U.S. Scores Pan-Am Cup Wins; IAAF Challenge Underway

Over two weekends of intense racing in Tijuana, Mexico and Chula Vista, California, the IAAF Racewalking Challenge series was successfully launched and the U.S. scored unprecedented men's victories at both 50 and 20 Km in the Pan-American Cup racewalks. While we would have to brand the 50 Km win largely circumstantial, the U.S. team did what was needed on the day. The 20 Km win a week later was a superb effort on the behalf of our team, although against a less than full strength Mexican team.

Mexican Racewalk Week in Tijuana on March 9 and 10 kicked off the IAAF RW Challenge, which will hit six more sites in Europe and Asia over the next five months, with 20 Km races for men and women and a 50 Km for men. Embedded in the men's 50, was the Pan-American Cup race.

The Tijuana 20 Km saw a strong men's field featuring last year's number one ranked Francisco Fernandez, Spain; world record holder Bernardo Segura of Mexico, returning to the elite ranks; world 50 Km record holder and Robert Korzeniowski of Poland, Olympic champion at both 20 and 50; and Mexico's Alejandro Lopez, ranked fourth in the world last year. Also on hand were four of our own country's top 20 Km men.

After, a large lead pack went through 10 Km in 39:54, the four mentioned above took control. Lopez dropped away with two kilometers to go and in a thrilling race, Segura edged away from the other two over the final kilometer to win 1:19:06, 2 seconds ahead of Fernandez and 5 ahead of Korzeniowski. Lopez finished in 1:19:49, with the rest of the field 3 minutes and more back.

The 33-year-old Segura, who has not raced at this level since his DQ in the 2000 Olympics, collapsed after hitting the tape, but managed to kiss the ground, thank God, and have his body draped by a Mexican flag. He recovered quickly to say, "I believe nobody expected a result like this one and it is personally very satisfying because some people thought I should have retired. Segura, the Director of Sport for the Mexico City government, noted that "It's just the start of a long season", which will include races in Europe, The Pan American Games, and the World Championships in Paris.

For the U.S., Tim Seaman, in 14th place, had his fastest race in 3 years, a 1:25:28, after going through 10 Km in 42:30. John Nunn was just 27 seconds behind Seaman at half-way and hung on well to finish in 1:26:59, with Sean Albert and Kevin Eastler also under 1:30.

In the women's race, Ireland's Gillian O'Sullivan had a much easier time, winning in 1:29:55, nearly 2 minutes ahead of Russian veteran, Nadezhda Ryashkina, whose world record for 10 Km dates back to 1990. O'Sullivan broke away from the field after 4 Km and had her own way from there. Not that it was a weak field. Following Ryashkina were Susana Feitor, Portugal; Olympic silver medalist Kjersti Flaetzer, Norway; Australia's Jane Saville, and Italy's Elisabetta Perrone.
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Following the race, OSullivan said: "I felt strong, so I decided to break away soon. I knew the field very well and I was confident I could keep my lead through the finish. I tried to speed up the pace and I did, but as the start was much slower than expected, I could not achieve the time I planned. Anyway, I cannot complain."

The top U.S. finisher was Susan Armenta who was 18th in 1:43:20. With her focus on her physical education studies, she was pleased with this. "I had done 1:53 in training, so I was hoping to go under 1:50. Considering my training has been on and off, I'm pleased with my result," she said.

In the 50 Km Challenge held the next day, Spain's Jesus Angel Garcia, among the world's elite at this distance for the past 10 years, indicated he is ready for another stellar season with a strong win in 3:46:46. He was walking his second 50 in three weeks, having done 3:46:03 for second in the Spanish Championships on Feb. 16. Garcia followed Mexico's Omar Zepeda through much of the race, and was 1:30 behind at 36 km when the Mexican abandoned the race, thinking he had been shown a red card he never actually received. However, Zepeda had slowed from 4:20 km splits to a 4:57 and was suffering from stomach cramps and he is highly doubtful he would hold off Garcia. In any case, Garcia had an easy path to victory from there, with early leader, New Zealand's Craig Barrett 4 1/2 minutes back in second. The rest of the field was spread far out with Mexico's German Sanchez third in 4:04:11 and Philip Dunn fourth in 4:04:11.

