And Yet Again--Indoor Titles To Dow and Seaman

Boston, Feb. 28-29--This story will get old before long. It's the USATF National Indoor Championships. On Saturday, Tim Seaman wins his seventh consecutive title in the Men's 5 Km walk. On Sunday, Joanne Dow wins her third consecutive title in the Women's 3 Km.

In winning the men's race, the 31-year-old Seaman had his third fastest time in the string of seven as he crossed the line in 19:30.59. Last year was his best as he challenged the American record (19:18.40, Tim Lewis, 1987) with his 19:21.56. In 2001, he had 19:29.96. He has never failed to break 20 minutes since starting his string with a 19:54.56 in 1998.

In the race here, John Nunn and Kevin Eastler were on his heels through 4 Km, but they had no answer when Tim made a strong move to open up at least 50 meters on Nunn. John closed slightly by the finish, but Seaman came home comfortably 5 seconds ahead. Eastler, just hoping to break 20 minutes, did so with ease, finishing in 19:50.36. Curt Clausen, on pace with the other three in the early stages, took fourth in 20:35.51.

Dow, just 19 days short of her 40th birthday, seems to be getting better with age. After finishing in just over 13 minutes the past two years, she blitzed a 12:36.76 today, leaving five-time winner Michelle Rohl 34 seconds back. Amber Antonia finished third. Dow's effort gave her the third fastest time in the 18-year history of the event (the women raced at 1 Mile from 1973 to 1986) behind Rohl's 12:28.32 in 2001 and Debbi Lawrence's 12:35.79 in 1993. Lawrence holds the American record at 12:20.79, set in Toronto in 1993.

The results:

**Men's 5 Km:**
1. Tim Seaman 19:30.59
2. John Nunn 19:35.58
3. Kevin Eastler 19:50.36
4. Curt Clausen 20:35.51
5. Patrick Collier 22:34.12
6. DNF--Dave McGovern

**Women's 3 Km:**
1. Joanne Dow, adidas 12:36.76
2. Michelle Rohl, Moving Comfort 13:10.79
3. Amber Antonia, NYAC 13:26.38
4. Jolene Moore, Parkside AC 13:32.46
5. Sam Cohen, Parkside AC 13:40.15
6. Deborah Huberty, New Balance 14:53.74
7. Bobbi Jo Chapman, un. 14:00.89
8. Loretta Schintlein, Walk USA 14:58.06
9. DQ--Marcia Guste Rumleth, Nedw England Walkers

Racewalking Challenge Off To Fast Start In Tijuana

The 2004 IAAF Racewalking Challenge made its first stop in Tijuana, Mexico on March 20-21 with three fast, highly competitive races. The men's 20 Km on Saturday produced a stirring dual between the world's two premier walkers, with Jefferson Perez prevailing over Robert Korzeniowski in 1:19:32.70. In the women's 20, Italy's Elisa Rigaudo won in 1:28:50. On Sunday, Mexico's German Sanchez scored a popular win in 3:48:11.27. In that race, Philip Dunn finished ninth, but more importantly bettered the Olympic A standard with his 3:59:11.55 to join Curt Clausen on the US Olympic team.
The men's 20 started at a relatively leisure pace, with Mexico's Omar Segura leading at 5 Km in 20:11. Korzeniowski was right behind him and just ahead of three more Mexicans—Alejandro Lopez, Rodrigo Flores, and Gabriel Ortiz. Perez was leading his time in sixth at 20:17, accompanied by Ireland's Robert Heffernan.

When the pace quickened, any pretenders dropped away and at 10 Km Lopez led in 39:56 with Perez, Korzeniowski, and Flores right behind. The rest of the field was dropping away. As the pace moved up another notch, Flores had to let go, but Italy's Ivano Bruettini was moving into the picture, covering his third 5 km in 19:43. At 15 Km it was Korzeniowski and Lopez in front with 59:37, Perez a second behind, but looking very dangerous, and Bruettini fourth in 59:54. Perez made his move at 17 Km and had an 8-second advantage on Korzeniowski and Lopez as they entered the final 2 km lap. That decided the race as Perez made that advantage hold up to the finish. Lopez was spent and gave up the bronze medal to Bruettini, who nearly caught Korzeniowski and even gained 2 seconds on Perez over the second half of the race. Lopez snuck under 2:20 in fourth and was 2:10 ahead of Flores, who finished fifth.

