U.S. Team Second at Pan Am Cup

Manaus, Brazil, Sept. 21-22—Think Atlanta conditions were tough on the walkers at the Olympic Trials and the Olympics themselves? Well, this Amazon city was even worse for this year's edition of the Pan American Racewalking Cup. As a result, the times were slow, but the performances of the U.S. athletes were superb, as they succumbed only to the always strong Mexicans, who has won the Cup seven straight times. Both U.S. men and women finished second in team standings and the U.S. was second overall. The women barely lost to the Mexicans, as the U.S. took second, third, and seventh, compared to one, four, five for Mexico.

The 20 km started at 7:30 Saturday morning, with the temperature at 92 F and humidity at 80 percent. Mexico's Daniel Garcia was an easy winner in a rather pedestrian, for him, 1:27:29. Guatemala's Julio Rene Martinez Sican upset Mexico's Miguel Rodriguez for the silver medal. For the U.S., Allen James was sixth, Robert Cole tenth, Gary Morgan eleventh, and Tim Seaman thirteenth. Curt Clausen was disqualified.

Identical temperature and humidity conditions prevailed at 5 that afternoon when the women took off for a 10 km spin. Graciela Mendoza was able to shake a determined Michelle Rohl to win in 48:24, but on the positive side, Debbie Van Orden held off Rosario Sanchez for third. It was reported as the first time in more than two decades that the U.S. has had two walkers on the victory stand at a major multi-national event. I haven't checked that fact out, but have no reason to doubt it. Only these first four were able to get under 50 minutes in the conditions. Other U.S. walkers were Sara Standley in seventh, Dann Yarbrough in eleventh, and Victoria Herazo, who was DQ'd.

Despite a 5:30 am start on Sunday for the 50 km, the temperature had risen to 95 before the race finished, with the relative humidity still reported at 80 percent. Mexico swept the medals, with German Sanchez winning in 4:12:43. Andrzej Chylinski was the first U.S. finisher in fifth with 4:33:31. Marco Evoniuk was eighth, Ian Whatley eleventh, and Dave Marchese twelfth. Herm Nelson did not finish.

Results:

**Men's 20 Km**
1. Daniel Garcia, Mexico 1:27:29
2. Julio Rene Martinez Sican, Guatemala 1:28:47
3. Miguel Rodriguez, Mex. 1:29:06
4. Hector Moreno, Colombia 1:29:38
5. Ignacio Zamudio, Mex. 1:32:29
6. Allen James, U.S. 1:34:46
7. Querubin Moreno, Col. 1:36:06
8. Arturo Huerta, Canada 1:36:09
9. Luis Fernando Garcia Boch, Guat. 1:37:36
12. Wilson Vargas, Col. 1:39:30
15. Wellington Luis Silva da Souza, Brazil 1:47:18
Curt Clausen, U.S. DQ'd (27 starters)

**Women's 10 Km**
1. Graciela Mendoza, Mex. 48:24
2. Michelle Rohl, U.S. 49:10
3. Debbie Van Orden, U.S. 49:43
4. Rosario Sanchez, Mex. 49:59
5. Francisca Martinez, Mex. 6. Tina
Herazo Captures 1 Hour

Cambridge, Mass., Oct. 13—Opening with a 1:38 on the first 400-meter lap of the M.I.T. track, Victoria Herazo was never headed as she chalked up another National 1 Hour title. Herazo covered 12,219 meters in the hour to beat runner-up Joanne Dow by nearly 200 meters. Kaisa Ajaye, Lynda DeWitt, and Jeanette Smith also went past 10 Km, with Smith capturing the Master's title. Herazo was well off her meet record of 12,771 meters set in 1991 and even further.

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Also competed: Brazil, Bolivia, Puerto Rico, and Argentina.


Victor Jansson, Sweden 1:33:26, Jacob Sorenson, Denmark 1:33:35.


