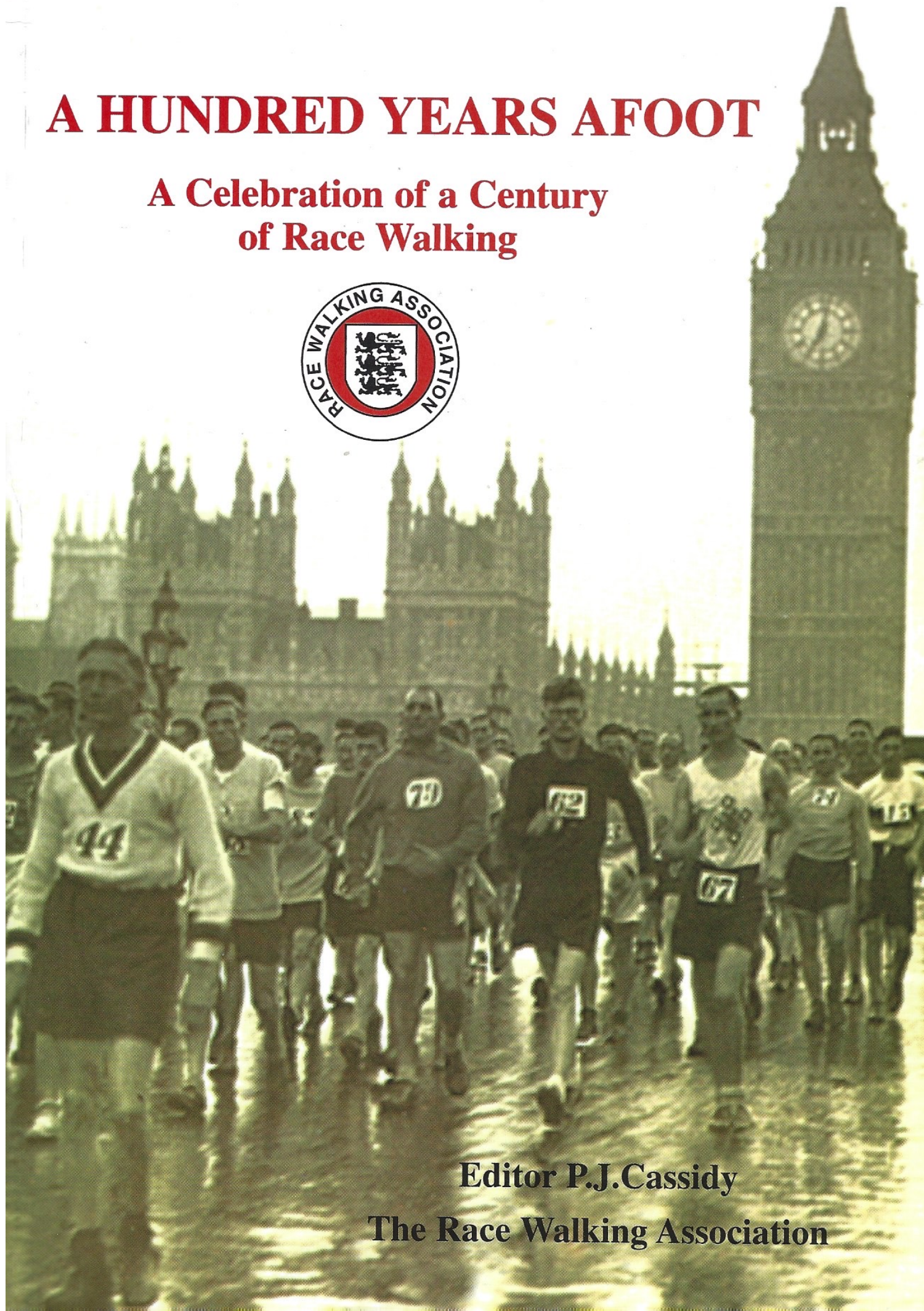


A HUNDRED YEARS AFOOT

**A Celebration of a Century
of Race Walking**

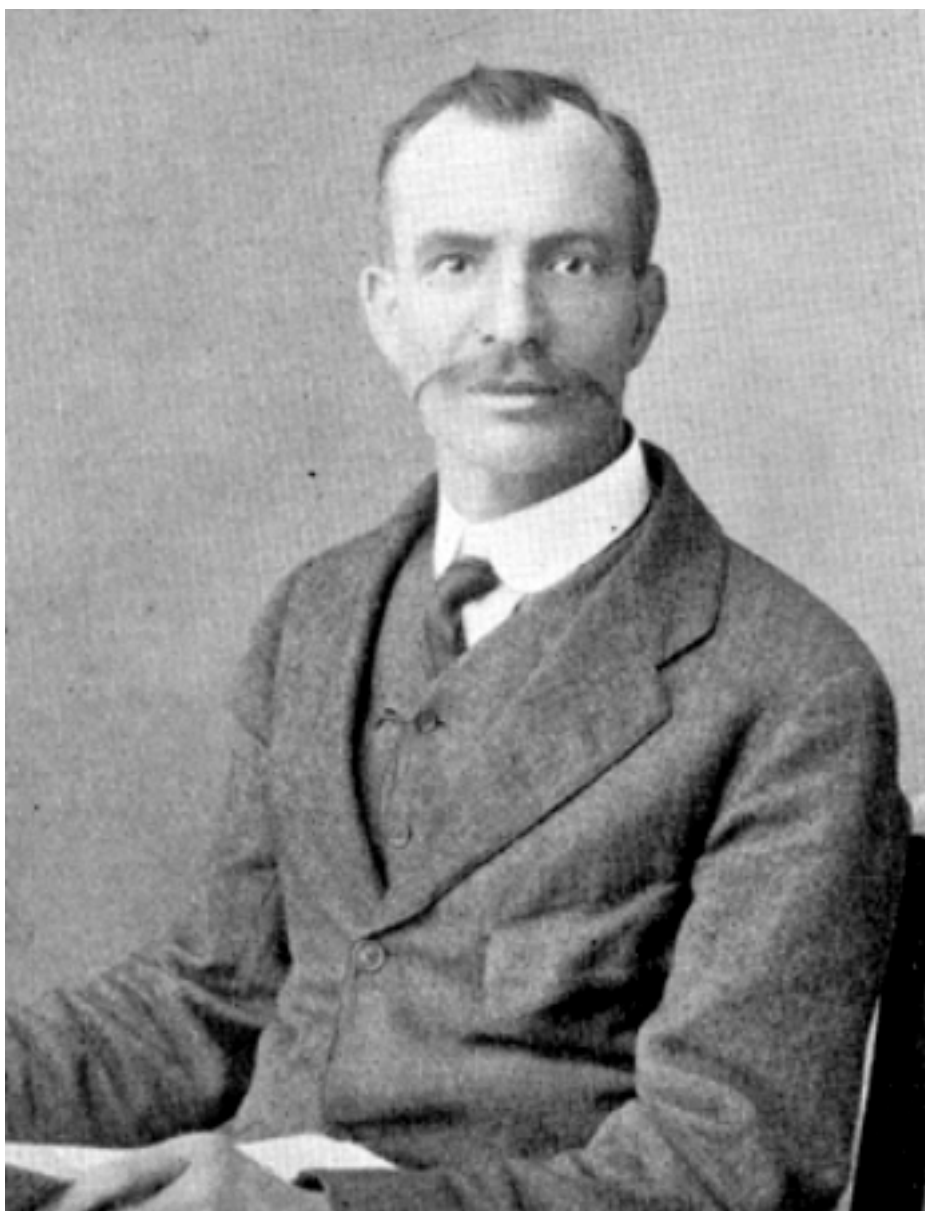


Editor P.J.Cassidy

The Race Walking Association

A HUNDRED YEARS AFOOT

E.W. “TEDDY” KNOTT



First President of the Race Walking Association
1907-1908

A HUNDRED YEARS AFOOT

A CELEBRATION OF A CENTURY OF RACE WALKING



EDITOR

PETER CASSIDY

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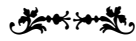
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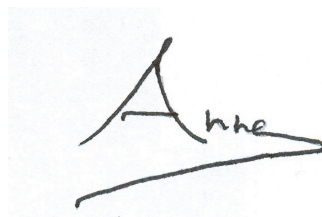
FOREWORD

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

The Race Walking Association, which was the first governing body for its sport anywhere in the world, was formed in 1907 and as President of the British Olympic Association I am pleased to have the opportunity to greet the Association on the occasion of its Centenary.

Walkers, officials and administrators from Great Britain have, during the last century, gained distinction in competition, the admiration of their fellows and the gratitude of many throughout the world for their contribution to the development of the sport. Their past achievements are described in this commemorative book and the current generation continues to work for the good of race walking and to inspire those yet to come.

If British walkers no longer expect the almost automatic victories that once appeared to be their right, it is largely because the rest of the world has learned from their excellent example and applied their successful methods. As President of the British Olympic Association, I am also conscious of the impressive series of medals gained in the Olympic Games by our walkers and of the work done by the Race Walking Association which has ensured the retention of race walking in the Olympic Games.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anne', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL NIHILL, M.B.E.



Centenary President of the Race Walking Association
2006-2007

A GREETING FROM THE CENTENNIAL PRESIDENT

I was very proud to be President once again of the R.W.A., in particular in the year of its Centenary. As we were celebrating one hundred years of our Association, I was celebrating fifty years as a race walker, so for me it was a double celebration.

I would like to go back one hundred years and pay tribute to the pioneers of our sport, two of whom were members of my club – Surrey Walking Club. Teddy Knott, one of the founders of Surrey W.C. in 1899, was the first elected President of our Association, then known as the Southern Counties' Road Walking Association, and Ernest Neville (Centurion No.7) helped draft the rules of the new organisation. I am old enough to have been on Ernest's Christmas card list which in those days, I might add, was a seal of approval.

During its history the R.W.A. has seen many home-grown international stars with gold, silver and bronze medal wins at Olympic, European and Commonwealth Games level, not to mention two Lugano Trophy World Team golds in 1961 and 1963, when we ruled the race walking world.

Who was our greatest walker? In my humble opinion it was Ken Matthews M.B.E., the 1964 Olympic 20k gold medallist. Not only did our athletes rule the world; our officials did likewise and excelled in their international duties. If I were to single out one person who filled the rôle, it would be Harold Whitlock M.B.E., who as an official was respected the world over; Harold was of course the 1936 Berlin Olympic 50k gold medallist. Today we have Peter Marlow, who is well to the fore of world race walking administration; Peter, incidentally, as a race walker was the finest stylist I have ever seen.

My experiences only cover half a century so I can only comment on what I have witnessed, and before I close, I would like to mention two other race walkers who for me have stamped their mark on our sport. Sandra Brown is a most remarkable woman who, a year or so ago, I dubbed as the Number One British lady race walker, and this a lady who is in her mid-fifties. The other, Colin Young, is a true friend and a man who knows more about our sport than anyone. On trips around the world in the past I have often been asked questions about Colin Young before anyone else.

To each and every one of you, enjoy reading about our history and with the memory of London's hosting of the London Olympic Games in 2012 still in our minds, let's see more British race walkers in future line-ups.

Paul Nihill, M.B.E.

PREFACE

A survey of the achievements of an organisation is not an easy work to plan and produce, especially when the organisation in question is one like the Race Walking Association. Over a period of a century, people and subsidiary organisations come and go and memory of them is largely lost. It is only necessary to look at the lists of Champions in the Appendices to see the number of Clubs now gone; no-one nowadays knows much of, for example, Attercliffe W.C., Brighton Railway A.C. or Uxbridge and West Middlesex A.C. Similarly, many of our individual champions and Officers of the past are now just names on a page and all real memory of their achievements has faded.

Large parts of the sport are also now gone, often to be replaced by others. Those once tremendously popular events, formerly at the heart of race walking, the point-to-point races on the road, are now pure history. The modern walker contemplating the London to Brighton, the Manchester to Blackpool, the Plymouth to Dawlish, the Leicester to Skegness or the Barking to Southend would hardly credit that such events could ever have been conceived, never mind actually carried out. The thing works the other way, of course; the pioneers of the early twentieth century, mature gentlemen mostly, would never have supposed that the Association they were launching would one day entertain *Ladies* in its ranks or organise National Championships for Under-13s or that the top walkers would receive cash payments to help them with their training and equipment expenses.

So much of yesterday has gone and so much of today is new that it is difficult to know how to begin – what to include and what to omit. Race walking consists of two strands, the people who have made it and the things that they did, and for this reason the Association's Centenary History has tried to give equal weight to both aspects.

The book presents a series of chapters on *Aspects of Race Walking* and another on *The People of Race Walking*, which aim to cover, within a reasonably-sized volume, as much as possible of what has made race walking in this country what it is today.

The *Aspects* chapters look at the parts of race walking that come to mind in relation to the sport; everyone engaged in walking must be involved in at least some of these things in one way or another and, even where they are not particularly concerned with some individual aspect, it is hoped that they may find a look at that activity to be of interest in helping to understand how we came to be where we are and how we can move forward.

Many people over the last century – and, indeed, before, in the dim “pre-history” of the days when there *was* no R.W.A. – have made contributions in their own ways, whether as distinguished competitors, officers who have helped to develop the formal shape of the Association or workers behind the scenes who have not held office but have nevertheless toiled tirelessly for the good of the sport and of the Association. The *People of Race Walking* chapters give just a glimpse of some of these people, many of whom, particularly those who do not appear in the competitive record books, need to be commemorated before all living memory of them is lost.

Of course, it has not been feasible to cover all possible aspects or to give credit to everyone who has been significant in race walking; the aim has been to produce a book, not a library, and many aspects and people have had to be omitted, not because they are unimportant or uninteresting, but because our resources are limited. We hope, however, that what we have been able to include and the men and women whose achievements we have been able to describe will give our readers a fair and balanced view of a century of race walking.

To appreciate the significance of the *Aspects* and *People*, of course, it is necessary to have an historical perspective and the opening chapters of the book try to provide this, ranging from those earliest and almost inconceivable times before 1907, up to the present, and even looking into the future, for what use is examining the past if it does not teach us how to anticipate and deal with what is yet to come?

This book is a work of many hands, a compendium of the efforts of a large number of people who have undertaken their task for the pure love of our sport and with no thought or prospect of personal gain or benefit. This is as it should be, as it always has been in race walking and as, we hope, it always will be. The individual chapters are attributed to their various authors; where no name is shown, the Editor himself is the author.

What we present here is *not* a formal history of the R.W.A. The reader who seeks the voting figures from when the National 10 Miles Championship was discontinued or who wishes to discover who said what when some great issue of the past was under discussion will not find the answers here. What he *will* find are the “flavour” and “spirit” of what has been, an understanding of what is and the basis to imagine what will be. Like Ebenezer Scrooge with his three Christmas Ghosts, we cannot change the first two but we *can* learn from them and influence the third.

To the pleasure of our readers, to the honour of those, past and present, who have done it because they enjoyed it and wished to serve our sport, and to the prospects of the generations of walkers to follow, this book is respectfully dedicated.

Peter Cassidy
Shenfield,
Essex,
England
August, 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The gratitude of the Editor to all contributors who have written chapters of this book goes without saying, and their individual chapters are here credited by name; where no name is shown, the Editor wrote the chapter in question:

12	Walking in the Midlands	Bill Wright
14	Walking in the South	John Powell
15	Walking in Wales	Jack Thomas
16	Walking in the Isle of Man	Allan Callow
17	Walking in the Channel Islands	Rob Elliott
18	Veterans' Walking	Eric Horwill
19	Women's Walking	John Powell
20	Schools' Walking	Derek Hayward
21	Lasting the Distance	Richard and Sandra Brown
22	Coaching	The late Peter Markham
27	100 Years of Performance Development	Andi Drake

However, many others have also contributed in various ways and our thanks go to the following:

The late Brian Ficken, for access to his large collection of historical material;

Edwin Grocock, for the loan of his late father's scrapbooks;

Hugh W. Innes, for setting an example;

The late John Keown for his research resulting in a number of articles in *Race Walking Record* in the late 1960s and early 1970s;

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Barrie Scorer, for the presentation to the R.W.A. of his grandfather's photograph albums;

Pauline Wilson, for contributing material on the organisation of the R.W.A. and for being our long-suffering critic, proof-reader and indexer.

EDITORIAL NOTES

UNITS

In general in this book, distances and sums of money have been left in the units in use at the times in question. In the hope that our volume may come into the hands of some readers who are too young to remember – or so old that they have forgotten – we give below a couple of notes for the purposes of translation.

MONEY

Before decimalisation of the British monetary system in 1971, the pound (£) was divided into twenty shillings of twelve pence each. Sums of money were written as, for example, £4/5/6 (or £4-5-6 or £4.5.6), to mean “Four pounds, five shillings and sixpence”, normally said as “Four pounds, five and six”. One shilling, written as 1/-, was worth 5p in modern terms and one penny, written 1d, was worth about $\frac{1}{2}$ p. In addition, some amounts of money had their own names: 2/6 (“two and six”) was called “half-a-crown” and had a special coin; £1/1/- was called a guinea, although guinea coins ceased to be current in 1817, when the “sovereign” or £1 was introduced. These units have now gone from normal usage, although one of them lingers in the names of two horse races, the *Thousand Guineas* and the *Two Thousand Guineas*. Sporting gentlemen frequently followed the customs of the turf and laid their wagers in terms of guineas.

DISTANCES

Many distances are still quoted in Imperial Measure, rather than Metric and should present no difficulties. The standard unit was the mile (about 1,609 metres), divided into 1,760 yards. Short-distance races were often quoted in yards, 100, 220, 440, etc., and the English athletic track eventually became standardised at a quarter of a mile (440 yards), which was universally “metricated” into 400 metres (437·4

yards). Hence, the general racing distances worldwide are 200, 400 and 800 metres, instead of the more rational 250, 500 and 1000, although the so-called “metric mile” of 1500 metres (1640 yards) was adopted. The standard walking distances of 20 kilometres (12·4 miles) and 50 kilometres (31·1 miles) seem arbitrary. Note, too, that the popular English track distances of 2 and 7 miles became 3000 metres (1·9 miles) and 10000 metres (6·2 miles) respectively; the standard road distance of 20 miles was variously converted to either 30k or 35k.

TIMES

In earlier ages, the detailed attention to accurate timing that we see today was unknown and the literature is sprinkled with such expressions as “a little under the hour”, “just inside five minutes” and “better than even time”. With the development of reliable and accurate timepieces it became possible to record performances to the second and subsequently even to the fraction of a second. Sometimes the fractions shown by the watch were quarters and sometimes fifths, so that it might be doubted whether a time returned as, say, $11\frac{4}{5}$ seconds was better or worse than one returned as $11\frac{3}{4}$. The introduction in 1862 of Benson’s Chronometer, which deposited a speck of ink on the dial when the button was pressed, while not actually improving the accuracy – in fact, quite possibly making it worse, given the additional complexity of the instrument’s movement – provided a visible record and, moreover, made it easy, by clicking the knob repeatedly, to take a time for each competitor. This came to replace the old reporting system, when the winner’s time alone was taken and the “offsets” of the other competitors were given not in times but in distances judged by eye, something along the lines, for an imaginary one mile walk, of “8 minutes 15 seconds, two yards, five yards, a distance.” Anyone outside the first three was lucky to have his deficit recorded at all.

In our references to early results and performances, which are not always, we must confess, from primary sources – which, in any case, may no longer exist – we have taken the decision to standardise the times in the modern decimal fashion and 11⁴/₅ appears as 11.8. Given the problems involved with early timekeeping, there is a loss of precision but probably no loss of accuracy.

THE PARALLEL STORIES

As we notice in the Bibliography, *Race Walking Record*, owned though it has always been by the Association, has never been inhibited from taking an independent line. It might be thought that the straight historical Chapters, 7 to 11, and those dealing with *Record*, 23 to 26, would cover the same ground; in fact, they cover the same *period*, but while the first set relates what happened the second set reflects the views, opinions and comments – by no means always entirely complimentary to the hierarchy – of the rank and file. Indeed at times it is difficult to believe that the same years are under discussion. We in race walking are in a possibly unique condition; no-one can now readily determine, for example, what the ordinary thrower felt as his area varied between a straight mark on the ground and squares and circles of various sizes, but *Record* frequently allows us to glimpse the thoughts, anger and exasperation of the club walker of the past as his sport struggled to define itself. It is only fair to cover both aspects; after all, the great majority of the walkers of the past century make no appearance in the lists of officers, officials, champions and record-holders; it is only through the pages of our own magazine that we can begin to glimpse what they contributed to the story of our development and what they thought of that development.

COPYRIGHT

In such a work as this, it is almost inevitable that someone's copyright will have been infringed. Much of the original material has been found in periodicals that no longer exist and in books written by long-dead authors and published by now defunct companies. Many of the illustrations, when they do not come from similar sources, exist, so far as we know, only in private collections. In these circumstances, a number of rights may have been trampled upon. Where this has happened, we offer our apologies, invite the owners of such rights to point out to us our transgressions and assure them that our faults were born of ignorance rather than of malice.

As to copyright in the other direction, this book has all the normal legal protection but it was produced for the good of race walking and we shall be content if it is used by its readers to further that good. Reference to it and quotation from it will at least show that it has fulfilled some of the purpose that was in our minds when we began the project.

ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS: AN APPEAL

In the production of such a diverse work as *A Hundred Years Afoot*, written by several different hands, it would be miraculous if no errors were to occur or if the contributors were not to express unfair judgements on people and events of the past. Such occurrences are to be regretted but cannot now be dealt with. However, the Editor would welcome any corrections, which will be filed carefully against the day when, as Innes put it in 1910, "some more skilful pen than mine will fill in my sketch and write the further history of race-walking."

INTRODUCTION

This book commemorates the centenary of the Race Walking Association, the first governing body for its sport anywhere in the world. To be perfectly accurate, as such a work should be, it actually commemorates the inaugural meeting in September, 1907, that saw the birth of what was in its initial form called the Southern Counties' Road Walking Association; however, very quickly the newly formed body's pronouncements were accepted throughout the land – and, indeed, throughout the world – and from 1911 its Championships were opened countrywide, so that it became legally as well as in practice a truly *national* body.

Why, it might be asked, should such a natural action as walking, in which challenges, competitions and wagers had been taking place for a couple of hundred years, have had to wait until the twentieth century to be codified, organised and controlled? Other sports, such as boxing, cricket and horse-racing, had worked for many years under uniform codes and rule books and were all the better for it. Why, then, not walking?

One problem was clearly the question of what walking actually *was*. With most sports, the *object* is obvious – putting the ball into the goal, say, or knocking the wicket down – and the rules of play, generally speaking, lay down the limits to which the participants are allowed to go in achieving that object. We might say that the important part of the rules of any sport is basically a list of fouls and the penalties to be imposed on transgressors. Here was one of the difficulties with walking; what, in a walking race, constituted a “foul”? The penalty was quite clear – disqualification of the offender – but for *what*, exactly?

In his famous book *Race Walking – A Primer of the Sport* (1910), Hugh W. Innes devotes eight pages to the chapter called “Definition of Walking”, including some five paragraphs on whether it should be “heel and

toe” or “toe and heel”. It is an idiosyncratic work in which the author is clearly grinding a few personal axes and the chapter concerned becomes something of a ramble through the dictionaries. He quotes eight of them and would have appealed to a ninth if he had been “able to lay his hand on it”; but for the fact that the letter *W* of the *Oxford English Dictionary* did not appear until the 1920s, he might have run his references into double figures. He concludes, after these learned explorations, by quoting the aphorism of Teddy Knott, the inaugural President of the Association; “It’s so simple. If you’re on the ground, it’s walking; if you’re off the ground, it’s running.”

“Exactly so!” as Innes himself exclaimed, but a century of race walking has seen several attempts to “improve” the definition, including the introduction of the “straight knee when upright” definition, followed by “straight knee from contact until upright”, which is where we are now, and even including attempts both to require straight knees at “some point” after contact and to do away with *contact* altogether, while maintaining the straightness.

Even after a definition had been agreed, there remained the second great difficulty of the sport; how to spot breaches of the rule. Again, decades were spent on improving the standard of judging so that decisions were broadly acceptable to all; when the rule is questionable and not universally agreed upon, the last thing needed is argument about whether its breach – whatever that may involve in the current circumstances – has actually occurred at all.

Innes, it must be remembered, was writing three years *after* the Association’s foundation, when a definition – indeed, several of them – had at least been promulgated, if not entirely approved. Two questions might be asked: “How much difficulty must there have been in the vacuum before 1907?” and “How necessary was the establishment of a body that took it upon itself to bring some order to the chaos of doubt,

argument and recrimination that had previously ruled?”

The answer to the first question is that the difficulty was considerable. In 1887, Montague Shearman, who had been first Honorary Secretary of the A.A.A., wrote “Of Murray’s style (in 1884) we feel great difficulty in speaking. We do not consider him to have been a fair walker in the sense that Merrill and Meek were fair walkers, but, at the same time, we must admit that he never had both feet off the ground together in a race. We....could see that the toe of his hind foot left the ground at exactly the same instant that the heel of his front foot touched it. Upon anything but a perfectly level cinder-track he must have broken into a trot, but did not do so when we saw him walking. He had rather a short stride, with a very great deal of arm action, and to look at his body he seemed to be trotting, not walking. Perhaps we may say that he was not a genuinely fair walker, but was within the received definition.”

Shearman was a barrister – and subsequently a judge – and must have been trained to tell truth from falsity; either a man *was* breaking the law or he was not. When it came to race walking, however, this cast of mind seems to have deserted him, as it had deserted so many others and would continue to in the future. In court he would scarcely have advanced the argument that the accused had not actually committed an offence but looked somehow suspicious and should be locked up. Again, writing of a race between Venn and Webster in 1878, “....we have already stated our opinion that in the succeeding year....both men were running under the nose of the referee of walking....To this day controversy rages about the fairness of Webster’s walking, some

averring that he never walked a yard in his life, and others that he never should have been disqualified. Our own opinion is that....he probably knew how to keep upon the right side of the line drawn by the judges, who only look to the requirement of both feet not being off the ground at the same time.”

The answer to the second question posed above is surely that the establishment of such a body as the S.C.R.W.A. was quite essential. Something clearly had to be done; there was doubt about whether walking should be defined in *absolute* terms – continuous contact with the ground, which, although possibly difficult to determine, was at least a matter of “Yes or No” – or whether it should be regarded as including the *subjective* element of “form” or “shape”, that is, whether a walker should, in some way, “look like a walker”. At times, it had evidently been thought easier to pretend that the problem did not exist, presumably in the hope that it would therefore be made to go away; indeed, the Rules for Competition of the Amateur Athletic Association, promulgated for its first Championships in 1880, made the provision, if that is not too definitive and clear-cut a word, that: “In Walking Races cautions and disqualifications to be left to the discretion of the Judges.” It took some time to improve on this! Some argue, even to this day, that the definition is wrong.

If it had done nothing in a hundred years other than define walking and lay down the levels of competence and impartiality required of the judges, the Race Walking Association would have earned its place in sporting history. It is the purpose of this volume to show how much else the Association *has* achieved and to celebrate that achievement.

PART I

HISTORICAL SURVEY

CHAPTER 1

THE BACKGROUND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ATHLETICS

The English have always been a people keen on their sport, come what may, and for many centuries it was regarded as perfectly normal for the population – nobility, gentry and the common herd – to engage in physical exercise. Sometimes this exercise had some practical object, such as the improvement of bowmanship, when the arrow was the only weapon capable of affecting a foe or a quarry at more than a few yards' distance, sometimes it was for an ancillary benefit, as swimming improved the general health and fitness, and sometimes it was purely for recreation, as various ball-games. The three types might respectively be regarded as practice, training and playing.

Some of these early sports were, of course, more "refined" than others; what have now become known as *field sports* were more suited to the nobility and, in fact, the upper classes, led by the king, took good care to ensure, by enclosing large tracts of land, that the lower orders could not encroach upon their hunting-grounds. At the other end of the scale of gentility, some groups were less restrained in their approach to sport. Apprentices of various trades, who at times lived in something approaching servitude, were much given in their small amount of spare time to sports that were not far removed from slightly formalised hooliganism and in which, perhaps, if any score were ever kept, it would be in terms of broken bones and bloody heads rather than of points and goals.

For tranquillity, of course, the gentle-women of the middle ages were greatly to be commended. In an interesting early nineteenth-century sporting book¹ the author reproduces a fourteenth century engraving of a male and a female, dressed in superior garments, at play. "The....engraving represents a gentleman and

lady playing at hand-ball, and as far as one can judge from the representation, the pastime consisted in merely beating the ball from one to the other." The players are standing about ten feet apart and wear expressions of amiable repose rather than of fierce effort; perhaps, however, it was gentle dalliance rather than sport! The same author reproduces another illustration from the same century showing players of "Club-ball", in which it would appear that a woman is "bowling" to a man who stands ready to hit the ball with what looks like a roughly-shaped club. This game seems rather more competitive, as we show in the notes. Nevertheless, although women evidently *did* play at some sort of sports, their participation and their influence were both marginal and their activities are not much noted.

The oldest organised "sport", in the ordinary modern sense, seems to have been football.² Shearman³ quotes a twelfth-century reference to what appears to be football and by 1314, Edward II felt impelled to issue an edict forbidding the game, which frequently led to breaches of the peace. It did no good, however; it was the king, not the sport, that ceased, for he was deposed and killed in 1327, and in 1349 Edward III, his son, also prohibited it by law, largely because it interfered with archery practice. Richard II, in 1389, promulgated a law prohibiting tennis, football, and other games called coits (i.e., quoits), dice, casting of the stone (effectively shot-putting), kailes (a primitive form of skittles) "and other such importune games". As Henry IV needed to re-enact the law in 1401, it seems that the Englishman would not be denied his organised riot from time to time. (North of the border, James III and James IV had the same kind of problem, but in Scotland golf was as troublesome

as football.⁴) Even the Puritans during the period of the Commonwealth in the seventeenth century failed to prevent football and other riotous games and by 1691 Charles II was able to attend a football match at Kennington Oval without fear of either excessive mayhem or inadvertent regicide.

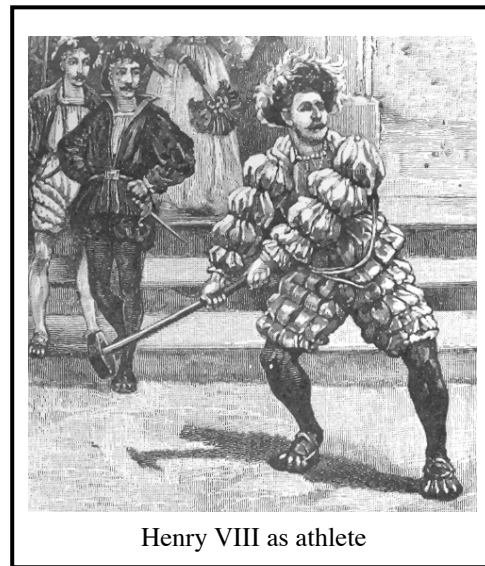
Charles himself, the so-called Merry Monarch, was, in fact, an enthusiast for and patron of sport in general, athletic as well as amorous; he was particularly attached to tennis, although not, it appears, very good at it – and during his reign generalised attempts at suppressing such games were abandoned.⁵

Charles was not the first monarch to enjoy sport personally or to encourage and support it. Even as early as the time of Henry II (1154–1189), the king caused the London apprentices to have open spaces allotted to them near the City for “leaping, wrestling, casting of the stone and playing with the ball”. It is, as Shearman has observed, unlikely that there would be jumping and throwing contests but not running ones. Of course, it is quite conceivable that the spaces were set aside not actually to encourage the apprentices but to keep them out of the way of everyone else. In any event, in the days of chivalry, knightly youths were certainly encouraged to run and jump, largely by way of military training.

It was said of Henry V that he was so good a runner that, accompanied by two of his lords, he was given to catching wild buck with his bare hands in a large park, possibly a record owing more to political expediency than to archival accuracy.

A fillip to athletics was given by Henry VIII who was an enthusiast for weight-putting, leaping, running and “casting the barre”.⁶ While the royal example may well have encouraged participation, athletics still did not win unstinted acclaim; in *Toxophilus* Roger of Ascham indicated that “running, leaping, and quoiting be too vile for scholars.”⁷ As in the tussle over football, the ordinary people did not pay too much attention to the philosophical basis of

athletics. Possibly, in any case, athletics was less riotous than football, because in 1540 an annual Shrove Tuesday football match held in Chester between the shoemakers and drapers was suddenly changed to a foot-race.



Henry VIII as athlete

The illustration, adapted from a late nineteenth century engraving by Stanley Berkeley of “Harry VIII throwing the Hammer” (and a curiously modern-looking implement it is) appears more decorative than strictly authentic; certainly, the courtiers in the background seem to be allowing their devotion to their monarch to overcome any thought of protecting their own safety.

There is plenty of evidence that by Elizabethan times the ordinary people had regular athletic sports meetings, involving running, high and long jump, throwing the hammer and putting the weight. Just as the Puritans had tried to ban the most popular sport, football, so they had also attacked athletics. The regular meetings were usually held at Church Festival times and on Sundays and were therefore seen as obstructions to Godliness; that they were generally held in the local churchyard merely made matters worse. The larger events, sometimes attended with as much disorder as any football match, generally coincided with fairs, which were of major importance in those days as

trading venues. The opposition and moral thundering of the Puritans, even when they were briefly in power, was as fruitless as the legislation of the kings; sport, and athletics in particular, went on and remained popular.

At the time athletic events were not simply informal rough-and-tumble rural carryings-on, either; a contemporary report says, “A butcher of Croydon on December 1, 1653, ran twenty miles from St.Albans to London in less than an hour and a half, and the last four miles so gently that he seemed to meditate, and not to ensult on the conquest, but did make it rather a recreation than a race.”⁸ Although the record may be hopelessly erroneous, in asserting that the runner averaged four-and-a-half-minute miles, it is nevertheless a very early reference to the performance of a run between two fixed points with what we may suppose was a preset target time, since his *precise* time was evidently not regarded as being as important as beating that target.

Athletics was becoming popular and respectable and Samuel Pepys more than once recorded in his diary having watched foot-races between people who were paid to compete, mentioning also that there was heavy betting. Among the runners at these events were a footman and an ex-footman (both servants of noblemen) and the gamblers included the king himself; there, already present, were the three necessary elements of a later pedestrianism – professional competitors, betting and noble patronage. Perhaps a fourth element showed itself, too; in one of the races, the heavily fancied and heavily backed man lost. It could be that the attractive odds offered for his opponent proved too much of a temptation; on the other hand, of course, any athlete might have an off day!⁹

This was the era of the so-called “running footmen”, originally employed by the gentry to run beside their carriages to fend off undesirables and occasionally to forge ahead and alert inns and the like of the approach of custom. The task was not exactly a sprint; even at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Pepys died, five miles an hour was reckoned to be good going for a coach outside the larger towns. By 1784, the

test run of the London to Bristol Mail Coach (during which, one imagines, nothing was allowed to go wrong) took sixteen hours for about 185 miles (a little faster than 11 m.p.h.) and a couple of years later the 600-odd miles to Edinburgh was a journey of sixty hours, and these were the Inter-City expresses of their day, with fresh horses waiting every ten miles.

The private gentleman in his own carriage, as well as travelling at half that speed, could hardly be on the road for more than three or four hours at a time without killing his horses; it was no doubt for the benefit of those valuable beasts and not to save the cheaper footmen, that the journeys were fairly leisurely. Nevertheless, a run of ten or fifteen miles, finishing with a couple of miles at a fair pace to order refreshments, was a duty likely to require some physical ability. It is not to be supposed, of course, that the master spent all his time on the road; conditions were too unpleasant for that, so that the running footman would not be doing his miles *every* day. Between times, he would need to keep himself in trim and his employer would, no doubt, if the man had any particular ability, take the opportunity from time to time to match him against the lackeys of his moneyed acquaintances.

In time, a decent runner could be sure of finding such employment and it was not considered ungentlemanly to entice away a man’s running footman, any more than his cook, his butler or, indeed, his wife. To a buck of the Regency period, they were all fair game; the main difference being that profit was to be made by matching the running footman against those of others and making money either by a stake on the outcome – racing, say for a hundred guineas a side – or by discreet (or not very discreet) gambling, as the reference to Pepys has shown. To the kind of men who would refuse help to a person collapsed in the street because it would spoil the spontaneous gambling on how long it would take him to die, anything was possible.¹⁰

After the time at which the running footmen came to be familiar figures in various races, others, not in the service of gentlemen, also

began to participate, either for agreed stakes or for what could be made on the side from wagers; they were the first of the “pedestrians” and were, in effect, self-employed professional athletes. Some of the gentlemanly patrons of the sport, evidently not to be outdone by their servants, actually participated in events themselves, either running against time or competing against each other. They did not consider themselves to be “pedestrians” because, although there was generally money on it, they did not do it for a living; they were truly “gentleman amateurs”, a status not even affected by their occasionally competing against the “open” professionals. The finances involved were considerable; in 1720, the Duke of Wharton’s running footman, Groves, beat Mr. Diston’s, Phillips, in a four-mile race in eighteen minutes, winning His Grace a thousand guineas. The obvious inaccuracy in either measurement or timing does not detract from the magnitude of the stake.^{11, 12}

Athletics continued to develop in much the same way into the nineteenth century, with a parallel growth of amateur sport taking place at fairs, festivals, wakes and assorted “revels”; these were not confined to men or, indeed, to humans, as there were often donkey and dog races. At the “Hungerford revel” in 1826, the contests included “girls running for smocks” and “racing between old women for a pound of tea”,¹³ while in Sheffield in the same era there were “foot-races (masculine) for a hat and foot-races (feminine) for a chemise”. Interestingly – and rather surprisingly – Webster, in *Athletics of Today*, remarks that “at these fairs and wakes, the ‘gentle’ sex was catered for with such events as running and ‘tossing the barre’”. Almost unnoticed at the time, a Major Mason, the squire of Necton in Norfolk, aiming to bring order and uniformity into such occasions, formed the Necton Guild, recognised by Shearman as the first athletic club in England, and organised properly controlled annual sports meetings which ran from 1819 to at least 1826.

A glimpse is given by Walker (quoted by Webster in his *Great Moments in Sport*) of what the best performers of the early nineteenth century were doing: “A good walker did do 6

miles an hour for one hour on a good road, 12 miles in two hours. Eighteen miles in three hours is a much more doubtful affair, although some are said to have achieved it....pedestrians of the first class will do 40 miles in eight hours, and perhaps 50 in ten.” Informality of going did not necessarily produce great speeds, then!

The two separate branches of athletics – pedestrianism, in which the competition was between professionals, usually with heavy gambling, and the amateur variety, indulged in by ordinary people as an occasional recreation for rather modest prizes – continued in parallel existence throughout the nineteenth century. Towards the middle of that century, matches became popular, in which two independent athletes would compete against each other, each separate match being governed by *Articles of Agreement* specifying the distance, the date, the conditions of racing, the penalties for defaulting and, most importantly, the money at stake. Generally speaking each side would put up the same sum, the winner (or, at any rate, the winner’s backer) taking all, while ancillary profits came from gambles and side bets, such as who would be leading at half way. It was not unknown for the backer of a better performer to find the opposition’s odds so long that it was worth his while to bet on the other man and persuade his own to lose, thus exchanging the hazardous match stake for the more certain income available from betting on a “fix”.

Into the second half of the century, promoters sprang up, not necessarily having an interest in either contestant but making a profit by holding the matches on enclosed “grounds” for which admission fees could be charged and, perhaps, opening a book on the outcome as well. As the promoters were often publicans, with the grounds attached to their houses, there was another useful source of income. In time, the promoters came to donate prizes to attract more entrants; sometimes these were in cash, sometimes in the shape of “Championship” belts and cups. Clearly, with no central organisation or control, anyone could put on a “Championship” and could choose his own distance and conditions; to ensure a “record” and the attendant

publicity, it was a good idea to hold a “Championship” over an odd distance – three-quarters of a mile or one-and-a-half, or an 11-mile walk. These trophies were often very handsome, with values at times up to £50; the entry fees would not often exceed 5/- and were frequently non-existent. The admission fees to the ground might be 6d or 1/- and with some thousands of spectators the promoter was sure of a profit.¹⁴

As the standard working week was then six days – or five-and-a-half if you were lucky – there were, in addition to large-scale weekend events, smaller ones in the evening, suitable for a working man to attend after his day’s labour, and at which he could combine sport, eating and drinking. Some meetings attracted such interest that special trains were run; it was not unknown for stations to be especially opened or to receive additional staffing to deal with the crowds.

