Two More Challenge Races Lead Up To Olympics

After two more IAAF Racewalking Challenge races in June, the next step for racewalking’s elite is the London Olympics beginning in late July. Some of those athletes tested themselves in June Challenge Races in La Coruna, Spain and Sesto San Giovanni, Italy.

The June 10 race in Italy saw 20 km wins by China’s Jianbo Li and Hong Liu. In the men’s race on a flat 1 km circuit, China’s World Cup winner, Zhen Wang, easily pulled away from the field in the first 2 km and had a commanding lead by 5. Wang continued his rapid pace and was still well clear of a 10-man chasing pack at 10, with Wei Yu and Jianbo Li of China, Giorgio Rubino of Italy, and Miguel Lopez of Spain leading the chase.

But, having a lead of more than a minute, Wang surprisingly dropped out at 14 km. With 3 km to go, Li shifted gears and started to pull away, finally prevailing by just 4 seconds over Lopez with Yu another 5 seconds back at the finish. “It’s my first 20 km race this season and this win means an enormous morale booster for the Olympic Games,” said Li. “I’ll now go straight to the Olympics, no more races until then.”

The second-place finish earned Lopez the Spanish National title as he lowered his personal best by 42 seconds. The 24-year old 2009 European Under 23 winner noted: “The most remarkable achievement today has been to place second at an IAAF meeting. It would be great to be in the top 10 at the Olympics.”

In contrast to the men’s race, the women’s 20 had no drama as Li proved much more than the other competitors could handle. Her two teammates made the early pace, but only briefly, and when Li took over after the first kilometer it was no contest. Spain’s Mario Vasco was second after the other two Chinese women faded, but she was unable to match Liu’s pace after 5 km and was soon caught by teammate Beatriz Pascual, who eventually finished second, some 1:41 behind Liu’s stunning 1:27:32. Vasco held on for third and Spanish women also finished fourth and fifth in a display of tight team walking.

A week later, the scene shifted to Italy and a new cast of characters. On a scorching hot day, Mexico’s Eder Sanchez and Russia’s Tatyana Sibeleva finished strongly to take honors in 20 km races.

In the men’s race, Sanchez started conservatively in the stifling heat and let a Japanese duo of Yusuke Suzuki and Takayuki Tanii set the pace. The pair passed the 5 km mark in 20:58, two seconds ahead of Russia’s Petr Trofimov. Sanchez was fourth in 21:15, just ahead of Australia’s Luke Adams.

Tanii dropped away at 7 km, leaving Suzuki and Trofimov alone in the lead, reaching 10 km in 42:03. They had extended their lead over Sanchez, who went through in 42:35, 11 seconds ahead of Adams.

The lead duo slowed over the next 5, but still led Sanchez by 21 seconds as they hit 15 in 1:03:47. Having conserved his energy, Sanchez was able to accelerate over the final 5
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and he caught Trofimov at 18 Km, the Russian having drawn away from Suzuki. Closing with a 20:44 for the final 5, Sanchez finished in 1:24:52, 30 seconds ahead of Trofimov.

“My tactic was perfect and it paid off,” Sanchez said. “My opponents pushed hard at the beginning. I am used to these conditions in Mexico and I kept my head. I am now going to St. Mortiz for one month to prepare for the Olympic Games in London.”

Federico Tondonati in seventh place won the Italian National title with Jean Jacques Nkouloukidi in second (eighth overall).

The women’s race also started at a conservative pace, considering the heat. At 5 km, Ireland’s Olive Loughnane; Australia’s Claire Tallent; Sibileva; and and Russia’s Tatiana Korotkova were together in 22:38. Three minutes later, Korotkova dropped of the pace and it became a three-woman race. They were still together at 10 Km in 46:06. Then Sibileva took over.

By 15 Km, she had a 38 second lead on Loughnane, with Tallent another 34 seconds back, having stepped up from the 23+ pace to a 22:09 for that third kilometer. Finishing it off with a 22:21, she finished nearly a minute ahead of Tallent in 1:30:35. Tallent was almost another minute behind Loughnane with fourth place Lucie Pelantova of the Czech Republic another three minutes back.

“I like hot weather but today it caused me a lot of problems, especially in the second half,” Sibileva said. “I wanted to show that I am among the best walkers in the world.”

Federica Ferraro in sixth place won the Italian title.

