World 50 Km Record at European Championships

Zurich, Switzerland.—In the final racewalking event at the European T&F Championships, France's Yohann Diniz shattered the world record. Leaving the Czech Republic's Matej Toth nearly 4 minutes in his wake, Diniz came home in 3:32:33, breaking Denis Nizhegorodov's six-year old record of 3:34:14.

The 36-year-old Frenchmen made his decisive move between kilometers 36 and 38, finally breaking clear of Russia's Mikhail Ryzhov who had been trading the lead with him. Diniz had to battle wet streets and heavy early morning rains to claim the victory and the record.

Ryzhov, a world silver medalist last year behind Ireland's Robert Heffernan, eventually paid for his boldness as he slipped out of the medal place--Toth coming through for the silver in 3:36:21 and Ryzhov's teammate, Ivan Noskov coming third another 20 seconds back--nearly a minute-and-a-half behind Noskov.

Diniz hits the tape, a champion and world record holder. (Getty Images)
triumphed in last year's World Championships in Moscow, Russia's Alexander Ivanov.

seconds separated the first four at the finish. To do so, the 26-year old beat the man who

male 20

year was third at the IAAF World Racewalking cup. "I had enough strength to accelerate and

"When I saw Drahotova 70 meters behind me, it gave me some confidence and I was almost sure

Diniz carried both the French and Portuguese flags across the finish line, the latter in honor of

Angel Garcia. At age 44, the 1993 World Champion was competing in his sixth European

Diniz -led at 20 in 1:26:55. At 30, after a 42:25, Ryzhov had established a six second lead, going through in 2:09:20. When Diniz dropped under 42 minutes for the

fourth IO (41:21). That he

Diniz by a whisker. They were given the same time-1:19:46.

The four had broken sway in the second half of the race, with Lopez, Ivanov, and

Dmytrenko taking turns in the lead, but Strelkov had enough in reserve to snatch the bronze

from the Ukrainian.

The top four finishers are already in control. The lead four from left are Dmytrenko, Giorgio Rubino of Italy, Lopez, and Ivanov with Strelkov (I believe) on

Ivanov's shoulder. (Getty Images)

Matsunaga Captures World Junior Title

Eugene, Oregon, July 25—Japan’s Daisuke Matsunaga lived up to his pre-race favorite status by walking off with a World Junior title at 10,000 meters. In the process he took down the championship record of 33:55.01 set by Russia’s Stanislav Yemelyanov in 2008. Matsunaga finished in 33:59.19. (We reported on the Women’s 10,000 last month.)

Matsunaga, who was second in the World Cup in May, led from the start, and by the time he reached the first KI mark in 3:54.07 he was in front by 55 meters. Walking sub-four-minute kilometers throughout most of the race (he missed by second or two on the seventh and ninth), he went on to win by nearly 100 meters.

Behind him a group of five pulled clear of the rest shortly after the half-way mark. With 4 km to go, Spain’s Diego Garcia made a move that carried him to the silver medal and left three other to battle for the final medal. At the finish, Ecuador’s Brian Pinto added to his bronze only to learn he had been DQ’d leaving Peru’s Paolo Yurivilca a surprised medal winner.


NACAC Under 23 Championships, Kamloops, B.C., Canada, Aug. 10- Men's 20,000 meters-1. Benjamin Thorne, Canada 1:29:08.64 2. Emmanuel Corvera, USA 1:31:30.86 3. Alejandro Chavez, USA 1:33:26.31 Women's 10,000-1. Andreia Bonilzes, Dominican Republic 52:12.40 2. Molly Josephs, USA 55:48.23 ) After the race, Corvera noted: "I went out there and I was doing some laps at about 1:49 and I thought I would try to keep the 1:49 every lap and pretty much did that. I just tried to come out here and just have fun because I know 20K is a lot to be worrying about, so I need to just do what I do. We do it in training, so it's just another day to push it harder. I didn't think I would be getting this far. I have only been racewalking for about a year and a half now. It's a blessing to say the least."

Ibero-American Championships, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Aug. 1-2: Women's 10 Km: 1. Julin
Heffernan head wrecked by Diniz's record pace

By Feidlim Kelly

The best laid plans of mice and men oft go awry. Robert Heffernan had only one plan in the 50 Km race walk on the streets of Zurich yesterday: to win gold. When he saw that goal slipping from view at the half way point—as Frenchman Johann Diniz churned out a world record pace—his race soon began to unravel. His spirit broken, Heffernan stepped off the course at the 47 km mark. "I feel as if I was beaten up," said a disconsolate Heffernan. "I was just broken. It broke my spirit, it broke me mentally. I didn't have the same feeling when I came through in Barcelona and in London and Moscow. All the control was taken away from me."

