Dunn Overcomes Determined Boyles In 50 Km Trials

Miami, Florida, Feb. 9 (Thanks to Steve Vaitiotes and Tom Surber for input to this story)—Philip Dunn won his third National USATF 50 Km title today and took a step toward his third Olympic berth in a race that also served as the Final Olympic Trial. But not before a race-long dual with Matt Boyles, walking just his second 50 Km race. On a humid day with the temperature rising into the 80s, Dunn walked a very respectable 4:12:55, finishing 1:35 ahead of Boyles, who challenged him for the first 38 Km. Neither walker has met the Olympic qualifying standard, but both will have a chance to do so at the IAAF World Cup at Cheboksary, Russia in May. Well back in third and fourth, and also qualifying for the World Cup team, were Parkside AC teammates Benjamin Shorey and Stephen Quirke.

Dunn and Boyles were alone in the lead after just two of the 25 laps of the 412-Km course. Only 47-year-old Ray Sharp and the comebacking Yariv Pomeranz tried to stay with the pair, but they started to drop back after the first lap. Sharp was just 6 seconds behind after two laps. By 10 Km (49:40 for the leaders), he was 21 seconds behind and by 20 km (1:39:50), the gap was 31 seconds. At that point, Sharp started to fade and the two-man race was on.

The 36-year-old Dunn and 25-year-old Boyles were glued together through 28 Km. At that point, Boyles tried to make a break and was four seconds ahead at 30 (2:30:41). They were both walking a bit cautiously considering the conditions and with the qualifying standard (4:00 “A”, 4:07 “B”) seemingly out of reach by that time it became a race for the National title.

Boyles maintained a slight lead through 36 Km, but Dunn was back on his shoulder by 38 Km and then made a move of his own that Boyles was unable to match. By 40 Km ((3:21:16) Dunn had a 22-second lead, having dropped from 10:09 on the 19th lap to 9:49 on the 20th. Boyles had maintained his own pace, but that was to no avail. When Dunn threw in another lap of 9:55, he established what proved to be an insurmountable lead, as Boyles began to feel the effects of the heat and the unaccustomed distance. (Matt’s only other 50 was a 4:17:14 last October.)

Meanwhile, the Parkside duo were having their own friendly race as they pushed each other to personal bests to take third and fourth, Shorey winning by just one second in 4:27:14, 14 seconds faster than he walked in 2004. Both Shorey (24) and Quirke (26) had been pretty much absent from the racewalking scene for a couple of years until they came back with a 50 in Kenosha last October, which Stephen won in 4:30:24, 3 minutes ahead of Benjamin. Today, they caught Sharp and Pomeranz at about 29 Km, and while slowing markedly over the last 20, came up with their personal best. Quirke explained Shorey’s one-second lead at the finish: “He needed the money more than I did.” (A $2500 difference between third and fourth in the largest payday in US racewalking history.)

Sharp struggled home a distant fifth and a couple of weeks later reported his second
retirement from the sport. But it was a great comeback while it lasted. He did hang on to beat Marco Evoniuk, who will be 50 in the fall. Marco was walking in his seventh Olympic 50 Km Trial. (Why? “Because it’s the Trials.”) The four-time Olympian (1980, 1984, 1988, and 1992) missed only the 2004 Trials since 1980. He is still fourth on the all-time U.S. 50 Km list with his 3:56:55 at the 1988 Olympics.

Three-time Olympian and U.S. record holder at 3:48:04, Curt Clausen, now 40 and semi-retired finished tenth today. Defending Champion Kevin Eastler, who does have an Olympic B standard, is still recovering from a sports hernia and walked less than two laps of the race before deciding he was not ready and might only jeopardize the rest of his season by continuing. Tim Seaman was also out early. Pomeranz, in only his third race in the last 8 or 9 years, cramped up badly and after fading out of contention and was DQ’d at about 49 km. Hopefully, this won’t discourage him from continuing with the promise he showed in his 4:38:41 comeback race last fall.

