Two Big Surprises; Then Another Day At the Office For Korz

Following two surprising finishes in the 20 Km races, Poland's Robert Korzeniowski brought some order back to the racewalking world. His third straight Olympic win at 50 Km was his most convincing. Despite high temperature and humidity, he missed the Olympic record by just seconds and led a spread-out field by what he says will be his finale. In 1996 he won by just 6 seconds over Mikhail Schennikov and in 2000 his margin over Aigars Fadejevs was just 1:18. It was his fourth Olympic gold. He also won the 20 in 2000.

A week earlier, Italy's Ivano Brugnetti, primarily a 50 Km specialist until this year, walked from the front to beat all the favorites in the men's 20 Km. His 1:19:40 was a personal best. Three days later, Greece's Athisanas Tsourneleka, a complete outsider in pre-race speculation, became an instant national hero as she stunned the women's 20 Km field to win in 1:29:12, also a personal best.

The men's 20 Km started at 9 am on August 20 with a temperature of 75 F and relative humidity at 43 percent, relatively cool and dry compared to what had been anticipated. Nonetheless, with heat expected to be a factor, the race started at a very conservative pace that kept a large part of the field together in the early stages.

Brugnetti was showing at the head of the pack from the start and led through the first 2 Km in 8:11, with some 36 walkers within 5 seconds. Maintaining that "leisurely" pace, Brugnetti was still in front at 4 Km in 16:23, and though there were still 29 walkers in the lead pack, the finish order, surprisingly, was already established—Brugnetti, Spain's Francisco Fernandez, Australia's Nathan Deakes, and favorite Jefferson Perez of Ecuador were at the front.

Fernandez assumed the lead and dropped the pace a notch, going through the next 2 Km in 8:03 to reach 6 Km in 24:26, with Brugnetti, Perez, and Deakes right on his heels. That small acceleration dropped the pack to just 23, with some of those starting to drop off the back.

From there, the race was on. Laps of 7:56 each brought the leaders through the first 10 Km in 40:18. Perez was lagging slightly at this point, 2 seconds behind and behind him the race was really spreading out—Hatem Ghoula, Tunisia and Hongjun Zhu, China at 40:21, Noe Hernandez, Mexico 40:22, Juan Molina, Spain 40:25, Vladimir Andreyev, Russia 40:25, Yungfenmg Liu, China 40:31, Alessandro Gandellini, Italy 40:32, and Andre Hohne, Germany 40:34 rounded out the top 12. Mexico's Bernardo Segura, seeking to capture the gold medal he thought he had won in Sydney before his disqualification, had faded to 14th in 40:38. After struggling through another lap in 8:36 and dropping back to 18th, he called it a day before reaching the 14 Km mark.

When the pace dropped another second to 7:54, even Perez, last year's World Champion and the 1996 Olympic gold medalist, started to lose contact. The other three went through 12 Km...
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Approximate deadline for submission of material is the 20th of the month, but it is usually the 25th or later before we go to the printer, so material received by then may get in.

together in 48:12, with Perez 5 seconds back. Hernandez, gamely trying to hang on was fifth in 48:22, a second ahead of Zhu and 7 ahead of Molina and Andreiev. Ghoulia was ninth in 49:30, 16 seconds ahead of Holme.

Perez rallied and got himself back in touch with the leaders in the middle of the next lap. At that point, it was easy to think that he had just been biding his time and he was now ready to put the others away. But by the end of the lap he was starting to lose contact again and it became apparent that his move was in desperation and it wasn't to be his day. So, at 14 Km, Brugnetti led at 56:05 with Fernandez and Deakes a second back, and Perez 3 seconds down. Perez had covered the lap in 7:49, the fastest of day, which was equaled by Brugnetti and Fernandez two laps later when the racing got really serious.

Perez tried desperately to hang on, but lost another 2 seconds as the leaders went through 16 in 1:03:58, after a 7:53 lap. Perez was now 5 seconds back and could no longer stay in touch. Hernandez was just 20 seconds back, but got his third red card shortly after. When Brugnetti took the lead and quickened the pace to 9:05 (18:18 at 4 Km), Deakes had to give up the chase with about 1500 meters to go, but finished unchallenged for the gold medal would be mine if I managed to stay with Fernandez up to the last kilometers because he is not as strong as I am mentally in the finishing stages of the race. I love the heat. I wish all races could be held in such hot cities. I was successful in Seville (1999 World Championships), which was even hotter, and Tijuana this winter, so I believe the conditions were perfect for me today.