Results of the two Challenge races:

La Coruna, June 10


Sesto San Giovanni, June 17

Women’s 20 Km-1. Tatiana Sibileva, Russia 1:30:35 2. Live

April 2012

JUNE 2012

Results of the two Challenge races:

National USATF 10 Km, Albany, New York, June 2


Challenge medalists. Left: Sesto San Giovanni winner Eder Sanchez. Right: La Coruna medalists Beatriz Pascual, Hong Liu, and Maria Vasco from left to right.
There’s Many A Place For you To Race

Sun. July 8 5 Km, Brookline, Mass., 9:30 am (X)
Mon. July 9 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Wed. July 11 1 Mile, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)
Sat. July 14 Bay State Games 3000 meters, Weston, Mass., 9:30am
Sun. July 15 Midwest Regional 3000 (and a 3000), Waukesha, Wis., 9:30 am (I)
Mon. July 16 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)
Thur. July 19 1 Mile and 3000 meters, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)
Sat. July 21 New England Masters and Open 3000 meters, Providence, Mass., 11:00 am
West Region Masters 5 Km (U (X)

JUNE 2012
Update

Last month we ran an article from an Irish newspaper on John Kelly. For purposes of accuracy and giving proper credit to some deserving individuals here are some updates to that article courtesy of Jim Hanley, who I am sure could have given himself more credit for some of what he reports. He too was part of the great effort put forth to ensure the success of the racewalk events at the LA Olympics in 1984.

There were some errors and omissions in the ORW article on John Kelly, which originally appeared in an Irish newspaper. As the Southern California Racewalk Chairman from 1978 to 1984, John was the guy in charge of many National championships, Pan American Games Trials, International Dual Meets, and many major indoor and outdoor invitationals. Visiting athletes often stayed at his Santa Monica home during this time. No one did more for our sport during the time leading up the the Olympics than John Kelly, who was also a first-rate coach and tireless promoter of the sport.

However, during the 1984 Olympics Ron Daniel—not John—was the Racewalk Director. Ron did a fabulous job in an incredibly difficult, politically charged arena that included a late boycott by most of the Soviet-block countries. The future IAFF Chairman, Bob Bowman (at that time he was a US Representative to the IAAF RW Committee and was elected chairman in 1991), got these two guys and other racewalk people involved in officiating the racewalks of the 1984 Games, resulting in the “best run Olympic racewalk events in the history of the Olympics” according to the IAFF. Besides having to deal with putting on two major races that were to be watched by something like 2 billion people, Daniel and Bowman had a huge number of issues that most track fans wouldn’t even think about. Topics like television camera placement, communications, transportation, athlete and official housing, paperwork and costs, what to do with “official” Olympic binoculars and TV sets, materials for visiting coaches, language translation, signage, hospitality for the international judges, screaming Mexican fans along the course making such noise that officials were having trouble hearing each other, leader board placement, table clothes to hide the legs of officials as they sat at tables on the course, e-mail (the first time any of us heard about it), physically getting huge aid and water stations in place, instantly getting the 2 kilometer split hand times to the media center (no chips then and no problems either), media and press access to the venue, escorting the athletes through the L.A. Coliseum tunnel and to the starting line, LAPD requests regarding street closures conflicting with their overall traffic plan, a city work crew getting 400 meter track with a 200 meter track built within the infield.

The Olympic Training Centre of the Republic of Mordova on Race Walking of a Name of Chegin” features a 333.3 meter track, which enable Coach Chegin to take kilometer splits without having to move between the starting line and the 2 kilometer mark as is required on a standard 400 meter track. The clean, albeit Spartan, dormitory contains a gym, sauna/pool room, massage/sports medicine room, and a restaurant where meals are menu­

An Inside Look At the World Cup

(1982 World Cup of Racewalking in Saransk, Russia. Here is a look at the non-competitive aspects of the experience as drawn from his official report of U.S. Team Coach Dave McGovern.)

After traveling from their home cities, then embarking on a 10-hour flight from New York, the majority of TEAM USA arrived in Russia early on Wednesday, May 9. With a full day layover in Moscow before taking a night train to Saransk, there was ample time for a day trip into Moscow to see Red Square. Team USA enjoyed several hours in the square and an enjoyable stroll at the “GUM” department store. (Ed. I must wonder how much GUM has changed since 1961 when Ron Zimm and I were there with another Team USA. I do know that old Joe Stalin is gone from the mausoleum on Red Square.)

