Rohl bests record; Seaman dominates

Atlanta, March 3 (From Al Heppner)--Three-time Olympian Michelle Rohl survived a blistering first kilometer to win the USA Track & Field National Indoor Women's 3 Km racewalk with a meet record of 12:28.32. Just a few minutes earlier, the New York Athletic Club's Tim Seaman pulled away from teammate Curt Clausen to win his fourth straight 5 Km title in 19:19.26.

Olivet Nazarene senior Sara Stevenson set a suicidal pace for the first kilometer of the women's race, hitting the mark in 4:01, well under American record pace. Rohl traded off with Stevenson and Jill Zerrer stayed less than 2 seconds back. Then Rohl took over and steadily pulled away from the rest of the field. Though slowing from Stevenson's initial pace, she was very steady with 4:14 and 4:13 for the final two kilometers and left Zerrer 22 seconds behind in second.

Stevenson paid the biggest price for blazing the first kilometer. The youngest competitor in the field stayed in second until just after the 2 Km mark, when Zerrer easily passed her. Zerrer, after a 4:03 first km, walked 4:24 and 4:26, missing her personal best by just one second with her 12:50.91. Stevenson did 4:25 for her second km, but obviously laboring, needed 4:42 for the final km to finish in 13:18.21. Parkside Athletic Club's Deb Huberty out battled teammate Sam Cohen for fourth place.

In the men's race, Seaman quickly took the lead, followed closely by Clausen and Sean Albert. The U.S. Army's Al Heppner and Mike Rohl of New Balance started well off the pace. At the 2 km mark, Seaman began to pull away from Clausen and Heppner who had fallen off the leaders. Clausen was unable to match his teammate on the third kilometer, and Seaman was in control. Shooting for Tim Lewis' American record of 19:18.40 (set at the World Championships in Indianapolis in 1987), Seaman walked splits of 3:47, 3:48, 3:52, 3:59, and 4:01 to Clausen's 3:47, 3:50, 4:01, 4:03, and 3:59.

"I did the best I could to win. Curt has been runnerup to me the past four years, but he has walked the three fastest runnerup times ever," said Seaman.

Clausen finished in 19:43.35 for a new indoor personal record, while Seaman recorded the fastest time ever by an American at the meet, bettering Lewis' 19:30.70 in 1987. He doesn't get the meet record though, which was set in 1988 by Canada's Guillaume Leblanc at 18:33.25. Foreigners were allowed to compete in the meet until 1993.

"I felt fine. I got through 2 km and I couldn't hold his pace. He's a heck of a competitor and it's good to have someone out there pushing you to get better. I'll take the personal best and as long as I keep getting faster it's OK," Clausen said.

The progression of Seaman's and Clausen's times the past four years are unparalleled in any U.S. racewalking era. Starting in 1998, Seaman's last four winning times have been 19:59, 19:45, 19:32, and 19:29. Clausen's marks are 20:27, 19:54, 19:53, and 19:43. If the duo continues at this rate, Lewis, American record is not safe. The results:

**Women's 3 Km**
1. Michelle Rohl, Moving Comfort 12:28.32
2. Jill Zerrer, un. 12:50.91
3. Sara Stevenson, Olivet Nazarene 13:18.21
4. Deb Huberty Parkside AC 14:24.73
5. Sam Cohen, Parkside AC 14:31.72.
McDonald, Antonia Lead Parkside Sweep of NAIA Walks

Johnson City, Tenn., March 3—Wisconsin Parkside continued its domination of racewalking at the NAIA Indoor Championships, taking the first three spots in the men's 5 Km and first and third in the women's race (with an assist to the absence of Sara Stevenson, competing in Atlanta). Lachlan McDonald and Amber Antonia were the winners. Antonia, a sophomore, also finished third in the 3000 meter run and ran a leg on the fifth place distance medley relay team.

Youth was well represented, with all the competitors, save two seniors in the women's race, being freshmen and sophomores.

