

RACE WALK OPPORTUNITIES IN THE USA

By Vince Peters, past National Chairman of Racewalking (last update – August 2014)

mv_tc@sbcglobal.net

(937) 689-4202

Though he isn't an American, and not even a race walker, Steve Cram, the great British distance runner said something extremely relevant, "There is a time when most athletes reach a crossroads in their career. Even the most talented need to realize that success at the highest level requires a new set of parameters in training and attitude and that without devotion - bordering on obsession - the path desired by most remains impossible to find."

Steve Cram was talking about stepping it up to the **next level**.

This is relevant because even if you possess all the knowledge about how to train, and are blessed with the ability to walk with a perfect technique, you cannot get to the next level without a dedication from within. And that dedication can only be accomplished with a single-minded purpose in establishing priorities, managing time, and setting of goals.

For teenagers the first "next level" after obtaining success via USATF Junior Olympics or in a HS program will be to earn a spot on the USA Junior Team. For those already there it should be race walking at the collegiate level. Certainly, for everyone, it is moving into the Open Ranks and competing on one of the numerous USA teams that compete internationally. And someday, certainly in everyone's dreams, lays the attainment of the ultimate level – a walk to the Olympic medal podium.

What does it take to move to the next level?

Dedication, talent and hard work are givens. These are all factors that you, with help from your coach, bring to the table and control. The one factor that comes from outside is **Opportunity**. For without opportunity there isn't anything for your devotion to be focused on. No opportunity – no justification for short or long term goals, no motivation to obtain the next level.

There are five (5) basic opportunities of which I want to make you aware through this letter:

- Collegiate Walking
- The USATF Race Walk Grand Prix Circuit
- Al Heppner College Scholarship
- Major USA National Championships
- International Teams

1) Collegiate Walking

Competitive walking at the collegiate level is an opportunity awaiting all high school age athletes. The hand out "**A Letter To High School T&F Athletes About Race Walking In College**" provides detailed information about the current status of race walk opportunities at the collegiate level. It also provides a large number of contacts for obtaining additional information about the colleges which have race walking as a regular part of their T&F program. There are scholarships available to HS athletes for race walking in college – so consult this document.

How fast a walker must you be to get into the elite field of athletes that compete at the NAIA Collegiate National Track & Field Championships in the race walk? Most top HS walkers are already there.

The 2014 qualifying standards are listed below. This document will be updated with the 2015 standards as soon as they are made available:

RW Qualifying Standards For 2014 Collegiate T&F Nationals				
Race Distance	Men		Women	
	Automatic	Provisional	Automatic	Provisional
INDOORS: 3,000 meters for men & women	14:15.00	15:15.00	16:30.00	17:30.00
OUTDOORS: 5,000m for men & women	24:00.00	25:00.00	27:45.00	28:15.00

2) Race Walk Grand Prix Circuit

The USA Track & Field RW Grand Prix Circuit is a collection of races throughout the year at which an athlete can score points based upon his/her finish in that race. Competition encompasses the entire age spectrum; junior and open men and women, as well as master (over 35) men and women. The top 3 finishers in each category at the end of the year will be recognized by an award. Top three men and women in the open division also receive bonus prize money awards at a season ending recognition ceremony.

The individual events comprising the Grand Prix Circuit are identified in the Composite Schedule for the year. This is available on-line at:

<http://www.usatf.org/Events---Calendar/2014/USA-RW-Grand-Prix.aspx>

While the Junior Division of the circuit doesn't offer any prize money, the open division does. For those athletes who have completed their collegiate eligibility there is just over **\$100,000** in prize money awarded annually in the USA to men and women who race walk. And, if an individual were to win all three major races in one year (indoor 3,000 and outdoor 20k and 50k events), the total amount won would be \$19,000!