The overnight train to Saransk was a throwback to the post-war era with athletes booked in four-bunk sleeper cars. Most of the US team slept quite well arriving reasonably well rested at 7:30 am. The team was shuttled to the Athletes’ Village in vans decked out with World Cup Banners emblazoned with life-sized images of Olga Kanaskina, one of Saransk’s many hometown racwalking heroes. The clean, well-appointed city has been undergoing a dramatic facelift over the past decade. There are family-oriented parks, top-notch sporting facilities, including a hockey arena, a track and field/football stadium, and an ever-expanding training center devoted entirely to racewalking.

The “Olympic Training Centre of the Republic of Mordova on Race Walking of a Name of Chegin” features a 333.3 meter track, which enable Coach Chegin to take kilometer splits without having to move between the starting line and the 2 kilometer mark as is required on a standard 400 meter track. The clean, albeit Spartan, dormitory contains a gym, sauna/pool room, massage/sports medicine room, and a restaurant where meals are menu­

Between the Chegin Center’s athlete dormitory rooms and the restaurant lies a Wall of Heroes featuring photos and bios of the Center’s current and former champions to provide a constant reminder of both the Center’s legacy and the competition that will be encountered both of the Olympic Course and during the next day’s training. A new, much larger dormitory is under construction as are a considerably larger sports medicine/training room as well as a 400 meter track with a 200 meter track built within the infield.

The Center is surrounded by miles of multi-use trails, including a 200 meter loop through a birch forest that is furnished with porta-johns, split marks every 100 meters, and benches for coaches or drink bottles, making for a perfect all-weather distance work or long­interval training location for the 40-45 racewalkers currently in residence at the Center. every 100 meters.

On Thursday morning, the US squad took their first group workout on this particular track. Other training sessions took place in the neighborhood roads around the athlete village. The most memorable workout, however, took place on Friday morning as the US team joined squads from other nations training on the World Cup course, laid out in the center of town a short bus ride away from the athlete village. The course was a fairly standard 2 km loop, albeit situated on an incline a bit steeper than most elite courses. The top of the loop was anchored by the town’s ornate gold-domed Russian Orthodox cathedral. Personal and aid tables were set up at this end of the course while communal water and sports drinks were located toward the bottom of the loop. Every inch of the course was barricaded to keep at bay the thousands of fans who would come to watch the weekend’s events.
The US team actually got their first sight of the course the previous evening as it was host to the Mordovian Junior 5 Km Championship and youth 3, 2, and 1 Km Championships. The Mordovian racewalkers did not disappoint, as huge field of technically proficient young athletes blazed around the shortened 1 km course under the watchful eyes of their coaches. Saransk’s rabid racewalk fans, and even those of Mordovian heroes Olga Kaniskina, Valeriy Borchin, and coach Vikor Chegin, who were present in the form of huge banners and billboards that overlooked the course. In fact, it seems the only eyes in town not watching the races were the racewalk judges! The US team’s vantage point near the top turn gave a clear view of many of the athletes flat out running around the turns with no judge present within 150 meters. Even more surprising than the lack of any judges near the turn was the fact that the nearest judge to the turn spent most of the race talking to spectators with his back turned to the athletes! Although Russia can clearly lay claim to many of the best racewalkers in the world, the home-course times could be seen as suspect if the judging at these Championships is any indication.

Friday evening’s Opening Ceremony was a full-blown Olympic-style extravaganza of native dancers, cheerleaders, multimedia video displays, confetti cannons, balloon, and dozens of flag-bearing walkers. The short walk back to the athlete village afterward took nearly as long as the hour-long Ceremony itself, as all the athletes and staff were mobbed by autograph seekers and racewalking fans hoping to have their photographs taken with anyone decked out in USA or other foreign apparel.

Saturday was a quiet day for Team USA with afternoon 10 Km races on tap for the junior boys and girls as well as the 20 Km for the senior men. While it was relatively easy to navigate around the course during Wednesday’s Mordovian Championships, this was not the case for the weekend races. A heavy police presence, as well as the throng of fans lined up 10-deep in places, made for some tricky coaching logistics. The press pass secured by Chef de Mission Steve Vaitones made it possible to both call splits and check the DQ board, which would not have been the case without the pass.