There were, naturally, not many top-quality athletes, and consequently they tended to meet again and again, with very similar results, which led to a slight waning of interest. The answer was the handicap race, the various competitors being given starts of distances calculated by an independent handicapper. These handicappers seem to have been men of integrity, making it difficult to “buy” a favourable mark. The answer was the practice of “roping” – borrowed from horse racing – which was walking or running at below the competitor’s real ability; he would lose this time, but his handicap – and his odds for some lucrative gambling on the side – would be much improved for the next competition. No doubt the handicappers were more astute than the athletes gave them credit for; in any case, on an enclosed “ground” it may have become a little too obvious if an athlete was not really trying, although feigning injury in order to lose was not likely to be too difficult.

Given that there were by then increasing numbers of professional athletes competing in specially arranged meetings for money, the men who had previously backed competitors in matches on a one-off basis developed into managers who had “stables” of runners and

walkers under more or less formal contract and who hawked them from “championship” to “championship”, looking for the best offers. The whole industry had become thoroughly professional and commercial and, where a manager “employed” more than one competitor in an event, prior arrangement of the outcome was rather easier. It was also easier for the nominally rival managements to come to agreement between themselves to maximise the profits from the side-bets, etc. If the result of a challenge was known in advance and the two “schools” were going to share the proceeds in any case, it was a matter of indifference – except to the competitors’ pride – what happened on the track. In the end, however, the desire to win seems to have defeated the desire for a certain return from an event and races became more honestly competitive.

The first purpose-built track had been constructed for two-man matches round Lord’s cricket ground in 1837 and by the middle of the century the number available had reached double figures; their surfaces were gravel – or sometimes well-maintained dirt – and their lengths were accurately determined, although the actual size and shape – the latter not necessarily having any symmetry – tended to be arbitrary and to depend upon the space available. Hackney Wick, for example, had a 260 yard track, the New Surrey was 307 yards, the City Ground, Manchester, 807 yards and the Olympian Ground, Bow, 543 yards.¹⁵

Nicholson, in his book *The Professionals*, makes the point that, in the middle of the nineteenth century, “As the population came to terms with life in the industrial concentrations, it began to devise distinctively urban forms of recreation. The games which replaced the field sports of the countryside were fitted into the cramped open spaces between buildings: instead of running in a straight line along a turnpike, you ran round and round a small patch of common land. As communities enlarged and transport improved, complete strangers came to meet on the playing field for the first time ever on any appreciable scale. So a common code of practice was needed and over the next few decades most

sports set up their governing bodies and laid down their laws,” although, as we shall see, walking was much slower off the mark than most other sports. Modern *amateur* athletics as the sport is known today was meanwhile beginning at the Universities; Exeter College, Oxford, held its first meeting in 1850, followed by other colleges there and at Cambridge, the latter establishment holding a full University Sports in 1857, three years before Oxford. Now that athletics was passing to amateurs, it was necessary for it to become properly organised outside the Universities, and Liverpool Athletic Club was founded in 1862. The following year a group of City businessmen, who had been competing at West London Cricket Ground in Brompton, set up the Mincing Lane Athletic Club, and another Club formed in London, the Amateur Athletic Club, was launched in December, 1865, and held its first Championship in March of the following year.

The A.A.C. evidently regarded its meeting as *the* Championships, in which any “gentleman amateur” was eligible to compete. As the programme included a 7 mile walk we should perhaps note here the date of the 23rd March, 1866, the venue of Beaufort House, the name of John Chambers of Cambridge University A.C. and the time of 59:32, as being the record of what may reasonably fairly be regarded as the first English Championship. In fact, as nine of the thirteen competitors were from Cambridge University and two of the others from Oxford University and Eton College, the appeal of the event was not very broad.

Of course, just as earlier promoters of professional contests, as noted above, were fully at liberty to organise “championships” for their own commercial benefit, so there was no reason – as there still is not – why any individual or organization should not invent a championship; no-one could – or can – prevent it.

Apparently alarmed by the new upstart, Mincing Lane A.C., nursing its own visions of grandeur, changed its name to London Athletic Club and started to think somewhat more expansively.

In the early days of clubs and so-called championships, there was much debate over what constituted an amateur. The original A.A.C. definition was along lines familiar today, but by 1868, the definition read: “An amateur is any gentleman who has never competed in an open competition, or for public money, or for admission money, and who has never at any period of his life taught or assisted in the pursuit of athletic exercises as a means of livelihood, or is a mechanic, artisan or labourer.” Athletics was evidently not to be a sport for the working class. It is not entirely impossible that the addition in 1868 of the clause barring those with dirty hands was provoked by the defeat in 1867 of Chambers, a founder of the A.A.C., by J.Farnsworth, a Liverpool barman; the lower orders were in danger of getting above themselves and, unless firmly checked, might well turn out to be better than their “betters”.

Over the next few years, relations between the A.A.C. and the L.A.C. deteriorated to the extent that in 1879 both clubs promoted “championships”, each boycotting the rival event. The A.A.C. meeting had scarcely anyone not from the two Universities and the L.A.C. version had only four competitors who were not members of the Club; on the other hand, the A.A.C. by then barely existed at all as a real Club, the current joke being that it had three members, Chambers, the pony and the roller. (The seven mile walk at the L.A.C. meeting attracted only one entrant, H.Venn, who walked over in 56:10, while the A.A.C. winner was H.Webster in 52:34.5.) It is quite possible that the public at large had very little interest in what was happening, although those who had must have thought the position peculiar if two separate bodies, which after all, were only private clubs, were claiming to organize the *championships*.

This was the culminating act of fifteen years’ ill-considered and ill-planned attempts to become the governing body for amateur athletics. After well over a century with no overall organisation at all, two private clubs, each of them hardly recognising the other’s existence except for purposes of mutual recrimination, were putting themselves up as sole proprietors of *the*

Championships, yet still doing nothing particularly constructive about formalising the government of athletics. It was very clear to those who thought about it that the situation

could not be allowed to continue if any sensible progress were to be made and someone had to take a firm hand and make a real attempt to bring some order to the primæval chaos that reigned.



OXFORD, 1880: THE PROTAGONISTS



Clement Jackson



Bernard Wise



Montague Shearman



Walter Rye

ORDER FROM CHAOS

The situation reached in the politics of athletics by 1879 could evidently not be tolerated; the sport, especially in the Midlands and the North, was becoming popular with the working class and the snobbish élitism of the ex-University athletes was in danger of holding up progress.¹ Ironically, it was three Oxford men, Clement Jackson, Bernhard Wise and Montague Shearman who, with decidedly lukewarm support from their fellow athletes at Cambridge University, called a meeting on the 24th April, 1880, to consider the formation of “an Amateur Athletic Association”.

An earlier attempt to form an “Athletic Association” had foundered. James and William Waddell of the London Athletic Club, as much in pursuit of cutting out the A.A.C. as for the overall benefit of the sport, had come to grief on the perpetual question of amateurism. To try to palliate the northern representatives at the meeting called to launch the Association in 1871, Rogers of the L.A.C. had tried to explain that there was no desire to discriminate against working men, but Walter Rye had objected to the presence of clubs whose members were not gentlemen by position or education, a status expounded upon by one delegate who averred that gentlemanliness was inconsistent with shopkeeping. The eventual wording, more or less that of the A.A.C., carried a rider to the effect that even those who qualified under the body of the definition might still be objectionable on other grounds. This would presumably have served to disqualify anyone who was not to the cultivated taste of the Committee and can hardly have been a viable basis for widespread acceptance. It was scarcely surprising, therefore, that the Association faded away within months.

There was much opposition at the inaugural Oxford A.A.A. meeting in 1880 from the Old Guard, best summed up by the character of Rye,

scuttler-in-chief of the earlier attempt at unification, who had previously published a tendentious list of athletic clubs categorised into three social or class divisions; “1. Recognized Gentlemen’s Athletic Clubs; 2. Athletic Clubs not generally recognized, some of whose members, however, are gentlemen; 3. Unrecognized Athletic Clubs, wholly or in the greater part consisting of tradesmen, tradesmen’s clerks, warehousemen or railway clerks.”²

Not surprisingly, the great argument at that inaugural meeting of the Association – as everywhere else in the sport for several years before and after – was about the definition of an amateur. The meeting organisers proposed their own definition, whereupon Chambers of the A.A.C. and some like-minded reactionary associates, by way of a counter-proposal, put forward the A.A.C.’s own definition, which was also used “for Henley Regatta and all Rowing Clubs”.

The new Oxford men dug in their heels, and Chambers and his party gave way; the bar on mechanics, artisans and labourers was gone and the A.A.C., for all practical purposes, was finished. The definition actually adopted was not the one proposed by Jackson and his colleagues, but, for tactical reasons, an amended version of that put forward by Chambers; in its final form it read: “No person shall be considered an amateur who has ever competed with or against any professional for any prize or who has ever taught, pursued, or assisted in the practice of athletic exercises of any kind as a means of obtaining a livelihood.” The amendment, put forward by Jackson, had removed the words “or who is by trade or employment a mechanic, artisan, or labourer”.

It should, however, be noted that even then the Old Guard did not give up; seven years later,

Rye was writing – remarkably enough, in an Appendix to Shearman’s book – “Some day, when the loathsomeness of the roping and betting has disgusted the better class of runners, a championship, in which gentlemen can take part without loss of self-respect, will probably again be instituted on the old lines....The mechanic, artisan, or labourer, who used to be barred from competition with gentlemen, is now not only allowed to run, but, if fast, is a welcome member of all country, and many London clubs, there being only one which insists on all its members being gentlemen by profession and education.” Even in 1910, as we show in Chapter 4, it was possible for a senior member of the A.A.A. itself to offer a *gentleman’s* view, this time of road walking.

The founders of the A.A.C and L.A.C. had seen themselves as setting up organisations that would control athletics throughout the country but they had, in fact, taken no steps to give themselves the power, authority or influence to do anything about it and, indeed, it is difficult to see what steps they could possibly have taken in that direction; as in all such cases, they had no statutory right to take control and could hope to succeed only with the consent of those they sought to control.

Now, with the formation of the Amateur Athletic Association, there *was* such a body. The predecessors had seen a need for the athletics equivalent of the Royal and Ancient or the Jockey Club but had not seen how to form one. The fledgling A.A.A. had been set up by a meeting that contained representatives not only of the Universities but also of several open Clubs – *real* Clubs, not ghosts like the A.A.C. – and of the Midland Counties’ and Northern Counties’ Athletic Associations, together with the North of the Thames Cross Country Union; even Newport (Monmouth) A.C. was there. There had, naturally, been no-one present to speak for walking, because walkers had not yet perceived that their sport was sufficiently different from the rest of athletics to need its own voice or, in fact, any voice at all. They had always gone on very informally and they were to continue in the same fashion for another

quarter of a century, when the necessity was to become apparent.

The speed with which new bodies could move in those days seems quite remarkable now. The Oxford meeting was in Spring, 1880, and the first Championships were held on the 3rd July, ironically enough at Lillie Bridge, the ground of the A.A.C., which had a track of three laps to the mile. The start was hardly auspicious; it rained most of the day and the opening event, the one mile, had only one competitor, Walter George, who ran 4:28.6 to become the first *genuine* National Champion; to be fair to him, four years later, when he did have some opposition, he won in 4:18.4.

The A.A.A. was naturally keen to set things off on a sure footing but balked at actually committing itself to saying what walking was; as a “fudge”, one of many to come in the ensuing decades, Rule for Competition No.14 set a new standard for shilly-shallying: “In Walking Races cautions and disqualifications to be left to the discretion of the Judges.”

The first genuine walking champion – that is, the winner of a championship of the A.A.A. rather than of the two warring clubs – was G.P.Beckley of L.A.C., who won the 7 miles in 56:40, but, unlike George, he never won again.

The decision had been taken that the A.A.A. Championships would move round what would eventually become the three Areas of South, Midlands and North and it was desirable to have representation in the last two to ensure that the Rules were enforced. Fortunately for the fledgeling A.A.A. – for it does not seem to have thought of it before – there was someone waiting to cooperate, although the Midland and Northern Associations represented at the A.A.A. foundation meeting were not exactly mature bodies themselves.

The Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society had been founded on 14th June, 1879, with thirteen Clubs, although two months later it evidently changed its mind about what it was for and dropped the “Championship”, also

having second thoughts about its method of operation and changing “Society” to “Association”. Given the more working-class basis of athletic competition in the North, it is not to be wondered at that the definition of amateurism adopted made no attempt to bar “mechanics and artisans”. It was far more interested in dealing with payments, although it adopted a curious style of wording in excluding those who had competed for “public money or admission money”; whether the intention was to permit competition for “private” money is not clear. The new body held its first championships at Southport in August, 1880, providing for competition at sprints, distances, hurdles, bicycling, walking, jumping, putting the shot, gymnastics and steeplechasing. The N.C.A.A. happily fell in with the proposals to form the A.A.A. and, to underline the good relations, the first northern 100 yards championship was won by none other than Shearman.³

The N.C.A.A. seems to have been much involved in its early years in legal action; several cases of impersonation of one athlete by another in pursuit of prizes led to court cases. The matter was taken very seriously then, with such judicial remarks as “disgraceful and blackguardly” and “low, mean and un-English”. One athlete caught in such hideous evil was given six months hard labour for his efforts. When action was taken against the Association by the proprietor of a Manchester theatre in 1887 on the grounds of libel, among other things, it retained Shearman, by then a barrister, to represent it; the Association won. Its legal representative probably felt some warmth towards the members of the bench who had chosen cases of what was basically cheating at a game to give expression to their moral indignation.⁴

Centralised organisation in the Midlands was even younger, the Midland Counties Athletic Association having been formed on the 1st March, 1880, seven weeks before the A.A.A. itself. It was founded chiefly for the purpose of *prosecuting* professionals “who mainly by false entries endeavoured to obtain prizes intended for amateurs only” and to “form a jury to whom

the vexed question of what really constitutes an amateur might be referred”, which has all the air of dealing with them first and deciding afterwards what their offences had been. One almost feels, reading early reports, that the M.C.A.A., like its northerly neighbour, was concerned with dealing “repressively with the abuses now prevalent in Athletic circles”, to quote its first *Objects*, almost to the exclusion of everything else, because it did not even organise its own championship meetings for some years, although it did allocate some championship events to various bodies. However, it did, under the agreed arrangement for annual rotation,⁵ hold the A.A.A. Championships in 1881. From the point of interest of race walkers, the principal incident involved the American E.E.Merrill in the 7 miles, he and some of his countrymen being in England for a competitive tour. The previous week, at the same Aston Lower Grounds at which the Championships were to be held, the crowd, greatly inflamed by drink, gambling and the disqualification of a local favourite, had prevented Merrill from finishing. At the Championship meeting itself, Webster, the current title-holder, was disqualified early in the proceedings, the local walker who had been disqualified the week before retired exhausted and Merrill “swooned” just after half way, leaving Raby – Shearman’s “tall, gaunt lad of the class which has recently received the franchise” of Chapter 29 – to complete the last twelve laps of the 501-yard bumpy track on his own to win.

With athletics in the Midlands and the North in the hands of the enthusiastic witch-hunters of the new bodies, the A.A.A. itself ran the South, still, in any case, being very little more than a southern organisation. When it finally decided to set up a special body for the South it chose not to follow the models of the other two Areas but to *appoint* a “Southern Committee” answerable to the national body, which it did in 1883. It was not until 1911 that the Committee became a body elected at the Annual Meeting of Southern Clubs and close on another twenty years before that Annual Meeting obtained the right to do those things – such as enacting regulations – that had been delegated to the

Southern Committee. It was for this reason that the query over second-claim competitors in walking events discussed in Chapter 4 was referred to the Southern Committee of the A.A.A., despite being a matter of *national* concern; the S.C.R.W.A., although it was affiliated to the A.A.A., was still a southern body. Similarly, the Southern Committee gave its “permission” for the S.C.R.W.A., when the time came, to drop the “S”. It was, as we remark later, unnecessarily complicated and confusing.

By the beginning of the 1890s, the pattern of athletic organisation was established and the following decade or so was devoted to the problems of getting the details right and making it work. The A.A.A. and its Officers, all of them Honorary and still largely gentlemen, were in two minds about the scope of their responsibilities. The Association saw itself – and some others saw it – as responsible for *all* athletics, but it really knew very little about anything outside the track and field side. To fill this need, the National Cross Country Union, later to change the “National” to “English”, was founded in 1883, but race walking was in a difficult position. Whereas all cross-country events were run under more or less similar circumstances, many walking competitions, including those at its own Championships, were held on the track, where the A.A.A. could assert its authority, but the contests that most of the participants regarded as “real” race walking were over considerable distances on the road. As might be expected, and as is touched upon in later chapters, the conditions of the two locations for walking events were quite different and led at times to considerable generation of heat.

Track distances were generally shorter and therefore the walking was faster, with consequent problems of legality. The time occupied by even the shortest of walking races in track meetings, however, was often regarded by promoters as excessive; it still is in some quarters, notwithstanding that a top quality 3000-metre walk takes less time than six heats of the 100 metres. It has to be admitted, however, that in the nineteenth and early

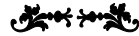
twentieth centuries a seven-mile track walk lasting well over an hour was rather a connoisseur’s event and did not hold the attention of those spectators who were not specialists. Even nowadays, the start of a walk in a general track meeting is often the signal for a mass move to the refreshment tent. Above all the other problems was the fact that no-one had any real notion of what walking actually was; that is to say, everyone knew in his own way but either could not express it succinctly, could not get anyone else to agree or found it, in practice, impossible to apply whatever definition might possibly, at any time, be more or less vaguely accepted.

Although road speeds were generally lower with less risk of “lifting” which, basically, was what most race walking philosophers were concerned with, there was even more scope, over twenty or thirty miles, for peculiar modes of progression. Many a commentator in the early days has, in effect, said, “Contact is all that matters,” only to add as a rider something along the lines of, “It shouldn’t look like *that*, though!”

Certainly, although some of the pioneers of athletic organisation were walkers – or did the occasional walk, because there was less specialisation then than now – the general administrators do seem to have had great difficulty in coming to terms with the basic inescapable problem. They could fiddle with the rules for the throws, having them taken from behind a line, in circles of varying diameters or in squares of assorted side-lengths, but the basic requirement was to get the implement as far as possible. Before the introduction of the sector-lines, if a thrower did not overstep the mark (whatever it may have been that year) and did not hit an official or spectator, it was a fair trial and was measured. How different with the subjectivity of judging walking, in which Shearman, as quoted in our Introduction, could remark, “To this day controversy rages about the fairness of Webster’s walking, some averring that he never walked a yard in his life, and others that he never should have been disqualified.”

With the first Honorary Secretary and third President of the A.A.A. itself thinking so, is it any wonder that the walkers, after some years of waiting for a lead on the whole question of

definition and enforcement, should eventually decide that they were not as other men and that something must be done *by* walkers and *for* walkers?



BIRTH AND THE FIRST STEPS

The legend has developed over the years that the Association was born amid the oysters and champagne of an expensive restaurant with a handful of moneyed gentlemen amateurs executing the act out of their benevolence. In reality, although there were certainly some preliminary meetings to float the idea – and, indeed, where better than a restaurant to have them – the actual birthplace was rather more prosaic.

The Sporting Life, on the 13th September, 1907, carried the following report of an event of two days earlier:

SOUTHERN COUNTIES ROAD- WALKING ASSOCIATION

Mr. Douglas Hogg presided at a meeting held on Wednesday at the Polytechnic, Regent-street, W., to inaugurate the Southern Counties Road Walking Association, and there was a fair attendance of delegates, those present including Messrs. J H Davenport, G Weightman and A C Palmer (Hairdressers' A. and C.C.), H.L.Marsh (R.C.H.A.C.¹), G.G.Cackett and C.Gunn (Highgate H.), H.Colden (Tooting A.C.), E Knott (S.W.C.), E J Hurley and J A Duffin (Garratt A.C.), G T Law and J M Andrew (Poly. H.), E A Forge (Essex Beagles), T J Eaton and T H Askew (Kensington H.), T W Mitchell and H R Withers (Vegetarian C.C.), H W Hines (Finchley H.), J W Budd and A C Mariette (Middlesex Walking Club), A K Culver and C A Morgan (Blackheath H.), J T Jull, E B Wright, H W Innes and T E Hammond (Surrey Walking Club), C Otway and E H Neville (Herne H.H.), H D Montague (Malden H.), H B Kearthland (Tooting A.C.), C J Pratt (Polytechnic), and J R Barnes Moss (Acting hon. secretary).²

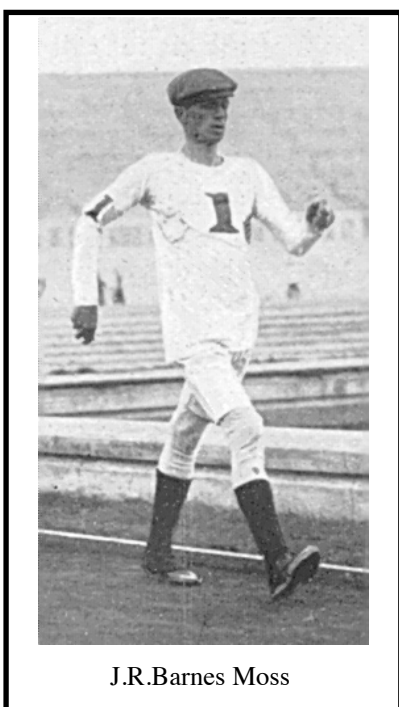
It was pointed out by Mr Barnes Moss that the original idea was to call it the Road Walking Association, but that was beyond their powers. If Northern and Midland Associations were formed there might be an amalgamation, and the association would then become really national in character. The association was formed under the title suggested, and its object specified as the encouragement of road walking.

Championships will be held on the road, and the association will undertake to examine and authenticate record performances under the rules of the association over specified courses and distances. The association is to be affiliated to the A.A.A., and only clubs strictly confined to amateurs according to the definition of the A.A.A. are eligible for membership. The management will be vested in a committee consisting of a president, four vice-presidents, a hon. treasurer, a hon. secretary, and twelve representatives of affiliated clubs. The subscription of clubs is 10s. per annum for each vote allotted, and each club is entitled to one vote for the first fifty members or less, up to 100 two votes, and three votes over 100.

Mr J.R. Barnes Moss was elected hon. secretary, Mr A.C. Mariette hon. treasurer, and the committee was chosen by ballot as follows:– E J Hurley, E H Neville, C Otway, E Knott, T E Hammond, H L March, J T Jull, H W Innes, J M Andrew, J H Davenport, E F Vowles³ and A C Palmer. The election of president and vice-presidents was deferred until the next meeting.⁴

As to the idea that the gentlemen amateurs were still in command, note the Hairdressers and the R.C.H. representatives. In addition,

Hammond's father was a licensee; artisans, railway clerks and even a publican's son – the gentlemen amateurs were decidedly *not* still in command, at least in the race walking world!



J.R. Barnes Moss

So the deed was done; it is interesting to note that, as Barnes Moss had pointed out at the Polytechnic, the clear intention had always been to establish a national governing body for race walking. Perhaps, if the men behind the idea had taken a leaf from the book of those who had established the A.A.A. and had invited representatives of the Midland and Northern walkers to their London meeting, the new Association could have had countrywide standing from its birth. There was no real reason why this should not have been done. It is, in some sense, true that it was beyond their powers, but that hardly seems to be the point, since they had no powers and were not establishing a limited company. The gentlemen meeting in Oxford had had no pre-established powers but had not seen that as any reason for holding back from assuming such powers as they fancied, including their self-proclaimed nationwide authority.

The new infant was quickly off the mark and by the 25th September *The Sporting Life* was announcing that the first Championship was to be held on the 21st March, 1908, over twenty miles.



Ernest Neville

The meeting on the 13th November adopted the rules for competition and championships and disposed of the left-over business from the inaugural meeting by electing its first President, "Teddy" Knott of Surrey Walking Club, and the *four* Vice-presidents, although there were only fifteen affiliated Clubs; the four were C.M.Callow, P.L.Fisher, H.Stessiger, and G.Jacob. Some degree of co-operation with other athletic authorities was clearly well in the fledgling's mind even then, for T.E.Hammond was elected as representative on the A.A.A.⁵

Administratively, all seemed to be going to plan, but a controversy had broken out over the so-called *New Zealand Definition* (which was, in reality, Australasian) and methods of judging, with H.W.Innes and "Expert", the race walking correspondent of *The Sporting Life*, at each other's throats in print. "Expert" offered the view that there were only two kinds of walking – fair and unfair – to which Innes responded

that they were easy to deal with, but that the problem was with a third kind – the doubtful – and that the judges needed help with walkers whose progress came under that heading. The New Zealand definition required a walker to be disqualified for “a bent knee, or a stoop, or walking flat-footed, or a lift”, the point being that each of the first three evils was reckoned by the proponents of the antipodean view to be conducive to the fourth, although they seemed hard put to it to explain how. Innes held to the view that straight knees might mean good style but that they were not *necessary* to define walking. “Expert” seemed to be arguing that a fine style could make a “lifter” look reasonably good, to the confusion of the judges. At bottom, there was very little difference between the two disputants and the matter, as so often, finally faded gently away in grudging expressions of respect for – or least understanding of – the other man’s view.

Simultaneously, with plans in hand for the Olympic Games to be staged in 1908, the distance walkers began to agitate for a “marathon” walk. “Expert”, always ready to exercise a little stirring, reckoned that a walk, say, from London to Brighton, would create quite as much enthusiasm as the running race. (A century ago, of course, long-distance traffic – London to Brighton being considered a long way – was largely on the railways and such an event would not have held the terrifying prospects that would apply today.) He conceded that this might be a burden for the Olympic Committee but suggested that the S.C.R.W.A. might put on such an event at the end of the Games. They did not appear any too keen; possibly their own twenty mile championship was occupying their minds too much.

In fact, they seemed not to be thinking very quickly even about that, because it was not until early February that the Committee decided that the championship would be four times round a five-mile course at Ruislip. The entry fee was to be 7/6 for a team with no individual entry charge, as it was conceived as an Inter-Club event; rather bizarrely, therefore, the first man

home in the Association’s inaugural Championship was not, strictly speaking, a champion, although he has, as it were, been given the title retrospectively.

A week before the date, the *entire* Committee of the S.C.R.W.A. met to scrutinise the entries and to elect the officials, who included sixteen judges, nine recorders and two timekeepers for a field of ninety-two. This was sufficient – bearing in mind that there will have been supporters and “feeders” as well –for the Great Western Railway to run a special from Paddington to Ruislip at 1/1 return. Numbers for most races (all of which required entry beforehand) were generally sent out in advance in those days and one of the regulations specified that “club secretaries are requested to see that their members have them sewn (not pinned) on back and front.”

The race itself had some problems. A number of the competitors were so late arriving that the start, scheduled for 3:00 p.m. was delayed by three-quarters of an hour, while the road itself was narrow, dusty and under repair in places, which, among other hazards, meant that there was a heap of material a hundred yards from the start. (Ruislip was described at the time as “a quaint little village some twelve miles down the Great Western line” and had appropriately rural facilities.) A consequence of the late start was that, as *The Sportsman* complained afterwards, “it was dusk when the leaders finished and almost pitch dark when those who were among the fifties came in.” The newspaper recommended a prompt start and reduction of the distance to fifteen miles, a proposal that fell upon deaf ears.

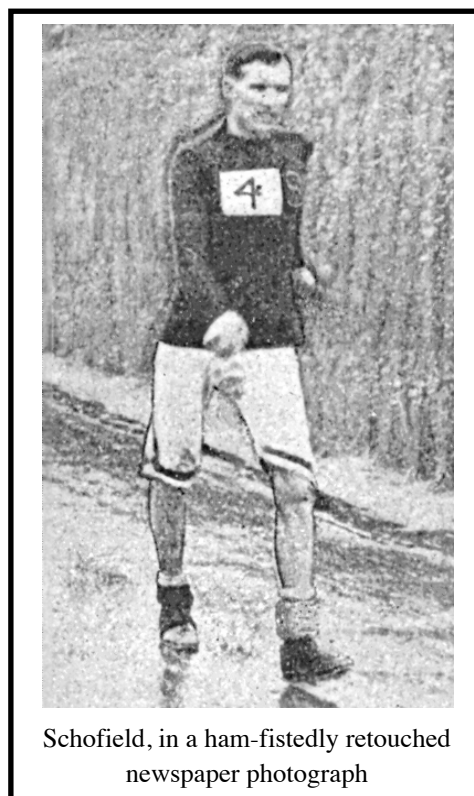
Despite the journalistic complaints, however, as a race, all appeared satisfactory, the winner, by eighteen seconds, being Tooting’s H.V.L.Ross, in only his second open race. With B.C.Brown finishing second, S.C.A. Schofield third, T.E.Hammond fifth and A.Hubbard twelfth, Surrey Walking Club were fairly easy winners from Polytechnic Harriers and Middlesex Walking Club.



Ross and Hammond, seen here in the 1908 24-hours

However, under the surface trouble was brewing and it was “Expert” and Innes who were in the thick of it. The journalist was first off the mark, complaining that the latest advice to “repress lifting seen or reasonably inferred” was leading judges to disqualify walkers not for what they saw in the way of loss of contact but because they saw styles of walking that they thought must lead to breaches of the rule. “Expert” also wrote that there was “without question a lot of prejudice among the purely road walking division against the track style of walking, and if they are disposed, in their own events, to regard hip-action experts with suspicion, while the man who uses no body swing can go very close to a jog trot without comment, nobody can say them nay.”

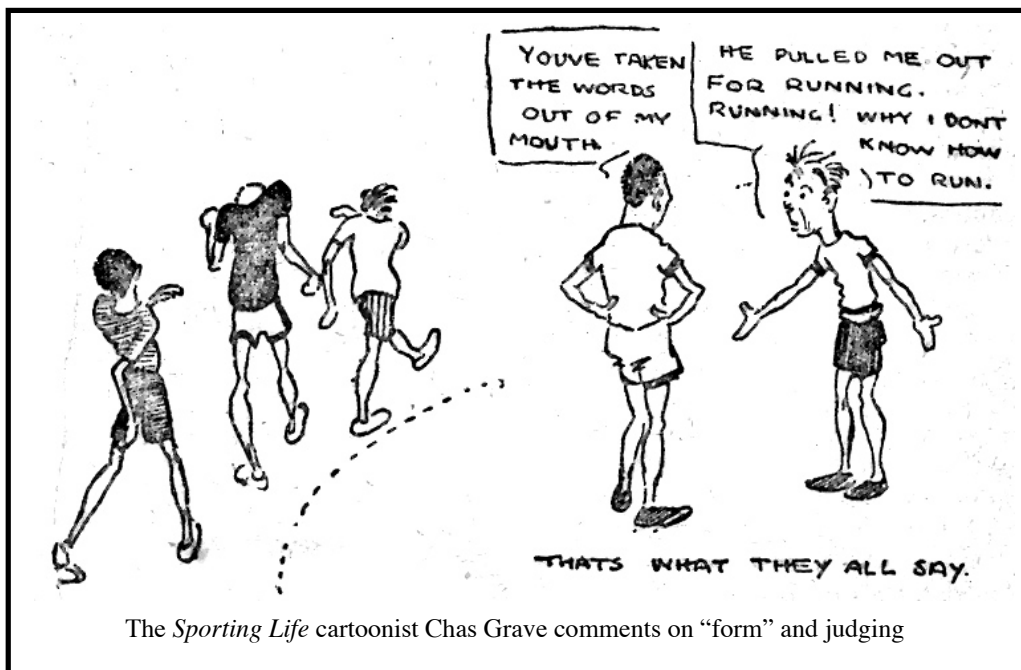
Because of this difference between road and track walkers, there had been protests about the appointment of some of the judges for the inaugural Championship because of their different approaches to judging. “I would be bold enough to say,” he went on, “that a proportion of those who were in the first twenty to finish would never have satisfied our best judges on the track. Their claim to merit appears to have been that they adopted the road walking style, which covered a multitude of sins, especially as it could be modified, without any alteration of action, to suit the exigencies of the occasion.” Since it was, after all, a road race, his complaints seems to have been somewhat fractious.



Schofield, in a ham-fistedly retouched newspaper photograph

Some time previously,⁶ Innes had written some articles on the scientific aspects of lifting and in reply to “Expert”, he remarked, “Those of my friends that I have consulted tell me either that they have not read my calculations, or that they could not understand them. ‘Expert’ himself belongs to the latter class, although he has not told me so.”

Then, as now, there was frequent disagreement over the disqualification of some walkers and the passing of others by the judges and Innes conceded that. He also pointed out that he had himself proposed four basic principles of judging: (1) a plain English definition of walking, such as in Johnson’s *Dictionary*; (2) individual responsibility of judges; (3) full discretion as to number of cautions and (4) doubtful walking to be treated as unfair walking. (It is worth stressing that Innes did *not* favour giving the competitor the benefit of the doubt.)



In another foretaste of later times, Innes blamed the large number of disqualifications on the "incredible carelessness of the officials of certain clubs, who will take no trouble at all to lick their men into shape during club trials and competitions....If they would reform their club scrambles, abandon their champion worship, and, in their private competitions, appoint judges who would bustle about and do real work, instead of standing at corners or chatting in brakes, why then their men would escape the risks they run at present in open competitions."

"Expert" had suggested that there had been a lot of "influence" in the judging whereupon Innes took a great deal of umbrage at the implication, turning it round to make it clear that his own influence was beginning to cause the judges to do their jobs properly. It was something of an anticlimax when it turned out that, due to his "bad calligraphy", "Expert's" original manuscript "inference" had been misread by *The Sporting Life's* compositors! Since "Expert" also accepted Innes' four principles, there was little left to argue about, except Innes' insistence that it was impossible actually to *see* lifting and that it needed to be

inferred from the man's general way of going. He concluded: "If you want actually to see a lift broadside from a distance no greater than the width of the road, there are two possible ways in which this may be done. You can lie down flat in the dust, or you can stand on your head. Otherwise you cannot get your eyes low enough actually to see daylight below both feet at once; hence you must 'infer' – 'reasonably', of course. If 'Expert' will let me know which of the above methods he is in the habit of employing, and how (in either case) he preserves his dignity, I shall be happy to adopt the same plan myself." 'Expert' did not supply the desired information and another public brawl dwindled limply away.

Possibly the subsiding of the battle between "Expert" and Innes was due to the generally more absorbing approach of the Olympic Games in a new stadium then being erected at Shepherd's Bush, with the accompaniment of frequent avowals that, although it may not have looked like it, the construction work *would* be finished in time for the Finchley Harriers meeting that was to be used as a tryout of the premises. They were on a grand enough scale for the Games; a running track at three laps to

the mile was surrounded by a banked cycle track thirty-five feet wide at two and three-quarter laps to the mile; the infield was 235 yards by 96, of which a ninety yard square section was occupied by tennis courts, and a swimming pool 110 yards long and fifty feet wide with a deepened centre for the diving lay along the inside of the home straight in front of the Royal Box. It was, in fact, ready in time – just about – and was opened on the 14th May to be greeted with rapture. The Central London Railway had built a station in the grounds, while

the Great Western and Metropolitan Railways had a joint one just outside, the London County Council was extending a tram line for the occasion and, in a sudden flurry of up-to-date technology, a plan was under consideration “whereby the Press may forward messages direct from the Press boxes to the telegraph office through special tubes”. The entire concept was entirely splendid and the only dampener on the proceedings was a literal one, as it rained hard all day at the grand ceremonial opening.



The Stadium at Shepherd's Bush from a contemporary postcard. The light-coloured cycle track is clearly seen with the darker athletics track inside it. On the far straight the paler “swimming tank” is just discernible on the infield.

With the Stadium ready, all that was required was a team, and trials were held on the 30th May. Many items of those days have their echoes in the twenty-first century and one of them was whether, given that the Trials were to “assist” the selectors in their work, a top man having a bad day should or should not be included; the general view seemed to be that he should. There was no 10 miles trial but the 3500 metres attracted the largest field for any event, fifteen in number (although sixteen actually walked), including the current A.A.A. Champion, Webb, and the previous title-holders G.Larner, Harrison and Yeoumans; given that

twelve were to be selected for the Games, it would be a very unfortunate man who was passed over. In fact, several were. The first seven men in the trial, G.E.Larner, E.J.Webb, E.E.Larner, B.C.Brown, J.Butler, W.J.Palmer and S.L.Sarel, were selected; others were R.Harrison, the 1907 Champion, who had been last in the Trial but subsequently third in the Championship, F.T.Carter, who had missed the Trial and finished only thirteenth in the Championship and, rather remarkably, A.T. Yeoumans, who had missed the Trial and been disqualified in the Championship. The two remaining places went to J.J.Reid of Clonliffe

Harriers and R.Quinn of Bellahouston Harriers, neither of whom had walked in either the Trial or the Championship, but who, being champions of their countries, seem to have been included in order to have Irish and Scottish representatives in the team.⁷

Having for some reason had no ten mile trial to guide them, the selectors' strategy was to take the first six from the shorter distance, with the exception of Brown, and to add the known distance men Yeoumans, Harrison, Carter, Hammond, Schofield, G.R.J.Withers and E.A.Spencer. "Expert", of course, had faults to find with the selected list, especially over the inclusion of Yeoumans, a man whose performances in earlier competitions were littered with disqualifications and whose "demonstrations" were generally regarded with some scorn; "If his walking will not pass muster for the purpose of the record book⁸ it is scarcely likely to satisfy the Olympic judges". He was equally opposed to Harrison – "...he will have to improve his style a bit before June". On the other side of the coin, he jibbed at the exclusion of A.H.Pateman, who had recently beaten Spencer, Withers, Schofield, Hammond and Webb over 11 miles.

The 3500 metres was held on the 14th June and the thirty-seven entrants required three heats, the first three in each to go to the final on the same day. Only twenty-four actually started, Carter being one of the absentees, and British fortunes were mixed. G.Larner and Webb won their heats, with Harrison second, Palmer third, E.Larner fourth and Sarel and Butler fifth, while Quinn and Reid failed to finish and Brown and Yeoumans were disqualified. In the final, George Larner, with 14:55, won by 12.4 seconds from Webb, with the "Australasian" Kerr (who was actually a New Zealander) half a minute away in third. British woes continued, however, for Palmer did not finish and Harrison confirmed the gloomy prophecy of "Expert" by being disqualified in the second lap.

The home walkers rather swamped the results in the ten miles.⁹ Twenty-five walkers competed in two heats, with four to qualify;

Webb, Carter, Spencer and E.Larner were first home in the first heat and G.Larner, Harrison, Kerr and Palmer in the second, while Butler failed to finish and the hapless Yeoumans was disqualified again. Webb beat Carter by sixty-seven seconds and Larner led Harrison by 2 seconds, their winning times being 1:20:18 and 1:18:19 respectively. Hammond, who had previously been dismissed by the forever scornful "Expert" as too slow for the distance, did not appear.

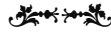
The two top British walkers had evidently not been doing more than was strictly necessary in the heats (Larner devoting some time to shepherding through Harrison and Palmer), because in the final, held on the 16th July, they were both well over two minutes faster; Larner's time was 1:15:57, a record, and Webb's was 1:17:31, while Spencer improved by five seconds on his heat time to win the bronze medal in 1:21:20, the same time as fourth-placed Carter. All six finishers were British, Harrison (the second fastest qualifier) and Kerr being non-starters and Palmer again retiring. Although he reduced the record by almost a minute and won by a minute and a half, Larner suffered somewhat in the race, recalling in his book published two years later that "...there were numerous occasions when I felt as though I MUST give up. My throat was like a lime-kiln, and I scarcely knew whether I had a tongue left or no. I would have given the world for a slice of lemon, and my tortures were frightfully intensified by the sight of the water in the swimming tank, which I had to pass every lap. The temptation to leave the track and to moisten my lips was almost irresistible. It would have meant disqualification but I scarcely felt as if I should mind that at all."

In spite of all the problems, some of them arising from London's taking up of the Games at rather short notice when Rome withdrew, the event had been a success, notwithstanding some abrasive contacts between British and United States officials.¹⁰ The walks, in particular, had not suffered any of the disputes, appeals and controversy that might have been expected, given the continuing vagueness of the rules,

essentially those adopted by the A.A.A. for their first championships in 1880; perhaps the fact that all the disqualified walkers were British – as were all the judges – may have allayed doubts about fairness and objectivity.

Thus, although it might well appear that controversy was as much a part of the sport as actual racing, the fledgeling Association had, in the space of ten months, been born, set itself in motion, arranged its first Championship and

come away from the London Olympic Games with five of the six medals. Even allowing for the gestation period before its delivery, scarcely a year had been needed to move from a glimmering of an idea to a fully working body. If the infant had not yet become a prodigy, it was certainly sitting up, taking notice and having some degree of notice taken of it. It had been a remarkably rapid, breathtaking and encouraging journey, but there was much still to be done.



ADOLESCENCE

RULES, REGULATIONS AND CONFUSION

The Association had come through a busy, combative and rather successful first year. What was it to do next?

