Let's start with some RESULTS:

**USATF National Masters 20 Km, Clermont, Florida, Nov. 12**: 

At about 12 km, McGovern took advantage of his superior technique (according to Steve) to bury Pecinovsky on the infamous Clermont hills as the dogged, but elderly, Jasonowski dropped gradually back. McGovern maintained a steady 200 meter lead until Steve tired a last ditch attempt to overtake him on the final 2500 meters (Steve's fastest split of the race). But Dave hung tough on the hill on his Varso's teammate, while Jasonowski strode home with a quite commendable for third place overall. 

The first two were fresh off four days of hard work at Dave's annual camp, so they survived quite well, though 20 and 22 minutes off their PRs of hygone days. "Old age sucks, but we still had a good time," said Steve. Outstanding performances by Jasonowski, Walker, and Fabre in the over 60 group. Connecticut Assn. 10 Km, Clinton, Nov. 18-1. Theron Kissinger 46:32 2. Ginger Armstrong (44) 65:26 3. Charles Mansbach (62) 66:12 4. Kara Steele (16) 66:57 5. Bill McCann (77) 73:37 6. Gus Davis (69) 74:34  
The Ohio Racewalker is published monthly in Columbus, Ohio. Subscription rate is $12.00 per year ($15.00 outside the U.S.). Editor and Publisher: John E. Jack Mortland. Address all correspondence regarding both editorial and subscription matters to: Ohio Racewalker, 3184 Summit Street, Columbus, OH 43202. E-mail address: jmortland@columbus.rr.com. Approximate deadline for submission of material is the 24th of each month.


Many A Place To Hop Into A Race (But please don’t hop to stay with the pace.)

Sun. Dec. 3 5 Km, New York City, 8:30 am (G)
Sat. Dec. 9 4 Mile, Denver, 9 am (H)
2.8 Miles, Seattle, 9 am (D)

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(6 finishers) Men-1. Peter Armstrong (61) 32:40 2. Joe Sutton (60) 34:40 (7 finishers) 10 Km, same place-1. Eric Steinbach (12) 71:32 2. Joe Armbruster (75) 74:56 1 Hour


Many A Place To Hop Into A Race (But please don’t hop to stay with the pace.)
From Heel To Toe

From Augie Hirt. Augie Hirt, originally from Piqua, Ohio, who started racewalking at McPheerson College in Kansas, developed into one of our top distance walkers in the mid to late '70s. He was on World Cup 50 Km teams in 1977 and 1979 and won three U.S. titles at 100 Km and one at 75 Km (Distances no longer contested). His best 100 Km was 10:19:00. In a note accompanying his ORW renewal, Augie wrote, who has lived in Chicago for many years,; "I got a special treat in October. On my way back to a McPherson homecoming, I stopped by Columbia, Missouri to visit with my Columbia Track Teammate, Larry Young. I visited the "farm" where Larry has built a foundry to produce his bronze sculptures. His work can be found at www.youngsculpture.com. I don't know who the current generation walkers look up to as role models, but I have built a foundry to produce his bronze sculptures.