With the races out of the way, Team USA embarked on the secondary competition of trip uniform trading. Here we are among the world’s best. Within hours of the final race, Belorussian, French, Canadian, Italian, Chinese, Russian, Brazilian, and Turkish walkers could be seen walking around the Athletes Village in Team USA gear while our US walkers sported a similar array of international colors. Further deals were close at the closing banquet, which featured traditional Russian dancers and musicians as well as the passing of the IAAF flag from the mayor of Saransk to the mayor of Taicang, China, site of the 2014 World Cup.

The team staff of Steve Vaitones (Chef de Mission/Manager, Dave McGovern (Head Coach), Tish Hanna (Junior Coach), and Maryanne Daniel (Medical/Massage) were ably assisted by local Saransk translators Yulia Orlova and Oleg Anisimov, who arranged for cars, busses, bottled water, computer cables, team photograph prints, and just about anything else the team needed or desired with efficiency and good humor. Major kudos to Aaron McGuire at USATF for handling the cumbersome visa process and other logistics for the trip.

A Good Story

(The following story appeared in the May 19 edition of the Dayton (Ohio) Daily News. It provides an inspirational look at one of the many highly competitive walkers to come out of the program National Chairman Vince Peters runs in Yellow Springs. Our pay on the back to Susan and Vince.

Two of the last things she sees before going to sleep at night and the first things she sees each morning—provided she turns the light on because it’s 2:20 am—are the pair of posters on the wall of their Beaver Creek home. One shows a lone runner going down a long stretch of deserted road. With the image comes the question: “The runner who beat you yesterday is training today. What are you doing?” The other poster trumpets the 2012 London Olympics.

Call it what you want—the labor and the fruits, the sacrifice and the glory—but for Susan Randall, this is much of her life right now. As for what she’s doing:

After waking in the wee hours, she reports to a local Target store in Beaver Creek where she stocks shelves for 3 to 9 am, after which she heads to the Beaver Creek bike path or maybe the streets of her neighborhood to train, often ending with a 10-kilometer effort, or more.

Following that, there’s a quick nap. Then, with husband Mike, now sitting the hours, she might end up on a ladder with a hammer or in the kitchen preparing something for her budding catering business. She’ll also spend time on the Internet trying to connect with her 19-year-old son John, who just was sent to Kuwait with the U.S. Air Force.

Come mid-afternoon, she goes to the Fairborn High School track for a two-hour second workout. Once back home in the evening she takes a last look at those two posters and falls into bed, only to repeat the whole routine a few hours later.

The 37-year-old Beaver Creek mother is one of the elite racewalkers in the US. She has competed all over the world, including this past March at the European Cup in Lugano, Switzerland. Two weeks from now she’s entered in the 10 Km National Championships in Albany, New York. The, following three weeks of altitude training in Colorado Springs, Colorado, she’ll go to Eugene, Oregon for the July 120 Km race at the U.S. Olympic Trials and her bid to make the London Games.

While she’s an outside shot at making the team (she was rated ninth in the nation early-season rankings), she has had several strong races this year and clocked a career-best of 1:42:47 in Switzerland. But more importantly—and the real story of Susan Randall—is that she has beaten far longer odds than this.

“It’s really an amazing story,” Mike said as he watched his 4-ft-10, 105-pound wife quick step it around the Fairborn track the other evening. “It’s one of those American dream stories. And it’s proof that anybody who is truly determined to something can do it.”

A little over seven years ago, Susan had never even seen a racewalker, much less tried it. And 11 years ago, she still was living in China, working 10 hours a day, six days a week at a telecom company. Unmarried and with one son in a country with a one-child per-family law and, she says, many men not open to the idea of adopting someone else’s child, she didn’t see much hope for having a family life or a future.

Susan grew up on the outskirts of Guangzhou, a city of 13 million people on the Pearl River in Southern China. “Those early years for her, it was tough,” Mike said. “They had no running water so she would have to schlep water down a hillside every day in buckets. They had to go to the bathroom in a building down the block. Eventually, they moved more into the heart of the city and things got better.” Her dad drove a delivery truck, her mom worked at a telecom company. Unmarried and with one son in a country with a one-child per-family law and, she says, many men not open to the idea of adopting someone else’s child, she didn’t see much hope for having a family life or a future.