After the race, Dunn noted: “I came in here with expectations of making the time standard, but I knew the key was winning the race. The organizing committee did a wonderful job here, but they can’t control the weather. It was a little warm and a little humid. I’ve heard the course in Russian is fast, the weather conditions should be good, and the quality of the field is going to be awesome. I’m not going to be the only one chasing after the prize money was significant with the first eight being rewarded. Dunn got $12,000 and Boyles $10,500. Covers expenses, that’s for sure. And Benjamin Storey’s one second margin over Stephen Quirke was worth an additional $2,500, $7,500 to $5,000. And, I doubt that Marco Evoniuk ever matched the $2250 he won for sixth place back in U1e days.

Dunn faced the same scenario of having of having to come up with a qualifying standard following the 2004 Trials. And he did it with a 3:59:12 in Tijuana, Mexico in March. He hopes to repeat this year. To do so he needs a 4:07, the “B” standard. Boyles could still make the team if he can break 4:07 and Dunn does not. Or, both could go if they can better the 4:00 “A” standard.

Boyles noted that the final portion of the race is the toughest to get used to. “You don’t understand what it feels like with 10 to go. It feels absolutely awful (laughter) he said. “To put on a surge like that in a race like this, that takes a lot of guts and I hand it to him. It was a very courageous race on his part. You have a lot of anxiety leading up to these races, but after you cross that finish line you can let your hair down and eat bad food and rest and just sit around and be lazy, and that’s what I’m looking forward to.”

The move came from the heart. I know the 50 really begins at 40”, said Dunn.

The prize money was significant with the first eight being rewarded. Dunn got $14,000 and Boyles $10,500. Covers expenses, that’s for sure. And Benjamin Storey’s one second margin over Stephen Quirke was worth an additional $2,500, $7,500 to $5,000. And, I doubt that Marco Evoniuk ever matched the $2250 he won for sixth place back in the days when he was walking nearly an hour faster. I’m not sure where future prize money of this magnitude might come from, but it would be a good incentive to bring more people into the sport and keep others there. And then the old-time purists might say: “They should do it for the love of the game and the joy of the competition like we did.” I say more power to them.

Remembering Al

February 2004. An earlier year and an earlier Olympic 50 Km Trial for the Ohio Racewalker to report. It was a front page story as it is this month. But above that story on page 1, was the following note in large bold type: In the following article of the Olympic 50 Km Trial you will find that Al Heppner finished fifth. Three days later, Al took his own life, jumping off a bridge. During his 29 years, Al brought much joy to many and lived a full, productive life, touching many both in our sport and beyond it. That he felt his performance in this race was cause to end that life is something none of us can comprehend. “We will all remember your talent, your drive and commitment to the sport. Those of us whose paths you have crossed will remember you fondly. Your tortured soul is now silent. May your rest in peace.” Stella Cashman. “Don’t dwell on the last four days. Remember who he was when you saw him in his element, the man you knew for years.” Cheryl Rellingen.

Al was an outstanding racewalker, coming out of the Wisconsin-Parkside program, where he won two NAIA titles. After college, he won three national titles at 15 Km and one at 5. He was second in the National 20 in 2002 and in 1999, became the seventh U.S. walker to go under 4 hours at 50, finishing second in 3:58:45 in the National title race. He was on two Pan-Am Cup teams and one World Cup team. But the Olympics were his ambition. In 2000 he had led the 50 Km Olympic Trial race for 35 Km, only to done in by bone-chilling wind and rain and finally a DQ. He went through a bout of depression for several months after that, but was back for another try in 2004, after enlisting in the U.S. Army Elite Athlete program and getting back on track. Again he took command of the race and was in front at sub-4 hour pace at 30 Km before struggling in over 4:23. He apparently fell back into depression—this time fatally.

Al had been a sometime correspondent for the Ohio Racewalker, reporting on races, providing information, and contributing witty columns. In that Feb. 2004 issue, following a more extensive review of Al’s career and several eulogies from others in the racewalking world, I said: “Perhaps we should all walk a mile or two for Al at some serene spot we know.”
Here is a way I will honor Al. He loved to write and wrote well. He was witty and entertaining. I never had room to print all he sent, but had some things still on file. Here in his memory, are a couple of his postings during a European trip with his Olympic Training Center mates.” Let me repeat one of those now as a further tribute to Al and the memories we share of him.

