Clausen Strolls to 6th 50 Km Title

Hauppauge, N.Y., Oct. 19—Perhaps not really a stroll, but Curt Clausen's fifth U.S. title at 50 Km was certainly a relatively easy effort for him. While winning in four of the last five years, Clausen always went under the 4-hour mark. Today, with his only real competition, Al Heppner, DQd in the first half of the race, he was able to ease to a victory in 4:29:32. That's the slowest winning time since John Knifton's 4:35:02 in 1970 and only the fifth win in over 4:20 in that period. It was also Curt's sixth U.S. title of 2003.

In the women's race, Cheryl Rellinger was an easy winner in 5:38:09, after Erin Taylor, who was challenging her, had to drop out. This was the third time the women had officially contested for the 50 Km title, the first two having gone to Susan Armenta, who was not on hand today.

Cool, rainy weather hampered the competitors and probably slowed the times, but there were seven walkers under the Olympic Trials qualifying standard, a positive spin on the day. And a starting field of 22 walkers with 15 finishers was an improvement over most recent years.

Veteran Gary Morgan captured second, 7 minutes behind Clausen. Ben Shorey had a promising debut at 50 with his 4:37:43 in third, and his UW Parkside teammate, Steve Quirke finished fourth, three places better than last year, but nearly a minute slower. Talk of the race was oldtimer Nick Bedera who finished seventh in a Trials qualifying 4:44:10. At 55, Nick is probably the oldest track and field athlete ever to qualify for the Trials. John Soucheck and Dave Doherty were the other qualifiers from today's race. Tim Seaman went through the first 25 Km with Clausen, but apparently had no intent of finishing. Dave McGovern and Teresa Vaill won accompanying 20 Km races.

Clausen and Rellinger each won $300 for their efforts. The results:

**Men's Open 50km Race Walk**


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Women's Open 10km Race Walk--Christina Stanley (32:48) 5:29:15

Men's 10km Race Walk--Dimitri Ofeingdenen, Unattached, Woodbury, NY 1:01:00 2. Joseph Folks, WUSA.

Other Results


10 km, same place--1. Jennifer Marlborough 1:34:37 2. Tammie Corley 2:00:01 3. Ann Tuerberg (43) 2:03:19


Indoor 1500 and 3000 meters, New York City (D)--1. Novak and Chraminski 25:04


1 Mile (races for ages 12 and under, 13-18), Pharr Texas, 5 pm (T)

Polar Bear 10 Mile, Asbury Park, N.J. (A)

Indoor H.S. 1500 meters, New York City (G)

Indoor 1 Mlle, Cambridge, Mass. (X)

Sun. Nov. 5 2.8 Miles, Seattle (C)
Sun. Nov. 12 2.8 Miles, Seattle (C)
Sun. Nov. 19 2.8 Miles, Seattle (C)
Sun. Nov. 26 2.8 Miles, Seattle (C)

Sun. Jan. 4 50 km, Houston (V)
Sun. Jan. 11 50 km, Houston (V)
Sun. Jan. 18 50 km, Houston (V)

Contacts:

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C--Bill LaVeck, 511 Lost River Road, Mazzara, WA 98833
D--Bill Reed, 8242 Greenfield Shores, Scotts, MI 49088

Venues for Participation In Upcoming Pedestrian Contests

Sun. Nov. 2 5 km, Sacramento, CA (P)
Sun. Nov. 9 5 km, Sacramento, CA (P)
Sun. Nov. 16 5 km, Sacramento, CA (P)

Sun. Jan. 4 50 km, Houston (V)
Sun. Jan. 11 50 km, Houston (V)
Sun. Jan. 18 50 km, Houston (V)