Swedish November 17: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

Southern November 16: 1 O Mile, Clarksville, TN. 8 am (T)

Sun. Nov. 17: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

Northeast 10 Km Championship, West Concord, MA. 12 noon (G)

Sat. Nov. 18: 10 Mile Handicap, New York City. 9 am (F)

Sun. Nov. 19: 10 Km and Florida State 20 Km (Q)

Eaton, Manitoba, Canada. 9:00 am (D)

Sun. Nov. 20: 10 Km and Florida State 20 Km (Q)

Northeast 10 Km Championship, West Concord, MA. 9:00 am (G)

Sat. Nov. 21: 10 Mile Handicap, New York City. 9 am (F)

Sun. Nov. 22: 10 Km, Kansas (I)

Fri. Nov. 23: 5 Km, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 10 am (A)

Louisiana State 25 and 10 Km, Abita Springs, 8 am (X)

Sun. Nov. 24: 5 Km, Colorado Springs, CO. 9 am (F)

Thu. Nov. 28: 5 Km, New York City. 9 am (F)

Marathon and Half-Marathon, Atlanta, GA. 9 am (D)

Sat. Nov. 30: 5 Km, Aurora, CO. 9:05 am (H)

Sun. Dec. 1: 5 Km, Lake Worth, FL. 9 am (Q)

Sun. Dec. 2: 2 Mile, New Orleans, 4 pm (X)

Sat. Dec. 7: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

Sun. Dec. 8: 5 Km, San Francisco, 8 am (P)

To Satisfy That Competitive Urge

Sat. Nov. 9: 5 and 10 Km, Miami, FL. 7:30 am (Q)

5 Km, Seattle, WA. 9 am (C)

5 Km, Fullerton, CA. 8 am (B)

5 Km, Denver, CO. 10 am (H)

Sun. Nov. 10: 10 Km and Florida State 20 Km (Q)

Northeast 10 Km Championship, West Concord, MA. 12 noon (G)

10 Mile Handicap, New York City. 9 am (F)

1 Hour, Kentfield, CA. 9 am (P)

10 Km, Kansas (I)

Sat. Nov. 16: 10 Mile, Clarksville, TN. 8 am (T)

5 Km, Denver, CO. 8 am (H)

Sun. Nov. 17: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

5 Km, Terrytown, LA. 8:30 am (X)

10 Km, Cleveland, OH (I)

Sat. Nov. 23: 5 Km, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 10 am (A)

Louisiana State 25 and 10 Km, Abita Springs, 8 am (X)

5 Km, Colorado Springs, CO. 9 am (F)

Sun. Nov. 24: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

5 Km, New York City. 9 am (F)

Thu. Nov. 28: 4 Mile, Denver, CO. 10 am (H)

Marathon and Half-Marathon, Atlanta, GA. 9 am (D)

5 Km, Parkville, MO. 9 am (I)

5 Km, Andover, MA. 9 am (G)

Sat. Nov. 30: 5 Km, Aurora, CO. 9:05 am (H)

Sun. Dec. 1: 5 and 10 Km, San Francisco, 8:30 am (P)

5 Km, Point Pleasant, NJ. 9 am (A)

5 Km, New York City. 9 am (F)

5 and 10 Km, Coconut Grove, FL. 8 am (P)

Sun. Dec. 2: 2 Mile, New Orleans, 4 pm (X)

Half Marathon, Baker, NE. 8 am (P)

Sun. Dec. 8: 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, NJ. 10 am (A)

5 Km, San Francisco, 8 am (P)

North American Race Series, 1996

OCTOBER 1996

FROM HEEL TO TOE

Judith Clymer-Hoffinan, a New Mexico artist and racewalker, hand cuts distinctive walker and runner Christmas tree ornaments in polished copper. She also suggests other possible uses, including suncatcher, bookmark, napkin ring, and wind chime addition. The ornaments are $6.00 each, or $8.00 with a cactus plant as part of the figure. She suggests the possibility of selling them as a club fund raiser. Contact Southwest Artho. P.O. Box 6312, Albuquerque, NM 87197, or call