Dunn struggled a bit in the second half, with some late kilometers in the 5:20s, but save Garcia and Barrett, everyone else faded more. Philip battled hard, caught the fourth placed walker with less than two laps to go, and pumped his fist in elation, as he crossed the line. "My conditioning was pretty close to where I needed to be. I was going for the "A" standard (3:57:00), but I would have needed a perfect day. The harder concrete surface and the brick road in the middle portion of the course really took its toll. But the crowd was amazing, especially when I was walking with a Mexican walker," said Dunn.

As it turned out, Dunn was leading the U.S. team to a victory in the Pan-Am Cup race.

Besides Zepeda, Miguel Rodriguez and Edgar Hernandez, both former bronze medalists in the World Championships, also dropped out (at 34 and 42 kilometers) and Sanchez was the only member of Mexico's "A" team to finish. So, even though their were seven Mexicans between Dunn and the second U.S. finisher, Theron Kissinger in 14th, they did not count in the team scoring and the U.S. got the win.

This Challenge race did not draw as strong of a field as the two 20s did and the attrition was tremendous, with only 16 of 50 starters finishing. Among those who did not finish was the first U.S. finisher, Theron Kissinger in 14th, they did not count in-the team scoring and the U.S. could have placed fifth. Eastler chased Seaman right to the finish, finishing just 10 seconds back in a personal best 1:25:34. Sean Albert finished the job for the U.S., passing Ecuador's Xavier Moreno in the later stages of the race to capture the title. The two teams finished with 13 points apiece, with the best third place finisher used as a tiebreaker. That was Albert over Moreno. Another factor was that Ecuador had not declared Rolando Sepulvado as one of their five designated scorers. He finished eighth and would have been the third team member had he counted. But the move seemed to make sense since he had walked the 50 the week before and didn't figure to be a factor. The U.S. was happy to take the win however it came, as Clausen and Dunn also had decent races in 1:30:45 and 1:32:13.

In the women's race, Mexico's Rosario Sanchez was in control all the way, as she won in 1:37:14. Only Bolivia's Beovana Krystina and Brazil's Gianetti Olivera de Sena Bonfim dared to go with her for the first 2-km lap (9:35). Susan Armenta was just 12 seconds back in a large trailing pack.

Sanchez opened up a 14-second gap by 4 km and increased her lead every lap. Irusta grabbed a firm hold on second, with Sena Bonfim fading quickly. Walking even splits, Sam Cohen caught Armenta just before 8 km, to lead the U.S. contingent. "My coach (Mike DeWitt) thought I was ready to walk about 1:46, so I tried to stay with that pace," Cohen said.

At halfway, Sanchez was in control at 47:36 with Irusta 15 seconds back. Cohen was sixth in 52:02, followed by her teammates Jolene Moore (52:42), Bobbi Jo Chapman (52:48), Cheryl Rellinger (52:52), and Armenta (52:46).

Sanchez continued to gain at least 5 seconds a lap and curised to her first Pan Am Cup victory in 1:37:14. She had won the bronze in 1998. Irusta claimed second while Columbia's Sandra Zapata surged on the last lap to pull away from 39-year-old Graciela Mendoza for the bronze. This was Mendoza's ninth Pan-Am Cup, including four gold medal performances. Cohen, Chapman, and Moore finished seventh, eighth, and ninth, as the U.S. team placed second behind Mexico.

Results:


In the men's race, Seaman set a record pace early with kilometers in 3:51 and 3:45 (a 19 minute pace) with Nunn and Russ cluttering on. Clusen started to fade after the first two kilometers, but Nunn stayed close for another kilometer. Seaman opened up 10 seconds during the fourth kilometer, but Nunn charged back to cut that margin in half by the finish, walking more than a minute under his previous best for the distance. Only the Tim's, Lewis and Seaman have gone faster among Americans. Clusen was a distant third, well off his best.

Commenting on the race, Nunn said, "The fourth kilometer really got me. I didn't realize I had slowed (to 4:00). I wasn't watching the clock, so I had no idea how close we were to the record. If I would have known, we could have raced for the record. I felt I had more to give." Seaman noted, "I was pleased with my race today, especially considering I haven't done much speed work. I hope to translate this type of performance into my upcoming 20 Km races."