The two Russians, Ivan Noskov and Mikhail Ryzhov, set out on a fast early pace with Diniz in hot pursuit as Heffernan expected. "I knew they were going to go out and Yohann too. I predicted that," said Heffernan, who thought it was playing into his hands. What he couldn't have predicted was that Diniz would split km times of 4:16 and then up that pace again to 4:06—eventually recording a new world record of 3:32:33.

To put the Frenchman's record into perspective, he was operating at 6:50 per mile pace—2:59:22 for the marathon. "When I heard he was dropping 4:06 a kilometer and he wasn't slowing up, I knew the gold was gone," said Heffernan. "My tactics were wrong," he said. "My tactics were wrong mentally as well. If I approached the race differently and I wanted to do it my own way maybe I'd have come through. Obviously, I wouldn't have won today because there is nothing you can do when somebody walks 3:32 and I wasn't capable of that."

"I didn't want third," he said with his retrospective bronze from the European championship in Barcelona in the way. "Even when I was in third it didn't appeal to me. When I was told (a couple of weeks ago) I had the medal from Barcelona that box wasn't ticked."

"The 50 Km race walk is a grueling event and a constant battle with the mind. It has made many a strong man crumble. Diniz has been where Heffernan was yesterday. At the Beijing Olympics in 2008 he dropped out. At the World Championships in Berlin in 2009 he cracked and finished back in 12th."

Let's Go Racing

Sun. Sept. 14  USATF 30 Km and Junior 20 Km, Valley Cottage, NY (K)  Florida 300 and 1500 meters, Plantation (B)
Sun. Sept. 21  Michigan 1 Hour, Berkley (F)
Sun. Sept. 28  Midwest 10,000 meters, Wauwatosa, Wis. (I)
Sun. Oct 5  3000 meters, St. Louis area (H)
Sun. Oct 12  National USATF 40 Km Hour, Ocean Twp., N.J. (A)

From Heel To Toe

The Russian saga continues. Russian walker Stanislav Emelyanov has been stripped of his gold medal from the 20 Km walk at the 2010 European Championships for irregularities in his biological passport. The date given for the start of the sanction was July 26, 2010, the day before Emelyanov won his European gold medal, meaning that result became invalid. The gold passes to second-place Alex Schwazer of Italy, who retired in 2012 after testing positive (So he might not deserve it either.) The Russian Anti-Doping Agency is already investigating the Russian walking team over repeated doping violations, including a two-year ban last month for
Olympic and world champion Elena Lashmanova...

Flash! This just in a day after I typed the above. From the AP: Moscow. The Russian Anti-Doping Agency suspended one of the country's top racewalking officials on Monday in connection with a major doping investigation. Victor Kolesnikov is a director of Russia's racewalking center in the city of Saransk. The center has turned Russia into the dominant power in the sport, but has also seen at least 17 of the athletes banned or suspended for doping. (Ed. Of course Russia was a dominant power in the sport before the center opened.)

Some of the athletes affected include Olympic 20 Km champion Elena Lashmanova banned for two years in June and Stanislav Emelyanov stripped of his 2010 European gold medal last month.

RUSADA said Kolesnikov is accused of “a potential breach of anti-doping rules” but did not provide further details. The agency announced last month it was investigating the Saransk center citing “multiple disqualifications of athletes.” IAAF vice-president Sergei Bubka has said the sport’s governing body is also investigating following an online campaign led by Olympic walking Jared Tallent, who had demanded Russian walking coach Viktor Chegin be banned from the sort over his athletes doping record.

Bubka said on Twitter in June that the IAAF was “looking into” claims of malpractice in the Russian team following Tallent’s campaign. Chegin was removed from the country’s delegation for this month’s European Championships by the Russian Athletics Federation after Lashmanova was banned, but remained in his job and did eventually attend the competition in Zurich.

Chegin has been in charge of all training for more than a decade at the Saransk center, which has been renamed in his honor. (And, speaking of Bubka, let us now return to “From Heel To Toe with an item I had already included. Amazing how this fits together.”)

