
Georgia Masters 5 Km, Atlanta (D)

5 Km, Battle Creek, Mich. (W)

5 Km, Chicago (Call Al Fisher 312-525-54492)

Pacific Masters 5 Km, Los Gatos, Cal. (G)

Mon. June 12
5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:30 pm (A) (And every Monday evening through August 28)

June 15-17
USATF National Men's20, Women's 10 Km, Sacramento, Cal. (Y)

Sun. June 17
5 Km, Hebron, Ind., 7:45 am (CC)

New Jersey Master's 3 KM, Tinton Falls (A)

New England 5 Km, Worcester, Mass. (I)

10 Km, Evansville, Indiana, 8 am (K)

5 Km, Kalamazoo, Mich. (N)

Sun. June 18
5 and 10 Km, Pasadena, Cal., 5:30 pm (B)

Colorado State Games 5 Km, Denver (H)

3, 5, and 10 Km, Dearborn, Mich. (E)

5 Km, Pasadena, Cal. (B)

Sat. June 24
5 Km, Eugene, Oregon (X)

5 Km, Indianapolis (V)

USATF National Jr. Men's 10, Women's 5 Km, Walnut, CA (EE)

Sun. June 25
10 Km, Loveland, Col. (H)

20 KM, New York City (F)

5 Km, Marin, Cal., 8 am (P)

Northwest Masters 5 Km, Gresham, Ore. (X)

 Fri. June 30
5 Km, Greenwood, Ind. (V)

10 Km, Buffalo, N.Y. (T)

Sat. July 2
5 Km, Evergreen, Col. (H)

Pegasus Races, Warren, Mich. (W)

July 5 to 9
USATF Masters 5, 10, and 20 Km, East Lansing Michigan (L)

Sun. July 16
3, 5, and 10 Km, Dearborn, Mich. (E)

July 28-30
U.S. Olympic Festival 10 and 20 Km (By invitation)

Sat. July 29
5 Km, Colorado Springs (H)

5 Km, Indianapolis (V)

Sun. July 30
3, 5, and 10 Km, Dearborn, Mich. (E)

Contacts
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The schedule for the walks at the U.S. Outdoor T&F Championships is: Women's 10 Km, 9 am, Saturday, June 17; Men's 20 Km, 8 am, Sunday, June 15. At the World T&F Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden, mark these dates: Men's 20 Km, 2 pm, Sunday, Aug. 6; Women's 10 Km, 5:25 pm, Monday, Aug. 7; Men's 50 Km, 3:45 pm, Thursday, August 10. From the Florida Athletic Club: '5 Km Racewalking Team Challenge: Attention all walking clubs. The FAC still believes that we have the best masters racewalking team in the country. What happened last year was just an aberration in terms of our club's performance. So, the only way to prove that we're the best is to have the Second Annual 5 Km Team Challenge.' This is a postal event; that is, you conduct your own event and submit the results for comparison. You need at least 10 team members, regardless of age or sex, with scoring done by age-grading tables. For all the rules and details, contact Bob Fine, 3250 Lakeview Blvd., Delray Beach, FL 33445, Phone 407-499-3370, FAX 407-495-5054. In a flyer for a new book, Jim Hanley sites several examples of laps being miscounted in major championship races. Although he doesn't include any racewalk events in the list, he could have listed the 1969 National 10 Km in Maryland, which ended in total confusion since none of the officials knew how far anyone other than winner Ray Somers had gone. Fortunately, the athletes all knew and were able to straighten out the places. Anyway, Jim suggests that if you have had similar experiences, you know how disconcerting it can be. To help avoid such situations in the future, he has written a book, Lap Counting. In the book, he teaches a simple and foolproof way to count laps of all competitors. "The easy-to-learn system allows officials to check themselves while a race is in progress to be sure that they do not make a lap-counting error. Communication between all the athletes and other officials is possible, and verifiable evidence is recorded to show all interested parties that the record of laps completed is correct" Jim is the nation's foremost authority on lap counting. The book explains his lap-counting system, which was used in the 1984 Olympic Games and 1991 Racewalking World Cup. In those events, packs of 20 to 30 athletes were quickly lapping packs of 10 to 12 athletes at a time, some for the fourth or fifth time! No problem. Even an officials' nightmare like that is easy to handle with this system. For more information, or to order ($14.95 plus $2.00 S&H) contact: Lap Counting, P.O. Box 6744, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359. The Senior Games in Solano County California on May 4 included racewalks of 50, 100, 200, and 400 meters--undjudged!... Ian Whatley reports that they had some duplication problems on the Ian and Dave tapes, which will delay the release of additional volumes. He asks that anyone who has received a tape that cuts off before the conclusion simply return it for a correct copy. For those interested in the ability that accompanied the U.S. walkers to Beijing: Bruce Douglas was Chief of Mission, Dr. Howard Palamarchuk Team Leader, Mark Fenton Men's Coach, Gwen Robertson women's coach, and Dr. Bruce Zappia trainer. A note on lifting, from master's walker Bill Tallmadge: "When I was taught racewalking by an All-American college walker, I remember him saying that a walker with the correct style could move through a tunnel with only a quarter-inch to spare and never bump his head. I also recall that the overall male winner at Turku, Finland in 1991, the Russian, Semenov, had such a smooth style that he could have done the tunnel with only an eighth of an inch to spare. Lifting while walking without bobbing up and down is impossible. On the other hand, the inch to an inch-and-a-half bob gives the illegal walker away without even looking at the feet. If there is a real desire to eliminate lifting that is presently invisible to judges, I would recommend walking clinics for judges at which a very fast walker would demonstrate both legal and illegal walking where the illegal walking is invisible to the eye. The difference between the two can be determined by the bobbing on one and the lack of bobbing on the other. If there is any doubt, a video will confirm the difference. When judges start checking the head instead of the feet, invisible lifting will begin to disappear. Semenov proved that speed need not be compromised by eliminating the invisible flight phase. (Ed. This theory of judging was widely espoused 30 years or more ago, but I believe was debunked by some biomechanics experts. Regardless of the validity, it is really easier to detect a bob of an inch or so, short of having each walker go through his or her own see-through tunnel of the correct height, than to detect loss of contact. And, if the judge is concentrating on the head, what about bent knees? Well, I'll leave it to others to comment more astutely.)... Dave McGovern will present a 5-day training camp at the University of Maine in Orono from August 16-20 in conjunction with the National Junior Camp. Cost is $495. Contact Dave at 601 Broad St, LaGrange, GA 30248 for more information.