Perez, last year's World champion and number one ranked 20 Km walker, will be seeking his second Olympic gold this summer (he won in 1996). Korzeniowski has ruled the 50 Km for the last 8 years and is defending Olympic titlist at both 20 and 50.

The U.S. was represented by Tim Seaman and Curt Clausen, who finished 25th and 26th in 2:28:41 and 1:29:04, respectively. Despite Seaman's 21:08, 43:15, and 1:05:49, he was only 2:10 ahead of Flores, who finished fifth.

As the pace quickened, these four moved away from the rest of the field and went through 15 Km in 1:06:53 with a 30-second advantage. At 16 Km, O'Sullivan began to drop away and it became a three woman race. Rigaudo proved quickest, building a 3.2 second margin with two laps to go and increasing that to 10 seconds after another lap and finally to 16 seconds by the finish. Vasco managed to edge away from Feitor to take the silver by 6 seconds and O'Sullivan finished strongly enough to finish under 1:30, with Longhena a solid fifth.

Following the race, Rigaudo said, "I felt very good during the race as I came here after winning the Italian Olympic trials. I believe many of the runners I faced today have great expectations of reaching the Olympic podium in Athens." Rigaudo was 10th in last year's World Championships and this is certainly the highlight of her career to date.

In the 50, Sanchez, who has been a strong walker for Mexico for many years but never good enough for a world ranking, had a breakthrough performance. He confidently walked his own race in the middle of a large field that stayed together for the first half of the race. His teammates, Mario Flores and Rogelio Sanchez, boke that field up with a strong move at 27 Km. Then Rogelio Sanchez made his own break and eventually increased his lead to 51 seconds at the 38 Km mark.
Further Results

National USATF Indoor Masters Championships, Boston, March 28


Women 75-84—1. fotosbeam 8:04.61 2. Lisa Sonntag 8:04.61 3. Lisa Sonntag 8:04.61 4. Lisa Sonntag 8:04.61 5. Lisa Sonntag 8:04.61


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Mid-America Indoor S Km, Colorado Springs, Feb. 29 --1. Daryl Meyers 29:38 S Km, Denver, Feb. 22 --1. Daryl Meyers 29:26 3. Rita Sinkovec (64) 33:29


Some Tests For Your Racewalking Skills and Endurance

Sun. April 4 World Cup 20 Km Trials, Men and Women, Overland Park, Kan. (J)

Metropolitan 10 Km, New York City, 8:30 am (G)

5 and 10 Km, Walnut, Cal. (Y)

Sat. April 10 10 Km and USATF South Region 1 Hour, Clermont, Fla. (U)

Florida 10 Km and South Region 1 Hour, Clermont, 9 am (U)

Sun. April 11 5 Km, Cambridge, Mass, 10 am (AA)

Sat. April 17 3 Km, Boynton Beach, Fla. (Q)

Sun. April 18 5 Km, Fair Oaks, Cal. 8:30 am (P)

5 Km, Denver, 8 am (H)

Sat. April 24 Masters 10 Km (Track), West Seattle. (C)

5 Km, Kalamazoo, Mich. (D)

Sun. May 25 5 Km, Denver, 9 am (H)

8 Km, Western, RI (AA)

Sat. May 1 5 Km, Howard Wood Relays, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., 6:30 am (N)

Sun. May 2 5 Km, Littleton, Col. 8 am (H)

5 Km, Kentfield, Cal., 8 am (P)

3 Km, Langley, Va. (O)

Sat. May 8 Colorado 10 Km, Broomfield, 8 am (H)

Fri. May 9 Southeast Masters 5 Km, Raleigh, NC (B)

Sun. May 9 South Region 20 Km and Southeast Masters 10 and 20 Km, Raleigh, NC (B)

5 Km, Cambridge, Mass., 10 am (AA)

North Region 20 Km, Mortland 5,10, and 20, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)

10 Km, Mt. Collins, Col., 8 am (H)

West Regional 20 Km, Travis AFB, Cal. (R)