The races provided some major controversy, however, about which we have only scanty details. In the men's race, several were DQ'd after the race, apparently without any cautions or warnings during the race. These included Matt Dewitt and Jim Hey of Parkside, who would have given Parkside a sweep of the first five spots. In the women's race, the officials at the finish line failed to count laps properly and the athletes had to walk an extra 280 meter lap, which renders the times rather meaningless. (As a guide, if you figure Antonia's average pace for the actual 3280 meters, she would have taken about 83 seconds for the extra 280 meters. Chances are her pace slowed when she knew she should have been finished. Anyway, if you deduct about 1:30 from the times, you'll get an approximation of their actual 3 km time. Those further back require a greater deduction.) The results:


More Results


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More Results

Swing those hips to and fro, as a racing thou dost go!
(Hey, why didn't someone blast me for last month's blunder on the heading for this feature—"... Get in the Oow from feel to toe". Obviously I intended "heel to toe", but just now noticed the mistake. If you care to read something Freudian into it, go ahead. Decided I may as well carry the theme a bit further this month.)

Sat. April 7
Half Marathon, Xenia, Ohio (M)
10 km, Aspire, N.Y. (E)
5 km, Santa Anita, Cal. (Y)
Sun. April 8
Pac. Assn. 15 km, Sacramento, Cal. (X)
5 km, Santa Anita, Cal. (Y)
5 km, Cambridge, Mass., 9:30 am (AA)
South Regional 10 km, Orlando, Florida (L)
4 mile, Denver, 9 am (H)
Metropolitan 10 km Championship, New York City, 9 am (F)
Sat. April 14
2.8 miles, Seattle, 9 am (C)
8 km, Alexandria, Virginia, 7:30 am (O)
15 km, Long Island, 9 am (F)
Sun. April 22
Masters Regional 10 km, Seattle, 10 am (C)
Orienteering 15 km, Middletown, 1 pm (M)
Ron Zimm Memorial and East Regional 10 km, Wall Twp., N.J., 11 am (A)
5 km, Westerly, R.I. (AA)
Metropolitan 10 km, New York City, 8:30 am (G)
Mt. SAC Relays Invitational 1 Mile, Walnut, Cal. (Y)
5 km, Littleton, Cal., 9 am (H)
Sat. April 28
Penn Relays 10 km and Women's 5 km (Invitational), Philadelphia (S)
5 miles, Long Island (F)
5 km (Track), Boise, Idaho, 11:30 am (C)
5 and 10 km, Pasadena (Y)
Sun. April 29
5 km, Denver (H)
3 km, Alexandria, Virginia (O)
5 miles, Long Island (F)
5 km, Auburn, Cal. (P)
Sat. May 5
National Christian College Championships 3 km, Cedarville, Ohio (M)
Howard Wood Dakota Relays 5 km (track), Sioux Falls, N.D., 7 am (BB)
From Heel to Toe

