Hot Times In Europe
World Best For Spitsyn; American Record For Clausen; 
Russian Women (Five of Them) Under 20 Km Best

Beginning with the Naumburg Grand Prix in Germany on the final weekend of April, the past month has seen a series of fast competitive European races featuring some of the world's best men and women.

Topping off the spectacular month were the Russian championships on May 21, where Valeriy Spitsyn covered 50 Km in 3:37:26, 15 seconds under Andrei Perlov's world road best set in 1989. Even more amazing was the annihilation of Hongyu Liu's world best 20 km of 1:27:30. Tatyana Gudkova won in 1:25:18 and fifth place Olimpilda Ivanova was just 50 seconds back, still 82 seconds under the previous best.

U.S. walkers were involved in many of the other European races with Curt Clausen's American record of 1:23:55.77 on the track in Bergen, Norway topping those efforts. The old record was Tim Seaman's 1:24:24.4 in Sacramento in February. Seaman had just snuck under Allen James' record of 1:24:26.9 set on the Bergen track in 1994. Only Tim Lewis (four times with a best of 1:21:40), Clausen (1:23:24) and Seaman (1:23:42) have gone faster on the road.

Here's a rundown of these and the other outstanding races.

Naumburg, Germany, April 30--This long-standing annual event saw three fast competitive races highlighted by the women's 20 km where Hongyu Liu, then holder of the world's best for the distance, was strongly challenged by Aussie veteran Kerry Saxby-Junna. Liu won in 1:29:20, with the 38-year-old Saxby just 16 seconds back. Saxby was 4 seconds under her personal best set way back in 1988, before many women were walking 20 km races. The pair were together for 15 km from where the Chinese lady eased ahead. Saxby's teammate, Jane Saville, was a strong third in 1:30:12, 46 seconds under her previous best. Danielle Kirk had a personal best with a strong 1:36:46 in 21st, as she fought hard to get the Olympic "A" standard of 1:36. Susan Armenta was two spots back in 1:38:14, three spots ahead of Gretchen Eastler-Fishman. Sara Standley and Victoria Herazo finished 29th and 30th.

In the men's 20 Km, Germany's Andreas Erm, a steady, if not spectacular, performer through the years (World ranked number 8 in 1998), outpaced a strong field to win in 1:20:30. Mexico's Daniel Garcia, world number one in 1997 and ranked third last year, was shuffled back to eighth place, just three spots of Andrew Hermann, who walked a strong 1:26:30. Curt Clausen was 15th in 1:28:43, with Sean Albert in 17th, Philip Dunn in 18th, Kevin Eastler in 20th, and Tim Seaman in 23rd.

Viktor Ginko, Belarus, fifth in the 96 Olympics, outclassed the 50 Km field in 3:47:53, while last year's number 3 ranked walker, Sergei Korepinov could manage only fifth place. The Germans were strong with five under 4 hours. Results of the Naumburg races:

Women's 20 Km--1. Liu Hongyu, China 1:29:20 2. Kerry Saxby-Junna, Australia 1:29:36 3. Jane...
Results:


- Women's 10 Km: 1. Anne Simonsen, Norway 45:42.21 2. Susan Armenta, USA 48:08.52 3. Danielle Kirk, USA 49:06.86

Russian Championships, May 21—Valeri Spitsyn set a new world best of 3:37:26 in the Men's 50 Km on the last day of an incredible Russian championships in which five women also crushed the previous world's best for 20 km. Spitsyn's 3:37:26 was 15 seconds better than Andrey Perio's 1989 performance in Linzigrad.

Spitsyn has been among the world's best for several years, but never at this level. He was second only in the world in 1994, when he won the European championships. He was fourth in the 1992 Olympics, third in the 1993 World Championships, and fourth in the 1995 World Cup, but has been second for the last three years. He missed the '96 Olympics because he was the victim of a violent assault 21 days before he was due to depart for Atlanta.