Sat. May 15 Colorado Masters 5 and 10 Km, Littleton, 9 am (H)

Sun. May 16 Weinacker Cup 5 and 10 Km (Michigan vs. Ontario)
Another Perspective

by Lance Tibbles

(Lance Tibbles is a long-time track and field fan who took up racewalking several years ago as a recreational and fitness pursuit. I met Lance even before that as a colleague of my sister on the Law School Faculty at Capital University here in Columbus and quickly learned of his interests in track. Track, of course, is always a topic of conversation when I see him. Along the line, I even provided a little instruction on our branch of the sport from time to time. He provides an interesting perspective on Al Heppner.)

In the 1870s, Henry Heppner ran mule freight teams in Eastern Oregon. On July 4, 1872, he made camp in a valley at the confluence of three creeks. That site later became a town named for him--Heppner, Oregon.

In 1999, on the same week of the year, 127 years later, Al Heppner visited the town named for his great, great-grand uncle. Al had met Jenny Krein, an intern at the Olympic Training Center. who was from Heppner, Oregon. Jenny arranged for Al to visit Heppner after the 1999 US Track and Field Championships in Eugene. Al's father, Max, had visited Heppner shortly before Al was born.

My brother and I grew up in Heppner. Our mother still lives there. We both visit regularly. Heppner is small, rural town in the high desert of Eastern Oregon where the economy is still based on cattle, sheep, timber, and wheat. The folks in Heppner do not know much about racewalking, but they know good people when they meet them. To the surprise of no one who knew Al, Al was received in Heppner as he was received everywhere he traveled—as an immediate member of the family. Al was a stranger to Heppner and its people only until he arrived there. The people were as delighted to include this new Heppner in their community as Al was to join them.

My brother and I traveled to Eugene (from different directions) to watch the 1999 Nationals. We both graduated from the University of Oregon and over the years have spent many hours watching track meets at Hayward Field. In fact, I still own a house a few blocks from that storied track. Vicne Peters, Jill Zenner Cobb, and Jill's dad have stayed there the last two times the Nationals were held in Eugene.

I had seen Al race in Indianapolis in 1996(?), but I was not able to talk with him then. At the time of the 1999 meet in Eugene, we did not know whether Al was related to Henry Heppner, so we decided to try to talk with him to see if he knew. The day before the race, we found the walkers beginning a workout. We saw Curt and Tim and asked if Al was with them. They pulled so we decided to try to talk with him to see if he knew. The day before the race, we found the walkers beginning a workout. We saw Curt and Tim and asked if Al was with them. They pulled
My brother and I visited with Al that day and after the 20 Km race the next day. It was no surprise when we later found that his visit to Heppner was a roaring success. We both began to read the articles that Al was writing. Al's stories, with his self-deprecating sense of humor (stuck in the snow in the mountains, lost in the streets of a foreign city) were always a good read. We also visited with Al the next time the T&F Championships were held in Eugene. Al remembered us and our connection with the town that bears his name. I don't need no tell you how friendly and delightful he was to us.

A practice in Heppner, as in many other places, is that when a friend and companion dies others remember him or her by recalling stories about the persons' life. And in Heppner, some of the stories are actually true. They cry, they tell a story, they laugh, then they cry some more. Although many of you know a great many more stories about Al than I do, it is in that spirit that I tell this story.

At the 2001 Nationals in Eugene, I was near the starting line as the starter was lining up the male walkers. "Hip #1, start here. Hip #2-right here. Hip #3... Hip #4... Hip #5... Hip #6. Number 6, where is #6? Why is there no #6? OK #7, #8... #9. Why are there two walkers with #8?"

To everyone's delight, it was discovered that Al had put on his hip #6 upside down. Now this is the National 20 Km Championship and the walkers are tensely lined up on the starting line awaiting the gun. But for the next 10 seconds, as he pulled off his number and replaced it right-side-up, this group of amazing athletes laughed and joked with Al about his plight. "It looks like a 6 when he looks down at it." "Hey Al, are you going to walk the race on your hands?"

"Apparently you do have to be able to count to six to join the Army." It was a magic moment.

