Russians Dominate At European Cup

Olhao, Portugal, May 21–It wasn’t complete domination, but very close to it as Russian walkers swept four of five team and individual titles at the European Cup of Racewalking. Only in the Junior Men’s 10 Km did the Russian contingent fall short. In the other four races—Junior women’s 10, men’s and women’s 20, and men’s 50—they were virtually unchallenged for either individual or team gold.

The 50 Km race went off first at 7:30 am and the race was strongly affected by hot, humid conditions. While the temperature was only in the mid 60s (F) at the start, the relative humidity was 86 percent. By the time the race finished, the temperature had risen to the mid 80s, and although the relative humidity had dropped under 50 percent by then, the athletes were suffering as the final times and the number of drop outs show.

Unfazed, Russia’s Denis Nizhegorodov, the defending champion, took command early and found only one competitor willing to challenge him. With a long history of success in the event—second in the 2004 Olympics, World Cup winner in 2006 and 2008, third in 2008 Olympics—Nizhegorodov had battled injury after dropping out of the 2009 World Championships with a double rupture in his leg. He came back strongly today.

Italy’s Marco De Luca challenged the Russian cautiously through the first 20 Km, holding back by six or seven meters as they went through the first 20 in 1:29:32. De Luca was holding back, not wanting to prompt Nizhegorodov into a quicker pace, but eventually pulled up even and even opened a slight gap on the Russian.

The result was what he had feared as Nizhegorodov quickened the pace. De Luca hung on until 32 Km, but then dropped away quickly as he began to wilt in the heat. Nizhegorodov walked steadily to the finish in 3:45:58—not sensational but very good considering the conditions. De Luca was eventually caught at 46 Km by Russia’s Igor Erokhin, who finished in 3:49:05, 68 seconds of the Italian. Yerokhio was part of chasing group of nine that broke apart over the final 10 km, with some dropping out.

Speaking after the race, Nizhegorodov said: "This was tough in the heat. But it was hot in Metz two years ago as well. It’s always hard when you are at the front. The plan was to win a medal—and it was really hot—so I’ve got to be pleased with first.

Only seven walkers were able to better 4 hours on the steamy day and with Denis Strelkov in twelfth place, the Russians finished 4 points clear of Italy, who had Jean-Jacques Nkouloukidi in sixth and Lorenzo Dessi in tenth. Sixteen of the 48 starters did not finish (19 if you count the three DQ’s.)

An hour into the race, the Junior men started their race over the same course and in another hour, the Junior women were started (after the boys were done). So it was a busy course. The temperature at the start of both junior races was about 73 F, with relative humidity over 60 percent, so it was quite muggy for those two races.

Russia’s bid for a complete sweep of gold was ended early in the junior men’s race as Ukraine’s Ihor Lyashchenko outlasted Germany’s World Youth Champion Hagen Pohle to win in 41:26. Pohle was 10 seconds back. Russia’s Dementiy Cheparev was third in 41:58.
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The 20 km races, with the men starting at 4:30 and the women at 6:30, were walked in 21:15. Cheperev was the last to drop away, but he lost ground quickly when he did. Lyschenko said: "I train two hours a day, but I wasn't feeling that well. I was so nervous I didn't sleep—but I still thought I could make the top three, and I really enjoyed having the spectators there." Pohle added: "It was a fast course—and over the last 3K, I was sure I could get a medal, a pity it wasn't gold."

There was little competition among the junior women. The Russian pair of Yelena Lashmanova and Svetlana Vasilevya said goodbye to the rest of the field after the first 500 meters and that was it. Nor was there a contest for the gold as Lashmanova left her teammate after 3 km and won by nearly a minute in 43:10, a personal best and a reversal of their result last year. Referring to fellow Russian, Olympic champion Olga Kaniskina, Sokolova said: "Olga is very strong—and I will have to work harder than this to beat her in the future, and maybe the World Championships in August are too soon—but I'm going to try hard for next year's Olympics."