An Elliott Denman odyssey. Elliott tells me: “I was fortunate to be in Bahamas (in media capacity) for the first edition of the IAAF World Relay Championships (a really superb event) in May. Sergei Bubka (pole vaulter extraordinary and now a candidate for IAAF leadership) was there with the Ukrainian delegation. On press conference day I got the chance to congratulate him on the gold medal performance by Ukraine’s 20 Km at the World Cup of Racewalking two weeks previously in China. So, I said, “Sergei, I think it’s wonderful that a man of your event, where achieving maximum attitude is paramount, is now also a fan of the racewalking center in the city of Saransk. Now he is making them more widely available. The paddles are about 4 X 9 inches, light weight (made of 5mm Baltic birch plywood), with a comfortable handle. The symbols for loss of contact and bent knee are painted black with a yellow background. Each paddle has the same symbol on both sides. The handle is painted black. The DQ paddle is the same size as above. It is painted red and has a black handle. The cost for two caution paddles is $10.00 plus $4.50 for postage within the U.S. The cost for two caution paddles and the DQ paddle is $15.00 plus $4.50 for postage within the U.S. If you are ordering please include an e-mail address so Jerry can let you know when the paddles are finished and are on the way. If you have any question Jerry’s e-mail address is rw2621@yahoo.com. Send check or money order to Gerald Bocci, 1353 Crayton, Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230.

Lou Neishloss, R.I.P.

A note from Elliott Denman accompanying the obituary that follows: “So sorry to hear (so belatedly) of the passing of dear friend, esteemed rival, and friendliest of competitors, Mr. Lou Neishloss, famed member of the great Penn A.C. racewalking teams. I found these details:”

Louis I. Neishloss
November 1, 1926—April 25, 2012

Louis I. Neishloss, Born in Norristown, Pa (graduate of Norristown area high school). Moved to Bristol Twp. In 1976. During his struggle with cancer he died peacefully in bed at the age of 85 on April 25, 2012. He was a WWII veteran serving in the Navy aboard the U.S.S. Brooklyn. After the war he dedicated his life to helping people with disabilities. He is a graduate of Temple University with a degree in therapeutic recreation. He founded the wheelchair sports team “The Central Penn Wheelers” and coached the U.S. National team for the 1968 par-Olympics. He was employed by the state of Pennsylvania at Eastern State School and Hospital in Trevose, working with disabled children and starting various athletic programs, including cross-country, track and field, and weight lifting programs. He was an avid athlete and completed and just missed joining the U.S. Olympic team for race walking. He is survived by his loving wife of 44 years Eugenie W. Neishloss (Kidd). His son David Neishloss and his wife Heather Neishloss, his daughter Anne Neishloss, and his grandson Logan Neishloss.

Elliott’s brief description of Louie is spot on. A joy to know and a joy to race with. I’m not sure he ever “just missed an Olympic team”, but he did finish third in the 1959 50 behind Elliott and Bob Mimm. I think his last race on the national level was in the 1975 40 in Long Branch. Like Elliott, I am sorry to hear so belatedly of his passing but am grateful for the opportunity to recognize his beautiful like during which he gave so much to so many. All who knew him are better for the knowing.

Qualifying times for the 2016 World Cup Trials are: 4:35:00 for the men’s 50; 1:32:00 for the men’s 20; 1:43:30 for the women’s 20; 48:30 for the junior men’s 10; and 53:15 for the junior women’s 10. Also note that beginning in 2016 it will no longer be The World Cup, but the World Team Championships. The IAAF wanted to emphasize the team nature of the event over the individual emphasis. Judges paddles. Effective Jan. 1, 2015, judges paddles must have the same symbol on both sides (as opposed to most current paddles that show contact infraction on one side and bent knee on the other). With this in mind, Jerry Bocci made a new pair of paddles that were used at the Junior Olympics in Des Moines in July. He sold a pair to one of starters there, who sometimes judges racewalks. Now he is making them more widely available. The paddles are about 4 X 9 inches, light weight (made of 5mm Baltic birch plywood), with a comfortable handle. The symbols for loss of contact and bent knee are painted black with a yellow background. Each paddle has the same symbol on both sides. The handle is painted black. The DQ paddle is the same size as above. It is painted red and has a black handle. The cost for two caution paddles is $10.00 plus $4.50 for postage within the U.S. The cost for two caution paddles and the DQ paddle is $15.00 plus $4.50 for postage within the U.S. If you are ordering please include an e-mail address so Jerry can let you know when the paddles are finished and are on the way. If you have any question Jerry’s e-mail address is rw2621@yahoo.com. Send check or money order to Gerald Bocci, 1353 Crayton, Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230.
Jonathan Responds

A recent blog on the internet showed shots from the Euro Championships with many walkers having both feet from the ground and a diatribe about this ridiculous sport. Following is a response from U.S. international racewalker Jonathan Mathews who was on many World Cup, World Championship, and Pan Am Cup teams in the 1990s. Way to go Jonathan.