His sculptures are beautiful. I have a small version of "Marathon Man" on my TV set. I have tried to give back to racewalking the joy it gave me by teaching racewalking for fitness one-on-one over the years."... 2007 National 50 Km. Because the 2007 Pan American Racewalking Cup is now scheduled for April 21-22 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the date of the USATF National 50 Km has been moved to January 28 in Chula Vista California on the same course used for the 2004 Olympic Trials. The race was originally to be held in Clermont, Florida in February. The new date and location will provide greater recovery time between the National and the Pan Am Cup race and a flatter, faster course to make it "easier" to achieve the "A" Standard for the 2007 World Championships and the 2008 Olympic Games. Male athletes completing the 50 Km in Chula Vista will be selecting themselves to the teams for the Pan Am Cup and the Pan Am Games, July 23-29, also in Rio, as well as the World Championships in Osaka, Japan (providing A or B standards are met as required for the latter). A time standard of 4:45 has been set for making the Pan Am Cup team. The National 30 Km originally scheduled for Chula Vista in January will be rescheduled. Dates for the racewalking events in Osaka are: Men's 20 Km—August 26, 8 am; Women's 20 Km—August 31, 8 am; and Men's 50 Km, September 1, 7 am. One other note of the international racewalking scene, the IAAF Racewalking Committee has scheduled a World Racewalking Challenge Final for September 29, 2007 in Saransk, Russia. This is a first. I have not seen the rest of the Challenge schedule for 2007... Big money race. By the time you read this, the race might be history, so look for the results. In the Australian 50 Km Championship in Geelong on Dec. 2, Wizard Geelong (whatever that is) has offered $10,000 to anyone who beats local hero Nathan Deakes. Deakes has a best of 3:42:53 this year and will have to be well off that to succumb to other Aussies, although Chris Erickson, Duane Cousins, Luke Adams (who has been lured to walk his first 60 in 4 years), and Jared Tallent are all capable of sub-4-hours performances. No reports of any elite 50 Km specialists from other parts of the world being lured down under to chase the bucks. But supposing Deakes should be injured and have to drop out, or (perish the thought) be disqualified. Will all those who finish get $10,000? Could be an expensive day for the Wizard... IAAF Judges. The IAAF Council has approved the designation of 21 race walking officials from the North American and Caribbean area for the 2007-2010 period. Included are Bob Bowman, Yvonne Daniels, Patricia Haas, Bob Hickey, Rod Larson, Dan Pierce, Michael Roth, and Nesgagie from the U.S... Golden Eagle Raffle. On Oct. 10, the North American Racewalking Institute launched its second annual fund raising raffle. The Golden Eagle raises money for the Al Heppner Memorial Scholarship Fund and the
Youth Development Fund of NRW. The Heppner Fund awards a scholarship to an 
outstanding college athlete who, like Al, aspires to be an Olympic racewalker. The Youth 
Fund supports the annual Junior camp and youth clubs with outstanding programs in order to 
encourage promising young racewalkers. Donations to either Fund will earn raffle tickets as follows: $25-1 raffle ticket; $50-3 raffle tickets; $100-7 raffle tickets. First prize in the 
raffle drawing (deadline January 10, 2007) is $500. Second prize is $100, and third prize 1 
American Eagle Silver Proof Coin. Make donations payable to NARI (North American 
Racewalking Institute), 358 W. California Blvd., #110, Pasadena, CA 91105. NARI, for the 
second year, has contributed to an elite Junior Racewalking Camp. Last year’s camp was in 
Maine. This year, the athletes will assemble in Pharr, Texas from Dec. 26 to 31. 
Expected attendance is ten Junior Boys 14-19, ten Junior Girls 14-19, and 10 male female athletes 20 
and over. Coaches include Tom Eastler, Gary Westerfield, Tim Seaman, Diane Graham-
Heiny. The Institute is also providing support to The South Texas Walking Club and Maine 
Racewalkers, both very successful in the development of youth walkers. 

Stroupe named 

Heppner winner for 2006. Even as the 2007 raffle takes place, NARI has named the winner of the 2006 Heppner Award. Patrick is a senior at Central Methodist University in Fayette, 
Missouri. He is a six-time NAIA racewalk titlist, indoors and outdoors. The 22-year-old has a 
20 km best of 1:38:44 and has walked 48:19 for 10 km, 23:04:63 for 5, and 13:13:27 for 3 
km. Patrick is a native of Fayette. After graduation in the spring, he plans to direct his 
training efforts towards the 2008 Olympic Trials. 

McGovern weekend. U.S. National 

Racewalk Team member Dave McGovern will conduct one of his popular Racewalking 
Weekends March 2-4, 2007 in Carmel Valley, California. Participants in the McGovern 
Camps learn techniques used by elite walkers that lead to faster, more efficient walking with 
fewer injuries. For those who don’t race, the techniques will help you to lose weight, get fit, 
and feel great. 

The $175 fee for the 2½-day weekend includes individual video-taped technique 
technique analysis, group lectures, use of Polar Heart Rate Monitors, and all handouts. Dave 
is a USAFT and LSA certified coach and is the author of Precision Walking: The Complete 
To enroll in the weekend or for more information, contact Vickie Cady, 8 Marquard Road, 
Carmel Valley CA 93924, 831-650-2380, or visit Dave at www.racewalking.org. 

Candidate. Gary Morgan, a member of the 1988 U.S. Olympic team at 20 km and a 17-
time National Champion, is one of the candidates for Vice President of the U.S. Olympians 
Association. 