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October 2003

WHERE? A note from Olympian and masters great Bob Mimm: "Kingsport (referring to the National 5Km) is a fun weekend and the 5K is always a very well conducted race. I just find it interesting that there were three competitors for men and one for women age 40 even though it was an open and masters championship. Would walk without the master's program?" Another note on the continuing commentary on the lack of depth in our nation's racewalking program... Errata continued. Several readers have pointed out that the 1968 National 20Km was held in Long Beach, not in Sacramento. I'm not sure how I made that mistake since I had the correct information on hand. One of those readers, Jim Hanley, also points out that in the August issue after Larry Walker's name in a result, I noted that he was the 1967 Olympic team, but ignored the fact that he was also on the 1980 team. That was the one that didn't go to the Olympics thanks to Jimmy Carter. Apologies for the oversight. And, another September issue error: the IAAF Challenge in Tijuana is March 20-21, not April. And finally, corrections to the National 40Km results published in the September issue: John Soucheck had 3:41:23 in 2nd, I had given him the same time as third placer Nick Benda, who competes for Jake Jacobson's East Side team, not for the Park RW, as I had listed. Not sure if that was my mistake or that of the results that were sent to me. Another correction reached me after the issue had been printed. Many Eisner, 62, who finished 17th in 5:37:02 was omitted from the original results. From Larry Young, 1968 anecdot. This comment from Jim Hanley regarding our review of Larry Young's 1968 season and of all of that year's nationals, also in the September issue: "Only National races seem to be listed in your article, but we have a large local AAU program at that time. There is a good chance Larry competed in many of the local races as well. One I remember well. After the Nationals at Oakland (where 13 So. Calif. Striderathletes shared one hotel room), we all flew down to compete in the Long Beach Relays 2-mile walk the next day. On the flight down, all three stewardesses (ed: That is, flight attendants, in today's vernacular) spent the entire flight talking to Larry at the expense of everyone else on the plane." (He was very good looking according to my students who always asked who is that guy? whenever I showed them pictures of our races.) Because it was raining and the track was very muddy (ed: again, not many all-weather track surfaces yet at that time), I did not want to mess up my new competition shoes so I walked in my bare feet. After some serious slipping and sliding, I realized that if I walked right down the chalk line between lane 1 and 2 there was good traction. As Young, DeNoon, Walker, Laird (I think) and others all over the track and had their shoes cake up with mud and get very heavy, I lowered along effortlessly and easily won the race. Ivanova. After being DQ'd in the 1992 Olympic 10Km race, Russia's Alina Ivanova, who had won the 1991 World Championship in the same event, decided to return to running where she could make some money. She is still at it and doing rather well. She finished fifth in the Berlin Marathon on Sept. 28 with a 2:29:00. Six days later she finished 10th in the World Half-Marathon Championships in Portland with a 1:10:59. Her sister Olga continues in racewalking, doing quite well, you know, with a World No. 1 ranking in both 2001 and 2002... IAAF Racewalking Challenge. Here are the final standings in the 2003 IAAF Racewalking Challenge series of races. Men-1. Robert Korzeniowski, Poland 33 points 2. Francesco Fernandez, Spain 28 3. Angas Fadjeleva, Latvia 23 Women-1. Gillian O'Sullivan, Ireland 29 2. Kjersti Platzer, Norway 14 3. Elisabetta Perrone, Italy 22... And speaking of... Kjersti Platzer has announced that Team Platzer will be coming to Flagstaff, Ariz. in November to begin its first training period in preparation for the 2004 Olympics. The team includes her husband Steve Platzer, brother Eric Tyas, and other Norwegian athletes. They are excited about the possibility of having Kevin Eales and Tim Seaman join them during their stay. Tim had a short training period with Team Platzer in Norway before setting his two American records last month. The Platzer may also host top walkers from Italy and Canada at their Flagstaff site... Collegete walk. The Snowbird Relays at Florida State in Tallahassee March 11-12 will include a 10Km walk. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside walkers will be on hand, as they escape wintry conditions, and other Northeast colleges are expected to send walkers, according to a Racewalk International release. Also, the Kansas Relays in April will again host a 5Km walk, and event plagued by torrential rains the last 2 years... Racewalking Chairperson. Dan Pierce has submitted his resignation as Chairperson of the USATF Racewalking Committee, effective Oct. 31, 2003. Vince Peters, who was elected by the Executive Committee to fill the vacated Vice Chair position in June, will immediately assume Dan's duties. Vince will serve the remainder of the term, which expires following the 2004 Olympic Games. Vince, who lives in Yellow Springs, Ohio, has revived the Ohio program in recent years as racewalk chair and has developed a strong program in Yellow Springs. He is a great organizer, as well as a reliable and conscientious worker. Through his Yellow Springs enchaces with or been in close contact with such nationally known walkers as Chad Eiler, Jill Cobb (nee Zenger), Matt Boyles, Cheryl Reiling, Jim Robinson, Steve Pecinovsky, junior Tina Peters, and the pioneers Chris Knotts and Jack Blackburn. He has sustained the Ansel ke and Mortland Invitational in Yellow Springs following its beginning in Columbus. I believe he is the first National Chair from Ohio since Cincinnati's Sebastian Linehan, 60 or more years ago... 2004 Olympic Trials. The 50Km Olympic Trials will be held in Chula Vista, Cal. on Feb. 15. The 20Km Trials are expected to be held in Sacramento, Cal. on July 17 for the men and July 15 for the women... Amazing indeed! Steve Vaintones found some material for sale on E-Bay describing the amazing racewalking feat of Dr. Harry Klink. (Steve didn't purchase the material, but sent me copies of what as shown on E-Bay.) A "Believe It or Not" item from the Oakland Tribune, Tuesday Jan. 24, 1939 stated: Dr. Harry Klink--Chicago, walked 100 yards in 12 1/4 seconds--at the age of 68! He lowered his own world's record of 13 seconds set 48 years before! Also included in the offering was certification of the feat, which read: "This is to certify that the undersigned acted as officials in the one hundred and one-tenth walk against time by Dr. Harry Klink this morning at Gerringar Park, One Hundred and Third Street Play Grounds, Chicago, Ill. He walked the distance in twelve and three-quarters seconds, split second stop watches were used. This is a new world's record for the...
By Shaul Ladany