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"I was doing all kinds of Internet programming for various companies, she was working for China Telecom and we met online," Mike said. "She invited me to visit, and I did and we had a great time." After that initial visit in February 2001, she invited him back five months later.

"I like to joke I went back and she informed me we were getting married," he laughed. "I was looking for an independent woman, a self-thinker, but also someone who wanted to be part of a family and someone who would like to be taken care of, too. And that seemed to be her. There was something about her. We just clicked. So, finally we went on a beautiful cruise at night on the Pearl River. With the lights and everything, it was just very romantic and I had practiced a week to propose perfectly in Chinese. After I finished, she just says "OK!"

Mike finally brought her back to the U.S. in late September 2001 and they married that November in Beaver Creek. The arrangements were tough at first for Susan, who was trying to learn a new language, new kinds of food to eat and a new culture, all while answering to a strange new name.

When she took an English class in China, instructors gave all the students American names. "They said, 'now about Susan? and I said: OK,'" she shrugged.

And then there was the embrace of married life to a man she barely knew. "I was doing triathlons back then and, in fact, just a week after we married we spent our honeymoon in Florida where I did the Ironman," Mike laughed.

"Watching us go through all that I figured she had to be wondering, 'What kind of crazy man did I marry? But that was when he discovered just what a "self-thinker" his new wife really was. Although she didn't swim, she soon was doing triathlons, which are similar to triathlons, except there is running, cycling, and then running again. "She's smart and adventurous," Mike beamed. "She's quite a woman."

The adventure took another turn in 2005 when Susan took her son--who eventually became a triathlete--with her to the National 50 K on Long Island. It took him a struggling 5:25:30. The next two spots went to Canadians Felix Cappella and Bill Grandy in just over 5:40. Johnny Abbate and Dave Lakritz, well into the master's category (which wasn't even a category in those ancient days) were the only others able to better 6 hours as the heat took a tremendous toll. It was also very hot in Chicago where Ron Zinn won the National 10 K in 47:54 on the Stagg Field track. Following were Jack Mortland (48:51), John Allen (48:56), Jack Blackburn (49:51), and Cappella (49:53). The Ohio Track Club grabbed the team title (hurrah!)

And you take down the London poster and put up one for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

LOOKING BACK

50 Years Ago (From the June 1962 American Race Walker, published by Chris McCarthy in Chicago)--Under a blazing sun that brought the temperatures into the low 90s, Ron Laird was one of the few survivors in the National 50 K on Long Island. It took him a struggling 5:25:30. The next two spots went to Canadians Felix Cappella and Bill Grandy in over 5:40. Johnny Abbate and Dave Lakritz, well into the master's category (which wasn't even a category in those ancient days) were the only others able to better 6 hours as the heat took a tremendous toll. It was also very hot in Chicago where Ron Zinn won the National 10 K in 47:54 on the Stagg Field track. Following were Jack Mortland (48:51), John Allen (48:56), Jack Blackburn (49:51), and Cappella (49:53). The Ohio Track Club grabbed the team title (hurrah!)

45 Years Ago (From the June 1967 ORW)--This time temperatures only reached the low 80s as Larry Young won the National 50 K in Chicago. His 4:33 effort left Goetz Klopfer 11 minutes behind. Ron Laird was third, just under 4:49, with Ron Kulik another 4 minutes behind. The Athens AC, from the SF Bay area, won the team title. Laird got the best of Young in the National 2 Mile, winning in 13:41. Larry had 14:07, just ahead of Don DeNeon. Next were Larry Walker, Ron Daniel, and Tom Dooley. In an earlier race, DeNeon did 3 K in 12:39.4 to better Laird's American record and beat Ron in the process.

40 Years Ago (From the June 1972 ORW)--Dave Romansky covered 8 miles 80 yards to win the National 1 Hour Championship in Lawrenceville, N.J. Jim Knifton was 374 yards back, with Ron Daniel and Steve Hayden going past 7 3/4 miles. Larry Young won national titles at both 5 and 10 K. In Chicago, he beat Tom Dooley by 21 seconds in the 10 doing it in 44:51. Jerry Brown, Floyd Godwin, and Steve Hayden followed. In the 5 in Seattle, Young's 21:39.8 left Bill Ramsey 50 seconds back with Todd Scully third. Laurie Tucholski walked an American record 7:50.4 for 1 Mile in Dayton, beating former record holder Lynn Olsen.

