

## No Surprises as Rohl, Seaman Rule at Trials

The 2000 Olympic Trials for the 20 Km racewalks, held in Sacramento, presented little drama with Michelle Rohl and Tim Seaman in control all the way to score decisive victories as expected. It will be Michelle's third Olympics (the other two at 10 Km, the former Olympic distance for women), but her first win at the Trials. Her 1:32:39 was 48 seconds off her American record, but she didn't push once she had the race in hand. In second was brand new U.S. citizen Yueling Chen, who won Olympic gold for China in 1992. She pushed Rohl early and then just held off Debbi Lawrence, who relishes the Olympic Trials and joined Rohl as a three-time Olympian. Debbi's first national team was the 1983 World Cup, when she was a mere tyke at age 21. Both Chen and Lawrence proved their ability to rise to the occasion with personal bests (1:33:39 and 1:33:47), the only two in the race to achieve that. Joanne Dow passed Sara Stephenson late in the race to gain the fourth spot, but she was never in contention for the team as the top three separated early. Dow finished in 1:36:15.

As expected, Tim Seaman became the only U.S. qualifier at 20 (barring a miraculous sub 1:23 by someone else in the next few weeks) as he won in 1:25:41, maintaining a comfortable lead from the 3 Km mark on. Kevin Eastler gave it a game effort, but faced the challenge not only of beating Seaman, but also getting under 1:25 (the B standard, which Seaman had already met). Kevin hung close enough to strike had Tim faltered, but dropped away the last couple of kilometers, when Tim extended his lead to nearly a minute. Still, Kevin's 1:26:35 was just 25 seconds over his personal best, closer than anyone else could come on this day. Disappointing for Kevin, but a great effort for him to build on.

The women's race went off at about 11 am on Saturday, July 15. A nice breeze and cloudy skies kept temperature from having much effect on performances. Rohl took the lead immediately at a sub 7:30 per mile pace, with Chen on her heels. Lawrence, knowing third place was good enough (all the leaders had met the A standard before the race), didn't try to challenge them, but neither did she let them get too far away, nor was she letting anyone go around her. At 5 km, Lawrence was about 50 meters in back of the two leaders with Sara Stevenson, Theresa Vaill, Joanne Dow, Jill Zenner, Gretchen Fishman, Sara Standley, Danielle Kirk, and Susan Armenta strung out behind her.

By 10 Km, Rohl was working to separate herself from Chen with Lawrence still within shouting distance. The order behind her was Stevenson, Dow, Standley, Zenner, Fishman, Armenta, and Kirk. As they neared 15 Km, Rohl had opened a 10-second lead on Chen and Lawrence had put considerable distance between herself and Stevenson. The others were in about the same order and that was essentially the way the race finished. Dow caught Stevenson and moved quickly away in the last couple of kilometers and Kirk took the eighth spot from Fishman, but barring disaster to one of the first three, there was no doubt about Olympic berths. With about 3 Km to go, Rohl was 20 seconds ahead of the fading Chen and Lawrence was a full minute ahead of Stevenson, who had Dow on her heels.



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A week later, the men were off on their Olympic quest. Again, heat was not the factor it could have been, although it warmed considerably during the race and a blazing sun beat on the contestants. Ian Whatley took the early lead, but Tim Seaman was right behind him. At 3 km, this pair was joined by Kevin Eastler at 13:04, with Andrew Hermann 4 seconds back. (Curt Clausen did not start the race, concentrating completely on his 50 km effort in Sydney.) The rest of the field was already stringing out with Sean Albert and John Nunn next at 13:25. It was already obvious that a 1:23 A standard was not in the cards, and that few, if any, would get the 1:25 B standard.

Eastler, making a determined effort, was right with Seaman at 5 Km in 21:37, followed by Hermann 21:53, Whatley 21:54, Albert and Nunn at 22:20. Jonathan Matthews, the only one in the race besides Seaman and Hermann with a B standard, was well back at 22:41. Eastler hung with Seaman through 11 km, edging ahead of him at one point. They were nearly a minute ahead of Hermann, who was followed, but not closely, by Albert, Nunn, and Mike Rohl.

Seaman stepped up the pace over the next four kilometers and as he went through 15 km in 64:12 he had a comfortable 29 second lead. Hermann was well back at 64:49, followed by Albert in 66:56, Rohl in 67:50, Nunn in 67:53, and Whatley in 68:39. Tim Seaman backed off a bit over the final 5, but was still able to widen his lead to nearly a minute at the finish. Eastler, though not able to match Seaman's surge, was able to move further ahead of Hermann over the last 5. (My own feeling is that it is unfortunate that we have standards today, particularly as tight as they are, and the first three can no longer celebrate their spot on the Olympic team. The 10 or 20 more walkers that might participate at the Games certainly wouldn't crowd a racewalking course. Oh well, that's another story.) The rest of the field was well back, with Mike Rohl taking the fourth spot in 1:32:23.

Incidentally, I mentioned above "a miraculous sub-1:23 in the next few weeks." My sources tell me that Tim Seaman and Kevin Eastler plan an assault on that barrier in the next few weeks. Tim, as the Trials winner, will still go to Sydney should Kevin make the standard while Tim fails. If they could both go under 1:23, then both go. And if someone else can hang on to them, that person could be on the team, too. We will await the results. But, if they should make it, it won't be a miracle—just the result of much hard work and a very focused effort.

Results of the two races:

**Women, July 15:** 1. Michelle Rohl 1:32:39 2. Yueling Chen 1:22:40 3. Debbi Lawrence 1:33:48 4. Joanne Dow 1:36:17 5. Sara Stevenson 1:37:36 6. Sara Standley 1:38:38 7. Jill Zenner 1:38:54 8. Danielle Kirk 1:40:49 9. Gretchen Eastler Fishman 1:41:24 10. Susan Armenta 1:43:17 11. Amber Antonia 1:43:38 12. Cheryl Rellinger 1:44:14 13. Victoria Herazo 1:45:23 14. Bobbi Chapman 1:45:51 15. Deborah Iden 1:46:19 16. Molly Lavacek 1:46:43 17. Lisa Sonntag 1:47:23 18. Debbie Benton 1:48:14 19. Ali Bahr 1:49:45 20. Lyn Brubaker 1:50:04 21. Heidi Hauch 1:50:36 22. Samantha Cohen 1:50:48 23. Donna Chamberlain 1:50:59 DNF—Theresa Vaill (Herazo, Brubaker, Hauch, and Chamberlain represented the over 40 bunch quite admirably.)