Contacts

A - Elbert Denman, 28 N. Locust, West Long Branch, NJ 07764
B - Elaine Ward, 1000 San Pasqual Rd. 335, Pasadena, CA 91106
C - Bev LeVeque, 6633 N.E. Windermere Road, Seattle, WA 98115
D - Walking Club of Georgia, P.O. Box 645, Stone Mountain, GA 30086
E - Dave Gwyn, 6502 South Briar Bayou, Houston, TX 77072
F - Park Racewalkers, 320 East 83rd St., Box 18, New York, NY 10028
G - Justin Kuo, 39 Oakland Road, Brookline, MA 02146
H - Bob Carlson, 2261 Glencoe St., Denver, CO 80207
I - Heartland Racewalkers, 3645 Somerset Drive, Prairie Village, KS 66208
J - Potomac Valley Walkers, 2305 S. Buchanan St., Arlington, VA 22206
M - Vincent Peters, 607 Omar Circle, Yellow Springs, OH 45387
N - Kalamazoo Valley Walkers, P.O. Box 19414, Kalamazoo, MI 49009
O - Frank Soby, 3907 Bishop Street, Detroit, MI 48224
P - Jack Bray, Marin Racewalkers, P.O. Box 21, Kentfield, CA 95758
Q - Florida Athletic Club, 3250 Lakeview Blvd, Delray Beach, FL 33445
R - Meg Savilonis, 11 Gay Road, Brookfield, MA 01506
S - Virginia Mullaney, 11975 Gist Road, Bridgetown, MO 63044
T - Elizabeth Main, 130 Springmont Circle, Guilderland, NY 12203
V - Pat Walker, 3537 S. State Rd 135, Greenwood, IN 46143
W - New Mexico Racewalker, P.O. Box 6301, Albuquerque, NM 87197
X - New Orleans TC, P.O. Box 52003, New Orleans, LA 70124
Y - Jim Bean, 4658 Fuhrer Street, Salem, OR 97305
Z - Ross Barranco, 3235 Musson Road, Howell, MI 48843

FROM HEEL TO TOE

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Judith at 505-344-6572 for further information... Henry Laskau was again on this year's ballot for the T&F Hall of Fame, but again fell short in the voting. He did get my vote, for whatever that was worth. So Ron Laird remains as our only member. Still little respect for the sport of racewalking... And, speaking of that respect, or lack thereof, here is a column that appeared in the Cincinnati Post during this summer's Olympic: "Yelena Nikolayeva, a student from Russia, walked 6 miles in the early morning light Monday. Monday morning was beautiful in Georgia, and walking at that hour is good for the soul. Ms. Nikolayeva walked briskly, with purpose, not unlike Bloomingdale shoppers. When her walk was over, she felt quite refreshed. They also gave her a gold medal. 'What a wonderful morning it was!' she exclaimed with a Russian exclamation point stumped to the end. 'There was no famous Atlanta heat at all.' This has to be the best sport at these Olympic Games. The 10 km walk. That's not an Olympic sport. That's what Grandma does when she wants fresh bread. These Games are filled with plenty of bizarre sport, of course, but at least they fit into one of the four great Olympic categories. 1. Show-off sports. These are sports where before performing the person is essentially saying 'Hey, look at me!' Includes gymnastics, diving, shooting, archery, jumping, weightlifting, and being Bela Karolyi. 2. Things you do for fun while on vacation. Includes badminton, tennis, table tennis, swimming, running round, all the volleyballs, all the water sports like canoeing, and, of course, starting a campfire. 3. Sports where all you really want to do is pummel your opponent. Includes all wrestling, judo, Dream Team, boxing, politics, watching Jim Lampley on NBC, and water polo. 4. Sports with some sort of ball. This does not fit into any of those. There's no categorizing this sport. They walk. That's the whole sport. They walk fast. It looks like people trying to beat traffic indoors. Here we are at the Olympic Games, a place to celebrate the human spirit, a place where you are supposed to see extraordinary things. There runners, jumping over hurdles and throwing spheres, there are gymnasts doing all sorts of amazing feats when they're not crying, there are divers flipping 27 times only to have a television announcer yell, 'Oh no, terrible form.' There runners, jumping over hurdles, walking past the finish line, and then, because she was tired, walking around a little bit. Then she walked into the interview room. 'The end of the race,' she said, "who was like a fairy tale." Then, she walked into a bus which took her away. (The columnist was Joe.)"--The columnist was Joe--the columnist was Joe...
judging opportunities on road-stadium courses have resulted in this event being conducted on the walking that in fact looks like walking. 