The state of ordinary race walking was nothing short of vibrant. By way of example of what could happen in a few days, the pages of *Sporting Life* and *The Sportsman* between the 11th and 18th June, 1908, reported on the following walks:

Esher A.C.: 2 miles handicap
Sheffield United Harriers: 1 mile handicap
Reading Traders: “nearly twelve miles”
Court Island Foresters (Isle of Wight): 2 miles
North Shields W.C.: 2 miles
Irish Championships: 3 miles
Banbury Annual Sports: 2 miles
Essex Beagles & Holloway United S.C.: 2 miles handicap
London, City & Midland Bank: 1 mile handicap
London A.C.: 3 miles
Theatrical Sports: 1 mile handicap (with prizes presented by Miss Lily Langtry, the actress and former mistress of the Prince of Wales)
Portsmouth Corporation Tramways: 2 miles handicap
Inter-Banks Championships: 2 miles
Garratt W.C.: 2 miles
New Barnet A.A.: 2 miles

Strictly speaking, as most of these races were on the track, they were no official business of the S.C.R.W.A. but the same walkers and officials were naturally involved in both track and road walks. The Irish and Northern events, of course, similarly, were not within the jurisdiction of the fledgeling Association and were under local control with varied local views of what constituted walking.

The Essex Beagles’ meeting took place in the new Olympic Stadium, where, despite the

fact that, at one point, running, swimming, motor cycling and the band were all going on at once, the crowd of 4,000 “looked nothing at all”. *The Sportsman’s* correspondent took the view that, “Man alone appears altogether too small – too insignificant in such a vast place. Elephant races might go well.”

It should be noted that of these fifteen meetings, five – those of the Traders, Bank, Theatricals, Tramways and Inter-Banks – were by way of being “closed” events for people in specific lines of occupation, and this was a particular feature of the times. In the same month, apart from those mentioned above, there were the meetings of Commercial Union Assurance, London Scottish Rifles Volunteers, War Office, Railway Clearing House, Staines Linoleum, Glyn Mills Bank, Civil Service, Cardiff Exchange, London Railways, Arc Works, London United Tramways, Liverpool Tramways, Kent County Constabulary (in uniform boots – two miles won by Police Constable Barham in 16:45.6), Bury Police, Imperial Tobacco Co., Great Northern Railway Accountant’s Office, London Postal Service, Consolidated Gold Fields, Central Y.M.C.A., Thomas Wallis, Ltd., Metropolitan Water Board and London Business Houses. These were not scratch meetings held in the works’ yard, either; the organisations not owning their own grounds, which, in any case, very many did, would hire the Olympic Stadium, the Stamford Bridge Ground or the local football stadium, the prizes might be worth hundreds of pounds and the crowds were counted in their thousands – 5,000 for Liverpool Tramways and 9,000 for the Kent Constabulary, for example. Many companies held athletics meetings lasting all day and constituting really popular social occasions, often with the Chairman of the company – or his wife – handing out the trophies at the shareholders’ expense; one can only imagine the

munificence of the awards at the Mappin & Webb staff sports, although W.H.Smith's may have been more safely carried home! On top of this, there were numerous matches between clubs; a randomly chosen month, February, 1908, saw the following:

Belgrave H. v Kennington H. v Garratt W.C.
Middlesex W.C. v Herne Hill H.
Middlesex W.C. v Garratt W.C.
Tooting A.C. v Middlesex W.C. v Surrey W.C.
Sutton H. v Herne Hill H.
Surrey W.C. v Middlesex W.C.
Nona Cycling Club v Raleigh Cycling Club
(two clubs of "wheelers" engaging in a 7-mile walk)

The four matches involving Middlesex W.C. were over 16, 11, 13 and 19 miles on consecutive weekends and a number of members of the Club raced all four, a total of 59 miles; the commitment in time and expense was considerable.

Following the not entirely uneventful first Championship of 1908, the Association seems to have been a little better prepared for its second attempt the following year at Croydon and seventy-seven competitors finished, led home by S.C.A.Schofield of Surrey W.C., his club retaining the team title; it was said of the winner that "his walking is beyond question, although his style is not a pretty one." A nice touch was that, although the course had been accurately measured, the finish line was moved to a lamp standard thirty-five yards short of the distance "for the convenience of the scorers and timekeepers in the dusk." Schofield chose to complete the whole distance, although the press of spectators was such that the extra few paces took him another sixteen seconds. Evidently, whatever had been learned from the previous promotion had not included starting the race early enough to finish in daylight, although on this occasion no one commented on the fact.¹ Similarly, despite the disqualification of a number of walkers, there was no great argument afterwards, although Essex Beagles were so annoyed at the surprising removal of their man F.E. Roberts² that they retired in a huff. The 20

mile distance itself was a compromise; the idea had originally been to have two Championships, at 14 and 50 miles but the funds would not stretch that far; with a subscription rate between 10/- and £1/10/- for a Club, it is hardly to be wondered at.

Someone signing himself "A.Walker" from South Wanstead in Essex wrote to *Sporting Life* shortly after to suggest the institution of a "Junior" Championship – along the lines of those held by some Cross Country Associations. By "junior" was meant not a lower age group but a lower standard, previous medal-winners, members of successful teams, etc., being barred from the event. "A.Walker", who may well have been a leading member of the Association wishing to float an idea without opening himself to ridicule, suggested that a distance of ten miles would "encourage many novices, who consider the present distance (20 miles) beyond their powers". The exclusions were fierce; those who had scored in the first three teams or had finished in the first twenty-five individual positions of the Championship in the previous two years, had been placed in any open scratch race or any championship at 5 miles or above or had scored for a placed team in any open inter-club race. His suggestion was adopted and the "Junior", which was held over ten miles from the Brentford F.C. ground, had fifty finishers despite the attempt to exclude anyone who was of any decent standard. It was won by Middlesex W.C., while Belgrave's W.Evans took first individual place in 1:21:37. This "Junior" championship continued (with war-time interruptions) until 1952, Sheffield United Harriers winning the last three. The Garnet Cup was then returned to the Southern Area, where it was awarded for a similarly limited race. Although this was initially popular, problems arose later. Smaller numbers in the sport in general meant that it became increasingly difficult to assemble fields worthy of the history of the competition because so many walkers had ruled themselves out by their previous successes. Even weakening the exclusion rules did not help much and the rump of the competition was eventually abandoned, the cup being transferred to other purposes.



1911: A typical field at New Malden for the start of a Surrey A.C. Open Walk of a little more than 10 miles. Winner was Ross (No.17, fifth walker from the left).

The S.C.R.W.A. endeavoured whenever possible to provide judges for all the matches, championships and open events held in the South of England and must have had dozens of judges at its disposal.³ However, it must be borne in mind that a man could become a “judge” more or less by saying that he was one; there were no examinations and no grading system, although without doubt the Association and the general coterie of judges made informal attempts to keep up the standard and allocated judges to events on the basis of their known willingness to take action when the badness of the walking warranted it.

A taste of the types of event – matches, championships and separate short races – is given above, but in addition there were large open meetings, usually involving walks and often cycle races as well. One such was that promoted by the Geneva Amateur Athletic Club for hotel and restaurant employees which had 700 entrants in 1909. There was a two mile

handicap walk – there were generally handicaps at that kind of meeting, to ensure close finishes and plenty of excitement (and the drama of last-gasp disqualifications) – and, very unusually for the time, a shorter event whose newspaper description, for its rarity value if nothing more, is worth quoting in full:

One mile walking race for Waitresses (trade).
– R.Gilling, Victoria Coffee Tavern, 1; E.Green, Blenheim Cafe, 2; K.Davies (penalised 50 yards for previous successes), Lyons and Co. Ludgate Hill, 3. This was one of the most attractive events of the day, and several of the ladies displayed both style and judgement. Miss Gilling cut out the pace, and was not seriously challenged until half the journey had been traversed; whenever caught she spurted. Miss Green, however, got on terms half way down the home straight and a close finish ended in Miss Green’s favour by a foot. She⁴ fell exhausted after breaking the worsted, and Miss Green

fell across the finishing line. Time 10min 45 sec. Miss Davies's time for the full mile was 10min 31 4/5 sec.⁵

There seems no hint of a condescending tone and the report reads like hundreds of others, except for the mention of the events at the finish, although reporters could also be pretty dismissive of men who could not even race twenty miles without collapsing.⁶

As an aside on the organisation of athletic events in the early years of the twentieth century, it is interesting to note how much importance was placed upon publicity; the Geneva A.C. promotion had no fewer than three "press stewards". Although *Sporting Life* and *The Sportsman* were competing for copy and seem to have been prepared to print more or less anything in the sporting line, the publicity officers of the time had difficulties not known nowadays. Two days before publishing its report of the Geneva A.C. Sports (held at Stamford Bridge) *The Sportsman* had apologised for the late appearance of news of the Middlesex W.C. London to Oxford race on Good Friday; the start had been at 6:00 a.m. and by the time the last man finished a little after 6:00 p.m. the Oxford postal telegraph office had closed. The "sleepy city of Oxford" was then cut off from civilisation until Saturday; when it did wake up again, all the seconds in the finishers' times got lost and there had to be a subsequent correction. The modern press officer, who can have the results on their way all over the world from his laptop computer as soon as the backmarker in a race crosses the line, has a comparatively easy time of it.

Most of the races referred to so far were on the track; there had been a frenzy of road walking in the very first years of the century, which had fizzled out – as frenzies tend to – within five years. Of course, some of them survived and many races had been taking place on the Brighton Road (either one way or there-and-back) for over twenty years, while the London to Oxford has already been mentioned and the Lancashire Walking Club's Manchester to Blackpool race was to begin in 1909. Of the

other survivors of the busiest years, the Newcastle Exchange Walks, from Newcastle upon Tyne to Hexham (24 miles) and to Haltwhistle (40 miles) were still going and the most robust of them all, the Bradford, was destined to reach its centenary and go beyond.

Sometimes facetiously regarded as a fierce northern event designed to humble the effete southerners who dared venture to tackle it, the Bradford was, in fact, fairly open and the first dozen winners were divided half and half between the two ends of the country; it was the Midlands walkers who missed out until Lloyd Johnson finally won in 1931. The Bradford is celebrated for not having been interrupted by the two World Wars, although it adopted a shorter route during the second of them; founded as 39.5 miles from Bradford to York, it became a circular 40.5 miles in 1906, 32.25 in 1915, 15.5 for the war years 1941 to 1945 and then 50 kilometres.

One may suppose that the large numbers of road races faded out because the walkers did not support them, but nevertheless in the Association's early years there were calls for *more* road walks to balance the track handicaps of two to seven miles; the renowned "Expert" of *Sporting Life* was foremost among the agitators.

The immediate response came from a somewhat unexpected quarter, when Southend Harriers promoted an Essex County Long Distance Championship over a 51-mile (roughly) course from Barking to Southend by way of Ilford, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Billericay and Rayleigh, a route seemingly intended to dispel the myth that Essex is a flat county. On his home ground, F.E. Roberts was unchallenged and won the event each year from 1909 to 1914, when the Championship and, indeed, Roberts himself, became victims of the Great War. It restarted in 1927 over 33 miles and became 50 kilometres in 1971.

The Association worked on through 1909 and 1910, encouraging walking in all its forms, with particular emphasis, of course, on road races, and at its Annual General Meeting in

1910 presented a confident face, although its affiliated Clubs still numbered only twenty; the Treasurer seemed happy enough, however, with a balance in hand of £2/6/-.

Much of the work of a new organisation is concerned with grinding drudgery for the Officers and not much spectacular progress as seen by the outside world. So it was with the juvenile S.C.R.W.A., which had persevered through another year of steady work, and by the following A.G.M., by which time the balance in hand had doubled, the Secretary was able to report that “the Association’s influence is increasing, as appears evident from the number of applications for the S.C.R.W.A. to appoint judges, clubs by this means satisfying themselves that the judging would be properly carried out”. Standards were beginning to be imposed at last, although still with no clear definition of what race walking actually *was*. At last, too, the time was ripe to do what the founders had always meant to do, and the Committee carried through a motion that, subject to the consent of the A.A.A., all references to the Southern Counties would be removed from the Rules and the body would at last be the Road Walking Association.

A month later, the Committee of the A.A.A. approved the application to change the name “on the understanding that such Association should be open to all England”. Since that was the whole purpose of the alteration, the condition was hardly a burden for the R.W.A.; no doubt the A.A.A. felt that it was making a point.

It might have been thought that the midland and northern clubs would regard the move as an impertinent southern attempt to interfere in their affairs, but it was actually welcomed. There were several strong clubs outside the Southern Counties’ area, such as Birmingham, Lancashire, Nottingham and North Shields, that were debarred on geographical grounds from the S.C.R.W.A. Championships as teams, although there was nothing to stop their members entering as individuals, and in fact the last-named club’s T.E.Payne, walking for Middlesex

W.C., had won the 20 miles earlier in 1911, before the change took place. Now, the Championship was open nationally and the rest of the country was free to take the crown if it was good enough, although in fact it was not until F.Poynton of Leicester in 1923 that a “provincial” representative did take it, and the team title did not leave the South until it went to Birmingham W.C. in 1930. The first simultaneous taking of both individual and team titles occurred in the following year, when T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester) and Derby, respectively, won them.

The early administrative arrangements of the Association give rise to a number of questions. Why did it not invite midland and northern representatives to its inaugural meeting in 1907 and adopt the “national” name in the first place? Why did it affiliate to the A.A.A., which appears to have given it some awkward problems, as we show below, and no conspicuous advantages, when all that it seems to have wanted was to adopt the A.A.A. definition of amateurism? Why did it apply to the A.A.A. to change its name – effectively asking permission of another body with no authority in the matter to become a national association – when it could simply have given notice that it had done so? The early minutes of the S.C.R.W.A. and the R.W.A. are lost and these questions cannot be answered; still, it is curious that men with such a clear idea of where they wanted to go and such enthusiasm and drive for getting there should have chosen such a roundabout route. The A.A.A. itself had shown how to proceed in 1880 by simply inventing itself and declaring itself to be the national body with no recognised authority – because there was no-one who could grant it – to impose itself on athletics at large. A private body had been formed and taken power by proclamation; the S.C.R.W.A. could just as easily have done the same, since no self-appointed body would be in a strong position to resist the claims of another.

One of the above-mentioned problems arising from the Association’s affiliation to the A.A.A. had been the question of second-claim

membership. At a race in 1910, protests had been lodged against the participation of some of the entrants because they were second-claim members of the clubs in whose colours they were appearing. The matter was referred to the Southern Committee of the A.A.A. for adjudication and an astonishing outbreak of chaos took place. The A.A.A. Rule in question stated that first-claim membership of a purely walking club “shall not debar a man from competing for his second-claim club under this rule, except when his first-claim club is competing in the race,” which seems adequately clear.

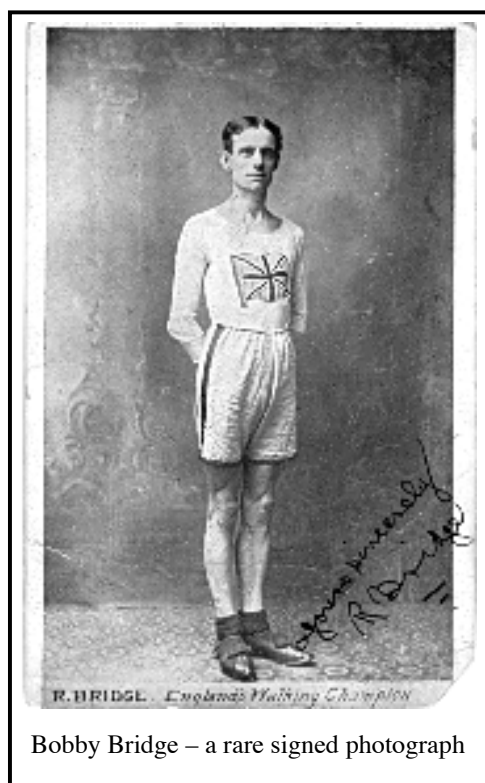
The A.A.A. Committee, after much apparently confused consideration, came to the conclusion that this meant that a first-claim member of a running club *could* compete in an open walk for his “purely walking” second-claim club if his first claim club was not competing, but *not* for his second-claim club if it was *not* “purely walking”. This would clearly have put at a disadvantage all but three of the S.C.R.W.A.’s clubs, as only the Surrey, Middlesex, and Garratt Walking Clubs were “purely walking”. The S.C.R.W.A. was much given to declaring its loyalty to the A.A.A. but this extraordinary ruling seems to have stretched that loyalty a little far. J.R.Barnes Moss, the Secretary of the S.C.R.W.A., had already complained that the rule as actually worded was unworkable and, as he expressed it, put “all walking clubs on the level, say, with ping pong organisations”. Now *Sporting Life*, at a time when newspapers were much more closely attuned than in later years to what was happening in sport, wrote that “in dealing with a matter that lies outside their sphere of influence the A.A.A. would do well to avail themselves of the services of those who may be regarded as experts on that particular subject” and *The Evening News* added its view; “Why not hand the whole control of walking over to the S.C.R.W.A.?” and, to add sarcasm to criticism, described the A.A.A. as “that august body”, always a damning turn of phrase. This was, so far as race walking was concerned, an early example of the difficulties of serving two masters where rules and administration were

involved and it was worsened by the reported remark of a leading light of the A.A.A. that road walking was a sport in which no gentleman would take part; shades, indeed, of Walter Rye!

Looking back now, it is remarkable that the S.C.R.W.A. should have allowed the A.A.A. to produce an interpretation that had little to do with the words of the actual rule and was in any case *ultra vires*. The ruling, however, with all its serious consequences for road walking had been made. What was the Association to do? Quite simply, it ignored it and continued to allow a first-claim member of any club to walk for his second-claim club, whether “purely walking” or not, so long as the first-claim club was not competing. The situation was unchanged and the S.C.R.W.A. had made it clear that it would control road walking in a manner beneficial to the clubs that troubled to affiliate to it. It had all helped the move toward national authority and effective power and to some extent mitigated any harm caused by listening to the A.A.A. in the first place.⁷

Scarcely was that unnecessary distraction out of the way when another question arose – that of the 1912 Olympic Games, to be held in Stockholm with a single track walk at 10000 metres. The R.W.A. had no organisational responsibilities as it had had in London but was still keenly interested, chiefly from the point of view of criticising the selectors (the A.A.A.) for their choices. These were largely based upon the results of the A.A.A. 7 miles championship in April, which had been won by R.Bridge of Lancashire W.C., whose style was admired despite the fact that the bottom of his left arm was missing.⁸ He had been followed home by W.G.Yates of Salford and H.V.L.Ross of Middlesex. Larner, the previous champion, was ineligible and Webb, winner two years before, had just returned from a trip to Canada and retired at five miles, several of the fancied men being disqualified. The selected team was Bridge, Yates and Webb, with T.H.Dumbill (seventh in the Championship), W.J.Palmer. and T.E. Hammond, the multiple Brighton winner as “provisionals”. (Since the Championship, Webb had set a new 10000m record of 45:15.6, thus

atoning for his failure in that event and justifying his inclusion.)



Bobby Bridge – a rare signed photograph

One expert reckoned that, if the Olympic judges did their work properly, the British walkers would stand a good chance of success. The judges certainly did *something*, but it did not help the British very much. In the first heat, Webb was second to the Canadian G.Goulding, with Palmer fifth, while the second was won by Yates with Dumbill third, Bridge being disqualified. There was no showing of a red card in those days, of course; as a contemporary newspaper columnist expressed it in reporting the final, “....the judging seemed to be overdone and a couple of Englishmen, T.H.Dumbill and W.G. Yates, were asked to retire....In my opinion, Yates was walking as fair as it is possible for man to walk when he was tapped on the shoulder with a little over two miles to go”. Palmer had already been “ruled out” before half way. Goulding won, with Webb taking another silver to go with his

two behind Larner in 1908. In all, six of the ten finalists were disqualified; including the heats, there were thirty-two starters, of whom only twelve were not disqualified at some point.

There is, one feels, something quaintly old-worldly in the thought that a judge might tap one on the shoulder in a courteous fashion and invite one to desist rather than waving a red disc and calling ones number; perhaps some spirit of gentlemanliness lingered on in race walking.

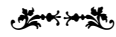
The other principal event of the renamed Association’s year, the now *National* Championship, had been more successful, Ross recording the third of his six wins, spread over the years 1908 to 1920, while Surrey W.C. regained the team award, on their way to winning it six times in the first seven years. Despite the “clarification” of the second-claim rule, Payne, the winner in 1911, was declared ineligible to represent Middlesex W.C. (because the Championship rules were different to the “open” ones) and had to walk as an individual; it made no difference in any case, as he “soon incurred the displeasure of the officials.... when leading by a furlong” and was disqualified in the first ten miles.

On the darker side, there was a problem only too well-known now; during the Stock Exchange Brighton two judges and their chauffeur were badly injured when their car collided with a motor-waggon at Povey Cross and a motorcyclist on his return after the event was killed in a collision with a horse-drawn cart. Still, it took nearly another century – with surprisingly few fatalities – to drive most long-distance races off the road. Considering the comparative lack of motor traffic on the roads of the time, it was a tragically unfortunate coincidence that *two* such incidents should have occurred in the same race.

The Association was now five years old, had weathered its storms and difficulties and had established all its procedures. It was time to expand and become a *truly* national body in deed as well as word.

Although some kind of start had already been made it had not as yet gone very far and some of the difficulties that lay ahead, although they were eventually resolved – especially the

organizational and constitutional ones – would have been avoided altogether if the founders had chosen to invent the Association as a national body instead of an area one.



GOING NATIONAL THEORY INTO PRACTICE

In fact, the Association's National career had not got off to too brilliant a start, the first *open* Championship, in 1911, showing a fall in finishers from sixty-eight to fifty-five compared to the previous year's Southern, with teams also down from twelve to eight.¹ New Barnet and the Vegetarians, ninth and eleventh in the previous Championship, could not finish teams. The only non-southern team, Birmingham Walking Club, was reduced to the bare minimum by illness and lost another man through disqualification, while Tommy Payne, the previous year's winner, was also disqualified.²

One of the reasons put forward for the poor turnout was that the event was only a week after the A.A.A. seven miles, although that had not stopped H.V.L. Ross from coming third on the track and winning on the road. Whatever the excuses may have been, it had not turned out a particularly auspicious start for the new status, particularly as it had been followed three months later by the judging-induced chaos of the Olympic Games.

The extension of the Association's jurisdiction to cover the whole country had been shortly followed by the foundation of the "Northern Section" of the R.W.A., and their first Championship, over 20 miles and 300 yards from the Lancashire W.C. Headquarters in Fallowfield, had not been much smaller than the parent body's, with thirty-six finishers, the hosts taking the team prize by filling the first four positions, led by Bobby Bridge.

As we have remarked elsewhere, it is interesting to note how often over the years the same questions and worries have arisen. One of the most frequent has been the problem of where new champions were to come from, a matter that led to correspondence in *The*

Evening News, whose journalist "Pinex" thought that the talent was there; "We have the men, and if we go into the country districts we shall find them. The cities and the towns are well covered as things are at present, but the country is left severely alone. Once that is altered we shall see a different complexion put on affairs for Berlin in 1916." He did not, however, seem to offer any ideas as to how to go and comb the country districts for hidden walkers.

In the same edition, the matter of judging arose yet again. "Pinex" had a full head of steam when he turned his mind to it: "...I wonder, though, when we shall see real fearless judging upon the track? We have at last got it upon the road, but many of the races, even the championships, upon cinders are absolutely farcical. Walking! Why, it might just as well be programmed as 'track gymnastics' for all the relationship it bears to real heel and toe methods. The road walker has no chance with the man who is allowed to shuffle along lap after lap, or at least he has stood no chance since Jack Butler found he was too old to keep up his speed. Jack was the only man who could come on the track and break up the 'gymnasts' by the length of his stride. He did that in the A.A.A. seven miles twice, and although the times now are faster than those he put up, the least said about the judging the better."

So far as judging was concerned, "Pinex" was saying again what everyone else – except, presumably, the judges – had been saying for years, namely that the judges did not have the stomach to pull a favoured man doing well in a track championship; as usual though, there was no suggestion as to a way of improving the situation. One gains the impression that, even if the judges on the track were less than perfect, no official attempt to bring them into line, train

them and *examine* them as to their abilities was to be contemplated; evidently, it was thought that mere complaint would raise the standard.

It is true that the problem of where the next generation of walkers was to be found is one that is still with us, but when “Pinex” raised it it was new. He was pointing out that it was three years to the next Olympic Games and the search should be started straight away. As it turned out, of course, Berlin was otherwise occupied when the time came, so that the question did not arise; it had, however, at least been realised that there was a question.

Notwithstanding the sport’s own internal ponderings, it was still proving popular with spectators, thousands lining the route of the National Championship in 1913, and the town of Aylesbury turned out “to the last man, woman and child” to see the finish, although the spirited “Pinex” had questioned the wisdom of holding the event so far from town – that is, from London – for “a railway fare of 3s 6d. is rather a big item, look at it as you will.” He was seemingly able to view with equanimity the rather greater costs of coming from Birmingham, Manchester or North Shields; although it was a *National* Championship in name, it was still very largely *Metropolitan* in substance.

Even the boredom of a seven mile track race had been enlivened at the A.A.A. Championships – held, with a flash of organisational brilliance, on Cup Final day – where the event had resulted in a dead heat between H.V.L.Ross, winner of the twenty miles a fortnight earlier, and Bobby Bridge. Interestingly enough, to show that differences of opinion were as sharp then as now, *The Sportsman’s* reporter at the seven miles remarked that “another pleasing feature of the afternoon was, as has several times been referred to in these columns, the evidence that the standard among the walkers is showing considerable improvement, which can be indirectly claimed to be the result of the stricter judging of late years. Competitors have recognised that to have any chance at all their style must be entirely in keeping with the rules

and regulations, and by adopting the current method they have increased their pace.” One can imagine conflict between the readers of *The Sportsman* and *The Evening News* over whether the fact that nineteen of the twenty-two A.A.A. starters satisfied the judges was due to improved walking or to doubtful judging!

Getting the rules right was a preoccupation of the R.W.A., as might be expected of a still relatively young body, and a special sub-committee flung itself wholeheartedly upon the four-year-old “Junior” 10 Mile Championship mentioned in the previous chapter. To the existing exclusions they added anyone who had beaten fifteen minutes or fifty-six minutes in the A.A.A. two-mile or seven-mile Championships and, in an innovation that must have made the scrutiny meeting last longer than the race itself, any competitor who had “been placed in a bona-fide open walking handicap (framed to the time standard) from 135yds or less in a mile, 250yds or less in two miles, 350yds or less in 3 miles, or a proportionate start at other distances, or in time handicaps, 45sec. or less per mile.” They do not appear to have given any indication as to what start in, say, five miles, would be “proportionate” to the noticeably non-proportionate specific starts quoted. However, as the Championship kept going in the same form until 1952, the officials presumably found some way of working the calculations and applying the several classes of exclusions.

There were still very nearly as many handicap races as open ones and a complex new system – for running and walking – was introduced to try to bring about some degree of uniformity and limit the effect of eccentric allowances. Even so, it seems that the practice fell short of the blueprint and handicappers were reluctant to apply the “limiting” marks for either slow men or fast ones; there did, however, seem to be some improvement, although to modern eyes the allowances appear large; a start of 440 yards in a mile was not regarded as out of the way.

Clashes of fixtures continued to irritate walkers and, more especially, journalists, but

the irritation may have been more apparent than real, as such inconveniences presented an excellently newsworthy opportunity to berate the R.W.A. for doing nothing about it. For practical purposes there *was* nothing very effective to be done anyway; no system of permits or other means of control existed, no insurance was required, the police – except in the case of very large events – were not consulted at all, a race could have as many or as few judges as the organisers fancied (without asking the R.W.A.) and everyone was free to do as he pleased as far as promoting events was concerned. The Association's response was limited to holding "conferences" of club secretaries to agree lists of dates for established events; they tended to be very short lists indeed, such a meeting in July, 1913, confirming a mere nineteen dates between the coming August and June of the following year. The purpose of the list had been to protect the major open races and championships from encroachment, but the level of hope that was entertained can be gathered from the remark of the acting Honorary Secretary that he "would esteem it a favour if secretaries of both affiliated and non-affiliated clubs would notify him of supplementary events in order that this list, which will be published from time to time, may be kept up to date." The soliciting of esteemed favours is, perhaps, a weak basis for trying to exercise control; in any case, by three weeks later two new races had appeared, three had disappeared and three dates had changed; the post of fixture co-ordinator was always fraught.

The thoughts of many connected with walking – and even, eventually, of the Association itself – did, under the urging noted above, turn to the next Olympic Games, although there had not been much practical progress made when the First World War started and made something of a difference to sport in this country. The two Championships of the Association, the 20 miles and the "Junior" 10 miles, were suspended from 1915 to 1919 and from 1914 to 1919 respectively and the same Officers remained in post throughout the period of the war. However, in many ways, the First War had less impact "at home" than the

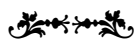
Second was to have twenty-five years later. There were, for example, far fewer German air raids, total casualties from which were about 5,000, against 280,000 in the Second World War. Also, there were not such significant shortages as were later brought about by enemy activity in the North Atlantic and there was never any serious threat of invasion, because the Germans and their allies never had a secure grip on the Channel coast. Above all else, despite the considerable personal effects of the loss of large numbers of servicemen overseas and the not always consistently brilliant performance of the British military commanders, there seems never to have been any doubt about the ultimate outcome. Even after the sudden withdrawal of Russia from the war following the revolution, faith in an allied victory – although no longer expected to be "by Christmas" – remained serenely unshaken.

The suspension of the administrative and National Championship activities of the R.W.A. was, then, more in the nature of a gesture of solidarity than of a serious difficulty brought on by wartime conditions. The number of races taking place during the war was maintained by the promotion of special events for servicemen, and the success of a few joint cross-country and walking meetings led to the establishment of the Metropolitan Athletic Committee to carry on the work. In February, 1916, in conjunction with a Belgrave Harriers cross-country race the R.W.A. itself put on a six mile walk for servicemen and attested men, that is, those who had "signed on the dotted line" but not yet been called up. Unfortunately for the "ordinary" servicemen, W.W.Hehir, who was to win the A.A.A. 7 miles in 1919 and the R.W.A. 20 miles in 1921 and 1922 and was described in a newspaper report as "the old H.H.H.³ and Surrey A.C. road walking crack", had that week joined the Royal Naval Air Service and won in 47:16.4. As we have noted elsewhere, club membership was highly flexible in those days, but it hardly seems likely that he would have joined up for another "pot"; Hehir was clearly one of the fortunate ones who survived hostilities. Thirty-three servicemen and attested men competed in this event, all of whom finished. One other such race

of the time lists seven walking judges for a six miles race, and not just anyone; that there was a determination to maintain standards even under such extremely difficult wartime circumstances is shown by their names; J.Butler, E.Knott, C.Owen, J.H.van Meurs, H.G.Brockman, J.A.Cottrell and A.J.Patrick, while the two timekeepers were J.Ogilvie and J.E.Fowler

Dixon, a remarkable panoply of dignitaries for forty-odd walkers in an ordinary race.

It can be seen, therefore, that despite the war walks went on where they could, that the temporarily largely inoperative Association did what *it* could and that, above all, there was an honest attempt to maintain peacetime standards.



CONSOLIDATION AND GROWTH

WALKING BETWEEN THE WARS

It is substantially true that an organisation, like a human child, has established by the age of five or six years what it will be like for many years to come and how it will develop. That was certainly true of the juvenile S.C.R.W.A./R.W.A.; by about 1912 it was well established in its way of operating, it knew where it was going and it set about getting there. It was, from the philosophical, organisational and administrative point of view, firm in its aims, if not yet entirely set in its ways, and it was largely a case of carrying on and trying to take the rest of the sport with it.

Before progress could continue along its preordained route, however, there was the interval of the First World War. Although, as we note in the previous chapter, the home effect of the "Great War" was not as profound as that of the conflict of 1939-1945, the disappearance of thousands of healthy young men to the battlefields of Western Europe – many of them, of course, never to return – did make its mark and the availability of races was considerably reduced in number if not in nature.

Administratively, there was a slowing down as well; just as in the Second World War R.Y.Martin was to serve as President from 1939 to 1945, so A.Fattorini broke the pattern of yearly change by remaining in office from 1914 to 1919 although, oddly, the General Secretaryship, usually held for several years at a time, had three incumbents, in O.V.A. Temple, H.G.Brockman and C.Otway, during the war years and the Treasurership also changed, passing from N.L.March to J.H.van Meurs in 1915. Since, in the century of its existence to date, the Association has had only twenty Secretaries (two of who were simultaneous and one of whom was a "stopgap" for a few months) and only *eleven* Treasurers, this was remarkable in a time of relative inactivity.

When real action recommenced and the Association's Championships were restarted, H.V.L. Ross, who had won the 20 miles in the last three pre-war contests, took the title for the sixth time. He had been the first winner (representing Tooting) in 1908, given them their second success in 1910, won for Middlesex in 1912 and Uxbridge the following two years and now greeted the peace by winning for Herne Hill; club membership was perhaps less rigid then than it is today!¹ In the same spirit of continuing as though there had been no break, R.Bridge won the A.A.A. 2 miles from 1912 to 1914 and again in 1919. Just as the English, as we have seen in Chapter 1, would not be denied their sport for long by either royal decree or Puritan disapproval, so similarly they seemed disinclined to let a war interrupt them for too long and carried on as before, although the world outside sport had changed more in those four years than probably in any other quadrennium since man had started to notice and record his circumstances.

A landmark in the extension of the R.W.A.'s influence came in 1920, when it was asked by the A.A.A. to appoint the judges for its track Championships, although remarkably it took another thirty-four years before the control situation was properly rationalised as between road and track walking by transfer of the latter to the R.W.A.

Many counties did their bit to get things going by introducing road championships in the middle range of ten miles or thereabouts, although some of them had been holding track championships since the early days; Essex, to name but one, had a two miles event as early as 1888 – won by a member of Chelmsford F.C. – although oddly enough it did not introduce a longer track race, and that only at seven miles, until 1958.

Internationally, walking was developing as well, as can be judged by the progress of the number of participating countries in the Olympic Games; in 1908 8, 1912 11, 1920 13, 1924 14. 1924 was marked by the controversy over the reinstatement of a disqualified walker² and the walk (previously at 10000m) was dropped for 1928, reappearing as a 50k in 1932, just in time for Tommy Green to win it. Nowadays, the events of those Paris Games in 1924 appear fantastic. Accounts of the incident vary from report to report and from reminiscence to reminiscence, but the most probable facts are that the Austrian Kuhnle was disqualified in his heat, the disqualification was overruled by the Jury of Appeal and he was allowed to walk in the second heat. In a fine gesture of solidarity, the judges refused to stand, the heat was postponed, another set of judges was assembled and the race finally took place. Whether the members of the new panel were intending to show yet more solidarity or were acting purely on grounds of walking technique can, of course, never be known; whatever the cause, they disqualified Kuhnle again. This time, there was no appeal, which is possibly just as well, as the organisers must by then have been running short of judges.

By the early twenties, the walking world in this country was fully back to normal; if anything, it was over-normal as there were no fewer than three "Brightons" (open races organised by Surrey W.C. and Polytechnic H. and the closed Stock Exchange event); the Brighton Road was as popular as ever, so popular, in fact that the London to Brighton *and back*, which had been in abeyance since 1907, was revived in 1921 and won by Edgar Horton in 19:50:41; he was one of only three finishers from the dozen starters, the everlasting Ross having retired along the way.

Three events that might be called business Championships were first held in the early years of the 1920s, the Police Barking to Southend, of a little over 32 miles, although it varied from time to time, the Civil Service Championships and the Insurance A.A. Championships. The Police event, although lasting close on fifty years was never quite the success that it might

have been, being always won by a "Met" man, which force, apart from victories from 1928 to 1930 by the Port of London Authority Police, also won all the team competitions.



Edgar Horton, by C.A.Evans

The old enthusiasm for point to point races was still, as the aforementioned Police event shows, very much alive and others were being founded over what would nowadays be quite terrifying courses, such as Norwich to Ipswich and Nottingham to Birmingham.

While the Association had dropped *Southern Counties* from its title ten years before, it was still very much centred on the Home Counties and had never held a Championship either north or west of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, until it summoned up the courage to take the 20 miles to Leicester in 1923, where it was won on home ground by Fred Poynton.³ He also won in 1924 at Windsor and 1925 at Derby. It was a tentative geographical venture and, even by the beginning of the Second World War after thirty years of existence, only eight of the 20 mile

Championships had been held away from the metropolis.

An illustration of the slow rate at which performances were improving, or, perhaps, of how stringency of supervision was being tightened – who can say which? – is that in a three-hour International Track Race in 1924 G.R. Goodwin, who had taken the silver medal in Paris a couple of weeks earlier, was the winner with 20 miles, 628 yards, sixty-six years after Westhall had performed his “feat” by walking *twenty-one* miles inside three hours in the icy winter winds of Newmarket Heath!

Many walkers have had their runs of success broken by circumstances beyond their control and Poynton was one who suffered thus, his hat-trick in the National 20 miles being terminated in 1926 by the General Strike, and he did not win again. In fact, the General Strike lasted only nine days, but the coal-miners, in solidarity with whom the Trades Union Congress had called out the other major unions remained out alone until November. Due to the shortage of fuel, travel was very difficult and many sporting events were cancelled or postponed; however, the “Junior” 10 miles escaped, providing the first occasion on which a “provincial” club won a National, Sheffield United H. & A.C. taking it, as they did again in 1928, sandwiching neighbouring Attercliffe A.C.’s win in 1927.

Although, as we have noted at the beginning of this chapter, the R.W.A. had, by the time of the First World War, more or less established the way it was to work, there remained some loose ends to be tidied. One of these concerned the Olympic Games; although the R.W.A. had always been listened to when questions of Olympic selection were on hand, it had previously not had any *official* position. This was corrected in 1928, when the Association obtained a seat on the Council of the British Olympic Association. The B.O.A. had as members over the years representatives of sports that either were not contested at the Olympic Games or were, like race walking, contested there but under the banner of another sport. These sports became in time “Associate

Members” of the B.O.A. until that category was abolished in the 1990s.

Nevertheless, at the time it was a step forward in the career of the R.W.A. although, of course, it coincided with the removal of race walking from the Games themselves. It did, however, give the Association an *entrée* to the corridors of Olympic power and it at once set about the business of restoring walking to the Games. As much of the trouble in 1924 had – as Ernest Neville subsequently discovered⁴ – been caused by the absence of a universally agreed definition of what walking actually *was*, it was apparent that the adoption of such a definition, acceptable to all countries, must precede the reintroduction.

The Association had, in 1922 and after some deliberation, produced “Walking is progression by steps so taken that the heel of the foremost foot must reach the ground before the toe of the other foot leaves it.” This wording can hardly be regarded as a particularly contentious statement, being merely a slightly formalised version of Teddy Knott’s remark to H.W. Innes⁵ that, “If you’re on the ground it’s walking; if you’re off the ground, it’s running.” It did not, however, find immediate acceptance, possibly because of the “heel and toe” aspect, which reintroduced the question of “shape” or “form”, and after four years’ gestation but not, seemingly, very much consultation, the I.A.A.F. produced its own Definition. This survived for only two years and was never used at top international level, because, while the Games of Amsterdam were in progress – without a walk – the Federation decided to abandon its own wording in favour of the British; having itself been revised, this had by then become “Walking is progression by steps so taken that unbroken contact with the ground is maintained”. Whether the R.W.A. adopted the I.A.A.F. definition or vice versa is doubtful, since Neville seems to have written both, but the position was now that Neville’s dictum ruled.⁶ The I.O.C., as everyone seemed to know what was what, felt it safe to reinstate a walk in the Games; this was to take effect in 1932 in Los Angeles and was to be at 50 kilometres.

Apart from the 1908 Games, with their strange combination of 3500m and 10 miles, the longest race had been at 10000m; the hope was evidently that problems of *lifting* would be eliminated. With a winning time in 1932 of 4:50:10 and the last man home, the Estonian Maski, taking 6:19:00 this hope was fulfilled.

It does seem to have dawned upon the I.A.A.F. that it did not really understand race walking and it established a Walking Commission, to which it subsequently referred all matters relating to the vexatious event. Strongly supported by W.F. May, who had been President of the R.W.A. from 1922-1923, Neville, himself an ex-President, had done most of the work at home and abroad that had led to the three achievements of an accepted definition, walking back in the Olympics and an I.A.A.F. Commission, and it was only appropriate that he should have been the British representative.