Bridges and Buckingham

by Al Heppner
April 17, 2002

Contrary to what you sang as a child, London Bridge is not falling down. John Nunn and I went there yesterday and it looked just fine, thank you. The only things that were falling down were John and I from the 8-hour time change. Fortunately, England has Red Bull everywhere. I had seven. Forget the wings, Red Bull turned me into Sonic the Hedgehog. John doesn’t consume caffeine, so I drank another one, hoping he would catch some of the drink radiating from my pores.

Since I was wide awake, I dragged John down to the Wimbledon Championship Tennis Courts, or so I thought. The home of the Grand Slam tennis tournament was not at the Wimbledon subway stop, nor was it at the Wimbledon Park stop. We should’ve known better—than to get directions from Chinese tourists in England who speak English, “Very, very bad” as they put it. The courts were actually at the Southfield exit.

It turned out to be worth the effort after all. The Wimbledon Tennis Museum was awesome and I even took Anna Kournakova home with me. That poster will look great on my wall.

In the morning, we racewalked by Buckingham Palace where the Queen lives, during the daily changing of the guard. As a result, there were thousands of people lining the streets to watch the guards march in. To avoid the crowd, we racewalked right down the middle of the street. At first, a couple of people started laughing, but then the crowd erupted into a roar of applause. Later, we walked by a girl who yelled out “Korzeniowski”.

“Hey Korzeniowski!”

And now I find myself asking again, “What happened to that zest for life on that fateful Wednesday evening?” And, I ask yet again.

Boyles Comes Back Strong

Boston, Feb. 23–Just two weeks after his strong 50 Km performance, a period in which he said he would sit around and be lazy (see above), Matt Boyles found a little speed in his tired legs to rebound with a win in the USATF National Indoor 5 Km title race. As Matt crossed the finish line in 20:30.00, he ended a string of 10 straight wins in the event for Tim Seaman. It helped, of course, that Tim did not come to defend his title. In second was Patrick Stroupe in just under 21 minutes, as he continues a march into the elite group of U.S. walkers. Well back of Patrick was Stephen Quirke, also coming back from the arduous 50s, as were the next two, Theron Kissinger and Curt Clausen. Another 50 Km survivor, Benjamin Shorey, was the race’s only DQ.

Not to belittle Matt’s performance, but it is only fair to note that this was the slowest winning time in the race since 1985, and it was 34 seconds off his personal best, set last year when he finished third behind Seaman and Kevin Eastler. Tim never failed to break 20 minutes in his 10 wins and probably felt that his American record time last year—19:15.88—was a good one to end the string on. The meet record is 18:53.25 by Canada’s Guillaume Leblanc in 1988. Russia’s Mikhail Schennikov set the World Record of 18:07.88 in 1995.


Vaill Edges Out Dow

Boston, Feb. 24–It seems youth is still waiting to have its day in the U.S. women’s racewalking world. Tonight, 45-year-old Teresa Vaill held off 43-year-old Joanne Dow to win her fourth National Indoor 3 Km title—her first since 1991. When she won her third title in 1991 at age 28, she did 12:49.95. She hasn’t slowed a lot, covering the distance in 13:08.40 tonight. Dow, who was seeking her sixth title at the distance, was just behind in 13:09.61. She had won in 1999, 2002-04, and 2006. Her fastest was a 12:36.76 in 2004.

Defending champion Sam Cohen, a mere 30 years of age, was third in 13:44.91, a 7 second improvement over last year. The youngsters followed. The meet record is Michelle Rohr’s 12:28.32 in 2001 and the American record Debbi Lawrence’s 12:20.79 in 1993.

Claudia Iovan of Romania has the fastest time in history with a 11:40.33 in 1999. The results:


Contributions to the fund are always welcome. You can send them to NARI, 621 North 10th Street, McAllen, TX 78501-4513. Attn: A.C. Jaime.
V For Victory

New York City, Feb. 1—Both the young and the ‘mature’ were well served at the National Indoor 1 Mile Racewalks held as part of the historic Millrose Games tonight. And, it was a great night for those with names starting with V. It was V vor victory in both the men’s and women’s races. In the men’s race, 17-year-old Ricardo Vergara became the second high-schooler and the youngest ever to capture the title as he won decisively in 6:29.92. A great night for the Vergara’s as twin brother Roberto took second.