The results:

The US contingent had an excellent day. Tim Seaman and Kevin Eastler chose to walk together the whole way and paced themselves beautifully. An 8:39 on the first 2 Km was their slowest lap of the day, and they moved from 47th and 48th at that point to 34th and 35th at 10 Km (42:35) and 20th and 21st at the finish in times of 1:25:17 and 1:25:20, the fastest 20s in US Olympic history. (Marco Eviuni had 1:25:42 in 1980.) John Nunn was just five places back in 26th, with a 1:27:38. He chose to go out a bit quicker and was in 30th at 10 Km with 42:25.

To show just how well the U.S. contingent did, consider that of the six nations that had three walkers finish, the U.S. was second on the basis of total time (the three walkers combined):
(Thanks to Elliott Denman for this stat.)
The race started almost leisurely for these athletes—a first 5 km in 22.21, which translates to a 3:43:30 finish. Still, few were willing to follow on a hot day and a group of six quickly established themselves at the front—Korzheniowski, recent world record setter Russia’s Denis Nizhegorodov; Australia’s Nathan Deakes; third in the 20; Caohong Yu of China, second in this year’s World Cup; Latvia’s Aigars Fedevejs, 2000 silver medalist; and Andreas Erm of Germany, third in last year’s World Championships. Alexey Voyevodin, winner of this year’s World Cup, was 29 seconds back in 12th.

The pace slowed slightly the second five as the lead group reached 10 km in 44.48 with Voyevodin moving to seventh just 9 seconds back. Then the walk in the park ended. Nizhegorodov moved to the front and pushed the pace—21:39 on the third 5, 21:27 on the fourth to reach 20 km in 1:27:54, now a sub 3:40 pace. Fedevejs and Voyevodin wanted none of that and started to drop away. They reached 20 in 1:29:03 and 1:29:25, with Spain’s great veteran, Jesus Angel Garcia, now with the Russian. Erm tried to hang on, but they dropped 5 seconds off the lead. So it became a four-man race. Korzeniowski pushed the next 5 down to 21:24, but Nizhegorodov, Yu, and Deasks were still right there as they reached halfway in 1:49:18. Erm was now 13 seconds back. Voyevodin (1:51:29) had moved ahead of Fedevejs and Garcia (1:51:34). The next pack was another 2 minutes back.

The pace slowed slightly on the next 5 (21:39) and the four leaders stayed right together. Erm was still within striking distance. They were still gaining on the field and Voyevodin was nearly three minutes back in sixth with Fedevejs right on his heels and Garcia just behind him.

The next 5 was decisive as Korzeniowski put on the pressure. Erm, trying to close back up, soon got his third red card. Only Deakes could cover the Pole’s move, but the Aussies already had two red cards and the new one picked up the third as tried to match strikes. Apparently, he wanted the gold or nothing, knowing that he had the two red cards, not to mention a caution from practically every judge on the course. Out on his own after Deakes was pulled, Korzeniowski covered that 5 in 21:15 and had 30 seconds on Nizhegorodov at the 35 km mark (2:32:12). Yu was spent and was 52 seconds back.

From there, it was a question of how much Korzeniowski’s margin would widen by the finish. He continued to apply pressure with a 21:32 for the eighth 5, picking up another 21 seconds on his Russian opponent. Yu was in a real struggle at this point, slowing to 23:22, but he still had nearly 2 minutes on Voyevodin at 40 km. At that point it was Korzeniowski 2:53:42, Nizhegorodov 2:54:33, Yu 2:56:26, Voyevodin 2:58:31, Garcia 2:59:43, Jefferson Perez 3:00:18, and Fedevejs 3:00:52. Perez was left up from 14th to 25 km and had his fastest 5 at 22:14 from 35 to 40. As it turned out, he spent it all on that spurt.