In a series of historical articles in *Race Walking Record* in 1971⁷, John Keown wrote of "The Golden Thirties" and that is a very fair description of a decade when everything went well for race walking in this country, with British walkers taking first place in each of the Olympic Games of 1932 and 1936; since the 1936 Champion, Harold Whitlock, had followed up by winning the European Championship in 1938 and peace was greeted in 1946 by second and third places in Europe by Harry Forbes and Charlie Megnin, there is no reason to suppose that 1940 and 1944 would not have carried the triumphal march into a second decade.

The first of the great stars of the period was Tommy Green, who had been born in 1894 and whose Olympic success – and the remarkable background against which it was won – is described in Chapter 31, and he indeed started the 1930s with a bang, winning the inaugural National 50k when the R.W.A. finally introduced one, the Bradford, the Manchester to Blackpool, the Nottingham to Birmingham, the Hastings to Brighton, the London to Brighton, the Sunderland to Darlington and the Milan 100k, over 350 miles of top-class racing; the *shortest* of these races was the 50k. He clearly

knew what had to be done to become supreme at the distance – regard it as the least distance to race seriously, although in the same year he did a little "speed work" by finishing third in the National 20 miles.

The continued growth of the Association outside the metropolitan area called for a change in organisational structure, as it was clearly impossible for representatives from far points of the country to attend monthly meetings in central London. Whereas the A.A.A. upon its foundation had taken in the new organisations in the midlands and north, the Southern Counties' Road Walking Association had not been started with an eye on the far horizons of England and when it had gone national in its infancy it had done very little to deal with *national* matters; it still seemed to be a southern – even a south-eastern – body with satellites. This was addressed by way of a radical constitutional review that changed a Metropolitan body with ambitions into a *truly* National one; it also changed a fairly cosy Metropolitan committee into a National giant.

The original 1907 structure with a nineteen-man committee now became a General Committee with three principal officers (President, Secretary and Treasurer), ten Vice Presidents, twelve Club representatives elected at the A.G.M. and three representatives of each Area, a total of thirty-four; in addition, any Past President who had attended one General Committee meeting in a year became a member of it for the following year. In parallel, Area organisations were created in the Midlands and North. This extraordinarily elaborate and highly cumbersome arrangement was amended less than a year later by reducing the Vice Presidents in number from ten to eight but *increasing* the Area representatives to one for each five Clubs in the Area, with a minimum of three per Area. Astonishingly, similar arrangements were still in existence thirty years later, although by that time the directly-elected Club representatives had been abolished. By this time the numbers of affiliations were as follows: Midlands 14 (with three representatives) North 29 (five), South 86 (seventeen) and Wales, which had, by that time



Los Angeles, 1932 Green (98) already at the front

become a separate Area, 9 (three); additionally, six nationally affiliated bodies were given one seat each, a Championships Honorary Secretary had been created and *all* Past Presidents were members, a total of forty-six members, plus as many Past Presidents as cared to attend! As the Association did continue to make progress, it can only be supposed that they did not all turn up for the meetings.

This astounding behemoth was to meet four times each year, moving round the country. Given that the Midland and Northern Committees had had delegated to them the powers to control the sport locally, it really is difficult to see the need for the enormity of the General Committee. One of the reasons for its size, of course, apart from its national duties, was that, despite the starting organisation's being different from that of the A.A.A., it chose to adopt a similar policy in its first stage of expansion by not having a Southern Area Committee in parallel with the Midland and Northern Area ones, but requiring the General

Committee itself to act in that capacity. It was, not for the first time, a recipe for administrative complexity.

However, while the A.A.A. continued without a Southern Committee from 1880 until 1883 and then had an *appointed* one, not having proper elected Area government in the south until eighteen years later, the R.W.A. saw the folly of its ways much more rapidly and the Southern Area, exactly on a par with the Midlands and North, was established in 1932. Although the responsibility for looking after Southern interests directly was now gone, the obvious opportunity to rationalise the structure was not taken and General Committee remained gargantuan.

That the Association managed to function at all with this structure is a remarkable testimony to the administrative ability – and, no doubt, patience and forbearance – of the Officers, then, as now, all volunteers working in their own time.⁸

The Midlands and North soon got to work, organising Area Championships at 50k in the North and 10 miles in the Midlands and the North even went so far as to have a separate North-Eastern Championship over 10 miles.

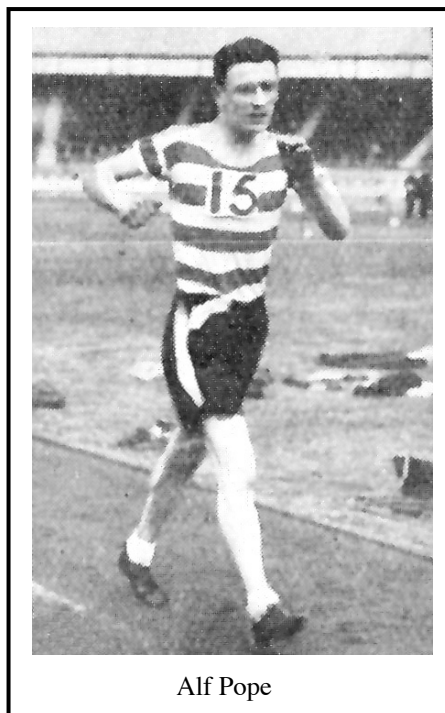
It may have been the sheer strain of operating such a monster, or it may have been a desire to involve more people in organisation of events – rather than simply organisation of the organisation – but, whatever the cause, the Association decided that it would in future organise nothing but its own Championships and would also discontinue its Open 7 Miles and one or two other events, such as the occasional Novices' Race. This was a perfectly rational decision, as there were so many other races available; in particular, the idea that a Governing Body should hold *novices'* events – a job much better left to Clubs, which would be able to follow up new local walkers – had always seemed anomalous and no-one missed them.

Reference is made elsewhere in this volume to the opportunity provided for the in-form man to gather in records when there were far more recognised than there are now and the exploits of such as Griffiths, Larner, Neilson and Thompson have been noted. Performances of that sort could scarcely be achieved except in a specially put-up event and such an opportunity was provided in 1931, when Alf Pope established new figures for five, six, seven and eight miles, 10000 metres and one hour at the White City, thus setting six records in sixty minutes.

As Appendix XII shows, the first two National 50k Championships had been individual only, with no team competition, in contrast to the 20 miles, which had initially been conceived as a team event only, although the decision was subsequently changed. The 50k was brought into line with the other two championships for the 1932 staging. The team event was won by Birmingham W.C. and, as the 20 miles went to Derby and the "Junior" 10 miles to Sheffield, there was a non-metropolitan clean sweep, not for the last time, either, as the

emphasis was all the time shifting to the provinces.

The first real attempt within the R.W.A. to do something practical about walking in schools occurred in 1933, when the Southern Area considered a proposal to encourage the inclusion of walks in the English Schools' Championships. As John Keown writes in one of his useful historical sketches, "The remarks of H.C. Lomax (Surrey W.C.) in the debate which followed illustrate the attitude of the Association to schoolboy walks in the pre-war era. He said, 'Walking for Schoolboys was to be strongly deprecated.'" Mr. Lomax seems to have carried the day, for no action was taken and thirty years were to pass before anything positive was done.



Alf Pope

This was not the only attempt to look forward and expand, but the other was pursued by the Association with considerably more enthusiasm; the idea was to have a 50k walk in the Empire Games and the R.W.A., at the South's urging, did what it has often done when a knotty subject has arisen and set up a Sub-

Committee of three senior members. Although the idea had support, in England at least, again it took thirty years before anything was achieved. It might be thought from these two examples and the rapid success in returning a walk to the Olympic Games that the time to achieve any particular development in the sport was quite independent of the Association's enthusiasm.

In similar vein, the R.W.A. in 1936 decided to approach the A.A.A. with a bid to take responsibility for track as well as road walking, something that did not actually occur until September, 1954. The idea again came from the South which, naturally enough, set up a Sub-Committee (this time seven strong) to develop the idea and forward it to the General Committee.

On the other hand, while backs were being turned on the possibility of developing the next generation of walkers – presumably because it was felt that no particular steps were necessary and that mature walkers would continue to appear spontaneously as they always had – the Southern Area embarked on a scheme to hold a midsummer league of six walks at four, six and eight miles. For some reason, League competitions, with one or two exceptions such as – pre-eminently – the Essex League and the Midland, Northern and Manx Winter Leagues, have never been quite the success that might have been expected. Leagues in which the walker simply accumulates points from “independent” races in which he was going to compete anyway have proved marginally less unpopular than the type proposed in 1933, but even this variety fell flat when attempted in the South in the 1990s. The 1930 version met the same fate and, like many an apparently good idea, never enjoyed prosperity and rapidly disappeared.

Unable to resist the temptation to introduce new ideas even where there was no apparent need for them, the R.W.A. instituted the Hammond Cup for an Inter-District⁹ competition held in conjunction with the National 20 miles.

One innovation that did work was the Inter-Counties' Match, raced over 10 miles; it had a slow start – from the point of view of support, rather than speed, as Alf Pope of Essex won in 78:04 – but then picked up and became quite popular. It was probably a little exasperating for the majority of the competing counties as Middlesex won from 1934 to 1939 and then, when it restarted after the war (1940 to 1947 having been missed), from 1948 to 1950; only a victory by Yorkshire in 1951 stopped Middlesex from taking their run into double figures. Competition was for the News of the World Cup, presented by the then respectable and sportingly inclined newspaper, and scoring was initially six-a-side. In 1948, the event became a *Championship* at four-a-side and from then on was scored from the result of the National 10 miles; it was later expanded to take in all age groups and both sexes, being generally held in conjunction with an Open meeting.

Another special race to attempt records was promoted in the autumn of 1935 at White City and 5th October stands fair comparison with another October day a quarter of a century later when Don Thompson and Hew Neilson were demolishing the record book. It was certainly Whitlock's day at White City as, in an eight-hour race, he set new marks for all miles from 30 to 51 and all hours from 5 to 8, a total of twenty-six, although, of all those figures, the only one recognised by the I.A.A.F. – presumably because it was about 50 kilometres – was 30 miles! It is indeed unfortunate that no-one appears to have had the foresight to record times at the generally recognised metric distances or Whitlock would assuredly have disposed of several other marks.

Hopes were high for the Olympic year of 1936 and the general feeling seems to have been that whatever might happen Harold Whitlock, winner of the National 50k in 1933 and 1935, was a certainty for selection, with Lloyd Johnson, champion in 1934, not far off. After those two, it was open among half-a-dozen or more. Although there was no trial as such, the selections were made following the 1936 National in Derby. As predicted by practically

all commentators, Whitlock won, but finished only a few seconds in front of Johnson with Lancashire Walking Club's Hopkins less than half a minute away. Johnson, however, had been disqualified so near the finish that there had been no time to remove him from the race, so Hopkins moved up to second and F.E. Bentley of Belgrave took the bronze medal.

It had always been clearly understood that the National Championship was *not* a trial and the selectors took the wise decision to disregard the disqualification and name the first three over the line. It was some compensation for both Whitlock and Johnson who had been the obvious candidates for the 1934 European Championships 50k in Turin when there had, remarkably, been no British walkers, but it was hard luck for Bentley who lost the place to a man who had beaten him only by infringing the rules; thanks to the advent of war, he never had another Olympic chance. Perhaps it was some compensation to him that he was in the winning team. There may have been more compensation, although possibly of a bitter kind, in 1938 when he beat Lloyd Johnson to the tape, as Whitlock took the title for the fifth of his six times, and was again in Belgrave's winning team.

There appears to have been some belief within the Association that the Rules pertaining to judging – that is, to the action of judges, not to the definition of the faults for which they were looking – were insufficiently clear. The standing regulation provided that “Judges shall disqualify any competitor they consider fails to comply with the definition”. That seems, in all conscience, plain enough, but the R.W.A. chose to amend it to read, “Any competitor whose mode of progression fails to comply with the definition of walking to the entire satisfaction of any Judge or Judges shall be disqualified.” There is no evidence still available to show whose idea this modification was or how the R.W.A. convinced itself that this represented an improvement; it still *meant* the same and the importing of *plural* Judges into the wording when one was sufficient seems in retrospect merely to have clouded the issue. Could it have been that there was some feeling in favour of

Larner's idea that the judges should confer in the case of a doubtful walker?

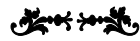
Whether or not this advisory note served to illuminate or confuse the thinking of the judges, two incidents in 1937 drew yet more attention to the question of disqualification and how the judges operated. Firstly, in the A.A.A. seven miles, two Scandinavian stars were disqualified, although no-one seems to have thought very much either of the “mode of progression” of the holder, Mikaelsson, a Swede, who nevertheless won. Secondly, and even more sensationally, the Olympic Champion himself, Harold Whitlock, was “pulled” in the National 20 miles. The first mutterings began to be heard that it was unfair for one judge to be able single-handedly to disqualify a competitor, the start of another debate that would rumble wearisomely on and on, internationally and domestically, for years and years to come. Eventually change did come, but it is fair to wonder whether any doubts and complaints would have arisen had the victim been anyone else. It had, after all, not happened in 1934 in the similar case of Lloyd Johnson.

Notwithstanding this remarkable and uncharacteristic setback, Whitlock still won the National 50k, gaining selection for the European Championship in Stockholm, where he was again first man home. If optimism had been high before about British Olympic chances, it was by now practically stratospheric. Whitlock was the Olympic and European Champion, had won Nationals and Opens by the handful and held scores of records. What could stop him in Tokyo? Quite possibly nothing *would* have stopped him, but, of course, the 1940 Games did not take place. The age of consolidation and growth of walking in this country came to an abrupt halt as Japan invaded China and Germany launched an attack on Europe very different from a sporting one.

Given how many died during the Second World War, the interruption of the sporting careers of a few men may seem a triviality, as indeed it is. However, not only individual careers but also organizational ones were upset

and it took some time for a full recovery after peace came in 1945. Given the disruption of domestic life in general and of sport in

particular, getting things back onto an even keel would prove difficult and in some aspects of life it did not happen.



MATURITY

WAR, CONCERN AND SUCCESS

Race Walking was not at a complete standstill during the war, but some of the events ring strange to present-day ears. In fact, the very first race reported in the infant *Race Walking Record* of November, 1941, was a five mile double match at Edgware on the 20th September between the Metropolitan Police and the British Workers' Sports Association and between the Police and Highgate Harriers. The Police won the first match, nine-a-side, and Highgate the second, fourteen-a-side. At the same venue, a three-and-a-half miles Inter-Unit A.R.P.¹ match, with three to score, was won by Harrow Rescue Station from South Kensington Stretcher Party with Kensington Rescue Station third. Other reported events included Metropolitan Police against Essex, three Open 5 miles organised by the Southern Committee itself (one of which had an impressive fifty-three finishers), Metropolitan Police against London Fire Services, the result of which, as received by *Record*, was somewhat lacking in detail because "Sgt.Clark reports that someone 'snaffled' the scoring sheets after the event and although the Yard is on the job, nothing has yet come to light", the Highgate Harriers Open 7 and Open 20 and the Watford and District Peace Memorial Hospital Saturday Fund Open 5 Miles, won by Hew Neilson in 40:04, with the ubiquitous Alf McSweeney fifth.

Walkers, as has been noted elsewhere in this book, have always had a strong appetite for controversy and with "public" newspaper space severely limited, *Record* gave them somewhere to let off steam. Debates flared up on the favourite old chestnuts of second-claim qualification (although this time with regard to Business House and Service teams), whether the judges should consider "style" when assessing a man's walking and whether the introduction of team scoring by aggregate time rather than aggregate position would eliminate last-stretch

scrambles and wholesale disqualification; like most such debates, they tended to generate a great deal of steam before fading out with a feeble splutter.

Perhaps walking enthusiasts had not enough to do during the War – or maybe they felt repressed – but "bright" new ideas were numerous and often peculiar and *Record* carried an item dealing with the difficulties of recording and judging in track races with more than fifty competitors, with the suggestion that if such races went off in two sections of "short markers" and "long markers" there would be room for even more entries and that each section might thereby have room for thirty or thirty-five participants without distressing the officials.

The Southern Committee itself, worried about "style" and the Rules, organised a "Brains Trust" on Judging; subsequently, Grayson Stone, shortly to become President of the Association, contributed his thoughts on *The Bent Knee* and whether judges should take any notice. His conclusion maintained the ambivalent attitude about which Innes and "Expert" had complained forty years and more before: "I would say – Race Walking is Walking so long as it looks like Walking but to be a good judge one must know also when the competitor ceases to comply with the definition." Not a lot of progress, perhaps, in half a century.

Things got back to normal remarkably rapidly at the end of the War, with the first National Championship arranged for March, 1946, and the European Championships in Oslo in September. Even before that, however, Eastleigh Sports Club and others organised a "Victory" 50k from their home town via Southampton to Lyndhurst and back; such contests had evidently been missed, for it turned out to be a great success, Forbes, Lloyd Johnson,

Megnin and the Whitlock brothers finishing within ten minutes. Swept away by the euphoria of the moment, *Record* devoted nearly two pages of its October, 1945 edition to the race. The first eighteen months of peace were indeed a period of frenzied activity as everything returned to the pre-war level, with the added bonus of an interest in walking in the Services.

Enthusiastic rebuilding did not, of course, stifle debate and argument; indeed, it may have increased the inclination toward mild eccentricity, spurred on by a desire for some kind of fresh start. Well in keeping with the old enthusiasm for repeating the blindingly obvious in an attempt to clarify what was already explicit, R.C. Mawbey, President of the R.W.A., produced an extraordinary statement or lament – it is really difficult to know what it was meant to be – that “Judges are reminded that if they are not satisfied that a man is Walking, the Competitor must be disqualified. This R.W.A. Instruction to Judges applies to all Walks.” One is reminded of Innes’ strictures on judges who spent their time standing at corners or chatting in brakes instead of bustling about and doing real work, and might be excused for wondering, if they needed such an Instruction, what the judges can otherwise have thought they were there for.

Perhaps impressed by the progress of *Race Walking Record* and mindful of its value – or perhaps, on the other hand, to try to keep it under control – in November, 1949, the R.W.A. finally took over ownership from the Southern Area. The journal had, after all, regarded itself as national since 1947 and had, during the war years, more or less done the Association’s work for it, and the situation had to be recognised.

Finance was, as ever, a problem for the Association and supporters of the sport were invited to become Honorary Members of the R.W.A. There appears to have been no fixed “fee”, although upon its introduction in 1939 it had been set at 5/-, which seems thereafter to have been accepted as a minimum because payments of that amount and upward are recorded, the older generation often making

their contributions in guineas or parts thereof; one list of *new* Honorary Members in the early fifties contained nearly sixty names and recorded total payments of almost £60. There was no confidentiality and the level of generosity was there for all to see.

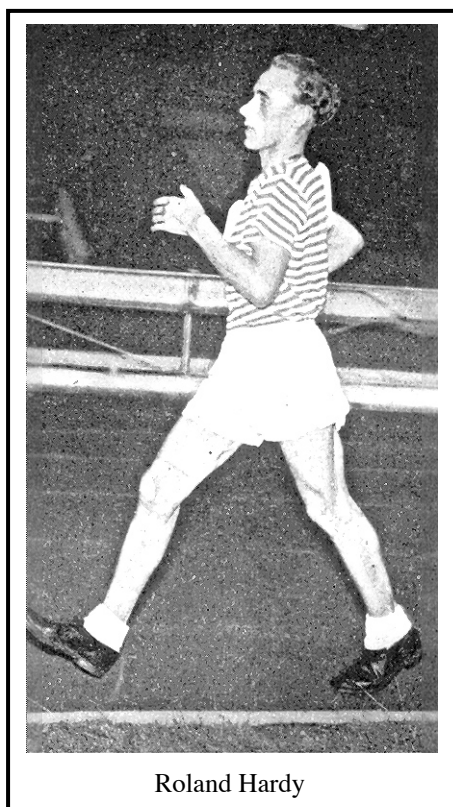
Just as the 1908 Olympics had been “picked up” by London for want of another city to run them, so were those of 1948, although with rather less success, the only notable achievement being Lloyd Johnson’s 50k bronze medal. The most noteworthy feature of those Games was probably that they were broadcast – at least in part – on the newly revived B.B.C. television service at 405 lines in black and white.



Lol Allen

The next big international event, the European Championships of 1950, was particularly interesting, from the “home” perspective, because of the disqualification in

the final of the 10000m of Lol Allen and Roland Hardy, who had finished second and third. They were disqualified the day after the race because, according to Harold Whitlock's report, "This had apparently happened on the twentieth lap and was not immediately acted upon as the Chief Judge was of the opinion that the Judges concerned had made an error and were in fact not in a position to judge at the point where the supposed irregularity had taken place. The jury however ruled otherwise." The same fate befell the pair in the Olympics in 1952, making it another barren year.



Roland Hardy

Being an Olympic year, 1952 saw the now familiar business of a tremendously optimistic approach followed by a puzzled reaction at lack of success; in this case, the bewilderment had some substance, due to the surprising disqualifications of Hardy and Allen in the track 10000 metres. Some reservations had previously been expressed at the selection for the 50 kilometres of Harold Whitlock, R.W.A. General

Secretary and National Coach, but, as he had finished third in the National and came in eleventh at Helsinki, beating the second "National" man, Don Tunbridge, by five minutes, no great fuss ensued. An equal surprise was that "even Coleman – the equal in elegance, perfection in hip action and foot placing of any British or Continental walker of the past decade – is reported to have been warned."²

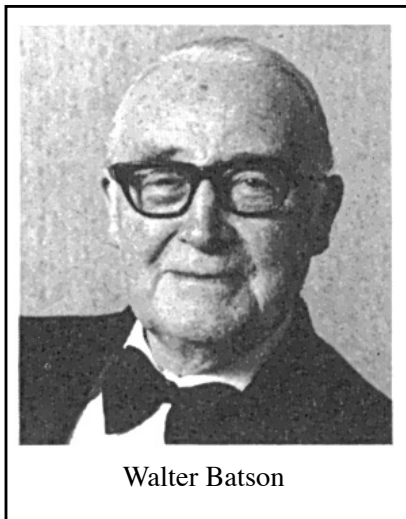
The occurrence of the Games revived the old enthusiasm for multiplying the walks and C.Hatch of Lancashire Walking Club wrote to *Record* urging the "active and energetic R.W.A. to remove the anomaly of having only two Olympic Walks". He proposed the provision of races at 50 kilometres, 10 and 20 miles on the road and 1, 2 and 5 miles on the track, "to be judged, where the judges do not agree, by the verdict of the slow motion camera". The R.W.A. did not rise to the challenge – or bait – which was probably as well, given the likely response to the idea of the I.O.C.

Just before the Olympic Games, but not to be used *at* them, the International Walking Commission had produced a new set of Rules which contained a very curious instruction to the Judges:

1 Definition: Walking is progression by steps so taken that unbroken contact with the ground is maintained. **2** Judges of Walking must be careful to observe that the advancing foot of the Walker makes contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground, and in particular, that during the period of each step, in which a foot is on the ground, the leg shall be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) at least for one moment.

The older generation must have had a moment of *déjà vu*, as they recalled the long-gone arguments about whether judges should consider "form" or "style". The R.W.A., in a move that was to have repercussions later on, decided not to change the "domestic" definition and, furthermore, to suggest that, for "clarity and application" paragraphs 1 and 2 should be combined. The other innovation, that

disqualification would henceforth require the agreement of three judges (or of two, if one was the Chief) was accepted, due very largely to the intervention and advocacy of Walter Batson, who had been President in 1949 and was one of a long line of police officers holding positions in the Association over the years. The debate on the International Definition would rumble for years; indeed, it continues to be heard.



Walter Batson

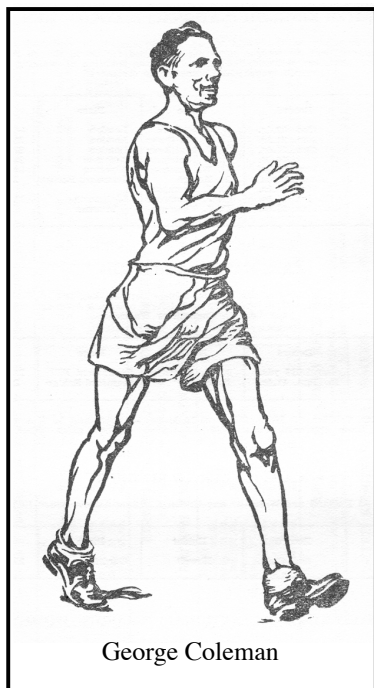
It was not only in this country that road races were then capable of being held over what would nowadays be suicidal courses. The inaugural Belgian 50k Championship in 1954 was reported as having been held on the main Antwerp-Brussels road with the finish at the Heysel Stadium. This, and other items of overseas news published in *Record*, led to letters that were still appearing decades later, some saying how interesting it was to know what was happening abroad but most complaining at the waste of space. As McSweeney himself remarked from time to time, Editors are Never Right; he forthwith *increased* the amount of overseas news, probably to irritate his critics.

Since 1907, a division had existed between road and track walking, the former being controlled by the Road Walking Association and the latter by the Amateur Athletic

Association. Before 1907, of course, road walking had not been controlled by anyone, while the A.A.A.'s "control" of track walking, which was more or less by default and lacked any definition of what it was supposed to be, was administrative rather than technical and seems largely to have hinged upon the relentless persecution of undercover professionals. It was very illogical and very English that such a situation should have existed for nearly fifty years and it was generally agreed that the two branches should be brought together.

Since the great majority – perhaps 95% – of walking was on the road, the sensible thing was for the R.W.A. to control everything and in 1954 the A.A.A. finally recognised this, gave up its claims to track walking and transferred it to the R.W.A., which had only to change its name to *Race Walking Association* and carry on. Even the bringing of logic to the situation – which was a largely amicable affair – carried its own flash of compromise, because the R.W.A. promptly asked the A.A.A. to continue to promote its own track championships under a sort of informal licensing arrangement. However, the unification of road and track was now effected and all that remained was to bring women into the fold, which was more easily wished for than done. Uniting the men had taken nearly half a century; uniting the sexes would take another quarter.

As usual, there were complaints in British walking circles about the Olympic selections in 1956 – then, as now, outside the control of the R.W.A. – and some agitation succeeded in having George Coleman added to the 20k team with Roland Hardy and Stan Vickers; the newly empowered Association was keen to show that, although it had no authority, it still had both expertise and influence. As is well known, the 50k was actually won by a British "export", Norman Read of New Zealand; it is also well known that Don Thompson's first ever failure to finish made him determined not to have the same experience again! Thompson's team mates Albert Johnson (eighth) and Eric Hall (ninth) fared better.



The old tradition of local fêtes and festivals was still in existence and many organisations included a walk in their celebrations. The year 1957, for example, saw promotions at the Chertsey British Legion Annual Sports, the Market Bosworth Show, the Harlow New Town Labour Party Fête and the Kempston Show (a two miles handicap), as well as the “ordinary” open meetings put on by company and industry sports associations. All these races, needless to say, were on top of the many Club events and the County, Area and National Championships and, for the distance men, the traditional point-to-points.

The 1956 Olympic Games came and went with the highest British placing Stan Vickers’ fifth position in the 20k, making two successive Olympiads without a British medal, although, as we show in the chapter on medallists, this was about to change abruptly as a sort of Golden Age set in; over a period of ten years from 1958, at the top international games and championships, there were to be seven individual golds, four silvers and four bronzes,

together with one set of team medals each of gold, silver and bronze.

Domestically, however, the R.W.A. was still rather less concerned with the gold and more with the silver and copper, with the closing bank balance in 1957 down to £148/18/2, £40 below the previous year’s figure. As may well be imagined, this had the Honorary Treasurer somewhat worried – as Honorary Treasurers generally are – and he called attention to the need to increase income, there being no obvious way of reducing expenditure.

The Welsh Area (Wales then still being organisationally an “Area” of England) wanted to increase international competition by having a 20k walk of what it vaguely termed “National character” in conjunction with the Empire Games in Cardiff in 1958 but failed to attract sufficient support among the other countries and the idea had to wait another eight years to come to maturity, largely then through English promotion and advocacy.

Not only were the fairs and festivals, together with the basic Club races, still going well, as mentioned above – for example, on the 14th December, 1957, in the London area alone, five races produced ninety-two finishers between them and the year finished on the 28th of the month with inter-club 7s at Wimbledon, Chigwell Row and Regents Park mustering a hundred and thirteen – but the great Opens, certainly in southern England, also remained immensely popular. In the latter part of 1957, the Highgate Harriers One Hour attracted 229 starters and the Open 7 Miles events were, if anything, even better supported than before; the Highgate (even though it was more or less the same as the One Hour) had 224 starters, the Enfield 179 and the Belgrave 230,³ numbers to be dreamed of half a century later or, indeed, half a century earlier.

The Counties were functioning strongly at the same period; on 22nd February the following year, ten of them staged their 10 miles championships with 184 finishers, although there was a marked discrepancy between

Middlesex, Surrey and Essex with 41, 38 and 37, and Hampshire, Staffordshire and Wiltshire with 6, 4 and 3. Bedfordshire shared their event with Hertfordshire and, presumably to make it fair as between the two counties, the course chosen was Luton to Harpenden and back.

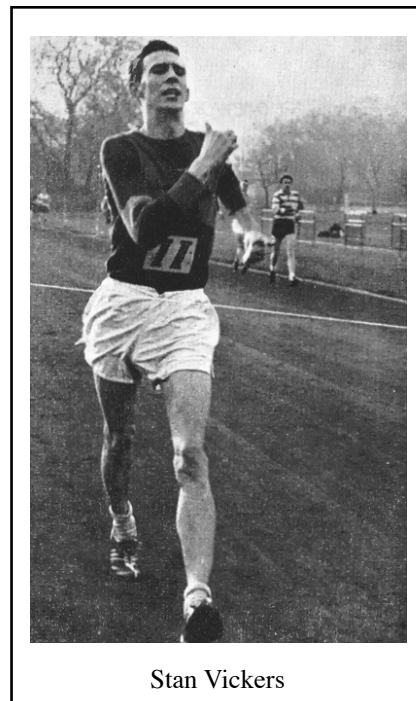
Two milestones were reached early in 1958. Firstly, club and association affiliations to the R.W.A. totalled a hundred clubs for the first time, with 3 National, 10 Midland, 15 Northern, 67 Southern and 5 Welsh. Secondly, for the first time there appeared an "official" book on *Race Walking*, written by Harold Whitlock and published by the Amateur Athletic Association. This work, which was to be followed by later editions written by Julian Hopkins and Peter Markham, was a fairly pricey volume at 6/6 for sixty-two pages (the same price as a six months' subscription to *Record* and, as it happens, with about the same number of pages) but was good value for money, not only *written* by a top man but including several well annotated pictures of other top men in action and explanatory diagrams. No doubt some of the cost of the production was met by the two advertisements for Ovaltine upon which, one gathers, the previous five Olympic Games and the conquests of Everest and Kanchenjunga had been based!

Some flicker of interest was being shown at the Universities, with three affiliated to the R.W.A., and it was even possible to stage a match in which the R.A.F. beat the Combined Universities, all of whose walkers came from either Oxford or Cambridge. Much support was still being shown, too, for the Nijmegen marches, with strong teams from the R.W.A., the Metropolitan Police and the Stock Exchange taking part.⁴

Then, as now, Presidents' Appeals were vital to the Association and the 1958 A.G.M. heard that Norman Easlea's Appeal had realized £263/18/6, easing the Treasurer's concerns of a year before.⁵

The same meeting agreed, despite the cost, to the establishment of the International Trophy, to recognise exceptional performances in

representative colours, the first recipient being Stan Vickers, who was awarded it for his brilliant victory in that year's European Championship, where he had been only five seconds short of beating Leonid Spirin, the Olympic Champion, by two minutes; when they had met in Melbourne two years earlier, with Vickers fifth, the margin had been fifty-seven seconds in the Soviet walker's favour.



Stan Vickers

One of the features of the late 1950s was the battle in race after race between Stan Vickers and Ken Matthews, with a continuous exchange of victories in the shorter distance races, while the longer ones, as often as not, would have made one feel safe in perming any three from Thompson, Hall, Misson, Read and Goodall.

There were a couple of other innovations at about this period. The London County Council agreed to institute a 10 mile championship, restricted to those born, resident, working or undergoing education in its area; the championship outlasted the County Council and the Greater London Council after it and lingered a few years in the care of the Westminster City

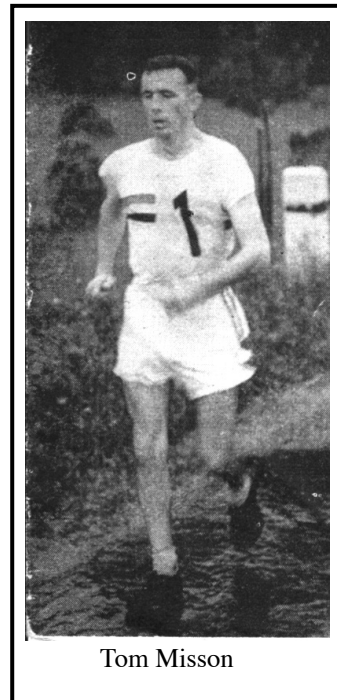
Council⁶ before being taken over in a non-championship guise by Cantlum Athletic Club and then Loughton Athletic Club. The race was originally in Victoria Park where, the previous year, the National 10 miles had been held. “the first important race”, as *Record* pointed out, to be held in the East End, which was presumably thought to be a bit daring.

The advertisement for this new enterprise appeared in January, 1959, in Edition 200 of *Record*, which contained also a list of the official recommendations from the R.W.A. on Dangerous Walking. Race promoters were urged to have their events led by a bicycle carrying in front a notice “Race in Progress” with another bicycle at the rear carrying a similar notice behind. It was additionally recommended that at road races the leading official “should issue a reminder to competitors at the start of the event in the following terms; ‘Gentlemen, in the interests of yourself and all other road users you must at all times exercise every care not to expose yourself and others to danger.’” It was indeed a very far cry from twenty-first century risk assessment, and they were still not insured!

The L.C.C.’s innovation was to be welcomed of course but, as there had also for several years been corresponding events for general athletics and for cross-country, the new development was hardly surprising. The other innovation certainly was; the R.W.A. Southern Area Dinner at The Feathers in Westminster, was, the Committee announced, “now open for the attendance of Ladies”. One supposes that they relied upon gentlemen to pay their half-guineas for them to hear a list of guest speakers of whom the chief was Stan Vickers.

The 1960s opened with optimism about the forthcoming Rome Olympics and the General Secretary, L.W. “Timber” Woodcock, reckoned that Vickers and Matthews at twenty kilometres and Thompson and Misson at fifty all had prospects of medals. His prediction was not too far wide of the mark, as it turned out in the September heat; Thompson indeed won and Vickers was third. In the coldness of an

English January, Woodcock had been worried about the heat, which had put paid to Thompson’s chances in Melbourne. How Thompson avoided the same fate this time is now history and it was Matthews who failed to finish; his day, however, was to come four years later in Tokyo.



Tom Misson

Concerned at the dangers posed by increasing road traffic, the R.W.A. introduced an Insurance Scheme, at a premium of 5/- a year for each walker or official and this innovation remained in existence for many years until the Amateur Athletic Association introduced a more comprehensive one, although the R.W.A. scheme continued in parallel for some time after that. It is, unfortunately, not possible to determine how many claims – and for what – were made on the insurers, General Accident Assurance, who undertook, in return, to pay £1,000 for death, loss of a limb, etc., and 104 weeks at £10 per week for a man’s “total disablement from engaging in or giving attention to profession or occupation”, provided that any of these resulted from being struck by a vehicle while racing, training, officiating or acting as an attendant.

The pioneering days of fiasco had not entirely passed from the realm of race walking, for the *News of the World* had seen – or had convinced itself that it had seen – a requirement for a “march” of 110 miles from Birmingham to London and it promoted one for Service personnel on the 18th and 19th December, 1960. The event was for men *and* women, which was rather “advanced” at the time, so advanced, indeed, that the R.W.A. establishment and *Race Walking Record* could not bring themselves to recognise the enormity of the innovation and comment on it. The walk was a “pairs” march; uniform was worn and all refreshment had to be carried by the competitors. The rules stipulated that there was to be no “doubling, jogging or running”; contact was to be maintained and judges would be there to ensure that it was; how the judging was to be managed is not clear. An encouraging 114 pairs left Birmingham at 9:30 a.m. on the Friday but most had dropped out by Dunchurch, just south of Rugby and a mere thirty miles into the journey.

A mere dozen saw dawn on Saturday and the newspaper’s expectation of an 11:30 a.m. finish at Regent’s Park (26 hours for 110 miles, note) proved an underestimate by several hours, as the first man home, Sgt. Banwell of the Parachute Regiment, a veteran of the Nijmegen Marches, recorded 30:17:03. He did not count anyway, having started without his “pair”, and the actual winners were close on three and a half hours behind him. Two men who had lost their pairs on the way took between 34 and 35 hours and the only other valid couple, a Flying Officer and Sergeant from the Royal Air Force, were timed precisely but cagily at “40:00:00 (approx)”. So, seven of the 228 starters actually finished; if the aim had been to intimidate the Soviet Union with a display of British military grit and toughness, the Kremlin may have been less than terrorised. Nevertheless, the *News of the World*, still convincing itself that there was a “market” for that class of event, said that it would do it again in the spring, if there were sufficient interest; there apparently wasn’t.

It is fascinating to see how often the same matters crop up in the administration and

politics of race walking, sometimes after years of dormancy; three men from Worcester Harriers were debarred from the 1960 Midland 10 miles as it had been reported that they had taken part in an event not under A.A.A. Laws, although there seems to have been no suggestion of illicit payments, and other walkers were warned to be careful. How Walter Rye would have relished this last-ditch stand against such ungentlemanliness and mingling with the distasteful labouring classes!

Into the 1960s “institutional” walking was still alive and well and the London Midland Region of British Railways could raise twenty four starters for their seven miles championship, although the winning time was only 66:07.

As though the excitement of an Olympic Year were not enough, the R.W.A. in 1960 turned its attention seriously to the British Empire and Commonwealth Games, writing to the Honorary Secretary of the A.A.A. and to the thirty-eight member territories of the Federation to tout for support, which was readily forthcoming from Australia and roused the interest of Hong Kong, Trinidad and Sierra Leone. One of the curious grounds put forward was that “non-utilitarian events” like the javelin, hammer, shot and, as it then was, hop, step and jump, were provided for and it was therefore unreasonable for “the basis of human locomotion” to be excluded. Despite many assurances of support for the idea, when England actually moved the proposal at a Commonwealth Games Federation Council meeting it was not even seconded and so could not be discussed and as a result it fell. Woodcock, who had done much of the fruitless work, directed mainly towards his worldwide walking contacts, saw that it was necessary to work in future by way of the various national bodies; it is now history that another four years of toil at last paid off.

The peculiarly artificial idea of Honorary Membership (which had to be paid for) had been quietly dropped in favour of a straightforward President’s Appeal and the income seems to have been about the same, the

new idea no doubt being easier to administer. The Presidents still did not feel called upon to indicate any particular purposes for their Appeals (which at least had the merit of avoiding arguments about the worthiness of the causes), the money simply disappearing into the general accounts of the Association, and it was not until thirty years later that the idea of devoting the proceeds to a "project" was adopted.

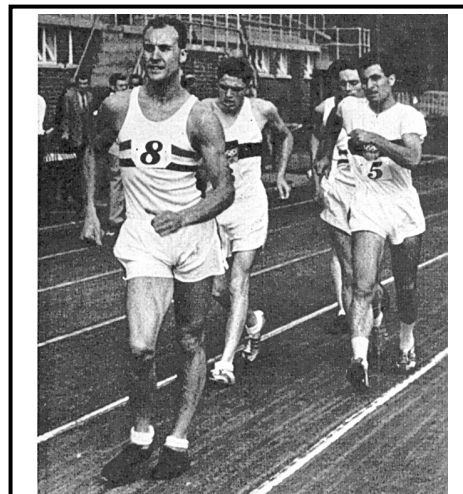
A degree of optimistic euphoria followed the Rome Olympic Games of 1960, as well it might, given the contrast with most recent top-level competition, and one can detect a certain amount of British lip-smacking at the prospect of the new Lugano Trophy competition for national teams the following year. The Olympic celebrations were rounded off, in February, 1961, by a dinner at the House of Commons at which, apart from Don Thompson and Stan Vickers, two previous Olympic 50 kilometre Champions, Tommy Green and Harold Whitlock, were present. The day before, one of the occasional Walking Conferences had been held by the R.W.A., covering coaching, training and judging.

On the International scene, keen to make a good start, the R.W.A. pushed the British Amateur Athletic Board into applying for the Zone Competition of the Lugano Trophy, which was duly granted and held at Wimbledon Park in August. The competition was rather limited at its inception; Great Britain shared a Zone with Belgium and Germany and the other three Zones involved Denmark Norway and Sweden; Italy, France, Switzerland and Spain; and Hungary, Romania and Turkey. Each Zone winner, together with Japan and the United States of America would proceed to the Final in Switzerland in October.