In the women’s race, 45-year-old Teresa Vaill prevailed and became the most senior person to capture the title. Teresa’s first National title came at the Indoor 1 Mile in 1984. This marked at least her 27th title—I’m losing count, so correct me if I’m wrong. Anyway, she has more than any other woman in history. On this night, she was an easy winner in 7:01.17 (11 seconds faster than in 1984) with Solomiya Login more than 10 seconds back in second, followed closely by junior walker Lauren Forgues.

In the men’s race, Michael Kazmiersczak set a blistering initial pace and led Richard Luettchau and the semi-retired Curt Clausen in the early going. The Vergaras, accompanied by another veteran, 42-year-old Dave McGovern, were not far back.

Luettchau took over the lead about half-way through and the Vergara twins, trading places on alternate laps, moved into third. By the time they entered the final quarter, the Vergaras were on Luettchau’s heels with McGovern in close pursuit.

Ricardo took the lead with two laps to go, and Luettchau tried in vain to get back in front. Really in vain, as he found he had picked up a third red card for his efforts, after finishing just over two seconds back. That gave the Vergaras their unprecedented sweep of the first two places. McGovern just held of Kazmiersczak for third with Clausen in fifth.

Matthew Forgues, just 15, was impressive in sixth as he missed going under 7 minutes by less than a second. The results:

Women’s 1 Mile—1. Teresa Vaill, Walk USA 7:01.17 2. Solomiya Login, Southeastern 7:07.01 (both 7 finishers)


Other Results


Kaniska Bettets World Record, Acceptance Doubtful

Alder Russia, Feb. 23—Russia's Olga Kaniska, the reigning World Champion at 20 Km, bettered the World Record at that distance while winning the Russian Winter Championships here. Her 1:25:11 bettered Olmi's 1:25:41 set at the World Championships in 2005. However, the Russian Federation reports that there were not three certified judges on hand, as required for world record recognition. It's not a unique situation for these championships. Ivanova herself did a 1:24:50 here in 2001 that was never recognized.

Today, second place Annya Kirdyapka also bettered the record with a 1:25:30 with Tatiana Shemyakin 1:25:46. In the men's race, Valery Borchin turned in a quick 1:17:55. World record holder Vladimir Kanaykin opted for the 35 Km race today, which he won in 2:25:59.


Women's 10 Km—1. Julia Tackas 48:00. 2. Raquel Gonzalez 49:56. 3. Sara Alonso 50:12. (50 finished, 2 DNFs)


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FEBRUARY 2008

2008 Racewalking Challenge Opens In Mexico, Perez Will Be There

After winning his third World Championship at 20 Km last August, Jefferson Perez left open the question of whether he was ready for retirement. That question is answered in the following press release from the IAAF.

Chihuahua, Mexico—Ecuador’s three-time World champion Jefferson Perez and Spain’s World and Olympic silver medalist Francisco Fernandez lead the 14-country field already confirmed for the first leg of the 2008 IAAF Racewalking Challenge, to be held in this northern Mexican city March 8-9. Former walker (1997 World bronze medalist) and head of Chihuahua’s State Sports Institute Miguel Rodriguez announced the attendance of two of the world’s best 20 Km specialists for the Mexican race.

Osaka World Championships fourth place finisher Eder Sanchez carries the host country’s hopes in a race that will help select the Mexican team for the IAAF World Cup in Cheboksary, Russia May 10-11.

“I am doing a different preparation towards Beijing, with less high altitude training and more endurance to speed work. I will race in Chihuahua with the hope to make the team for the World Cup and the Olympic Games”.

Some of Mexico’s top walkers are currently training at altitude in Bolivia, including veteran Bernardo Segura (Ed. 1999 World Cup winner and ranked number two in the world as far back as 1994 when he set a world record of 1:17:26 on the track), 2007 Challenge winner in Mexico Omar Segura, 2000 World Junior champion Cristian Berdeja, and Jesus Sanchez.

Chihuahua-born Horacio Nava and Gabriel Ortiz are also doing a one-month preparation in Bolivia.

Nava, the 2007 Pan American Games 50 Km silver medalist and seventh at the 2006 World Cup, ranks as Mexico’s best 50 Km specialist, together with Omar Zepeda, but is expected to contest over the shorter distance in his home town.