(Saul is an Israeli Olympian at 50 Km (1972), winner of five U.S. titles at 75 and 100 Km, and a long-time participant in ultra-distance walks throughout Europe.)

Reading Chuck Newell's 100 mile experience in England, it struck me that the ORW has not reported on the fate of what once used to be called the "Blue-Ribbon" of racewalking competitions, the 52 and 3/4 mile "London-Brighton" walk.

Although the first London to Brighton walking record stems from 1869 (11:25:00), the Surrey Walking Club, (SWC), started the organized closed club race over the course only in 1899, and the OPEN race only in 1919. Hundreds used to compete in each race, and even in the early seventies it drew over 200 contestants. In 1984 a competitor was hit by a car during the race, and after 59 repetitions of the open race (having no contests during WW II), the organizers decided to stop the tradition. The curtain went down for the first time. During the blossoming, 5 of its winners were also Olympic Gold Medalists (Tony Green, Harold Whitlock, Don Thompson, Norman Read, and Abdon Pamich). It was Elliott Denman who motivated me to train for the London-Brighton, and so I managed to win it 3 times, in 1970, 1971, and 1973, every time with sub 8 hours results. My best time of 7:46:37 from 1970, is the 3rd overall best time in the race history, bettered only by Thompson and Pamich.

With the spread and popularity of the walking craze in the early 20th Century, the Stock Exchange Athletic Club, (SEAC), followed Surrey and started in 1903 its own London-Brighton. It was restarted after a 8 years pause in 1912, and then held year after year, except for WWI & WWII. In 1999, SEAC joined hands with SWC to celebrate during the 76th SEAC London-Brighton the Surrey Walking Club Centenary Race. I could not resist an unpaid invitation, and managed to finish in 13th place in a time of 10:33 hours. This was the last edition of the Surrey London-Brighton, and the curtain closed for the second time.

However, SEAC continued to organize the race also in 2000 and 2001. In 2001 the rumor was that it will be the last time to be held, so I walked it again, for the 5th time, finishing in the 8th place. Indeed, in 2002 it was not held. But then SEAC decided to make a final effort and to celebrate in 2003 its Centenary race, and the LAST one to be organized. So at age 67 I flew again for a weekend to England, to walk on May 17, 2003 the terminal edition of the London-Brighton. I managed to finish, for the 6th time, relatively effortlessly, in the 18th place in a time of 10:15:24, having the fortune of getting a SEAC volunteer attendant - the best I ever had! So the curtain was closed for the 3rd, and as it seems now, for the final time, over the London-Brighton saga. Pity! I never liked to walk it, but I loved to finish it, and I will continue to have nostalgic feelings. Did I receive during the last non-winning participations any "hardware" memorabilia? Yes and No. The only thing I received, besides a certificate, is an unscribed standard Stock Exchange Athletic Club medal, which lacks even the mentioning that it is for completing the London-Brighton walk, the date or the placing. Nevertheless, I will miss the race.

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Last month, we ran an article by Ron Daniel entitled When Is Lifting An Advantage. Later that article was submitted to the Racewalking List on the internet and drew a flurry of commentary. We have selected some of those comments to repeat in these pages. The first comes from Ray Sharp, a 13-time U.S. titlist in the 1980s, member of two World Cup teams and two World Championship teams (one indoor and one outdoor). Ray said:

There are 2 bad places for lifting in a race:
1. On a very steep uphill (the energy cost may outweigh the speed benefit);
2. When a judge is viewing from the side.