Following today's race, he said, "I needed to show world record in the battle for a place on the team. In Sydney, the walk will be slower. Now I am going to have a rest and then I'll begin preparation for the third peak performance this year—first in the European championships and then in the World Cup."

In the women's race on Friday, Tatyana Gudivkova's 1:25:18 was 2:12 under the previous world best and beat Olga Polyakova by just 2 seconds, with the better-known Irina Stankina another 9 seconds back. Tamara Kovalenko and Olimpia Ivanova were also well under the record. In the men's 20, Aleksandr Rasskazov won in 1:17:46, bettering the world best of 1:17:30 that record, which must be on a track, is held by Mexican Bernardo Segura at 1:17:25.6. Results of the Russian championships:


- Women's 10 Km: 1. Anne Simonsen, Norway 45:42.21 2. Susan Armenta, USA 48:08.52 3. Danielle Kirk, USA 49:06.86
Rohls Blitzes U.S. 20 Km Best

Kenosha, Wis., May 13—Walking on her own after the first 5 km, Michelle Rohls walked an impressive 20 km today, completing the distance in 1:31:51. The previous best by U.S. women was Michelle's 1:33:17 at last year's U.S. Championships. The 33-year-old Rohls, who had returned to Wisconsin 10 days earlier from altitude training in New Mexico, enjoyed the cool air (50-55 F) and walked strong the whole way. Seeking a sub 46 minute 10 km, she covered the first 5 in 22:57 and then accelerated to hit 10 in 45:42. She maintained the pace for the third 5 with a 22:53 before slowing slightly on the final 5 (23:16).

In second, Debbi Lawrence, 37, showed she will be ready to challenge for an Olympic berth, bettering her personal record with a 1:34:41. Perhaps most impressive of all was 20-year-old Sara Stevenson, the fast improving Olvet Nazarene student. Walking her first 20, and never having broken 48 minutes for 10, she went through the first 10 in 46:40 and then hung on well, even closing a little ground on Lawrence over the final 5, to finish in 1:35:22. Quite a debut at the distance! An instant number 4 on the all-time U.S. list.

In the men's 20 km, Matt DeWitt, a 20-year-old protege of his U.W. Parkside coach and father Mike, improved his personal best by more than 5 minutes as he won easily in 1:32:41.

Two other European races:


La Coruna, Spain, May 20: Men's 20 Km–1. Michelle Didoni, Italy 1:22:45 2. Julio Martinez, Guat. (The results say Spain, but unless this is a different Julio or he had a quick change in citizenship since the Bergen race, that's a mistake.) 3. David Marquez, Spain 1:24:10 4. Mikel Orioizola, Spain 1:24:31 5. Jose Rodriguez, Spain 1:24:53 6. Andrew Hermann, USA 1:25:05 (Another solid race for Andrew and a personal best.) Women's 10 Km–1. Claudia Iovan, Romania 44:35 2. Maria Vasco, Spain 44:48 3. Encarna Granados, Spain 45:07

Other Results


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**Sat. June 10**
- 10K, Long Island, 5:30 pm (F)
- 2.8 Miles, Seattle, 9 am (C)
- 5K, Denver, 8:30 am (H)

**Sun. June 11**
- 3K, New Hyde Park, L.I., N.Y. (F)
- 5K, Cambridge, Mass. (N)
- 3K, Alexandria, Va. (J)

**Mon. June 12**
- 5K, Long Branch, N.J. 6:45 pm (A)

**Sat. June 17**
- 5K, Long Island, 9 am (F)
- New EWing 3K, Dedham, Mass. (N)

**Sun. June 18**
- Ohio 8K and Novice 3K (Track), Franklin, 1 pm (M)

**Mon. June 19**
- 5K, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)

**Wed. June 21**
- 5K, Denver, 6 pm (H)

**Sat. June 24**
- 4K, Mile Long Island, 9 am (F)
- 5 and 10K, Youth 3K, Van Nuys, CA, 5 pm (B)
- 15 and 20K, Kenosha, Wis. (O)