According to the organizers, athletes from 14 countries will compete in the first stop of the IAAF Challenge: Ecuador, El Salvador, Armenia, Sweden, Tunisia, Peru, Spain, Norway, Cuba, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Poland, Guatemala, and the United States (Ed. No word here on who will be going from the U.S.) Eight more nations are slated to send delegations. Organizers also expect attendance of 2007 Challenge winners Luke Adams (Ed.and Jared Tallent, according to Australian reports) of Australia and Rytu Turava of Belarus. (Ed. Turava is interesting since we had reports last fall after she had passed on the World Championships that she was retired.)

Raul Gonzalez, the 1984 Olympic champion and head of the racewalking commission in the Mexican Athletics Federation, said the Federation will pay tribute to Jerzy Hausleber, instrumental in Mexico’s early success in racewalking. (Ed. Hausleber went to Mexico in 1966 as the National Coach and soon revolutionized the world of racewalking. Ron Laird had spent some time with him the year before in Poland, but there was no hint then that he would be leaving his native country.)

The race will be held along the Division del Norte Avenue on a course known as “Circuito Pancho Villa”. Mexico has hosted the first leg of the IAAF Challenge since its inception in 2003 and was awarded the right to organize the 2010 World Cup, its first since 1993.


From Heel To Toe

Leblanc honored. Athletics Canada announced that racewalker Guillaume Leblanc from Sept-Iles, Quebec will be part of the 2008 class inducted into the Canadian Olympic Committee Hall of Fame. Martin Goulet, Athletics Canada Chief High Performance Officer remembers Leblanc as an outstanding talent: “He was beyond doubt one of our exceptional National Team athletes in the late ’80s and early ’90s, exceptional from a talent standpoint and how intelligent and clever a competitor he was. There was something immeasurable in his demeanor and attitude that you knew he was truly a world class athlete.” Born April 14, 1962, Leblanc competed at three Olympic Games, winning silver at the 1992 Barcelona Games in the 20 Km racewalk. He also won gold at the Jeux de la Francophonie in 1989 and at the Commonwealth Games. He is Canada’s most decorated and successful racewalker, still holding the Canadian 30 Km and 10 Km senior racewalk records, as well as the junior 10 Km mark. The athletics facility in Sept-Iles was named after him following the 1992 Games; the same honor bestowed upon him in Rimouski where a recreational center carries his name since 1993. . .

Respected International Judge and World Cup Pioneer Dies. Armando Libotte of Switzerland, a distinguished race walking judge, passed away at age 90 in January. Libotte was a well-known walker before World War II and a respected sports journalist. For many years he was also the leader of the SA, Lugano, the club that organized some famous
racewalking events inside the Swiss Canton of Ticino. Along with others, Libotte came up with the idea of an international Racewalking competition for national teams, and so the Lugano Trophy race was born in 1961. Then only for men’s teams, it was eventually combined with a women’s competition, the Eschborn Cup (established 1979), and so what we know today as the IAAF World Racewalking Cup was established. Jonathan Matthews Clinic. The Heartland Racewalkers announce that Jonathan Matthews will conduct a clinic in Overland Park, Kansas on April 12-13. Jonathan, who turned from running to walking in his early 30s competed in the World Championships in 1993, finishing 19th in the 50 in 4:02:52 and was on four World Cup teams from 1993 to 1999. He had bests of 1:24:50 for 20km and 4:01:36 for 50. Jonathan’s clinic will stress technique problems and customized training, teaching you to be your own coach. For further information on the intensive two-day clinic email: info@heartlandracewalkers.com. New Website. Chris Rael invites everyone and collegiate racewalkers and coaches in particular to visit naiaw.com to find information, results, news, and resources on the only internet resource devoted exclusively to college racewalking. Beginners can learn the basics of racewalking technique while the experienced walker can find information on how to become faster and ever improve on personal best through a comprehensive training program. There are video demonstrations of racewalk specific drills, proper stretching routines, mobility exercises to improve flexibility, and much more that walkers of every ability can use to improve. Go the distance. How far can you walk in 24 hours? Go to the FANS 24-hour event June 7-8 in Minneapolis and find out. USAFIT/FMN, in cooperation with ultrawalking.com and with the permission of the FANS organizers is putting on a Centurion walking event at FANS. Any entrant of FANS 24-hour walk can also enter the Centurion at no extra cost by sending an e-mail to Bruce Leisure racewalk@usatfn.org. There will be judges on the course for the whole 24 hours. While FANS is a charity event, you don’t have to give contributions as you don’t want to or to be part of the Centurion section...