At all other times, loss of contact is advantageous (but not something to consciously strive for, as you'll see if you read the last two sentences of this post). At higher speeds, say sub 5:00 kilometers, there is a huge energy cost associated with maintaining contact because it requires the very unnatural and arbitrary, straight-legged, sinking-low-into-the-hips technique that allows one to stay legal. Anything the walker can do to provide even a millisecond of relief from that technique during each stride helps one maintain the appearance of contact for longer distances at
any given speed. The very fastest walkers have always lost contact on most strides but they use their fitness, flexibility and trunk strength to dampen the eccentric forces of the lower body and maintain a smooth, low-shouldered, no-head-bobbing upper body. Now, having said that, some walkers with freakish knee flexibility like Tim Lewis and Allen James are able to stay legal at higher speeds because their extremely hyperextended knees allow the ankle-flexion forces to push them forward and down instead of forward and up, but when Tim walked in the 1:22-1:23 range he would bring the feet through a little higher and lose contact. He still looked more legal that most of his competitors at such speeds.

Walking speed, as with running sans hurdles, is the product of stride rate and stride length. The distance you travel forward while lifting makes you go faster, and without much energy cost because, remember this, at high walking speeds you have energy costs associated with maintaining the unnatural gait and by lessening those costs and freeing up your technique a little, you basically get your extra distance on each stride for free. This is not a violation of physics. The extra energy needed to maintain that greater forward velocity is mostly offset by the reduction in energy from not doing the crazy gyrations of super-legal walking. Now, as for the often-cited and fallacious theory that legal walking is faster because the high hurdler is caught up by the lead leg down fast. LISTEN CLOSELY. In the hurdles, the only factor in speed is stride rate. All competitors have the same average stride length until after the first hurdle. Why? Because the hurdles are at fixed intervals, and each racer goes left, right, left, jump, left, right, left, jump, etc for 10 hurdles. In fact, there is an optimum range for leg length in hurdlng, and if you are too tall you have to chop unnaturally between the hurdle and it is difficult to keep your tempo up. Most elite hurdlers are about 6' to 6'2" for the men and 5'7" to 5'9" for the women (women's hurdles are closer together).

That's why some of the event's all-time great technicians, like Rod Milburn, Renaldo Nehemiah and Gail Devers, were shorter than their chief rivals.

So, to repeat, hurdlers need to get the heel down fast. So do walkers. But stride length is a factor in walking speed. Therefore, loss of contact, when done smoothly with flexibility and without a lot of wasted vertical component, can enhance speed and save a little energy. Most fast walkers know this instinctively and do it well, even if it still feels to them like they are maintaining contact. And that's where you need to be in a race--at the point where it still feels like you're not lifting. When you get to the speed where you can feel that you're lifting, the judges can see it, too.

In a later post, Ray added:

For a top walker, the energy cost for maintaining contact with the ground is not so large at 5:00 per kilometer (8:00 mile) pace, at least not for one stride. It does add up though, over the distance. My stride length was about 1.1 to 1.3 meters, depending on speed. Usually around 1.25 meters when doing intervals on the track (say 4:00 kilo.). I probably took about 17,000 steps in a 20 km. (17,000 divided by 200 per minute equals 85 minutes, my best time). So a little energy multiplied by a lot of steps does count for something.

Now, the energy cost of maintaining contact rises with speed, but not linearly, more like exponentially. It starts to rise sharply at higher speeds, just like blood lactate does at anaerobic threshold. Obviously the two are related: higher energy cost equals higher oxygen demand equals anaerobic metabolism equals lactic acid. A little bit of lifting moves the energy curve to the right and therefore allows you to continue at that critical speed with minimal metabolic cost. For me, this was once in the 4:15 per kilometer range. Now, it would be over 5:00. Flexibility and weight loss will help some.

Interesting sport... always something to think about.