Apologies. I must apologize for the appearance of last month’s issue. A couple of days before I printed that issue out, I noticed some extraneous lines on copy from my printer, but nothing too serious. However, by the time I got to printing out the newsletter, it was the way you saw it—lots of uncalled for lines through the printed word. I put in a new cartridge, but that made no difference, so I went ahead with that issue, despicable as it was, since time was of the essence. As I contemplated what I needed to do over the next couple of days, the problem seemingly solved itself and I have had no reoccurence (let us hope I don’t have such when I print this). Any explanations of this phenomenon from the great world of computer geeks out there will be welcome. What caused the problem and what might I have done to correct it? . . . Comment on Fast Russian times. People often wonder what advantages the Russians have that they can develop so many world class athletes year after year. Government support? Fabulous facilities? Bobby Briggs, who puts on the national Invitational races now and was a good enough walker to record times of 1:29:02 and 4:19:24 in 1991, has this to say: "A few years ago, a couple of walkers from Belarus (used to be part of Russia) came to race at the National Invitational. (Ed. It was 1993 to be exact.) My wife took them to the track one day to work out, followed by a swim in the indoor pool and some unwinding in the steam room. All of this at the local high school. She had taken some video of them on the track and as they were watching themselves for the first time on TV, Micha said something in Russian and they laughed. They hesitated to translate, but Tracey insisted. The gist of it was, "If we had all these wonderful facilities back home, we would probably walk 1:29, too!" Micha went on to walk 1:23 at the Invitational and later finished third in the 1997 World Championships. (Ed. This was Mikhail Kmelevich, third in the 1997 World Championships.) My, and maybe his, point is that it’s not the quality of the facilities or the money you spend (or where that money comes from), but the effort put forth and the dedication one applies to the task. Their training philosophy seemed to boil down to “Don’t think so much. Just go walk!” Nike would be proud. . . . Racewalking in the high schools. We continually raise the issue of the lack of depth in the U.S. racewalking program and how the number of elite walkers has constantly shrunk over the last 20 to 25 years. We have demonstrated this with statistics on the number of men under 1:30, 1:35, and 1:40 for 20 km and under 4:10, 4:30, and 5 hours (or some such time standards) each year. There are fewer and fewer at the elite and near elite levels each year. Of course, we haven’t offered any solutions. One that is always bandied about is getting racewalking into high school programs, which on the surface seems obvious and a perfect solution. However, a major problem there, as we have pointed out before, is the need for judges if this is to come about. We have never meant to throw cold water on promotional plans in high schools and colleges, and have never gone into great detail on the potential problems, but have suggested caution. Tom Eastler, who has been deeply involved in the high school program in Maine, goes into some of that detail in the following comments. "What has nearly killed the New York state high school racewalking program and continues to threaten the Maine program is the degree of subjectivity associated with racewalking officiating, and the limited number of racewalk officials available to handle meets. For instance, Maine has more than 200 high schools that compete in outdoor track and field. There are typically eight regular meets per season, plus regionals and the state meets. If each meet typically has four schools involved, then there would be roughly 50 meets per week, usually the same day, which would require a minimum of 150 racewalk officials, preferably 200, per week for each of eight weeks. (Ed. In Ohio, most of the weekday meets are still duals. In Columbus and Franklin County alone there are typically 10 to 20 meets a couple of nights a week, maybe more since all boys and girls meets are not held simultaneously.) Where do these officials come from, who trains them, how do they get compensated for their time, etc?? You can see where much difficulty can arise depending on many factors. There is no way we have anything close to 200 racewalk officials in Maine—so how do we do it?? We constantly put on clinics and continually urge local officials to become certified so we can track them. Don’t hold your breath! Even within our very successful program, one that boasts 51 All-American awards earned by 21 different athletes from 13 different schools since 1995, there is still the call for dropping the racewalk because of its subjectivity. Even Saturday night at the annual Maine Track and Cross Country Coaches Association meeting, a motion was made once again to drop the racewalk from the regional and state competitions. The same motion was made in 1998 and was barely defeated 26 to 22 with 8 abstentions. This year was better in that the motion was defeated 31 to 15 with 8 abstentions, but the fact remains that we must be ever vigilant in fighting off the forces that would kill all that we have fought for. I tell all of this, airing our laundry so to speak, because people need to know what we are up against in just the high school arena. We need lots and lots of good, well-trained officials." Ed. The same problems, of course, apply to racewalking in the colleges. That many more officials are needed. It would be interesting to hear comments on the officiating problem from those intimately involved with walking in the NAIA schools, which, limited as it is, is still the only thing going on the collegiate level. . . . And more. To expand on Tom’s comments for the need for all of the well-trained officials, Bill Penner, a long-time walker and booster of the sport in the San Francisco area, has commented on the problem of finding them. "A person wants to be a racewalking judge. He or she attends an officials clinic. He or she then makes arrangements to be an apprentice. He or she on his or her own dime—drives to events and serves as an apprentice judge. He or she does this for many, many months. He or she qualifies, he or she then is finally granted certification. The judge then drives (almost always at his or her own expense) to events and stands through heat, sun, rain, cold, wind, and other assorted meteorological niceties. The judge judges with an open mind, not ever wanting to have to disqualify an athlete who is out there trying his or her best. The judge, of course, eventually has to disqualify an athlete. The judge may or may not, from time to time, be the object of nasty contempt from a disgruntled, unsportsmanlike walker. The judge may, from time to time, be accused of favoritism, or, worse yet, of a ‘conspiracy’ to disqualify a supposedly unlike person or an unlike group. And judges do this all for the love of the game? And judges do this at their own expense? I think that judges are one of the most undervalued components of our sport. They keep the sport clean. They do their best. They are not perfect. They deserve every ‘thank you’ that we walkers can offer them. They deserve all of the kudos they ever get. They deserve our thanks for making our walking events even possible. In our zeal to want to get zillions of high-school and college athletes involved in racewalking, we should not forget that if we did get zillions involved, we would have to have a concomitant increase in the number of certified racewalking judges to handle the extra load. Would we be able to find them? Let’s hope that we would be able to find extra judges, if we ever got zillions of new athletes involved in walking.