Rigaudo won the 50th major walking medal for proteges of coach Sandro Damilano. She said: "I certainly didn't expect to get a medal today. The goal was merely to get a qualifying time for the World Championships—and to get a medal for my eight-month old baby Elena." Results:

**Jr. Women's 10 Km**

**Team Score**

**Jr. Men's 10 Km**

**Women's 20 Km**
Borchin, Kaniskina Prevail In Italian Challenge Races

Sesto San Giovanni, Italy, May 1–Two weeks earlier, Russia also cleaned up in the fourth leg of the IAAF Racewalking Challenge. Olympic and World Championship gold medalists Valeriy Borchin and Olga Kaniskina won the 20 Km races of the Coppa Citta di Sesto San Giovanni.

Borchin went to the lead with Japan’s Yusuke Suzuki in the early stages of the men’s race, followed by Hassanine Sebei of Tunisia, Petr Trofimov from Russia, Jose Leyer Ojeda of Mexico, and Isaaru Fujisawa of Japan. Borchin went through 5 Km in 20:28 and then increased his pace to break away from Suzuki. He passed 10 Km in 40:14 and 15 Km in 49:17 before romping home in 1:19:43, 2:28 ahead of Fujisawa, who caught and then edged away from Sebei.

"The weather did not create any problems for me," said Borchin. "I liked the course where I heard the support of a lot of my compatriots. This was my last test before (Daegu World Championships)."

Olympic 50 Km champion Alex Schwazer of Italy finished 12th in 1:24:15 in his first race of the year since recovering from a knee injury sustained during a skiing accident. "This result was in line with what I expected on the eve of the race. I don’t like finishing 12th but it was just a test to prepare for Daegu. I started training again only two months ago and I am aiming to reach my peak in Daegu," said Schwazer.

In the women’s race, Spain’s Beatriz Pascual took the lead early, followed closely by Kaniskina as they established a gap of about 40 meters on the rest of the field. The pair went through the first 5 in 22:18 and reached 10 in 44:45. At 13 Km, Kaniskina unleashed an attack and switched gears, breaking away to a decisive lead as she reached 15 Km in 1:07:14. The race for first was over at that point, but Pascual had to hold off Portugal’s Ines Henrique for third with Vera Santos in fourth.

"I feel honored to compete in Sesto for the first time in my career," said Kaniskina. "It means a lot to win this race and add my name to the list of athletes who have made the history of the Cup. I enjoyed the great support from the crowd along the course. I will now return home to prepare for my title defense in Daegu, where I am aiming to reach a third World title."

The results:

**Men’s 50 Km**

**Women’s 50 Km**
Impressive performances at:

National Title To Barron

No details on the race as 18-year-old Trevor Barron won his second national title, apparently recovered from the knee injury that caused him to drop out of the Pan Am Cup Junior 10 Km.}


Other Results


Come Join In the Fun, But Please Do Not Run

Sat. June 4 National USATF Junior and Open 10 Km, Albany, N.Y., (L)
5 Km, Fontana, Cal. (U)
5 Km, Felton, Del. (T)
10 Km and 1 Hour, Wauwatosa, Wis. (I)

Fri. June 10 Southeast Masters 1500 meters, Raleigh, N.C., 4 pm (V)

Sat. June 11 Michigan USATF 5 Km, Hillsdale (F)
West Region Masters 5 Km, Costa Mesa, Cal. (Y)
Ohio 10 Km (With 20 Km option), Yellow Springs (M)
Southeast Masters 5000 meters, Raleigh, N.C., 7:30 am (V)

Sun. June 12 North Region 5 Km, St. Paul, Minn. (S)
5000 meters, San Mateo, Cal. (J)

Wd. June 15 1 Mile, Yellow Springs (M)

Fri. June 17 5 Km, Georgetown, DE (T)