Wayne Armbrust, coach of international athletes in a multiplicity of events, with a strong interest in racewalking through his wife, Gayle Johnson, had this comment:
about 1.20 kg/m**3. The height of a typical male elite 20k walker is approximately 1.65 m and his average width is probably about 0.42 m, giving a cross section of about 0.7 m**2. Walking at a 1:20:00 pace for 20k, his velocity is 4.17 m/sec. Using these values, the air resistance is seen to be 7.22 N. A typical mass for an elite male walker would be 60 kg. Assuming a flight phase of 0.02 sec, which would be coincidental to the eye, the decrease in velocity during the flight phase would be 0.0024 m/sec, a totally insignificant amount. Even if the walker were to be walking into a very stiff wind, the loss of velocity would be no more than three or four times this quantity, still insignificant.

In fact, when we repeat the above analysis for the case of the high hurdlers, we arrive at a similar conclusion. A typical elite male 110 m hurler is about 1.85 m tall and has an average width of about 0.45 m. Because he lays out over the hurdle during clearance, his average cross section over the hurdle is probably only about 2/3 his cross section when running erect. This would give a cross section of 0.592 m**2. If he runs a time of 13.60 sec, he has an average speed (allowing 0.80 sec for the start) of 9.62 m/sec. (Assuming that a 110 hurler is only going a little over twice as fast as a 20k walker!) The hurdlers therefore experience an air resistance of about 28.88 N. 80 kg would be a typical mass for an elite hurdlers. If we accept the traditional rule of thumb for time lost per hurdle clearance of 0.2 sec, we find that an elite hurdlers decelerates approximately 0.072 m/sec additional beyond that lost in a normal sprint stride. This amount is also small, even if we would consider the effects of running into a headwind.

And these thoughts from Ian Whately:

Thanks to Ron Daniel for sharing his thoughts on this topic. The following come to mind at once:

1. The ankle and knee are not pure hinge joints and analysis of the motion of the lower leg and foot must take into account rotational forces as well as the linear forces relating to forward drive. This is further compounded by hip motion.

2. The foot position at toe off is not indicative of drive angle in some walkers. This is especially true amongst elite walkers who maintain a relatively passive ground contact for the last few thousandths of a second prior to toe off. In simplified form, after the drive work is completed, the foot motion is continued to keep a toe tip in contact for legality.

4. Ron observed that:

"... a walker in a 20,000 meter race who has a stride length of one meter is taking 20,000 strides. Let's say that he is able to float forward 1/10th of a meter. He has now saved himself 10% of the needed strides, or 2000 strides, which is saving of 10% of the push-off energy and 10% of the braking energy."

I disagree. The body mass and acceleration due to gravity don't change. The number of strides decrease and therefore the acceleration required at each stride must increase to maintain the same velocity. Since $F=MA$ it follows that the force must increase and the energy cost will therefore go up in each stride but we would need to solve the resulting energy curve equation for each athlete for each velocity in order to predict their break even energy cost point. This presumes the use of otherwise legal walking form on a flat surface of constant restitution. There would also be an increase in energy cost due to braking forces which are directly proportional to the maximum inter contact height of the whole body centre of gravity. This may be modified by alterations in lead leg to ground contact angle in the lifting versus the no lifting condition. I am working from the premise that this angle would remain unchanged but the human nervous system has shown incredible degrees of plasticity - we know that the spring constants for the leg muscles can alter in a single stride when a different hardness of surface is reached in running - that I doubt it is valid. It wouldn't be a surprise if we found subliminal adaptations in muscle tension or limb angle occurring with a transition to lifting.

All off ground motion is parabolic but the individual body segment motions will have a mirror effect down the biomechanical chain. We can calculate these using Newton's third law of motion but would need a large array of 3D sensors and some googlisciously large number crunching machines.

5. There is no point number five.

6. Your feet should get hotter if you lift. This is an amusing and probably insignificant effect predicted by the second law of thermodynamics.

7. We can over analyze anything, my post being a prima facie case for this statement. The practical test of the energy cost of lifting would be to take a large group of trained subjects and race them over various distances using straight legged form but with or without lifting. The proof of the advantages of lifting would then be clear, I believe. It is rather like the urban myth that "scientists calculated that honey bees should not be able to fly." Lifting is an advantage and the fact that we can't theoretically calculate the exact nature of the advantage doesn't it go away.

8. We can't ignore physiology and do a biomechanical study alone. There is an advantage in changing the muscle groups used during long races. A short form break can aid recovery. Such effects don't appear in a stride to stride energy comparison.

I am intrigued by Ron's theoretical finding that small amounts of lifting increase energy costs but large amounts decrease costs. If anyone has several thousand dollars in gift money in a shoe box under their bed, please send it to me and I'll arrange a full scale test of this hypothesis.