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The information in this article, first published in Southern California Racewalking News, came from Joe Rogers, USATF Chair of Atlanta, and Rob Cole, men's national team
More on plyometrics

by Ian Whatley

It was pleasing to see Roger Burrows' insightful response to my article on Plyometrics. I'd like to encourage others to join this discussion on how to train most effectively for racewalking.

A plyometric contraction occurs when a muscle is first stretched rapidly and then shortened to accelerate the body or a limb segment. An example of this is a vertical jump with a prior crouching motion to store elastic energy in the thigh muscles. Vertical jump performance can be further improved as much as 20 percent if the crouching motion occurs as part of a drop jump. Several studies agree that drop-jump training increases the height of jumps preceded by a counter movement but has no important effect on jumps from a static crouch.

Kraemer and Newton summarize that plyometric drop-jump training "... does not effectively increase fundamental muscular power." (Sports Science Exchange, Vol. 7, No. 6, 1994.) So, do I agree with Roger on the need for "Plyometric training" in a racewalker's program? Yes and no! I don't see a need for exercises that involve rapid stretching prior to contraction of any muscle groups (the exact definition of plyometric training), but I do agree that such things as speed drills and dynamic weight work may be of benefit. The apparent disagreement between Roger and myself arise from our slightly different uses of the word "plyometrics".

In an effort to keep a debate focussed on training, here is the Kenyan men's world cross country championship preparation schedule. The speeds and distances are converted from running to racewalking. Their 3-week training camp is at about 6300 feet altitude. I don't advocate this as a training routine, but some sessions might add spice to a repetitive schedule.

Sunday: Ten miles starting at 12 minute miles and gradually accelerating to 7 minute mile pace for the final couple of miles.

All other days:

6 am--45 minutes gradually accelerating from 12 to 8 minutes per mile. Followed by 20 to 30 minutes stretching.

10 am--Hard workout. Typical example sessions:

- 7 Km of fartoek on hilly terrain. Two minutes hard (moving up from 8 to 6 minutes per mile pace through the session) with either 2 minutes or 3 minute rest between fast sections.
- Intervals of 100 to 700 meters. This is a VO2 Max workout done at close to full speed. The rest is the time taken to return to the start point and the session continues until the athlete cannot continue.
- 2 miles easy followed by 20 X 300 meters in 65 to 68 seconds or 10 X 600 meters in about 2:20 with 400 meters easy recovery walk between fast reps. 1 mile warm down at about 8 min/mile pace.
- Easy warm-up walk followed by two 3 Km reps at 5 mile race pace with 3 minutes rest between reps.
- 10 Km at 7:30/mile followed by 20 X 150 meters at 27 to 30 seconds and an easy 2 mile warm down.
• Some of the sessions cannot be translated usefully into racewalking units, such as 25 X 200 meter runs up a 40 degree hill.