Dooley. I recently read Kenny Moore’s book Bowman and the Men of 
Oregan (which I highly recommend) and found our own Tom Dooley (1968 and 1972 U.S. 20 
Km Olypican) mentioned twice. When discussing the aftermath of the Tommy Smith/John 
Carlos “protest” on the victory stand in Mexico City (black-gloved fists raised), Moore notes: 
“Tom Dooley, Ron Daws, and I helped jack the sacks of hate mail that began arriving the 
next day.” Yes, Tom would be involved in that endeavor because he understood and respected 
what Tommy and John were about. A dark time, not because of the actions of Tommy and 
John, but because of the reaction to it, which included banishment of Smith and Carlos from 
the remainder of the Games. Later, in discussing the immediate reactions to the attack on 
Israeli quarters at the Munich Games, Moore offers the following dialogue: Back in our room 
we talked all this over. “The Games should go on,” said walker Tom Dooley, “and they will. 
But for the wrong reasons. The Germans don’t want any hitches in their organization. 
There are the financial considerations. Those people who applauded (when it was announced the 
Games would continue) just want to see who will win the 5000 and the hell with the rest. 

“What are the right reasons?” I asked. “Just one. To stay together. Who wins or loses now is 
ridiculously unimportant considered against these men’s deaths. But we have to stay 
together.” I recall that I had to teach Tom how to tie a necktie when we went to Bad Saarow, 
E.G. for the 1967 Lugano Cup, but he didn’t need to be taught anything about basic human 

rights and compassion for our brothers and sisters in this world. 

Don Henry. Racewalking 

has lost another good friend in the person of Don Henry, who died in October in New Jersey. 
Don was a dedicated official in the weight throwing events until he retired after a stroke in 1996. 
While he officiated the throws more often, he aslo did racewalking events and his wife 
Marie set many age-groups records in racewalking events. She died 5 years ago. Don was the 
treasurer of the New Jersey USAFT Association. I remember Don and Marie coming out to 
Columbus for racewalking events and he would help out, and perhaps, find a shot or discuss 
event to participate in. 

A word for the masters. Jack Starr, well known as an outstanding 
racewalker for many years (he is now 78 and has been winning races and setting records in 
whatever age group he falls into for at least the past 20 years) writes a few words of criticism, 
that are well stated and deserving of airing: “Each month the Ohio Racewalker, just like the 
rest of the U.S. racewalking community, properly commiserates on the dwindling number of 
U.S. elite racewalkers and their decreasing international competitiveness, and bemoans the 
fact that more and more national races have more and more masters competing and less and 
less elites. We may not like it, but that’s how it is. Without masters, how many racewalks 
would fold for lack of participation? Is that good? No, but that’s how it is. Don’t you think 
that it’s time for you to embrace the Masters efforts rather than continuing to treat their 
performances as afterthoughts? Example: the National 5 Km report in the October issue: ‘The 
est of the field was conducting a masters race.” Is it me, or is that a condescending tone? 
You don’t point out that the races drew ‘large, if not elite fields.’ Most of these athletes, 
masters, came a long way, and spent a lot of money and effort to do so. They keep this race 
go ing. Celebrate it some, don’t pooh-pooh it. It won’t take away from your desire or effort to 
develop a better elite base in this country. Your report on the 1 Hour: ‘otherwise, it was another 
one of primarily masters walkers.” Of course it was, but why just dismiss 3/4 of the 
competitors so casually? Did you know, for instance, but consider it too small potatoes to 
even mention, that Teresa set a national age group record? Yes, I know a puny 
accomplishment next to her Olympic credentials, but maybe not to your readers. (Alright, I 
have to admit that I set an age group record, but that’s not the point. The point is that you 
have to admit that I set an age group record, but that’s not the point. The point is that you 
don’t have to stop trying to promote more and better elite racewalking, but you can still start 
giving a little credit to a pretty impressive body of masters performances.) I wonder what 
percentage of your subscription list is masters; my guess is that it’s about 75 percent. Am I 
right?” If I’m off base in suggesting how you should run your publication, sorry. It’s obvious 
your dedication to the Ohio Racewalker reflects your love for the sport, and I sure don’t want 
to minimize that in any way.” (Ed. No need to be sorry, Jack, you aren’t trying to tell me how 
to run your publication, just pointing out some insensitivity on my part. I’m not sure what 
percentage of the subscriber list is in the masters category (even if I tried to count, I don’t 
know who all the subscribers are), but it could easily be as much as 75 percent. I do know 
that it’s time for you to embrace the Masters efforts rather than continuing to treat their 
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develop a better elite base in this country. Your report on the 1 Hour: ‘otherwise, it was another
that feature the best at national and international levels. Nonetheless, I have always sought to commend those among the masters who excel, particularly those that continue to give noteworthy performances at what we consider advanced years--certainly Teresa Vaill, Joanne Dow, Allen James, Ray Sharp, Dave McGovern, Mark Green, Steve Pecinovsky are names that come to mind among present competitors. And Jonathan Matthews. The USSR's Vladimir Golubchik, Sweden's Bo Gustafsson, and Germany's Gerhard Weidner quickly came to mind from earlier years. And among those that performed amazingly well into their 50s and 60s, John Allen, Don DeNun, Dave Romansky, Leon Jasinskiwski. Certainly, a list like this must include Bob Minm, Jack Starr, Jack Bray, and Gordon Wallace. Bob who never stopped and has excelled in every age group as he ages (now 81), and the others who started late, but excelled in their 60s and 70s--Starr and Bray still going strong. That's just a smattering of names that come to mind--and I apologize to those that I should be listing if the list were complete--that have amazed me with their feats and who I hope have given due credit through the years. If not, let this speak for my omissions. My frustration, however, and I think Jack recognizes this, is that while these stars continue to shine, there are too few replacing them and those who, certainly for legitimate reasons, are gone long before they reach the master years. As Jack points out, if the masters weren't supporting the national races, we might not have national races. Likewise, I must recognize that if I didn't report results of many, many races that involve primarily masters I would have few results to report. If we had the participation we would all like to see, I could report only on elite activities and leave it to someone else to cover masters racewalking. After all, we don't see results of masters events in Track and Field News, but there is a masters newsletter. (Of course, it took T&F News a long time to recognize that women were competing in track and field, and that's a fact you can't lay on the ORW, so perhaps I shouldn't use them as an example.) Well, that's a rather rambling stream of consciousness reply to Jack's remarks, which I hope I haven't denigrated. I will try to honor his admonitions in the future."