Sun. June 19 1 Mile, Santa Cruz, Cal. (J)

1 Mile, Yellow Springs, Ohio (N)

Sat. June 25 5 Km, Middleton, Del. (T)
National USATF Jr and Women 10,000, Eugene, Oregon (D)

Sun. June 26 National USATF Men's and Women's 20 Km, Eugene, Oregon (D)
5 and 10 Km, Pasadena, Cal. (U)
1 Mile, Portland, Oregon (Z)

Mon. June 27 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Sat. July 2 5 Km, Dover, Del. (T)
Sat. July 9 State Games of Oregon 3 Km (Z)

Mon. July 11 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Mon. July 18 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Thur. July 21 1500 and 3000 meters, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)

Mon. July 25 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Sun. July 31 5 Km, Rehobeth, Del. (T)
Mon. Aug. 1 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Sat. Aug. 6 5 Km, Dover, Del. (T)
Virginia USATF 15000 meters, Virginia Beach (W)

Mon. Aug. 8 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Sat. Aug. 13 West Region 30000 meters, Reno, Nevada (I)
Sun. Aug. 14 10 Km, Portland (Z)
Mon. Aug. 15 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Mon. Aug. 22 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)

From Heel To Toe

Old Errata. Ray Somers recently brought to my attention an ORW mistake of nearly a year ago. Ray says: “So I just got around to indexing my 2010 ORWs. Silly question: June issue National 15 Km results; August issue different National 15 Km results. Strange?” Not a silly question and strange indeed. Explanation. The National 15 Km reported in the June issue, in which I credited Tim Seaman with his 44th National title, was actually the National Masters 15 Km. The National title race, as reported in August, was held in Missouri that month.

With my failing senior memory, I didn’t realize that I had already reported a national title race (mistakenly). What is really strange, however, is that I don’t recall anyone calling me on my mistake after the June issue was published. So, maybe no one actually reads this stuff? .