The anticipatory drooling was, as it turned out, very nearly premature in the Zone event, Great Britain managing only a narrow 41-39 victory over Germany, while Belgium (filling the last three positions in both the 20 and 50 kilometres) finished a remote third with 12 points. Despite having Ken Matthews home first

in the 20k, the British team, with George Williams fifth and Bob Clark sixth, was beaten 21-19, but the 50k team of Don Thompson first, Ray Middleton third and Charlie Fogg fifth, won 22-18 to clinch it.

When it came to the final, at which the U.S.A. and Japan did not appear, the finish was even closer. Thompson (second), Middleton (fourth) and Fogg (ninth) were beaten 25-24 by Sweden, while in the shorter race Matthews (first), Williams (third) and Clark (seventh) had the edge by 29-28, giving total scores of 53-all. Under the predetermined tie-break rule that the victory would go to the team finishing its leading 50k man first, Great Britain won, Thompson beating Soderlund of Sweden by over six minutes. The value of the competition was perhaps a little diminished – although you can only beat those who choose to turn up – by the additional absence of the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia, who were kept away by domestic competition, hardly something that happened in later years.



The Zone Final: Matthews leads:
Clark and Williams hidden by No.5

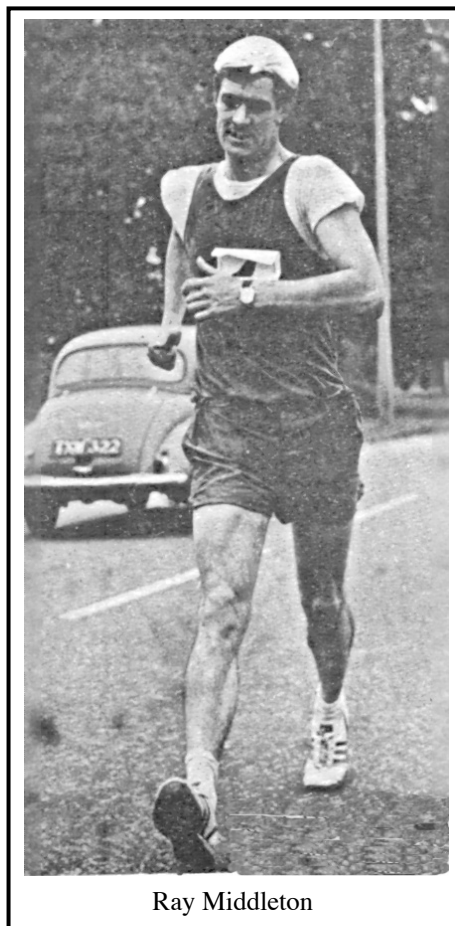
If the Lugano Trophy competition had nearly gone awry but come out right in the end, the European Championships in 1962, were somewhat mixed; Ken Matthews won the 20k

and Don Thompson was third in the 50k, while for various reasons, Arthur Thomson and Bob Clark at the shorter distance and Ray Hall at the longer had rather off days, and Ray Middleton, “shaken by a warning after only half a mile,” in the words of Colin Young, reporting in *Race Walking Record*, “was surprisingly disqualified just before 30 Kms.” Even more surprising was the warning to Matthews, who, wrote Young, “was told that it was a ‘formality!!’ so he did not let it worry him.”

At the end of December, the long- and eagerly-awaited R.W.A. book *The Sport of Race Walking*, appeared at the price of 6/- (postage included); it was advertised as a bargain, with the statement that through normal publishing channels it would have cost 12/6 to 17/-. “Many an ‘old-timer’”, said the advertisement in *Record*, “will re-live a very happy sporting past with this volume and students of records, results and statistics will derive hours of pleasure from the facts it contains.”⁷

Still bemused by the chopping and changing in the definition, the R.W.A. lit upon another of the uneasy compromises that had been confusing the sport for the previous half-century and more. In a pronouncement that evoked the “style” or “form” arguments between Innes and his contemporaries, General Committee promulgated the decision in terms that clearly indicated that they knew that they were wrong; they unanimously accepted the recommendation of the National Judges Sub-Committee to maintain the current R.W.A. definition of walking but, looking over their shoulders at the rest of the world, they added; “The problem of ‘bent knee’ style walkers in International Events was discussed and it was agreed that all R.W.A. International Selection Committees shall include at least three judges to deal with the style aspect and that no walker shall be recommended for selection unless the Judges are satisfied that his style is in accordance with the ‘International’ definition.” That is to say, a man could win any number of domestic races but be denied selection because the judges – who may well have passed him in a trial event under “home” conditions – had doubts about his

ability to meet international standards. The dedicated controversialists of the 1920s would have had no end of fun with that convolution⁸; four decades later, no-one thought it at all peculiar.



Intent though they seem to have been on baffling themselves and everyone else by trying to sustain two different definitions of walking simultaneously, the R.W.A. were ever ready to experiment and early in 1963 held tests on the indoor track at Wembley and were so convinced that indoor walking was feasible that they asked the A.A.A. to hold an event. In fact, the first race was held on the 26th October at R.A.F. Feltwell, one of the very few possible indoor venues, on an unbanked 200 yard track, J. Northcott of Highgate Harriers winning a one mile event in 7:43.

Having won the inaugural Lugano Trophy competition in 1961, British hopes were high for 1963 and the sextet of Matthews, Nihill, Vaughan Thomas (20k), Middleton, Fogg and Wallwork (50k) duly beat France 25-19 to qualify for the final against Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Sweden and Western Germany in Varese. The performance of Sweden in the Scandinavian Zone, where they had not been far off scoring as many points as Denmark, Norway and Finland together, gave some cause for concern, but, on the day, the British walkers beat Hungary 93-64 with Sweden only third on 63. The Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic were absent from the competition, but such was the magnitude of the victory that it hardly seemed to matter and Colin Young, reporting in *Record*, felt it "quite feasible to class our National Team as No.1 in the World." He may have been a little extravagant. British walkers in the top 25 of the world rankings for 1963 were: 20k; 7 Ken Matthews, 25 Paul Nihill: 50k; 9 Ray Middleton, 20 Don Thompson, 23 Charles Fogg, 25 Ron Wallwork. The shape of things to come was evident; the U.S.S.R. had 17 and 12 respectively and the G.D.R. 2 and 5!

Whether to try to validate Colin Young's claim or, alternatively, to try make it come true, the R.W.A. instituted a National Coaching Scheme, which was to be supervised by National and Area Sub-Committees and answerable to an Honorary Chief Coach, Harold Whitlock. The ups and downs of coaching are dealt with in Chapter 22 of this volume; it is sufficient to remark here that there was constance change and reorganization over a period of several years.

The General Committee was also concerned about the national championship structure and had simultaneously set up a special sub-committee to examine the problem and to suggest improvements. Pioneering work was being done outside the R.W.A. organisation as well; the Leicestershire Schools' A.A. had begun to agitate for *national* schools' championships and the English Schools' own Development Committee was examining the

possibility of including walks within the main track championships after 1964. As Derek Hayward shows in Chapter 20, it took a few years for this initiative to come to fruition.

When the Championships' report appeared, apart from the introduction of a Senior 10 miles, it was, as so often with R.W.A. Committee reports, "no change" all round. Peculiar though it may have been in the circumstances, and to the long-term detriment of the sport in England, one cannot but admire the lofty grandeur of one of the Report's conclusions: "Judging: As at present. It is felt by the Committee that our system is superior to the Continental system." Again, the desirability of having everyone playing by the same rules appears to have escaped them.

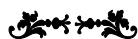
Admiration – perhaps rather tempered with amazement – is also due to those who were still introducing new events over what now read like terrifying courses, such as the 54½ mile Bath to Weston-Super-Mare; on a hot July Saturday afternoon, over a route described as "stiff", 62 started and 41 finished, *and* there was a clash with the Southern 20k, which seems not to have suffered too badly as a result.

Perhaps an ominous indication of the way things were going internationally was given in the Olympic 50k in Tokyo in 1964, when Don Thompson, the defending champion, was almost three minutes inside his 1960 time but finished tenth, eleven minutes behind the winner, while the times set in Tokyo by John Edgington and John Paddick in finishing eighth and tenth in the 20k were a minute or two faster than Golubnichy had done in his gold medal performance at Rome. The implication was that British walking was marking time while the rest of the world, starting well behind, was fast catching up.

There were certainly to be other medals at international level in later years, but Tokyo, with the gold and silver medals for Ken Matthews and Paul Nihill, marked the end of the great run of British Olympic successes – fifteen out of fifty-four possible medals, and six

of the eighteen golds; it is true that these impressive figures include the London Games of 1908, when the rest of the world knew little about race walking and British walkers won five of the six medals available, largely by force of

numbers, but it had been a remarkable sequence. It is, alas, generally the fate of pioneers to show how it's done and then to be eclipsed by those who learn by the example of others rather than by experiment.



OVER THE HILL

Even with two successive Lugano Cup victories, a European Champion and Olympic gold and silver medals to the credit of “home” race walking, finance was never far from the minds of the General Committee and they were glad to receive sponsorship for the newly created National 20 kilometres when it was started in 1965; this support came from E.A.Chamberlain, Ltd., who presented the “Aries Cup” (named after the washable plastic insoles the company produced) and provided the medals and a sixteen page programme. The sponsors, who also advertised in *Race Walking Record*, cannot have been too pleased that the magazine used the spelling “Aires”, an error perpetuated in the report of a successful inaugural contest, noteworthy for being held in Cardiff and for being won by Paul Nihill, who thus held four national titles simultaneously.

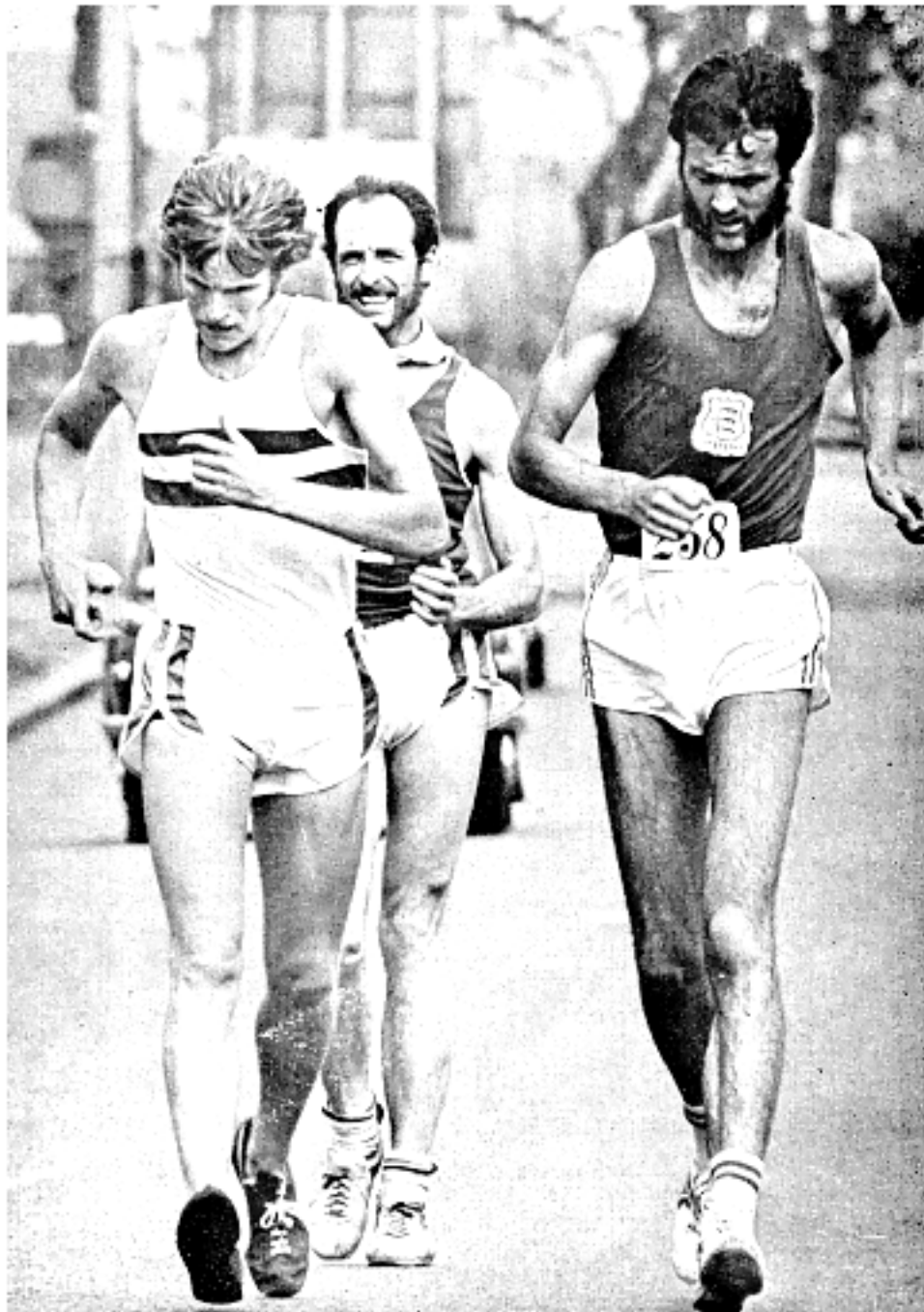
Another perpetual problem was persuading walkers to participate in the A.A.A. track championship over 2 miles. It was announced that, although there was a time standard for entry, “favourable consideration will be given to walkers who have recorded outside 14:30”. The rallying-call seems to have done the trick, as there were seventeen starters (three of whom were disqualified) and the “consideration” must have been *very* favourable, as seven of them finished outside 14:30, the last in 15:46.3.

Several years of agitation and propaganda had at last paid off and 1966 saw the introduction of a walk – at 20 miles – in the Empire and Commonwealth Games in Kingston, Jamaica. Despite many earlier expressions of enthusiasm, it was contested by only seven countries¹ and was dominated by England, with Ron Wallwork, Ray Middleton and Don Thompson finishing first, second and fourth,

separated by the English-born New Zealander Norman Read.

Although there were still very reasonable fields in some races, there were signs of trouble in this respect, too, as no Club finished eight competitors in the National 50k to win the Milan Trophy and only four walkers turned out for the Northern Counties’ Athletic Association Track 2 miles, although, in compensation, Ron Wallwork broke the 55-year-old record. Internationally, it was not entirely surprising that the British walkers did not get among the medals in the European Championships; what *was* surprising was that Paul Nihill, having been selected, announced his retirement from race walking, reportedly “annoyed with the selectors, R.W.A. and walkers in general.” The retirement proved not to be definitive; he was back at the end of 1967 and won all the Nationals in one season!

Although the period from the mid-1960s onward was one of decline, the falling-away was initially quite gradual; turnouts for races, of course, are always fluctuating and any slight deterioration may consequently not be noticed. In 1967, for example, there were still 162 individual and 23 team finishers in the National 10 miles, with 14 teams in the incorporated Inter-Counties’ Championships. Although the corresponding numbers were up to 202, 26 and 23 in 1968 and to 211, 29 and 14 in 1969, within fifteen years something had gone wrong and the numbers involved had fallen to 157, 22 and 11, a drop of a quarter all round. Looking back from the vantage point of forty years later, the beginning of the fade is obvious enough but, at the time, no-one seemed to notice and optimism and enthusiasm still ran remarkably high.²



Some Stars of the Seventies
Roger Mills, Brian Adams and Ollie Flynn

The year 1967 saw the Association's sixtieth birthday, marked by a dinner in the House of Commons (but not until February, 1968) at a cost of £2; again ladies were welcome and lounge suits were to be worn. Perhaps it was a manifestation of the R.W.A.'s enthusiasm for *ad hoc* bodies, or perhaps a lack of one-man volunteers, but a Special Dinner Sub-Committee of General Committee had to be set up – with four members, one of them, Frank Jarvis, actually being designated Dinner Secretary – to organise the affair. Two hundred attended the dinner when it came off, with Denis Howell, the well-disposed Minister of Sport, as principal guest. As one of the ever-dwindling links with the old days, much of the success of the event was due to the efforts of Ernest Neville, who had attended the foundation meeting and had been the Association's President from 1920 to 1922.

Fourteen countries entered for the Lugano Trophy in 1967, of which three – Great Britain, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic – went straight to the final on the grounds of having been the top three last time, while South Africa had a similar bye solely because it was the only non-European entrant and its closest possible Zone opponent would have been Italy.³

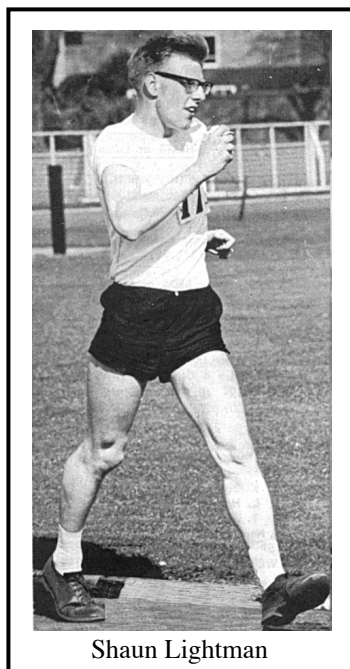
An indication of how walking was developing in the rest of the world can be had from the fact that, although the *lowest* placings for the British walkers were ninths for Ron Wallwork in the 20k and Shaun Lightman in the 50k, the team could finish only third, behind the German Democratic Republic and the U.S.S.R.

Some success in “pushing” walking was achieved by the inclusion of a 20k race in the Los Angeles match between the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth. When the result was reported in *Record* – Laird and Young of the U.S.A. coming first and second, followed by Wallwork, Gardiner and Mayhew of the Commonwealth – it was noted that “Ray Middleton travelled to the U.S.A. but was not allowed to compete,” although no explanation was given.

After a deal of agitation, as mentioned previously, a “demonstration” walk took place at the English Schools' Championships in Peterborough. As Derek Hayward explains in his chapter on Schools' Walking, although this was only a modest affair – one race with eighteen finishers – there were, thereafter, genuine championships. It is interesting that, although the R.W.A. gave its support in voice to this enterprise, it had never done anything very active to encourage young walkers. It did not have even a Junior Championship (Junior by age, as distinct from “Junior” by ability) until 1951 or an Under-17 until 1961 and the Under-15 and Under-13 Championships did not follow until 1972 and 1980, respectively. Such encouragement for the young as there had been had come from individual clubs, some of which had been trying for years. From 1920 to the mid-1930s, for example, Lancashire Walking Club, in conjunction with its Manchester to Blackpool, had a schoolboys' race over the rather startling distance of 8 miles, from Lytham to Blackpool. The enterprise was admirable, although, since the school leaving age was then fourteen, the distance might be thought excessive for young boys.

Toward the end of the 1960s metrication was a matter for concern in athletic circles and the A.A.A. determined in 1968 to abandon all its imperial distance championships, to bring it into line with most of the rest of the world, although it rather queerly chose to experiment with 1600 metres instead of 1500 as a replacement for the mile. Of course, the conversion had to be uniform, since it involved the construction of tracks, but road walks could be at any distance and, after thinking about it for a while, the R.W.A. continued with its mixture of 10 and 20 miles and 20 and 50 kilometres, one argument being that the leap from 7 miles to 20k would be too abrupt, especially if the 7 miles became 10k. It recommended to the A.A.A. that the 2 and 7 miles championships be reduced to 3000 and 10000 metres and the Juniors' and Youths' (i.e., Under-17) distances be increased from 1 mile to 3000m and 2000m respectively; it was an odd compromise.

It had been the Women's Amateur Athletic Association that had led the way here and had experimented with metrication many years before, their senior track championships having been held at 1600 metres from 1933 to 1939 and from 1946 to 1951 (with a one mile interpolated for some reason – nostalgia, perhaps – in 1945). In 1952 they returned to imperial measurement with one mile and then one-and-a-half miles and finally went metric definitively in 1969.



Shaun Lightman

The 10 miles was discontinued in 1998, when it was still the most popular championship distance, and the Association's oldest championship, the 20 miles, after being metricated, re-imperialised, re-metricated and thrice altered in length, making five changes in seventeen years, ended in 1998. However five, seven and ten mile races were still being held in the twenty-first century. Given that, as we have shown, the early races tended to be point-to-point over considerable distances, with the mileage often vaguely described as "about twenty-five", meaning "somewhere between twenty-three and twenty-seven", it is not surprising that nostalgia for solid English imperial distances lingered on.⁴ In fact, the

Association's second century began with the revival of the 10 miles!

There was some optimism – as usual – about Britain's Olympic chances in Mexico, with Hughes, Jones and Webb going at 20k and Eley, Lightman and Nihill at 50k. British walking, it must be remembered, was still working on the smug basis that "our system is superior to the Continental system", which led some to suggest that there should be occasional races under the Continental system to reduce the shock to the home walkers' systems when they had to venture abroad; it was reckoned, however, that it was sufficient to rely on the rather bizarre method of having judges on the selection panels to eliminate those walkers, fast enough at home, who were unlikely to survive abroad, a tacit admission that isolationism was all very well but that it had its limits.

The main worry about the Games was over the problem of competing 7,000 feet above sea level; the lesson to be learned was that it helps to be native to higher altitudes, although with the walks medals going to the U.S.S.R. (2), G.D.R., Mexico, Hungary, and the U.S.A., the benefit was not all that marked. There was a certain amount of scientific and medical gain from Mexico as a result of the early research carried out into the physiological aspects of violent exercise at high altitude.

Many races still had handicap prizes in addition to the scratch ones and this was possible only because of the labours of the handicappers who had to scrutinise entry forms; there was a standard pattern for these, requiring the competitor to state his recent performances and the handicappers also had to keep abreast of the changing abilities of new walkers, those recovering from illness and injury and those past their best and fighting the slippery slope. The system was designed to give a sporting chance of a prize to those used to finishing down the field; in a seven-mile race, for example, a 70-minute man could hardly expect to beat, say, Nihill or Webb doing 50 or 51 minutes, but he could aim to beat his handicap or target time by more than the stars beat theirs.

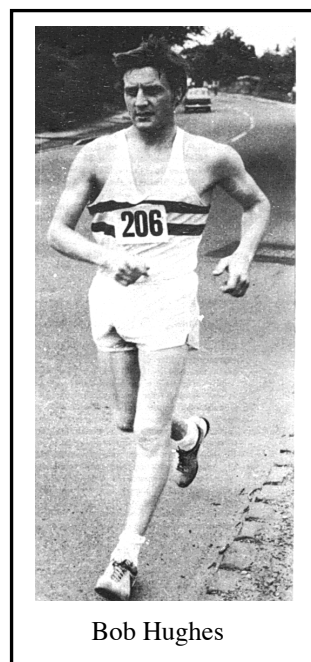


Paul Nihill and Brian Eley

One consequence, if 150 walkers had to have their finishing times recorded, their handicap times calculated and the handicap order arranged and then, on top, if the handicap *team* results had also to be dealt with, was that presentations might well be delayed for some considerable time. While the old days of “roping” may have been long gone⁵ – except in the case of a few crafty practitioners – the idea was still to beat the handicapper and in 1969 the Honorary Secretary of the R.W.A. National Handicappers’ Sub-Committee – for such an assemblage actually existed, so seriously was the matter taken – felt it necessary to justify the procedure followed. The particular problem was that one C.Wormleighton of Greystones Walking Club had improved his seven mile time by over seven minutes within five months and had left the handicappers – as well as the other competitors – nowhere. The result and the explanation were accepted in good spirit, but it was pointed out that the man would be handicapped rather severely in his next race!

As a rule the R.W.A. neither promoted its own races – championships excepted – nor asked others to do so, but it made an exception

on the 14th May, 1969, when it invited the Southern Counties’ A.A.A. to mount a special 5000 metre track race with the sole purpose of removing the embarrassingly old record of 21:09.4, which had been set by George Larnier in 1905 and stood as the oldest-established national record. A new time of 20:44.0 was duly set by Paul Nihill but, even in a field including Phil Embleton, Roger Mills, Shaun Lightman and Bill Sutherland, no-one else was inside the old figure. To ensure that there were no such quibbles as there had been about Larnier’s performance – and modern walkers who complain of over-judging may wish to contemplate this fact – there were *eight* Grade 1 judges operating on the “superior” home-bred system and *no* disqualifications.



Bob Hughes

This was a time when one-off international matches were sometimes arranged, occasionally in clusters. August, 1969, for example, saw *three* at 20k, on the twelfth against the U.S.A. in Battersea Park, London, on the sixteenth against Italy and Czechoslovakia in Verona and on the thirtieth against France back in Battersea Park; some of the British walkers appeared in more than one of the matches.

It was evidently thought internationally that the Rules had been left alone for long enough and needed more tinkering, so the I.A.A.F. Race Walking Commission came up with the idea that the shoes worn by walkers should have heels 10mm thicker than the soles. The rationale was not entirely clear, but there seems to have been a hope that such an arrangement would contribute to more conspicuous “heel-and-toe” contact and simultaneously make both knee-straightening easier to achieve and knee-bending easier to detect.

It was not only walking in this country that was beginning to show signs of strain; *Record* had experienced such a decline in circulation – to the extent that it was near to making a loss and thereby drawing on the Association’s resources – that General Committee set up a special Sub-Committee to look into it. Various possibilities were considered, including some other type of publication, but that particular idea was not pursued. The Sub-Committee did produce the idea that the distribution of results sheets at events should be discontinued so that those who wanted the information would have to buy *Record* – which still cost only 1/6 a month, comparable with race entry fees and considerably less than some, such as the Leicester Mercury and the Metropolitan W.C. 20k, which were 3/- each.

The A.A.A. Five Star Award Scheme, sponsored by Walls Ice Cream had been started in 1968 at the suggestion of Tom McNab, an A.A.A. Coach, with the idea of providing a way for young athletes of all abilities to demonstrate their progress and improvement. The Scheme had initially included race walking but the walks had been dropped, largely because the times reported showed that judging, where it existed at all, was inadequate and it appeared that anyone who could not run fast enough to achieve running standards could run more slowly and achieve walking ones. By 1970, the agitation carried out by the R.W.A. and others had convinced the A.A.A. that walks should be reinstated. It was to be understood, however, that a condition of the reinstatement was that “strict judging is essential”; it might be

remarked that although this was to be a requirement for the awarding of non-competitive time certificates for performances against the clock, there remain forty years later some who argue that, even in championship-level races, judging of the young should be lenient! Simultaneously, a brisk flurry of correspondence in *Record* was voicing both views and several in between, as well; a little later, in a report on “the first ever youth championship of the Shetlands”, five of the thirty-six starters were disqualified, so there evidently *were* outposts of severity.

The Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh in 1970 saw an increase over Kingston, with walkers up from twelve to twenty one and countries from seven to eleven. Even within the limited range of these Games, however, there were danger signs for English walking, as the first two places went to the Australians Freeman and Gardiner with Scotland's Bill Sutherland third, and England's Bob Dobson, Ron Wallwork and Shaun Lightman finishing fourth, fifth and seventh. Setting aside the eleven walkers from the British Isles, only Australia, Canada, India, Singapore and Trinidad & Tobago took part. As part of his preparation for the race, Sutherland had won the A.A.A. 10000m a fortnight before on a Battersea track described as not fit for a national championship and in a race in which the Fowler Dixon Style Prize was not awarded, and he had also won the National Police 3000m in between.

The previous year's successful breaking of Larner's 5000m record seems to have inspired the idea of attacking his one mile time of 6:26 and this was achieved at Crystal Palace – by Nihill, again – in 6:17; the distance was no longer recognised for record purposes, of course, but it had at least – and at last – been bettered.

As international success began to be harder to find, so domestic fields continued to fall, too; for example, in comparison with the 1957 figures quoted in Chapter 7, the Highgate Hour in 1970 was down from 229 to 150 and the Belgrave 7 from 230 to 163. The lack of involvement was also showing elsewhere and

the newly-elected President Lloyd Johnson complained that the A.G.M. in September had been attended by the General Committee plus *two* others. He voiced the frequently-heard observation that people who complained about “them” were often not prepared to make even such a small contribution to the Association’s work as giving up an afternoon to the A.G.M.

There had been intermittent discussion on how to improve the general standard of walking in this country and in early 1971 Terry Simons produced a “25-Point Plan” containing some radical ideas, not least the proposal for a *Red Book* in which all disqualifications would be recorded; it would, he suggested, “show clearly the people that blatantly disregard judges’ warnings and advice and those walkers could then be dealt with by a disciplinary committee that would have the powers to suspend (or fine) a walker for repeated disqualifications that in turn would (1) bring the sport of race walking into disrepute, (2) undermine the faith and ability of the judge, (3) show complete lack of interest and respect by the walker for the sport and (4) seriously damage the image of race walking in the eyes of the spectators.” He suggested that the *Red Book* would “act as a deterrent, in the same way that a football referee books a footballer.” This interesting but tremendously burdensome idea, however, did carry within itself two problems that Simons seems to have overlooked. Firstly, it implied that disqualification was likely to be incurred as a result of failed attempts at dishonesty – in fact, by cheating – and so needed “punishment” and secondly, it was rather likely that walkers “booked” would throw in the towel; if they were to be accused of not being interested and respectful and of cheating into the bargain, why should they trouble?

Simons also proposed the institution of a National Boys’ (Under-15) Championship to improve the standard among younger walkers, an increase of racing distances for all the younger age groups and the formation of an international race walkers’ club to discuss improvements and submit their ideas to the R.W.A. for consideration. He further proposed

an upper age limit of sixty for competitors at all distances, in order to speed up the preparation of results; however, he also proposed, in compensation, that the events from which such older walkers were debarred should be preceded by races specially for them. He called for the long overdue standardised measurement of road courses to remove the “under or over?” disputes and, in a gesture of the beating of tiny wings in the candle flame of progress,⁶ for the replacement of the 50k at top international level by 32k or more-or-less 20 miles.

Simons was very keen, of course, on encouraging the young – indeed, that was behind many of his proposals – and (another example of what, only thirty-five years later, seems like a voice from the remote past) he wanted all major industrial firms to be approached with a view to the foundation of a National Apprentices’ Championship. Another idea, still being raised today – and just as fruitlessly – was that all international athletics matches should have a 5000m walk.

He recognised the difficulty in expecting the current organisation to take on all these extra duties and proposed the formation of “another association” to work in close liaison with the R.W.A. The ideas were a mixture of the obvious, the difficult and the fantastic; conditions more than three decades on are so changed that some of the ideas cannot really be assessed. In any event, practically all that came about was the foundation of the International Race Walkers’ Club, which never had the effect for which Simons had hoped.

There remained a general feeling of confidence that, come Helsinki in 1971, British walkers would somehow still be able to show the way with Paul Nihill retaining his European title and, consequently, there was some surprise and disappointment when he was “only” third, although less than a quarter of a minute behind the winner. There was concern, too, at the British performance in the 50k, in which Bob Dobson was the only finisher of the trio. The commentator in *Record* – probably Phil Embleton, who was sixth in the 20k – put the

result in the longer race down to the fact that, as he expressed it, on the continent the 50k was “raced compared to our domestic events”; the implication was that at home, after the manner of the old long-distance and point-to-point races, it was slogged out as an endurance test.



Bob Dobson

Lloyd Johnson’s castigation of the race walking fraternity for not turning up at the 1970 A.G.M. seems to have hit home, as there was a much improved turnout a year later.

As a step towards encouraging the young, it was agreed to institute a Boys’ Championship at two miles; the event will have pleased Simons, although not the distance, as he had argued for a “very minimum” of three miles.

The R.W.A. decided (but not until early 1972, when it was too late to have much effect) to prepare for the Munich Olympics by setting up squads of a dozen each for the events and having a series of assemblies of seven days or a weekend, with high altitude work at St. Moritz

immediately before the Games. As is now known, the scheme was none too successful, best British performances being by Nihill, sixth in the shorter race and ninth in the longer; a deal of breast-beating followed on what had gone wrong. In actual fact, nothing had, except that the rest of the world had made progress rather more rapidly than Great Britain.⁷

There were, naturally enough, differences of opinion over policy within the R.W.A. which were normally dealt with in the traditional smoke-filled rooms but from time to time during its history, *Record* was used by an “insider” to push his cause against the R.W.A. establishment and in 1972, in an article that seemed to suggest that he had at last become completely exasperated and blown a safety valve, no less an insider than the former General Secretary and President and long-standing member of the I.A.A.F. Walking Committee, Harold Whitlock, set about the Association and its view of the Definition. His complaint was that Great Britain alone ignored the second paragraph of the I.A.A.F. definition, because, as was shown in Chapter 6, it was “felt by the Committee that our system is superior to the Continental system.”⁸ Like Ernest Neville, Whitlock saw that the problems, especially those of the Paris débâcle of 1924, arose from different national views of what constituted fair walking. Whitlock himself was a supporter of straight knees and recalled that, “In England we had in the RWA, a headache, especially in Vic Stone when he won the A.A.A. 7 miles championship in 1936 in the greatest exhibition of “Creeping” ever seen, to the disgust of the competitors and the onlookers.”⁹

This had resulted in the adoption of the bent-knee style by other walkers,¹⁰ and three of Whitlock’s club-mates took up to three minutes off their seven mile times in a couple of months. They all made contact but, as Whitlock pointed out, they were very unpopular with competitors and judges so they reverted to the accepted style.¹¹ There seems no doubt that Whitlock blamed Neville for opposing the introduction of *knees* into the definition, which at the time was strangely expressed as, “Each leg as it is carried

forward should be stretched and should be normally stretched until the foot of the other leg leaves the ground". There is room for doubt whether "normally" here means "in an ordinary way" or "generally speaking". Whitlock did not like either that wording or the slightly modified version introduced in 1952 but proposed the tactical position of accepting the I.A.A.F. definition as it then stood and trying to get it redrafted "from the inside" as it were. He thought that walking in this country could then be "cleansed" under a Rule of Walking, instead of appealing to the omnibus A.A.A. Rule of Ungentlemanly Conduct.¹² In a rather odd final sentence, Whitlock pointed out that in the R.W.A. National 10 Miles of the previous month half the disqualifications had been of walkers "known to use a degree of bent leg action." We might wonder whether this means that the judges were working to the International definition anyway, perhaps in the realisation that the home system was *not* superior; it would, like the point mentioned in Footnote 12, have been one of the stranger things to have happened in the history of the sport!

One perennial problem in race walking had been a certain antipathy between coaches and judges, who have sometimes seemed to lack mutual trust and understanding – a condition that is not unknown today – and the differences were aired between Frank Jarvis and Reg Wells, the National Coaching Secretary.¹³

The R.W.A. was at the time formulating a national plan on what Wells called the "dual pyramid" principle. A pyramid of coaches, from the top people in the field down to the unqualified club coaches – for this was a period when a coach was someone who was good at coaching rather than someone who had a piece of paper *saying* that he was a coach – would be married to a pyramid of walkers from the International Squad down to the novices and back markers. Coaching centres were to be set up in the main areas and walkers and coaches would be able to meet there. Wells planned that "these centres will have tracks, weight and circuit rooms, suitable measured roads and, if

possible, up-to-date libraries where books and magazines from home and abroad may be kept." It was a grand plan that, had it been fully implemented, might well have made a difference. It would, however, have cost a fortune.

Wells had recently surveyed the walkers in his own county of Essex and had concluded that 75% of them did not comply with the international definition, but that 95% of that category did not "interfere in any way with the race leaders, the internationals, etc." His idea was to have "Grade A" races – Nationals, international selection events and some others – and "Grade B", covering everything else. Grade A races were to be judged against the international definition and Grade B against the domestic, with both Grades judged severely. Grade A races would have entry standards and – echoes of Simons and the *Red Book* – anyone suffering three Grade A disqualifications *would be banned from such races for a year* to give him time to rectify his faults. Wells then proposed that the Rule should read, "A judge will disqualify a competitor if, in that judge's opinion, the competitor is not walking fairly," which more or less amounted to a reversion to the A.A.A. Rule of Competition No. 14 of 1880.

The proposal made no headway, however, being overtaken by a new International Definition after the Olympic Games of 1972, when the I.A.A.F. produced: "Walking is a progression of steps so taken that unbroken contact with the ground is maintained. At each step the advancing foot of the walkers must make contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground. During the period of each step in which a foot is on the ground, the leg must be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) at least for one moment and, in particular, the supporting leg must be straight in the vertically upright position." The I.A.A.F. recommended that all National Associations use the new definition although, of course, that remark was directed at only one pair of collective ears. This new Rule followed hard on the heels of an I.A.A.F. booklet of *Guidance for Walking Judges*, which had seriously muddled

the waters by containing a real gem of rule-drafters' obfuscation offered in the name of assistance: it reads like another compromise-inspired afterthought:

Judges of walking must be careful to observe that the advancing foot of the walker makes contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground, and *in particular*¹⁴ that during the period of each step in which a foot is on the ground, the leg shall be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) for at least one moment.

It is recommended that judges interpret the rule by the addition of the following words "and in particular the supporting leg must be straight in the vertically upright position".

Alan Buchanan, Editor of *Record* at the time, did not often go in for humour, but when he printed this *Guidance* he headed it "Clearer Walking Definition".

The dissatisfaction over the 1972 Olympic selections, mentioned in Chapter 25, at least resulted in a large and combative A.G.M. in that year. The dissenters narrowly failed – by twenty-six votes to twenty-three – to pass a motion of no confidence in the International Selection Committee, but did somewhat hamstring that body by the adoption of a resolution that for major international events there would be a *trial* race, the first three finishers being nominated.

Faced with the problem of the new definition, the Association, it goes without saying, set up a subcommittee to look into its acceptance and application. Being in the subcommittee-forming mood, it also set up one to "lay down the future fixture lists", a thankless enough burden with which to be encumbered. No sooner had a list been produced, of course, than the newly-created necessity to hold Lugano *trials* involved a series of date changes to fit them in in such a way that the hopefuls could do both.

The "straight leg" subcommittee worked with praiseworthy rapidity given that R.W.A. ad

hoc bodies tended to cogitate for months, and recommended that the new rule be adopted in England, to operate from September, 1974, a year after the A.G.M. that would need to accept the recommendation.

Meanwhile, a more urgent matter was to be dealt with, the threat to remove walking from the Olympic Games altogether; for 1976 in Montreal the 50k was to be omitted, partly on the grounds that it took a lot of organising and had too long a finishing time between the gold medallist and the last man home – one and a half hours in 1968 and an hour in 1972 – and the clear implication was that the 20k would follow in 1980, although some comfort and hope could be gained from the fact that the latter Games would be held in Moscow, at a time when the U.S.S.R. was a leading walking power. The R.W.A. did *not* immediately set up a subcommittee but instead held an E.G.M. to discuss the issue. It was agreed that a campaign would be started and *then* a subcommittee was formed by Bill Sutherland, the Association's Press and Publicity Officer, to see the matter through.

The A.G.M., by fifty-one votes to eight, duly agreed to adopt the I.A.A.F. definition of walking, while a proposal to limit it to National Championships, rather in accordance with Wells's "A" and "B" idea, was lost by fifty-one to thirteen. An attempt to adopt the definition without its last fourteen words, which referred to the "vertically upright position" fell for want of a seconder.¹⁵ At last, then, England had come into line with the rest of the world, although it probably managed to convince itself that it was the other way round. It should be noted, however, that although England now agreed with the definition, there would still be several years of resistance to formal "cautions" and the "three card rule". It is sometimes difficult not to think that many in English race walking, wedded to unbroken contact as a means of progression, were equally devoted to foot-dragging as an administrative method.

On the international walking scene – as distinct from the international politicking scene,

which was just as active – passage to the Lugano final was fairly straightforward, as Great Britain's zone contained Sweden, France, Norway, Denmark and Ireland, and Britain, Sweden and France easily passed through. The Final, in Lugano itself, was a very different affair, as the G.D.R. narrowly beat the U.S.S.R. with Italy third and the British team a rather remote sixth.

Early in 1974, the R.W.A. established the position of Records Officer – appointing Reg Wells – and requested all race organisers to send him full results of their events in order to provide comprehensive information for coaching and selection purposes. It also founded the 200 Club to improve the Association's finances. The subscription was £1 per month, as it remains over thirty years later¹⁶; the take-up was not overwhelming, as it had still reached only twenty-eight members after the first six months. One of the legends that have developed over the years is that the 200 Club was actually *founded* for the support of *Race Walking Record*, but initially there was no mention of such a dedicated purpose; *Record* was to be just one possible draw upon the new resources, provided that the Honorary Treasurer would let the money escape from the general funds of the Association.

Following the fairly grim result in Lugano, there was rather better news from New Zealand, where John Warhurst and Roy Thorpe took first and second places in the Commonwealth Games 20 miles, with Manxman Graham Young just missing the bronze medal.