**Men:** 1. Tim Seaman 1:25:41 2. Kevin Eastler 1:26:38 3. Andrew Hermann 1:28:06 4. Michael Rohl 1:32:34 (edging his wife by 5 seconds) 5. Philip Dunn 1:32:39 6. John Nunn 1:32:57 7. Ian Whatley 1:33:28 8. Dave McGovern 1:35:38 9. Jonathan Matthews 1:37:38 10. Matt DeWitt 1:41:57 DNF—Gary Morgan, DQ—Sean Albert

## Other results

**Mass. Senior Games, Springfield, June 9-10:** Men's 1500—1. Brian Savilonis (50-54) 6:54 2. Phil McGaw (50-54) 7:03 3. Tom Knatt (60-64) 7:57 4. Bob Beaudet (65-59) 8:31 5. Charles Mansbach (55-59) 8:53 6. Spencer Parrish (60-64) 9:40 (20 finishers) Women's 1500—1. Margaret Savilonis (50-54) 9:27 2. Ann Montgomery (50-54) 9:38 3. Jeanne Shepardson (65-59) 9:57 4. Fran O'Brien (65-59) 10:09 5. Rachel Beaudet (65-59) 10:11 (19 finishers) 5 Km—1. Brian Savilonis 25:41 2. Phil McGaw 27:52 3. Tom Knatt 28:35 4. Bob Beaudet 31:03 5. Charles Mansbach 31:06 (16 finishers) **5 Km, Cambridge, Mass, July 8—1.** John Costello 29:28 **Eastern Regional 5 Km, New London, Conn., July 9:** Women—1. Maryann Torrellas 25:25.9 2. Anne Favolise 27:07 3. Li Mie Alice tan 27:11 4. Gloria Rawls 28:04 5. Nadya Dmitrov 32:51 Men—1. Greg Dawson 23:46.24 2. Steve Vaitones 25:58 3. Andy Cable 27:50 4. Steve McCullough 30:56 (3 DQs) **Eastern Regional 5 Km, Springfield, Mass., July 15:** Women 1. Maracia Gutsche 28:28 2. Ann Percival (42) 28:44 3. Jean Tenan 29:32 4. Donna Masters 31:06 (10 finishers) Men—1. Bob Keating (53) 24:21 2. Reynaldo Carrazana (42) 24:56 3. Brian Savilonis (50) 25:53 4. David Baldwin (57) 26:23 5. Ken Mattsson 28:54 6. Bob Barrett (66) 29:13 7. Stephen McCullough 29:48 8. Robert Beaudet (67) 31:08 (17 finishers) **3 Km, Alexandria, Virginia, May 14—1.** Vanessa Ryan 15:47.30 Men—1. Bob Ryan (52) 18:36 2. John Gersh (52) 18:41 **3 Km, Alexandria, May 28—1.** Lois Dicker (60) 18:13 Men—1. Alan Price (53) 18:12 2. Michael Schwed (59) 18:16 **5 Km, Miami, May 27—1.** Sara Perry 27:19 Men—1. Rod Vargas 25:45 **5 Km, South Miami, June 3—1.** Rod Vargas 25:42 2. Juan Mora 30:47 Women—1. Marilyn Whipple (50+) 31:15 **Florida USATF 5 Km, Kissimmee, June 4—1.** Steve Renard 25:29 2. John Fredericks (50+) 28:37 3. Paul Johnson (60+) 29:22 Women—1. Sarah Perry 27:28 **North Region 8 Km, Kalamazoo, Mich., June 24—1.** Rod Craig (40+) 39:27.40 2. Dan O'Brien 39:30 3. Pablo Gomez 42:50 3. Richard McGuire (50+) 42:51 5. Leon Jasionowski (55+) 43:20 6. David Dunn 45:57 7. Tish Roberts (50+, 1st woman) 8. Ken Lampar (40+) 48:30 9. Ross Barranco (50+) 48:36 10. Rick Sack (50+) 48:46 11. Stephanie Konsza (40+) 50:06 12. Susan Mora Fassett 50:41 (22 finishers) **National Youth Championships, Decatur, Ill, July 5-9:** Young Men's 3 Km—1. Tristan Ruoss 13:21.74 2. T.C. DeWitt 16:45 (4 finishers, 1 DQ) Intermediate Boy's 3 Km—1. Jonathan Rehling 16:52 Bantam Boy's 1500—1. Eric Lawson 8:43.57 (3 finishers, 1 DQ) Midget Boy's 1500—1. Paul Regul 8:02.77 (e finishers) Youth Boy's 3 Km—1. Eric Regul 19:18 Intermediate Girl's 3 Km—1. Dawn McKay 19:19 (1 DQ) Young Women's 3 Km—1. Tina Mann 19:53 Bantam Girl's 1500—1. Alexandra Bishop 9:06.43 Midget Girl's 1500—1. Christina Peters 8:07.67 2. Amanda Johnson 8:57 3. Tyann Williams 9:07 4. Rachel Travis 9:15 (7 finishers, 1 DQ) Youth Girl's 3 Km—1. Jennifer Reekie 17:18.13 2. Keelin Yenney 17:24 (4 finishers) **10 Km, Denver, June 17—1.** John Tarin (48) 55:48 **5 Km, Evergreen, Col., July 4—1.** Terry Femmer (47) 26:58 2. Sally Richards (47) 27:11 3. Scott Richards (50) 27:43 4. Patty Gehrke 28:04 5. Mike Blanchard 28:27 6. Pat Thrall (50) 30:37 **Western Regional 3 Km, Riverside, Cal., May 21—1.** Heidi Hauch (40+) 1:25:49 2. Margaret Govea 1:28:24 (6 finishers) Men—1. Pedro Santoni (40+) 1:33:23 2. Ed Bouldin (50+) 1:35:10 3. Rick Campbell (50+) 1:35:57 (10 finishers) **5 Km, Van Nuys, Cal., June 24—1.** Stan Chraminski (52) 27:11 2. Daniel Thompson (47) 28:26 3. Pedro Santoni (43) 28:30 Women—1. Yoko Eichel (53) 31:22 **10 Km, same place—1.** Joseph Nieroski 52:24 2. Enrique Camarena (50) 55:32 3. Richard Lenhardt (41) 55:55 (8 finishers, 1 DQ)