**Other Results**


**Indoor Titles to Dow, Seaman**

Boston, March 2--In the USATF National Indoor T&F Championships, Joanne Dow and Tim Seaman ruled the racewalk events. Dow won her second straight 3 Km title and her third overall, beating five-time titlist, Michelle Rohl. Rohl not only won his sixth straight title, but bettered his own meet record in the process with his 19:21.56. He just missed Tim Lewis' American record (19:18.40) set in 1987 in the World Championships. He had to be that good as John Nunn pushed all the way, and also bettered Tim's previous meet record (19:26.9 in 2001).

In the women's race, Rohl led for the first 11 of the 15 laps. Rohl had missed last year's race as she awaited delivery of her fourth child, but was out to claim her sixth title. On this day, Dow proved too strong at the finish and opened up a near 14-second gap on those final four laps. "I could hear Michelle breathing hard late in the race, so I decided to pass her...I gave it my best the rest of
FROM HEEL TO TOE

Errata. Wayne Armbrust questions my inclusion of "Larry" James in the list of the top five U.S. 50 Km walkers in the Feb. issue. He suggests that perhaps Larry James, well known as a 400 meter runner, followed my example of switching from that event to racewalking. Well, of course, it should have been Allen James. But, I'm sure I didn't have the same Larry James that Wayne mentions in my subconscious when I typed that. We had a racewalker with the Ohio TC many years ago by the name of Larry James. Hence, the confused message to my fingers. Wayne also pointed out that the ranking of nations based on world lists for the racewalking events, which I attributed to Steve Vaitones, who posted them on the internet, actually came from Roger Ruth, who does these rankings for all &Events. Finally, the caption on the cover picture in the January issue said that Larry Young was "deducted" into the T&F Hall of Fame. That's a strange thought. Perhaps "inducted" would have been a better word... A member of parliament. Harry Sittenon let us know that Sari Issayeh, 36, a world and European champion racewalker in the early 1990s, has been elected as a member of the Finnish Parliament in the nation's general elections on March 15. She was elected as one of the seven successful candidates of the Christian Democratic Party. Sari is probably the only racewalker in the world to have been elected to a national legislative body. It is not unprecedented in Finland for racewalkers to hold public office. Reima Sallonen, European 50 Km Champion in 1980 and fourth in the 1984 Olympics 50 Km, was at one time a City Council member in a Turku suburb, representing one of the Finnish labor parties. Harry asks, "Should we get the ball rolling here? Racewalkers are pretty cool folks and should make good public servants." A campaign we shall go. Mike Rohl announces that Mansfield University (Penn.) will be holding a National Racewalking Camp from Tuesday, July 7 to Monday July 13. The cost is $325 for the week for youth 8 to 18 and $400 for adults. The camp will include the Junior National 5 Km and an open 5 on the track. He has brochures that he will mail on request. Money raised from the camp will go towards racewalking scholarships at Mansfield. Mike currently has four racewalkers on his team. He will also welcome contributions to the scholarship fund. Contact Michael Rohl, Head Coach, Track & Field, Mansfield University 570-662-4645... Youth meets. Steve Vaitones provides the following dates for USATF Youth and Junior Olympic nationals this summer: Youth Athletics Nationals, Buffalo, NY (www.youthathletics2003.org); Bantam/Midget/Youth-Wed., July 2, Intermediate/Young-Thur., July 3; Junior Olympic Nationals, Miami, FL (www.juniorolympics2003.org); Bantam/Midget/Youth--Tues., July 29; Intermediate/Young--Wed., July 30... Youth trip. Racewalking International has announced
that its Youth Development Team will travel to England in April for competition against your walkers from the Coventry area, about 100 miles north of London. The team includes New Jersey high school junior Zach Pollinger, Christopher Diao from Texas, and John Kozel from South Carolina. Pollinger won the Millrose Games mile as well as the Nike Scholastic and National Scholastic miles. Diao and Kozel were second and third in the Nike meet. Others on the team have not been announced, but they reportedly represent six states. The team is coached by Ray Kuhles, track coach at California University in Pennsylvania (there's also an Indiana U. in Pennsylvania). Assisting him on the trip will be Amber Antonius, a student at Wisconsin-Parkside. They have been invited to share clinic duties with English walking coaches while in England.