**North Region 8 KM, Lakeville, Minn. (DD)**
- 5K, Denver (H)

**Sun. June 25**
- Metropolitan 15K, New York City, 9 am (G)
- 3K, Alexandria, Va. (J)
- 1 Hour, Sacramento (F)
MAY 2000

1999 Postal 1 Hour Results

This annual affair is sponsored by the Shore AC. You hold your own races on the track and mail in the results. For information on the 2000 competition—you can hold a race anytime until Dec. 31—contact Elliott Denman, 28 N. Locust, West Long Branch, NJ 07764, 732-222-0080, E-mail Elliottden@aol.com. Some highlights of the 1999 competition. Citoria Hazo set a woman's 40-44 record of 11,597 meters. Gayle Johnson topped the women's 50-54 record with 10,815. Bev LaVeek, already of the 55-59 record, added the 60-64 record with 9702. The Potomac Valley women (Cheryl Rellinger, Kora Boullier, and Alison Zabrenski) totaled 33,395 meters to set an all-time women's open division team record. The Shore AC's trio of Donna Chamberlain, Lyn Brubaker, and Sherry Bramer, totaled 33,298 meters for an age 40-49 record.


V—Pat Walker, 3537 S. State Rd. 135, Greenwood, IN 46143 W—New Mexico Racewalker, P.O. Box 6301, Albuquerque, NM 87197 CC—Jim Hanley, PO Box 6744, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 DD—Bill Reed, 8242 Greenfield Shores, Scotts, MI 49088
friends to us all. This group was so tight-knit that we saw each other just about every weekend. New Year's eve 1956 found us at Roy and Ethel Chernock's house. I must admit, we were pretty good at knocking down beer and for some—mixed drinks. We moved the ping-pong table from the center of the room and were kiddingly racewalking diagonally across the rec room floor, when Henry said to me "You should take up racewalking." (I was still a pretty good x-country and distance runner at the time. It was almost like a challenge.

Henry and I trained together at the Pioneer Armory and in my first race they gave me a sizeable headstart (previously called handicap races) and I won by a large margin and got a big trophy. Being a "pot hunter" from way back, I was hooked. He and Hilde have been my enthusiastic supporters and friends ever since. As families, we've always been close despite being separated by 1500 miles. All the Jacobsons will miss Henry—the man who never had a bad word about anyone, who finally, after too many years waiting—was elected to USATF's Hall of Fame at a time when he didn't have a chance to appreciate it.

Some years ago, the Mineola, Long Island Mustang group, conducted as part of their running race, The Henry Laskau Racewalk. It was dropped for some reason. The Long Island T&F Racewalk Committee will approach that group to reinstate the race in Henry's (a former Mineola resident) honor. The NY Walkers Club will also conduct an annual race walk in his honor. This year we'll conduct the 90th Annual Coney Island Racewalks. Each year we have given, in Henry's honor, the "Henry Laskau Olympic Trophy" for the male with the best racewalk performance. Sadly, this year, it will be in memoriam. If there are clubs around the country that would like to conduct an event dedicated to this great contributor to our sport, please contact me. I have pictures and more information." Coach Jake, 91 Blue Spruce Road, Levittown, NY 11756, 516-579-WALK.

And this from another one who Henry inspired and tutored, Olympian Elliott Demman:

"His gone now—so hard to believe—but Henry Laskau will be forever enshrined in my book of golden memories as a No. 1 Guy of All.

He touched so many lives. He turned so many of them around, mine most surely included.

He took me under his wing. He showed me The Way. He led me in all the right directions.

His story is of legend. It should have been made into a book or movie. (Maybe that might still be possible.) All the details out there now. Frank Litsky wrote a marvelous tribute of an obituary in the New York Times. I understand there have been others around the nation.

Henry deserved every good word written or spoken about him. He is all true. He was a man too good to be true, true to all his honorary brothers and sisters in his sport (who in some fated way perhaps may have replaced the real family he lost in the Holocaust.)

And true to all humanity.