Obituary department. Albert Johnson, British Olympic racewalker in 1956 and 1960, died on May 20 at age 80 in Hobart, Australia. He was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire and lived on the Isle of Man from 1967 to 1974 when he migrated to Australia, having fallen in love with the country while competing at the 1956 Games. He has lived in Tasmania since, coaching many walkers and distance runners to a national and international standard. Also, Elliott Denman learned of the passing of Ray Smith at age 80, also in Australia, last June. Ray also competed in the 1956 Games, representing Australia and finishing sixth in the 50 Km event.
(Johnson was eighth in the same event and Elliott was in tat race, too.) Smith claimed a combined 14 state and national medals in racewalking and remained involved in the sport as both official and administrator, including 26 years as an IAAF judge. He officiated at two Olympics and five World Cups and was on the IAAF Racewalking Committee. Elliott remembers Ray as a good friend. "Ray was a truly wonderful gentleman, full of life. He dedicated so much of that life to racewalking, as great athlete, coach, and renowned IAAF judge. He traveled widely and had an open invitation to visit us here in New Jersey...we always said 'someday'. We exchanged e-mails for many years...lots of jokes, and commentary on the world scene, but none for quite a while. Now, so sadly, I know the reason..."...De Witt on the move. A year after he left the very successful program he had established at U. of Wisconsin- Parkside to coach men's and women's track and cross country at Ave Maria University in Florida, Mike DeWitt has been named to the same position at Belmont Abbey College. During his 29 years at Parkside, where his eums became a national power in track and cross country, he also developed a strong program in racewalking. Mike coached six US. Olympic Racewalkers, and has coached over 25 athletes to positions on World Championship, World Cup, and/or World Junior Championships through the university and the Parkside Athletic Club. He was the head coach of the U.S. Pan Am Cup of Racewalking team in 2002 and was named as a U.S. National Associate Coach on several occasions. His training programs have been noted as a model for success by the USATF Elite Athlete Testing Program. In 2000, he was elected to the NAIA Hall of Fame for Coaching. As a competitor, Mike represented the U.S. in international competition on seven different occasions, including the 1989 World Cup of Racewalking. Interesting. Several weeks ago, I received the following commentary from an Ohio Racewalker who prefers to remain anonymous. Because of its controversial aspects, I ran it by Bob Bowman, IAAF Racewalk Committee member and former Chair. He, in turn, ran it by Pierce O’Callaghan, who was one of the IAAF Judges at the subject Russian Winter Championships and who, along with me, helps Bob in compiling the T&F News world racewalk rankings. Neither saw any reason not to give it wider distribution. And Peirce, while he has no knowledge of any doping, said he wouldn’t be surprised. So here is the commentary I remained from my subscriber: "I received my ORW yesterday, and saw Sokolova’s time at Adler/Sochi (Russian Winter Championships). Then today, I received this message from a friend in Russia: ‘...of course Chyogin’s athletes won’. His Sokolova won with a world record, but didn’t go to doping control so that the record would be ratified. Of course this means she competed ‘dirty’! The Federation closes its eyes to its doping experiments so competing against his athletes is very difficult” After consulting with Bob, I put this on the Yahoo racewalking list, but the item received little comment. So now I am sharing it here. I personally have no comment on the veracity of the charge, and, of course, the Russian source could just have a bone to pick with the Federation or the coach. Interesting, nonetheless. Does it bring to mind Lance Armstrong? I would prefer to believe that both he and Coach Chyogin’s athletes are clean. But, I sure don’t know...From salmonella to training camps. A report from Germany stated: "A salmonella poisoning stopped the preparation for 30-year-old German walker Sabine Krantz. She returned only this winter after a baby break to win the national indoor championships. The preparation continued well and Krantz traveled home from altitude training camp in Flagstaff, Arizona with good results. Then the illness came and she was forced to stop the training for two weeks. Last weekend she completed her first slow workout. She now has only two solid chances for achieving the World Championship standard--at the national championships in June and later that month at the meeting in Dublin.” This little item got Elliott Denman to thinking as follows: For years, I’ve heard that many global racewalking (and running) stars come to the U.S. (Arizona frequently) to avail themselves of American hospitality and winter season training camps. But, I’ve never, ever heard of any of them being invited to partake of American activities (such as actually competing in our races, or doing clinics to help the locals get a bit faster and improve their technique) while here. They seem to do all this in anonymity, racking up the kilometers with hardly anyone from local racewalking communities even knowing they were right here, right in our midst. Well, how about changing this situation in the future? How about finding out the specifics—who, where, when—and extending invitations. I think it would be great for everybody—the visitors and the visited. Win-win-win for one and all. How about it???

Certification As An Official

(From USATF National Racewalk Committee Chair Vince Peters)

Without judges insuring a fair and level competition there wouldn’t be any racewalking. So, one of the most frequently asked questions in racewalking always is “How can I become a judge?”

So, how do you become a judge?

The initial level of racewalk judge is achieved simply by taking an open book test. Since racewalking is an additional skill earned, you will need to take both the racewalk open book and the normal official open book (This is why most officials don’t know how to judge racewalking—it is a separate test.) It can take upwards of two-to-three hours to go through the rule book to complete both tests. The test are found at:

http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/certification/forms.asp

Specifically you need the Test for New Officials and the Test for New RW Judge/Official.

The source materials for the tests (actually called “Reviews”) are the current rule book and the 2008 Race Walk Officializing Handbook. These are available at:

http://usatf.org/About/Competition-Rules.aspx and
http://usatf.org/groups/officials/resources/race-walking

After that, it is a matter of asking to shadow a judge at any competition you are at and progressing from new official to the association level official.