Racewalking judges are the unheralded HEROES of our sport.” (Ed. It's interesting to think back to when I came into the sport. We didn't think too much about judges except when we went to "big races. For local races, we usually had no judge other than policing each other. Guests that came in occasionally from all around the country, some of them rather prominent, seemed to accept this and we had no problem. Nor did we have any problems when we went to the big ones resulting from walking without judges in most of our races. I don't think we were unusual at the time. Many races in many places were conducted with little or no judging. I'm in no way suggesting this as a model for the sport in the schools—it just wouldn't work in what must be a well-organized activity—but it is interesting to reflect how well it worked in getting people motivated in pursuing the sport at that time. Other old timers might want to comment on this.) More on shoe alarms. Reader Marc Alshan in Alfred, N.Y. adds this to the discussion on shoe alarms: "I agree with Bob Bowman, but think there is another type of reason for rejecting them. The use of shoe alarms as a check against lifting is a great example of the inappropriate use of technology. The temptation to use a technology just because it is there is known as the Law of the Hammer—"Give a small boy a hammer and he'll think that everything needs pounding." In this case, even if shoe alarms were reliable (and apparently they aren't), they would be inappropriate because they would create more problems that they solve. To put things in perspective, consider the possible uses of similar technology in other sports. In boxing, inserted into the belts of boxers' trunks. In soccer: attached to players' hands. In baseball: placed along foul lines. In football: to collect data for possible off-sides or unnecessary roughness calls. In each case, and in racewalking as well, procedures would have to be set up to determine that all devices are approved and equally calibrated for sensitivity; that all devices were functioning properly before competition began and after it was completed; and that no device had been temporarily disabled (deliberately or otherwise) during the competition. Rather than removing doubt and human error from the sport, such devices would only introduce a new array of doubts and more layers of officials, rules, technology committees, appeals and who knows what else. This would be true for any sport, but in particular for racewalking, a sport not well understood by the general public. The last thing racewalking needs is shoe alarms. To further underline its legitimacy by confirming that it somehow solves problems in every sport, there are judgment calls and problems with sportsmanship. They won't be eliminated with electronic devices. (Ed. Agreed and well stated, although we must note, that electronic devices seem to work rather well for monitoring the service line and the net in tennis, so there may be a few other niches for them in sport, but not in ours.).. Doubles revisited. From Roger Burrows in Canada: "Just got the most ORW yesterday. It was in the 'doubling' discussion. If you really want a neat example, you can look (a) north of the border once more and (b) in the pages of the same ORW. You mention two early Olympic results, both containing the name George Goulding. Yes, George won in 1912, Canada's only gold medalist. (Goulding's telegram home to his wife was a masterpiece: "Won. George.") As you mention, though, Goulding was also in the 1908 Olympics. He came fourth in the 3500 meter walk, as listed. However, there was another walk on the program, a 10 mile. Goulding did not finish. He was apparently a bit upset, as he was one of the leading walkers of the day. But also being a reasonable runner, he entered the marathon, just to make amends, so to speak. Curiously, he was the fourth Canadian entrant. Remember, the year was 1908. This was the famous Dorando Pietri Marathon, held in brutally hot conditions and the first one ever held at the now-traditional distance. Though the most dramatic, Pietri was not the only DNF that day. Also a casualty was Canada's legendary Tom Longboat, one of the truly great runners of the day and a pre-race favorite, especially to British Empire fans. Plaguing away behind was George Goulding. He ended up in 22nd in just around 3:35. He was, therefore, one of the few Canadians who could say that he beat Longboat in his prime. Not a bad double (actually triple) either." A month earlier, after we had first mentioned Michelle Roh's plans to double in both running and walking 10 ks at the Nationals, Roger had also communicated: "Did you know that Canada's Janice McCaffrey is pretty accomplished in that area herself? She started as a runner (city high school 400 meter champion in the late '70s). Her strength was more middle distance and cross-country, though. In the last few years, she's relaxed during the off-season by marathoning. She's done seven, all under 3 hours, most under 2:50, and has a best of just under 2:46, which is well over hers. That usually puts her in the top national rankings for the event, and, combined with the racewalk, gives a pretty unusual double. I always thought that a 20 Km walk-run duathlon, 10 km each, would be really cool. If, some time in the future, it becomes a multi-million dollar, made-for-TV sporting extravaganza, you'll know that you read about it here first." (Ed. I never wanted to tax someone that much, with back-to-back 10s, but I have suggested at times in the past that an individual medley in track (as in swimming) would be interesting. My idea was 3 mile, one running, one walking, one of steeplechase, including the water jump, of course. I never did decide what would be the best order of the three legs, however.).. More Goulding. We have various items in the past on this Great Canadian walker. It turns out, that if you are in the London, Ontario area, you have the opportunity to browse through George's scrapbook. Sherry Watts did so, and treasures the experience: "I just had the most marvelous experience. I finally made it across campus to see George Goulding's scrapbook. Its huge—maybe 15 centimeters (Ed. that's about 6 inches to us retarded Americans). It's housed in the Special Collections section of the library at the University of Western Ontario. The room itself makes you feel as though you were in a different era—all dark wood and shelf after shelf of precious history. Wonderful Christmas music was playing and I was the only one there—and had been the only one for days according to the guest book. What a restful place to spend a few hours. The newspaper accounts of the day were wonderful—lots of description. He especially chronicles his first Olympics in 1980. And not just the walks—he seems to have everything that was printed in the newspaper. In those Olympics, he finished fourth in the walk, but was also 2nd in the marathon. (Ed. Hey Sherry, we already know that; didn't you read above?) His son was born 10 days before the 1912 Olympics and he named the child George Beverly Olympic Goulding. Seems as though times haven't really changed all that much; this was in one article about his technique: "...the Canadian has lifted the walking game out of the joke class, where it had been placed through the rather frantic and foolish gyrations of the exponents of the game of late years." In 1915, he was accused of professionalism and that was reported in a lot of different papers. I could just go on and on. I meant to just have a glimpse through it, but I got so fascinated that the librarian had to ease gently out the door at closing time. The pages are brown and brittle and the words are fading, but the descriptions and photos are wonderful. The scrapbook is also on microfilm and perhaps can be borrowed by other libraries. The librarian will also assist with the reproduction of photos and such. ..Coaching suggestion. Also from Roger Burrows, as reported in his news notes to Canadian walkers: "Recently on my e-mail was a joyous message from another walker in Edmonton. Let's call him Dave, because that's his name. Dave knows that he has to be careful of, and work on, a soft knee. At a recent group workout, Holly Gerke was trying to come up with yet another cue that might be useful. Dave, walk sexy!" she yelled. Dave reports that he compiled thinking that he was exaggerating the action as a joke. Voila, a perfectly straight leg being controlled by a mobile hip! Wanting to see another acceleration, Holly yelled, "OK Dave, come back!" as he receded into the distance. "I can't, he shouted back over his shoulder, not wanting to lose the moment. Speaking as one who has told people to walk like a supermodel in my time in order to address the same problem of a soft knee, I feel that we are definitely onto something here." (Ed. So, should we start recruiting from the supermodel ranks for a new generation of women racewalkers? I guess neither the pay nor the perks would be quite as good.).. Speaking of depth. Charts from the Track and Field listserve (as reported by Michael Roth on the racewalk list) show the number of athletes per country in the top 100 performances for 2000. For the men 20 and 50 km walks and the women 10 and 20. Not surprisingly, Russia had by far the most walkers in 20 Km, both men and women. In the men's 20,
where the 100th best performance was 1:24:33, there were 18 Russians. Italy was next with 9, Spain and Mexico had 7, and Japan and China 6. (Japan is a real surprise.) Twelve countries were represented by three or more walkers and 25 had at least one. The U.S. had two. In the women's race, where the 100th best was 1:33:54, there were 18 Russians, 8 Italians, and seven Chinese. The Ukraine had 6, and Belarus, Australia, Romania, Spain, Mexico, and the U.S. 5. Three other countries had three or four and 27 countries were represented. The men's 50 was the most popular event. With the 100th fastest at 40:07:59, 34 countries were represented on the list and 16 had three or more walkers. Spain led with seven walkers, Italy and Slovakia had 7, Russia and Germany 6, and Mexico and Japan 5. The U.S. was among six nations with three. In the women's race, the 100th best was 46:42. 26 countries were represented and 11 had three or more. Russia was way out front with 24. Italy had 10, China 8, and Belarus and Ukraine 6. The U.S. had three.