More on Tijuana. Following is an IAAF release on the Challenge event in Tijuana. "Some spectators would be willing to swear that Cuauhtemoc beamed down over the city this past weekend. The 16th century ruler, the last emperor of the Aztecs, is represented by an imposing monument in the middle of "El Paseo de Los Heroes" in Tijuana, the avenue where the inaugural event of the IAAF Racewalking Challenge was held. Along with Cuauhtemoc, more than 600 onlookers in summer-like temperatures, lined up along Mexico's equivalent of the Champs-Elysees to acclaim the world's best racewalkers and to sing traditional tunes. "This first leg of this new challenge was a real success," believes Poland's Robert Korzeniowski, the multi-Olympic and World Championships gold medalist. "This is what happens in Cracow (Poland), and how racewalking ought to be: it should welcome the competitors into the heart of major cities. It didn't matter whether they chanted 'Adalante Mejico, Adelante' (Go Mexico, Go) it still felt nice to be supported by such a crowd." Although Mexico "breathes, eats, and smells football" (Ed. Soccer to most of you), as Rivero Juarez, a retired elementary teacher put it, the Central American country has traditionally been enchanted by racewalking. Mexico has indeed been organizing "La Semana Internacional de Marcha" (the International Week of Racewalking) since 1977, and in Tijuana alone, a city that now boasts close to 2 million inhabitants, thousands of kids are said to practice this Olympic discipline. The expression of joy on people's faces when Bernardo Segura broke the tape in the men's 20Km on March 8, was just another proof of their passion for this individual sport. "Every year, thousands of spectators come to see the 'marchedores' and they all go crazy when a Mexican does well. Walking is really popular here. Look at them all," Particia Obregado, a local police woman, said after pushing the fans back behind the barriers. They had ecstatically invaded the circuit for Segura just as if he scored the winning goal in football's World Cup final. Tijuana suffers from a bad reputation. This booming city, nestled in a valley just a few miles south of San Diego, is the main gate of entrance for illegal immigrants lured by the 'American Dream'. To many, it is associated with touristic traps and violence. To many Tijuana is an adventure and almost everybody leaves the city with a story to tell. "We want the athletes, the people, and the press to remember that our city was welcoming," said Carlos Mercenario, winner of IAAF World Cup gold medals in 1987, 1991, and 1993, who helped set up the competition. His wish is fulfilled. The athletes all applauded the crowd, while the spectators flocked to the streets on both days to see the races. Their traditional music accompanied the walkers and the city showed itself off for this special occasion. "The walkers are real heroes in this country. This is a good example of success," added Korzeniowski. Tijuana set the note. Racewalking is on a path paved with gold. "At last, walking is recognized. I hope we showed the world that this Olympic sport is attractive," explained Cesar Moreno, a Mexican member of the IAAF Council. "Every country is interested in this sport, and I am glad that the opportunity to share this passion with many. We will do it again."

Judging and Biomechanics

In the March and April 2002 issues of the ORW, we published an article by Gary Westerfield on the topic of the biomechanics of judging racewalking. Belatedly, in October 2002, we published comments on that article by Bob Bowman. In the meantime, Westerfield had revised his original article, and that revision appeared on the internet, but never in the ORW. We did receive comments by Ron Daniel on the revised version. So in keeping the topic alive, we now publish Ron's article, a brief comment by Michael Roth related to Gary's revised article and Ron's commentary, and a brief reply to Michael's comments from Bob Bowman. Is that clear?

Comments on:

By Ron Daniel, Nov 2002

In opening, for those of you who don't know, Gary and I have been friends for over 30 years so if my reply takes on a casual nature it's not due to a lack of respect. My remarks are not to belittle the effort that Gary has put into his writing. I know that a lot of time goes into this kind of a review and Gary should be acknowledged for his effort. I hope, as he does, that more clarity is produced by this investigation.

I respectfully disagree with Gary's premise that

"Now, more calls are made for bent knees than for loss of contact. Athletes who appear to be efficient and appear to be racewalking get disqualified. Why? There are essentially three reasons:

1. A matter of grammar and understanding of English
2. When working with a definition that essentially has three criteria
3. That many judges do not know the process, the mechanics, of how the leg is straitened."