Sharp retires with no regrets

Though he had an up and down career, interrupted by injury, Ray Sharp was one of the leading U.S. walkers in the 1980s with best times of 1:24:58 for 20 and 4:21:06 for 50. He won 13 U.S. titles at various distances and represented the U.S. in the World Championships, both indoors and outdoors in 1987 and in the World Cup in 1981 and 1987. Then he quietly disappeared from the scene until re-emergence at age 45 in 2004. Walking a 1:38:57 for 20 that year, he was back for sure in February of 2005 when he finished fourth in the National 50 with a 4:40:53. He improved that to 4:38:53 in the Pan-Am Cup 50 and then finished sixth in the National 20 with 1:35:54. In 2006, he matched his personal record of 25 years earlier while finishing second to Philip Dunn in the National 50. He later repeated his sixth place finish in the National 20, improving to 1:34:59. Last year at 47, he was still good for 4:26:07 and fourth place in the National 50 and for 1:36:06 and seventh at 20. Over the three years he added several national titles to his earlier total. Several days after this years 50, he announced his second retirement on his website blog. He leaves in good spirits, as opposed to his earlier retirement, as you can hear in his retirement message, which includes tribute to many, many people who have touched his career. That list is sort of roll call of our sport over the past quarter of a century. I suppose his retirement will mean I might lose another subscriber, but it’s been good having him back.

I am finished with competitive walking (again). This time I leave with no regrets. I gave it my best effort, enjoyed great trips to Peru, Spain and Brazil, met a lot of wonderful people, and fell short of some audacious goals, but I am satisfied. I know that there is a very slim possibility that I could qualify for the Olympics if I were named to the World Cup team, but I don't think I earned a World Cup berth in Miami and I don't feel any sadness that my quest is over. Actually I feel a bit of relief. It was more than I could accomplish, whether because of age, family and work obligations, or just because of living in a cold climate and training for a warm weather event. Note that my best race of the last 4 years, 4:21 for 50k, came in cold, windy conditions 2 years ago. As they say, it is what it is.

I am looking for a sport that will keep me in shape, but where I can compete in local and regional races. Imagine race walking if there were 20 or 30 good walkers living within 100 miles of me, and I could compete 10 times a year in low-key races. This is what I have in triathlon, trail running, mountain biking, nordic skiing. I can even pick a couple national-level goal races a year - like the Kirtibeken ski marathon and the Wisconsin Ironman -- and try to qualify for the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii, yet still enjoy local competition. In walking, it was at the point where I had a couple domestic races a year, and if I didn’t win, it was a failure. That’s not the kind of sport I want to be in any longer.

I might race again if there were a world masters in the U.S. or Canada. I’m sure I’d have a good chance to medal when I turn 50 in a year. After all, I just soloed 20:53 and 43:49 last month. I’m ready for about 1:31 for 20k. But there’s no way I can walk 1:22 this year, of course. My best at age 26 was 1:24:58. So I won’t be going to the 20k trials in June.

One life goal that intrigues me is 100 miles in 24 hours. I may try for that, the sooner the better since I have been walking a lot. If there’s a walk in the FANS in Minneapolis, that would be a good fit.

Before I say goodbye to race walking, I should thank the hundreds of people, in this country and abroad, who helped me over the years, with friendship, coaching, a plane ticket, a smile, a shared cup of vodka after a hard-fought race. I will not remember everyone. Here is a partial list. Thank you all for making my life in sport rich and satisfying.


LOOKING BACK

45 Years Ago (From the February 1963 Race Walker published by Chris McCarthy)-The
National AAU 1 Mile Championship race, contested in Madison Square Garden, went to Ron Zinn for the third straight year. The 23-year-old Army Lieutenant finished in 6:42.0, 5.1 seconds ahead of Ron Laird. Close on Laird's heels was Bill Osmoltschenko, who finished in 6:49. Alan Blakeslee was fourth in 6:52 and four others broke 7 minutes. A week earlier, Akos Szekely, only sixth in the national race, had beaten Zinn at the New York AC Games with a 6:38.2. However, he had a 35-yard headstart in the handicap race. Zinn walked 6:41.8 from scratch. A week after the National, Zinn won the New York K of C race in 6:36.3. Szekely, a West Point cadet, won the IC4A collegiate mile in 6:56.6 as West Pointers, following the Zinn example, swept the first four places. Mike Brodie won the Golden West Invitational 1 Mile in San Francisco in 6:38.