How To Be A Very Competitive 47 Year Old

Over the past couple of years, Ray Sharp has moved back into the top echelon of U.S. walkers, a position he held through the 1980s, before disappearing in the early '90s. Ray is not approaching his times of yore over the distances up to 20 km (he is about 10 minutes of his 1:24:58 in 1986), although his times are still quite impressive. But at 50 km, he has matched his personal record of 4:21:06 set in 1981 at age 21. Ray celebrated his 47th birthday on Nov. 25. How is he doing this? Well, he is continuing to take care of himself, and here are a couple of weeks. Be careful before you try to duplicate. From mid-October:

Tough week with 110 km (68 miles) the hard way, with most of it between 6 and 7 am in the dark and SNOW!!! or beyond lane or beyond lane 5, outside the indoor track, 7 laps per 1600 meters, racewalking unless otherwise noted. Next week will be around 130 km, I hope.

Monday--6 km slow a.m., 12 km in 60:50, warmup and cooldown.
Tuesday--90 minute run/jog on trails (hilly)
Wednesday--7 km slow a.m., 8 km p.m. in 37:33 with easy start, last 1600 in 7:10. Only had an hour including warmup, cooldown shower
Thursday--5 km slow
Friday--20 km in 1:39:43 with 1600 meter splits starting at 3:28 and accelerating throughout to 1:42 for the final one and then 3:52 for the final 800.
Saturday--9 km slow.

Sunday--90 minute trail run. And, then to add one more day to the summary:

Monday--6 km a.m., 32 km on track in p.m. in 2:46:39 (on the indoor track) Here, he went from 9:12 on his first 1600 to 7:43 on the last.

Later, he summarizes a hard training week, ending on Saturday, Nov. 4. He totaled 147 km for this week:

Sunday--Rest
Monday--60 km with 6 km slow, 50 km in 4:25:34, and 4 km slow
Tuesday--10 km jogging/ski walking
Wednesday--8 km slow walking
Thursday: 3 x 5 km in 24:07, 23:22, 23:49 (Te doesn't say how much rest between)
Friday--6 km slow, 8 km slow
Saturday--1 km slow, 25 km in 2:07:20 (26:02, 25:08, 25:22, 25:02, 25:34), 1 km slow, 5 km 23:52, 1 km slow, 1 km in 4:31:3, 3 km jog.