Route To Destruction, 

(speeds) have improved considerably with an increase in event management problems. Reduced years. The women's IO Km 

The men's distances are really not a problem with again no real improvement over the last 15 walks have had almost no improvement in the last 5, 10, and 20 Km performance (30th best in '68 vs. 30th best in '95) over the same period, it too has questionable performance? Of course not. This is illogical thinking. Racewalking is a technical discipline over comparison . He says that 

conclusions arc totally without merit. In both cases, the judges acted properly. Mr. Phillips' premise that because the percent improvement rate (10 percent and 11 percent) in the 20 and 50 Km walks since 1968 is greater than the men's marathon (5 percent), the walkers are no longer walking properly is complete nonsense. It is not a statistically valid comparison. He says that in few other disciplines of the sport have standards risen so dramatically. So what? Does this mean that since the pole vault had a 13 percent rise in performance (30th best in '68 vs. 30th best in '95) over the same period, it too has questionable performances? Of course not. This is illogical thinking. Racewalking is a technical discipline over considerable distances and therefore has greater opportunity for percent improvement than most other athletic disciplines (i.e., short sprints, etc.). It should also be noted that the 20 and 50 Km walks have had almost no improvement in the last 15 years and therefore all disciplines have had their standards rise dramatically more. It is convenient for his argument to pick 1980 as a starting date. If he had picked 1980, a more relevant date, his argument is defeated by statistics alone.

His suggestion that the distances be increased is valid in the case of the women's walk. The men's distances are really not a problem with again no real improvement over the last 15 years. The women's 10 Km is another story. This is being a fairly new event, performances (speeds) have improved considerably with an increase in event management problems. Reduced judging opportunities on road-stadium courses have resulted in this event being conducted on the track at next year's world championships and increased to 20 Km starting in 1999.

In response to my long-time friend Colin Young's article on Political Correctness: The Route To Destruction, I offer the following rebuttal: The new rule that Colin questions is really the same contact rule as to enforcement which has always been by human eye judging. The straight leg rule was added to the definition 30 years ago to further distinguish walking from running. Requiring the leg to be straightened upon contact further supports this requirement, which seeks to maintain racewalking as a distinct form of walking that in fact looks like walking. Colin tends to live in the past, feeling walkers were fairer then because they were slower with less lifting and those who did lift were quickly removed by the judges who were free from 

'political correctness'. This is a total myth and a false premise. I'm afraid Colin is caught up in the nostalgia of the past which was a great period for racewalking with many colorful characters. However, the champions of the past were not the athletes of today, nor was the judging any better. Colin states that today, in any race regardless of the level, the vast majority of the first half of the field are lifting. This statement by someone who has actually never judged any races himself, is a complete distortion of the truth and shows a lack of understanding of the biomechanical aspects of racewalking today and in the past. Biomechanical studies of videos taken of major events over the past 40 years clearly show almost the complete opposite of what Colin claims. The facts are as follows regarding the loss of contact in racewalking:

- Loss of contact has always occurred. It is the degree of the lifting that the judges are able to detect or not, depending on whether it is visible or not.
- Walkers 25 to 40 years ago (Colin's nostalgia period) were in general exhibiting greater degree of lifting as a percent of stride while walking slower than today's walkers! There are two reasons for this: The lack of flexibility and longer strides, attributes of walkers of that period. This true made judging of these races easier than today's races where the strides are shorter with fewer turnover and less percent loss of contact.
- Walkers of the last 10 to 15 years tend to lift more while going at reduced speeds during the first half of the race than during the last half of the race where the stride turnover is quicker. This is especially the case during the 20 Km events. In the 50 Km events, fatigue often yields mixed results as to legality, with bent knees being the main problem.
- Women exhibit a slightly greater percent loss of contact than men, while walking at slower speeds than the men. Colin correctly states one of the reasons for this in his article.