3) Al Heppner Scholarship

While not under the precepts of USATF, all college and high school athletes need to know of the existence of the Al Heppner Scholarship. Named in the memory of one of our National team members this scholarship is awarded annually to a college sophomore, junior, or senior who has exhibited excellence in the class room and in race walking. Athletes applying for the scholarship must have completed a 20k race and write an essay about their ambitions within race walking. Deadline for applications is October 1st. The winner is typically announced in early December. For more info go to:

<http://www.narionline.org/nari/Programs/AlHeppner.asp>

This scholarship is typically worth up to \$2,500 to the winner. Past awardees include:

- 2004 – Anne Favoloise, University of Wisconsin - Parkside
- 2005 - Maria Michta, CW Post University, NY
- 2006 - Patrick Stroupe, Central Methodist University, Missouri
- 2007 - Maria Michta, CW Post University, NY
- 2008 - Chris Tegtmeier, Concordia University, Nebraska & Lauren Forgues, University of Phoenix
- 2009 – Chris Tegtmeier, Concordia Univ., Nebraska & Miranda Melville, Univ. of Wis. – Parkside
- 2010 – Katie Burnett, William Penn University, Iowa.
- 2011 - Katie Burnett, William Penn University, Iowa.
- 2012 – Nick Christie, Missouri Baptist, Missouri
- 2013 – Alex Chavez, Missouri Baptist - & - Rachael Tylock, Mansfield University, Pennsylvania

4) Major Domestic Race Walk Competitions in the USA

USA National Indoor Track & Field Championships

The USA Indoor T&F Championships for 2015 are slated for Boston, Massachusetts on February Feb. 27 thru March 1st. The table below illustrates the qualifying standards available to athletes seeking to enter the USA indoor nationals in the 3,000m race walk.

2014 Qualifying Standards:	1 mile	3,000m *	5,000m
Men's 3,000m RW	TBD	12:45.00	22:00.00
Women's 3,000m RW	7:30.00	14:40.00	TBD

- Travel expense money is paid only to the top 4-5 athletes qualifying at the 3,000m distance and the defending champ.

Prize money (2014) is: \$5,000 (1st); \$3,000 (2nd); \$1,500 (3rd); and \$750 (4th). The qualifying window for the 2014 Indoor Nationals was **November 15, 2013 thru February 16, 2014**.

USA Team Competition Selection Races

In alternating years the USA selects its squads for the IAAF World Race Walk Team Championships (even # years) and the Pan American Race Walk Cup (odd # years). In 2015 the Team Competition Selection Races for the USA's PanAm Cup (PAC) team will be hosted by the Shore Athletics Club in Whiting, New Jersey, on Sunday, April 12th. Bids for the 2016 site for selecting the team can still be submitted.

Athletes finishing in the top three overall in the junior men's and women's 10k, and top five overall in the open 20k teams for men and women, with the necessary qualifying time, are named to the team. There are no qualifying times needed to participate in the team selection races. Therefore anyone can compete in the selection races making this annual affair one of the largest and most competitive events held in the USA each year. The table below identifies the times needed to be obtained during the qualifying period to be named to the USA team in 2015 (and the standards established for 2016):

	2015 Pan Am Cup Team Standards			2016 World RW Team Championship Standards		
	Jr. 10k	Sr. 20k	Sr.50k	Jr 10k	Sr. 20k	Sr. 50k
Men's	50:00	1:36:00	4:45:00	48:30	1:32:00	4:35:00
Women's	54:30	1:48:00	-	53:15	1:43:30	-

Note: The IAAF World Race Walk Team Championships have previously been known as the World Race Walk Cup and, before that, the Luguno Cup.

PENN RELAYS

The Olympic Development Race Walks are an annual feature on the final day of the Penn Relays each year. Traditionally held the 4th weekend in April at renowned Franklin Field in downtown Philadelphia, the walks are conducted on the 400m oval at a 5,000m distance for women and 10,000m for men. Stick around after the walks and watch the USA .vs. The World Relays with the other 55,000 fans that pack the stadium. Contact race coordinator Jeff Salvage at <campssalvage2@yahoo.com> for more specifics.

USA National & Junior National Outdoor Track & Field Championships:

A) The **2015 Outdoor T&F National Championships** for junior (15-19) men and women will be at world famous Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon, the weekend of June 25-28. Juniors must be at least 15 years of age and cannot turn 20 in 2015. The athletes will compete at a 10k distance but may qualify for the nationals at their choice of a 3k, 5k or 10k distances on the road or track.

2014 Qualifying Standards:	3k	5k	10k
Junior Men 10k	15:00	26:00	55:00
Junior Women 10k	16:30	28:30	59:45

B) The **2015 Outdoor T&F National Championships** in the 20k Race Walk for senior men and women will be June 25-28 in Eugene, Oregon. Athletes qualify for the 20k nationals via competitions at 5k and 10k as well as the 20k distance. To compete in the open division at 20k you must be at least 17 years of age. **Prize money** (2014) for both men & women in the Open/Senior division is: \$7,000 (1st); \$5,000 (2nd); \$3,000 (3rd); \$2,000 (4th); \$1,000 (5th); \$750 (6th) and \$500 (7th & 8th places).