Australian Jack Tregearha commented:

A couple of questions:

1. Shouldn't the float time and the distance of the float be related to the speed over the ground? I would think that if the body is moving at 11.11 feet per second, and is off the ground for 0.02 of a second, then the distance travelled in the float should be 11.11 x 12 x 0.02 = 2.67 inches. If he floated for a greater or lesser distance, he would be off the ground for a greater or lesser time. I don't think you can ascribe a arbitrary 2 inches or 4 inches for this calculation. While in theory there would be a slight slowing while in the air, for the very short time involved, I think this can be ignored - at least for this level of analysis.

Your alternative assumption with the walker floating 4 inches in 0.02 second, would give him a speed over the ground of 16.67 feet per second while he was in the air. This is a 50% increase in speed compared with his average speed. I don't think anything like that would happen. If it did, a massive amount of energy would be involved.

2. At the start of the Energy analysis you state: "If there is little or no extra effort (energy) to achieve the float, then there is little to no energy penalty for the loss of contact." Surely, to achieve a float, it is necessary to lift the whole body mass into the air, and this must require some energy. I don't think you can ignore this. I would expect that this is the major aspect which should be taken into account.

In response to these and other comments, Ron Daniel himself replied:

Elaine's original question (As noted last month the article first appeared in Elaine Ward's Racewalking Bulletin) had to do with when is lifting an advantage. Elaine asked me to give a description beyond the simple "faster turn over and longer stride equals greater velocity" answer.

As Elaine suspected, my hypothetical description of the conditions that need to exist in order to
calculate what is necessary to have loss of contact result in faster velocity has sparked some interesting discussion. Please remember my hypothesis is for the race walker that is obeying the straight leg requirement. Discussions that include bent knee walking or even running is a change of topic. My calculations do not require energy or force analysis. In fact I was careful to say in the first part of my write-up, ..."more difficult to analyze are the forces and energy issues associated with race walking and the potential changes when walking with loss of contact." In Jack's reply he astutely pointed out that to have a 4 inch float in 0.02 seconds would require a velocity of 16.67 ft per second during those 0.02 seconds, which is 50% faster than the base velocity of 11.11 ft per second that I used. By pointing this out, Jack is raising the question of the nature of the performance analysis; that is, setting parameters. Let's assume that 50% is above the upper bound for velocity in 0.02 seconds. In 25% Twenty percent is 13.89 ft per second requiring a float of 3.33 inches. In fact, to maintain the velocity of 11.11 the float distance has to be 2.66 inches. At this point we have to accept that during a stride, the velocity of the center of the body (not necessarily the center of mass) is not constant.

If we are to model the movement and energy issues of a walker, we should be careful to NOT arbitrarily constrain any of the attributes of the walker, such as limiting ankle flexion to +/− 5 degrees.

In Ray Sharp's reply, he is agreeing with my comments that in order to walk with double contact or very nearly so, the walker must exert energy to maintain that gait. Consequently, less energy is required when relaxing from that effort and perhaps having more float.

The latter part of Wayne's reply, i.e. high stride frequency and push off, leads to something valuable. With this observation we can examine exercises that will improve the walkers strength in order to maintain push off through a greater part of the stride while sustaining high stride frequency.

Let's keep up the useful banter.

And then, in a letter to your editor via the U.S. mail, Bob Mimm, Olympian and winner of a zillion or so U.S. and World master titles in many age groups, unaware of all the banter, had the final word:

"The article by Ron Daniel was interesting, but should have been published in a physics magazine. It was too esoteric for us average racewalkers. I'm confused as to what his conclusion was supposed to be. I do know that most of us run faster than we walk. I also know that when I walk, I can not keep up with myself when I run (at attempt at humor).

When you run you lose contact with the ground. So, if you run faster than you walk, lifting must be an advantage. It's that simple.

So, put away the physics books, fancy formulas, deep thinking, and detailed analysis and listen to the wisdom of age and experience. But first, it's interesting to see what Ron Daniel had to say 30 years ago in a March 1973 Ohio Racewalker letter to the editor. I hope Ron won't object to this reprint, but I ran across this and thought it was interesting to see how some basic ideas have developed in his thinking over 30 years. Chances are he won't remember writing this letter."

