

National 2 Hour to Savilonis

Cambridge, Mass., Oct. 13--Brian Savilonis put nearly a half-lap between himself and Robert Keating over the course of 2 hours of walking to capture the National 2 Hour title today. Douglas Johnson was in third at the finish, nearly 3 laps behind the winner. Only five competitors contested the race. In an accompanying 1 Hour race, 19-year-old Josh Ginsburg hung on to beat 40-year-old Steve Vaitones by 35 meters. Ginsburg covered 11,445 meters. Victoria Herazo won the Women's National 1 Hour, covering 12,215 meters, as reported last month.

National 2 Hour Result: 1. Brian Savilonis (46), New England Walkers 22,271 meters 2. Robert Keating (49), NEW 22,088 3. Douglas Johnson (36), Morgantown, Kentucky 21,182 4. Ken Mattsson (32), NEW 18,313 5. Justin Kuo (42), NEW 17,777

1 Hour Result: 1. Josh Ginsburg (19), Phast 11,445 meters 2. Steve Vaitones (40) Nike Boston 11,410 3. Bill Purves (52), NEW 10,968 4. Joe Light (49), NEW 10,931 5. Bob Barrett (62), Park Walkers 10,492 5. Peter Brown (15), Wilton, Maine 10,492 7. Robert Ullman (47), NEW 10,400 8. Tom Knatt (56), NEW 10,400 9. Stan Sosnowski (46), NEW 10,225 10. Jack Starr (68), Phast 10,118 11. John Gersh (49), Potomac Valley Walkers 9785 12. Bill Harriman (49), NEW 9744 13. Bernie Finch (56), Wolverine Pacers 9455 14. Benno Stein (58) Park RW 9337 (23 finishers, 3 DQs)

Alongi Memorial Walks, Dearborn, Mich. Sept. 28 (Partial results last month): International 20 Km--1. Gary Morgan 1:33:12 2. Mark Green 1:34:23 3. Joan Froman 1:35:20 4. Dan O'Brien 1:38:29 DQ--Wei Wang, China Women's International 10 Km--1. Joanne Dow 47:54 2. Gretchen Eastler 52:42 DQ--Kristen Mullaney Junior Women's 5 Km--1. Samantha Cohen 24:49.2 2. Lisa Kutzing 24:49.5 3. Roselle Safran 25:50.2 4. Katie Rulapaugh 27:17 DQ--Alison Zabrenski Men's Junior 10 Km--1. Kevin Eastler 46:54 2. Josh Ginsburg 47:22 3. Scott Crafton 49:15 4. Brandon Perry 54:00 DQ--Brian Colby Men's 10 Km: 1. Jeff Savage 46:36 2. Edward Finch 53:38 3. Jerry Muskal 55:17 4. Paul Tucknott 55:19 6. Rob Sonthmeier 56:08 Women's 10 Km--1. Julie Hecksel 57:04 2. Sheri Samassa 60:09 3. Abigail Oliver 60:44 Masters Women's 5 Km: 40-44--1. Sherry Watts 28:40 2. Janet Corni 28:48 3. Ann Davin 29:45 (10 finishers, 1 DQ) 45-49--1. Jackie Jessup 28:01 2. Tish Roberta 28:25 (11 finishers) 50-54--1. Janet Higbie 30:54 2. Valerie Stowe 32:16 (2 finishers) 55-59--1. Walda Tichy 29:59 2. Ruth Everson 31:27 3. Roberta Hatfield 31:44 4. Beth Young-Grady 31:45 (6 finishers) 60-64--1. June-Marie Provost 30:51 2. Joane Parks 31:09 (4 finishers) 70-74--1. Margaret Walker 35:45 Masters Men's 10 Km: 40-44--1. Jonathan Matthews 43:56 2. Bill Reed 53:34 3. Don Wilkins 58:54 (5 finishers, 2 DQs) 45-49--1. Max Walker 53:39 2. Michael Bird 59:30 3. John Gersh 60:12 (10 finishers, 1 DQ) 50-54--1. James Carmines 50:37 2. Michael Burreis 60:10 (2 finishers, 3 DQs) 55-59--1. Ron Laird 55:10 (5 finishers, 1 DQ) 60-64--1. Max Green 53:53 2. Stuart Summerhayes, Can. 56:42 3. Antonio DeGrazia 61:56 (5 finishers) 65-59--1. Jack Starr 58:32 2. Edward Gawinski 61:29 3. Kenneth McKay 62:41 4. Vance Genzlinger 62:42 70-74--1. William Flick 60:00 2. Hugh Acton 63:38 (5 finishers)

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National 15 Km, Elk Grove Village, Illinois, Sept. 22 (Partial results last month): Men--1. Dave McGovern 1:07:32 (21:55, 44:26) 2. Al Heppner 1:07:58 (21:56, 44:34) 3. Mike Rohl 1:14:40 (23:56, 48:44) 4. Donald Peterson 1:59:05 Masters Men: 40-44--1. Jonathan Udesky (41) 1:29:29 (3 finishers) 45-49--1. Mike DeWitt (45) 1:17:38 (25:40, 51:38) 2. Max Walker (49) 1:25:24 3. Augie Hirt (45) 1:26:35 4. Gary Westlund (45) 1:28:59 5. Bruce Leasure (47) 1:31:35 6. Ed Sell (48) 1:32:04 (8 finishers) 50-54--1. Don DeNoon (53) 1:15:08 (24:09, 51:36) 2. Jim Carmines (53) 1:18:37 (25:14, 51:43) 3. Don Mowles (53) 1:27:19 55-59--1. Bernie Finch (56) 1:36:52 60-64--1. George Kruck (62) 1:37:14 2. Cedric Hustace (62) 1:39:11 65-59--1. Jack Starr (68) 1:32:54 (31:32, 62:13) 2. Mike Michel (66) 1:36:43 75-59--1. Paul Geyer (77) 1:59:27 80 and up--1. Bill Tallmadge (80) 1:55:34 Women: 1. Danielle Kirk 1:21:50 (26:05, 53:20) 2. Kelly Watson 1:26:52 3. Amber Nichols 1:28:54 Masters Women: 40-44--1. Kathy Finch (41) 1:40:47 (3 finishers) 45-49--1. Jeanette Smith (47) 1:28:30 (28:38, 58:25) 50-54--1. Margie Alexander (53) 1:48:42 55-59--1. Elton Richardson (57) 1:32:54 (30:11, 61:02) 2. Beth Young-Grady 1:43:23 **10 Km, same place--1. Richard McGuire (48) 54:02 5 Km (same place)--1. Jim Heiring (40) 24:56 2. Chris Brooks (15) 26:31**