Even Korzeniowski couldn’t have lived in the pace he had been setting, but he came closer than the others and continued to widen his lead despite slowing to 22:06 and 22:58 on his final laps. Nizhegorodov suffered the most, holding on for a 22:47, but needing 26:14 for his final 5. He was staggering and weaving over his final quarter mile but gamely hung on for the silver medal. With 5 km to go, Voyevodin was still 1:28 behind Yu, but he pulled out a 22:34 on his final 5 to overtake Yu with about 200 meters to go. Garcia was closing but was never a threat to Yu. Korzeniowski’s Polish mates, Roman Magdziaziaczek and Gregory Sudol, walking steady races and taking advantage of attrition, moved into the sixth and seventh spots, ahead of Spain’s Santiago Perez and Russia’s Yuriy Andronov. All of these walkers moved up several positions the second half of the race as
Liquori had obviously done a lot of research and interviewing to try and gain knowledge and true my experience. And, there were times they seemed to be completely ignorant of the graphics respectful. The biggest irritant to me was Liquori's constant references to how the athletes might be suppositions, but must be appreciative of the fact that they carried the races. Tom Feur and Marty Time Zone. We could pick at the commentary, which was often inaccurate and filled with incorrect breaks) on MSNBC. Of course, that required being awake at 2 in the morning here in the Eastern Time Zone. Tann, Japan (46:02 in 23rd at 30) , Nathaniel Deakes, Australia (2:10:57 in 2nd at 30) , Martinez, Guatemala (1:10:24 in 26th at 10).

It was great to be able to watch all three races in their entirety (minus many commercial interruptions). Many are ready to name Robert Korzeniowski the greatest walker of all time and who is to argue. Four Olympic Golds, three World Championships, and surely the most dominant over both Olympic distances throughout his long career. And, a style carefully honed to perfection following problems with the judges early in his career. A great champion.

Not a good day for the U.S. Curt Clausen apparently just had a bad day. If there was a reason, we don't know it yet (a few hours after the race as I type this.) He started off well back in the pack with a 3:14:14 for his first 5. That was probably about what he wanted, planning to move through the field as the temperature rose. But, he slowed immediately, hitting 5:47 at 10 and 1:34:42 at 20. He was still under 4 hour pace at 25 Km (1:59:21), but a 2:49 on that fifth 5 started a slow down over the next 20 Km, which was more than 11 minutes slower than the first 20. He did manage to pick up again the final 10 (50:49) to finish in 4:11:31 in 32nd place. Nursing an injury all summer, Philip Dunn was simply short of his top shape. He was never on the pace that he is capable of with splits of 50:58, 1:41:56, 2:32:31, 3:22:54, and 4:12:49. He was one of only two in the race to cover the second half of the race faster than the first (negative splits). Korzeniowski, on a much faster pace, was close with 1:49:18 and 1:49:28.

The results:

Veterans Capture National 10 Km Titles

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Aug. 21—It was a good day for the old folks at the National USATF 10 Km Racewalking Championships today. In the men's race, 40-year-old Allen James, the nation's premier walker in the early to mid 90s, topped the field with a winning time of 45:45. In the women's race, it was 39-year-old Michelle Rohl, reportedly in her final race, winning in 48:37.

Surprisingly it was the first 10 Km title for James, who won 14 titles at other distances. To day, he was too strong for National Team members Sean Albert and Theron Kissinger, as those two held off the threat of 17-year-old Zach Pollinger. Dave McGregor, a contemporary of James at 39, took the fifth spot. Rohl was able to stave off Amber Antonia, 15 years her junior, who finished just 10 seconds back. Marina Crivello and Deb Huberty also bettered 50 minutes. The results:


Races Large and Small For Walking MightyTall

Sat. Sept. 4 Rocky Mountain Masters 3 Km, Boulder, Col., 8:15 am (H) 1 Hour, Kentfield, Cal. (P) West Region 3 Km, West Valley, Utah (S) 1 Hour, Columbus, Ohio (M)

Sun. Sept. 5 3 Km, Langley, Va. (O) 9 Km, Denver, 8 am (H) Sat. Oct. 2 New Hampshire Marathon and 5 Km Racewalk, Bristol, NH (Z)