When it was announced that the English Schools walks were to be removed from the Track and Field Championships and given a day to themselves, the news was greeted with some enthusiasm. Each County could then enter only sixty competitors overall in the championships, which naturally restricted the numbers of walkers, but in the new format each could enter ten walkers, with six to walk and three to score, giving much more scope for participation in the sport, although some critics doubted whether

many counties would be able to find enough decent representatives. Perhaps some foresight and reading between the lines would have modified the rapture. In fact, the standard was higher than expected and the numbers were healthy – 142 boys and 84 girls, of whom only ten and five respectively were disqualified. The Championships were held in Redditch, where “home” county Worcestershire, and their Midlands neighbours Warwickshire won five of the races, the sixth, the Senior Girls’, going to Cumberland.

Reg Wells, who seems to have been a firm believer in the dictum that if you cannot measure something then you know nothing about it, did a count of the numbers racing in Britain between September, 1973 and February, 1974, the total being 823. A later Editor of *Record*, Tim Watt, began to produce figures in 2001 and these show that in 2006 (the whole year) there were 2781, of whom 1891 did *only one race*, largely in the Isle of Man. However, Watt's figure for walkers doing two or more was 890 (about the same as Wells had found in six months) and five or more 348, so that the numbers may not have changed very greatly over the thirty-two years.

The R.W.A. again bestirred itself to promote an event, this time the eight-hour “Accolade” track race at New River, Haringey. It was not, said the Association, a record attempt, but there were the six-, seven- and eight-hour and the forty- and fifty-mile records that were close on forty years old, should anyone fancy attempting them. It was a little disingenuous to suggest that such an odd event should be put on if the records were *not* the target! These figures seemed to strike the R.W.A. as embarrassingly antique and the Association gave the impression of trying to have them erased without calling too much attention to the fact, probably in case it turned out that no progress had been made in four decades. Entry was by *selection* of sixteen élite walkers and it was a success, Ray Middleton polishing off all five records, three weeks after warming up for the job by winning the “Brighton”.



The start of the "Accolade" race: l. to r.: Peter Selby, Peter Markham, Carl Lawton ("tea-cosy" hat visible), Ken Harding, John Lees, Mike Holmes (head), Ray Middleton, Tom Casey (at back), John Dowling, Colin Young (obscured), Dave Boxall, Charlie Fogg (obscured), Roger Michell
[Photograph: J.R.Coomber]

The campaign to keep walking in the Olympic Games, meanwhile, continued with a well-publicised *March on Parliament* in June, 1974, culminating in a meeting with the highly sympathetic Minister of Sport, Dennis Howell.

As is normal, there was displeasure voiced over European Championship selections, not this time at the selectors themselves, but at the British Amateur Athletic Board, which rejected the R.W.A. nominations of Olly Flynn (20k) and Roy Thorpe (50k), accepting only Amos Seddon and Roger Mills at 20k and Bob Dobson and John Warhurst at 50k, a remarkable exhibition of lack of support, in view of the continuing Olympic campaign. Mills made the best showing on the day with his fourth place, but was moved into the bronze medal position when third finisher Zaloshek (variously transcribed in England as Zhaloshchek and Schalochik) was disqualified eight weeks later after failing a drugs test.

There had from time to time been tentative attempts to develop links with women's walking

and, as a further step in that direction, the R.W.A. agreed towards the end of 1974 to accept female judges who were members of affiliated Clubs. A potential problem in the way of union was over ages and distances; the women split their Junior (Under 15) age group to provide for an extra Under 13 group, the respective maximum distances being 3000 and 2500 metres, while the senior maximum was 6500m, although experiments had recently been carried out at 10000m, but with a minimum age of nineteen. Some, of course, still held out against having much to do with women – in race walking, at any rate – and 1976's Metropolitan Police Race Walking Club Reunion and Dinner remained strictly "Men only"!

The Lugano Final of 1975 seemed to show some indication of improvement, certainly in comparison with 1973, as Great Britain moved up to fourth place, equal on points with third placed West Germany and only four points in a hundred away from the German Democratic Republic in second; the star turn from the

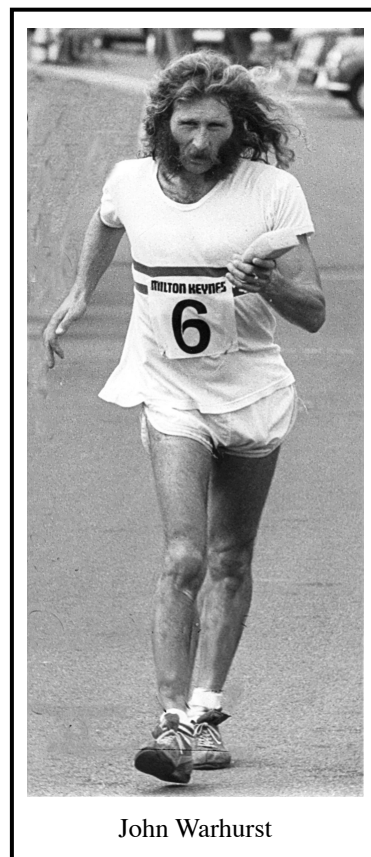
British point of view was by John Warhurst, who was fourth in the 50k.

The R.W.A., although retaining the 10 and 20 miles championship, went *slightly* metric in 1976, abandoning the badges for six and seven miles in the hour in favour of ten, eleven and twelve kilometres. As an imperial hedge, it was agreed that the 11k badges could be awarded for 7 mile races! Thus, while going metric, they introduced the fairly meaningless 11 kilometres while preserving the popular 7 miles race, which, incidentally, they would have preferred to change to 10 kilometres. What the walkers felt about receiving an 11k badge for doing 11.27k is not known.

A fillip to the continuing campaign for retention of Olympic walks was received when the Soviet authorities announced their decision that both walks would be included in 1980 in Moscow, although the I.A.A.F. warned that this was at present only a proposal, which would have to go forward to the International Olympic Committee in August, 1976. As a demonstration of support for an event under threat, the Olympic turn-out at Montreal was successful enough, with thirty-six finishers. It was promptly decided by the I.O.C. that the 20k would remain in the Games and that the decision about the 50k would be deferred until the following Spring; the outcome was, of course, entirely predictable given that the U.S.S.R. was the host and the campaign was successfully concluded.

Selection for the World Championships of 1976 should have been free of controversy, as it had been decided that the first three in the National 50k – there was to be no 20k in Malmö – would be selected, so that there could be no arguments about the naming of Roy Thorpe, Carl Lawton and Bob Dobson. What controversy there was concerned the National course at Birmingham Polytechnic, which had a twisting and hilly final 7k and was described by the winner as “tougher than the Bradford”; evidently as a result of this severity, thirty-four of the hundred-and-seven starters retired. With Dobson thirteenth, Thorpe thirty-second and

Lawton not finishing, Malmö was, in the event, far from being one of Britain’s best championship performances.



John Warhurst

Although the I.A.A.F. *definition* had been adopted, the *administration* of judging was still the old R.W.A. “one shout and you’re out” system, so that England and Wales remained to some degree out on their own private limb. As a small step towards closing the gap with the rest of the world, the decision was taken that the A section at the Highgate Hour meeting would be worked by the international method, where “warnings are given and the Chief Judge issues the warnings and disqualifications.” It was by way of being an experiment before considering adopting the method for track races and major closed circuit road events.

Reg Wells had been at the figures again and produced a list of Track Walking Records,

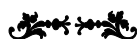
correct to the 1st August, 1976, covering World, European, Commonwealth, National, All-comers and R.W.A. marks – 32 for various numbers of miles, 17 corresponding ones for kilometres and 26 for numbers of hours. The oldest of them, which would have been another embarrassment similar to those previously mentioned if anyone had been much troubled about that particular distance, was George Larnier's 20:25.8 for 3 miles in Brighton on 19th August, 1905.

The R.W.A.'s seventieth birthday in 1977 was marked by the promotion of the biggest international walking event ever staged in this country, the Lugano Cup Final, held at Milton Keynes, then a half-built new town in Buckinghamshire. The previous "big" events in England, the 1908 and 1948 Olympic Games, had each had fewer than fifty walkers; even bearing in mind that in the Lugano Cup there were zonal heats, the number was expected to be of the order of a hundred. The top two nations from each of the three zones went straight to the final, together with the Soviet Union, the two Germanies, the U.S.A. and Mexico and with Great Britain also participating

as the host country. Unfortunately, as it turned out, the only one of the visiting teams that Great Britain was able to beat was the United States, while Mexico beat the G.D.R. and Italy to take the Trophy.

The 1975 version had been accompanied by a women's 5k race, easily won by Sweden, whose walkers finished first, second and third, and a similar race at Milton Keynes had Swedes finishing first, third, fifth and sixth, with Carol Tyson, Judy Farr, Beverley Francis and Virginia Lovell occupying the rest of the top eight positions; had there been team scoring, it would have been another comfortable win for Sweden. Nevertheless, the British women showed themselves in a good light, albeit that there were only three other competitors in the race, an Australian, an Irishwoman and a Belgian.

Clearly, the golden days of race walking in this country had been left well behind and, with overseas progress as it was, the future looked somewhat bleak unless action could be taken fairly rapidly. The problem for the R.W.A. was whether it would ever be possible to reverse the trend.



STABILISATION – OR STAGNATION?

By 1979, when the World Cup went to Eschborn in Western Germany, 1977's result of eleventh place would, in retrospect, have seemed comparatively satisfactory; with seventh in the 20k and thirteenth in the 50k, for an overall twelfth, the British team again felt the strength of overseas development rather than of absolute decline in domestic standards. Roger Mills, for example, was six minutes faster than in Milton Keynes but only improved his position by six places, as Daniel Bautista, winner both times, showed the same gain in time. First British 50k competitor was Adrian James in 4:09:52, compared with 4:23:54 by Brian Adams two years earlier, but he finished thirty-first against seventeenth for Adams.

There was *some* good news for the British, however; the women's race became official as the Eschborn Cup and, with Marion Fawkes first, Carol Tyson second and Irene Bateman sixth there was a clear win over Sweden and Norway. Whether or not the significance was realised at the time is not clear, but the women's competition had no teams from the Socialist countries; two years later, at their first attempt, the U.S.S.R. went straight to the top, to be supplanted in 1983 by China, while the G.D.R., Hungary and Poland lurked menacingly in the lists.

Domestically, as the chapters of this volume looking at the three Areas show, competition continued as before, with the main centres of interest being the struggle between the top Midlands clubs, despite Sheffield's continual presence, although individual titles, of course, still went as often as not to the South.

The story of judging in this country, which has cropped up frequently in these pages, has been one of regarding the rest of the world as being out of step and of grudgingly catching up, seemingly as slowly as possible. This changed in a surprising way early in 1980, when the

General Committee decided that the National Championships for that year would be judged as though the new I.A.A.F. operational regulations, due to come into force later, *already existed*. For once, England was ahead!

Emboldened by this modernising step, the R.W.A. reached agreement for the unification of race walking by the merging of the men's side (already controlled by the Association) and the women's (which was still in the hands of the W.A.A.A. and the W.C.C.R.W.A.). To be constitutionally correct, it was necessary for all bodies concerned to assent to the change and, astonishingly, a Special General Meeting of the R.W.A. did so *unanimously*. It is not clear what might have transpired had the necessary two-thirds majority not been achieved; the Meeting was on the 31st May, 1980, with an agreed operative date of the 1st June! Some of the old traditionalists in the R.W.A. must have had difficulties over accepting women into the organisation, despite their rather half-hearted earlier decision to recognise female judges. So, eventually, after nearly three-quarters of a century of existence, the Association was in the position in which, with a little additional thought and prescience, it could have been from the start. It had been a long haul that might have been even longer without Doreen Nelson Neale's encouragement from the women's side of the fence and at least the acquiescence of the formidable Marea Hartman; in recognition, Nelson Neale and some of her colleagues became the R.W.A.'s first female Life Members. The women, however, seem not to have thrown themselves into their new arrangement wholeheartedly; for some reason, no representatives of the recently welcomed women's walking clubs attended the Annual General Meeting later that year.

Quibbling and dithering over the minutiae of rules and worrying about money have been unavoidable aspects of race walking's history

and have been mentioned frequently in this volume; one other aspect that, as we remark elsewhere, might have been regarded as almost intentional, was rampant eccentricity, and this manifested itself again in 1980 with a relay match between Britain and the U.S.A. from Penzance in Cornwall to Cheshunt in Hertfordshire. As reported for *Race Walking Record* by Carl Lawton, who was one of the participants, a series of transport mishaps occurred, not the least eccentric of them being the demolition by the official coach of a “Cornwall Welcomes Careful Drivers” sign before the race had even started. The event, which was sponsored by the supermarket chain Tesco and the building contractor Wimpey, covered 500 miles in ten days and was won by the home team by a margin of two minutes and twenty-eight seconds; the spirit of oddity evidently still flourished.

Tenth in the 20k (Roger Mills) and eleventh in the 50k (Ian Richards) at the Moscow Olympics was perhaps all that could be hoped for, given the development of walking in other countries. There was, of course, no Olympic women’s walk at the time, but a triangular match in Cwmbrân¹ found Britain wanting, as the team finished behind Sweden and Norway. Oddly, the two races in the match were at the similar distances of 3k and 5k.

Faced with the addition of women to the fold, the R.W.A. thought it timely to review its championships structure by introducing a male Under 13 event to match the female “Girls”, but retaining the A.A.A. and W.A.A.A. names for the age groups, leading to some confusion in the ranks. The groups were, using the modern equivalents:

	Male	Female
U13	Colts	Girls
U15	Boys	Juniors
U17	Youths	Intermediates
U20	Juniors	Seniors ²

Subsequent switching of the female Intermediate and Junior designations did nothing to clarify things. Notwithstanding its

earlier decision, the next A.G.M. decided *not* to use the International System of three cards for disqualification for the two youngest groups, leading to confusion when the walkers in those sections were disqualified on one judge’s say-so, while Seniors, who in any case should have known better (and been walking better), had three “chances”. This somewhat bizarre and, indeed, potentially discouraging decision was later reversed.

Optimistically, the months for the holding of the various championships were specified in the Rules of Competition; it subsequently transpired that, as often as not, there was a pressing reason for changing the schedule!

Repeating an initiative that had last occurred in 1973, the R.W.A. sent the National and Southern Press and Publicity Officers, Dave Ainsworth and Bill Sutherland, together with the P. & P.O. of the British Race Walkers’ Club, Barry Ingarfield, to meet representatives of the Sports Department of the B.B.C., largely to push for better coverage and reporting for the sport. Ainsworth at least was impressed by the B.B.C.’s response and attitude but, in the outcome, nothing very much changed³.

Brighton celebrated the rarity of the opening of a new all-weather track – at Withdean – with a 24-hour race apparently aimed at removing Hew Neilson’s twenty-year-old record of 133 miles and 21 yards (thus mirroring the special record assaults mentioned in the previous chapter), and with a triangular match at 20k and 35k against Spain and France. The latter was a home success, by a single point over Spain, but the all-day event was less so, as the winner Geoff Tranter fell a little under four miles short of the target⁴. These were the times when, with Alan Buchanan’s energetic example, Brighton and Hove A.C. were among the live wires of the South.

The Lugano qualifying round in Helsinki in 1980 provided a British win against not very strong opposition although, as mentioned above, the days of glory were gone, and sixth in the 20k and ninth in the 50k could only bring eighth

overall in the final, a position rather bettered by the women's fourth position. The men's results were actually somewhat better than two years previously, but the inevitable impression was of hanging on and fearing the worst. In fact, although we have called this chapter *Stabilisation – or Stagnation?*, opinion at the time may well have favoured *To the Brink of the Precipice* as a more realistic assessment of the situation.

The end of 1980 saw the first women's championships under the aegis of the R.W.A. The change over the thirty years since in what is seen as a suitable course for racing is shown by the remark by Alan Buchanan in *Race Walking Record* that the course in Battersea Park, while ideal for the spectators, was "hardly so for the walkers, who shuffled back and forth, up and down a straight path in front of 27 judges spaced 30 metres apart. "Back and forth" on a one kilometre lap is, of course, the standard nowadays, but no doubt even the current National Judges' and Officials' Secretary would regard the judging provision as extravagant.

A point raised by Buchanan relating to transparency was that it was questionable whether judges with an "interest" should be permitted in Nationals, something that still rumbles on from time to time although, at present, excluding such officials would result in under-judging as considerable as 1980's over-provision.

With an eye on the future, concern was being expressed by Geoff Tranter and others that of every five youngsters entering the sport only one continued into the teens and only 5% of those made it to their early twenties; a "Survival rate" of about 1% was hardly healthy. Perhaps one reason – then as now – was too much of flinging the young novices in at the deep end. The last finishers in the Intermediate, Junior and Girls races in the inaugural championships at Battersea Park had times respectively 48%, 49% and 41% greater than the winners; possibly the young tail-enders found the discrepancy discouraging or even humiliating.

By way of acknowledgement of what was then seen as serious inflation, the R.W.A. insurance scheme tripled its level of benefits in 1981 to a maximum of £3,000 for death or loss of an eye or a limb, plus £30 per week for up to two years in compensation for incapacity for work resulting from a qualifying accident. The premium, in contrast, was only doubled – to 50p a year! This was at a time when most individual race fees were of the order of 50p, often with free team entry.

Although diminished in comparison with the past, which, it must be admitted, was often viewed with an exaggeration born of nostalgia, support for championships was still adequate and even taking the Nationals to Exeter in 1981 resulted in one hundred and seventy-five and thirty-eight starters in the men's ten miles and women's five kilometres, which was not calamitous. The times were by no means spectacular (Mike Parker 73:37, the slowest since Ron Wallwork won in 1967, and Irene Bateman, 25:00, 1:55 slower than Carol Tyson's inaugural win the previous year and not to be exceeded – except on an over-distance course at Colchester in 1992 – until as late as 2003). The weather seems to have been the culprit, abetted by a hilly course with poor surfaces.

An unusual source of sponsorship was found for a women's international in Spain in 1981, when Irene Bateman and Carol Tyson were supported by Vladivar Vodka; the British women seemed to thrive on the backing, if not on the liquid itself, finishing second and third.⁵

A judging conference in France in the aftermath of the Olympic Games had before it a bizarre Swedish proposal that the number of red cards needed for disqualification should be related to the number of judges acting. It was suggested that with five or six judges three cards would be needed, with seven to nine four cards and with ten to twelve, five.⁶ This proposal, if used in Moscow, would have reduced the number of disqualifications from eleven to one, the single remaining walker having managed to gather nine cards from eleven judges in the 20k!⁷

It has often been suggested that the “International System” leads to what might be called *fiercer* judging, as the judges can hide behind the “rule of three”, but the two Olympic Chiefs, Larsen (for the 50k) and Kirkor (for the 20k), thought that the marked variation between judges in the numbers of cautions and cards issued was down to lack of courage, so that the International System did not, in their opinion, bring out the sterner side of the judges, but, if anything, the opposite.

The conference showed much support for the idea that cautions should be given to the walkers direct from the judges, rather than via the Chief Judge, a system readily adopted later; indeed, the centralised issuing of cautions seems, in retrospect, to be a decidedly peculiar way of doing things. It may be that the system existed only because of the rule that a walker was not entitled to two cautions for the same offence – or near-offence; it was only by centralising the issue of cautions that this could be ensured.

British qualification for the Lugano final in 1981 proved fairly comfortable; with Steve Barry (first), Ian McCombie (second), Roger Mills (seventh) and Graham Morris (tenth) in the 20k and Dennis Jackson (fourth), Ian Richards (fifth), Barry Graham (tenth) and Bob Dobson (eleventh) over 50k, Norway were beaten 49-44 with Western Germany and Finland nowhere. It was, of course, different at the final in Valencia, where Britain, with Amos Seddon replacing Morris, could manage only eighth, somewhat outshone by the women’s team of Irene Bateman, Lillian Millen, Jill Barrett and Carol Tyson, who just missed the podium in finishing in fourth place.

It would appear that, sometime in 1981, someone, somewhere, was struck by the thought that the regulations for the operation of the International System omitted to indicate whether all three cards had to be for the *same* infraction or whether a mixture of bent knees and loss of contact would count. The I.A.A.F. therefore produced a rule clarification which, unlike many such “clarifications” over the earlier years, actually did appear to make things

clearer; “Disqualification will be effected on receipt of three disqualification cards for any offence from any three judges.” This clarification at least avoided retrospective uproar, as everyone had thought that that was what the rule meant in any case; certainly, any other interpretation would have been rather odd.

1982 was a busy year internationally, with the European Championships in Athens and the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. Only Steve Barry and Ian McCombie were selected for Athens, where they finished eleventh and thirteenth, while for Brisbane England picked Mills and Paul Blagg, outnumbered by the Manx team of Murray Lambden, Graham Young and Rob Lambie, while Wales (Barry) and Guernsey (Rob Elliott) settled for one walker apiece. In the event, only the Welshman was among the medals, winning by two minutes from the Canadian Jobin, with another Canadian, Leblanc, a further two minutes in arrears.

Some criticism was raised concerning the judging in Australia, but it was as nothing compared with the furore that broke out on a domestic level over the arrangements for the National 10 miles at Dronfield in March. At the time, the judging provision for Nationals was for five judges from each Area, plus members of the International Panel; the result at Dronfield was that forty-one judges appeared on the programme, although not all of them actually attended. Between them, the ones who *were* there issued a total of 108 red cards against the 184 starters, disqualifying sixteen of them; in addition, there were 84 caution cards and 6 “spoilt” cards, for a grand total of 198. Bearing in mind that the slowest walker’s time was 111:30, the interval between cards was only about 35 seconds for the full duration of the race, although no doubt things were somewhat more frenzied as the race warmed up. The inevitable result was that the Chief Judge’s Recorder was rather swamped; no wonder, then, that some walkers were disqualified well after finishing.⁸

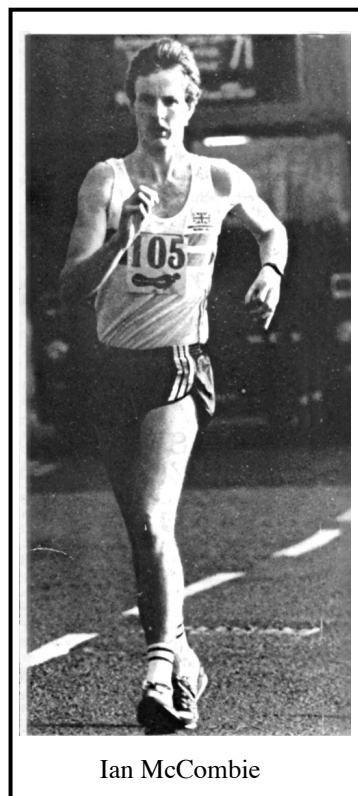
The main concern in 1983 was reaching the final of the Lugano Trophy, and preparation for

the semi-final in June (a “home” fixture in Southwark) began in January with the announcement of the teams, “pencilled in”, in the words of Julian Hopkins, the National Coach. For the 20k, the names were Barry, McCombie, Vesty and Mills, with relative newcomer Roy Sheppard as reserve, and for the 50k James, Blagg, Seddon and Maddocks with Barry Graham as extra. As it transpired, the British team just about made it, winning the 20k from Sweden by twenty-six points to twenty, but finishing fourth in the 50k, with fifteen points to Spain’s and Finland’s twenty-two, for a final match score of Great Britain 41, Spain 39, Finland 38 and Sweden 37. Vesty, McCombie and Mills, in third, fifth and sixth, settled the 20k well enough, while Maddocks, Blagg, Jackson and King filled seventh to tenth spots in the longer event – held on the road, in contrast to the track race at 20k – the disqualification of a Spanish walker in the last two kilometres resulting in Great Britain’s narrow match victory. It was a happier day for another Spaniard, as Llopart, winning in 3:57:29, produced the first sub-four-hour time to be achieved in competition in this country.

The women, with Jill Barrett and Irene Bateman second at 3000m and 5000m respectively, were second, sandwiched between Sweden and Norway, perhaps fortunately, as they had learned only days earlier that the races were *not* being held at 5000m and 10000m.

The men were thus assured of a place in the final, but there was some apprehension about what would happen in Bergen in September. In the event, it could have been a lot worse, although Hopkins, in his report, was perhaps over-exuberant in asking, “Was this Britain’s best ever?” Even given that the opposition was both greater and stronger than in the days when Britain actually won, the modest success, Hopkins said, “more than justified the selection policy adopted for the season” of “pencilling in” the names eight months in advance.⁹ Surprisingly, perhaps, the British walkers in Bergen did better at 50k than at 20k. Maddocks (ninth), Jackson (sixteenth), Graham (twenty-second) and Blagg (thirtieth) finished fourth

while Vesty (twenty-first), McCombie (thirty-second), Mills (thirty-third) and King (fortieth) were ninth, for a combined position of fifth. Overall, the U.S.S.R. won easily from Italy and Mexico. In the Eschborn Cup competition, China narrowly beat the U.S.S.R. and Australia to victory, with Britain (Bateman nineteenth, Barrett twenty-fifth, Birch twenty-sixth and Lupton forty-second) finishing seventh, between Norway and the U.S.A.

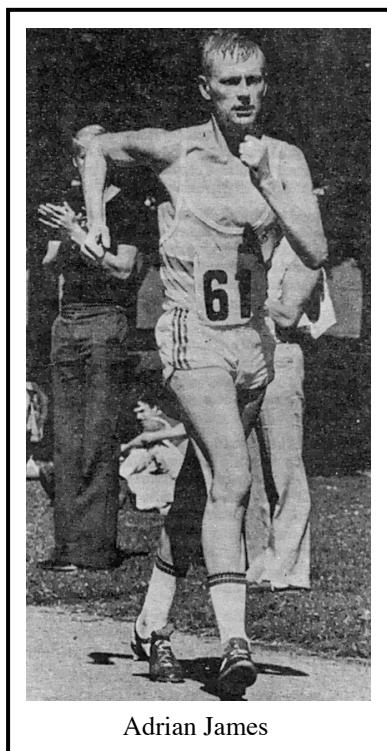


Ian McCombie

The R.W.A. recommendations for the World Championships in Helsinki were partly accepted by the B.A.A.B., Barry, McCombie and Vesty being named at 20k, with Barry’s subsequent withdrawal being covered by the inclusion of Mills. The 50k nominations of Graham and Maddocks, however, were rejected. Vesty led the team home with Mills beating McCombie.

As described in Chapter 12, 1983 was Leicester’s *annus mirabilis*, as they won all five

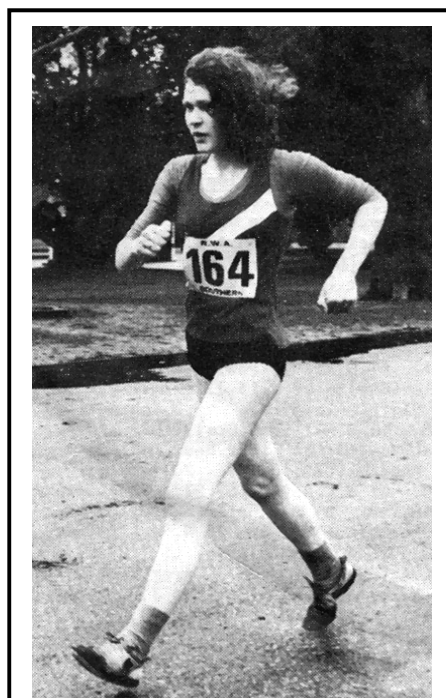
national championships, with Brian Adams in every team. Their quest took them to Kenilworth (for the 10 miles), Southport (20k), Colchester (20 miles), Beham (100k) and Enfield (50k) and was a spectacular coup for the leading Midlands club.



Adrian James

As though the Cornwall to Hertfordshire relay were not enough eccentricity to be going on with, the idea was conceived of inventing the quadrathlon by taking a triathlon and making it even harder; after a two mile swim at Brighton came a 50k walk to Tunbridge Wells, a 110-mile cycle ride to and around Brands Hatch and a marathon run to Gravesend. It was evidently done properly, for there were several walking judges and one of the competitors was given a card, although there were no disqualifications. The star among the walkers was Ed Shillabeer, who started the 50k lying thirty-fifth and finished it in the lead. He reached Gravesend in third position in 16:53:04, less than two-and-a-half minutes ahead of Arthur Eddleston (16:55:29), with Steve Till sixth in 17:23:43. Winner Richard Crane, a triathlete, took

16:26:47. Shillabeer's speed for the whole journey was a fraction over 10 m.p.h. and the positions of the leading walkers, who were only on their "own ground" for about 18% of the trip, spoke well for what it takes to follow the walking régime.



Jill Barrett as a Junior

Not having tampered too much with its organisation for a while, the R.W.A. had before its A.G.M. a proposal to set up a system of sub-committees to reduce the work falling to General Committee itself. No fewer than seven such sub-committees were formed; Rules, Records and Standards, chaired by Cecil Gittins; Coaching and Development (Peter Markham); Publicity (John Burns); Fixtures and Championships (Ken Smith); Judging and Officials (John Wish); Finance and Sponsorship (Alan Hall) and International (Amos Seddon). At the same time, the size of General Committee was reduced from sixty-plus to twenty, three from the South, two each from the Midlands and the North, the Sub-Committee Chairmen and the National Officers.

The A.G.M. also abolished the upper age limit for National Championships (previously set at sixty), but rejected a proposal for National Championships in the lower age groups to be held under the R.W.A., not the I.A.A.F., system of judging. Presumably the South, proposers of the change, felt that England had been in line with the rest of the world – or possibly vice versa – for too long.

In his preview of the A.G.M., John Hedgethorpe had thought that the Sub-Committee proposal might lead to some heat but that, “after all this, the election of officers will be something of an anti-climax.” He was somewhat mistaken. The reorganisation was passed easily. An opponent, in Ken Smith, the Midlands President, was proposed against Peter Marlow, who had been General Secretary since 1972. The incumbent retained his office, whereupon Peter Worth, Treasurer for the past four years, withdrew *his* nomination for re-election and was replaced by Reg Wells, who served for just one year before himself becoming General Secretary; as might be supposed, a degree of ill feeling lingered for some time.

As a step towards parity, Canada, during the year, proposed that a women’s walk be added to the Olympic Games, an idea that met with some support; unlike other suggestions for adding walks to various championships and games, it needed only nine years before, in Barcelona in 1972, Chen Yueling won the inaugural 10k.

While 1984 was an Olympic year, perhaps the most significant domestic event in the twelve months was on the 24th March at Southend-on-Sea when, a week after winning the A.A.A. 10,000m in 41:33, Ian McCombie became national ten-mile champion with 67:32, beating Phil Vesty by half a minute. What was significant was that McCombie was to take the ten-mile crown from then on until 1992, beating the five-year sequences of Roland Hardy (1952-1956) and Ken Matthews (1960-1964). In 1984 to 1986 and again in 1988 he also won the 20k. The nine years as 10 mile champion remains the longest winning streak. among the men.¹⁰

The Southend event was not without its controversy. The Inter-Counties’ Ten-mile Championship, held in conjunction, appeared to have been taken by Essex but after some contemplation by the Counties’ Athletic Union, prompted by doubts about the county status of the New Zealander Graham Seatter, it turned out that Surrey had won after all.

In an attempt to plan as far ahead as it had with the Lugano Cup, the R.W.A. made its recommendations for the Olympic selection procedures (for August, 1984) in October, 1983; but it took the B.A.A.B., which was ultimately responsible, until December to accept them. Selection standards were to be set at 1:25 and 4:03, walked in 1984 before the end of May; anyone achieving these times would be automatically selected and anyone beating 1:27 or 4:10 between July, 1983, and the 23rd June, 1984, would also be nominated to the B.A.A.B. selection meeting on the following day. Four nominated walkers at each distance would be sent to Spanish events in March and April. The usual arguments about the relative merits of the walkers took place – naturally enough! – and only the walkers achieving the first set of times were selected – Maddocks at 50k and McCombie, Barry and Vesty at 20k.

Barry had been suffering intermittent knee problems and on the day in Los Angeles could do no better than twenty-fourth, while Vesty and McCombie finished thirteenth and nineteenth; Maddocks was sixteenth of seventeen finishers (with five disqualified and nine retiring). The fields were, in any case, depleted in numbers and strength, with thirty-eight starting the 20k and thirty-one the 50k; this was largely as the result of a boycott by the socialist countries in retaliation for the United States-led boycott of the Moscow Games four years before.

As mentioned earlier, come the A.G.M., there were changes at the top, with Peter Marlow standing down as Secretary, to be succeeded by Reg Wells, whose Treasurer’s mantle passed to Bill Wright, setting out on his career to become the only Officer of the

Association so far to serve a continuous quarter century in the same – or, indeed, any – post. Having a year previously removed the upper age limit of sixty for national championships, General Committee had realised that there was now a situation of “anyone can play for as long as he likes” and instituted instead time limits, beyond which walkers “would not be regarded as finishing.”¹¹ The times were modest enough, so that no-one who was half-way serious and not injured or otherwise ailing need have any fears.

Money, as always, continued to matter to the Association and, reporting a surplus of £35 against £345 the previous year, Wells reckoned that a total annual income of £8,000 was needed “to put the sport on the right road and to enable us to compete against other attractions.” A quarter of a century later, his target was still to be reached. Similarly, the A.A.A. and its successors had not dropped walks from the annual track championships, despite their threat in 1984 to do so.

A source of some heat generation was the on/off nature of the 100k Championship, the predecessor of the R.W.A. Long-Distance Championship, to which it changed in 1987, largely because of the furore generated in 1984. No venue could be found for the race (and no-one prepared to organise it) so the South proposed that it should become “a national long-distance championship of at least fifty miles,” with the observation that this could be linked with any open long-distance event, as later became the case. General Committee did not make a decision on the proposal, but an offer by Surrey Walking Club to include a championship event in its “Brighton” was accepted by acclamation at the National 35k, rather than by General Committee itself. There was a good deal of dissatisfaction with this way of proceeding, especially over whether or not the race would be counted in the A.D.McSweeney Trophy table for best all-round club in the R.W.A. overall male championships. Eventually, it was decided that the Brighton was *not* the 100k Championship and it was, by proper General Committee

decision, not included in the Trophy calculation. In fact, it made no difference, as Coventry won the Trophy with or without counting the Brighton. The Hammond Trophy for highest number of points in the National Championships, however, went to Sheffield instead of Coventry.

There had been apprehension that 1984 would turn out to be a sinister year, thanks to George Orwell’s choice of a title for his propaganda diatribe, and there seemed to be a general sigh of relief – and not just within the world of race walking – when it ended without the occurrence of some dreadful apocalypse.

The National 100 business rumbled on for months. One of the casualties of this was Lilian Burns, the Chairman of the Fixtures and Championships Sub-committee, who resigned all her posts following a vituperative General Committee meeting in which there was a violent “personality clash”, as Reg Wells described it, between her husband, John Burns, Chairman of the Publicity Sub-committee, and John Wish, Chairman of the Judging Sub-committee. As she also resigned as Northern Area Secretary, a short but revolutionary period in the Association’s history ended, for at the time, Gill Wish was the Secretary of the Midlands Area and Pauline Wilson of the Southern. Having three female Area Secretaries in office simultaneously was a concept that would probably have dumbfounded the men of 1907, whose idea of the place of women in race walking was largely to sew competition numbers on their shirts, launder them afterwards and make the tea.

Another retinkered I.A.A.F. Rule then came upon the scene, the amended requirement for straightening being “for at least one moment in the vertically upright position.”¹²

A small useful boost to the interests of race walking came with the agreement by the A.A.A. to the institution of a walking section in the Esso Five Star Scheme, designed to help and encourage young athletes; track and field events had been the inaugural items, but now that race

walking was to be on a par with cross-country running. The Association set itself to devising suitable rules, which, in due course, it did.

Late in 1984, as mentioned in Chapter 22, the National Event Coach Julian Hopkins resigned after ten years in his post. He had become increasingly disillusioned with disqualifications for loss of contact; "I find it soul destroying," he wrote, "to go to a race and see fast, technically proficient walkers disqualified whilst others with poor technique and lacking in fitness are allowed to finish. I find that the contact rule is quite unfair on judges and walkers alike. Indeed the whole business of judging contact seems surrounded by hypocrisy to me and this I can no longer stomach." He argued that at a speed in excess of some personal limit that exists for each walker given a particular state of fitness and technical expertise, loss of contact *is inevitable*. Arguing from a biomechanical standpoint, he proposed that the difference between running and walking was not contact but the straight leg; in running, contact was made almost under the body with a bent knee, the straightening of which produced the propulsion of the athlete; in walking, the knee was straight at contact – in front of the body – and remained straight until just before toe-off.¹³ He regarded the solution to the problem as "inescapable", nothing less than the deletion from the definition of the requirement for continuous contact, which had, of course, through all the changes, been the fixed point of race walking.

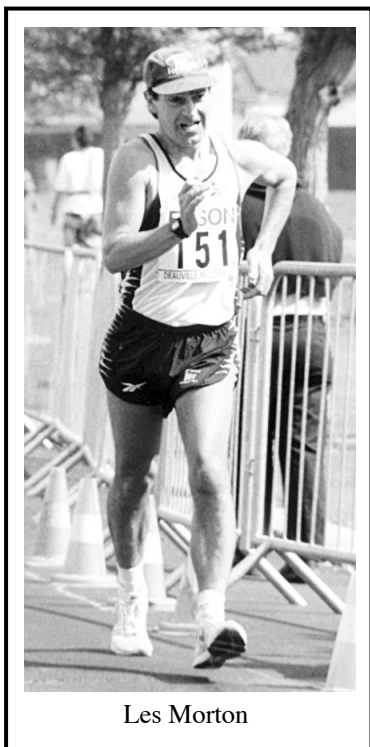
Such a radical departure from the historical position, especially when many people continued to argue that knees had nothing to do with the matter and that it was *all*, as Teddy Knott had long ago declared, a question of contact pure and simple, ensured that very little support was expressed for Hopkins's standpoint. Given that his post required him, in effect, to coach people to do what he thought was wrong or irrelevant, he had little reasonable option but to resign from the position. His disillusionment, however, did not prevent his appointment as Features Editor of *Race Walking Record*, although that lasted only two months before,

together with Ian Brooks, he became a "feature writer."

Both domestically and internationally, the big event of 1985 was the Lugano Trophy and Eschborn Cup competition, which was held at St. John's in the Isle of Man at the end of September. As hosts, Great Britain were sure of a place in the final, where they would be joined by the first two in each of three European semi-finals. The men's final would also feature the U.S.S.R., Italy and Mexico (medallists from Bergen in 1983) plus direct entries from Kenya, Canada, China, Australia, Algeria, U.S.A., Colombia and India. It was a strange arrangement, obviously depending on the feasibility of arranging semi-finals, but it did guarantee the presence of India and Kenya while ensuring that, from the first semi-final, two of Finland, the German Democratic Republic, Norway and Sweden – all of them far stronger than India and Kenya – would be excluded.

The same qualification system applied to the women with China, the U.S.S.R. and Australia, as the first three from Bergen, plus Mexico¹⁴, Canada, Colombia and the U.S.A., perhaps slightly less odd than the men's arrangement, although, again, it meant that Finland, the G.D.R., Norway, Sweden and Italy were fighting for two places. The outcome of the semi-finals was that in the Men's event, G.D.R., Sweden, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary qualified and in the women's, Finland, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Spain and Italy. It was obviously a compromise solution based upon the impossibility of arranging a semi-final involving all – or even some – of the "lesser" countries, as they then were.

Because of the overwhelming strength of the fields, home advantage in the final proved *not* to be such an advantage, the men finishing seventh at each distance and overall, and the women twelfth and last. The best individual British performers were Ian McCombie, twentieth in the 20k, Les Morton, seventeenth in the 50k, and Lisa Langford, who was twenty-fifth in the women's 10k.



Les Morton

Apart from the British performance on the road, the organisation was excellent but, even so, the event was not without its unrest. In particular, the appointment of a separate Press Officer led to the prompt resignation of the Association's National Press and Publicity Officer, Dave Ainsworth, who felt – and many people will have sympathised with him – that after doing the “donkey work” for some time he had been cast off for the “big one.”

The important event in 1986 was the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. Given the possibility of having representatives from seven countries and familiar conditions to boot, collective British hopes were fairly buoyant. So far as England was concerned, too much controversy over the selections was avoided by the simplest possible process; a trial was held over the actual Games course¹⁵ and the first three were selected. Ian Brooks used his “feature” in *Race Walking Record* to tip McCombie, Vesty, Rush, Maddocks, Morton and Jackson as likely contenders with Chris Smith and Alan King as outsiders. It was, as it

turned out, a good piece of prevision, as the successful trio was McCombie, Maddocks and Rush. Jackson was fifth – behind Blagg – and Morton ninth. The Commonwealth Games race itself was contested in foul weather and McCombie was the best of England's team, finishing third behind Simon Baker of Australia and the Canadian Guillaume Leblanc.