ORW Editor Jack Mortland threw in final laps of 1:54 and 1:50 to win a track 7 miles in 55:20 with Jack Blackburn second.

35 Years Ago (From the June 1977 ORW)--Junior Marcos Castro overcame Todd Scully in the final 5 K to win the U.S. 20 K title race in Seattle with 1:30:05. Scully was 31 seconds ahead as he passed 5:106:29, but he faded just as Castro accelerated and was 30 seconds behind at the finish. Neal Pyke was third in 1:31:29, with two other Mexican juniors, one named Ernesto Canto (a World and Olympic champion to be), in the next two spots. The real Mexicans were on the track in Bergen Norway, where Daniel Bautista set a World Record for 20 K in 1:23:52. Domingo Colin and Raul Gonzalez also bettered the former record and Angel Flores missed it by less than a minute. The Mexican onslaught continued the next day with Enrique Vera taking Bernd Kannenberg's World Record for 50 K down to 3:56:38. Kanenberg also held the 20 K record. Jim Heiring won the NAIA 10 K in 44:42, more than a minute and a half up on Erik Schuler. . .Neal Pyke did 8 miles 240 yards in a one-hour race. Sue Brodock won U.S. titles at 5 Km (24:10) and 10 Km (51:17).

30 Years Ago (From the June 1982 ORW)--Jim Heiring was an easy winner in the National 20 K, held in Knoxville, Tenn. Jim's 1:30:22 put him 2:08 ahead of Ray Sharp at the finish.
first 10 of the men's race in 44:47, a second behind John Nunn, with five others within 20 seconds. A 21:09 by Seaman on the third 5 settled the issue and he closed with a 21:05, finishing 1:16 ahead of Al Hepner (1:27:59.62). Kevin Eastler was third in 1:28:35.68, followed by Philip Dunn (1:28:59.62), Curt Clausen (1:29:33), Nunn (1:30:19), Sean Albert (1:30:42), and Matt Boyles (1:32:36). National Junior 10 Km titles went to Ben Shoresy (42:50:21) and Robyn Stevens (50:29.32). The National 15 Km was won by John Nunn in 1:06:49 with Al Hepner second in 1:09:43. Amber Antonia won the women's race in 1:14:15. The Russian 20 Km went to Victor Burayev in 1:20:41, 13 seconds ahead of Vladimir Andreev. Twelve were under 1:25, with six of them under 1:22. Elena Nikoleva won the women's title in 1:27:02, 50 seconds ahead of Lyudmila Efimkina. There were eight walkers under 1:30. Ecuador's Jefferson Perez walked a 1:19:08 for 20 in Germany and Robert Korzeniowski won the Polish title in 1:20:54.

5 Years Ago (From the June 2007 ORW)-National 20 Km titles went to Kevin Eastler and Teresa Vaill in 1:26:43.28 and 1:27:28.70, respectively. In the men's race Eastler easily handled five-time winner Tim Seaman who finished second in 1:28:17.82 with Matt Boyles third in 1:28:17.82. John Nunn, Patrick Stroupe, and Michael Tarantino followed. Vaill also received little challenge with Jolene Moore nearly 2 minutes back in second (1:39:24.14). Sam Cohen was third and Maria Michita fourth. Junior 10 Km titles went to Roberto Vergara in 1:18:50, 25 seconds ahead of Yucheng Han of China. Australia's Nathan Deakes was third in 1:19:34. Eastler and Seaman had impressive races in twelfth and thirteenth places with 1:22:56 and 1:23:38... 

FLASH!

Last minute news from a Michigan newspaper report dated June 22 before I take this to the printer:

A Clarkston man who is a former Olympic racewalker is recuperating after falling more than 500 feet down Mt. Hood in Oregon. Gary Morgan, 52, suffered a hip injury and abrasions in his solo climb. He was at roughly the 10,000-foot level on the 11,239-foot mountain when he fell Thursday.

In an e-mail on Monday, June 25, Vince Peters noted: "Gary Morgan was seen maneuvering very slowly on crutches today (Sunday) at the Olympic Trials after surviving his 500-foot fall."

So, bad news followed by good news. And to the Michigan newspaper, there are no former Olympians—once an Olympian always an Olympian!