But in a way, Al was right—6 was not his number. Al, to the people of Heppner, Oregon, you will always be #1.

On Ice After Indoors

by Dave McGovern

For me it was just an interesting morning, but for those who may be more spiritual, maybe there's something more to it. There was a memorial for Al Happner in Boston yesterday morning at 10 am at the meet headquarters for the USATF Indoor Championships. I took Sherry Watts suggestion to heart instead (Ed. Sherry had suggested on the internet taking a walk in your favorite spot in Al's memory), and opted for a long workout on the Charles River bike trail, starting just before 10 to coincide with the memorial service. Normally, I would have waited to workout until after the service had warmed up, but I wanted to be out there while the service was going on inside. To the extent that I have one, my God is "out there," under the sun, in the trees, the grass, the water. (At Sunday School and church, I was always the distracted one, scolded for trying to look through the stained glass to see what was going on outside.) And on this day, it was sunny and warm out there (warm for Boston in February, anyway.)

It was an easy workout and there are no deceptively mileages on the trail, so I kept occupied by watching people running, dogs playing, squirrels doing whatever the hell it is that squirrels do, etc. I stayed on the Boston/Brookline side and took the trail all the way to its westernmost end. Just before getting to the Northeastern U. boathouse about 1/2 mile before the turnaround, I was entertained by a woman trying to control her two shelties (kind of like the Minnie Me version of collies) as they chased squirrels, ducks, and each other all over the park.

When I was about 100 meters away, the smaller of the dogs went tearing off onto the frozen river to chase a pair of ducks that were in the water just past the edge of the ice.

Predictably, it found the brakes to be inadequate as it got toward the edge of the ice sheet and it slid into the water. As Little Lassie bobbed around trying to get itself out, the other dog, a bit larger and possibly older and wiser, tip-toed very gingerly towards the edge as it barked encouragement. That didn't last long, as it too wound up in the drink.

By this time, from about 50 meters out, I said to myself, "Oh crap, here it comes..." as the woman walked quickly out towards the edge of the ice to save her pets, seemingly oblivious to the law of physics that says a 12-pound dog will break through a sheet of ice, so too will a 25-pound woman. Since I did in fact labor through several semesters of physics, I was already veering off the path towards the river as the inevitable happened. So there she was, flailing around in the river as the dogs tried to claw their way over her to get themselves out. (There's a reason they call them man's best friend.)

I didn't notice the 25-foot, retractable leash that she dropped on to the dogs—it would have come in handy—but I did find a 5-foot long board on the shore that seemed like the best thing available in a pinch. I told her to calm down as I bellowed my way out to her, pushing the board ahead of me. By this time, she was clinging to the ice, but ice being one of the world's truly "frictionless surfaces" that physics professors posit to make equation-solving more manageable, she was making no progress whatsoever in getting herself unlodged beyond her armpits in her effort to get out of the water. Laying in 4-inches of water on top of sheet of ice, I wasn't getting much of a grip either, but the board did offer her enough to get herself up to mid-chest level. That's as far as she got, but it was enough for me to reach out and grab the hood of her down vest. I was able to pull her out up to waist level, but then she became stuck. No amount of pulling could get her further up onto the ice.

By this point, who was a babbling incoherent amalgam of teeth-chattering, crying and moaning, not able to communicate that she was being held by her fanny pack that was lodged under the ice. "Try to relax, we'll get you out," I said. "I heard myself talking about, I asked again and again what was holding her under until she finally chattered "f-f-fanny pack." I told her to remove it, and when she couldn't, to roll onto her side. That did the trick. As soon as she rolled, her hips leveled her legs closer to the surface, the pack was freed, and she popped right out onto the ice. With a few more tugs on her hood, she was safely away from the edge.

I wanted to go after the dogs, but I wasn't going any closer to the water until she got her weight off the ice, and it took a lot of convincing to get her to move. All the while, I'm belly down in 4-inches of 32-degree water. When she was a safe distance away, I turned to the dogs, but only saw the larger one bobbing slowly eastward. I bellowed my way downstream a few feet and was able to get a finger on its collar. The ice was making funny noises, so I didn't immediately yank the bigger out. As I lay there waiting for the whole sheet to collapse, the other dog, who must have crawled over the woman while I was trying to get her out, started yapping in my ear, running over my back, spinning in tight circles near the edge. It was enough to distract me from thoughts of the ice imploding, so I got another finger on the bigger dog's collar and was able to opeam him out. I backed away from the edge, got up to my feet soaking wet and cold, and helped the woman off the ice and onto a park bench.