More statistics. How has the U.S. performed in the Olympics through the years? Pondering this a while ago, I came up with the idea that a good measure would be how closely our entrants finished behind the leader in each event, not by place but on time. (Looking at finishing places is unfair since the size of the fields keeps increasing. A straight comparison of times is not fair since conditions vary and, as in all athletic endeavor, performances continually improve, but that doesn't necessarily mean the athletes are better.) On that basis, our best was 1968 when our three walkers finished a combined 17:50 behind the winning time of 1:33:59 (altitude, smog, and heat influenced). That team was headed by Rudy Haluza (1:02 back in fourth), Tom Dooley (6:09 back), and Ron Laird (10:39 back). The 1984 team was next with a plus 21:35 (Marco Evisniak 2:29, Jim Heiring 7:07, and Dan O'Connor 11:57). However, 1964 would be on top if Ron Laird hadn't decided to chase one man over the last 400 meters and get a DQ. Ron Zinn in sixth had a plus 3:09 and Jack Mortland a plus 7:01. Laird would have been less than six minutes back, for a combined time of 6:13 minutes. Our 2000 team appears to be best in the 50 with a combined plus 61:56. (Clausen 16:17, Dunn 20:43, and Hermann 24:56). 1996 was right with them through the first two (17:48 and 19:43, but had a DQ for the third. 1968 was well ahead of them for the first two (11:42 and 19:00), but had a sick Dave Romansky at plus 1:17:50. Still, I would have to rate that 1968 team as the best over the two events with stellar performances by five of the six. Well, do you do your own playing around analyzing with this. Here are the numbers starting with 1932 for the 50 and 1956 for the 20. The numbers show how far behind our first, second, and third men were in each case. (Note that since 1992, we have been able to qualify only one 20K performer for each Olympics. I have not included the women, since they have only a three Olympic history, two of them at 10 and only one at 20.)