Magnus Ol, it is wrong to call this cheating. Most elite racewalkers are slightly off the ground. The rule states that a racewalker is in violation of the contact rule when a judge observes this with his/her eye, unaided by a slow-motion video.

Look a little deeper into racewalking. It is one of athletics most impressive events. 20 Km racewalkers maintain the cadence/turnover rate of the finest 800 meter runners, but instead of maintaining this for only 1 minute and 43 seconds, they maintain this high cadence for an hour and 20 minutes. Racewalkers have the highest VO2max among all track athletes. Yes, the best racewalkers are fitter than the best runners, due to the demands imposed by the contact and straight knee rules. The only athletes who have ever tested with higher VO2max than racewalkers are cross country skiers.

There is nothing odd about an athletics event that has highly technical demands, as racewalking does. All of the field events do, and there is judging involved in them, just as there is in racewalking.

Racewalking's greatness is that it demands as much fitness as distance running while demanding the turnover/cadence of a long sprinter and the technical demands of a field-event athlete. Additionally, because racewalkers are often ridiculed by the ignorant, racewalking demands a person with self-confidence and independence. In my country, at the masters level, a large percentage of racewalkers are PhDs, engineers, professors—smart people who are attracted by an athletics event that enables them to achieve peak fitness while embracing the additional challenge of attempting to achieve technical mastery.

News from down under

Long-time reader Bob Steadman, who competed for Canada forty some years ago, then moved to the U.S. for several years before returning to Australia has sent me a couple of items of interest. Long-time subscribers will remember Bob's interesting 'letters' from T.S. Gombojab in Outer Mongolia. His first item is the following article from the Journal of the American Medical Association (so it really isn't news from down under as headlined above).

Walking 400 meters may not seem like a great physical feat, but new research in the Journal of the American Medical Association claims that the ability to walk this distance can predict whether an elderly person will become ill, disabled, or die within six years. Researchers asked 2680 men and women aged 70 to 79 to complete ten 40 meter laps in a corridor-as fast as they could without running. None of the participants had reported any previous difficulty in walking 400 meters, climbing a flight of stairs without resting or performing daily tasks. They were told to stop walking if they experienced fatigue or rapid heart rate. Of the elderly people tested 356 (13 percent) were unable to go the distance, and these people were 95 percent more likely to become disabled in the following six years. Even among those who completed the walk, those in the slowest 25 percent had a three-to four-fold higher risk of death in the following six years than those in the fastest 25 percent.

Bob also sent me the following picture with the following comment. "The attached photo raises the question of judging. Should Mr. Ito have at least one limb on the ground? Probably not, as I doubt that any walker has reached his speed of greater than 20 Km per hour.

Emil Zatopek was the first person to run 20 Km in an hour." He adds: "Until I read your 2012 article on Zatopek, I didn't know that he held the world record in 1956. Only his bout with hepatitis stopped Australia from ever seeing him.

No monkeying around for tour de four-ce

Showing the style that has propelled him to world records, Kenichi "Monkey man" Ito sets the fastest 100m for running on all fours in Tokyo yesterday in 17.47sec. Ito, 30, studies primates' movements by books, videos and frequently visiting the zoo.

Picture: AP

LOOKING BACK

45 Years Ago (From the August 1969 ORW)-Ron Laird won a 10 Km against the West Germans in 44:97 with Tom Dooley coming third in 44:55. Laird also won a 20 Km against the British in 1:30:26 with Goetz Klopfer third in 1:33:16 and Tom Dooley sixth in 1:34:41. Shaul Ladany won both the 10 Km (48:59) and 3 Km (13:35) in the Maccabiah Games.