2014 Qualifying Standards:	5k	10k	20k*
Men's 20k	23:30	48:20	1:39:50
Women 20k	26:00	54:30	1:52:00

➤ Travel expense money is paid to the top 4-5 athletes qualifying at the 20k distance and the defending champ.

C) The **2014 national championships at the 50 kilometer distance** for senior men and women will be held Sunday, December 14, 2014, in Santee, California (near San Diego). **Prize money** is: \$7,000 (1st); \$5,000 (2nd); \$3,000 (3rd); \$2,000 (4th); \$1,000 (5th); \$750 (6th) and \$500 (7th & 8th).

NOTE #1: This event will select the individuals who will compete internationally in 2015 at the PanAm Cup in Chile; Pan Am Games in Toronto, Canada; and the IAAF World T&F Championships in Beijing.

NOTE #2: There is no qualifying standard to enter the USA 50k Nationals in non-Olympic years.

5) International Teams – 2 Year Planning Calendar

There are usually several team opportunities each year. The tables below outline the possibilities:

Opportunities in Odd Numbered Years (2015)					
Division	Team	Date	Distances Contested	Selection Method	Date
U18	World Youth T&F Meet	July	10,000m Boys (16-17) 5,000m Girls (16-17)	USATF Junior Nationals World Youth Trials Meet	June ?
U20 Open	Pan American Cup	May	Jr M&W – 10k (16-19) Open M &W - 20k Open Men only – 50k	Pan American Cup Trials 10k Pan American Cup Trials 20k USA 50k Nationals	April 12, 2015 April 12, 2015 Dec 14, 2014
Juniors (U20)	Junior Pan Am T&F Meet	July/Aug	Jr M&W – 10k (16-19)	USA Junior National T&F Meet	June 27/28
Juniors (U20)	USA – Canada Junior Dual	August	Jr. Men 10k; (16-19) Jr. Women 5k (16-19)	USA Junior Nationals T&F Meet	June 27/28
U23	U23 NAAC Cup (age 20-22) Held with USA-Canada Dual	August	Men 10k; Women 10k	USA T&F Nats or Performance List	June 27/28
Open	World T&F Championships	July/August	Open M &W - 20k Open Men only – 50k	USA T&F Nationals USA 50k Nationals	June 27/28 Dec 14, 2014
Open	Pan Am Games	July/August	Open M &W - 20k Open Men only – 50k	USA T&F Nationals USA 50k Nationals	June 27/28 Dec 14, 2014

Opportunities in Even Numbered Years (2016)					
Division	Team	Date	Distances Competed	Selection Method	Date
U18	World Youth Olympics (every 4 years – 2014, 2018)	TBD	10,000m Boys (16-17) 5,000m Girls (16-17)	USATF Youth Trials	TBD
Juniors Open	World RW Team Champs Saransk, Russia	May'16	Jr M&W – 10k (16-19) Open M &W - 20k Open Men only – 50k	World RW Cup Trials 10k World RW Cup Trials 20k USA National/Olympic Trials 50k	TBD TBD TBD
Juniors (U20)	USA – Canada Junior Dual Vancouver, Can	August 10	Jr. Men 10k; Jr. Women 5k (15-19)	USA Junior Nationals T&F Meet	TBD
U20	IAAF World Junior T&F Meet	July/Aug	Jr M&W – 10k (16-19)	USA Junior National T&F Meet	TBD
U23	U23 NAAC T&F Meet (20-22)	July	Men 20k; Women 10k	USA T&F Nats or Performance List	TBD
Open	Olympic Games (every 4 years – 2012, 2016)	Aug./Sep.	Open M &W - 20k Open Men only – 50k	USA T&F Olympic Trials USA 50k Nationals	TBD

- Note #1: Other events may come up during a calendar year that aren't currently included in the above tables.
- Note #2: Please refer to the USATF Web pages <www.usatf.org> for more information on a specific competition opportunity.

Additional Contact Information

- Dave McGovern (New York) – Vice Chair USATF National RW Committee - RayZwocker@aol.com
- Maryanne Daniel (Connecticut) - Women's RW Development Chair - ctracewalk@sbcglobal.net
- Tim Seaman (California) – Men's RW Development Chair - Tim.Seaman@Olympian.org