Women--1. Margaret Govea 58:19 **5 Km, Los Gatos, Cal., June 10**--1. Ric Holt 23:36 2. Bill Penner (50+) 27:07 (3 finishers, 2 DQs) Women--1. Robyn Stevens 24:49.6 2. Laura Cribbins (40+) 29:17 (7 finishers) **3 Km, Marin, Cal., June 11**--1. Jack Bray 16:25.3 2. Petter Corona 18:24 3. Marge Garner 18:28.1 4. Ann Lee 18:28.3 (19 finishers) **1 Hour, Marin, Cal., July 23**--1. Victoria Herazo 11,383 meters 2. Eric Poulsen 11,217 3. Jack Bray 10,389 4. Shirley Dockstader 9,260 5. Ed Lane 9:146 6. Doris Cassels 9:137 7. Marge Garner 9:136 (These two apparently like to duke it out to the finish. 25 finishers) **3 Km, Seattle, June 3**--1. Stan Chraminski 15:35.3 2. Bob Novak 25:49 3. Bev LaVeck 17:07 3. Bart Kale 17:33 5. Joslyn Slaughter 17:54 **1500, same place**--1. Steve Thompson 8:31.2 2. Joslyn Slaughter 8:53 **2.8 Miles, Seattle, June 10**--1. Stan Chraminski 24:04 2. Bob Novak 24:55 3. Bev LaVeck 16:12 4. Joslyn Slaughter 27:00 **5 Km, Seattle, July 7**--1. Stan Chraminski (52) 26:22.4 2. Bob Novak (51) 27:22 3. Terry Buchanan (51) 30:07 4. Joslyn Slaughter (41) 30:15 5. Bart Kale (44) 30:20 **Masters 5 Km, Eugene, Ore., July 1**--1. Mary Snyder (49) 27:15 2. Bev LaVeck (64) 28:54 3. Kim Miller (40) 29:26 4. Lida Smith (49) 30:27 (12 finishers) Men--1. Rob Frank (47) 26:10 2. Doug Vermeer (46) 27:21 3. Pat Detloff (48) 28:46 4. George Opsahl (58) 29:21 5. John Backlund (60) 29:22 (9 finishers) **1 Mile, Eugene, July 2**--1. Rob Frank 7:50.44 2. Doug Vermeer 8:14 3. John Backlund 9:04 4. George Opsahl 9:07 5. Lida Smith 9:19 6. Darlene Backlund 9:46 (15 finishers, 1 DQ) **20 Km, Vancouver, June 26**--1. Janice McCaffrey 1:35:43 (Canadian record) **20 Km, Etobicoke, Ontario**--1. Arturo Huerta 1:21:02 (Canadian best, bettering Guillaume Leblanc's 1:21 13 from 14 years ago) **Canadian Junior Championships, Montreal, July 15**: Women's 5 Km--1. Kate Brooker 18:15 2. Brigitte Farly 28:35 3. Brione Bruce 28:45 4. Sharon Yen 19:45 Men's 10 Km--1. Jim Heys 49:46 **50 Km, Dublin, Ireland, July 15**--1. Trond Nymark, Norway 3:53:10 2. Peter Tichy, Slovakia 3:57:56 3. Martin Pupis, Slovakia 3:59:13 4. Zoltan Czukur, Hungary 4:01:58 5. Jeff Cassin 4:05:21 6. Chris Cheeseman, Great Britain 4:13:07 (DNF--and check the splits to see why--Robert Heffernan with 1:47:23 at 25, 2:08:57 at 30, and 2:31:19 at 35) **20 Km, same place**--1. Andre Hohne, Germany 1:22:05 2. Kazimer Verkin, Slovakia 1:24:13 3. Nichan Daimer, Germany 1:26:07 4. Milos Babaosky, Slovakia 1:28:41 5. Bobby O'Leary 1:29:55 **Women's 20 Km, same place**--1. Melanie Seeger, Germany 1:32:10 **Women's 10 Km, same place**--1. Gillian O'Sullivan 43:28 **Junior Men's 10 Km, same place**--1. Colin Griffin 44:07 **20 Km, Hildesheim, Germany, July 9**--1. Susana Feitor, Portugal 1:28:19 2. Natalia Fedoskina, Russia 1:28:52 3. Rossella Giordano, Italy 1:29:47 4. Natalia Misyulya, Belarus 1:31:08 5. Teresa Linaraes, Spain 1:31:55 Men--1. Robert Korzeniowski, Poland 1:18:22 2. Eugeny Misyulya, Belarus 1:19:33 3. Marco Giungi, Italy 1:20:19 4. Andrei Makarov, Belarus 1:21:19 5. Giovanni Pericelli, Italy 1:24:25 **5 Km, Warsaw, June 24**--1. Robert Korzeniowski 19:03 2. Tomasz Lipiec 19:28 3. Roman Magdziarczyk 19:35 4. Stanislaw Stosik 20:02 5. Grzegorz Sudol 20:44 5. Grzegorz Muller 20:48 7. Andrzej Chylinski 22:00 **African Championships 20 Km, July 11**--1. Hatem Ghoul, Tunisia 1:25:38 2. Moussa Aouanouk, Algeria 1:25:42 3. Merzak Abbas, Algeria 1:32:37 **30 Km, Melbourne, July 9**--1. Duane Cousins 2:16:08

## Find the place to set your pace in a walking race

Sat. Aug 5 5 Km, Ft. Collins, Col., 8 am (H)  
 Sun. Aug. 6 3 Km, Alexandria, Vir. (J)  
 Metropolitan 3 Km, New York City, 9 am (G)  
 5 Km, Evergreen, Col., 8 am (H)  
 Edmonton International 5, 10, 20 Km and Canada-USA Junior Dual Meet (X)  
 Mon. Aug. 7 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)  
 Aug. 10-13 **USATF Masters Outdoors T&F Championships, Eugene, Oregon**