Now an interesting contrast. Allen James, five years younger than Ray, had an even more impressive early career than Ray with personal best of 2:42:27 and 3:55:39 and fifteen national titles to 13 for Ray. Sharp has now added four in his comeback. Allen essentially retired after the 1996, but has never stopped training and makes occasional impressive outings, such as his recent 1:33:42 in Ontario, one second slower than his best last year. His current training is much more low key than that of Ray, but his goals are much more modest also. In a recent posting on the racewalking list, he reflected on his Ontario race and on his training. It is obvious that Allen could also be winning spots on national teams if he were so inclined. Here is his posting:

Writing the book on how not to prepare for a race or how to crash and burn in Welland, Ontario. You would think someone with my level of experience would know better, but throwing caution to the wind, I figured I'd roll the dice anyhow. Over the past weeks, I've averaged 44.5 km per week (29 days–356 km), 40 percent of which was achieved on 7 longer days, 6 of the days were 5 to 8 km efforts at or below 5 min/km pace. Only 2 days were used for rhythm workouts doing 3x30, 60, and 90 second intervals with 30 seconds easy between each. No longer intervals whatsoever. Add into the mix a new pair of flats that arrived on Tuesday that I was able to at least put 20 km total on before the race.

My pre-race goal was to go out near 1:32 pace, with the hope of finishing between 1:32 and 1:34. The course was an odd size loop, 1651.27 meters, with staggered 5, 10, 15, and 20 km lines. The turns were pretty tight (24 turns) and the course had a 400 meter section with fairly sizeable cants to it. The conditions were nearly perfect, about 55 F and a bit breezy. Some early leaf fall made the one turn quite slick even though they had done an

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Clearly two problems seem to have been coexisting. First, there was an obvious technical breakdown that I was unaware of until after the race. Second I was totally unprepared for a long sustained speed effort. I fully lacked any longer interval or fartlek sessions that I would seem absolutely necessary to develop longer term speed endurance.

(Just a handful of 1 or 2 km intervals or 500 meter or 1 km Special K fartleks would have probably made a huge difference.)

That being said, I have to be pleased with the result. Walking solo for 20 km and keeping on pace for so long is nothing to be too unhappy about/

So an interesting contrast between two old gentlemen still achieving at a high level. And for further contrast, let's consider how a 29-year-old seeking an Olympic 20 Km berth some 42 years ago was putting in his training time. This from my training log for 1964.

First, my monthly mileage for the nine months leading up to the mid-October Olympic race were: 161, 167, 232, 210, 157, 143, 142, and 220, and nearly 100 in October before the race on the 15th. That's 180 plus miles a month, or around 70 km a week.

Here are a couple of periods in the spring. (Note that most of these sessions were on a 9.35 laps to the mile blacktop track at the home of my friend Dr. John Blackburn--accurately measured, I assure you. One principal I was using was what Chris McCarthy called laminations—a long walk on Sunday followed by a fast middle-distance walk on Monday. This seemed to work well for me and I was always surprised by how good the fast walk felt.)

Sunday, April 5-26 miles, 4:11:10--this was on a 2 mile loop with an acceleration over the last 6 miles.
Monday-6 miles in 46:14 at a very steady pace
Tuesday-½ miles 11:34, 1½ miles 9:33, 1 mile 7:29, 3/4 mile 5:34, ½ mile 3:34, 1/4 mile 1:43, 220-51. Brief intervals at 10 to 11 minute pace so that I covered 6 miles in 47:34.
Wednesday-2 mile run 11:24
Thursday-3 x 2 miles in 15:19, 15:13, and 14:50, strolled 1 lap between passing 10 km in 48:32
Friday-8 miles in 63:35 at steady pace
Saturday—rest
Sunday-20 miles in 2:55:08 with second 10 in 1:24:30
Monday—10 km in 47:18

Later:
Sun. May 24-35 Km 2:21:26
Monday—6 miles in 44:56
Tuesday-3 x 1 mile in 7:43, 7:33, and 7:31, stroll 1 lap between, 2 miles in 14:12 (7:05, 7:07)
Wednesday—2 miles 16:50, 4 x 1 Mile in 7:19, 7:30, 7:31, 7:39, 2 miles 16:29, stroll 1 lap between
Thursday—2 miles in 17:16, 1 mile in 8:45 (What I considered an active rest day.)
Friday—12 miles in 1:32:59 (46:19 at 6) This was planned as a 15 mile at well under 2 hours and I was holding the pace with no problem, but I was feeling a definite pang in my inner, upper thigh and knew that training goals do not supercede competitive goals. As it was, I had to alternate easy days for a few weeks while nursing the strain. It may have kept me from overtraining. I was able to walk 48:21 for second place in the National 10on a very hot day in Chicago two weeks later and another week later a 47:24 in the Ohio AAU 10 Km. On July 5, a 1:37:05 on another hot day in Pittsburgh brought me third and the sought after Olympic

berth. Tokyo saw me improving to 1:36:35 for 17th place.