Looking Back

35 Years Ago (From the March 1966 ORW)—Rudy Haluza launched what was probably his most successful year in racewalking (and not discounting his Olympic fourth place finish 2 years later) with a storming last lap to nip Don DeNoon in the National Indoor 1 Mile. In Albuquerque's altitude, DeNoon's very fast early pace proved to be his downfall. Going through 440 in 1:31 and

30 Years Ago (From the March 1971 ORW)—Tom Dooley did a 20 km in 1:32:33 in San Francisco. Although well behind Dooley in that run, Goetz Kloper shone in a Seattle race, setting American records at 15 miles, 25 Kms, and 2 hours—1:52:44, 1:56:53, and 15 miles 1578. However, since he was in a 20-mile race that he failed to finish, he never got the times in the book.

Greg Diebold won the IC4A (collegiate) Indoor Mile in 6:51.8. He also had a 6:37.6 in Albany, N.Y., edging Ron Kulik.

25 Years Ago (From the March 1976 ORW)—In the National Indoor Meet, veteran Ron Laird captured the 2 mile in 13:37 and Sue Brodock the women's Mile in 13:37. Although he controlled the race throughout, Laird was only 1.6 seconds ahead of Larry Walker and Todd Scully at the finish. Ron Daniel and Dave Romansky were also under 13:50 in a tight finish. The Ohio Track Club's Laurie Tucholski, under the tutelage of your editor, was second to Brodock in 7:39:6.


20 Years Ago (From the March 1981 ORW)—The Eastern Interscholastic Indoor Mile went to Andy Liles in 6:50.3, followed by Bill Iaberg (6:54.4), Pat Moore (6:59.6), and Jim Mann (7:03.3). At the Philadelphia Track Classic, Todd Scully won the Mile Walk in 6:18.8, 6.2 seconds ahead of Tim Lewis... At the Columbus Track Classic, Todd Scully won the Mile in 6:46:14 at the same site ahead of Monica Karlsson, Sweden, 1:49:25.