Sat. Aug. 12 **USATF 10 Km Championships, Men and Women, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. (Y)**  
 5 Km, Greeley, Col., 7:30 am (H)  
 Sun. Aug. 13 5 Km, Cambridge, Mass., 9:30 am (N)  
 2.8 Miles, Seattle, 9 am (C)  
 Mon. Aug. 14 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)  
 Sat. Aug. 19 **USATF Nat. Youth Road Walk Championships, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)**  
 Sun. Aug. 20 5 Km, Denver, 8 am (H)  
 3 Km, Alexandria, Vir. (J)  
**USATF Nat. Youth Road Walk Championships, Yellow Springs, Ohio (M)**  
 Mon. Aug. 21 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)  
 5 Km, Brentwood, L.I., N.Y. (F)  
 Fri. Aug. 25 5 Km, Loveland, Col., 7 pm (H)  
 Sun. Aug. 27 5 Km, Castle Rock, Col., 8 am (H)  
 Mon. Aug. 28 5 Km, Long Branch, N.J., 6:45 pm (A)  
 Sat. Sept. 2 5 Km, Ft. Collins, Col., 7:30 am (H)  
 Sun. Sept. 3 5 Km, Hauppauge, L.I., N.Y., 7 pm (F)  
 5 Km, Boulder, Col., 8 am (H)  
 Mon. Sept. 4 8 Km, Kentfield, Cal. (P)  
 20 Km, Sante Fe, N.M. (W)  
 Sun. Sept. 10 1 Hour, Kentfield, Cal. (P)  
 15 Km, Brighton, Col., 8 am (H)  
 5.2 Mile, Interlaken, N.J., 12 noon (A)  
 3 Km, Miami (Q)  
 5 Km, Cambridge, Mass., 9:30 am (N)  
 5.2 Miles, Interlaken, N.J. (A)  
 4 Miles, Larkspur, Cal., 8:30 am (P)  
 Sat. Sept. 16 **USATF 40 Km, Fort Monmouth, N.J., 8:30 am (A)**  
 Sun. Sept. 17 5 Km, Denver, 8 am (H)  
 10 Km, Oakland, Cal. (R)  
 Sat. Sept. 23 Start of 24 Hour, 100 Miles, Golden, Colorado (Z)  
 5 Km, Morganfield, Kentucky, 8:30 am (BB)  
 Sun. Sept. 24 10 Km, Evansville, Ind. (V)  
 5 Km, Denver, 9 am (H)  
 Sun. Oct. 1 Sacramento 1/2 Marathon (E)  
**National USATF 1 Hour and 2 Hour, Worcester, Mass. (AA)**  
 Jersey Shore Half-Marathon (A)  
 Sat. Oct. 7 1 Hour, Miami (Q)  
 Sun. Oct. 8 1 Hour, Alexandria, Vir. (J)  
 5 Km, Cambridge, Mass., 9:30 am (N)

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## From Heel to Toe

**We lose a friend and a mentor.** A few weeks ago, Dr. John Blackburn died in Flagstaff, Arizona. Doc was largely responsible for the Ohio Track Club becoming a national power in racewalking during the '60s. It was in 1956 or '57 that Doc went to Dayton to watch his son Jack, a successful distance runner at Ohio State, compete in the Ohio AAU meet. In the course of the evening he also saw the 1 Mile walk and decided this was something he could do to improve his fitness. He introduced himself to two legends of Ohio racewalking, Wayne Yarcho and Clair Duckham, and got himself into the sport. As he did with everything he took interest in (which included sports cars, such as Jaguars and MGs, the violin, history, and much else) he immersed himself in the sport, studying the mechanics closely, aided by his medical knowledge. In his mid'40s when he started, he wasn't going to become a national champion, but he did become quite adept. In the spring of 1958, Jack's class schedule didn't allow him to make track practices, so he gave up running and began walking with his dad. Almost immediately, Jack was competitive on the national level. Your editor knew Jack from high school competition, summer all-comers meets, and training together that winter when I was in grad school at OSU. So naturally, they drew me into the sport that summer. Over the next several years, I really had no coach, nor did any of us, but I found much guidance from Doc Blackburn--on technique, medical matters, and life itself. Most of my training was done on the blacktop track he had built outside his home--9.3 laps to the mile. I walked as much as 22 miles on that track. The big Coca-Cola clock, with a sweep second hand, on the front of the carport pushed me with its report of how I was doing at the end of each lap. Forty-five second laps meant a 7 minute mile, 51s a sub-8 minute mile. And there were Doc and Corinn to talk with or commiserate with after I was finished. Doc was a well-respected racewalking judge throughout the country--strict in his interpretation, fair and impartial. He wrote some very well received columns on medical and physiological aspect of our sports in early issues of this newsletter. He spoke out against whatever he saw as hypocrisy in the sport. He supported my career even when I beat his son, but let me know when I was off base in my actions or words. When Doc retired from his practice, he worked for a few years as a state medical examiner, and then, with Corinn, retired to Arizona about 20 years ago. He continued to walk, though not competitively. A couple of years ago he published a Civil War novel, which was a very good read, and had since done a sequel to that book. But as health problems caught up with him, he was unable to go for his walks or to play his violin, or even to devote the effort he wanted to toward