I believe that the validity of 'more calls are made for bent knees than for loss of contact', is a function of the skill level of the walkers and the skill level of the judges and the not universal. For example, at last Spring's International Walk Week in Mexico in the men's and women's 20K's, the collective number of loss of contact warnings was 50 to 30 bent knees warnings. Similarly at the World Junior competition in Kingston, Jamaica the two 10K's produced 25 loss of contact and 13 bent knee warnings. Perhaps Gary's statement should refer to a higher proportion of bent knees to loss of contact than before the Rule change. Now that may be true, and be correct, because the Rule has changed the emphasis of the time period for evaluating the knee.

A matter of grammar and understanding of English

After several readings of this section I don't believe that the nuances that Gary refers to were intended to be micro examined in the way that he is doing. And maybe, there are grammatical flaws! Gary also selectively uses a particular word definition while overlooking another. For example, 'shall' is also a command and can decouple from a time frame. And what time frame is 'moment' perhaps instant is more correct; here both words have similar meaning but can be defined separately and in that nuance a different conclusion is reached. Lastly, Gary's definition argument would lead to judging that is no different than the old rule language, i.e. the leg straight by the vertical and that certainly is not the intent. In this case we should as judges be driven by the intent! Later, I will discuss the Rule intent and its origin.

When working with a definition that essentially has three criteria
In my opinion, the most important of the three criteria is the 'make visible contact' phrase. It sets the sequence by which a judge is to make his observation of the knee. And in the instances that there are judges that "use static parameters to pick out instances of infraction?", then these judges need more training. And like Gary, I too have always judged racewalkers while in motion, as a process. Let me explain the process that I use and why. If I suspect that a walker is having a knee straightening problem, I first make sure that contact with the ground has occurred before making my assessment of the knee. To me this is important because in my viewing I'm not able to simultaneously focus on the foot and the knee. So now, serendipitously, there is a 'moment' time lag. This time lag may be on the order of the eye response time which is the flight time grace period built into the contact portion of the Rule. And for me, that is the time in which I make the knee assessment. If I enjoyed the benefit of a stop action picture that is taken at the INSTANT of contact with the ground I may observe that the walker's leg had not yet 'straightened' but I've already agreed that I'm judging during the motion. So in reality, I don't see the knee at all at the instant of contact but after a moment! It's my estimation, that since the Rule change and enhanced emphasis on the knee, some judges may NOT be first making certain of ground contact and may indeed be judging the knee prematurely. This may be an explanation for erroneous knee calls when they occur. As far as the Spanish language translation, I'd be surprised if that was the real reason for confusion but I leave that to our Spanish speaking readers to comment on. And since I wasn't at the last Pan Am Cup, I have no basis to challenge the calls made but will rely on my colleagues that were there that say errors were made. And here again, these errors are more likely not due to any language misinterpretation.

That many judges do not know the process, the mechanics, of how the leg is straightened.

While the above may be a true statement, the description of the mechanics of knee straightening would make the task of the judge even more daunting. Meanwhile, is it not possible for the quad to be contracted even when the leg is functionally straight? If that is true, then the judge may incorrectly assess a 'bent knee'. And wouldn't the rule then have to change to guide the judge to look for a "shut-off" quad muscle! And how do you explain that the spectator...

Yes, that true, that in a flexed stance, the quad is eccentrically contracted to prevent collapsing to the ground and does extend to the running motion. But isn't there then a competition within the quad to straighten the leg and isn't that by a concentric contraction of the quad. Lacking an anatomy and physiology text, what are all the muscles that contribute to the eventual straightening of the leg?

Back to walking vs. running and why we care. The Rule change was motivated primarily because some walkers had adopted a technique that had them landing with their advancing leg nearly under their center of gravity. In that action, there was very limited time for the leg to become straight by the vertical and gave more of the appearance of running. And in the vertical upright position, this is more inclusive than any other rule violation.

There is no ambiguity. It is quite clear. There should be no debate on the meaning of the word "straightened". The definition appears immediately after it (i.e. not bent at the knee). The word "straightened" was chosen over the word "straight" in order not to encourage analogies with stick figures. In other words, human legs are not sticks. For Rule 230.1, "straightened" means "not bent at the knee". To say that the leg does not need to be straightened on contact but only needs to be in the process of straightening is illogical. Not only does this ignore the provided definition of "straightened" but would require an impossible determination of when does it need to be straight or not bent at the knee. Therefore not until in the vertical upright position.}

But if that recoil happens just after the body passes over the center of gravity the walker may then gain an advantage. That's why I care.