"After many years of competition, viewing films of Americans and the European "greats", I have come to the following conclusion. That 100 percent contact in racewalking is non-existent at the championship level, especially in the high-speed races, such as a 20 Km. My guess is that the problem is one of mechanics not one of poor execution by the athlete. Let me try to explain. First, we assume that 100 percent can be attained. The ideal condition would be a perfectly flat surface and physically ready body (no injuries, no fatigue). There is now some maximum speed where 100 percent contact exists. In order to maintain this top speed and contact, a very high degree of coordination and timing is taking place. Neglecting fatigue or other physical problems, loss of contact can be caused by an irregular surface. The worst type being a blacktop road with occasional waves; this type of surface is so innocuous in appearance that the walker in lugged into conversancy by the smooth surface. What occurs at high speed is similar to a car wheel with poor shocks. The walker steps off one of the hidden wobles and bobs, he's lifting before he is even aware of it and his reflexes have started to damp out the lift. But not before several non-contact steps go by. Now take other irregular surfaces, or a moving surface (indoor track) and add fatigue, strain, etc., and we have the ingredients for less than 100 percent contact. Usually, this type of break in contact is so slight that it only can be detected on film. Without further speculation, that is my theory on speed walking that wins the big ones. Of course Ron's original premise was eventually widely recognized and the rules of the sport changed to include the "as judged by the human eye" clause. A part of your editor's response to Ron's letter at that time was:

As Ron states, the effects of irregular surfaces is a very important factor and becomes even greater as fatigue builds up. And this true not only in the speed races. I think this is one reason we often find more disqualifications in high lever 50s than in 20s. It becomes extremely difficult to maintain a fluid style over an irregular surface after 3 hours or so. Perhaps the loss of contact is no greater than in a 20, but the style deteriorates so one no longer "looks like a walker" and the judges move in. As to the real high speed races, films taken of several of our walkers doing all-out 100 meter sprints at the 1968 Olympic training camp show that it is definitely possible to maintain contact at a pace of much better than 6 minutes a mile. But it is very tenuous and one can assume they would not have to go much further before fatigue factors would pull them off the ground."

The real distance records

While the 50 Km racewalk is the longest Olympic distance on foot, there are those fanatics out there who think of that as just a warmup. World ultra-distance racewalk records start with 100 km and then get longer. Here are the current records, according to an ultra-distance web site.

**Track**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Km</td>
<td>9:16.32</td>
<td>Frederic Marie, France, Etekey, April 4, 1987</td>
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<tr>
<td>200 Km</td>
<td>21:58.40</td>
<td>Claudio Sterpin, Italy, Milan, Oct. 18-19, 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>500 Km</td>
<td>50:49.55</td>
<td>John Dowling, Great Britain, Nottingham, Jul. 31-Aug. 3, 1983</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Hours</td>
<td>118,805</td>
<td>Robert Dobson, Great Britain, Colchester, Sept. 15, 1985</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Hours</td>
<td>118,521</td>
<td>Tom Richardson, Great Britain, Woodford, Oct. 16, 1988*</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>216,621</td>
<td>Claudio Sterpin, Italy, Milan, Oct. 18-19, 1986</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Days</td>
<td>741,212</td>
<td>John Dowling, Great Britain, Nottingham, July 31-Aug. 5, 1983</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Days</td>
<td>855,180</td>
<td>George Littlewood, Great Britain, Sheffield, March 6-11, 1982*</td>
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</table>

**Road**

<table>
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<th>Distance</th>
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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Km</td>
<td>8:38.07</td>
<td>Viktor Ginko, Belarus, Szczeciniae, Italy, Oct. 27, 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>200 Km</td>
<td>19:55.07</td>
<td>Zbigniew Klapa, Poland, Chapelle, Belg., Oct. 22-23, 1983</td>
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<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>226,432</td>
<td>Paul Fothome, Belgium, Brussels, Oct. 13-14, 1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>228,930</td>
<td>Jesse Castaneda, U.S., Albuquerque, Sept. 18-19, 1976*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*unconfirmed</td>
<td></td>
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**Women**

**Track**

<table>
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<th>Record</th>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Km</td>
<td>11:17.42</td>
<td>Sandra Brown, Great Britain, Etekey, France, Oct. 27, 1990</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>100 Miles</td>
<td>19:00.47</td>
<td>Sandra Brown, Great Britain, Auckland, N.Z., July 10-11, 1982</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Columbia, in 56:19.