40 Years Ago (From the February 1968 ORW)-In the National AAU Indoor 1 Mile, Ron Laird won in 6:16.9, following one of two qualifying heats in 6:42.9. Dan Totheroh edged Larry Young for second with a 6:23.4 to 6:24.7. Larry Walker finished in 6:19.5, but Laird won in 6:16.9, after capturing one of two qualifying heats in 6:42.9. Dan Totheroh with a 6:38.2. However, he had a 35-yard headstart in the handicap race. Zinn walked 6:41.8 Akos Szekely, only sixth in the national race, had beaten Zinn at the New York AC Games in 6:24.2, with Todd Scully just missing a chance to compete against the Soviets with his 6:25.7 Mile race, covering the distance in 6:22. His NYAC teammate, Ron Kulik, copped second in 6:24.2, with Todd Scully just missing a chance to compete against the Soviets with his 6:25.7 in fourth. Lynn Olson won the women's title with a quick 7:39 ahead of Jeanne Bocci, who was then DQ'd. Thus, second went to Ellen Minkow in 8:06 with Carol Mohanco, Kettering, Ohio, just 2 seconds back in third. Daniel also won the Olympic Invitational 1500 meters in a close race with John Knifton, Kulik, Scully, and newcomer Dan O'Connor. Times were 5:57.2, 5:58.2, 5:58.5, 6:00.7, and 6:03.5. 16-year-old Sue Brodock showed some promise with a 7:55.7 mile in a girl's race in California. Later, she did 7:17 for 1500 meters.

35 Years Ago (From the February 1973 ORW)-Ron Daniel prevailed in the National AAU 1 Mile race, covering the distance in 6:22. His NYAC teammate, Ron Kulik, copped second in 6:24.2, with Todd Scully just missing a chance to compete against the Soviets with his 6:25.7 in fourth. Lynn Olson won the women's title with a quick 7:39 ahead of Jeanne Bocci, who was then DQ'd. Thus, second went to Ellen Minkow in 8:06 with Carol Mohanco, Kettering, Ohio, just 2 seconds back in third. Daniel also won the Olympic Invitational 1500 meters in a close race with John Knifton, Kulik, Scully, and newcomer Dan O'Connor. Times were 5:57.2, 5:58.2, 5:58.5, 6:00.7, and 6:03.5. 16-year-old Sue Brodock showed some promise with a 7:55.7 mile in a girl's race in California. Later, she did 7:17 for 1500 meters.

30 Years Ago (From the February 1980 ORW)-We made a big mistake in our lead headline, which we didn't notice until 10 years later when doing the Looking Back feature. Apparently no one else had noticed either, or they just passed it off as another of the famous ORW typos. Anyway, the headline reads "Liers Defends Indoor Title." The only problem—Sue Brodock won the race, which was the National Indoor 1 Mile, and it was she who was defending the title. (I guess when you've seen one Sue, you've seen them all.) Brodock's 7:01.7 bettered her own record of 7:05.9. Liers was a distant second in 7:34.9 with Tracy Trisco third. The Men's 2 Mile title went to Todd Scully in 13:07.6. Dan O'Connor (13:20.3) edged Jim Heiring (13:21.2) for second. Ron Daniel and Dave Romansky were next, about 14 seconds back. Neal Pyke walked an American record 6:04 mile in San Francisco and Scully did 1500 meters in 5:47.9 at the Olympic Invitational, another American record. Scully also won miles in the Millrose Games and in Philadelphia. Larry Walker won the LA Times mile in 6:26.5.