Of course your local association’s Certification Chair should be able to guide you through all of this. You can find your local Certification Chair’s contact information at:

http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/certification/

LOOKING BACK

50 Years Ago (From Chris McCarthy's May 1961 Midwest Walker)—John Allen won the National 50 Km on Long Island in 4:38:19, beating Ron Laird (4:40:16) and Ron Zinn (4:44:39). Carl Kurr was fourth in 4:46:33, with Bruce MacDonald, Elliott Denman, and Bob Mimm also under 5 hours. There were 22 finishers. Your editor won a 25 Km in Chicago in 2:05:57, better than 6 minutes ahead of Rimas Vacaitis and 7 ahead of Jack Blackburn. However, the course, which had long been in question because the lap around the park just happened to be exactly 1 Mile, was actually measured shortly after and proved to somewhat less than a mile. Based on a comparison of the winner’s splits in this race and in the...
National 25 on the same course a month later, the performance was worth about 2:11:30. I wasn't fit for 25 Km. The first 13 laps averaged 7:52, the last two were 9:30 and 9:40 and the final 954 yards took 5:27.

1930s. (An insert looking way back, before your editor's birth.) Here is another picture found by Steve Vaitones on the world wide web. Picture is Janis Dalins, Latvia on his way to European gold in 1934. Dalins was born in 1904 and died in 1978. He was Latvia's first Olympic medalist, finishing second in the 50 Km at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics in 4:57:20. The race was won by Great Britain's Tommy Green in 4:50:10. Two years later, Dalins won the European 50 Km title. He did not finish in the 50 at the Berlin Olympics (1936). In 1939, walked his personal best of 4:37:50. His best 20, 1:34:26, was credited as a World record in 1933. He also walked records of 2:00:46 for 25 in the same year and 2:31:30.5 for 30 in 1934. He lived the rest of his life there. In Latvia, a phrase "Ak, kauf man Dalina k ajas Bulia" (Oh, if I had Dalins' legs), originally a 1930s song title, remains widely known and a stadium in his hometown is named after him. Two other Latvians have followed him as Olympic medalists—Adalberts Bubenko with bronze in 1936 and Aigars Padejevs with silver in 2000.

45 Years Ago (From the May 1966 ORW)—The National 35 Km went to Ron Laird in 2:35:20, more than 15 minutes ahead of Goetz Klopfer. Bob Bowman and newcomer Larry Young finished third and fourth. Ron Daniel and Canadian Karl Merschen walked a dead heat in a fast 20 Km in Ontario, finishing in 1:32:48. Young was improving fast, finishing just 7 seconds behind Larry Walker's 13:54 in a 2 mile race in L.A.

40 Years Ago (From the May 1971 ORW)—Tom Dooley won the National 20 Km, edging Athens AC teammate Goetz Klopfer in San Francisco. Tom had 1:32:18 with Goetz returning 1:32:38 in second and Larry Young 1:33:34 in third. Aging Ron Laird could manage only fourth ahead of John Knifton, Floyd Godwin, and Bill Ranney. Ranney finished in 1:35:40 and Bob Henderson, way back in 14th, broke 1:40 in the fastest man finish in U.S. history to that date. Young did better at 35 Km, beating Laird on his home ground in Pomona with a 2:17:14 finish. At 45, Ron Laird finished third in 35:23, with Domingo Colm returning 43:49. (Assuming the 10 was on the track, the times might make one wonder about the accuracy of the 20 Km course.) In East Germany, Peter Frenkel and Karl-Heinz Stadtmuller both did 1:25:40 ahead of Hans-Georg Reiman, 1:26:19. In the USSR, it was Anatoly Salomon in 1:26:32, Yegemty Yevseyev 1:26:41, and Pyotr Pototschenkov 1:26:45. Jim Heiring won the NAIA 10 Km in 47:35. In Bergen, Norway, Bautista did a world's best 40:51.6 for 10 Km. The US. beat Canada in a dual meet as Dan O'Connor won the 20 in 1:35:31 (Todd Scully had 1:34:05 as a non-scorer) and Jerry Lansing won the 35 Km (really just 32.66 Km as it turned out) in 2:46:20, just 8 seconds ahead of Augie Hirt.