doing a third book. So from his perspective, I am sure the end was welcome. All those who encountered Doc are the better for it and will miss his presence in this world. . . **Let's get Mike to Sydney.** The list of elite walkers that have come out of Mike DeWitt's University of Wisconsin-Parkside and Parkside A.C. programs is overwhelming and includes past Olympians and two members of this year's team--Michelle Rohl and Debbi Lawrence. Mike deserves the opportunity to see this pair compete on the world stage and the North American Racewalking Institute is raising money to enable him to do so, according to founder Elaine Ward. If more money is donated than is needed for this purpose, it will be put in a fund to help Mike develop racewalking in the NAIA collegiate program. As time is short, Elaine requests that you please consider an SOS. Donations made to the Institute are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to NARI, designating the Mike DeWitt Fund, and mail them to NARI, P.O. Box 50312, Pasadena, CA 91115-0312. If you have any questions, call Elaine Ward at 626-441-5459. . . **Whoops.** Speaking of contacts, I goofed on the e-mail address for Roger Burrows on the blurb on the Edmonton International walks in last month's issue. It's probably a little late since the August 6 competition will be just a few days off when you get this, but the correct address is [burro14@uottawa.ca](mailto:burro14@uottawa.ca). I spelled Ottawa "ottowa". **The memory of an elephant.** Many, many, many years ago, Bob Mimm sent me a note urging me to keep Ohio title in the title of this publication, even though it was national in scope. He cited other publications that had fallen by the wayside after changing their titles to something with a more national ring to it. So what do I get a few weeks ago but a note from Bob stating, "I'm glad you took my advice and kept Ohio in your title. As you well know, the publications with American in their titles did not last long." Bob also sent along a little article he had done for the Easy Striders (California) newsletter. Entitled "Racewalk Livewires", it went as follows: "When I first began racewalking in 1955, it was not easy to find competition. National championships were usually held in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and the Ohio region. (Ed. Well, region is better than territory, but I think we are a state.) It is interesting to not that where you find an active racewalk program, you usually find one individual who provides the impetus, hard work, coordination, or whatever else is required to establish and ensure continuation of that program. One name that immediately comes to mind is Elliott Denman. Elliott moved to New Jersey about the time I began racewalking. He became a sports writer, reestablished the "old" Shore A.C., and began promoting races. He has been doing it ever since. New Jersey continues to be an active racewalk areas. Throughout the summer it would not be unusual to find five races in one week. Florida has never been known as a racewalking state. It is now. Bob Fine moved there a few years ago and established a very active program. In the Denver area, the name Bob Carlson stands out. In Seattle, Bev LaVeck. In California, there are several active promoters. Elaine Ward is one who does much more than her share to help keep racewalking growing. Jack Bray, who established the Marin Racewalkers, has one of the liveliest programs in the country. We certainly can't leave California without mentioning our own Jim Coots. He certainly has done much for racewalking and continues to do so. Please allow me to give credit to one more person. A.C. Jaime. Although Dave Gwyn has an active program in Houston, there has never been anything in Texas before as you now find under the direction of Jaime. He operates in the McAllen, Harlingen, Brownsville areas. One of his annual races is advertised as the largest judged racewalk in the country. It probably is. The one year I did it, there must have been over 400 participants. So, if you would like to get involved competitively while traveling in other parts of the country, I would be happy to put in touch with these or other racewalk livewires" That note was really meant for the other newsletter's readers, but since Bob has shared the article, I will share his address: Bob Mimm, 89 Hazelwood Circle, Willingboro, NJ 08046. And I would be interested in more on Jaime's program since I have never seen any results or any notices of races in that area. They should be reported here, but I didn't even know. . . **Walking products.** We reviewed the Jeff Salvage/Gary Westerfield book, *Walk Like An Athlete*, when it came out a couple of years ago. There is now a two-volume video to accompany the book, plus a racewalking t-shirt and a



nutritional supplement "Walk Assist" available. For more information, call 888-Walk123 or visit the [www.racewalk.com](http://www.racewalk.com) website. . **James moving up.** Allen James, 1992 and 1996 Olympic racewalker, has accepted a new position as the Deputy Public Relations Officer for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation, a bureau of the New York State Parks. The move to communications is a huge career step that will give James the opportunity to participate in all facets of one of the finest park systems in the world. This according to the *The Legacy*, the official newsletter of U.S. Olympians. But, I have to note that we have a right good park system here in the Ohio territory, as well. . **Training weekend.** Viisha Sedlak and the American Racewalk Association will conduct a walkers training weekend and AWA walkcoach certification program in Boulder, Col. on Aug. 26 and 27. For further information contact the AWA at PO Box 20491, Boulder, CO 80308, 303-939-9531, FAX 303-938-9536, e-mail: [viisha@americanwalk.org](mailto:viisha@americanwalk.org). . **Racewalking International.** John MacLachlan has resigned as Chairman of the North American Racewalking Institute to form a new organization, Racewalking International, Inc. (RWI). The mission is to further advance racewalking for competition and fitness in the America's, Europe, and Asia. John has been involved with our sport in various capacities for many years, including a term as National Chairman. The new organization plans to further promote the sport in the US by sponsoring four new training centers for young athletes, elite, and masters. On the international scene, they plan to work with representatives of racewalking federations and organizations throughout the world in holding symposiums to advance new techniques and thought regarding training. The first of these is planned for Sydney on September 30, the day after the 50 Km race. It will be hosted by Adidas International B.V. The purpose is to discuss the recent trends and hear the procedures that are proving successful in developing and expanding the interest in racewalking worldwide. The discussion will center on three distinct scenarios: 1. Countries that used to be racewalking dominant, have slipped, and what they are doing now to get back on top. 2. Countries that have not had a strong racewalking past and now are making progress. 3. Countries that have been continuously strong in racewalking and how they continue to attract young athletes and achieve international success. RWI's address is 745 Kelly Drive, Incline Village, Nevada 89451, Call 775-833-2121. FAX: 775-833-2122. E-mail [rw-international@msn.com](mailto:rw-international@msn.com). . **Good pub.** The following interview with Curt Clausen appeared recently on the active-com website.

## An interview with racewalker Curt Clausen

by Travis Hill, Active.com

### *What are you working on now in training?*

Right now I've re-entered a base period. We're kind of viewing this year as two seasons, so we just finished up our first season. We qualified for the Olympics in February, then we did some altitude training and did four races in Europe in April and May. That gave us a chance to see the rest of the competition. Now we've taken a couple of easy weeks. It's like running, in that we have a base period for 6 to 8 weeks and then we'll start doing a little more fine-tuning—faster-than-pace stuff. Right now, I'm doing about 160 km a week. We'll go a little higher than that soon, up to just under 200.

### *With whom are you training?*

My coach is Enrique Pena. He coached the Olympic gold medalist in '96. Fortunately, we were able to get him to come coach the team based here (Olympic Training Center). We have five other men training for racewalking here.

### *How did you get into racewalking?*

I got into it during the summer of seventh grade at the Junior Olympics Track and Field program. I was running summer track; we had a local club in Stevens Point, Wisconsin and I was running the 1500 and 3000. One of the guys from the local university had won a national title in walking. He came out and showed us how to racewalk because it was part of the Junior Olympic program but nobody in our club had even tried it because they had no clue how to. I guess it was just sort of luck that I got into it because it was an endurance event and it meshed well with the distance running. I did it every summer from then on, through high school.

### *You've already qualified for the 50 km in Sydney. Are you going to try to qualify to compete in the Olympic 20 Km this summer, as well?*

Honestly, unless my coach encourages me to do so, I don't see myself doing the 20. I'm going to focus on the 50. The way the U.S. team is set up right now, we have three guys at 50, but because we don't have A standards at 20, we're probably only going to take one athlete. I'm going to go to the Trials and try to win the thing, then probably defer to whoever the next eligible athlete is.