Conclusion:

I believe the intent of the second part of the Rule was to have walkers not appear to be running. If my process of assessing the knee straightening is correct then within my "moment" of time lag from ground contact observation to knee observation the walker is required to get his knee straight. Then spurious (if true) bent-knee calls can be remedied by better judges' education. I say let's judge to the intent and not to the nuances of the language.

Commenting on this Michael Roth wrote:

"Having read both Gary's paper and Ron's reply, I have one question that goes to the heart of this very debate. With the exception of brevity, why does the IAAF Rules of Race Walking rely on intent and/or interpretation at all? It would seem expedient to spell out the rules in exacting language, with accurate translations, so that issues of this level are nonexistent. This is the next, and appropriate step, that needs to be taken on the International level to remove all ambiguity in this event."

And to close this out, Bob Bowman says:

"I had previously responded to Gary's original paper and did not agree with his explanation of IAAF Rule 230.1 on the definition of race walking, or his biomechanical model. Having read his second paper, I still disagree with his explanations which have not changed. My comments here will be directed solely to the discussion on the straight leg rule. I also disagree with Michael Roth's statement above. I do not feel that Rule 230.1 relies on intent and/or interpretation in any way. There is no ambiguity. It is quite clear.

"Having read both Gary's paper and Ron's reply, I have one question that goes to the heart of this very debate. With the exception of brevity, why does the IAAF Rules of Race Walking rely on intent and/or interpretation at all? It would seem expedient to spell out the rules in exacting language, with accurate translations, so that issues of this level are nonexistent. This is the next, and appropriate step, that needs to be taken on the International level to remove all ambiguity in this event."

In his opening paragraph Gary states that "prior to 1995 there were more infractions for illegal walking due to loss of contact than for not straightening the advancing leg. Now, more calls are made for 'bent knees' than for loss of contact." As Ron Daniel pointed out, this is not exactly true. Ron's statistics were somewhat incomplete however. Prior to the new rule on straightening, the ratio of "loss of contact" to "bent knee" calls for the 20Km event was approx. 2.5 to 1. For the 50Km it was approx. 1 to 1. This is for Rule 12.1(a) competitions (major internationals). In the last several years (I went back to 1999), the ratio is 1.6 to 1 for the 20Km and 0.5 to 1 for the 50Km. So we still see more "loss of contact" calls in the 20Km but the ratio is smaller. And in the 50Km we have gone from equal number of calls to twice as many for "bent knee". This of course is not surprising. The new Rule is more inclusive regarding the bent knee violations. The period from first contact until in the vertical upright position is more inclusive than solely "in the vertical upright position". The new bent knee rule is therefore doing its job. And there is certainly less ambiguity in the new rule. The increase in number of bent knee calls has nothing to do with grammar or understanding of English, or lack of biomechanics knowledge. It is simply a more inclusive or easier to detect rule violation.


LOOKING BACK

40 Years Ago (From the March 1963 Race Walker, published by Chris McCarthy)--The National 20 Km was won by Ron Laird in 1:34:52. Ron Zinn led the race, held in Chicago's Homer Park, for 8 miles, starting with a 6:58 mile, but faded at the finish in 1:36:02, 34 seconds ahead of Canada's Alex Oakley. Akos Szekely was colse behind in 1:36:41, with Jack Mortland almost 2 minutes further back, just ahead of John Allen. Mortland noted that he was pointing more for his June wedding than the Pan-Am Games, for which this race was a trial. Ken Matthews beat Paul Nihill in the British National 10 Mile, 73:00 to 73:34, with our own Rudy Haluzka, stationed in England with the US Air Force, 10th in 77:19. Two weeks later, Rudy finished ninth in the British National 20 Km.

35 Years Ago (From the March 1968 ORW)--On the Mt. SAC track in Walnut, Calif., Larry Young bettered the American 50 Km record with a 4:25:40 and Ron Laird also bettered Goetz Klopfer's old record with 4:29:29. Tom Dooley also had a fast track race with a 1:08:50 for 15 Km in San Francisco. On the East Coast, Ron Daniel got into the record breaking act with a 3:05:43 for 35 Km, beating John Knifton by 2 minutes. Dave Romanosky turned in a 1:16:36 for 10 miles on the Asbury Park, N.J. boardwalk.