40 Years Ago (From the August 1974 ORW)-Sue Brodock scored a win in the Women's International 5 Km with a then world's best of 24:16.2. Margaret Simu, Sweden, and Marian Fawkes, Great Britain, were well back in second and third. Come-backing Larry Young captured the National 50 Km in 4:25:41 over John Knifton's 4:30:51. Augie Hirt had 4:42:01, Ron Kulik 4:48:16, Tom Knatt 4:50:21, and Bob Bowman 4:54:20. Jim Murchie won the
January 1999 ORW—The World Championships were conducted in<br>steamy conditions in Seville, Spain. In the 50, Russia’s German Skurygin pulled away from<br>the field early and went on to a nearly 4-minute win in 3:44:23. Ivan Brugnetti, Italy, and<br>Nikolay Matyukhin, Russia, followed. For the USA, Curt Clausen walked a magnificent race,<br>staying with Matyukhin through 38 km before a thigh cramp forced him to back off a bit. Still,<nh>he withstood a challenge by Spain’s Valentin Massana to take fourth in 3:50:55. Two years<br>later, Skurygin was finally disqualified on a doping charge and Curt belatedly got the bronze<br>medal, the first medal for the USA in a World Championship, Olympic Games, or World Cup<br>event since Ron Laird won bronze at 20 km in the 1973 World Cup. Ron also won the bronze<br>at the 1967 World Cup, Larry Young won bronze at 50 km in both the 1968 and 1972<br>Olympics, Joe Pearson won silver at 10 km in the 1920 Olympics, and Richard Remer won a<br>brass at 3000 meters in the 1924 Olympics.) The 20 went to Russia’s Ilya Markov, who led<br>Ecuador’s Jefferson Perez by 45 seconds with his 1:23:34. Alessandro Gandellini of Italy was<br>third. Tim Seaman had 1:35:38 for 24th place. The Chinese women took one-two at 20 km<br>with Hongyu Liu beating Yan Wang by two seconds in 1:30:50. Kerry Saxby-Junna, Australia,<br>was third in 1:31:18. Susan Armenta led the USA with 1:40:20 in 31st place as Joanne Dow<br>DQ’d early in the race. Mexico’s Joel Sanchez won the 50 km race at the Pan American<br>Games in 4:06:51. Philip Dunn (4:13:45) was third and Gary Morgan (4:40:29) fourth for the USA.<br>...Clausen also won the U.S. National 10 km about 3 weeks before the World 50, in<br>43:08.2. Tim Seaman was second in 44:54.

10 Years Ago (From the August 2004 ORW)—In the Olympic Games, Poland’s Robert<br>Korzeniewski won his third straight gold at 50 km with a 3:38:46 effort. He was unchallenged<br>over the final 15 km with Russia’s Denis Nizhegorodov and Aleksey Voyovodin capturing<br>silver and bronze in 3:54:20 and 3:43:34. It was Korzeniewski’s fourth Olympic gold as he<br>also won at 20 in 2000. ...Surprise winner of the women’s 20 was Athanasia Tsoumeleka of<br>the holy nation Greece. Her 1:29:12 left her just four seconds ahead of Russia’s Olimpia<br>Ioannidou with Australia’s Jane Seville another nine seconds back in third. The men’s 20 was<br>also a surprise as Italy’s Ivano Brugnetti, previously a 50 km specialist, beat Spain’s Francisco<br>Fernandez by 5 seconds with his 1:23:34. Alessandro Gandellini of Italy was<br>third. Tim Seaman had 1:35:38 for 24th place. The Chinese women took one-two at 20 km<br>with Hongyu Liu beating Yan Wang by two seconds in 1:30:50. Kerry Saxby-Junna, Australia,<br>was third in 1:31:18. Susan Armenta led the USA with 1:40:20 in 31st place as Joanne Dow<br>DQ’d early in the race. Mexico’s Joel Sanchez won the 50 km race at the Pan American<br>Games in 4:06:51. Philip Dunn (4:13:45) was third and Gary Morgan (4:40:29) fourth for the USA.<br>...Clausen also won the U.S. National 10 km about 3 weeks before the World 50, in<br>43:08.2. Tim Seaman was second in 44:54.

5 Years Ago (From the August 2009 ORW)—The World Championships, held in Berlin, were<br>dominated by Russian walkers. In the men’s 20, Valeriy Borchin (1:23:13) won with<br>Francisco Fernandez by 45 seconds with his 1:23:34. Alessandro Gandellini of Italy was<br>third. Tim Seaman had 1:35:38 for 24th place. The Chinese women took one-two at 20 km<br>with Hongyu Liu beating Yan Wang by two seconds in 1:30:50. Kerry Saxby-Junna, Australia,<br>was third in 1:31:18. Susan Armenta led the USA with 1:40:20 in 31st place as Joanne Dow<br>DQ’d early in the race. Mexico’s Joel Sanchez won the 50 km race at the Pan American<br>Games in 4:06:51. Philip Dunn (4:13:45) was third and Gary Morgan (4:40:29) fourth for the USA.<br>...Clausen also won the U.S. National 10 km about 3 weeks before the World 50, in<br>43:08.2. Tim Seaman was second in 44:54.