Henry taught me to aspire, to overcome, to dream, to seek out...and decades before Nike...to Just Do It.

He just did it—it meaning being A MAN—so well. No one did it better.

We'll all miss you immensely, Dear Friend (and honorary brother) Henry"

From former USA Track & Field Racewalk Chairman and long-time contributor to the sport in this country, Bob Bowman:

"What an inspiration he was to all of us who were fortunate to be his friend. From the first day I met him almost 40 years ago, he always treated me as a special friend who I cared more about than himself. It was not surprising to later learn that is exactly how he treated everyone. In all the years I knew him, under all kinds of circumstances, I never heard him say a negative thing! He was always positive despite what he had experienced in his early years. This story needs to be
told somehow. God surely must be more than pleased with this wonderful man's performance right from the start all the way to the finish line. What a remarkable life! I will miss him dearly."

As will all who knew him. He was always encouraging to my career and seemed genuinely pleased to see Jack Blackburn and I emerge from the midwest to challenge racewalking's elite. It was always a pleasure to see Henry when we went East for races. He did give me a caution in the Indoor 1 Mile early in my career and one of my few DQs in the National 25 as my career was fading, but in both cases spent time with me after the race giving positive reinforcement and sound advice. As Bob has said, always positive, never negative. It was almost worth a DQ to have a good talk with Henry.

Actually, I first encountered Henry several years before I took up racewalking. I journeyed to Dayton with a good friend in 1953, having just graduated from high school, to see the National AAU T&F meet. I had seen Henry walk an indoor meet in Cleveland a couple of years earlier, but did not know much about his branch of the sport. We stopped at the most headquarters hotel before the first day's events and my friend suddenly said, "There's Henry Laskau." We asked for his autograph, which he gracefully gave, in his usual warm, friendly manner. I never imagined that I would be following his footsteps a few years down the line. I don't recall what, if any, conversation we had, but I was impressed with how he reacted to a couple of impetuous teenagers. Incidentally, the other autograph we got was that of Olympic 800 meter runner (7th 1952) Reggie Pearman, another member of the NY Pioneer Club that Jake mentions above. Reggie was equally gracious.

According to Bob Fine, Henry's service was very touching, attended by more than 150 persons, with many giving memorableness. Bob says, "Racewalking is not a major factor in mankind's existence. Yet Henry touched many lives-making them a bit better." He reports that Hilde has suggested that anyone who wishes to make a donation in Henry's name can send it to Alzheimers's Day Care-Nefp, 227 Northwest 2nd Street, Deerfield Beach, FL 33441.

Finally, this obituary from the Associated Press:

Henry Laskau, who slipped out of a Nazi Labor camp and ended up in the National T&F Hall of Fame after dominating race walking for more than a decade, has died. He was 83. Mr. Laskau won 42 national titles, held five national records, and made three Olympic appearances (48',52',56). "He died a very peaceful death, for which we are all very grateful," his widow, Hilde Laskau said Monday from the couple's Coconut Creek home.

Mr. Laskau was voted into the National T&F Hall of Fame in December 1997. In his native Berlin, Mr. Laskau was a 22-year-old middle distance runner on a Jewish team when, one day, a knock on the door turned out to be Nazis. He went to a labor camp, the holding ground before the Third Reich's death camps. After about 3 months at the camp, Mr. Laskau got a suggestion from a sympathetic guard who said he would turn his back if Mr. Laskau were to leave that night. He did, and made his way to France, where he boarded a ship to Cuba.

Nine months later he was in the U.S. His brother and parents died in concentration camps.

In 1941, in New York, Mr. Laskau met Hilde, whose family had fled Germany, and they married two years later. Mr. Laskau took up racewalking relatively late in life, entering and winning his first race at age 30 in 1946. From that point on, he was the best U.S. walker until 1957, when his wife took one shoe out of his travel bag because she wanted him to go out on top. During those 11 years, he won national titles at distances from 1 mile to 25 Km. He won 11 straight 10 Km crowns and won national titles at distances from 1 mile to 25 Km. He won 11 straight 10 Km crowns and was the champion of both the indoor mile and outdoor 3 Km/2 miles for 10 years running. In addition to his Olympic teams, he brought home gold from the first Pan American Games in 1951.