Before long, a elderly couple came along. I asked them to stay with the woman, who seemed to be in her mid-50s and was by now a bit more coherent than she had been moments before while chest-deep in the Charles. As I was about to walk the 500 meters or so back to where I had seen a green Parks Department vehicle, she thanked me and said, "I don't even know your name." I muttered, "um...Dave", and headed off to get here someone warmer and drier to finish the job of helping her to her car, taking her to the emergency room, or whatever the next step is for someone who just spent 5 minutes floating fully clothed in the Charles River in February.

I got the parks people on the case, gave them my name and cell phone number for whatever reason they wanted them, and headed back for the 35-minute cold, wet journey back to my hotel.
As an ardent agnostic and cynic, I was surprised on the walk back that I was thinking about the possibility of Al nudging me to be out there at that time, but I was. Deep down, I don't believe I was "sent there", but there's something haunting to think that somehow maybe three lives were saved because of Al. (Ah! A slight chink in the agnostic armor. But even as a firm believer in a greater power, that I certainly can't fully define or comprehend with my finite mind, I can't say that Dave was "sent there". How do you draw a line between mere coincidence, serendipity, if you will, and some sort of divine, or spiritual, intervention. But, it's sure nice for the woman and her dogs that a caring, and competent soul appeared on the trail at that moment in time.)

Finally, Elaine Ward, in an editorial in her N.A.R.F Racewalking Bulletin, offered the following analysis of Al's passing.

I have mixed emotions in writing this editorial. I was in the east during the time of the 50 Km Olympic Trials in Chula Vista and Al's subsequent suicide. I am just one of many who have been coping with the question, "Why?" After weeks, I feel I may have pieced together a possible answer. I am not saying the only answer, but an answer to increase future awareness.

Many pieces contribute to this answer:
1. My past intensive study of legal and illegal drugs for a book I was writing.
2. Al had a history of depression and of erratic workouts where he would have months of excellent training interspersed with inexplicable periods of being down on his training.
3. He was single focused, almost hyperfocused, on his goal of making the Olympic Team. By the time of the Trials, he was in lean, excellent condition.
4. When he came to Pasadena to do a special 5 Km qualifying race for the indoor Nationals, he finished saying he just "raced to meet the qualifying time." I was a bit puzzled that he held back, but accepted his controlled effort within the context of his plan to give his all at the Olympic Trials in three weeks. (Al's and my personal communication stopped at this point as I went east. So the next points are from others.)
5. After finishing the Trials, Al lay in an unaware, uncommunicative, zoned-out state with a completely "flat affect". His condition was way beyond that of exhaustion from a strenuous effort. It took the official responsible for making him to drug testing 3 hours before he could get Al to respond and accompany him.
6. In the next couple of days, Al seemed to recognize that he had other opportunities to make the Olympic Team, but he was uncertain where to go in spite of everyone's encouragement and his effort to plan.

7. Allen James posted an article on the Internet about Derrick Adkins, and what happened after he won the gold medal in the 400 meter hurdles at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. In Adkins' words, "Everything just crashed. It was a nightmare." He had stopped his antidepressant medication in order to train for the Olympics. Without the high of the stimulation of his gold medal quest, he mentally and emotionally wiped out.
8. I learned that Al had taken himself off the antidepressant he was taking in order to optimize his training for the 2000 Olympics.
9. Within my family, we know of four other young people ages 17-30 whose suicides can be related to antidepressants.

During my drug studies, I found myself getting extremely angry at the drug companies and doctors who prescribe antidepressants without warning and rewarning of the serious consequences that can be associated with stopping without supervision. The danger of relapsing into a black, suicidal depression--far worse than the original complaint--needs to be widely understood.