Mon. Sept. 6 5 Km, Roswell, N.M. (N) 5 Km, Denver, 8 am (H) Sun. Oct. 3 Sacramento Half-Marathon, Sacramento, Cal. (E) USATF Masters and 10 Km, Sacramento, Cal. (H) Detroit Marathon (W)

Sun. Sept. 12 5 Km, Aurora, Col., 9 am (H) 5 Km, Columbus, Missouri (X) West Region 1 Hour, Aurora, Col. (H) 10 Km, Dearborn, Mich. (W)

Sun. Sept. 19 5 Km, Denver, 8 am (H) 5 Km, Columbia, Missouri (X) 5:2 Miles, Interlaken, N.J., 12 noon (A) 10 Km, Denver, 9 am (H) 94th Annual Coney Island 10 Mile Handicap, Brooklyn, NY, 9 am (B)

Sat. Nov. 6 5 Km, Denver, 9:30 am (H) Marathon, Albuquerque (N)

Sun. Nov. 7 5 Km, Denver, 9:30 am (H) National USATF Masters and 10 Km, Hauppauge, NY (BB)

Sat. Nov. 17 5 Km, Denver, 9:30 am (H) 10 Km, Seaside, Cal. (R)

Contact: A—Elliott Denman, 28 N. Locust, West Long Branch, NJ 07764
B—Lon Wilson, 1020 Grand Concourse 15X, Bronx, NY 10451
C—Dev LaVeek, 511 Lost River Road, Maza, WA 98633
D—Bill Reed, 8242 Greenfield Shores, Scotts, MI 49088
E—Sierra Race Walkers, P.O. Box 5221, Fair Oaks, CA 95628
F—Mike DeWitt, uwpc@yahoo.com
G—Stella Cashman, 320 East 83rd St., New York, NY 10028
H—Bob Carlson, 2261 Glencoe St., Denver CO 80207
I—Bobby Baker, rare@charternet.net
J—Columbia Track Club, PO Box 1872, Columbia, MO 65205
K—Rocky Mountain Masters 3 Km, Boulder, Cal., 8:15 am (H) 1 Hour, Kentfield, Cal. (P)
L—Virginia Masters 45 Wellandvale Drive, Wetland, ON L3C 7C4, Canada
M—Vince Peters, 607 Omar Circle, Yellow Springs, OH 45387, 937-767-7424
N—Mew Mexico Racewalkers, PO Box 16102, Albuquerque, NM 87191
O—Sal Corrallo, 72 Creek Drive, Millsboro, DE 19966
P—Mike DeWitt, uwpc@yahoo.com
Q—Florida Athletic Club, 3250 Lakeview Blvd., Deeray Beach, FL 33445
R—Art Klein, 3055 Arlington Drive, Aptos, CA 95003
S—Mary Olszewski, 45 Wellandvale Drive, Wetland, ON L3C 7C4, Canada
T—Bobby Baker, rare@charternet.net
U—Mary Olszewski, 45 Wellandvale Drive, Wetland, ON L3C 7C4, Canada
V—Ontario Racewalkers, 676 Balliol Street, Toronto, ON M8S 1E7, Canada
W—Frank Soby, 4157 Colonial Drive, Royal Oak, MI 48073

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FROM HEEL TO TOE

Walkers involved. Beyond his judging of beauty pageants (see June issue), Jefferson Perez joined the Kids' Athletics event held in his home town Cuenca in the South of the country, strongly endorsing the project, said: "Physical education must learn to present athletics to the kids in a joyful manner. They should finish with the old concepts, which are boring and the main reason why so many children do not like athletics and move to other sports." The project was held as a joint venture with IIAF, who supplied a full set of Kids/Athletics equipment. And last year's other World Champion, Robert Korzeniowski, has now been appointed an international ambassador for fitness, along with Carl Lewis and Jackie Joyner-Kersee, by McDonald's worldwide. Elliott Denman suggests that we should all encourage Robert and McDonald's to do all kinds of promotional and marketing things globally for racewalking. Elliott sees this as a great opportunity for racewalking to make a major stride forward. Talk about the luck of the Irish. Ireland's Gillian O'Sullivan, expected to be a medal contender in Athens, had to scratch from the race because of a nagging hip injury that had bothered her all year and seriously curtailed recent training. Then, just two days before the opening ceremonies, Ireland's 50 Km hope, Jamie Costin, was involved in a serious accident, suffering back injuries, broken toes, and a hand injury, which ended his two days before the opening ceremonies, Ireland's 50 Km hope, Jamie Costin, was involved in a serious accident, suffering back injuries, broken toes, and a hand injury, which ended his Olympic dreams. In the final half, pulled his finishing time to a meet record by a single tick of the clock.