### *How do the two events differ?*

They're entirely different races in a lot of ways, but if trained properly, the same people can do well in either. You see more 20 km races because you can do them more often. But it's kind of weird because the top 20 guys will all say, "Someday, I'm going to try the 50." It's like the marathon, with your 10 km guys saying, "Someday, I'm, going to try the marathon."

### *Who will be your main competition in Sydney? And Americans?*

My teammate Andrew Hermann is walking strong right now, but it's going to take a big breakthrough for him to be up in the lead pack. I think he's capable of it, but he wouldn't be considered a favorite right now. As for the top guys, last year at the World Championships, I finished fourth and there were two Russians and one Italian in front of me, so I'm obviously looking at the Russians and the Italians. But his names often change—in fact, on the Russian team, the guy who finished third at the World Championships (Nikolay Matyukhin) made their Olympic team and the guy who won (German Skurygin) didn't.

They are always competitive and they'll always have a strong team. Mexico has a couple of key athletes—Miguel Rodriguez is their top guy right now. There are a few individuals that you have to look out for, especially Korseniowski from Poland. He's the defending champion and up until last year, he dominated the major events. It's such a wide-open sport and any of a number of people can win.

### *What's it going to take for you to get the gold in Sydney?*

Time-wise, I think it's going to take a sub 3:40, which is a tall order, but with an endurance race, the weather is so critically important for speed, and I think the weather is likely to be good. That means the times are going to be in the top ten of all time. I just foresee those kinds of times based on



early-season results and results from last year. I need to walk sub 3:40 to ensure a medal. It's going to be a challenge, but I'm looking forward to it and I'll be ready. No matter what happens, I want to be competitive. I want to be in the lead pack when the moves start taking place. I want to be able to counter them and challenge for a medal. Based on last year, I know I can do it.

*How long can someone stay competitive in this sport?*

It's like any endurance sport. I think you can stay competitive until your late 30s, even right up to the 40s. The big question is, can you do the amount of training required to be competitive? The top guys in the world are full-time athletes and that's what I am now. I've been full-time since July of '97 and that's what allowed me to move from being one of the best in the U.S. to being one of the best in the world. That's all I do now.

*Talk about technique; what are the major technique rules in racewalking?*

There are two basic rules: Theoretically, you have to keep both feet on the ground and you cannot bend your knee until after your leg passes the support phase. The key to keeping your leg straight is a high toe plant. In other words, make sure your toe is pointed as high into the air as possible and firmly plant your heel into the ground. If you start walking this way, you'll really feel it in your shins—basically, if your shins aren't burning, you're doing it wrong.

*How are walkers penalized for violating these rules?*

The way the penalties work is, basically, three strikes and you're out. We race on a 2 or 2 1/2 km circuit outside of the stadium. We start on the track and go and do a bunch of laps on the course and there will be eight to twelve judges stationed on the course. If three of the judges agree that you've been in violation of either rule at any time during the race, then you are disqualified. It takes three separate violations from three different judges to knock you out of a race.

*How frequent are these violations? Have you ever had one?*

Oh, yeah, I've had violations before. I've been really fortunate lately—last year at the World Championships, I made it through the race without any calls, which was nice because it allowed me to race really well without holding anything back. But the guys who finished second and third had two calls each, one away from being disqualified. The defending champion, Korsiowski, actually got disqualified. So it happens to the best.

*So the lesson from that for new walkers is not to be discouraged if the form doesn't come right away?*

Exactly. It takes time. Walking fast, whether you have the proper technique or not, is great exercise. It's a great workout. Whether you're coming to walking from running because you beat yourself up and need a break on your joints, or whether you're coming from just strolling and want more of a cardio workout from your walks, walking fast is a great workout.

When you want to push the limit and get better results, proper technique is important. So when you go to your first judged race, don't be discouraged if you get DQ'd. Proper form takes time and penalties happen to even the top-level athletes.

*So improving your technique is the way to improve your speed?*

For a beginner, with technique improvement you'll see your times drop dramatically, which is fun. But even on my level it makes a difference. In November of '98, when coach Pena came to the Training Center, we made some fairly simple technical adjustments to my arm carriage, which opened up my hips. I could tell within five days of his arrival that we had made some changes that other coaches had missed. Then less than a year later, I was fourth in the world. I made a change in '98 and I had been doing the sport of 18 years, so there is always room for improvements in your form.

*Have you set goals beyond Sydney?*

Right now, I'm really focused on Sydney and doing everything possible to put myself in a position to medal. If I really think about it, though, I'd like to stick around for 2001, which is a huge year. We have the Walking World Cup, which is our big competition. Then we have the World Championships for track later in the year, and rumor has it we'll have a Goodwill Games late in the year. So there are three big international competitions next year.

I'll make my long-term decisions after 2001. I know physically I'm capable of lasting until 2004, so in the back of my mind, that's an option. But right now, I'm 100 percent focused on the gold in Sydney.

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The following article by Ron Laird appeared in the most recent issue of *Coaches Track & Field Review* (Vol. 73, Issue 2). Printed below is a more up-to-date version reflecting a few revisions Ron has made. When mention of the article appeared on the internet racewalking list, there was some reaction that Ron was not up to date on technique and would be teaching wrong ideas. This was without seeing the article. Others were pleased to see a good description of racewalking brought before track and field coaches. I won't go into all the details of this discussion, but when I brought it to Ron's attention, his response included: "As you know, what I'm trying to teach is the basics of what we are to do with our knees, hips, feet, arms, balance, and effort level." He also noted: "This article went out to 15,000 coaches. You'd think the gurus of U.S. racewalking would be happy the event got the exposure! I hope it will help RW get added to future H.S. and college programs." I myself had added to the internet discussion, before I talked with Ron: "Is it fair to put Ron down with out reference to what he has actually said simply because he is one of the plodding relics of the past who know nothing of what today's quick-striding super athletes are doing. Methinks not. I know things have changed, but let's consider some of what Ron has said and then decide if it is going to in some way contaminate impressionable young athletes and their coaches and lead them down the wrong path. This is not a lengthy, scholarly article going into the nuances of technique. But it does cover the basics, and, I feel, would get someone off on the right foot (or left if they prefer to put that foot forward)—yesterday, today, or even tomorrow, when today's gurus will be plodding relics." I then included some excerpts. Here for you is the entire article and I hope it will be helpful to many. You be the judge.