Other Results

3 Km, Alexandria, Virginia, Aug. 4--1. Jim Goldstein (47) 16:19 2. Claude Letien (49) 16:31 3. John Gersh (49) 17:02 Women: 1. Fran Carnevale (44) 17:30 **3 Km, Alexandria, Aug. 18--1. Philip Dunn 11:59.40 2. B.E. Booth (48) 14:38 3. Claude Letien 16:36 4. John Gersh 16:54 5. Scott Jensen (11) 17:03 6. Victor Litwinski (53) 17:57** Women: 11. Marykirk Cunningham 14:14.20 2. Samantha Cohen 15:10 3. Fran Carnevale 17:30 4. Patricia Zerfas 17:44 5. Jamie Hall (16) 17:47 **1 Hour, Alexandria, Oct. 6--1. Bruce Booth (48) 11,613 meters (51:50) 2. Alan Price (49) 10,477 3. Claude Letien 10,452 4. John Gersh 10,058 5. Victor Litwinski 9881 1 Hour, Alexandria, Nov. 3--1. Jim Carmines (53) 11,800 meters (50:49) 2. Claude Letien 10,054 3. George Fenigsohn (48) 10,026 4. John Gersh 10,013 5. Jim Wass (44) 9,856 6. Victor Litwinski 9969 (something wrong here, but those are the results sent to me) 7. Richard Jirousek (53) 9771 8. Paul Cajka (39) 9588 9. Ed Gawinski (69) 9581 **30 Km (same place)--1. Keith Luoma 3:03:42 20 Km (same place)--1. Ed Fitch 2:00:04 (60:34) 2. Jack Starr (68) 2:03:44 (60:35) 4. Tim Good 2:09:45 5 Km, Marietta, Georgia, Oct. 5--1. Phil Gura 27:54 Women--1. Bonnie Stein 30:48 **5 Km, Orlando, Florida, Oct. 26--1. Edgardo Rodriguez 26:15 2. Bryce Courtney 28:54 3. C.S. MonteCarlo (50-59) 27:00 3. Mario Feinstein (40-49) 29:03 4. Steve Chirstlieb (40-49) 29:26 5. Phil Brown (40-49) 30:08 Women--1. Chris Alt 28:29 2. Sperry rademaker (50-50) 28:35 **Henry Laskau Invitational 10 Km, Coconut Grove, Florida, Oct. 26--1. Tim Nicholls 50:04 2. John Fredericks (45-49) 57:00 3. Gergely Hodai 57:34 4. Tom White (60-64) 61:09 5. Gerry Gomes (60-64) 62:27 (15 finishers) Women: 1. Bonnie Stein 59:10 2. Donna Pape 52:08 (6 finishers) **Women's 5 Km (same place)--1. June-Marie Provost (60-64) 30:58 **Detroit Marathon, Oct. 20--1. Gary Morgan 3:46:33 2. Ioan Froman 3:48:11 3.************

Julie Hecksel 4:41:25 4. Valentine Hompoth, Can. 4:43:59 5. Robin McIntosh 4:52:08 6. William Watson (50) 4:58:25 7. Walda Tichy (56) 4:58:36 (32 finishers) **5 Km, Warren, Mich., Nov. 3--1. J. Klos 22:56 2. Z. Sadlej 25:24 3. John Hunyady 28:40 Women--1. Walda Tichy 30:46 **10 Km, Roseville, Mich., Nov. 10--1. John Elwarner 54:15 2. Walda Tichy 62:36 **5 Km, Chicago, Oct. 26--1. Richard McGuire (44-49) 25:44 2. Don Mowles (50-54) 26:49 3. Ed Sell (45-49) 26:51 4. Jonathan Udesky (40-44) 28:49 5. Albert Kaiser (45-49) 29:26 6. Ron Winkler (45-49) 29:39 7. Jim Shaw (50-54) 29:45 8. Stephen Frey (45-49) 29:54 9. Garland Moore (45-49) 30:03 10. George Kruck (60-64) 30:51 (14 finishers) **1 Hour, Aurora, Col., Oct. 13--1. Kevin Eastler 12,265 meters 2. Lonnie Schreiner (53) 10,659 3. Peggy Miller (42) 10,490 4. Mike Blanchard 10,259 5. Marianne Martino (45) 9990 6. Christine Vanoni (45) 9930 **Half-Marathon, Denver, Oct. 20--1. Brad Bearshart 2:09:43 2. Christine Vanoni 2:12:07 **5 Km, same place--1. Daryl Meyers (53) 28:39 **10 Km, Longmont, Col., Nov. 2--1. Brad Bearshart 54:45 2. Dan Pierce (40) 56:21 **2 Mile, Gallup, N.M.--1. Art Ortega 17:01 2. Teresa Aragon 18:00 (20 finishers) 15 Km, El Paso, Tex., Oct. 6--1. Andrzej Chylinski 1:10:58 2. Theron Kissing 1:11:11 3. Norm Frable (50-54) 1:21:46 4. John Knifton (55-59) 1:23:55 5. Dave Gwyn (40-44) 1:33:04 6. C. Emerson (45-49) 1:33:25 (27 finishers) Women: 1. Jackie Kerby 1:34:09 2. I. McCubbin 1:36:46 (18 finishers) **Western Regional 8 Km, Las Vegas, Oct. 20--1. Warrick Yeager (40-44) 36:07 2. Mark Green (40-44) 36:23 3. Mike Stauch 39:25 4. Chris Dreher 41:12 5. Edgar Kousky (55-59) 42:20 6. Stan Chraminski (45-49) 42:22 7. Jack Bray (60-64) 42:32 8. David Crabb (50-54) 43:12 9. Max Green (60-64) 43:23 10. S. Torabian (45-49) 44:11 11. P. Santoni 44:53 12. Peter Armstrong (50-54) 46:26 13. John Schulz (55-59) 47:14 14. Al Du Bois (60-64) 48:30 (23 finishers) Women: 1. Brenda Carpino (45-49) 47:59 2. Lani LeBlanc (5-54) 50:51 (10 finishers) **10 Km, Monterey, Cal., Oct. 26--1. Kim Wilkinson 49:51 2. Roger Welborn 53:00 3. Therese Iknoina 56:46 4. Bill Penner 58:10 5. Dick Petruzzi 58:24 6. Quang Than 59:42 7. Terri Brothers 60:01 8. John Doane 60:44 9. Art Klein 61:32 (28 finishers, 3 DQs, 2 DNFs) **unior 3 Km (same place)--1. Brooke Szody 16:30 2. Erika Ackeret 16:50 3. Nathan Williams 16:51 **5 Km, Marin, Cal., Oct. --1. Jack Bray 25:53 2. Shoja Torabian 26:30 3. Brenda Usher-Carpino 28:16 4. Jim Stuckey 28:25 (10 finishers) **1 Hour, Marin, Oct. 13--1. Jack Bray 11,135 meters 2. Shoja Torabian 10,912 3. John Schulz 10,361 4. Jim Stuckey 10,097 5. Ed Lane 9683 (13 finishers) **3 Miles, Seattle, Oct. 12--1. Colin Peters 24:03 2. Stan Chraminski 25:03 3. Bruce Harland 27:03 (with baby in baby jogger) 4. Bev LaVeck 28:18 5. Teri-Lee Taylor Smith 28:34****************************