Colin makes another false assumption when he states that the IAAF Race Walking Committee has added to what was a basic and clear definition of walking in order to keep racewalking events in the athletics program and to make it more 'technical' in an effort to pacify those who wish to eliminate walks from major championships. First of all, if that was the Committee's motivation and the rule changes were not technically correct, then we would be defeating our own purpose. Second, the old definition was not clear. It contained a major inconsistency regarding the contact rule; and the straight leg rule was difficult to enforce on a consistent basis, thus resulting in a lower standard of judging than is required in order to maintain respect for racewalking as a serious athletic discipline. Third, the only motivation for the IAAF to make these clarifying changes to Rule 191 was to provide a definition that would be consistently enforced without cause for any confusion during the process. Just like other events in athletics, such as the javelin, where the center of mass of the men's javelin was changed to allow for fairer throws that are easier to mark, the IAAF continuously seeks to improve the practical and technical aspects of the rules for all disciplines. Walking is no different. There is no attempt to pacify anyone. The motivation is for a fairer competition with better officiating. It is a simple as that. Why else would volunteers from all walking federations work as a team?

Colin makes the unwarranted cheap shot at the sport for "turning a blind eye" to the use of photographs or TV cameras by relying solely on human-eye judging. This again, is an oversimplistic distortion of the truth. It is always easier to criticize, especially when you don't take the time to study the situation. We would all love to see an improvement on human-eye judging if any could be found to be both practical and reliable. Unfortunately, the use of photographs or TV cameras is not the panacea that Colin feels it to be. They are neither practical nor reliable in their usage, and would actually contribute to further inconsistency in the enforcement of the rules, the opposite effect to that which Colin desires.
Colin claims that a worthy sport has deteriorated and that he has plenty of evidence by means of film and photos that pre-1975 performers had safe contact when breaking records and winning championships. Unfortunately for him, the evidence is exactly the opposite. He seems to overlook events like the well-known 1968 Olympic 20 Km incident where the Mexican Pedraza literally ran into a silver medal over much cleaner walkers, the 1936 Olympic 20 Km walk where video clearly shows all three Soviet medalists to be flagrantly breaking contact throughout the race, and many other examples that his memory seems to block out in his nostalgic article. The evidence clearly shows a consistent improvement in athletic performances and the judging standard as well. Time after time, photos have supported the judging decisions in major events. A perfect example of this appears in the August issue of the ORW where a photo on page 2 by Jim Hanley clearly shows why Irina Stankina was disqualified in Atlanta while challenging the eventual winner, Yelena Nikonova. On that very lap when she broke obvious contact, five judges in succession recorded red cards! That is great judging. You would never have seen that standard of judging in the nostalgic era so revered by Colin. These judges are the ones preventing the sport from being a joke, not the type of distorted article written by Colin Young.

The further contention by Colin that the warning posting board encourages walkers to hide in bunches in the early stages of an event and then throw caution to the winds in the closing kilometers when they have warnings to spare makes no sense and shows a total lack of understanding of the current judging system, which now records warnings instantaneously using an electronic system. Any walker who would be foolish enough to employ this strategy suggested by Colin would quickly learn a very tough lesson. It is a ridiculous theory that has no merit.

Unfortunately, nostalgia for the past has greatly clouded Colin's ability to learn of the progress that has been made in the conduct and officiating of racewalking events in recent years. His unfounded criticism unfortunately gives false impressions to others who may not be as sympathetic to racewalking as Colin, a long-time racewalking enthusiast. This of course does unfair damage to image or racewalking, one of the few drug-free events in athletics, which continues to grow in popularity despite these false and unfair contentions.