From Heel to Toe

New rates. When I raised the subscription rates with last month's issue, I wondered about complaints and possible effect on renewals. Of course, the number of subscribers has shown a steady decline for several years anyway. A few days later I got my first renewal under the new rates--with a check for $15.00 rather than $12.00. The renewal slip was marked "$12.00 + $3.00 gift!" Gosh! I didn't intend to be begging. But, the gift was appreciated (although I applied to an additional 3 months on the subscription)... ORW--your love connection. Joe Berendl's name, which I hadn't seen for several years, has been appearing in recent results from the S.F. area. A couple of days ago, I got a note and a check from Joe. The note read: "Hello from a subscriber from long ago now wishing to renew my subscription... I drifted from racewalking back in '89 and restarted about 3 years ago. The reason for renewing is more than for informational purposes; it's also for sentimental reasons. Back in early 1988, I lived in an apartment complex in Hayward, Cal. and moved a couple of times, within the same apartment complex though. So I never updated my mailing address with ORW as the mail man always forwarded it to my new place--except once. That time it was delivered to a neighbor of my first apartment within that complex. A neighbor whom, except for an occasional hello, I never would have met. She knew I was still in the complex somewhere so she looked in the phone book. Not listed. Then she looked in an old phone book hoping I kept the same phone number--I did. She called and said she had a piece of my mail delivered to her by mistake and that if I wanted it, it would cost a movie out. I took her challenge and had a great evening, but she didn't tell me about or give me the piece of mail. She finally gave me the piece of mail about a year later--as a wedding gift. It was, of course, the ORW. We have been married now for just over 10 years partly thanks to you." Joe, welcome back. We are humbled to think we could so enrich your life, but always glad to be of service.

U.S. All-Time Top (as of 5/21/00)

Women's 20 Km

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:31:51</td>
<td>Michelle Rohl, MCRT, Kenesho, Wis.</td>
<td>5/13/00</td>
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<td>1:33:27</td>
<td>Jennie Dow, adidas TC, Manassas, Vir.</td>
<td>3/20/99</td>
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<td>1:34:41</td>
<td>Debbi Lawrence, Nike, Kenesho, Wis.</td>
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<td>1:35:22</td>
<td>Sara Stevenson, Olivet Nazarene, Kenesho, Wis.</td>
<td>5/13/00</td>
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<td>1:35:38</td>
<td>Lynn Weik, Nat. Sport, Hauppauge, N.Y.</td>
<td>12/22/91</td>
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<td>1:35:40</td>
<td>Victoria Henzo, Cal Walkers, Albany, N.Y.</td>
<td>5/21/95</td>
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<td>1:35:45</td>
<td>Teresa Vaill, un., Manassas, Vir.</td>
<td>4/2/00</td>
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<td>1:36:46</td>
<td>Danielle Kirk, SC Walkers, Naumburg, Ger.</td>
<td>4/30/00</td>
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<td>1:37:04</td>
<td>Susan Armenta, SC Walkers, Eugene, Ore.</td>
<td>6/27/99</td>
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<td>1:37:19</td>
<td>Jill Zenner, MVTC, Manassas, Vir.</td>
<td>3/20/99</td>
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Men's 20 Km

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<td>1:21:48</td>
<td>Tim Lewis, NYAC, St. Leonard, Can.</td>
<td>10/5/86</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:23:34</td>
<td>Curt Clausen, NYAC, Eugene, Ore.</td>
<td>6/27/99</td>
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Looking Back

35 Years Ago (From the May 1965 ORW)—In its third month of publication, the ORW was still a bit provincial, and this issue featured a lot of the editor (Yea, even then, Jack Mortland) and publisher (Jack Blackburn, who was actually responsible for our starting this publication, though he ducked out after a couple of years). 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 high temperature and humidity—or, at least, so we boastfully reported—and Blackburn beat him 10 K 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 Ray Sharp, un., St. Leonard, Can., 10/5/86