Grand Prix of Racewalking, Dublin, Ireland, Sept. 28 Girls Under 12 1 Km--1. Catriona McMahon 5:04 2. Sophie Hales, G.B. 5:05 (23 finishers) Boys Under 12 1 Km--1. David Gorman 5:07 2. James Taylor, G.B. 5:09 (10 finishers) Girls Under 14 2 Km--1. Amy Hales, GB 9:46 2. Nathalie Watson, GB 10:03 (23 finishers) Boys Under 14 2 Km--1. Lloyd Finch, GB 9:16 2. Dom King, GB 9:19 3. Hugh O'Connell 9:37 (19 finishers) Grils Under 16 3 Km--1. Sarah ennett, GB 14:34 2. Beckey Tisshaw, GB 14:39 3. Deirdre Brennan 15:28 4. Katie Ford, GB 15:30 (18 finishers) BOys Under 16 3 Km--1. David Kidd 13:22 2. Thomas Taylor, GB 13:41 3. Nigel Wharlow, GB 13:56 (12 finishers) Girls Under 18 3 Km--1. Nikey Huckerby, GB 14:44 2. Sally Warren, GB 15:01 3. Nina Hawley, GB 15:28 Boys Under 18 5 Km--1. Robert Heffernan 22:41 2. Michael Kemp, GB 22:43 3. Scott Taylor, GB 23:12 (8 finishers) Women's 10 Km--1. Olive Loughnora 49:44 2. Karen Kneale, Isle of Man 51:54 (10 finishers) Men's 20 Km--1. Michael Casy 1:30:53 2. Chris Cheeseman, GB 1:31:23 3. Kevin Salmesley, IOM 1:33:28 (11 finishers) (Pierce O'Callaghan reports that this event was set up in 1993 to provide International competition between the young walkers of Ireland and Great Britain. It is now seen as the biggest date on the International calendar for young walkers. He suggests that some one over here might want to entertain the thought of taking an American high school team over next year. Great Britain had a party of about 200 at this year's event. Anyone interested in pursuing this might contact Pierce O'Callaghan at Castle Street, Ashbourne Co. Meath, Ireland.) **50 Km, Hericourt,**

France, Sept. 29 (track)--1. Thierry Toutain 3:40:57.9 (better Rene Piller's World Record set in 1994 by 30.3 seconds. The time has been bettered 14 times on road courses. Toutain was DQ'd in the Olympics and was trying to salvage something from his season.)

Opportunity Knocks At These Venues

- Sat. Dec. 7 2 Mile, New Orleans, 4 pm (X)
Half Marathon, Baker U., Kansas (I)
- Sun. Dec. 8 1 Hour, Fort Monmouth, N.J., 10 am (A)
5 Km, San Francisco, 8 am (P)
5 Km, St. Louis (S)
5 Km, Ft. Collins, Col. (H)
4.4 Miles, Denver, 9 am (H)
- Sat. Dec. 14 5 Km, Kent, Wash., 10 am (C)
5 Km, Atlanta, 9 am (D)
10 Km, Kansas (I)
4 Mile, Ft. Collins, Col., 9 am (H)
- Sun. Dec. 15 Todd Scully 10 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 1:15pm (A)
5 Km, New York City, 9 am (F)
5 Km, Denver (H)
10 Km, Coconut Grove, Fla., 7:45 am (Q)
- Sat. Dec. 21 Louisiana State 15 and 30 Km, Abita Springs, 8 am (X)
20, 40, and 60 Km, Colorado Springs (H)
5 Km, Kansas (I)
- Sat. Dec. 28 5 and 10 Km, Miami (Q)
- Sun. Dec. 29 Polar Bear 10 Mile, Asbury Park, N.J., 10 am (A)
South Regional 50 Km, Houston (E)
Indoor 3 Km, Men and Women, New York City (F) (Prizes of \$100 for first, \$50 for second, and \$25 for third, both men and women)
- Tue. Dec. 31 New year's Eve 4 Mile, Detroit (O)
8 Km, Colorado Springs (H)
- Sun. Jan. 5 9 Km, New Orleans (X)
- Sat. Jan. 11 Half-marathon, 5 Km, Irvine, Cal., 8 am (B)
5 Km, Miami, 8 am (Q)
- Sun. Jan. 12 Indoor 880 yd and 3 Km, Arlington, Vir., 8:15 am (J)
5 Km, Denver, Col., 10 am (H)
- Sat. Jan. 18 Marathon, 1/2 Marathon, 6 Km, New Orleans, 8 am (X)
- Sun. Jan. 19 1/2 Marathon, Naples, Fla., 7 am (Q)
- Sat. Jan. 25 1 Mile and 5 Km, Metairie, La., 9 am (X)
- Sun. Jan. 26 Indoor 880 yd and 3 Km, Arlington, Vir., 8:15 am (J)
5 Km, Denver, 10 am (H)
- Sat. Feb. 8 5 Km, Boca Raton, Fla., 7:30 am (Q)
- Sun. Feb. 9 Indoor 880 yd and 3 Km, Arlington, Vir., 8:15 am (J)
Half-marathon, Las Vegas, 7 am (P)
- Sun. Feb. 16 **USATF National 50 Km and World Cup Trial, Palo Alto, Cal. (R)**

Contacts

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J--Potomac Valley Walkers, 2305 S. Buchanan St., Arlington, VA 22206
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FROM HEEL TO TOE