Ed. My own perspective from nearly 40 years in the sport is that things are pretty much as they have always been. (Incidentally, this perspective, like Colin's, is from one who has been involved in judging only on rare occasions when it is demanded and who doesn't feel comfortable in that involvement. But, I'm not sure why that should invalidate our opinions.) Perhaps Bob has 'nostalgia' for the present. I'm sure that Colin, as he claims, has many photos showing top walkers demonstrating 'fair heel and toe' in the "good old days". And I know, as Bob points out, that their is considerable photographic evidence, much in the ORW files, to show top walkers clearly off the ground. So, we do have evidence for both sides. And, so do we today. (The evidence of flying feet or of solid contact in my files neither stops or begins in 1968.) I had called attention to the photo of Stankina when I published it, suggesting she certainly deserved her disqualification. I didn't point out, nor did Bob apparently notice, that in the photo of the 50 Km race on page 15 of the same issue, Valentina Kononen, closest to the curb in the front, is also clearly off the ground. He went on to finish seventh without disqualification. I did not publish a photo of the women's 10 Km showing a competitor who finished in a fairly high position as clearly off the ground as Stankina. I think Bob is unduly critical of judges in the past. I really doubt that he can prove to me that the standard of walking was any worse 30 or 40 years ago than it is today. But, I think Colin is unduly critical of today's standards of walking. And, I doubt that he can really prove to me that things have deteriorated. The sport has certainly changed in its technical aspects and the rules have been updated to reflect this. What hasn't changed is the need for excellence and consistency in judging. I'm not sure, despite what Bob says, that we are any closer to the ideal than we were in the nostalgic era. As long as the human element is involved, and I don't see that changing anytime soon, we may improve, but perfection will not be obtained. To me, the important thing is that by putting into the rules the bit on judging by the human eye, we recognize the imperfection that has always existed. None of this means that we shouldn't continue to strive for a day that there will be no photos of walkers whose obvious lack of contact went undetected. I think that is what Bob, Colin, and all the rest of us want. Why argue about whether we were closer 30 years ago or today. Just keep trying to close that gap--the one photos have always shown.

Walk That Way

(The following article appeared in the Greenville (S.C.) News on April 17, 1996. It was written by Staff Writer Tom Layton. Ian reports that he had much positive feedback from local runner and walkers from the article, with three things catching their eye: the comparison of walking and running times, the fact that racewalking can generate just as high heart rates and energy expenditures as running, and the analogy with butterfly and freestyle swimming. It certainly generates a more positive image than the Cincinnati Post article above.)

Fans stuck in Olympic traffic this summer in Atlanta might appreciate Ian Whatley's short cut: He's trying to walk to the Games. Whatley has two chances—Saturday in LaGrange, Ga., and June 22 in Atlanta—to reach the Olympics in a misunderstood and possibly misnamed event: racewalking.

"It's probably better to call it cantering," said Whatley, a native of England who now lives in Greenville. He formerly worked for Stone Manufacturing's Umbro Division, but is living off savings—"the last of the true amateurs," he said—in his four-year pursuit of his Olympic dream.

If he makes it, he will be 37 years old in a sport where most of the pacemakers are around 15. (Ed. As we know, he didn't make it, but he gave it a bloody go with his fifth place 4:14:48 in the 50. Whatley was fifth in the Olympic trials for the 20 Km race in 1992 and is now ranked fourth among the American contenders at that distance.

As a bonus, he also has been invited as the last of 16 Americans for the 50 Km trials, which will be held this weekend. With speed on his side and nothing to lose, his hope is to set a quick pace and then "go until the wheels fall off." He said. If the weather is accommodating and his sore knee holds up, he might have a chance for one of the two or three spots on the Olympic team.

Though he is better qualified at 20 Km, that race might be harder because the Olympics will take only one American in that event. (Ed. Note that this was incorrect. The Olympics would take up to three in both events, provided they all met the qualifying standard.) If fans appreciate nothing else about Whatley's sport, they will appreciate the fact that they can attend without tickets.

The races will start and end in the Olympic Stadium, but will be open to the public along a 2 Km loop along Central Avenue in Atlanta.