## Correct Racewalking Technique

by Ron Laird

The key to fast and legal racewalking is correct hip and knee action. The hips must perform a rolling and turning motion. This unique hip movement allows your legs to walk their



fastest and gives you good stride length. Study the drawings and the stripe on the side of the shorts to see how the hips roll and turn back and forth with each step.

The leg must be straight, and stay straight, when the heel of the advancing foot touches the ground. There should be a pulling of the ground back and underneath you with your hamstring and hip muscles. Once your leg is directly under or just behind you, it will bend at the knee and quickly swing forward. Keep your feet close to the ground. Too high a knee swing or any sort of a prancing action can cause loss of contact when racewalking fast. Overstriding while moving quickly is fatiguing and can easily float you up and off the ground enough to be detected by competent racewalk judges. Take steps that are comfortable for your body structure and its present level of fitness.

Your toes and ankles are used to push you straight ahead, not upward. Your feet land along or on top of a straight line with toes pointed directly forward. Keeping your body weight a little to the outside of your foot will help you maintain correct and continual hip roll.

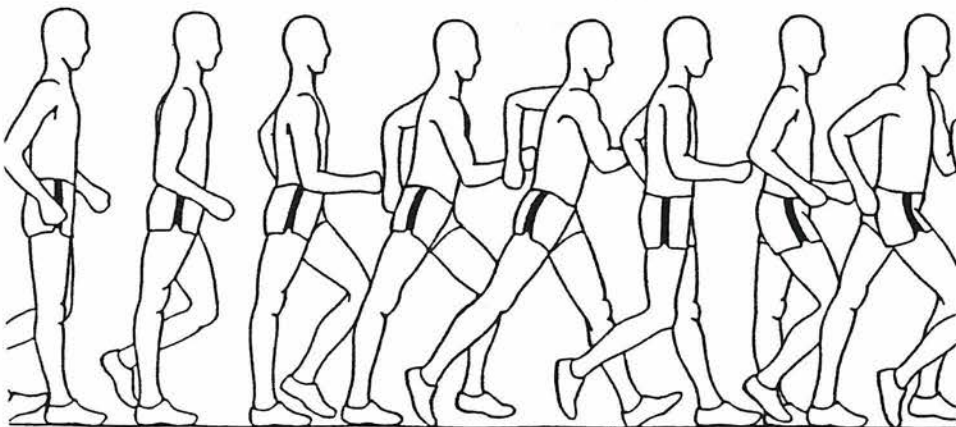
Your arms are held at a 90 degree angle and pumped vigorously. Swing them across your chest a bit to help turn your hips back and forth. Quick arm pumping helps you achieve and maintain quick leg turnover. Try to keep your neck and face relaxed.

Keep your body and head in an upright position. Forward lean needs to come from your ankles, not your waist. Bending at the waist can push your hips out behind you so much that it causes you to use a hiking technique where hip rolling is lost and bent-knee walking replaces correct straight leg action.

Your workouts are the same as those of distance runners except you do them using correct racewalking technique. Since the low-impact steps of racewalking allow you to move safely, quickly, and efficiently, you'll be taking quality workouts without all the pounding to feet and legs that runners constantly endure. The different ways your muscles are worked should feel strange at first, but a lot more comfortable after just a few weeks of conscientious training. Flexibility and strengthening exercises for hips, stomach, and hamstring muscles will always be of specific help. It's normal for beginners to feel soreness in their shins and in the back of their knees until those areas get used to their new way of walking.

Beginners may find it easier to develop correct hip motion and knee straightening by first practicing them with very short steps. It's also helpful during this short step drill to try snapping your knee back as you pull your heel back into the ground.

Whether you are coached or coach yourself, proper technique must always be mastered. Good racing results will require a high level of fitness, efficient and legal technique, and the



discipline to push your pace in training and racing. As with all endurance sports, you will need to develop concentration and learn to tolerate the discomfort that comes from long hard efforts. Be patient and allow yourself to improve gradually. Perseverance is a must.

To repeat, when the leg speed and stride length of a proper hip action are combined with early knee straightening, you have the basics for fast and legal racewalking. Other requirements are vigorous arm pumping, good balance, flexibility, and lots of effort. Correct technique lets you move your legs quickly, but power and stamina must be developed to maintain this leg turnover for long periods of time.

You don't need special equipment, facilities, or training partners to enjoy this beneficial exercise and its cross-training advantages. Even though the unique technique and rules of racewalking may make them seem complicated, it's quite a natural and efficient way to move once you've learned the basics and practiced for a few months. Don't let a feeling of awkwardness discourage you from participating in this challenging Olympic sport.

Since racewalking is a low-impact activity with high fitness benefits, it would be a good addition to high school and college competitive track and physical education programs. These programs would soon be turning out America's future international-class walkers. Racewalking can be used throughout a person's life for fun, fitness, and competition.

Always work on efficient and legal technique no matter how fast or slow you racewalk. This helps time and effort pass quicker and makes you move and look better. Train consistently and wisely and you will achieve satisfying results.

## The judging of racewalking

The purpose of having racewalk judges is to insure the fairness of the competition for all walkers. There are only two things the judges of racewalking look for: apparent foot contact with the ground and straight leg action.

The advancing foot must look like it has contacted the ground before the toes of the rear foot have left the ground. It is during this spread-out, heel-and-toe position that racewalkers break or maintain contact with the ground. When there is loss of contact, the walker illegally gains a few inches through the air with each step.

All judging decisions are made as seen by the unaided (glasses are fine) eye. No camera or video equipment may be used for judging during or after a race. Even though the human eye is not 100 percent perfect to judge a racewalker's contact with the ground, this is the method the sport has decided to use over the years. It has proven to be the most fair and accurate way to control the event.

Bent knees racewalking promotes the use of the large quadracep muscles to help thrust the walker forward and can also cause loss of contact. You want to land with a straight leg, leaving the quadriceps relaxed, and pull the ground back, underneath, and behind you with your hamstring and hip muscles. A strong heel pull as soon as the heel touches should also help to straighten the knee joint. Bent leg quadracep pushing and leaping up and over the ground is what runners do. Racewalkers want to quickly and smoothly pull themselves forward with their large hamstring muscles.