A point of confusion in the results of the Food City USA 5 Km Masters Walks reported in our September issue. We did not note that Victoria Herazo, though beaten by Michelle Rohl by 9 seconds, was the Food City Masters Champion. Michelle, of course, is not yet old enough for that title. . . Here's a great opportunity for a delightful winter vacation and some serious work on your racewalking at the same time. Martin Rudow, International judge, former national coach, author of *Advanced Race Walking*, and producer of an excellent videotape, is presenting a racewalking in Honolulu from January 20 - 26, 1997. You will have the opportunity to get some serious training, some expert analysis and advice, and to socialize with walkers of all levels and abilities, while also exploring a tropical paradise. The camp fee of \$195 covers all camp sessions (including videotaping), a camp binder, and t-shirt. For more information, contact Martin at Technique Productions, 4831 NE 44th, Seattle, WA 98105. You can call 206-527-5301 or send a FAX to 206-527-1223. E-mail at jrudow@hale.ssd.k12.wa.us . . . Here, via Lori Maynard, is information on Trials for major international events in 1997. The 17th IAAF World Racewalking Cup is scheduled for Podebrady, Czech Republic on April 19 and 20. The National Invitational Racewalks in Washington, D.C. on March 23 have been designated as the Women's 10 Km and Men's 20 Km Trials for that event. Contact Sal Corrallo at 4860 South 28th Street, #B1, Arlington VA 22206, phone 703-379-6915. In order to provide recovery time between the 50 Km Trial and the World Cup, the U.S. 50 Km Championship will be held February 16, 1997 in Palo Alto, Cal. and will serve as the Trial. The contact is Ron Daniel 1289 Balboa Court, #149, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, phone 408-964-3580. The race will also be used to select the 50 Km team for the 6th World Championships in Athens, Greece next summer. The 10 and 20 Km teams for the Athens meet will be selected at the National Outdoor T7F Championships in Indianapolis in June. The "A" qualifying standards for the World Championships (the time needed for all athletes if we are to have three competitors in each race) are 45:30, 1:23:30, and 4:00.0. The "B" standards (that which a single entrant must reach) are 48:00, 1:26:00, and 4:10. . . From time-to-time, we must sadly note the passing of those who have helped build our sport. The following

from Jim Hanley: 1932 Olympian Bill Chisholm, 87, passed away on November 8 of an apparent heart attack while riding a bus in Bakersfield, California. A ninth place finisher in the Olympic 50 Km walk, Chisholm was noted for his extremely legal walking style. He will be remembered for his "Chisholm Trail" of inspirational talks where he promoted the Olympic movement to thousands of schools and civic groups. As a tough, but fair, racewalk judge, Bill played a big part in the legal racewalking style of many California walkers Larry Young, Ron Laird, Bob Bowman, Tom Dooley, Bill Ranney, Larry Walker, Rudy Haluza, and Jim Hanley. As one of the oldest T&F Olympians, Bill recently attended the Olympians Reunion during the Atlanta Games. . . Jim also pointed out that I missed one athlete when mentioning U.S. Centurions (those who have completed a 100 Mile race in 24 hours) that are also Centurions. John Kelly represented Ireland in 1968 Olympics in Mexico City in the 50 Km. In the 1982 National 100 Mile Championship in San Diego he became a Centurion by clocking 19:42 for the distance. . . My face is red and I apologize to long-time subscriber, John. Actually, when I was reviewing the list, I saw John's name and thought, "Now, wasn't he on the Irish team at some time?" But, thoughts don't stay long with we aging folks, and before I researched it, the thought slipped my mind. Thanks to Jim for setting us right. . . If you must indulge in Christmas chocolate, either for yourself or for others, why not support a hard-working racewalker in doing so? Marc Varsano can offer a wide variety of chocolates hand-dipped daily, and, as I can attest from the sample he sent me last year, they are delicious. For more information, it's Varsano's Chocolates, 179 W. 4th Street, New York, NY 10014, 1-800-414-4718. . . Lori Maynard writes regarding our September comments on the 40 Km National (and the National 2 Hour reported in this issue is another case in point): "I have felt for quite awhile that it is very difficult to justify calling a race a national championship when few or no elite athletes take part. The idea of someone being a "National Champion" under these circumstances is virtually meaningless. The 40 Km is not the only race that has to contend with this problem. Understand that this is in no way a criticism of these races nor of their organizers. Attitudes, goals, and training schedules of athletes now are different from what they were years ago. Titles at off-distances are not as important as they once were, and athletes are more selective in race scheduling, for a variety of reasons. USATF standing sport committees are looking at reducing the numbers of championships and I fully agree with this concept. Being a Rules year, this would be an appropriate time for action on this subject. If racewalking does decide to eliminate certain races, it would be my hope that these races would continue but simply without the title of National Championship. It is obvious that having the title is not a guarantee of drawing elite athletes. It has also been proven that races can be very successful without this moniker. Sal Corrallo has been doing it for years with his National Invitational. It seems to me that this would be a good time to streamline our National Championships Program to conform to the present day realities of the sport." . . . In the *Southern California Racewalking News*, Martin Rudow, in a guest editorial, commented on judging of lifting vs. bent knees as follows: "I have read quotes from a few bitter masters walkers that the judges are calling the masters more tightly than the open division walkers--that there is some kind of conscious decision or even a judges' plot to let the open division walkers get away with lifting, but call the equivalent degree of creeping when judging masters. Besides revealing these walkers' paranoia, there is a good reason for this perception. It is because it is very difficult to judge, for instance, 1/4 inch of lifting. The equivalent amount of bent knee is easy to see. This may not be fair, but it is what we've got to work with and we've got to call them as we see them. If you are marginally lifting, it may be impossible to detect. If you are marginally straightening, it is much easier to detect. I've sat with masters walkers watching videos of the 1996 Olympics. There are walkers lifting who got through the race without even one red card. I have been told that we are not calling such offenses, so why are we calling bent knees? I hope the preceding points answer that question. We'd call lifting if we could see it, but the rules state "as seen by the naked eye." We can see a small degree of bent knee with the naked eye. We can't see a small amount of lifting with the naked eye. This may not make everyone happy because

maybe in an ideal world, it isn't fair, but it is an explanation of a perceived judging dichotomy." . . . Here's another view on this same controversy, this from Master's champion and experienced judge, Bev LaVeck:

"In recent years, several influential members of the USATF RW Committee have defined "progress" by the increase in fitness walking in local associations and the exposure of walking in health-related publications. Growth has replaced competitiveness in international racing as a measure of progress. The USATF RW Committee is composed in large part of representatives from USATF associations all around the country, and these people are energetically motivated to contribute to the sport. The most likely way to contribute is to promote racewalking locally by having clinics and events. Many are very successful in developing large clubs or programs with lots and lots of walkers. The people most likely to be drawn to these events are 30+--with many 50+. And, I fear many of these people are either not motivated or not encouraged to learn correct, legal racewalking technique. In other words, an increasing contingent of racewalkers are health/fitness/recreational walkers, which is fine and worthwhile, but their satisfaction with judged, competitive racewalking--as we know it--is questionable.