MARCH 2004

FROM HEEL TO TOE

Dunn honored. Philip Dunn's Olympic qualifying performance in Tijuana won for him USATF Athlete of the Week honors. That makes two such awards for racewalkers in the first 3 months of the year. Curt Clausen was honored the week of Feb. 17 for his win at the 50 Km Olympic Trials.

Seminars. The Marin Racewalkers will present their annual Alongi in Marin weekend May 29-31. Besides the Alongi in Marin 5 Km race on Sunday, the activities include seminars and semi-private sessions with well-known coach Frank Alongi on Saturday and Monday and a round table with Frank following Sunday's race. In addition, two members of the Italian national team--Elisa Barbieri an intermediate competitor and Daniele Paris, a junior competitor--will be on hand. The events are in Kentfield, Cal. For further information contact Jack Bray at PO Box 21, Kentfield, CA 94914, 415-461-6843, marinrw@earthlink.net. Weinacker Cup. The Weinacker Cup, an annual competition pitting teams of Michigan and Ontario walkers against each other, will be hosted by Dan O'Brien in Marysville, Michigan on May 16. The competition is at 5 Km for women and 10 Km for men. Other competitors are welcome, although they will not figure in the team scoring. (But, I think teams, say from Ohio, New York, Indiana would be welcomed into the team competition.) Anyway, contact Dan at 810-984-4965 for further information.

National Invitational. The National Invitational walks, held annually in the D.C. area since 1986, were cancelled this year. The host Potomac Valley Track Club simply felt they didn't have the available man(and woman)power to do justice to the event this year. They hope to be back on the schedule next year. Meanwhile, the Jack Mortland Walks, which John White started in Columbus in 1988 and Vince Peters took to Yellow Springs several years ago, will go on as usual with a May 9 date. The event encompasses the North Region 10 Km Championship. Omission. A bad oversight on my part--last month, I listed US racewalkers who had been on at least three Olympic teams and omitted Track and Field Hall of Famer Henry Laskau who was on the 1948, 1952, and 1956 teams. Interesting that the only one to point out this omission to me is Israeli Olympian Shaul Ladany. Zach pikes up honors. Zachary Pollinger has been prominent in these pages for the past 3 years with his outstanding results in high school and junior competitions. Most recently, his wins in the Nike Invitational and National Scholastic meets on successive nights, are reported earlier in this issue. The New Jersey high school senior, still just 17 holds freshman and junior class high school records at 1 Mile. He has won five Junior Olympic Nationals and holds the Intermediate Boys 5 Km record. He has been on three National teams, two junior and one Youth, and was eleventh at the 2003 World Youth Championships. And, of course, he won the Millrose Mile last year as a high school junior. He still has two years of Junior eligibility remaining. A National Merit finalist, he has been awarded early admission to Harvard. Also, on the academic side, he was first overall in the New Jersey DECA competition, a national marketing competition, two years in a row and was a National Finalist in 2003. His future in racewalking and in life is certainly promising. Racewalking camp. California University of Pennsylvania will be hosting its annual racewalking camp July 4-8. The camp, directed by Ray Kuhles, will be held in conjunction with the Cal U distance camp. The cost will be $225 for resident campers or $175 for commuters and is for boys and girls ages 10-18. For more information, call 724-938-5828. World Cup. The US World Cup Team, which will be finalized following the 20 Km Trial on April 4 in Overland Park, Kansas, will be coached by four-time Olympian Carl Schueler and managed by former Racewalk Committee Chairman Rich Torrellas.
Ward has announced that the North American Racewalking Institute is establishing an Al Heppner Scholarship Fund with the intent of awarding a scholarship annually to an aspiring, talented young potential Olympian. To date, 34 donors have contributed $3600. The committee responsible for establishing the protocol for the Fund is Curt Clausen, Vince Peters, Jeff Salvage, Diane Graham-Henry, Dave Doherty, and Elaine. The protocol will establish the qualifications, standards, and procedures for awarding money. For more information, or to make donations, contact NARI at 1203 S. Orange Grove Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91105 or call 800-898-5117.

LOOKING BACK

(Please note that the items in this feature last month were from February issues, not January issues as the text indicated. Just another of those little irritations you must put up with if you are going to continue to invest in my humble offerings, with leanings toward errata.)