The European Championships in Stuttgart in the same year proved a fairly comprehensive disaster for the British competitors. In the women's 10k, Lisa Langford and Beverley Allen finished fourteenth and fifteenth with Helen Elleker disqualified, there were no representatives at 20k and in the 50k Dennis Jackson was eighteenth and Les Morton disqualified.

The Annual General Meeting in September did not really address the basic problems that had become apparent, such as declining numbers, difficulties of retaining young walkers and general falling-off of standards in comparison with the rest of the world. Officers of the R.W.A. have always tended to remain in post until they died or had otherwise had enough, but the 1986 A.G.M. provided one of the occasional outbursts of competition that may indicate, on the one hand, keen interest and, on the other, some degree of individual animosity. Whatever the reason in this instance, Dave Rosser who, following the resignation of Lilian Burns, had taken over as Championships Secretary in February, 1985, was opposed by Ken Smith and defeated by a single vote. It is a moot point whether, as Peter Marlow's *Race Walking Record* editorial stated, the action – supposedly led by the South, which was upset by the Association's decision not to circulate championship details to clubs, at a trivial financial saving – “split the race walking fraternity” and “caused a lot of unnecessary bitterness in our sport.” A more likely result is that, apart from the thirty-four people who attended the A.G.M., no-one cared very much who did what so long as someone did. As usual, after the normal flurry of correspondence and ill-considered public washing of dirty linen, the matter faded into history.

After the chaos over 1984's long-distance championship – or non-championship – the situation had been clearer in 1985 with a track 100k at Colchester, won by Ed Shillabeer, and incorporating both 100 miles and twenty-four hours competitions, although there were problems caused by the intervention of the wind among the lap-recording charts and the uncontrolled coming and going of competitors, some returning near the end in order to score in the twenty-four hours. This led to a tightening of the rules, which were certainly applied the next year, 1986, when a Hew Neilson Memorial Race was held at Woodford, although for some reason it was not recognised as a National Championship.

In order to “simplify” things, the race secretary decided to “unmetricate” the Ashton Playing Fields track and turn it into a quarter-mile one. The Editor had the pleasure of assisting Charlie Megnin and George Eastwood in this by making the top bend wider. There was no particular conceptual difficulty in doing this accurately by repeated application of the well-known old technique of trial-and-error; there was, however, a practical problem in the actual execution as it was done on a club training night, with all that that implies in terms of spike-marks in the hands and exchanges of pleasantries with sprinters. A perpetual trophy, incorporating Hew Neilson's Centurion badge, was provided by his family for the first new centurion to qualify. Astoundingly, after 100 miles, Phil Carroll beat Percy Gordon by just under sixteen minutes and by the twenty-four hour signal the difference was down to fifty-one yards. Three women had a keen interest in the Colchester and Woodford races. At Colchester, Carol Bean had recorded 23:49:05 for the hundred miles and she went to Woodford to encourage Pauline Wilson to 23:39:55, both of them being, apparently, National Track Bests. However, an earlier time set by Ann Sayer in a mixed running/walking event was subsequently ratified. It is, perhaps a comment on the camaraderie within the world of race walking (and especially that of the long-distance enthusiasts) that Bean turned up to cheer on a rival, that Sayer had advised Wilson on her preparations and that Wilson was then

instrumental in having Sayer's time accepted by the Association.



So far as international successes were concerned, British walking was really not in the hunt. The World Cup of 1987 in New York was by direct entry without preliminary rounds, thus increasing the number of participating countries from a little over a dozen in each event to thirty-four for the men and twenty-three for the women. Provisional British selections had been made in the previous autumn and another nine names were added later; two training camps were held and a “B” squad was even set up, containing nine walkers with their own separate camp. A full team was eventually selected: Beverley Allen, Helen Elleker, Nicky Jackson and Lisa Langford for the women and Chris Maddocks, Ian McCombie, Phil Vesty and Andi Drake at 20k with Paul Blagg, Barry Graham, Denis Jackson and Les Morton at 50k for the men.

As a preliminary diversion, a match against Hungary was held in Bekescaba in April, where the women won fairly comfortably, the magnitude of the men's defeat, however, resulting in second place overall, although individual runner-up places in the junior events for Darrell Stone and Julie Drake were encouraging.

In New York in May, the result was very much as expected from the British viewpoint, seventh by the women, tenth by the 20k men and eighth at 50k. Star performer was Lisa Langford, who not only set a national record in the 10k but took fourteen seconds off the seven-year-old 5k time *en route*. She finished eleventh, with Allen thirty-seventh and Elleker forty-second, while Jackson fell foul of what was generally recognised as somewhat haphazard judging.¹⁶

The 20k men – McCombie (twenty-third), Maddocks (twenty-seventh), Vesty (sixty-first) and Drake (sixty-fifth) – at least had the satisfaction of beating the German Democratic Republic, a task that was beyond the rest of the world in the 50k, where they filled the first three places within forty-eight seconds. Clearly, no-one else was in the same class and Blagg in twenty-seventh, Jackson (thirty-fifth), Morton (forty-second) and Graham (fifty-eighth) finished between the U.S.A. and Canada; overall, the British men's team was eleventh. Conditions were difficult, especially for the 50k, where five disqualifications and forty-four retirements decidedly thinned out the field leaving only eighty-six finishers.

The World Athletics Championships later in the year resulted in some stirring British performances. With 83:51, Ian McCombie was ninth, a little over three minutes behind Maurizio Damilano, while Chris Maddocks suffered a muscle injury during the race and could do no better than thirty-fourth. Lisa Langford and Beverley Allen were thirteenth and twenty-fifth respectively and the star turn was Paul Blagg's as he became the first British walker to break four hours for 50k, finishing with five seconds in hand.

As a barrier fell in Rome, so a tradition ended on the Hastings to Brighton road, the thirty-eight mile classic being held for the fiftieth and final time. It had already been announced that it would be replaced by a 50k in a park, and Alan Buchanan noted that the volume of traffic at the start and its speed near the end more than confirmed the wisdom of the decision.

Brighton and Hove A.C., promoters of the "Hastings", launched a relay competition, five stages of various lengths for men, totalling thirty kilometres and four for women, totalling twenty, with the first leg in each case to be walked by an Under-13 or Under-15 and time penalties for receiving cards. Considering that the event was held on the same weekend as the W.A.A. track championships, the Bradford 50k and the Stock Exchange London to Brighton, the response was fairly good, with twelve men's and six women's teams participating. Splott beat Steyning A and Steyning B for the men's prize, while the hosts led Aldershot, Farnham & District and Steyning in the women's race. The following year, the relays were adopted by the R.W.A. as a National Championship and continued until 1997, when waning interest – and also, perhaps, the continued predominance of three or four leading clubs – prompted their discontinuance; occasional subsequent mutterings about their revival came to nothing.

Two other innovations occurred during 1987, one enduring and the other less so. Chiltern Running Club promoted a five mile walk in conjunction with their annual run and were pleased to have forty-five finishers over a somewhat hilly course up and down the edge of the hills from which the club took its name; an indication of the toughness of the course is that the winning times by Tim Berrett and Gillian Brackpool were 37:39 and 45:31. Although it did not succeed in the aim of drawing many novices into the sport, the Pednor Walk became an established feature of the calendar¹⁷.

Of rather shorter life was the International Race Walkers Club, whose initial prospectus

included the promotion of “Walking spectaculars”, the establishment of small teams to race on the continent, assistance to clubs, publicity, maintenance of close contacts with track and field athletics and production of a bulletin. It was an organisation for the élite walker, with entry standards of 1:32:00, 4:25:00 and 51:00 for men’s 20k and 50k and women’s 10k or, alternatively, membership of any Olympic, European or Commonwealth Championship team. The Chairman and Secretary were Peter Marlow and Ian McCombie. In the previous year, according to the annual rankings, fourteen men (led by McCombie himself) had achieved the 20k time and nine (headed by Les Morton) that for 50k, while Beverley Allen was top of the four qualifying women; among the men, three names appeared on both lists. Whether the somewhat stringent conditions for Club membership meant that there were simply too few walkers to do all that was intended is not clear, but no real achievements ever appeared and the Club had a fairly short life.

Although things were not entirely well with walking and there was much correspondence in *Race Walking Record*, as will be seen in the relevant chapters of this book, the Annual General Meeting in Leeds passed in its normal blaze of torpor, with all the Officers re-elected and a couple of innocuous resolutions passed – along the lines of authorising the Secretary to pursue development and making funds available, giving precedence in the fixtures calendar to national championships and discontinuing the Association’s insurance scheme in favour of the one run by the A.A.A. Attempts to fix the National 50k in March or April and to restrict the senior men’s national championships to 20k, 30k and 50k both failed. Very little attention seems to have been given to finding and curing the underlying problems, although, to be sure, one of the problems was simply that walkers everywhere else in the world seemed to be getting better as they took the sport more seriously.

Troubled, as usual, by rising costs early in 1988, General Committee took the enormous

decision to increase the annual subscription for *Race Walking Record* from £5.00 to £5.50 home, from £6.00 to £8.00 within Europe and from £6.00 to £10.00 elsewhere, while keeping the cover price at 50p. It cannot have made much difference to the Association’s finances.

More serious financial problems were at the same time arising elsewhere; for some time they had been developing throughout athletics. Until 1932, the four “Home Countries” – England¹⁸, Scotland, Wales and, following on from an all-Ireland body, Northern Ireland – had had separately organised governing bodies for men and women, eight in all, while the (English) Amateur Athletic Association, more or less by dint of seniority, was the British representative on the International Amateur Athletic Federation. The world body was unhappy with the arrangement (but would not allow Scotland to have separate membership) and, in consequence, the British Amateur Athletic Board was formed as an “umbrella” body, sensibly restricting itself to *British representative* matters and leaving the eight (self-appointed) governing bodies to look after their own nations’ affairs. By 1988, the B.A.A.B., largely as a result of over-reaching itself, was running short of money and multilateral talks began on – to use the dreadfully ominous term current at the time – “rationalisation”. All this, of course, made very little difference to the R.W.A., which governed race walking in England and Wales for both men and women.

By 1988, there seemed to be a possibility of radical reorganisation – whether or not for the better being a matter of very divided opinion – and Reg Wells, writing in *Record*, in February, thought that, “In 1988/89 there will be one governing body in athletics....” and suggested a method of organising the disciplines in a manner not totally unlike the arrangements adopted when the negotiations resulted in the foundation of the ill-conceived and (fortunately, as many thought) ill-fated British Athletic Federation in 1991; at that point the A.A.A. and the W.A.A.A. merged, although there was much concern on the women’s side that it would be

more of a take-over than a joining of equals,¹⁹ which did turn out to be the case.

A surprise event early in 1988 was the resignation due to ill health of Reg Wells, who had been General Secretary since 1984, when he had succeeded Peter Marlow. His parting message was, "To the Committee I say this. Forget your personal differences, forget personal ambitions, fight to keep the sport of race walking on the calendar." Such sentiments are often expressed but, of course, there are certain to be differences over how to develop, and everyone involved in anything contentious must have ambition to reach a position in which he can get his policies into practice. Still, being able to accept defeat is also desirable – if harder – which is curious in a sport in which competitors are ready to accept elimination on the grounds that, in someone's personal opinion, they are not doing it properly!

The Association's Rules gave the General Committee the power to fill any casual vacancy among the Officers, and John Keown, the serving President, took over until the next General Committee meeting in April. At that meeting, however, it was found that one Area had submitted two different nominations for the post; Keown extracted the Association from its home-made muddle by agreeing to continue to look after affairs until the A.G.M. in September, at which meeting Beryl Randle, the Midlands Area Secretary, became the R.W.A's first female Officer. (Championships Secretary, a position held by Lillian Burns from 1980 to 1985, was not an Office, within the meaning of the Rules.)

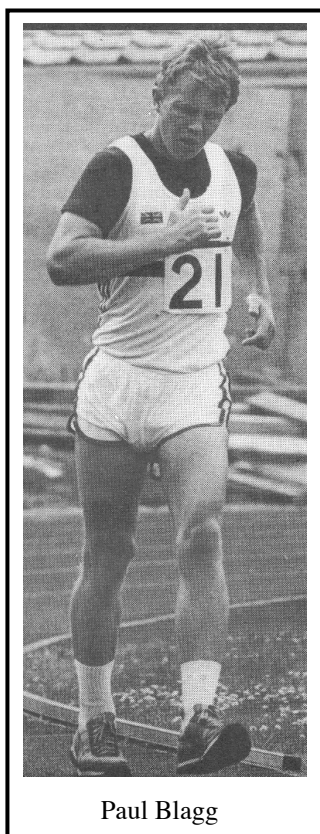
Bill Wright and Ken Smith were re-elected and Cecil Gittins became President, passing the Chairmanship to the now recovered Reg Wells.

General Committee had given thought to the proposed reorganisation of British athletics so that it could try to make recommendations to its clubs. There were two schemes before a special meeting held in July; the "McAllister Proposal" and the Southern Counties' Athletic Association plan. The McAllister proposals would – or

might – have led to a seat on the new British Athletic Federation for the R.W.A. when it could represent the whole of United Kingdom race walking – a somewhat remote possibility in actual fact – while the S.C.A.A. version would have given a definite seat to the Association and was the scheme for which the General Committee urged support. It should be borne in mind that most of the R.W.A. clubs were general athletic clubs and that the views of their walking sections might have carried comparatively little weight.

The S.C.A.A. plan was approved fairly heavily at the E.G.M. (which was especially surprisingly since McAllister had the support of the B.A.A.B., the Sports Council and the Government, among others) by 782 votes to 576. Keown remarked that "Great vigilance will now be needed to ensure that the RWA does get the promised seat and discussions will have to begin with the Athletic authorities in Scotland and Northern Ireland to see if it can be agreed that the RWA should represent race walking in the UK as a whole." This, too, was a rather fanciful aspiration as, although Scotland and Northern Ireland were not over-concerned about race walking, they *were* concerned with maximising their representation on the new body. In any case, it did not matter much one way or the other at the time because, as shown above, the reorganisation did not occur for another three years.

With the R.W.A's internal hiatus over its officers and the external concern over the chaotic state of British athletics in general, there was still time for the Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea, where McCombie set a national best of 1:22:03 for thirteenth place, a couple of minutes behind the Czech Jozef Pribilinec, with Maddocks, suffering from food poisoning, only one second outside his personal best, twenty-fourth in 1:23:46. At 50k, Les Morton, who had earlier joined the sub-four-hour class, finished twenty-seventh in 3:59:30, one place and thirty-seven seconds ahead of Paul Blagg. The pace in the two races was decidedly brisk, the first twenty in the 20k and the first eleven in the 50k beating the Olympic records.



Paul Blagg

From time to time – and not only in moments of stress – the sport becomes philosophically contemplative and deeply introspective and asks, “Whither Race Walking?” in response to which there are always a few pessimists, sceptics, wags and ill-wishers who cry, “Wither Race Walking!” The year 1988 saw such an upsurge of rumbling – it could hardly be called a proper debate – largely arising from a letter to *Race Walking Record* from G.Mayes of Essex. Whenever the words “farce” and “alleged” (or, indeed, the expression “so-called”) appear in a letter, one may be

certain that temperatures will rise rapidly and this was a case in point. Mayes’s outburst had been prompted by a television news snippet in which Charlie Megnin complained about technical standards in the sport and dramatically dropped his shoes into a litter-bin. Mayes seized on the fact that Megnin had been “driven out of the sport because of the antics of the straight legged gallopers who are falsely referred to as walkers,” to call for the winding-up of the R.W.A., which, he alleged, exercised no control, and the elimination of “so-called” walking races from all athletics meetings, a proposition certain to ignite the hot gases of the great majority of walkers. What Mayes presumably did not know was that when the television recording was “in the can” Megnin recovered his shoes from the bin and went for a training spin!

Sure enough, after a month’s silence – a stunned one, it may be supposed – Dave Rowlands, Andi Drake, Alan Buchanan and Chris Maddocks tore into Mayes and those who thought as he did, followed up by Martin Oliver and, as the exchange widened into what to do about standards, by Martin Rush, John Delaine – moving power behind the then powerful Aldershot, Farnham and District A.C. – and others. Questions of coaching theory somehow came into the argument and a subsidiary bout of theoretical sword-crossing broke out between Buchanan and Bob Picton. One way and another, pressure was building up nicely and then....? Perhaps the fire went out but, as so often before and since, the walking fraternity showed that it could not keep its collective dander up for more than three or four months. It may be that conducting a row through the pages of a monthly magazine gives too much time to cool off and makes permanent anger a difficult state of emotion to maintain.

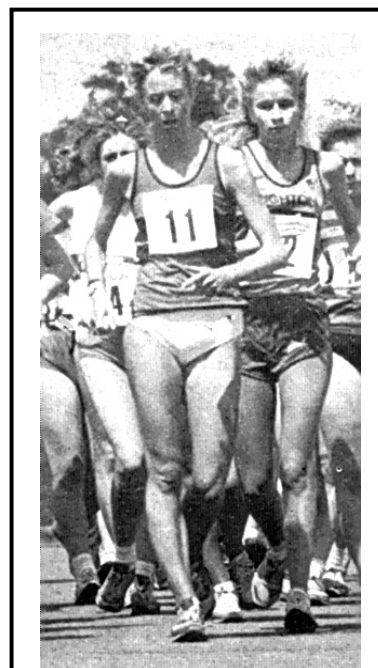


A LEVEL IS REACHED

A full team was sent to the World Cup at L'Hospitalet in 1989, finishing eighth overall in the Lugano Trophy (seventh at 20k and eleventh at 50k) and eleventh in the Eschborn Cup. Leaders of the British finishers in the respective races were Chris Maddocks, fifteenth in 1:22:35, Les Morton, twenty-fifth in 4:03:30, and Lisa Langford, fifteenth in 46:02. The team positions actually showed a slight improvement over 1987 and opinion was divided over whether it was a good or bad year and whether it had been sensible to select the team so close to the event; this at least provided a relief from the normal complaints about choosing it too far in advance.

In contrast, the trials for the February, 1990, Commonwealth Games were held in September, 1989; Lisa Langford and Betty Sworowski finished together in 47:15, followed by Julie Drake (48:55) and Helen Elleker, while in the men's 30k, Maddocks (2:11:38) beat McCombie by five seconds with Easton a couple of minutes behind. The R.W.A. selectors recommended the first three men but preferred Elleker to Drake – without, apparently telling the unfortunate Brighton walker – and so found a new way of unleashing controversy.

The longer notice may have made a difference when the Games took place in Auckland, New Zealand, the English team having two bronze medals to show for their work. In the women's 10k, the first to be held in the Commonwealth Games, Australian Kerry Saxby was two minutes clear of the field, as generally expected, with Langford third; there is no knowing what Drake would have done, but Elleker managed seventh, while Sworowski, after leading the squad early on, was overcome by the heat and collapsed. A disappointing feature of the race was that, after all the effort to have it included, only eleven started and eight finished. It was scarcely an auspicious start for the new enterprise.



Brighton Power
Julie Drake (11) and Joanne Pope

In fact, the men's race, which had been an established part of the Games since Ron Wallwork won the inaugural contest in Kingston a quarter of a century earlier, was not much bigger, with thirteen starters and twelve finishers, led by Guillaume Leblanc of Canada. McCombie was third with Easton and Maddocks fifth and sixth, while Manxman Steve Partington was ninth. The only countries represented were New Zealand, Australia, Canada, England and the Isle of Man.

Controversy reigned, too, at the Annual General meeting in October, where in her first Annual Report Honorary General Secretary Beryl Randle quoted in full the latest draft – of several – of the Constitution of the Race

Walking Commission of the yet-to-be-formed British Athletic Federation.¹ The draft provided for what seems to have been intended as a United Kingdom-wide election of the Officers (Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer) and between nine and twelve members, together with all the Officers of the Federation, except the President, and an apparently limitless number of non-voting co-opted members. No provision was made for the actual conduct of elections, except that they were to be by annual “ballot of affiliated clubs and bodies paying a subscription in respect of race walking from amongst their number.”² The Commission was to have one seat on the B.A.F. Council.

This plan for chaos was not, however, the source of the controversy at the Annual General Meeting, quite possibly because no-one really believed that the B.A.F. with its ponderous proposed constitution would ever have the strength to stay upright for long enough to do anything; these doubts turned out to be justified.

What led to the A.G.M. arguments was the proposal to change the R.W.A.’s internal voting system. It was felt in some quarters that there were several affiliated clubs with no real interest in race walking and even some “phantom” bodies that scarcely existed at all but were mere devices for obtaining votes. Two solutions were put forward, both involving differential voting. The R.W.A. “official” proposal was that, apart from the single vote that each club had anyway, those starting a team in a men’s national championship should have a second, with another for starting a team in a women’s national. The Northern Area preferred the qualification to be *finishing* teams rather than merely *starting*. Proceedings were a little out of the ordinary, as a preliminary vote was held on which motion to put to the meeting definitively, the winner – or interim winner – being the one favouring *starting*. To quote the report in *Race Walking Record*, “While the Southern delegates would have been happy to support the North’s proposals (had they gone forward) in an attempt to bring about change, the North, having lost the right to put forward

their views, decided to pick up their ball and play no longer as they did not support the South’s view.”³ The outcome was that the motion was passed but without the majority necessary to change the Association’s rules. A similar inadequate majority was gained by a proposal to give a vote to each *Area* instead of each *Area Secretary* personally. There is a school of thought holding that this was the most sensible proposition ever lost at an R.W.A. Annual General Meeting. Indeed, so clearly just was it that it succeeded some years later.

The whole meeting was so confrontational that even the election of the new President, usually a gentlemanly – even courtly – affair, involved a contest, Doug Fotheringham defeating Ken Smith.⁴

Excitement grew upon excitement as the Chairmanship, too, was contested, Cecil Gittins, who had held the post between 1983 and 1989 and then stood aside during his Presidential year, defeating the incumbent Reg Wells and entering upon a nine-year tenure, ending only when he deemed himself too old for the job. Tension carried over into the normally mundane business, from the “floor’s” point of view, of the election of the Honorary Auditors. It was not that the matter was keenly contested; on the contrary, there was a marked shortage of nominees or volunteers until Martin Oliver of the Enfield club almost literally burst upon the proceedings, flinging open the doors at the top of the Regent Street Polytechnic lecture theatre and declaring his candidature. He was elected, together with Leicester Walking Club’s Chris Berwick, who was not present and had not previously been consulted.⁵

It was, taken for all-in-all, one of the Association’s most remarkable annual assemblies so far; two organisational matters agreed but with insufficient majority, contested elections for two top jobs and the auditors elected, one by virtue of last-minute apparition and one *in absentia*. The actual effect of the entire day, looked at coolly afterwards when something had to be made of the proceedings, was more or less nothing.

Just as the renowned Hastings to Brighton had been defeated by the traffic, so another classic, the seventy-year-old police Barking to Southend walk, went the same way, even being honoured by a lengthy obituary in *Record*.⁶

For the 1990 European Championships, to be held in Split, Yugoslavia, in October, trials had been staged in early April at Redditch, the selectors naming only the three winners – Mark Easton for 20k, Les Morton for 50k and Betty Sworowski – with the possibility of other selections later, depending on the performances during the summer. In the event, others *were* added, with rather mixed results. In the 20k, Easton came home sixteenth with the added Andi Drake disqualified, and in the 50k Morton was eleventh, while Paul Blagg and Darrell Stone did not finish, due respectively to blisters and the intervention of the medical officers. The women fared rather better, latecomer Lisa Langford beating Sworowski – tenth place against fifteenth – with Julie Drake twentieth.

Another “classic” nearly died when Enfield, finding itself suddenly short of a Secretary, was unable to promote its annual Open 7, first held in 1920, although it reappeared in 1992, somewhat reinvigorated. The cancellation, after decades in which numerous “sevens” were a feature of the early winter, especially in the metropolitan area, left only the equally venerable Belgrave Harriers’ version, held over what – largely because of the plague of traffic hazards – had become a succession of different courses, all euphemistically called “testing”, in the Wimbledon area.

The I.A.A.F. Walking Committee, moving slowly in the general direction of equality, proposed the replacement of the World Cup women’s 10k by a 20k. The I.A.A.F. itself, moving even more slowly, disagreed and the change did not take place until 1999, so that the shorter distance was included in San José in 1991 and for a couple of competitions thereafter. The British selection procedure had been set late in 1990 with trials in March, won by Mark Easton at 20k, Les Morton at 50k and Betty Sworowski at 10k. The selection protocol was

to take the winner of each trial together with up to three more for each distance, subject to the achieving of 88:00, 4:15:00 and 48:00, respectively by early April. As well as the Trial winners, Rush and Penn in the 20k and Elleker and Lupton in the 10k bettered the standards and in the event, those four plus McCombie at 20k, Maddocks, Blagg and Jackson at 50k and Drake for the women were included, making up a full squad.

The weather, as might be expected in California in June, was hot, in the eighties at nine o’clock in the morning. As might also have been expected, the British teams were rather down the tables, the best result being the 50k men’s in which they finished seventh, beating, among others, the U.S.S.R., who had three walkers disqualified. Morton led the team home in twentieth, with Blagg twenty-fifth, Maddocks forty-fifth and Jackson fifty-fifth. Next best result was the women’s twelfth place – Sworowski, Lupton, Elleker and Drake filling twenty-first, thirty-ninth, forty-third and sixtieth positions – while the 20k squad managed only fifteenth (one behind Ireland), with McCombie thirty-eighth, Rush forty-second, Easton fifty-third and Penn fifty-seventh.

It had previously been decided that the first Briton home at each distance would go to the World Championships in Tokyo, subject to achieving certain times – not necessarily in San José, which was fortunate, given the conditions. Sworowski, Elleker and Drake were the women eventually selected, Sworowski again providing the best finish, in twentieth place. McCombie (twenty-seventh) was the only 20k competitor and Morton (tenth), Blagg (twenty-second) and Maddocks (twenty-fourth) contested the 50k. Such were the weather conditions, with very high humidity, that the “d.n.fs” at 50k read like an extract from an “all-time greats” list – Gustaffson, Perricelli, Baker, Moreno, Weigel, Korzeniowski.... Reporting the event, Maddocks reckoned that the seven British race walking representatives in Tokyo did a good PR job; possibly they did, among the local people and their team-mates, but the journalistic coverage back home was at its normal minimalist level.

In March, 1991, general meetings of the B.A.A.B., A.A.A. and W.A.A.A. agreed to the merging of the last-named two to form the Athletic Association of England, and the creation, with effect from the 1st October, of the British Athletic Federation. Honorary General Secretary Beryl Randle said that “There is still some negotiation over a little more voting power but we have all we want except for some cosmetic changes.” The Walking Commission, she observed, was in “almost the form which the R.W.A. would wish.” That may have been true, but the Commission’s constitution had no provision for the holding of elections or the appointment of representatives, so the R.W.A. simply decided to elect the Commission Secretary at its own A.G.M. Beryl Randle won the election against Peter Cassidy and, in accordance with a previous agreement between the two, withdrew her candidature for the R.W.A. Secretaryship, leaving Cassidy to take it unopposed. There were a few who thought the whole thing a “set-up”, but there was logic in it. Doing both jobs might have become a burden, especially as one of them was new and had to be developed from scratch, and there might conceivably have been some conflict of interest between British and English aims. Randle relished the challenge of setting the Commission on its way; Cassidy did not see how the Federation as a whole, which seemed to consist of structure rather than substance, with a great deal of residual ill-feeling and acrimony, could possibly survive for long and felt that the Association provided more scope for action. Everyone, therefore, was more or less content with the result.⁸

Once again, the A.G.M. saw a contest for the Presidency, Leicester’s Peter Markham defeating Sheffield’s Alan Hall, who was renominated in 1992 and duly elected. The Presidency had been vacant since the sudden death in June of the sixty-one-year-old Peter Worth. The Rules made no provision for the death in office of the President, which had apparently never happened before, but, in deference to his memory, the General Committee agreed to let the rest of his term run its course.⁹

From time to time, as has been mentioned elsewhere in these pages, attempts have been made to form leagues on the basis of existing races, and the Southern Area started such a competition in 1992 to replace the discontinued Area Track Competition, which had been a one-day contest over various distances but had recently lacked support. The new league was to be scored on five classic races – Chippenham to Calne, Enfield, Belgrave, Basingstoke and Metropolitan Police – for both men and women. Unfortunately, like many such enterprises based upon more or less scattered individual events and in which turning out regularly is liable to rank a walker above one who produces a couple of winning performances, support was decidedly patchy and the league died of atrophy.

Two more attempts arose to define what walking really is, or should be. Oslo’s University of Sport and Physical Education proposed a study to determine when walking becomes running. Their proposal stated that, “...in walking the leg in ground contact is straight and the knee is extended, while the pelvis is fixed relative to the hip. This means that in walking the centre of gravity is at its highest when the hip is above the foot on the ground, while in running the centre of gravity is at its lowest at this phase.” The position of the centre of gravity therefore showed a 180° phase difference and the proposal was to investigate whether the change in phase as speed increased was gradual or instantaneous. Meanwhile, Australian research showed that higher speeds were obtained by shortening the “front half” of the stride (the horizontal distance between the leading heel and the body’s centre of gravity). In the U.S.S.R., research had led to the proposal to land on a slightly bent knee and straighten it immediately, thus reducing shin soreness but making greater demands on the quadriceps, which would need to be able to “snap” the knee straight in an instant instead of having the whole swing phase in which to do so. What that would have done to the internal structures of the knee was not clear. Carrying the Soviet idea to excessive lengths would obviously look unlike walking – “not good shaping”, as an earlier generation might have put it – and may have

helped in the move towards “straight knee from contact to verticality.”

The Olympic Games in Barcelona took place with temperatures in the vicinity of 80°F, which upset many competitors, but not as much as the final two-kilometre climb to the Montjuic Stadium. The home favourite Daniel Plaza was the winner, while his compatriot Valentin Massana, who had tracked him all the way, survived the climb only to be disqualified at the stadium entrance, letting in Guillaume Leblanc from Canada, not the hottest of countries. In the un-English conditions, Chris Maddocks walked well for sixteenth, with Andy Penn and Martin Rush twenty-third and twenty-fourth. The judges’ intervention was even more dramatic in the inaugural women’s 10k, as they removed Ivanova of the E.U.N. after she had finished, to promote China’s Chen Yueling. For the British contingent, Lupton suffered disqualification while Sworowski and Langford finished in the thirties. The E.U.N’s Andrei Perlov was a two-minute winner of the 50k, in the slowest winning time for twenty years; the sole British competitor, Paul Blagg, was thirtieth.

The big domestic debate of the year – apart from the eternal one about “What is walking?” – was over the arrangements for national championships. Ken Smith, the Championships Secretary, produced a much-needed package for the organisers of the events and then set about drawing up a coherent plan for the annual championships programme. The old and reasonably orderly progress of championships throughout the year had gradually broken down and the races had, by 1992, been wedged into the programme more or less where they would fit, with half an eye to the big international events for which they often served as selection races. Smith’s radical proposal was to concentrate the championships into three days in the year:

International Day in April, with five championships at the then recognised international distances, Junior Women’s 5k, Junior Men’s 10k, Senior Women’s 10k and

Senior Men’s 20k and 50k;

National Day in June, with all the Younger Age Group events, the Senior Women’s 15k and the Senior Men’s 35k;

Inter-County Day, with Y.A.G. events to count for the Inter-Counties, while the Senior Women and Men did 5k and 10 miles.

The long distance championships were regarded as “different” and would be dealt with separately as and when they could be fitted in.

Given that Smith’s proposals were logical and consistent and could probably have been “tinkered” into full working form – the clash of the 20k and 50k being the obvious stumbling-block – it was, perhaps, only to be expected that the A.G.M. rejected them without even trying to make them work. Dates for 1992 were subsequently set in the normal way – and a couple of months later had to be moved to accommodate the necessary trials for international events.

In his first Annual Report, General Secretary Peter Cassidy, remarking that the British Athletic Federation was on the threshold of its first birthday, observed that, while it was not “up and running”, it was at least crawling about the linoleum while everyone else tried to avoid being tripped up too often. He said that, as it was frequently the same people looking at the matter from both the England and United Kingdom viewpoints, “we often find ourselves reaching compromises with ourselves.” The significant part was the reference to avoiding being tripped up, but even Cassidy did not realise how spectacularly the Federation, when it did feel sufficiently confident to stand up, would fall over. Beryl Randle’s hope that the size of the Race Walking Commission would be increased to include not only the R.W.A. Secretary, but also the Treasurer and Championship Secretary, was not fulfilled. However, that proved to be no obstacle; when it was useful to have them present, they attended upon some pretext or other.

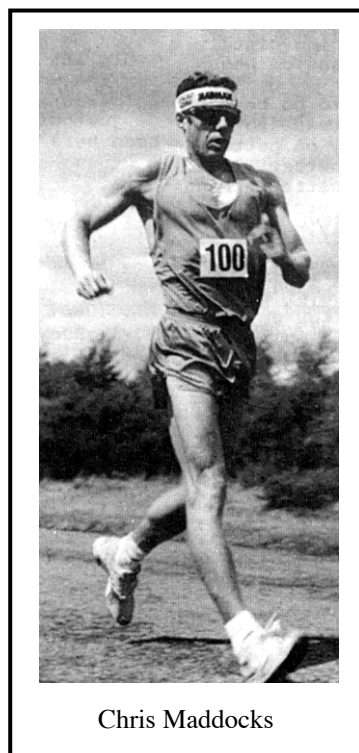
A remarkable event took place at the National Exhibition Centre in August, 1992,

when, in conjunction with the World Veterans' 30k road running championships, an "International Veterans' Walk" was staged over 30k for men and 20k for women, the whole meeting being organised by a commercial company. What made it remarkable was the degree of chaos involved, the extent of which may be judged from the preamble to the results in *Race Walking Record*; "Men's 28+k: NB adjustment made where 1 more or 1 lap less is known. Distance walked plus true time shown with estimated position." The women's race was similarly described as "18+k".

The problems were many, ranging from missing numbers and incomplete start lists through a twisting course on an odd-length lap to an absence of lap recorders (a gap gallantly filled by volunteers when the race was into its second lap) and a failure by the organisers to produce proper finish lists. The last shortcoming led to their complete abandonment of any attempt to construct results. This task was taken on afterwards by Eric Horwill and Bob and Olive Dobson; it took them several hours to work out a reasonable approximation to the results. Refreshment arrangements during the race were also inadequate and at one point the runners, separated from the walkers only by a line of cones, were forced, by sheer numbers and congestion, to spill into the walkers' half of the road.¹⁰ The whole bizarre event was the subject of angry ridicule and a salutary reminder not to meddle with things in which one is inexperienced.¹¹

The year 1993 was a "double" at world level with both the World Cup in Monterey and the World Championships in Stuttgart. As noted above, this caused the first of the championship date casualties, as the 20k and 10k moved from May to March to accommodate the World Cup trials. Furthermore, in a distinct departure from the normal practice, the *English* championships were held in Cardiff in conjunction with the British Athletic Federation's United Kingdom championships. Penn, Stone and Rush took the 20k medals and were joined in the team by Maddocks. The top two women, Verity Larby, a Scot winning the English championship in

Wales, and Sylvia Black, had Vicky Lupton (who had been preselected but was absent injured) and Julie Drake added to their number. At 50k, Morton, Easton and King were selected, with Stuart Phillips and Denis Jackson sent to fight out the remaining berth in Hungary over 35k. Phillips beat Jackson by one position and one minute, but then had to withdraw because of his police commitments and Jackson moved into the team. Again, with temperatures of 100°F, conditions favoured the Mexicans (Garcia and Cruz) in first and third positions in the 20k, with a Spaniard, Massana, sandwiched in the eleven-second slot between them. For the British, Maddocks was thirty-seventh, Penn forty-seventh, Steve Partington (substituting for the injured Rush) fiftieth and Stone sixty-first.



Chris Maddocks

Maddocks, who was nine minutes down on the time for which he had hoped, put it down to lack of team preparation and acclimatisation and called for radical changes. "The alternative," he argued, "is to muddle along from one big race to another and hope for the best come the day. In other words, what we've done before." His team

mates in the other races fared no better, the women having Drake forty-eighth, Larby fifty-seventh, Lupton sixty-seventh and Black eighty-first. In the 50k, things were much the same; Morton forty-first and Jackson forty-fourth, while King was disqualified and Easton retired. The women's team finished twenty-first, beating only El Salvador, Brazil and Argentina, while the men were thirteenth, strangely enough five places ahead of China.

Having only a couple of months in hand, there was not much option but to "muddle along" to the World Athletic Championships in Stuttgart, and the outcome was much the same as in Monterey. At 10k, Lupton was twenty-third, Larby twenty-ninth and Drake forty-second, at 20k Maddocks twenty-fourth and Stone twenty-eighth and in the 50k the ever-resilient Morton was twenty-third. Stone was suffering from stomach trouble, while Penn, with a virus, was worse, struggling on until he collapsed towards the end. According to a subsequent report by Ray Hall, one of the British managers, the Chief Judge, Nicola Maggio, was somewhat swamped by red cards, which came in with a rush late in the 20k, and by the time that they arrived it was necessary to disqualify six men on the track during the final lap. One problem was a shortage of judges' runners – four young people on bicycles, who had already been on duty for the marathon – and one of the consequences was the decision by the I.A.A.F. that cards should be transmitted directly by the issuing judges. The dispute ran on for a year, involving suggestions of forged cards, altered timings, illicit maintenance by Maggio of a list of red cards issued, bullying by Primo Nebiolo and so forth. It was never really determined where the third card against the Mexican Garcia came from, although it was noted darkly that his disqualification moved the Italian De Benedictis up to the silver medal position. The Walking Committee voted unanimously to suspend Maggio, but this was overruled by officials of the I.A.A.F., who then appointed him as Chief Judge for the World Junior Championships. It was all very bad publicity for race walking and, it may be said, for Italian officials, following on five years after

they had "incorrectly" recorded a long jump by Evangelisti in the world championships (in Rome), giving him a bronze medal that was later removed.

The Norwegians, having done their research, evidently thought that they had solved the "What is race walking?" problem, by proposing to the Walking Commission a new definition: "Race walking is a progression of steps so taken that the heel must be the first part of the foot to touch the ground and the supporting leg must be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee joint) for at least one moment when in the vertical upright position." Putting it plainly, they proposed that contact did not define walking, which had been Julian Hopkins's view nine years earlier.

Their argument was long and detailed, but much of it hinged upon the judges' problems in observing the knee and both feet simultaneously. "A straightened leg in the vertical upright position," they stated, "seems to be a natural part of the pattern of walking, meaning that the majority of competitors will walk correctly and make it easier for judges to see the few who are walking incorrectly." It was an extraordinary piece of reasoning; if many people are breaking the rule, change the rule so that they are not. The proposal failed to gain support, as did another argument at the time that shoes should have heels of the order of twenty millimetres thicker than the soles, on the grounds that it would not be possible to break contact in such shoes without an exaggerated – and therefore easily detectable – action.

The year marked the end of an era, as Ian McCombie, winner of the National 10 miles from 1984 to 1992, bowed to the inevitable and retired from competition due to recurrent injury problems.

It was very nearly the end of a much longer era, too, as a motion put before the A.G.M. by the Northern Area proposed the abolition of the R.W.A. and the transfer of all its functions to the Amateur Athletic Association of England, whose predecessor, of course, had transferred its own track walking responsibilities to the R.W.A.

several years previously. There is no overstatement in recording that the Honorary General Secretary was stricken with horror¹² – as were many others – and in the short time available after he had received notice of the motion organised a counter-motion from his own club, Loughton A.C., instructing the Officers to negotiate with the athletics authorities with a view to establishing a closer relationship.

The Northern Area motion was lost by thirty-two votes to two, suggesting that most northerners were against it, while the Loughton motion was carried by thirty-three to nil and another stormy tea-cup vanished. Another motion would have provided for the rotation of the Presidency around the Areas, but the feeling was clearly in favour of “the best man for the job” – the idea of “best woman” not maturing until Beryl Randle was elected three years later – and it fell by twenty-nine to five. The A.G.M., no doubt spurred on by the outburst of ridicule directed at the sport after Stuttgart, also agreed to the appointment of a Publicity Officer – which had been lacking for some time – in the form of Chris Smith of Leicester Walking Club.

It was only to be expected that of the two top international meetings of 1994, British walkers would fare rather better in the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada, than in the European Championships in Helsinki, Finland. Indeed, no British men made the qualifying standard for Finland, so that it was down to the women, whose success was mixed; Vicky Lupton was twentieth and Verity Larby twenty-third, while Lisa Langford was disqualified before halfway, as the home favourite, Sari Essayeh, took the title.