Although I haven't heard much talk of this, I suspect a parallel development is the gradual willingness of judges to judge Masters racewalkers seriously. It used to be common for judges to leave while Masters were still competing, to look away, and to hold a sort of patronizing "at least they're out there" or "they came so far" attitude. I'm sure I'm not the only judge to tire of constantly reinventing the degree of illegality I'll permit in a Masters racewalk with a significant number of racewalkers violating the straight-leg rule. And I'm tired of developing criteria for "excusing" some bent knees (e.g., the walker isn't gaining an advantage). I've tolerated some bent knees because they weren't quite as bad as some others. And I'll admit that I've let affection for some of my favorite "emeritus" walkers restrain my calls. But, over time, this is even more uncomfortable than making hard calls. Walkers are attributing the increasing numbers of DQ calls to the change in the rules. True, the straight-leg-on-contact rule makes bent knees clearer in slow, over-striding walkers. However, I suspect that judging standards are changing and accounting for the increase in DQs--not just the rules. We're seeing a strong negative reaction to tougher judging by some highly vocal racewalkers, as well as meet directors who are inclined to want to manage the DQs so as to have happier competitors. These are very detrimental to the willingness of judges to volunteer their time, money, good intentions, and expertise.

Both Masters T&F and the Racewalking Committee are going to have to decide whether their main mission is to provide participation opportunities for a large number of people or to provide high quality development and competitive opportunities for (probably) fewer. A lot can be said for both missions, but they're different. A large fitness-walking body won't help the emergence and development of young competitive racewalkers without very deliberate focusing on youth development as a priority by the organizers of fitness walkers. There's not much evidence that young elite racewalkers bubble up out of recreational/fitness racewalking. Most racewalkers in local programs are realistically too busy with jobs, family, "life" and/or too serious about their own training to form a consistent support system (coaching, officiating, etc.) for young racewalkers. Perhaps significant Committee energy can be devoted to both "elite" and "mass" programs, but the two shouldn't be blurred. Perhaps it's OK for the USATF associations to independently develop their own programs, with minimal involvement of the USATF RW Committee. It's a bigger challenge to target and develop large numbers of young motivated and talented racewalkers than it is to promote walking for health and fitness. Within Master's, the challenge is to decide how (and when and where) to be inclusive. . .

Still on judging issues Bob Bowman doesn't want to let me have the last word (but of course, an editor who so desires can always get the last word), Bob writes: "Commenting on your editorial comments regarding my response to Colin Young's contention that the standard of judging today is not as good as it was 30 years ago, I offer the following rebuttal: First of all, my nostalgia period is

the same as Colin's and yours because that is the period in which we competed as racewalkers. However, I'm not about to let that cloud my judgment in regards to the appraisal of the judging standard today versus 30 years ago. I realize you were trying to be diplomatic, however, the standard is clearly better today. The IAAF Panel of Judges is younger, fitter, and held to a much higher standard. They are evaluated for consistency and their appointment based on their past performance. This simply didn't happen 20 to 40 years ago. In the future, the standard will be even higher in that starting in 1997, all IAAF judges will be required to pass oral, written, and practical examinations including a visual acuity test. This will certainly further raise the standard of judging for these important competitions.

Incidentally, Stankina was obviously off the ground, Kononen is not clearly off as you state. Not in my copy. Also he is walking in a crowd. He also received several cautions and one red card. I was simply giving a current example of when someone is obviously breaking contact, the judges of today will always detect it. This was not the case 30 years ago when the judging was weak and inconsistent. All you have to do is to look at the judging summary sheets to be convinced of that! For example, the only US/IAAF judge who judged the Olympics over a 20-year period was old Joe Tigerman. He was over the retirement age of today, had poor vision, and rarely made any calls. I stood next to him at the '72 Olympics and he didn't have a clue what he was doing. There was a guy from France who was even worse. He often fell asleep during these events! Are you going to tell me that these guys are as good as judges like Rudow, Westerfield, etc? Give me a break!

"Further, the proof that the walkers of today have significantly less loss of contact than 30 to 40 years ago is found in the videos and studies of these videos. The average flight phase for the elite walkers of 30-40 years ago is well over 50 ms. Today, it is in the 35 to 45 ms range with Schennikov measured consistently at 30 ms! This guy is walking 10 minutes faster for 20 Km than 1964 Olympic champion Ken Matthews with half the flight phase! Which is one of the reasons he is that much faster. Walkers in that period did not have the technique to minimize lifting as the walkers of today. All Olympic events have improved considerably in performance, technique, and officiation, and racewalking is no exception."

(Ed. Well, I wasn't trying to be diplomatic, but only to reflect my perspective, which I don't think is clouded by nostalgia. That, of course, doesn't mean it is right either. But, I do think Kononen was clearly off the ground in the photo I mentioned, and he was ahead of and outside the crowd. And, as I said before, I had another photo, no longer in my possession, showing a well-placed female certainly as clearly off the ground as Stankina. Also, see Martin Rudow's comments above regarding the review of video. As to measuring flight phase in milliseconds, let us remember that today's times are coming from shorter strides and extremely quick turnover. Therefore, it seems to me, that an athlete can have a shorter flight phase time, but be further off the ground. That is, today's athlete might get his foot down faster from 2 1/2 inches than yesterday's athlete did from 2 inches. Finally, I concluded by saying that there was no sense in arguing whether we do better today than yesterday, or vice versa. The important thing is striving to improve to as close to perfection as the human eye can come. Even Bob says that the judges of today will almost always detect someone obviously breaking contact. So, even if better than yesterday, the level of judging still has considerable room for improvement. And Bob says we are going in that direction. I'll accept that.) . . . Incidentally, the judges sheets from Atlanta suggest that all the judges aren't seeing the same thing. There were six disqualifications in both the 20 and 50. In both races, only one of the six had all three red cards for the same offense. In the 50 Thierry Toutain had three red cards for bent knees and in the 20 Miguel Rodriguez had three cards for loss of contact. In the 50, the other five DQs were all two contact, one bent knee. In the 20, there were three DQs with two contact and one bent knee, and two with two bent knees and one contact. Further, several athletes receiving two cards had one for each offense.

Wrecks of the Walk

Condition of the Women in the Crippling Match in Gilmore's Garden

(Ed. Six-day races, both walking and running, in indoor arenas were quite popular in the last third of the 19th century. I have run some material on such events at various times in the past. Sal Corrallo has sent me an interesting article that appeared in the April 11, 1879 edition of the *New Castle Courant*. I'm not sure what New Castle, though. I know of New Castle, Pa., since my father grew up in Western Pennsylvania. Anyway, here's the article.)