35 Years Ago (From the March 1969 ORW)—In the National Indoor meet in Philadelphia, local hero Dave Romanovsky zipped by Ron Laird during the final half lap to win in 6:21.9. Laird finished in 6:24.4, with Italy's 1954 Olympic gold medalist, Adlon Pamich, third in 6:28.8. Following were Ron Kulik, Dan Totheroh, and Jim Hanley. Bob Kitchen won the IC4A mile in 6:41.1, with Greg Diebold also under 7 minutes. Pamich won a mile in Albany, N.Y. over Ron Dannel and Kulik in 6:32.9. Out west, Goetz Klopfer edged Tom Dooley in a quick 10 Km with a 45:10 performance.

30 Years Ago (From the March 1974 ORW)—The IC4A indoor mile title went to Ellen Minkow in 7:36.1, probably making her the first woman to win a title in a major collegiate track event for men (primarily). Bill Hamlin actually finished about 15 yards ahead of Ellen, but was DQ'd and Howie Palamarchuk left the track with a commanding lead when he mistakenly thought he had down over the final 5 Km. Floyd Godfrey (20:17.2) third and Rob Cole (20:48.97) fourth. The women's Indoor 3 Km went to Debbi Lawrence in 13:13.20, 2 1/2 seconds ahead of Teresa Vaill. Susan Armenta (13:49.86) was third, second ahead of Gretchen Estall, who just edged Cheryl Rellinger. Another week later, there was a gathering in Palo Alto for 50 Km, and James turned the tables in his debut at the distance. What a debut! An American record of 3:55:39, leaving the favored Matthews 7:20 back. Herr Nelson (4:04:23), Andrej Chylinski (4:07:40), Paul Wall (4:08:15), and Rob Cole (4:14:15) followed. At the National Invitational Walks, Canad's Martin St. Pierre won the men's 20 Km in 1:29:51 and Teresa Vaill captured the women's 10 in 45:14. Philip Dunn (1:30:37), Dave Marchese (1:30:49), and Dave McGovern (1:32:05) followed St. Pierre, and Lyn Brubaker (1:33:52), Dana Yarbrough (1:39:10), and Cheryl Rellinger (2:00:22) took the next three women's spots.

5 Years Ago (From the March 1999 ORW)—In a great National Indoor invitation's 20 Km., Joanne Dow bettered her own American road best to win in 1:33:27. Also capturing spots on the US World Cup team were Michelle Rohl (1:36:27), Danielle Kirk (1:37:16), Jill Zenner (1:37:19), and Margaret Ditchburn (1:37:35). Teresa Vaill was just 3 seconds behind Ditchburn, after going through 10 Km in a solid second place. Canada's Janice McCaffrey (1:36:33) actually finished second in the race. The men's race saw solid performances by Ecuador's Olympic Champion Jefferson Perez (1:22:02) and Tim Seaman (1:23:50). Curt Clausen was third in 1:24:49, ahead of Jonathan Matthews (1:25:27), Andrew Herrmann (1:26:50), Kevin Estall (1:27:17), Al Heppner (1:29:02), Philip Dunn (1:29:13), and Michael Rohl (1:29:49). Five others (Sean Albert, Dave McGovern, Gary Morgan, Mark Green, and Warrick Yeager) finished between 1:30:30 and 1:34:36. Dow and Seaman captured indoor titles at 5 and 3 Km, respectively. Seaman won in 19:45.04 with Curt Clausen just 9 seconds back and Kevin Estall in third. Dow did 12:44.9, 5 seconds ahead of Jill Zenner, with Margaret Ditchburn third. In Chula Vista, Cal., Seaman set an American 3 Km record 11:19.2, and Curt Clausen an American 5 Km record with 19:35.20. (It was a 5 Km race, so Seaman had to finish the 5, which he did in 24:11, as he did an easy cool-down over the final 2 Km.) Al Heppner, the former 5 Km record holder at 20:07, finished second in 20:41.07 ahead of Philip Dunn and Sean Albert. Dion Russell won the Australian 20 Km title in 1:20:49, 29 seconds ahead of Nick A'Hern.

Let us remember Al like this, with a big smile for the world. Photo of Al Heppner from the Potomac Valley Track Club newsletter.