Straight Knee Rule and Hamstring Injuries

by Lenny Parracino with Elaine Ward

(Lenny Parracino is the founder of Kinetic Conditioning, which is a specialized form of individualized physical conditioning. He and his team have been featured here and abroad. Elaine Ward is the Director of the North American Racewalking Institute and contributor to the sport in many ways over the past 20 years. She notes that if you are seeking new ways of improving your performance, or are suffering an acute or repetitive injury, she is certain of recommending Lenny, who can be reached at lenny@kineticconditioning.net-ew. This article is appearing in the N.A.R.F. Racewalking Bulletin.

Just as the rule in the bench press requires an athlete to touch the bar to hi chest, the Straight Knee Rule in racewalking requires the knee to be straight as the foot contacts the ground. The rule is a product of the sport and is to be respected. The question for us is how do the muscles react to the demands made by the Straight Knee Rule.

As competitors, you want your muscles to work in harmony in order to develop maximum power as quickly as possible with each stride. To develop maximum power, your leg muscles must first lengthen to load and then shorten to explode. The muscle lengthening phase is an essential prelude to the shortening, power phase.

The reason you see people of all ages walking on the street with slightly bent knees is that bent knees allow the necessary muscle lengthening and shortening to take place. It is also why you will see racewalkers run or walk with bent knees immediately after competition. The bent knee allows the muscles to function naturally without unnecessary stress.

When your leg is straight at heel contact, your muscles cannot lengthen and load properly. In practice, the Straight Knee Rule is actually a “deloading” rule meaning that the hamstrings cannot eccentrically load at foot contact. The “deloading” is predominantly at the knee in the transverse plane, causing potential rotational instability. To better understand why this is so, it is necessary to review the basic anatomy and function of the hamstrings.

The hamstrings refer to the group of three muscles going up and down the back of the thigh. They originate at the ischium, come down straight, and then the medial and lateral hamstrings angle out obliquely to wrap around the knee and attach to the tibia and fibula. Two of their primary functions are to stabilize the knee and to steer the multiplanar action of the knee.

Now imagine that you are astride a horse and are holding one rein in hour left hand and the other in your right. If you want your horse to go to the left, what do you do? You pull back or shorten the left rein allowing the right to relax and lengthen. If you want your horse to go to the right, you pull back on the right rein and allow the left to relax and lengthen. Now what do you do when you want a horse to slow down? You pull the reins back equally.

The anatomical structure of the hamstrings from the pelvis to their attachments on the tibia and fibula allows the three muscles to act just like reins on a horse. The hamstrings allow the quick forward-back, side-side, and rotational action of the lower extremity to take place subconsciously in response to the demands of the activity being performed. The decelerating action of the hamstrings also occurs subconsciously as a reaction to the task. 
Deceleration is not the result of a conscious contraction. In fact, research shows that the hamstrings may be the most powerful decelerator in any upright activity.

Let's make a simplified comparison between the function of the hamstrings in regular walking and racewalking. When you regular walk, your muscles are lengthening or loading as the heel absorbs the braking force of ground contact. Specifically, ground impact causes the proximal part of the hamstrings to lengthen or eccentrically load. After ground contact, the hamstrings shorten or power up quickly, and the foot in a paradoxical fashion turns into a rigid platform, allowing the body to move over it. At this point, the opposite leg is forward.

In contrast, when you are racewalking, you are consciously causing your knee to contract or lock. Deliberate knee straightening creates rigidity in the leg. A rigid straightening creates rigidity in the leg. A rigid structure when it hits the ground is impacted by the ground reaction force. The heel will not be able to absorb this force, and your leg muscles will not be able to lengthen or load naturally.

You can run with a straight knee, but it becomes painful. You can jump up and down with straight legs, but again, it becomes painful. If a straight leg hurts in running and jumping, it can also hurt in walking, but it just takes longer to traumatize the muscles and joints. When you get knee hamstrings injuries, The Straight Knee Rule may be a cause. Always consider the repeated, percussive stress your leg muscles and joints experience because of the need to maintain a straight leg at ground contact.

Here it is important to say that the body has a vast ability to adapt to stresses caused by a sport or by poor technique. In a future article, we explore how to condition the hamstrings to adapt favorably to the Straight Knee Rule of racewalking. In the meantime, keep in mind that hamstring strains are not the result of “bad” hamstrings. They are a result of something causing the hamstrings to behave badly.