On the upper floor in a back room of the tenement, 47 Bedford Street, Clair was found last night in an almost dying condition. She had suffered from a succession of fainting spells ever since she was carried from Gilmore's Gardens on Monday evening. The chances are that the woman will recover, but it will be a long time before she will be able to walk. In one of her easier moments she said: "I came from the Garden without one cent, and tonight the landlord served a dispossess warrant on me. What will I do? I can't stand even. I had finished a walk of 1,250 quarter miles in New Haven on the 17th of March for which I was not paid one dollar. I was not fit to walk here, but I had no other chance to pay my debts." Her physician said she was suffering from a dangerous attack of one of the most painful diseases woman is heir to.

In a small backroom of the Putnam House, Cora Cushing tossed uneasily in a bed, with her arms bent in a bow over her head. No more beautiful arms or neck ever served as models for a sculptor. The color was slowly returning to her cheeks.

"I am gaining strength slowly," said Cushing. "I had no business in that walk. Nine days before I had finished a task of 3,000 quarter miles in Pedestrian Hall. I am sorry for the men who bet on me at the start and lost." She retired from the track at 2 yesterday morning having finished 198 miles. She was very sick and lame when she withdrew.

In tent No. 14, gray-haired Mrs. Farren was propped up with pillows on a cot. Her left limb, from her ankle to her knee, was badly swollen, and her feet were in a terrible condition. It was impossible for her to stand. Bathing her ankle with liniment made her wince and moan with pain. She had walked a great deal as a sewing machine agent before this match and thought she might be able to win something.

In another tent, Williams was lying on her back. She had hobbled in at 4:58 am, lame and exhausted. She rested till 10:24, when she attempted to resume, but was only able to crawl around one lap. Her right leg was badly swollen and inflamed from her ankle to her knee; her feet were covered with blisters and two of her toe nails came off with her stockings. She had walked 191 miles and 3 laps. A short time previously her trainer said she had walked 275 miles in 6 days. She was in no condition for the walk at the commencement.

Rich was reported as roaming around town in a crazy condition.

Of the five who remained on the track, Miss Tobias, the swimming woman, was in the best condition. She forged ahead with long, easy strides, walking a mile frequently in 14 minutes. She had taken matters so easily in the first days of the walk that she was 80 miles behind Von who was sturdily jogging(?) on at a rate of 18 minutes to the mile.

There was a hard struggle between young Kilbury and tough little Wallace for second place. Kilbury had more friends than Wallace and received the most applause. Occasionally, the young girl would break into a run, with a heavy, languid movement . . . (seems to be a line missing here) woman was losing her senses. Her friends wanted her to withdraw in the morning, but she said she would die on the track first. Shortly after this, she retired to her tent and a doctor was summoned to attend to her feet.

The fifth day ended at 11. The score of the remaining five out of the 18 starters was: Von Berg 318 miles, Wallace 296, Kilbury 293, Tobias 264, and Von Klamasch 250

At the beginning of the sixth and last day, only Von Berg, Kilbury, and Von Klamasch were walking. Tobias was resting, and Wallace was being doctored.

A few incidents of interest occurred on the this day. Bertha Von Berg, who was 20 miles ahead on the score, walked as steadily as she did on the first day. She was the only one in the 18 that started who was physically equal to the six days walk.

The contestants stopped walking at 11:20. The score then stood: Bertha Von Berg (real name Maggie Van Gross) 372 miles, Bella Kilbury 352, Wallace 336, Von Klamasch 300, and Tobias 292.

The women were called in front of the judges stand. Von Berg was presented with the belt, to be held under the Astley rules, and \$1000 cash. Kilbury received \$800, and Wallace \$250. Little Von Klamasch was presented with \$55, which was partly raised by subscription. It was rumored that a gentleman who admired her courage presented her with \$200 in the afternoon.

Al Smith, O'Leary's backer, made a bet of \$3000 that Kilbury would walk 340 miles. After winning the money, a gentleman said that he handed it over to the girl.

Tobias said last night that she did not enter the match to win anything, but mostly to train and see what she could do. It was the general opinion that she was the best walker in the match.

"One of the pedestriennes is dead, and another has been taken to the hospital," said Sergt. Timms of the 13th Street police last night. "Sergeant!" called out Capt. Williams from his office, "I order you to give no news to reporters. All that the law requires in this matter I have done."

No further information could be obtained.

(Ed. Certainly one of the strangest race reports we have ever published.)

Use But Don't Abuse Those Feet

by Dr. DeWayne Walker

(This article was provided by subscriber Jane Sweet and is reprinted from the TC Walkers' Footnotes with Dr. Walker's permission. The TC Walkers club is in the twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul.)

It is difficult to conceive of an activity, especially a sport or health promotion activity, that does not require the use of ones feet. Unfortunately, those two things beneath us get little credit for their contribution to our daily lives and in general are taken for granted. Consequently, on occasion they can do us in.

The foot is far more complex than we think, with some 26 individual bones bound together by strong ligaments. The muscles that control the movement of the foot consist of short muscles that lie entirely within the foot and long muscles in the leg whose tendons extend into the foot. High tech engineering is involved with the ligaments and muscles holding the bones of the foot in such a position that two main arches are formed. It is these resilient and elastic arches that give us spring to our gait, but anything interfering with the arches of the foot may cause painful feet and is fact arch problems are the most common cause of foot disability.

Foot conditions such as fallen arches, heel spurs, and bunions are among those significant malaise that should result in a visit to the podiatrist or physician. There are, however, three transient conditions--blisters, corns, and calluses--that have likely befallen us all. Beyond being a nuisance, these conditions can be very painful.

Blisters are caused by friction in which the upper layers of the epidermis are moved to and fro over the lower layers, producing a fluid-filled small cleft between the layers. When blisters form, it is best to leave them unbroken until the fluid is absorbed. However, if you are unable to

relieve the pressure pain, first aid consists of first washing the entire area with soap and water. Then, with a needle soaked in alcohol, make a small hole at the base of the blister and express the fluid. Naturally broken blisters or lanced blisters should be protected with a sterile dressing, protected from further irritation, and observed for signs of infection.

Corns and calluses are actually similar except for site and size. Corns are most commonly seen on the tops or sides of ones toes and are typically small protrudences, usually no more than 1/4" in diameter with a firm central core. Calluses are typically several times larger in diameter and typically found on the heel or bottom of the foot or toes. Both actually have a purpose as an extra layer of firm, thick tissue which has developed where toughened skin resists constant friction. But this protection can be a problem if the thickening becomes large, inflamed, or painful. The cause of both is ill-fitting footwear. Typically, shoes that cramp the toes can lead to corns and shoes that have worn inner soles or heels can create the constant rubbing leading to calluses. You can often relieve the pain of corns and calluses at home, using over-the-counter help, such as corn pads or a molehair pad over troubled areas. An adjunct home remedy consists of soaking the foot in soapy water for an extended period of time, then working away the thickened skin layer by gently rubbing with a towel or pumice stone. This may take several weeks and the temptation to cut them off should be avoided so as not to potentiate an infection. Naturally, if a corn or callus becomes ulcerated or sore, immediately see your doctor.