Sporting goods manufacturers say that the Greenville-Spartanburg market is one of the best for fitness walking. But no one else here walks to the extreme that Whatley does. "It's not walking in the commonsense understanding of walking," Whatley said. "It has two rules: You must have one foot on the ground at all times as judged by the unaided human eye, and you must have a straight leg from the time that your heel touches the floor until it is upright underneath you."

The result is a peculiar stride and a motion which Whatley admits is "a lot less efficient than running." But he said that on treadmill tests, walkers use energy and reach pulses comparable to the best runners. The walkers' pace—about 210 strides per minute—is faster than the marathons' 180-stride average and is comparable to the pace run by quarter-milers and half-milers. Whatley said. But the walkers race for 12 to 31 miles.
Whatley describes his stroll in terms long-distance runners can understand. "all you have to do is go 3:20 for a marathon, then go 5 more miles at the same pace. And, oh, by the way, you have to walk, not run. It is a pretty athletic event." Whatley was a competitive runner in local and college races who realized at age 29—when he was at the Seoul Olympics on a business trip—how much he wanted to make the Olympics, and how farfetched his chances were as a runner.

So, he returned to walking, a sport he had tried growing up in Birmingham, England, but had given up when he moved to America to work for Nike. At the time, he said, "There was a little bit of stigma toward racewalking. It was like, 'We're runners here.'" Injuries limited his success until he turned heads last month by walking fourth in the National Invitational. It's taken 25 years for me to be an overnight sensation," he said.

Whatley has walked 20 Km in 1:27:02—a pace that he said would have won an Olympic bronze medal as recently as 1972. Only 11 Americans have ever gone faster. he said. Whatley, the father of four, said he cashed in an IRA, and has been living off savings while training full-time for the Olympics. He feels he's-heeled in one sense, if not the other.

For four years, he has done everything necessary and everything possible. He has walked the walk. "The question I wanted to avoid is What if?", he said. "If I don't make it, I'll be satisfied. I've reached a level that's very high, within one percent of what's required to make the Olympics." "I'm going to go as far as I can. I'll know I have gone as far as I can; I can go on and do other things.

Whatley compares walking to bicycling in first gear or swimming a stroke other than freestyle. "It's not a natural movement," he said. "The same way that swimming butterfly is comparatively unnatural and takes a lot more coordination than swimming freestyle, it still is a legitimate way to get from A to B." Or from Greenville to Atlanta.

Concentration Skills for Racewalkers

Dr. Richard Godin

A crucial mental skill to be learned is concentration or focus. It is virtually impossible to perform consistently or confidently without the ability to focus. Each race has a specific duration and it is essential to learn to develop the skill to focus on appropriate cues for the appropriate amount of time. We develop these skills if we reach the highest levels of our sport, unfortunately, not all learn to focus appropriately and never reach the top. Distractions can occur from various sources: family, friends, weather, meet officials, coaches, etc. It is imperative that you learn to focus and refocus to prevent becoming distracted at crucial times. It only takes a moment for a competitor to take advantage of a mental error. You do not have to allow the distractions that occur to spoil your positive frame of mind. Things will happen at competitions. How you choose to react to these potential distractions is of paramount importance. Distractions can occur from external sources or internal sources. The single most internal distractor is our self-talk. Athletes need to develop the ability to focus, the ability to focus on demand, the ability to focus on the present, and the ability to focus for the right amount of time.

You learn to focus through practice. Pick out an object right now. Stop reading this page and concentrate on that object for one minute. No matter what happens, continue to concentrate for the entire minute. What happened? Were you able to do it? If not, how can you expect to concentrate for a race that takes several minutes or more? You do not need to allow yourself to react emotionally at each distraction. Make all events either neutral or positive for you. Here are some hints that might help you keep focus.

- Have a plan and stick to it. If something disrupts you, go to plan B.
- Concentrate on the object for one minute. This exercise illustrates how many times we might have split attention in a race. It is vitally important to concentrate on the important aspects of the race.
- The next exercise is called the "I am aware" exercise. Lay down in a room and just listen to sounds for one minute. Allow your thoughts to flow. Next, pick a problem. Think of all the solutions to the problem. Do this for about a minute. Now, blank your mind completely. Usually this part of the exercise is done with eyes closed. Finally, open your eyes and watch an object for one minute. This exercise will teach you to switch from one type of focus to another. This is the type of focus many athletes use in competition.
- You are convinced that this skill is one of the most crucial skills to develop if you want to reach your goals. Practice developing concentration daily in order to use it in competition. Good racing.