The advancing leg may not land bent at the knee. It must land straight, and stay straight, all the way back to at least the vertical upright position.

When racewalking judges see a competitor in danger of breaking one or both racewalking rules, they call out the violation to the walker and at the same time show a white and black sign. On opposite sides of this sign are the symbols for loss of contact and bent knees. These "in danger of" calls are known as CAUTIONS. Cautions never add up to anything that would ever disqualify a walker from a race.



If a racewalker is obviously losing contact with the ground and/or landing with bent knees, the judge will write a disqualification (WARNING) card on the walker without telling the walker about it. It takes a warning call from three different judges to disqualify a competitor. Only the head judge is allowed to disqualify an illegal walker and he or she does it verbally and with a red sign. When in doubt, the judges are to give the benefit of doubt to the walker.

Racewalking judges are only concerned with knee straightening and what looks like proper contact with the ground. Competitors need to put more mental and physical effort into maintaining correct technique during their fast workouts and races. This will keep them from getting into trouble with the judges.

## Looking Back

**35 Years Ago** (From the July 1965 ORW)—Ron Laird and your editor toured Europe with the U.S. track and field team, starting with a 20 Km race in Kiev, part of a meet in which we had the great privilege of being part of the first losing U.S. men's T&F team. And they threw a long course at us. The Soviet walkers thought it was at least 21 Km, and maybe as much as 21.6. Laird had a quite decent race, finishing third in 1:41:10 behind a 1:39:14 for the winner, Boris Khrolovich. Mortland was terrible, losing contact early and trudging by himself through busy streets to a lonely finish in 1:48:45. In Poland, we had a 3 Km on a cinder track in the midst of beautiful pine forest on the Baltic. After withstanding the opening burst of dozens of eager Poles, who were at a training camp, Laird set an American record of 12:52.4, though some 7 seconds behind the winner Czaplinski. Mortland came third in 13:09. Two days later, a 20 Km from Sztum to Malbork came up short—at least the final 5 Km was 2 to 3 minutes faster than it should have been based on splits through 15. Laird beat Czaplinski this time in 1:29:40 and Mortland was third in 1:34:39. Finally, there was a track 10 Km in Augsburg, W.G. with Laird second in 46:06.2 and Mortland third in 47:57. . . Paul Schell survived temperatures in the high 90s to win the National 40 Km in New Jersey with 4:17:38, ahead of Ron Kulik, Bruce MacDonald, and John Kelly.

**30 Years Ago** (From the July 1970 ORW)—The U.S. defeated Canada in their first dual meet in Toronto with Ron Laird winning the 20 km in 1:35:15 and Dave Romansky the 20 mile in 2:37:21 (both on the track). John Knifton and Ron Daniel completed a U.S. sweep in the metric race. Your editor, called in for emergence duty at the last moment, was well back, but broke 49 on the way for his best 10 km of the year. Romansky dominated the 20 mile, with a 1:34:45 20 km on the way (faster than Laird the day before). Bob Kitchen finished behind Canadian Alex Oakley (see last month's ORW). . . Romansky won the National 40 km in 3:32:29 and Gary Westerfield the National Junior 25 km in 2:12:28. . . The 512 Km Paris-to-Strasbourg race was won in 70:04:50 by Sammy Zaugg.

**25 Years Ago** (From the July 1975 ORW)—John Knifton won the National 10 km in Bridgeport, Conn. in 45:04 on an unseasonably cold and windy day, with Dave Romansky, Ron Daniel, and Bob Kitchen also under 47 minutes. Your editor came tenth in 50:26, but barely beat 50-year-old Bob Mimm for the master's title. . . Todd Scully overcame John Knifton in the final 6 miles to win the National 40 Km in 3:25:30, with Ron Kulik, Ron Daniel, and Tom Knatt following.

**20 Years Ago** (From the July 1980 ORW)—Olympic titles went to Italy's Maurizio Damilano (1:23:35) and the GDR's Hartwig Gauder (3:49:24). Mexican favorites Daniel Bautista (20) and Raul Gonzalez (50) were DQ'd and blew up, respectively. . . With the U.S. not competing in the Olympics because of President Carter's boycott, Marco Evoniuk led our team in a 20 km in Germany with 1:25:51. Dan O'Connor (1:27:53), Jim Heiring (1:28:41), Todd Scully (1:30:09),

and Carl Schueler (1:30:26) followed. Canadian Marcel Jobin won the National 15 Km in 1:08:56, ahead of Ray Sharp.

**15 Years Ago** (From the July 1985 ORW)—Maryanne Torrellas and Tim Lewis both set American records while winning races in a dual T&F meet with West Germany. Maryanne had 22:51.2 for 5 Km and Tim a 40:20.6 for 10. Teresa Vaill (23:23.6) and Marco Evoniuk (41:02.8) were second in the two races. . . Gary Morgan won the National 10 km title in 43:31 at Niagara Falls. Todd Scully (44:35), Ray Funkhouser, and Mel McGinnis followed. . . The National Junior 10 Km went to Curtis Fisher in 47:50, ahead of Paul Schwartzburg's 48:08.

**10 Years Ago** (From the July 1990 ORW)—At Seattle's Goodwill Games, Russia's Nyadzhda Ryashkina broke the world 10 km record with a 41:56.21 on the track. Australia's Kerry Saxby was just a second back with Beate Anders, GDR, third in 42:49. Debbi Lawrence led U.S. walkers with 46:32. Mexico's Ernesto Canto won the 20 km in 1:23:14 ahead of Mikhail Schennikov (1:23:23). . . The National 10 Km went to Curtis Fisher in 42:56, with Gary Morgan (43:23) second and Bob Briggs (44:19) third. Canada's Janice McCaffrey led the women in 47:41. . . At the U.S. Olympic Festival, Debbi Lawrence (46:10.16) beat Sara Standley by more than 2 minutes, with Wendy Sharp third. In the 20 Km, a misplaced cone on the 2.5 km loop shortened the race to a calculated 18.27 km with Carl Schueler winning in 1:18:58, 20 seconds ahead of Allen James, with Curtis Fisher third. Marco Evoniuk won the 50 in 4:17:11 ahead of Dan O'Connor (4:19:28).