The best remedy for these three conditions is prevention. There are three ingredients to this approach: care of the feet, proper socks, and proper shoes. As stated in the introduction, feet are not only used considerably but abused considerably. I suspect that most of us, even when we bathe, ignore the feet giving a cursory wipe with a cloth or simply assuming in a shower that the soap running from our head will eventually get to and clean those feet. Bathing should include inspection of the feet for potential problems and then a thorough cleaning. Towel drying, between the toes is essential to avoid leaving a warm, dark, and moist environment for the growth of organisms.

Socks should be selected based on the expected use. For most sporting events, look at some of the newer synthetic fibers, such as nylon, Orlon, polypropylene, or blends of the same. They are desirable because they wick moisture away from the foot, which can benefit those prone to blistering. Cotton socks should not be ruled out, but they do tend to hold more moisture and become misshapen after repeated washings. This can lead to callus formation due to the chronic rubbing over the irregular surfaces. Sports enthusiasts may wish to consider the newer specialized socks that have thickened toes, arch areas, and heel depending on the expected impact area and natural wear for the given sport. If blisters persist even with these high tech socks, an old remedy is to keep the foot dry by the use of the old paste jar formulated deodorants. The paste, rubbed on the foot and allowed to dry before putting on a pair of socks, results in a remarkably dry foot for the duration of most any sporting event.

Ill-fitting shoes are thought to cause 80 percent of all foot problems. You should never buy a shoe with the idea of breaking it in or going small for vanity reasons. The tip of the shoe's toe should extend 1/4" to 1/2" beyond the end of the wearer's great toe. It is not uncommon for people to have slight differences in the size of their feet, thus suggesting that both feet should be measured for size and the larger size selected. Shoes, like tires, wear out and people, for economic or sentimental reasons, are reluctant to toss them. No one can tell you how often to buy a new pair, as factors such as quality, how often they are used, and what surfaces they are used on, play a major role. However, balding shoes don't absorb shock or give good traction, which means higher risk of injury. Also, in time, inner soles and the natural stretch of materials diminish the ability of the shoe to properly support the foot. Above all, buy a shoe for comfort, not for the flash stripes, lighted soles, or exotic shape. Your feet will thank your unrelenting support.

LOOKING BACK

30 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1966 ORW)--Don DeNoon won the National 1 Hour from Rudy Haluza, the favorite, covering 8 miles 138 yards. Haluza was 112 yards behind. Ron Laird, in third, went 7 miles 1430 yards, some 69 yards ahead of Larry Walker. . In the Ohio TC Distance Carnival "A gutsy Jack Blackburn, showing the zest of his long forgotten youth, moved easily away from decrepit old Jack Mortland in the last 5 miles of Sunday's 15 miler to cop individual walking honors." Blackburn took that one in 2:04:31 to Mortland's 2:07:28. The day before, Mortland had won a 7 miler in 55:57, but then succumbed to a fresh Blackburn in the 2 Mile, 14:16 to 14:56. In the women's 5 Mile, Jeanne Bocci turned in an excellent 43:54.

25 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1971 ORW)--Ron Laird won a fast 15 miles in Long Branch, N.J., with a 1:58:27, just over 2 minutes ahead of Todd Scully. . Bill Weigle did 50 Km in 4:40:59 on the track in Boulder, Col. . In the ORW Race Walking Orgy (replacing the OTC Distance Carnival), three races saw three winners. Phil McDonald walked a classy 10 Mile on Saturday morning--1:20:12. Jack Blackburn, recovering from the flu, was more than 20 minutes back. However, a few hours later he took to the track and matched a fresh Jack Mortland stride for stride as they deadheaded in 14:58.4 for 2 miles. The next day, Jerry Bocci captured the 20 miles in 2:59:56, with Blackburn struggling through in 3:29. McDonald stayed for Bocci for 12 miles and then called it a day. Mortland stopped at 14 miles, some 6 minutes behind Bocci.

20 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1976 ORW)--John Knifton was an easy winner in the National 35 Km in Pittsburgh with a 2:59:52. Detroit's Bill Walker and Matin Kraft followed in 3:06:20 and 3:07:09. Ray Somers, Ray Floriani, and Tom Hamilton rounded out the top six. . Locally, the rapidly aging Jacks engaged in a 2 Miler and Mortland prevailed by 0.5 second in 15:57.5, with Laurie Tucholski not far back in 16:31. . Bob Rosencrantz did a 4:29:48 for 50 Km on the track in Seattle. . In the ORW's Annual World Rankings, Mexico's Daniel Bautista, the Olympic champion was ranked first at 20 Km followed by Peter Frenkel, East Germany and Raul Gonzales, Mexico. Soviet ace Veniamin Soldatenko led Mexico's Enriugu Vera and Finland's Reima Salonen at 50. In the U.S. rankings, Ron Laird was placed ahead of Todd Scully, Larry Walker, and Larry Young at 20, and Young led Augie Hirt, Dan O'Connor, and Floyd Godwin at 50.

15 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1981 ORW)--Dan O'Connor easily won the National 40 Km in Long Branch, N.J. His 3:21:51 left him 8 minutes ahead of Ray Sharp. Randy Mimm, and Brian Savilonis followed. . In the Can-Am Cup races at Niagara Falls, Quebec was an easy winner over Wisconsin, Ontario, and the Niagara Association. At 20 Km, Quebec's trio swept honors, led by Guillaume Leblanc's 1:26:31. Marcel Jobin had 1:27:22 and Francois LaPointe 1:27:39. Jim Heiring, walking for Wisconsin, was fourth in 1:28:04. The women's 10 Km race went to Ann Peel of Ontario in 50:54, with Jeanne Bocci second in 52:31. . Alan Price won his fourth straight 100 miler in Columbia, Missouri, finishing in 20:14:45. Bob Chapin was nearly 1 1/2 hours back and Leonard Busen also completed the distance.

10 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1986 ORW)--John Slavonic won his first National title, taking the 40 Km at Ft. Monmouth, N.J. His 3:29:01 left him nearly minutes ahead of Steve Pecinovsky with Curt Clausen another 2 1/2 minutes back in third. . In an International race in Los Angeles, Mexico's Maria Colin beat Debbi Lawrence over 10 Km, 47:42 to 49:28. Mexican Junior, Carlos Mercenario won an accompanying 20 Km in 1:24:25 with Martin Bermudez second in 1:24:54. Carl Schueler, more prominent at 50 Km, was a surprise third in 1:27:25, beating Daniel Levesque

and Guillaume Leblanc of Canada, as well as Tim Lewis (1:29:42 in sixth). . Canadian Francois Lapointe journeyed down to Columbus for a 50 Km and whipped through an impressive 3:58:45, beating countryman Martin Archimbault by nearly 11 minutes.