LOOKING BACK
40 Years Ago (From the November 1961 Midwest Walker, published in Chicago by Chris McCarthy)-The very first edition of the Lugano Cup (now World Cup) was held in Lugano, Switzerland, hence the name of the Cup, still awarded to the winning men’s teams. Back in those dark ages, there were only men’s races. The British won the team title by the narrowest of margins over Sweden. Scoring of the places in the two races resulted in a 53-53 tie, but the British won on the basis of the highest placed walker in the 50. Don Thompson finished second, one spot ahead of Sweden’s Soderlund. Italy was third and Hungary fourth. Those were the only teams competing, other European countries having been eliminated in earlier zone competitions. Other countries outside of Europe were invited, but none attended. As McCarthy reported, the USA representatives were stranded in the New World for lack of green stuff. Individual winners were Britain’s Ken Matthews, the 1960 Olympic gold medalist, in the 20 1:30:54 and Italy’s Abdon Pamich at 50 (4:35:38). And here’s a laugh for today’s racewalking elite. Walking on his old high school track in Upper Arlington, a Columbus suburb, one of those stranded U.S. representatives, Jack Mortland, won the National postal 20 Km, taking down the American record in the process with a startling 1:40:36.5! (No, not a typo.) And he bettered Ferenc Sipos’ old record by nearly 3 minutes. Well, track races rare and you had to be on a track for a record. There had been many faster times on the road (some, of course on courses of questionable length, those dark days also being void of course certification.) Rimas Vacaitis, just 19 and walking in Chicago, was second, nearly 3 minutes back and just 10 seconds ahead of Jack Blackburn, also walking in Upper Arlington. Ron Laird was fourth and Bob Mimm fifth. Flame is fleeting and the following year, Laird shattered Mortland’s mark... Laird won the National 30 Km in Providence, R.I., walking a faster pace than he did in his postal 20 km effort as he finished in 2:29:40 (uncertified course, of course.). Canada’s Alex Oakley beat John Allen in a Buffalo 15 Km event, 1:12:35 to 1:13:24.

40 Years Ago (From the November 1966 ORW)-Don DeNoon won the National 1 Hour in San Diego from favored Rudy Haluza, covering 8 miles 158 yards. Rudy trailed by 112 yards. Ron Laird was third with 7 miles 1430 yds, 69 yards ahead of Larry Walker... In the Ohio TC Distance Carnival “A gutsy Jack Blackburn, showing the zest of his long forgotten youth, moved easily away from Jack Mortland in the last 5 miles of Sunday’s 15 miler to cop individual walking honors.” Blackburn took that one in 2:04:31 to Mortland’s 2:07:28. The day before, Mortland had won a 7 miler in 55:57, but then succumbed to a fresh Blackburn in the 2 mile, 14:16 to 14:56. In the women’s 5 Mile, Jeanne Bocci turned in an excellent 43:54. Still in the dark ages, this was one of the rare women’s races to be found in country, and only in Scandinavia was there anything approaching a solid program.

25 Years Ago (From the November 1971 ORW)-Ron Laird won a fast 15 miler in Long Branch, N.J. with a 1:58:27, just over 2 minutes ahead of Todd Scully... Bill Weigle did 50 Km in 4:40:59 on the track in Boulder, Colo... In the ORW Racewalking Orgy (replacing the Distance Carnival, which had also included running races), three races saw three winners. Phil McDonald walked a classy 10 mile on Saturday morning—1:20:12. Jack Blackburn, recovering from the flu, was more than 20 minutes back. However, a few hours later, he took to the track and matched a fresh Jack Mortland stride for stride as they walked a dead heat in 1:58.4 for 2 miles. The next day, Jerry Bocci captured the 20 miler in 2:59:26 with Blackburn struggling through in 3:29. McDonald stayed with Bocci for 12 miles then called it a day. Mortland stopped at 14 miles, some 6 minutes behind Bocci.

30 Years Ago (From the November 1976 ORW)-John Knifton was an easy winner in the National 35 Km in Pittsburgh with a 2:59:52. Detroit’s Bill Walker and Martin Kraft followed in 3:06:20 and 3:07:29. Ray Somers, Ray Floriani, and Tom Hamilton rounded out the top six... Locally, the rapidly ageing Jacks (having entered their fifth decade) engaged in a 2 mile and Mortland prevailed by 0.6 second in 15:57.5, with Laurie Tucholski not far back in 16:31... Bob Rosencrantz did a 2:49:48 for 30 Km on the track in Seattle... In the ORW’s Annual World Rankings, Mexico’s Danielia Bautista, the Olympic champion, was ranked first in second, followed by Peter Frenkel, East Germany, and Raul Gonzalez, Mexico. Soviet ace Veniamin Soldatenko led Mexico’s Enrique and Finland’s Reima Salonen at 50. In the U.S. rankings, Ron Laird was place ahead of Todd Scully, Larry Walker, and Larry Young at 20, and Young led Augie Hirt, Dan O’Connor, and Floyd Godwin at 50.