25 Years Ago (From the February 1983 ORW)-Landing in the men's race, Ray Sharp won the National Indoor 2 Mile title in a record 12:13.33. Jim Heiring stayed close, but could never challenge for the lead and finished second in 12:15.36. Dan O'Connor and Todd Scully were also under 13 minutes, with Troy Engle and Wil Peruschel rounding out the top six. The Women's Mile went to Sue Brodock in 7:14.67, less than 3 seconds ahead of Teresa Vaill. Susan Liers, Vicki Jones, Chris Anderson, and Carol Brown followed. Heiring set an American record for 3 Km in Chicago, winning in 11:32.15, better than a half-minute ahead of Tim Lewis...Sharp blasted a 5:47.98 for the mile in Albuquerque, beating Heiring by 7 seconds, and won the LA Times in a "pedestrian" 6:07.8, with Dan O'Connor, Tom Edwards, Gary Morgan, and Todd Scully on his heels.

20 Years Ago (From the February 1988 ORW)-At Research Triangle Park, N.C., Carl Schueler scored an impressive National 50 Km victory in 4:02:55, his fifth title at the distance. Carl blamed the finish 10 Km in 44:50 to move easily away from Andy Kaestner (4:11:10) and Jim Heiring (4:12:37). Dan Pierce (4:18:00) and Mark Green (4:18:37) were next, as 14 walkers went under 4:30 just getting started on an illustrious career, Curt Clausen, just 20 years old at the time, was eleventh in 4:27:25. Maryanne Torrellas edged Teresa Vaill to win the National Indoor 3 Km in 12:45.38. Teresa had 12:47.32. Lynn Weik was third in 13:24:88. Canada's Guillaume Leblanc led the men's 5 Km in a Canadian record 18:53.25. Tim Lewis, in second, won the U.S. title in 19:56:05, 6 seconds ahead of Gary Morgan. Paul Wick (20:11:42) and Mike Stroch (20:25:05) followed. Leblanc's time placed him seventh on the All-Time World List at that time...Tim Lewis had a World's best of 5:33.53 in winning the Milrose race by 20 seconds over Gary Morgan. He had another World best 5:13.53 in winning the Vitalis Invitational 1500 meters...Torrellas did 6:37.06 for 1 Mile in Fairfax, Virginia, beating Weik by 11 seconds.

15 Years Ago (From the February 1993 ORW)-Jonathan Matthews won the National 50 Km in Palo Alto with a 4:01:36. Next was Herr Nelson in 4:09:49, then Andrezej Chylinski in 4:14:14 and Paul Wick in 4:16:48. Great Britain swept the U.S. men in an indoor 3 Km in Birmingham, England. Martin Rush (1:10:54.54) was first, followed by Darrel Stone and Derek Bell. Dave McGovern led the U.S. with 1:15:24 and Ian Whatley had 1:15:56. In the women's race, Sara Standley won in 1:30:40 with Victoria Herazo second in 1:38:05...Debbie Lawrence beat Standley in the Fairfax 1 Mile with a 6:20...18. Dara had 6:35.18 and Victoria Herazo 6:47.82.

10 Years Ago (From the February 1998 ORW)-The National 50 Km in Palo Alto saw Canada's Tim Berrett crossing the line first in 3:55:08. Second, and winning the U.S. title was Curt Clausen in 3:57:24. That bettered his personal best, dating back to 1988 (see above), by half-an-hour, as he became the sixth U.S. walker all-time to better 4 hours. Tim Seaman, in his 50 Km debut, was third in 4:05:35 and Andrew Herrmann came fourth in 4:08:00. There were nine finishers...Clausen also had an indoor 3 Km in 1:19:0...In Australia Nick A'Hern had a quick 20 Km in 1:24:40, beating New Zealand's Craig Barrett (1:22:20).

5 Years Ago (From the February 2003 ORW)-High schooler Zac Pollinger won the Millrose Games 1 Mile in 6:41.19...Michelle Rohr did 12:37.90 for an indoor 3 Km in Findlay, Ohio. In the men's race, Adam Staier (12:07.4) edged Matt Boyles (12:07.7)...In Wisconsin, Ben Shorey had a 12:30.24 for an indoor 3 Km, and 43:55 for 10 km, both indoors...The Spanish 50 Km went to Mikel Odriozola in 3:42:03 ahead of Jesus Garcia (3:46:03). The women's 20 went to Maria Vasco in 1:30:52 with Eva Trujillo Maria Cruz Dias close behind in 1:31:15 and 1:31:30.