5 Years Ago (From the Nov. 1991 ORW)--In Atlanta, Jonathan Matthews turned in a 4:23:35 for 50 Km, beating Paul Malek by just 44 seconds, and Dave McGovern blitzed a 20 Km in 1:29:12 with Ian Whateley second in 1:30:56.

Atlanta

(Some excerpts from descriptions of the Olympic racewalks in the *IAAF Magazine*.)

20 Km. Jefferson Perez, who at 22 became the youngest ever Olympic walking champion, walked a canny race, ignoring the early jousting at the head of the field. He was only 22nd at the 2 Km checkpoint and 21st after 6 Km. But by halfway, which he passed in 40:59, he was a joint fourth with Li Zewen and Ilya Markov, just 8 seconds off the lead. He covered the second half of the race in a very fast 39:08.

Perez, who lives at 1500 meters above sea level and trains for up to 5 hours a day, remarked: "When I took the lead I felt very tired as if I was half asleep; it felt like a dream. Then I thought that this is my dream. I have to go for it even if I die. I have to win for Latin America and my country." (*Ed. With that said, this item from T&F News: Olympic 20 Km walk champ Jefferson Perez, Ecuador's first-ever Olympic medalist, is threatening to take out Colombian citizenship. Perez is distraught over the lack of support he is getting from his federation. One particularly heavy blow was the failure of the federation to renew his coach's contract, even after the Olympic gold.*)

50 Km. Robert Korzenowski from Poland has known many disappointments in major competitions. At the 1992 Olympics he failed to finish the 20 Km and was disqualified in the 50 just before the finish when in second place. He was pulled too in the 1993 World 50 Km and 1994 European 20 Km. Only last year, when he placed third in the 50 at the World Championships, did the tide start to turn and now he is Olympic champion at that distance. He walked a shrewd and fair race, receiving no red cards.

10 Km. Here's one for the trivia buffs. In which event is the women's Olympic record superior to the men's? It's the 10 Km walk. There is a catch, as the men's event (actually 10,000 meters on the track) was last staged in 1952. But the best time recorded was 45:02.8 by John Mikaelsson of Sweden--which would have placed 17th in the Atlanta women's road walk! The first 14 broke the inaugural Olympic record of 44:32 established in Barcelona by Chen Yucling of China.

On that occasion, Yelena Nikolayeva finished just one second behind, and in the intervening years built up a steady sequence of high placings: third in the 1994 European and 1995 World Championships, second in the 1995 World Cup. Her only major victory remained the world indoor 3000 meter title in 1991.

This year, aged 30, Nikolayeva has set new standards. She produced the extraordinary time of 41:04 in April, knocking 25 seconds off the previous world best, and she led the way in Atlanta. "What a wonderful morning it was," she beamed. "There was not the famous Atlanta heat at all. I had no pre-race plan except for torturing myself and to be aware of the judges."

Elisabetta Perrone, the Italian who switched from distance running to walking because she lost most weight that way, finished second as she had in the 1995 World Championships. Third was China's Wang Yan, who may only be 25 but was a world record breaker a full decade ago.

She was just 14 years and 334 days old when she set new 5000 meter figures back in 1986, becoming the youngest world record holder in history.

Technique--A Brief Reminder

Coach Jim Coots, San Diego

(Lifted from Bob Carlson's *Front Range Walkers News*.)

This is the time of year to rest our sore bodies and frazzled psyches, and an excellent opportunity to focus on walking technique. Let's take a moment to review exactly what we mean by good technique.

An important principle to keep in mind is that everything you do while racewalking should contribute to forward motion, and every movement that does not contribute to forward motion wastes valuable energy. Once you understand this you are in position to critique anything you ever hear or read about good walking technique, whether from me or from some other self-professed expert. Simply ask how each element of technique contributes to forward motion.

For example, why should your feet generally fall on a straight line as you walk? The answer is that since the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, any steps that do not fall on the line are taking you from one side to other on each stride, which means you are walking further than the shortest possible distance. If this is so obvious, why don't I ever teach anyone to place their feet on a line as they walk? The reason is that if you learn to rotate your hips properly, no one should ever have to teach you to walk on a line. You will do so automatically. (Ed. But isn't walking on a straight line a way to teach proper hip rotation?)

Another feature of walking technique that people focus on is the arm swing. If you read articles and books, you will encounter everything imaginable: Bend your elbows 90 degrees; swing your hands up in front of the opposite shoulder, or in front of the same shoulder, or in front of the opposite nipple; drive your elbows back until the hands are even with the hips, or back as far as possible. How do you know what to believe?

My advice: drive the elbows back as far as possible and stop the forward swing so that each hand finishes in front of the bellybutton. In other words, focus on the back swing and truncate the forward swing. Driving the elbows back forces the rest of the body forward, creating a slight forward lean. This assists forward motion in three ways: it helps you gain as much distance as possible on each step, it helps get the recovery foot back on the ground quickly so that you can begin the next step, and it helps with forward propulsion by using gravity from the forward lean position. Letting your hands go higher than the bellybutton on the forward swing eliminates all these advantages. It also has the effect of slowing down the stride frequency and lengthening your stride too much, both of which reduce speed.

How about head position? This is something you probably never hear me talk about, but I do yell at people to keep their eyes up. Some walkers have the bad habit of looking down, which places the head forward of the midline of the body, causing the rest of the body to lean back to compensate for the awkward position of the head. This eliminates the desirable body lean discussed above, and it causes the muscles in the neck and shoulders to tighten unnecessarily. In general, try to keep your head in a neutral position.

There are several things that are important in good walking, such as "keep your knees straight", and "stay in contact with the ground". These, of course, are part of the legal requirements, and there is no arguing with the judges. Just accept them. Work on them regularly throughout the training year until you have them mastered.

Your contribution to this article is to think of the technique problem I keep yelling at you about. Why is it important? How does it contribute to (or detract from) forward motion? Figure it out. I'll see you at the track.



Gallery of the past. Ron Laird nears the finish line of a 20 Km in Viariggio, Italy in August 1967. Ron scored a significant win over 1964 Olympic 50 Km champion Abdon Pamich in a personal best 1:28:18. Two months later, he took third in the Lugano Cup (now World Cup) 20 Km.