15 Years Ago (From the March 1986 ORW)—John Alfonso won a 60 km race in New York City in 5:58:37, passing 50 in 5:48:39. That was a short stroll indeed in the light of this news "flush" we lifted from the N.Y. Daily Mirror, May 31, 1942 edition: "If you think you're being abused because you are forced for one reason or another to walk more these days, get a load of Jim Hocking, the man who never onceing his 85 years has been nick-named 'Hitch'." With the help of Ray Van Cleef, the Hotel New Yorker's rub-downer pare excellence, we have some of Hocking's feats at hand. Hocking has walked a quarter of a million miles, without replacements. When he was a sprightly lad of 61, he walked from Times Square to the City Hall in Philadelphia, 97 miles in 19:16. Seven years later, he strolled from New York to Chicago in 17 days 11 hours. It took him only 83 walking days the time he ankled from Coney Island to San Francisco. Sergeant John Walsh, when 61, did the same 3,684 miles in 85 days, didn't like San Francisco, did an about-face, and walked back. Made nice time coming back: 91 days. Jim Ennis is another who contracted the
same curious siege of vagabondia at Coney Island and immediately lit out for San Francisco. Last year, at the age of 84, Hocking walked from Yonkers to Poughkeepsie, 61 miles, in 13:40. On his 84th birthday, he legged it from old Teaneck, N.J., his home when not walking, and made it to Bear Mountain Inn, 55 miles away, in 12 hours. Edward Payson Weston, at 75, walked from Minneapolis to New York, 1546 miles, in 60 days. So what are you griping about: Boy, call me a cab.

10 Years Ago (From the March 1991 ORW)—Carl Schueler captured the U.S. 50 km title for the sixth time in Long Beach. (Larry Young won eight 50 Km titles.) Carl's 4:11:03 put him better than 2 minutes ahead of Marco Evoniuk at the finish. Third in 4:15:13 was Eugene Kitts, on the far side of age 40. Paul Wick and Tim Lewis followed, both under 4:20, with Dan O'Connor, Herm Nelson, and Bob Briggs under 4:25 and Mark Manning just missing. In a U.S.-Great Britain Indoor track meet, Victoria Herazo edged Britain's Julie Drake in an exciting 3 Km. Victoria had 13:28.05 to Julie's 13:29.73. Susan Liers was fourth. Doug Fournier competed a U.S. sweep of the walks, winning in 11:34.24, 9 seconds ahead of Britain's Mark Easton. Tim Seaman was fourth in 11:50.71. Fournier also won the Millrose Games Mile in 5:51.87, nearly 4 seconds ahead of Curtis Fisher, with Don Lawrence edging Seaman for third, both under 5:58.

5 Years Ago (From the March 1996 ORW)—Allen James and Michelle Rohl won USATF National Indoor titles, Allen with 20:02.59 for 5 km and Michelle with a record 12:55.90 for 3 km. Gary Morgan was less than 4 seconds back of James in second, after surging into the lead with about 3 laps to go. Curt Clausen was third in 20:18 and Tim Seaman fourth in 20:39. In the women's race, Rohl was by herself most of the way, but it was close behind her with Maryanne Torrellas taking second in 13:09.35, Victoria Herazo third in 13:12.29, Debbi Lawrence fourth in 13:17.71, Sara Standley fifth in 13:15.24. In the German indoor championships, Axel Naock blitzed the 5 km in 18:37.70 and Beate Gummelt roared through in 11:53.03 for 3 km.

Olympic 10 Km Walk, Antwerp, Belgium August 18, 1920


The walkers qualified from two heats, with Frigerio winning one in 47:06.2 and Hehir the other in 51:34.6. However, Frigerio's time, which was startling, was accounted for by the fact that the walkers had gone only 14, not 25, laps. In the final, Peaman led for the first half of the race, but Frigerio then took over and went away to win by more than half a lap. After typing these results, which came from a recent issue of the IAAF magazine issued last year that includes complete results of all Olympic T&F events, I went back to a 1972 statistical book from Denmark that includes complete results, including heats, of all the Olympic results. I thought I would include the results of heats from that track. What I found was a can of worms. While the source has the same first six finishers, it shows Seghers and Doyen eliminated in the heats and has Donato Pavesi of Italy and William Plant of the U.S. finishing seventh and eighth in the final with Parker and Melendez of Australia ninth and tenth. The U.S. Handbook, compiled by Bob Bowman, shows that Plant did not start the final after finishing fourth in his heat. So, I have gone with the IAAF source. Perhaps Bob Bowman will enlighten me as to how Egon Rasmussen and Palle Lassen went astray in their summary nearly 30 years ago. Or were they right.