30 Years Ago (From the May 1981 ORW)—Jim Heiring and Alan Price both won two National titles. Jim took the 20 in Kenosha, Wis. in 1:30:47 and the 10 on the track at Stagg Field in Chicago in 45:08. Price won the 100 Km in Arlington, Vir. In 11:17:11 and four weeks later the 100 mile in Methuen, Mass. with a 20:09:18. In the 100 Km, Price took the title, but Israel's Shaul Ladany easily won the race in 10:24:14. Sal Corallo won the master title in third place. Bob Keating was just 22 minutes behind Price in the 100 miler and Ohio's own Jack Blackburn also went under 21 hours. In the 20, Dan O'Connor was second to Heiring in 1:32:20, followed by Marco Evoniuk and Todd Scully. Evan Fox led Mike DeWitt and Jay Byers for second place in the 10. Vicki Jones beat Paula Kash to win the women's National 20 Km in California. Vicki finished in 1:53:59, Paula in 1:55:03 with Lori Maynard another 2 minutes back.

25 Years Ago (From the May 1986 ORW)—Many more National titles were contested. Debbie Lawrence won the women's 20 Km in Overland Park, Kan., finishing in 1:45:07 and Carl Schueler took the men's 25 Km at the same site with his 1:53:28. Teresa Valli was 33 seconds behind Debbie with Canada's Micheline Daneau third and Susan Liars fourth. Jim Heiring led Schueler through 15 Km and finished just 3 seconds behind in second. Dave McGovern and Gary Morgan were third and fourth. The National 15 Km in Long Beach went to Tim Lewis in 1:06:47. Paul Wick was 1:20 behind and Steve Pecinovsky nearly 3 minutes back in third. McGovern, Larry Walker, and Morgan followed. The National 50 Km was held in Seattle, with Marco Evoniuk winning in 4:13:32. Dan O'Connor went just under 4:20 in second and...
1920s. (An insert even further back, thanks again to the Vaitones’ web searches.) Pictured here is Willie Plant who won 14 National Racewalking titles from 1917 through 1927. Four of these came at 1 Mile Indoors with a best time of 6:34.8 in 1927. One was at 3000 meters in 1920 (13:08). Four were at 3 Miles, with a best of 21:50.1 in 1922. The other five were at 7 miles with a best of 53:04.4 in 1917.

Eugene Kitts had 4:23:56 in third. Randy Minam, John Slavonic, and Mark Fenton rounded out the top six. Teresa Vaill and Tim Lewis won the Rockport 5 Km walks in Denver in 23:54 and 20:51. Debbi Lawrence and Gwen Robertson were second and third in the women’s race, and Carl Schueler and Dave Cummings second and third in the men’s race. In the John Ljunggren Sweden Cup, East Germany’s Hartwig Gauder won the 20 in 1:21:15 ahead of Victor Ivanenko, USSR, 1:22:18. The women’s race went to Vera Osipova, USSR, in 1:35:52, ahead of Ann Jansson, Sweden, 1:26:18, probably one of the first elite international 20 Km races for women.

15 Years Ago (From the May 1996 ORW)—Victoria Herazo retained her National 20 Km in Albany, N.Y. in 1:40:31.8, but fell well short of the record she set a year earlier on the same course—1:35:40. She went after it, going through the first 5 in under 23 minutes, but wasn’t helped by weather conditions. Debbie Benton was a distant second in 1:54:32. In the men’s National 25 Km held concurrently, Gary Morgan was aiming for a sub 1:30 at 20 Km and missed it by just 7 seconds. He went on to a personal best 1:54:48.5. John Soucheck was second in 2:11:02. In the Mortland 20 Km in Yellow Springs, Ohio, Cedarville College’s Chad Eder blitzed a 1:29:56...