LD Moocey

AUGUST 2004

35 Years Ago (From the August 1969 ORW)-Jack Blackburn won the annual Worthington, Ohio Labor Day Handicap 6 mile 536 yard affair in 50:25 with Paul Reback edging Jack Mortland for second. In Europe, Ron Laird won a 10 Km against the West Germans in 44:07.4 with Tom Dooley coming third in 44:55. Laird also won 20 Km against the British in 1:30:26, with Goetz Klopfen third in 1:33:16 and Tom Dooley sixth in 1:34:41. Shaul Ladany won both the 10 Km (48:39) and 5 Km (13:35) in the Maccabiah Games.

AUGUST 2004

25 Years Ago (From the August 1979 ORW)-Neal Pyke scored a win in the U.S. in the Women's International 5 Km with a then world's best of 24:16.2. Margareta Simu, Sweden, and Marian Fawkes, Great Britain, were well back in second and third. Coming back from injury, John Knifflon captured the 50 Km in 4:25:41 over John Knifflon's 4:30:51. Augie Hirt had 4:42:01, Ron Kulik 4:48:16, Tom Knott 4:50:21, and Bob Bowman 4:54:20... Jim Murchie won the National Junior 1 Hour with 7 miles 41 yards and Bob Faubert the National 50 km race with 7 miles 365... The Junior 20 km went to Dennis Slattery in 1:49:56... Every-young Vladimir Golubinskiy, the 1960 and 1968 Olympic gold medalist, took the Soviet 20 km title in 1:28:21 over Yevgeny Ivenchko.

LOOKING BACK

20 Years Ago (From the August 1974 ORW)-Sue Brooksh scored a win for the U.S. in the Women's International 5 Km with a then world's best of 24:16.2. Margareta Simu, Sweden, and Marian Fawkes, Great Britain, were well back in second and third. Coming back from injury, John Knifflon captured the 50 Km in 4:25:41 over John Knifflon's 4:30:51. Augie Hirt had 4:42:01, Ron Kulik 4:48:16, Tom Knott 4:50:21, and Bob Bowman 4:54:20... Jim Murchie won the National Junior 1 Hour with 7 miles 41 yards and Bob Faubert the National 50 km race with 7 miles 365... The Junior 20 km went to Dennis Slattery in 1:49:56... Every-young Vladimir Golubinskiy, the 1960 and 1968 Olympic gold medalist, took the Soviet 20 km title in 1:28:21 over Yevgeny Ivenchko.
20 Years Ago (From the August 1984 ORW)—In the Los Angeles Olympics, Mexico captured both gold medals in the persons of Ernesto Canto and Raul Gonzalez. In the 20, Defending titlist Mauricio Damilano, Italy, led Canto by 8 seconds after 8 Km, but was no match for the Mexican over the final 5. Canto won in 1:23:13 with Gonzalez also catching the Italian to take the silver in 1:23:20. Damilano was another 6 seconds back and Canada's Guillaume Leblanc, only a second back of Canto starting the final 5 Km, finished a brilliant fourth in 1:24:29. For the U.S. Marco Evoniuk stayed close to the leaders through 10 Km and then hung well for seventh place in 1:25:42. Jim Heiring finished 23rd in 1:30:20 and Dan O'Connor 33rd in 1:35:12. . . . In the 50 eight days later, Damilano hung with Gonzalez through 35 Km, but when the Mexican accelerated at that point, Maurizio had no answer and dropped out at 40. Gonzalez won easily in 4:47:26 with Sweden's Bo Gustafsson second in 3:53:19 and Italy's Sandro Belucci third in 3:53:45. Carl Schueler captured sixth for the U.S. in 3:59:46. Vincent O'Sullivan was 14th in 4:22:51 and Marco Evoniuk dropped out after 25 Km, which he reached in 1:55:21, 2 minutes back of the leaders. The fields were weakened by the absence of most Eastern European walkers due to the Soviet boycott of the Games.