20 Years Ago (From the May 1980 ORW)—Carl Schueler won the 50 Km Olympic Trial 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 K and went on to take the third spot in 4:11:03. Jim finished in 4:12:37. Vincent O'Sullivan and Wayne Glusker filled the next two spots... A week earlier, 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 K 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 the next day with a 42:01, ahead of Ray Sharp's 42:49. Pecinovsky edged O'Connor for third this time. The races were in Chicago... Sue Brodock won the U.S. 20 K km title in 1:48:22, as Vicki Jones finished second and Lori Maynard third... The men's 20 was held in Seattle with O'Connor beating a relatively weak field in an excellent 1:26:26. John VanDenbrandt, Terry Lingblom, and Al Haltur followed.

15 Years Ago (From the May 1995 ORW)—With heat slowing the times, Carl Schueler defended his U.S. 50 Km title in New York City. Carl's 4:18:07 left Marco Evoniuk better than 7 minutes back. Randy Minn was another 12 minutes back; then came Dane O'Connor, Dan Pierce, and Bob Davidson... Jim Heiring won the National 5 Km in Denver in a swift 20:21. Dave Cummings had 20:40 to beat Tim Lewis (20:56) for second. Marco Evoniuk, Gary Morgan, and Todd Scully were next. Maryanne Torrellas (23:52) took the women's title ahead of Esther Lopez (24:25) and Teresa Vaull (24:50)... At the Mexican walking week, Martin Berumdez won the U.S. 20 K in 2:35:50, Columbia's Quevino Moreno the 1 Hour with 14,270 meters, and Norway's Erling Anderson the 50 K in 3:59:34. Sweden's Ann Jansson won the women's 20 K in 1:36:37... China's Hsiu Yan had a women's world best of 44:14 for 10 K, with 15 more of her countrywomen under 48 minutes in the same race. Two days later, she died 21:43 for 5 K, but was beaten by Jungjiu (21:42).

10 Years Ago (From the May 1990 ORW)—National 5 K races were held in Bethany, Oklahoma with Tim Lewis (21:06) and Teresa Vaull (22:45) winning. Dave McGovern and Ian Whatley were second and third in the men's race. Victorial Horazo and Susan Liers got the silver and bronze in the women's race.

5 Years Ago (From the May 1995 ORW)—Chinese women completed dominated the World Cup 10 K, held on thier home turf in Beijing. They finished 1,3,4,12, and 15, finishing 16 points ahead of Italy in the team race. Hongmin Gao won the race in 42:19, 13 seconds ahead of Russia's Elena Nikolaeva. With Michelle Rohr in 34th (45:57) and Victoria Henzo 42nd, the U.S. women finished 14th. The Chinese men also did well, winning both races, taking four of the top 10 spots in the 20, and finishing third in the final standings (20 and 50 combined). Mexico was first and Italy second in the team standings. The 20 went to China's Zewen Li in 1:19:44, 14 seconds ahead of Russia's Mikhail Sechmennov. Bernado Segura was third for Mexico. In the 50, Yongsheng Zhao led all the way to win in 3:41:20 with Spain's Jesus Garcia 34 seconds behind. Finland's Valentin Kononen was third. The U.S. men finished 13th... Allen James was 40th in the 20 (1:25:54). Those two grand vets, Carl Schueler (39) and Marco Evoniuk (37), led the way at 50 finishing 42nd and 47th. Carl had a 4:06:45... In a fast Penn Relays 10 K, Herm Nelson won in 42:06, with the Szelza brothers (Luuka and Wojciech) second and third in 42:15 and 42:55. Chad Eder had 43:02 and Tim Seaman and Curtis Fisher were under 44... Eder had a 1:28:57 for 10 K in Kenosha, Wis., beating Al Heppner (1:31:53). Debbi Lawrence had a 45:18 for 10 at the same place.