(From the Oct. 1966 ORW)--Larry Young won his first of eight national 50 Km titles in Chicago. Pulling away from Canada's Alex Oakley in the final 3 miles, Larry recorded the second best ever by a U.S. walker (to that time), 4:38:25. Oakley folded completely and finished nearly 5 minutes back in 4:43:06, less than a minute ahead of fast-closing Shaul Ladany. Ron Daniel, Pat Parrelly (Can.), Jim Clinton, and Karl Merschelz (Can.) were also under 5 hours. Your editor, in one of his failed attempts at this distance, dropped out at 24 miles in third place. Earlier in the month, Ron Laird won the National 15 Km in Atlantic City with 1:11:28. Ron Daniel just edged Bob Klithe a couple of minutes back, and Bill Kaiser took fourth. ...In East Germany, Christoph Hohnle did a 2:20:36 for 30 Km on the track, with a world's best of 1:50:07 for 15 miles on the way. ...Gennady Agapov covered the 30 Km distance on the road in 2:12:56 in the Soviet Union. ...Another Soviet walker, Nikolai Smaga, won the Little Olympics 20 Km in Mexico City in 1:31:04. Italy's Vittorio Visani was a minute back. Leading 47 finishers, K. Abolins won the Leicester-to-Skegness 100 mile race in England in 18:10:46.

15 Years Ago (from the October 1981 ORW)—A well-balanced Italian team emerged as the winner in the Lugano Cup, race walking's world championship. Italy trailed the Soviet Union by 3 points after the 20 Km, but picked those points up in the 50 and won the title on the basis of the first individual finisher in the 50. Defending world champion Mexico was third, just 6 points back, with East Germany fourth. The U.S. was 7th of 15 teams. Mexico took the individual titles—Ernesto Canto doing 1:23:52 and Raul Gonzales 3:48:30. East Germany's Roland Weisser and Italy's Alessandro Pezzatini followed at 20. Medals went to the same two countries in the 50 in the persons of Hartwig Gauder and Sandro Bellucci. For the U.S., Todd Scully was 21st (1:30:22) and Jim Heiring 22nd in the 20. Marco Evonuk took 13th in 4:07:44 in the 50, with Dan O'Connor 21st...

10 Years Ago (From the Oct. 1986 ORW)—The second Pan-Am Cup walks, held in Quebec featured an outstanding 20 Km race in which Tim Lewis walked what is still the fastest ever 20 Km by a U.S. athlete. Canada's Guillaume Leblanc won the race in 1:21:15. Lewis was with Leblanc at 10 Km in 40:32 and just 5 seconds back at 15, but couldn't match the Canadian's pace from there. He also fell to Mexican junior Carlos Mercenario, who finished in 1:21:33 to Tim's 1:21:48. (The following spring Mercenario was the surprising winner at the World Cup 20, and in 1991 he won the World Cup 50.) Ray Sharp and Carl Schueler also had outstanding 20s for the U.S. finishing 8th and 9th in 1:24:58 and 1:25:04. Mexico's Martin Bermudez won the 50 in 3:56:21, 9 1/2 minutes ahead of Marco Evonuk. Dan O'Connor was fifth in 4:18:46. Graciella Mendoza, of Mexico, edged Canada's Ann Peel in the women's 10 Km, 45:23 to 45:26 with Teresa Vaill fourth for the U.S. in 46:47. Debbi Lawrence was 9th in 49:06...Leblanc also won the Alto 20 Km in Dearborn, Mich., beating Bermudez. Leblanc's 1:25:45 put him 66 seconds ahead of the Mexican. Gary Morgan was fourth...Doug Fournier won the 5 Km in a U.S.-Romania Junior meet in 21:54:68. Curt Clausen was third in 22:29:58.