15 Years Ago (From the August 1989 ORW)—At the US Olympic Festival in Norman, Oklahoma, Mark Fenton won at 35 Km in 3:03:50, Richard Quinn at 20 in 1:32:23, and Debbi Lawrence in the women's 10 with a 49:21.8. Carl Schueler (1:33:00) and Curt Clausen (1:34:00) followed Quinn. Lawrence was unchallenged in the very hot conditions, with Wendy Sharp second in 51:41 and Victoria Herazo third in 51:54. In a seven-nation match, Italy's Marzio Damilano won the 35 Km in 2:31:52, guest Kerry Saxby from Australia the women's 10 in 43:13, France's Therry Toutain the 20 in 1:23:42, Spain's Valentin Massana the junior 10 in 41:32, and Kathrin Born of the GDR the junior women's 5 in 22:07. . . . The Paris-to-Colmar 521 Km race went to Roger Quemener in 64:35, 26 minutes ahead of Pheulpin.

10 Years Ago (From the August 1994 ORW)—In the European Championships in Helsinki, Finland's Sari Essayah, the defending world champion, won the women's 10 Km in 42:37. Essayah led all the way, but had only six seconds on Italy's Annarita Sidoti and Russia's Yelena Nikolayeva, who were given the same time in their near photo finish for the silver. The 20 was a walk-away victory for Russia's Mikhail Schennikov in 1:18:45. Yevgeniy Misyulya, Belarus, was second in 1:26:34, with Valentin Massana (1:27:30) trailing far behind in third. In a U.S.-Canada Junior match, Anya-Marie Ruoss won the women's 3 Km in 24:53:71 and Justin Marrujo the men's 5 in 22:12.25. Deborah Iden (14:28:59) and William Van Axen (22:15:81) completed one-two sweeps for the U.S.

5 Years Ago (From the August 1999 ORW)—The World Championships were conducted in steaming conditions in Seville, Spain. In the 50, Russia's German Skurygin pulled away from the field early and went on to a nearly 4-minute win in 3:44:23. Ivan Burgnetti, Italy, and Nikolay Matyukhin, Russia followed. For the U.S., Curt Clausen walked a magnificent race, staying with Matyukhin through 38 Km before a thigh cramp forced to back off a bit. Still, he withstood a challenge by Spain's Valentin Massana to take fourth in 3:50:55. Two years later, Skurygin was finally disqualified on a doping charge and Curt belatedly got the bronze medal, the first medal for the U.S. in a World Championship, Olympic, or World Cup event since Larry Young's bronze at the 1972 Olympics. The 20 Km went to Russia's Ilya Markov, who led Ecuador's Jefferson Perez by 45 seconds with his 1:23:34. Alessandro Gandellini of Italy was third. Tim Seaman had 1:35:58 for 24th place. The Chinese women took one-two at 20 Km with Hongyu Liu beating

Nothing to do with racewalking, but here are "Some Interesting Facts" from Bob Carlson's Front Range Walkers News.

- A dime has 118 ridges around the edge.
- A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
- A crocodile cannot stick out its tongue.
- A dragonfly has a life span of 24 hours.
- A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
- A "jiffy" is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.
- Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
- All 50 states are listed across the top of the Lincoln Memorial on the back of the $5 bill.
- Al Cappone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
- Sains are a member of the peach family.
- Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age.
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- Cats have over one hundred vocal sounds. Dogs only have about 10.
- February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a fullmoon.
- In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.
- If the population of China walked past you in single file, the line reaches 50.
- If you are an average American, in your whole life, you will spend an average of 6 months waiting at red lights.
- It is impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
- Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors.
- Maine is the only state whose name is just one syllable.
- No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, or purple.
- On a Canadian two dollar bill, the flag flying over the Parliament building is an American flag.
- Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.
- Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.
- Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.
- "Swordwrestles" is the longest word typed with only the left hand and "lollipop" with your right.
- There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar.
- Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.