30 Years Ago (From the March 1973 ORW)--Nikolai Smaga won the 3 Mile Race in the US-USSR indoor track meet in Richmond, Va., with a 20:56.3, 3 seconds ahead of Yevgeniy Ivanchenko. Ron Daniel had 21:31.2 and Ron Kulik 22:50. John Knifton covered 25 Km in a swift 2:00:15 with Ray Somers only 58 seconds back. A visiting team of Italian policemen filled the next four spots. On the local scene, Jack Blackburn edged you editor in a friendly 7 mile, 57:17 to 57:19, and all-out race for the old men following a leisurely first 3 miles in 25:20. (Now, 30 years later, a 35:20 for 3 miles hardly seems leisurely, let alone accelerating for another 4 miles.) We also had a note on Latvian walker Adolfs Liepsakalins, who in 1965 at age 55, did 10 Km in 44:00. He had done 43:11 at age 49, a considerable improvement over his youthful best of 46:00 at age 28.

25 Years Ago (From the March 1978 ORW)--Collegiate indoor titles went to Carl Schueler and Peter Timmons. Frostburg's Schueler did 13:53.6 to win the NAIA 2 Mile, and Timmons, of St. John's, won the IC4A 1 Mile in 6:49.2. Schueler also beat an aging Dave Romanosky at 10 Km with a 45:26 performance. Italy's Vittorio Visini had a world's best indoor 2 Mile with 12:57.6 in Genoa and East Germany's Karl-Heinz Stadtmuller did an indoor 20 Km in 1:27:19. In another race, Visini did 3 Km in 11:43.8, also the best on record. The British 10 Mile went to Olly Flynn in 67:29, but the course was reported as short.

20 Years Ago (From the March 1983 ORW)--Marco Eionui defeated Jim Heiring in the National 30 Km, blazing a 2:16:41. Heiring was nearly 3 minutes back. Tim Lewis (2:23:50) came third. European 20 Km Champion Jose Marin won the Spanish 50 Km in a blistering 3:40:47, 7 minutes ahead of Jorge Llopart. Dan O'Connor finished seventh in the race with a 4:21:27. A week later, O'Connor won a 20 Km race in Long Beach in 1:28:38. Tom Edwards made an impressive debut at 50 Km, winning the eastern Regional in 4:23:22.

10 Years Ago (From the March 1993 ORW)--At the World Indoor Championships in Toronto, the Russians prevailed with Mikhail Schennikov winning the men's 5 Km in 18:32.10 and Elena Nikolayeva the women's 3 Km in 11:49.73. Poland's Robert Korzeniowski trailed Schennikov by nearly 4 seconds, with Canada's Tim Berrett a strong fourth in 18:53.02. Kerry Junna Saxby, Australia, pushed Nikolayeva with 11:53.82. Italy's Ileana Salvador was less the 2 seconds further back in third. Debbi Lawrence finished third in her heat in 12:20.79, but was DQd in the final. U.S. titles went to Lawrence in 12:35.79 and Allen James in 20:24.37. Victoria Herazo and Sara Standley followed Lawrence--well behind in 13:08.73 and 13:48.24. Doug Fournier was just 10 seconds behind James with Marc Varsano third in 20:41.01. In an outdoor 5 Km in Australia, Frants Kostyukevich, Belarus, beat Korzeniowski 18:28.50 to 18:36.98. Junna Saxby did 20:30 at the same site.

5 Years Ago--(From the March 1998 ORW)--Michelle Rohl and Tim Seaman won U.S. indoor titles at 3 and 5 Km respectively. Rohl's 12:40.37 put her 15 seconds ahead of Joanne Dow with Gretchen Eastler-Fishman third. Seaman did 19:54.36, 35 seconds ahead of Curt Clausen. Al Heppner was another 11 seconds back in third, just ahead of Jonathan Matthews. Clausen easily won the mile at the Millrose Games in 5:54.90 with Mike Rohl second in 5:09.28. In a battle of 43-year-old military personnel in Arlington, Va., Varrick Yeager finished 0.2 seconds ahead of Steve Pecinovsky in 12:33.7. The Japanese national 20 Km went to Daisuke Ikeshima in 1:21:49. Satoshi Yanagisawa had the same time in second. Australia's Nick A'hem had a 18:51.39 for 5 Km in Auckland, N.Z.

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