25 Years Ago (From the November 1981 ORW)-Dan O’Conor easily won the National 40 Km in Long Branch, N.J. His 3:21:51 left him 8 minutes ahead of Ray Sharp. Randy Mimm and Brian Savilonis followed... In Can-Am Cup races at Niagara Falls, Quebec was an easy winner over Wisconsin, Ontario, and the Niagara Association. At 20, Quebec’s trio swept honors, led by Guillaume Leblanc at 1:26:31. Marcel Jobin had 1:27:22 and Francois LaPointe 1:27:39. Jim Heiring, walking for Wisconsin, was a fourth in 1:28:04—a very class race. The women’s 10 went to Ann Peal, Ontario, in 50:54 with Jeanne Bocci second in 52:31... Alan Price won his fourth straight 100 miles in Columbia, Missouri, finishing in 20:24:45. Bob Chapin was nearly 1½ hours back and Leonard Busen also completed the distance within the 24-hour limit.
20 Years Ago (From the November 1986 ORW) — John Slavonic won his first National title, taking the 40 Km at Ft. Monmouth, N.J. His 3:29:01 put him well clear of Steve Pecinosky's 3:30:47. Curt Clausen took third, 2 ½ minutes behind Steve. In an International race in Los Angeles, Mexico's Maria Colin beat Debbi Lawrence over 10 Km, 47:42 to 49:28. Mexican Junior Carlos Mercenario won an accompanying 20 Km in 1:24:25, a prelude to his World Cup win the next year. Mexico's Martin Berndez was second in 1:24:54 and Carl Schueler third in 1:27:25. Both were better known for 50 Km exploits. Schueler surprised by beating Canada's Daniel Levesque and Guillaume Leblanc, as well as Tim Lewis (sixth in 1:29:42). Canadian Francois Lapointe journeyed down to Columbus for a 50 Km race and whippet through an impressive 3:58:45, beating countryman Martin Archibald by nearly 11 minutes, both no doubt inspired by spending the previous night at the Mortland residence—home of the ORW.

15 Years Ago (From the November 1991 ORW) — In Atlanta, Jonathan Mathews turned in a 4:23:35 for 50, beating Paul Malek by just 44 seconds. At the same site, Dave McGovern blitzed a 20 in 1:29:12, with Ian Whatley second in 1:30:56.

10 Years Ago (From the November 1996 ORW) — The National 2 Hour, held in Cambridge, Mass. Went to 46-year-old Brian Savilonis, who covered 22.271 meters. Bob Keating was 183 meters behind in second with Doug Johnson third. Back in September, Frenchman Thierry Toutain had bettered the World Record for 50 Km with a 3:40:57.9 effort on the track. That bettered the old record, set by his countryman Rene Piller, by 30.4 seconds. At that time, there had been 14 faster times on road courses.

5 Years Ago — (From the November 2001 ORW) — Mexican walkers dominated the Pan-Am Cup races, winning all three events. In the 20, Alejandro Lopez upset Ecuador's Jefferson Perez, winning by nearly a minute in 1:25:25, with teammates Jesus Sanchez and Claudio Vargas third and fourth. Sean Albert finished seventh for the U.S. in 1:33:22. The women's 20 went to Guadalupe Sanchez in 1:38:03, 24 seconds ahead of teammate Victoria Palacios. Jill Zenner was ninth in 1:48:24. The Mexicans took the first four spots in the 50, with Edgar Hernandez winning in 4:05:24, but not without some controversy. Curt Clausen took the lead at 42 km and moved out by about 40 meters. Maintaining that lead he seemed in control of the race, until a DQ with about 3 km to go, a DQ questioned by most of those present at the race in Ecuador. In the Chinese National Games, Zewen Li won the men's 20 Km in 1:20:49, with four others under 1:22 and Yan Wang the women's race in 1:26:22, with another seven under 1:30.

Some actual statements from hospital charts

The patient refused autopsy.
The patient has no previous history of suicides.
Patient has left white blood cells at another hospital.
She has no rigors or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.
Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
On the second day, the knee was better, and on the third day it disappeared.
The patient is tearful and crying constantly. She also appears to be depressed.
The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.
Discharge status: Alive but without permission
Healthy appearing decrepit 69-year-old male, mentally alert but forgetful.