Another 10 minutes back. ... The day before Ellen Minkow won the women's 10 Km title, also in

minute and a half back, and a promising newcomer, Dan O'Connor, edged Augie Hirt for third,

Markon, and John Argo also going all the way. Jerry Brown captured the National 30 Km in

leg, and, after spending much time in the bushes, struggled in 16 minutes back of the leaders.

Switzerland. The U.S. was sixth in this one as Ron Laird ran into stomach problems on the first

U.S., John Knifion had a 4:16:49 in 14th, Floyd Godwin 4:23:48 in 20th, and Bill Weigle

U.S. fifth in a best-ever performance. Ron Laird outdistanced Nikolai Smaga to capture his second

performance in the 50 for a final four-point margin. Italy was third, West Germany fourth and the

U.S. with a 47:52 in 16th as the U.S. team finished eighth. Czech Josef Pribiline beat Mexico's

Ernesto Canto by 11 seconds in 1:19:30 to win the 20. Jim Heiring had 1:24:51 in 16th. Mexico's

Raul Gonzalez took command of the 50 early and drew steadily away to win in 3:45:37. Dan

O'Connor was 18th in 4:09:50 as the U.S. team finished ninth. The Soviets had a third in the 20

and second and third in the 50 and finished well ahead of Mexico and Italy in the team race.

. Gonzalez also won the Alloni Memorial 20 Km in Dearborn, Mich., a week later in 1:27:55 with

Carl Scheuler second in 1:29:05.

15 Years Ago (From the Oct. 1988 ORW).--Veteran walkers dominated in the Seoul Olympics.

In the 20, Josef Pribiline, 1983 World Champion, blistered the final 5 in 19:18 to edge East

Germany's Ronald Weigel with a 1:19:37. Weigel was just 3 seconds back. 1980 Olympic gold

medalist Maurizio Damilano was third in 1:20:14. Gary Morgan had a personal best of 1:27:26 in

finishing 37th, just 4 seconds ahead of Jim Heiring. In the 50, Soviet Vyacheslav Ivanenko

emerged from the shadow of East Germany's Hartwig Gauder and Weigel to take the gold in

3:38:29. He discouraged the veteran pair with a 20:39 split from 35 to 40 Km and then pulled

away over the final 10. Weigel finished in 3:38:56 and Weigle in 3:39:45. Marco Evonitiuk, only

40 seconds off the pace at 30 Km, hung on for 22nd in 3:56:55, with Carl Scheuler 23rd in

3:57:44... Canada's Tim Berrett won the Alloni 20 Km in 1:25:09 with Giorgio Damilano

(Marucio's brother) second in 1:27:30.

10 Years Ago (From the Oct. 1993 ORW)--Italy's Amnita Sidoti and Mexico's Bernardo Segura

were winners of the Alloni Memorial races in Dearborn. Sidoti took the women's 10 Km in 46:06,

dead of Deborn Van Order (46:52) and Lynda Brubaker (47:46). Though unchallenged, Segura

blasted the 20 in 1:21:55 with Italy's Giovanni Pericielli a distant second in 1:27:09. Gary Morgan

was the first U.S. finisher with a 1:29:31 in 6th... Czech Ivo Majestic, a student at the University

of Technology in Xening, China, was 1:29 in 6th... Mexico's Raul Gonzalez won the Alloni

Memorial 20 Km in Dearborn, Mich., a week later in 1:27:55 with Giorgio Damilano

(Marucio's brother) second in 1:27:30.

5 Years Ago (From the Oct. 1998 ORW)--Jeanne Dow won the Pan-Am Cup women's 20 Km in

1:38:57, ahead of Teresa Vail (1:41:02) and Mexicos Rosario Sanches (1:42:22) and Aura

Morales (1:43:03). Mexican men swept the medals in the men's 20, with Ignacio Zamudio

winning in 1:28:33. Canada's Arturo Huerta was fourth, with Curt Clausen the first American at

1:37:11 in 10th. Mexico also swept the 50--Carlos Mercenario winning in 4:06:38. Philip Dunn

was fourth in 4:25:30. ... In the National 40, Gary Morgan (3:21:37) and Cheryl Reiling

(3:40:38) captured the titles. Philip Dunn followed Morgan in 3:22:58. Reiling was 32 minutes

ahead of second-place Dorit Attia. ... Hern Nelson won the National 2 Hour going 23,694 meters

and Gretchen Esteller-Fishman the women's 1 Hour 11,656 meters.