4 pm-5 to 7 miles starting slowly and accelerating close to race pace for the final mile.

Using the same approach, a walking equivalent of Arthur Lydiard's base training maxim would read "Racewalkers must complete 10 weeks of 75 plus miles a week base training before they embark on hill or interval work."

LOOKING BACK

30 Years Ago (From the May 1965 ORW)--In only its third month of publication, the ORW still covered the local scene primarily, including a lot of news about the editor (the same then as today) and the publisher (Jack Blackburn--publisher emeritus for the past 27 years or so). One week, Blackburn beat Mortland in a 2 miler 14:05 to 14:08, the next week it was Mortland better than 2 minutes ahead in 1:17:36 10 miler. Finally, Mortland overcame heat and humidity, or at least, we boastfully reported--and Blackburn to take a 10 Km race in 47:51. Blackburn had 49:19. In the hinterlands, Ron Daniel won the Asbury Park 10 miler in 1:20:04, 10 seconds ahead of Art Mark. Henry Laskau, in a rare appearance 10 years after retirement with many, many national titles, walked a very creditable 1:22:04 in fifth. In yet another 10 miler, Paul Nihill took the British title in 1:14:55, with Ron Wallwork less than a half-minute behind.

25 Years Ago (From the May 1970 ORW)--Dave Romansky won the National 35 Km in Des Moines in 3:13:14 on a 12-lap course that included one hill that had no place in walking race since it was impossible to actually racewalk up it. A close and steadily closing second was Australian Bob Steadman, then living in Winnipeg, in 3:14:19. Bob later took residences in Colorado and Texas before returning to Australia 5 or 6 years ago. Fortunately, he still honors us with copies of letters from his Mongolian friend, T.S. Gombojab, as witness last month’s issue. . .Romansky also won the National 15 Km in Nutley, N.J. in 1:14:14 plus on a very hot day. Ron Kulik, hosting the race, beat Steve Hayden for second. . .The ORW Postal 20 Km went to Ron Laird in 1:33:35 with Tom Dooley just 21 seconds back. . .Romansky blitzed the course record in the Zinn Memorial 10 Mile in Asbury Park, N.J. with 1:10:54. Ron Daniel was 4 1/2 minutes back. . .In separate 20 Km races, West Germany’s Wilf Wesch had 1:29:02 and Soviet Gennadiy Agapov a 1:29:19.

15 Years Ago (From the May 1980 ORW)--Carl Schueler won the 50 Km Olympic Trail and, in the process, became the first U.S. walker under the 4 hour mark. Schueler caught Marco Evoniuk on the last of 20 laps, and finished in 3:59:33. Evoniuk’s 4:00:30 was also under Larry Young’s previous U.S. best of 4:00:45. Dan O’Connor passed Jim Heiring just after 40 Km and went on to take the third spot in 4:11:03. Jim finished in 4:12:37. A week earlier, Canada’s Marcel Jobin had become the first North American under 4 hours, winning the Canadian title in 3:54:50. Jobin also came first in the U.S. 10 Km title race in 41:47.3, nearly a minute ahead of Chris Hansen. O’Connor and Steve Pecinovsky were next. Jobin repeated in the Zinn Memorial 10 Km the next day with a 42:01 ahead of Ray Sharp’s 42:49. Sue Brodock won the U.S. 20 Km title in 1:48:22, with Vicki Jones second and Lori Maynard third. . .The men’s 20 Km was held in Seattle with O’Connor beating a relatively weak field in an excellent 1:26:26. John VanDenBrandt, Torry Lingbloom, and Al Halbur followed.

5 Years Ago (From the May 1990 ORW)--National 5 Km races were held in Bethany, Oklahoma with Tim Lewis (21:06) and Teresa Vaill (22:45) winning. Dave McGovern and Ian Whatley were second and third in the men’s race. Victoria Herazo and Susan Liers got the silver and bronze in the women’s race.

Above: Michelle Rohl (cap) leads the U.S. in the World Cup 10 Km in Beijing.
Below: Andrew Hermann and Rob Cole move through the 20 Km in Beijing. (Photos by Howard Palmarchuk)