Naturally, there were more “home” competitors in Canada, including, for England, the winners of the trials, Chris Maddocks and, perhaps surprisingly, Karen Smith of Coventry. The other team members were genuinely *selected* on consideration of overall merit. Ultimately, Maddocks was joined by Darrell Stone and Mark Easton and Smith by Langford and Lupton. Scotland sent Martin Bell and

Larby and the Isle of Man Cal Partington in the women’s race and Steve Partington and Steve Taylor in the men’s. Stone, fourth, and Lupton, fifth, were the best performers on the day.

The year’s episode of tinkering with the rules provided a new definition designed, if that is not too strong a word, by a working group of the I.A.A.F. Race Walking Committee. The new definition proposed for Rule 191.1 is worthy of quotation in full:

“Race walking is a progression by steps so taken that the walker seeks to make contact with the ground, so that no visible loss of contact is seen.

(a) During the period of each step, the advancing foot of the walker must make contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground.

(b) During the period of each step the heel must be the first part of the advancing foot to make contact with the ground.

(c) The advancing leg must be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until in the vertically upright position.”

Thus, judges would now have to watch for continuous contact, landing on the heel and an extended period of straightness of the knee. How they were to deal with deciding whether the walker was *actually seeking* to maintain contact and accidentally failing, rather than *not seeking*, was not clarified; nor, indeed, were the meaning and purpose of the preamble. There cannot have been a great deal of confidence in the plausibility of the Rule, as it was made dependent upon a testing period lasting to the end of 1994.

Confidence or not made no difference; after a meeting between the working group and the committee in the following April, another definition appeared;

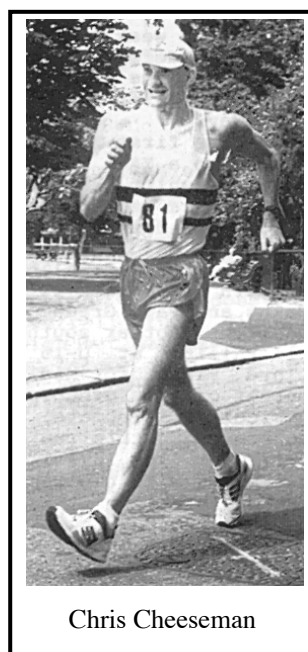
“Race walking is a progression of steps so taken that the walker makes contact with the ground, so that no visible (to the human eyes) loss of contact occurs. The advancing leg must be

straightened (i.e. not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until in the vertical upright position.” which was very little different from the existing definition. Various amendments were made to the description of how the judging system was to operate, including the introduction of the “caution” and of the “warning”, which was to be a judge’s “proposal for disqualification”, later to be called the “red card”. The new Rule was finally adopted in August, 1995, to be in operation from the 1st January, 1996; another slow-motion frenzy had done not very much!

For the encouragement of younger walkers, President Fred Denny agreed to dedicate his Appeal for funds to a new enterprise.¹³ For some years, a few Irish walkers had been attending the R.W.A. Younger Age Group Championships as guests and the General Secretary produced the idea of taking a group of young English walkers to the annual event in Dublin for a *formal* international match in September. As with many useful innovations, the agreement was reached over coffee during the R.W.A. championships and the English team selection of twenty four was largely based on the results put up that day. As well as the honour of receiving a vest, the young walkers had the experience of being members of an official team and of racing against some compatriots whom they had not previously faced in competition; this was because the Irish age groups were based on even years – Under 12, Under 14, etc. – rather than the familiar odd year classifications they knew at home.

The spirits of the young team, who enjoyed some Irish hospitality, were not at all extinguished by either the almost continuous rain during the races or the decidedly bumpy return ferry journey. The result was a narrow English victory and a determination to continue with two matches each year, one in either country, and so the regular Paul Nihill Trophy series, named after the Anglo-Irish Olympian, was instituted. After a few years, England’s home leg was abandoned because of difficulties of participation from the Irish side, but the Dublin match continued.

Always with an eye to “fun” and the eccentricity that rather endears walking to its adherents and brings on sorrowful head-shaking in outsiders, John Hedgethorpe, organiser of the Essex Walking League, had, in 1992, decided that, as well as actually needing to compete in the Colchester August Bank Holiday race, walkers would be required to estimate afterwards how long the course had been. It says much for walkers’ internal pedometers – or their pure luck – that Pauline Wilson’s 1994 error of nine metres in four thousand three hundred was the *worst* winning estimate so far. Mike Scammell of Belgrave had been only two metres out in 1993 and Cath Reader from the home club exactly right in the inaugural year.¹⁴ The race wove around the High Street shopping centre and certainly, as was one of Hedgethorpe’s aims, gave some sort of high profile exposure to the sport.



Chris Cheeseman

The B.A.F. Race Walking Commission, to which the task now fell, preselected some of the team for the World Cup in Beijing in 1995, naming, subject to fitness, Les Morton (50k), Darrell Stone (20k) and Vicky Lupton, Lisa Langford and Verity Snook (the erstwhile Larby) at 10k. Following the joint R.W.A./

B.A.F. championships in March, Graham White and Mark Easton were added at the longer distance and Chris Cheeseman, Steve Partington and Andy Penn at the shorter, while Cal Partington and Melanie Wright joined the women's team.

The Cup was definitely a home victory, with China providing all three individual winners, as well as the men's 20k and the women's top teams; it was only an eleventh place in the 50k that prevented a clean sweep and let in Mexico. The British women were sixteenth (Langford thirty-sixth, Lupton fifty-first, Partington sixtieth, Snook sixty-ninth and Wright eighty-second). The men were about the same level; thirteenth in the 20k (Stone twenty-ninth, Partington fifty-eighth, Penn seventieth and Cheeseman eightieth) and sixteenth in the 50k (Easton fortieth, Morton forty-third and White seventy-first) resulting in an overall fourteenth place.

An important change in domestic championship rules was introduced. Once, there had been an upper age limit for participation in national championships, a rule that had previously been dropped in favour of a cut-off time; anyone exceeding that time was deemed not to have finished (even if they had). A variant was now introduced whereby any competitor who appeared unlikely to beat the cut-off time could be stopped early by the referee and "classified" by time and distance, so as to appear in the results. As multi-lapped courses were the standard, it was eventually agreed that the classification would occur at the bell; a later amendment required the competitor to have covered 80% of the distance. The classification procedure applied only to the twenty miles, fifty kilometres and long-distance championships.

The purpose of the classification system was probably to encourage walkers with no real hope of finishing to enter the longer championships; it was also something of an inducement for those "having a bad one" to hang on to the bitter – classified – end. At the other end of the scale, to encourage younger

walkers, the R.W.A. badge scheme was expanded to include all age groups other than seniors. There were two classes, first and second, and the performances had to be achieved at events on a carefully controlled list, ranging from county championships to internationals. The range was wide, from 11:30 (second class) for 2k for an under-13 Girl to 50:00 (first class) for 10k for a junior man; again, there was some encouragement for everyone to "have a go."

Each year since 1967, the leading athletic statistician Peter Matthews had produced merit rankings – as distinct from mere lists of performances – for British walkers. The 50k rankings made unhappy reading, with only a quartet listed, the first four home in the R.W.A. 50k, Les Morton, Tim Watt, Chris Berwick and Graham White. The best of the times was Morton's 4:32:25, Berwick, who had been ten years in the top ten, was forty-eight years old and Matthews, enthusiast for and supporter of, walking, could not justify taking the list any deeper; it was another sign of the times.

The R.W.A. had, since the abolition of the concept of becoming an "honorary member" against payment of a donation, always depended heavily on the annual President's appeal which, as noted above, had helped finance the young walkers' trip to Ireland in 1994. The 1995 appeal by Ken Smith was characterised by a particularly vigorous approach as he pushed towards £1000, a total never before imagined, flaunting his yellow collecting-tin on all possible occasions; he even had it with him at General Committee meetings.

The B.A.F., after two years of debate and argument, finally produced its walking officials' grading scheme, largely drafted by John Keown who, with a small working group, also proposed the allocation of individuals to grades. There were to be three grades in each of the classes of Officials and Timekeepers; Grade C was the basic level, really requiring little more than the possession of a clipboard or a watch, as the case may be, and a supply of common sense. Grade B, in both classes, needed two years at Grade C,

including at least fifteen races, six of which should have been at county or area level, a completed diary and at least 65% in a written test. Grade A, again for both classes, required *five* years at Grade B, with at least six national road championships, a diary record and a mark of 80% in a written examination.

There was a deal of opposition to the whole scheme, particularly in the Southern Area, largely on the joint grounds that:

- (1) it was unnecessary;
- (2) it was unworkably cumbersome;
- (3) the requirements for qualification were excessively severe – eight years from starting to reaching Grade A;
- (4) it would cause disaffection among the many who had been officiating “unqualified” for years.

The scheme was, despite the objections, largely led by the General Secretary (suffering a rare defeat), adopted by the Commission and the R.W.A.

The initial gradings showed some strange discrepancies and a number – variously estimated at between 10% and 20% – of the experienced officials, unhappy with their grading levels, withdrew from officiating altogether.¹⁵ The support within the R.W.A. was so dubious that, having adopted the scheme, it then declared itself not restricted by it when appointing officials for national championships, a move made possible by the text of the scheme itself. The wording, whether intentionally to provide a sort of “back door” or through oversight, stated that, in the case of national championships, “All ‘key officials’ at these races should, where possible, be grade A.” As often as not, they weren’t, some of them not even being graded at all!

The scheme was never formally abolished but, rather, withered somewhat, the years of experience and numbers of championships required for promotion being gradually reduced in order to make the system workable. Again, the walking fraternity had spent a deal of time and energy in producing an inadequate solution to a non-existent problem. The parallel grading

system for walking judges, on the other hand, survived, although there, also, the qualifying periods and numbers of races required were severely reduced to ensure that there were still some people qualified to stand.

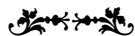
Apart from the World Cup, the other big event of the year internationally was the World Athletic Championships held in Gothenburg, Sweden; although the Championships were rather more handily located than Beijing as they were not on a team basis there was only a small British participation. The sole woman was Lisa Langford, who finished thirty-fifth, her opposite number in the 20k, Darrell Stone, was twenty-fifth and Les Morton, in the 50k, was disqualified. Langford appears to have suffered from some confusion on the part of the operators of the disqualification posting board, who seemingly allocated to her a red card meant for another walker, causing her to slow in the interests of caution before the card disappeared; she probably lost position because of the error.

Never reluctant to make problems for itself, walking produced another when, at what Beryl Randle described as “a very political” Midlands A.G.M., Peter Markham was replaced as delegate to the Commission by Dave Ratcliffe. As Markham was Chairman of the Commission – a post elected from among its representative members – he had, at its next meeting, to supervise the election of his own replacement, the only nominee being John Keown. Markham, however, as National Senior Coach, remained a member of the Commission. Those who had thought the constitutions of the Federation and the Commission ill-considered, noted another fragment of evidence.

The years from 1990 to 1995, although featuring something of a decline in British standards, both absolutely and in comparison with the rest of the world, had still not shown any *catastrophic* collapse in fortunes and it could be considered that a proper position on the world stage had been reached. It is often overlooked – possibly because of the density of population and of the tradition of inventing sports and then teaching them to others – that

the United Kingdom is, in terms of absolute population, not in the top twenty territories in the world. A half-dozen of those that are, take race walking more-or-less seriously, as do a few of the smaller countries, so that it is, perhaps, no

surprise that the situation was as it was. In the last few years before the centenary, however, with a general desire to return to the old days it would prove difficult to justify matters by statistical argument.¹⁶



THE CENTURY IS ATTAINED

Two young walkers deserve to have their names recorded to commemorate their small niches in the history of race walking. Loughton Athletic Club, with its New Year's Day Walks in 1996, claimed to be the promoter of the first event using the latest version of the rules, which came into effect that day. Olivier Fernandez of the home club, in taking the Under-11 Boys' gold medal, became the first winner under the new rules, while Leicester Walking Club's Mario Sandall had the equal – but possibly less welcome – distinction of falling foul of them and receiving the inaugural disqualification.

There were many who regarded the innovation of the 1st January as a step backward rather than forward. There seemed to linger a feeling that Teddy Knott's dictum of "It's so simple. If you're on the ground, it's walking; if you're off the ground, it's running," remained valid, despite the evident majority in the world who thought otherwise. At the same time, another school of thought fell somewhere between reckoning that what had been good enough in 1907 was good enough nearly a century later and insisting that straight knees were essential. The middle-of-the-road philosophy of caution was succinctly, although not wholly sympathetically, summarised by John Hedgethorne in *Race Walking Record*, where he put down resistance to the new rules as merely resistance to *change* and laid his finger firmly on why the change was necessary.¹ Opposition to the new rules being, in any case, entirely pointless without secession from the international race walking world, there was nothing to be done about it, although, as subsequently appeared, some continued to think otherwise.

On a higher level, competitive attention was focussed on the Olympic Games in Atlanta. Trials in Cardiff in April had no-one approaching the qualifying times for selection, although there were certain unsubstantiated

murmurings about the accuracy of the course. (The judges, on the other hand, had a fine day, producing seventy-two cards for sixty-one walkers.) Only Darrell Stone and Steve Partington beat ninety minutes in the 20k and only Vicky Lupton and Lisa Langford were inside fifty in the 10k. When it came to the Games, British representation was limited to Chris Maddocks – in his fourth Olympics and finishing thirty-fourth in the 50k – and Lupton, thirty-third with a personal best of 47:08. Perhaps the outstanding British "performance" was that of Sylvia Markham, who officiated as Chief Judge for the women's 10k.

An event that involved no British walkers at all was the first European Cup; originally scheduled for 1998, it suddenly appeared in 1996, when the Spanish Federation found the means to hold it in La Coruña, clashing with the somewhat fruitless British Olympic trials mentioned above. The British absence may not have had a significant effect on the results, in any case, as Italy and Spain won the cups, Italy the 20k and the hosts the 50k and women's 10k.

Thinking further ahead, in mid-year the Race Walking Commission of the B.A.F. determined a selection policy for 1997's World Cup, trials being held in March, 1996, with automatic selection for men beating ninety minutes at 20k and women forty-nine minutes at 10k, with other selections on current form and 50k nominations being based *solely* on form with no designated trial.

There were still occasional International Matches and one of them in Moscow in June may have resulted in the worst-ever defeat of a British walking team, which, in the words of *Race Walking Record*, was "hammered". The squad numbered eighteen, but with three disqualifications and one very early retirement, the disastrous score-sheet read: Russia 134; Italy 108; Germany 79; Belarus 68; France 64;

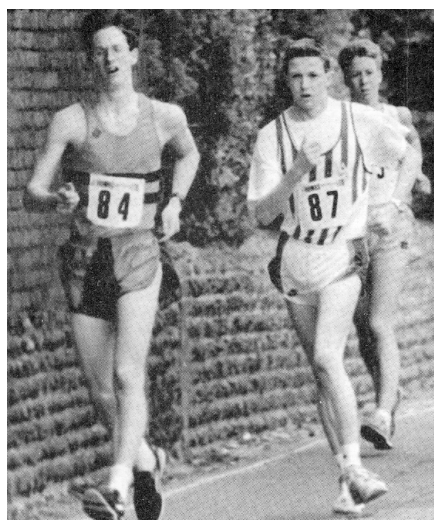
Great Britain 9. Victory had not been expected but the margin of defeat was completely unforeseen and there seemed no very good explanation of what had befallen the team, even given the general improvement in standards throughout the world.

Just as the year had begun with a couple of firsts – or so Loughton A.C. claimed – so the R.W.A. Annual General Meeting produced another, as the Association completed its evolution from the days when the ladies made the tea and, judging by early photographs, paid very little attention to the actual races. Beryl Randle, former holder of the World Record for the mile, was elected first female President; it had only taken eighty-nine years! At the same meeting, Ken Smith, who had managed to change the championship structure somewhat despite the rejection of his “three-day plan”, finally managed to prevail upon someone else to take on the ever-burdensome job of Championships Secretary and John Howley of Sheffield was duly elected.

It needed no great insight or study of the statistics to discover that 1996 was a bad year, and Peter Matthews pointed out in his annual merit rankings that there were no newcomers in the top ten for either men or women. Stone, Partington (Isle of Man) and Maddocks led at 20k, Maddocks, Cheeseman and White (Scotland) at 50k and Lupton, Snook (Scotland) and Langford among the women. Of the thirty names in the “top ten”: lists – some, of course, duplicates – seven were Manx and two Scottish.

The World Cup trials of March, 1997, were at least more productive than the Olympic ones of the previous year and full teams were selected: 20k; Stone, Penn, Easton and White (with J. O’Rawe as reserve); 50k; Maddocks, Cheeseman, Atton and Morton (Jackson reserve); women’s 10k; Lupton, Black, Snook and Crump (Huckerby reserve). The only surprises, perhaps, were the omission of Langford and the inclusion of newcomer Lisa Crump of Sheffield. In the Cup at Podebrady in the Czech Republic, there were no greatly distinguished triumphs from the British side,

although they all walked well, except Stone, who had the misfortune to injure a hamstring during the race.



South coast stars: Philip King, Darrell Stone and Julie Drake

For once, temperatures were not tropical – so far from it that there was snow during the 50k – but still the British teams were well beaten, all dropping four places from Beijing. The colder weather evidently did not help them, although the women, led home by Lupton in fifty-eighth place, all beat their trial times as they finished twentieth, with Russia winning, as they did in the two men’s events and overall. Britain was twenty-fourth in the 20k and fourteenth in the 50k, led home respectively by Penn, seventy-ninth, and Maddocks, forty-second. Perhaps the adverse conditions had some effect on the teams that had indulged in warm weather training, particularly in the 50k where, from one hundred starters, six were disqualified and sixteen others did not finish.

A touch of light relief, probably not appreciated by the victims, was the supply to the team somewhat late in the day of a set of kit in Jamaican colours; schizophrenia was avoided by the even later supply of the right set.

The weather made its contribution at the other end of the scale at the World Track and Field Championships in Athens in early August but, as no British walkers had reached the qualifying standard, no meteorological explanations were needed. In any case, with thirty-one men inside ninety minutes and eighteen inside four hours, any British walkers present might have had a torrid enough time of it regardless of the weather. The women's 10k, for the first time, was held as two heats and a final on the track, not an idea that found universal acceptance, and not one that survived, mainly because the women's international distance was about to double.

In contrast, in the World Veterans' Championships in Durban, South Africa, shortly before Athens, British walkers did exceptionally well, with a gold for Jill Langford, silvers for Terry Simons and Doug Fotheringham and bronzes for Langford, Dave Stevens and Annie Brewster. Membership of the British W50 team (an age group down below her own) completed Langford's set of medals, while the M65 team also won silver and the M40 team bronze. "The older, the better," seemed to be governing this country's walking at world level.

Setting another precedent to add to her previous year's election, Beryl Randle was re-elected as President. This might have been as well if she wanted work to do, because a month later, in October, 1997, the long-expected and therefore unsurprising happened, when the British Athletic Federation went into administration, taking with it the Race Walking Commission and her Secretaryship.

Those interested in the details of how this came about from the financial point of view are again referred to John Lister's book. It is sufficient to note here that, between the September, 1995, accounts and the initial administrators' statement of affairs in October, 1997, the Federation's assets had fallen from some £2,500,000 to a £300,000 *deficit*. How this happened was hard for the layman to understand, especially since, launched a year later, the successor body, United Kingdom

Athletics (usually known as "UKA") showed a healthy first year surplus of £200,000.

So involved and obscure were the Federation's affairs, that the winding-up took nearly twelve years; its funeral was about twice its life-span. The Federation had been born as a chimera² joining together but not reconciling many disparate organisations with their own aims and interests, and very few were surprised that the end had come, although the magnitude of the crash was not altogether foreseen – even, apparently by those on the inside. None, it seemed, had loved it and there were no very heartbroken mourners. The one person emerging with a deal of sympathy was David Moorcroft, who had followed Peter Radford as Chief Executive just a fortnight before the Federations' management board recognised the inevitable and gave up the struggle.

As there were no changes in the definition of walking about which the old-stagers could complain, they seemingly had to concentrate on the question of consistency of judging, another recurrent old faithful. There were doubts about the judging in Podebrady and Athens – and, indeed, in Durban – and, in an event in which such problems are exceedingly rare, the R.W.A. National Long-Distance Championship, held in 1997 as a one-hundred mile track race in Ware. A number of observers, including Peter Duhig of the British Veterans' Athletic Federation in a long and detailed letter to *Race Walking Record*, felt that the judging, sufficiently severe early on to remove two competitors and discourage another so much that he retired, then became more moderately amiable – "softer" as some termed it – as the race progressed, so that a number of very bent legs were on view by the finish.

A little earlier in the year, an attempt had been made at the B.V.A.F. A.G.M. to abolish the straight knee requirement for over-sixties in veteran events and, effectively, to move back in time by some decades to when the Knott dictum held. The move fell for lack of support but there remained a degree of feeling among some of the older walkers that the change should be made³.

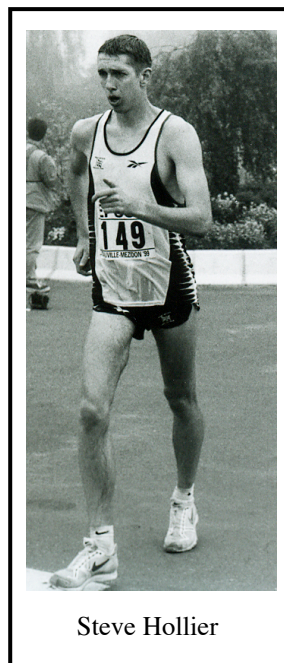
It is often the fate of walkers in “general” athletics meetings to be ignored by everyone else, but a welcome exception came in 1997’s Schools’ International Athletics Board match in Dublin, containing a walk for the first time. Not only did the President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, open the meeting, but she also talked to the walkers. In general meetings, particularly in England, too often the attitude was, and is, along the lines of “When the walk is over, the first event will be....”.

Possibly nettled by being criticised too frequently, the R.W.A. Judges and Officials’ Subcommittee, observing that the numbers participating in championships seemed to be affected by travel distance, proposed the restricting of the location of national championships to a “Midland triangle” defined by Sheffield, Birmingham and Luton. For a while some attempt was actually made to put the idea into operation but, like many such plans, it failed in the long term because of the difficulty of finding safe and suitable courses and willing local organisers. This inevitably led to exceptions on the “just this once” basis and to the eventual collapse of the system.

The year 1998 was as full a one at the top international level as it could be, with the European Championships to be held in Budapest, the second European Cup in Dudince and the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur.

It should go without saying that the Commonwealth Games offer the best chance of coming home with a medal and it was no surprise that Lisa Kehler⁴ finished third behind the Australians Saville and Saxby-Junna. With Lupton and Braznell seventh and eighth and Cal Partington and Karen Kneale of the Isle of Man sixth and tenth, these islands provided over a third of the thirteen starters – or very nearly half if one includes the last finisher, England-born Angela Keogh, Norfolk Island’s only race walker. Again, in the men’s 20k, Stone (fourth), Bell (seventh), Maddocks (tenth), Drake (twelfth) and Partington (thirteenth) – three Englishmen, a Scot and a Manxman – were only

marginally short of providing a third of the starters. Only thirteen men started the 50k in difficult conditions and only ten finished. From the point of view of the “home countries”, the surprise performance was by Steve Hollier, who had finished only fourth in the trial and now finished in the same position in the Games, leading fellow English walkers Easton (fifth) and Cheeseman (eighth) and the Scot Graham White, all of whom had beaten him in the trial⁵.



Steve Hollier

From the Commonwealth’s point of view, the greatest surprise, at least to those who were too shortsighted to notice, was probably that the gold medal went to a Malaysian, Govindasamy Savaranam. He had previously finished third in the Asian Championships in 1995 and won those of South-East Asia in 1997, a performance he was to repeat in 2001.

Having missed the first edition of the European Cup, Britain sent individuals but no full team to the second, one walker appearing in each of the races. Easton set a personal best of 4:03:53, Kehler, at 45:54, had her best time since 1987 and Martin Bell, having been “battered and pushed to a 4:05 first kilo,” as

team manager Helen Elleker reported, was unhappy with his 89:18. Again, Spain won the men's competition, but Russia narrowly beat the previous winners, Italy, for the women's.

British participation in the European Championships in mid-August was even thinner, Kehler appearing alone and walking a little faster to finish eighteenth.

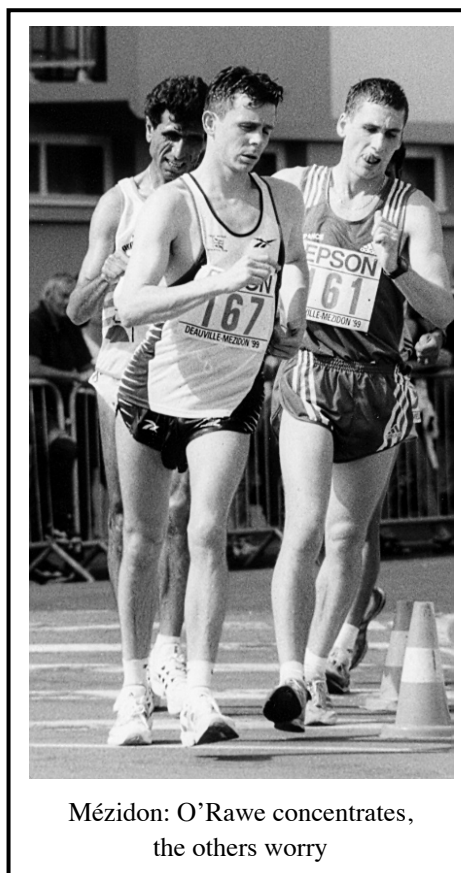
It did not take the new Championships Secretary long to decide, like his predecessor, that the whole championship schedule needed a going-over. No doubt mindful of the rough handling that Ken Smith's proposals had received, John Howley asked the walking world in general what they wanted, on the principle that most people would probably not vote anyway, although that was not necessarily a guarantee that they would not complain afterwards.

The outcome of the consultations was that almost three-quarters of respondents wanted to change the championship format, while fractionally over half wished to change the distances. Meanwhile, 58% were in favour of changing the 10 miles to 15k and 65% would have preferred the 20 miles to become 35k⁶.

Unusually introducing a note of caution, John Hedgethorpe pointed out in *Race Walking Record* that the turnout in the ballot had been only 60%. At the A.G.M., Sheffield, the Championships Secretary's own club, put up a motion to adopt his proposals; possibly some of the questionnaire abstainers went to the meeting instead of airing their views by post, but, whatever the reason, the whole business was referred back to the General Committee to deal with.

It did so fairly promptly, having, as is its wont, set up a working party, and fixed the schedule of championships thus: Men 20k, 35k, 50k and Long Distance; Women 5k, 10k, 20k; Younger Age Groups to remain as previously. The 35k had an odd history; it had begun over twenty miles as the Association's first championship in 1908, changed to 30k in 1978,

to 35k in 1979, back to its original distance in 1993, to 30k after one year and back again to twenty miles in 1995. Now it changed to 35k again, but survived only until 2004, when it was finally abandoned because, a wag suggested, there were no distances between 20k and 50k left to try.

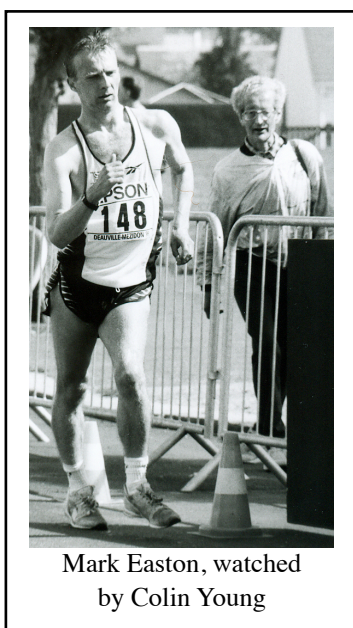


Mézidon: O'Rawe concentrates,
the others worry

The most conspicuous, and to many incomprehensible, change was the dropping of the ten miles, which was the most popular championship on the programme. It, too, had a strange career. It had first taken place, for men, in 1947 and had been *nearly* joined in 1988 by a women's championship over 15k; this was meant to provide a step between 10k and the relatively new women's distance of 20k. The 15k was brought into line with the men's distance in 1993 and the pair were discontinued after the 1998 holding. The gap was felt and in 2008 a 15k for both men and women was

introduced. In the first year of its existence, no convenient date or venue was available, so it was, as a temporary measure, held over ten miles in conjunction with an open event. It proved to have lost very little of its popularity during its absence and was thereafter quietly changed to the imperial distance on a permanent basis. The men's 15k is thus unique, as a championship that was introduced, never actually held and then surreptitiously buried before most people had noticed that it existed.

The agreed schedule, by some oversight, failed to mention the women's long-distance championship, which had been held since 1993, but it continued anyway⁷.



Mark Easton, watched
by Colin Young

A full British team was entered for the 1999 World Cup in Mézidon; Maddocks, Atton, Drake, Jamie O'Rawe and the young Matthew Hales at 20k, Cheeseman, Easton, Morton, Hollier and Allan King at 50k and Niobe Menéndez, Kim Braznell, Vicky Lupton, Lisa Crump and Catherine Charnock for the women. The finishing order in the 20k was perhaps unexpected; O'Rawe, Maddocks, Atton, Drake and Hales, for twenty-first place, and Cheeseman was best at 50k, ahead of Morton and Hollier, while Easton retired and King was

disqualified, leaving the team sixteenth. Three of the British women, Lupton, Charnock and Menéndez, were closely grouped in seventy-fourth, seventy-sixth and seventy-seventh, with Braznell ninetieth and Crump retiring. This, the first women's 20k in the World Cup, saw China (thirteen points) and Russia (sixteen points) scoring *between them* fewer than half as many as third-placed Mexico, with Great Britain eighteenth. The effect on world walking, especially among the women, of the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. was again underlined with the former Union Republics of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Lithuania all beating Great Britain. Overall, however, the British performance was slightly improved from Beijing.

Beryl Randle ingeniously used her President's Appeal to take a team of young walkers to compete in the open events at Mézidon, in the hope that experience of the world's top event would inspire them to develop in the future; unfortunately, five years later only Daniel and Dominic King were still competing.

No British walkers made it later in the year to the World Track and Field Championships in Spain, where temperatures were even higher than in Mézidon, reaching 106°F (41°C on the local scale) at the start of the men's 20k.

A slight success for the "never mind the knees" view was the adoption by the R.W.A. of a new rule to the effect that in races above 50k continuous contact was to be the only criterion; the rationale was that the majority of competitors in long-distance events do not straighten anyway but are, in some sense "clearly walking," as Knott would have said. It was a small, and seemingly inconsequential, change; however, consequences *would* ensue, and only a few months later.

U.K.Athletics began to develop its own structure, including the replacement of the old B.A.F. Commissions by Policy and Support Teams for the various disciplines, each P.S.T. having designated members responsible for various aspects. The selection of these members

for the Race Walking P.S.T. was all done in a very proper and, indeed, ponderous, fashion, complete with advertisements, applications, interviews by panels and finally appointments of the following: Chairman, Peter Marlow; Administration and Planning, Ken Smith; Records and Standards, Peter Markham; Fixtures Co-ordination, Pauline Wilson; Officials Co-ordination, Joan Powell; Promotion, Martin Rush. There was a “job specification” for the P.S.T. as a whole, as well as for the individual members; “To co-ordinate the planning, implementation and review of all aspects of U.K. race walking competition structures, programmes and initiatives, and to produce a coherent U.K.-wide strategy for race walking competition and to co-ordinate the production of a U.K.-wide fixtures list for race walking.”

As more and more control was exercised centrally by U.K. Athletics over the next few years, the P.S.Ts – especially that for race walking, which because of the lack of any activity elsewhere in the United Kingdom, largely duplicated the work of the R.W.A. without its independence of action – steadily became of less significance until they withered away. Their eventual abolition was the merest formality.

A move was made at the R.W.A. General Committee meeting in February, 2000, to abolish the straight-knee requirement for all races except national championships, which resulted in a very long and not particularly well-tempered debate. It was always apparent that the “revisionists” would be able to effect some change but a rearguard action by some committee members together with a policy of subtly engineered attrition by amendment considerably modified the whole proposal. Eventually, it was agreed that walks *could* be held under rules ignoring the knees. The full text of the new Rule for Competition, which is not exactly elegant, having been redrafted several times during the course of the afternoon, was: “Races shall be classified as Category A or Category B, with ‘A’ races being National, Area and County Championships and such races as

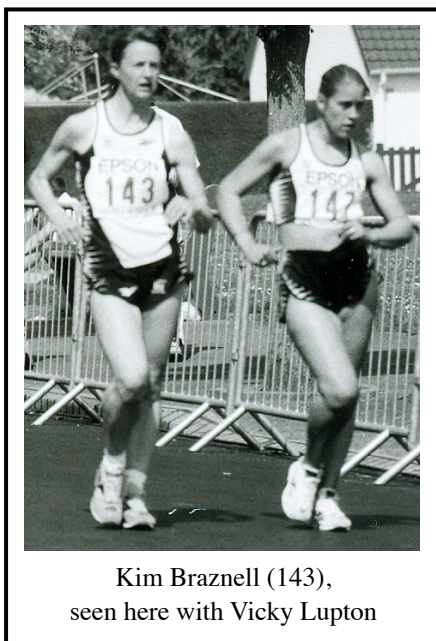
are designated ‘A’ by the promoters. Judges shall operate the same rules and standards in both categories, but in ‘B’ races the Chief Judge shall not enact disqualifications for ‘bent knee’ cards. Qualifying times for selection may be gained only in ‘A’ races.”

It soon became apparent that in practice the requirement for judges in “B” races to submit cards for bent knees so that the chief judge could ignore them was sheer madness. Furthermore, in its adopted form the rule seemed to require the individual judges not only to issue such cards but to *caution* walkers for being in danger of committing an offence (bent knees) for which they might subsequently be given a meaningless card. The wording was subsequently modified in order to make sense; thereafter, in “B” races, knees were *totally* ignored.

The same committee meeting found itself faced with a sad task. In the previous few months, the former National Coach Jeff Ford had died after a long illness and both John Keown, generally regarded as the font of all knowledge of the sport, and John Hedgethorpe, the larger-than-life Chief Inspector in the Essex Police, who had twice been editor of *Race Walking Record*, died very suddenly. The Committee meeting at which the rule change noted above was executed, appointed Tim Watt, the 1998 National 50k Champion, as Editor. Chapter 26 reflects on the sometimes stormy relationship between the Association and its Editors; it is a matter for conjecture what Hedgethorpe would have said about the rule change had he lived three months longer.

April 23rd, 2000 – St. George’s Day, by chance – saw the largest ever race walking event in the country, as the British Grand Prix of Race Walking was held in Leamington⁸, with a full range of races: Junior Women 10k (twelve starters), Junior Men 10k (twenty-four), Women’s 20k (thirty-two) and Men’s 20k (thirty-five) and 50k (seventeen). With a range of overseas winners, the standard was high; in the same order as above, they were Melissa Rodrigues (France) 48:54; Patrick Ennemoser

(Italy) 43:12; Liu Hongya (China) 88:40; Francisco Fernández (Spain) 80:16; Giovanni Perricelli (Italy) 3:50:21. The British team, with race positions of third, second, third, fourth and third respectively, finished second overall to Spain, the highlight being Lisa Kehler's Olympic Qualifying performance of 95:35; she thus joined Chris Maddocks, aiming at his fifth Olympics, who had recently recorded 3:57:10. As far as the officials were concerned, it was a trying weekend, but experience was gained that was to prove useful in Centenary Year when the European Cup was promoted there.



Kim Braznell (143),
seen here with Vicky Lupton

Before the Olympic Games, however, the European Cup had to be dealt with in Eisenhüttenstadt. Kehler walked even better than at Leamington Spa, with 93:57 but even with good backing from Niobe Menéndez (forty-sixth) and Kim Braznell (fiftieth) the team could only manage eleventh place. Two retirements and two disqualifications upset the British team effort, with “no score” and eleventh in the men's races, twelfth in the junior men's and a lone Claire Reeves – only fifteen years old – in the junior women's.

At the Sydney Olympics it was not Kehler's thirty-third or Maddocks' struggle to finish with

a hamstring injury, nor even Robert Korzeniowski's two gold medals, that most caught public attention, but the last-minute disqualification controversies. In the men's 20k the Mexican Bernardo Segura received his third red card in the last kilometre but had finished two seconds ahead of Korzeniowski and was giving interviews when the Chief Judge, who had been on the road circuit disqualifying another walker while Segura was in the stadium, caught up with him; the difficulty had apparently been that the security guards would not let him back in to do his job!

Problems were even greater in the women's race, especially for the Australian spectators. First came the disqualification of the Italian Perrone, who seemed disinclined to leave the race. The Chinese walker Liu had been pulled slightly earlier, putting the home favourite Jane Saville alone in the lead. Approaching the stadium entrance with a hundred and twenty metres to go Saville, too, was disqualified, leaving another Chinese competitor, Wang Liping, to a comfortable victory. Unlike at Stuttgart in 1993, there were few objections to the actual disqualifications but a great deal of concern over the administration of the judging system. Subsequent changes introduced by the I.A.A.F. helped to improve the “image” of race walking as a legitimate sport, although slow-motion film of non-disqualified walkers continue to fan the flames. One of the reasons, it was widely felt, was summed up by Andi Drake in his report on Sydney; “(Saville's) DQ was front page news in the Australian press with sensational tabloid journalism to match – sadly a clear case of a little knowledge being a dangerous thing, with the ignorant reporters questioning how such tragedy could befall an Australian athlete when if they had taken any time to understand the event, they would have seen that DQ's are an (unhappy) occupational hazard to the race walker (maybe a case for some proactive pre-race spin from the IAAF media department in the future?)”.

Many journalists – although not all – continue to comment on matters of which they have no understanding; many of them appear

not to notice the expression “visible (to the human eye)”.

The I.A.A.F., rather nudged into panic reactions by the I.O.C., decided that the communications between judges should be improved and that the rôle of the Chief Judge was to be “simplified”, including giving him the authority to “disqualify an athlete who flagrantly breaches the rules.” It would also study the feasibility of using a “new” invention by Dennis Furlong which made the loss of contact detectable by electronic devices in the walker’s shoes; the invention was scarcely new, having been rejected by the I.A.A.F. seven years previously. There was no doubt that the leader in the attack on race walking was Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the I.O.C. and not exactly what could be called either a friend of walking or a very self-effacing man.⁹ His successor, as will be seen, also appeared not to care for walking.

At its A.G.M. in December, the R.W.A. decided to appoint a Coaching Co-ordinator, to try to bring some degree of cohesion to the problem of coaching. Peter Markham was subsequently appointed by the General Committee, but the idea was not as successful as had been hoped and, in keeping with the Association’s normal practice, the position was allowed to wither quietly away. At a later date, the national coach or the equivalent (because the title kept changing as U.K.A. reorganized itself) became a member of General Committee *ex officio*.

Two elections were contested, Jill Langford becoming the Chairman of Coaching and Development and Dave Ainsworth being elected Press and Publicity Officer. No-one, however, had asked Ainsworth and he subsequently declined the post, whereupon Chris Smith agreed to serve. An *uncontested* election was for the presidency, where, as Richard Holland’s term ended, Paul Nihill was unopposed, becoming the first Olympic medallist to hold the position since Lloyd Johnson in 1970-1971 and only the third overall¹⁰.

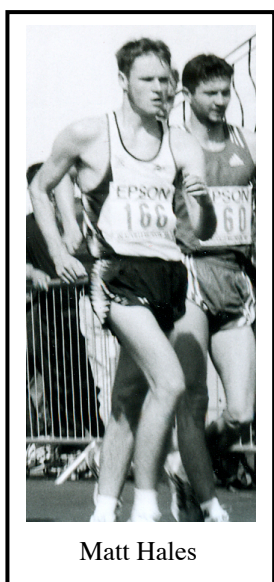
A threat of future financial problems was indicated by the Treasurer. Over the years, funds had come in various ways from athletic bodies and one of these had been by way of the “incremental subscription.” For some time, all clubs affiliating to the A.A.A. had paid a basic fee together with an incremental subscription for each “discipline” in which they participated. The race walking increment had been returned to the R.W.A. to assist its operations but the introduction of the B.A.F. had seen that system terminate and a block grant was made instead. That, in its turn, had ended with the collapse of the B.A.F. and the R.W.A. had been in negotiations for some form of replacement. There was never a satisfactory outcome, despite several promises to resolve the issue and the Association found itself entirely reliant on its own efforts for financial viability.

While some were looking backward to the “good old days” when everyone knew what walking was and disqualifications were at the judges’ discretion, the General Secretary, albeit with some reluctance, was trying to keep abreast of technology and launched the Association’s web site as a means of keeping walkers in touch with things and spreading the word to the uninitiated.

After 2000’s packed year of top-level competition, the following twelve months were rather quieter. For the World Athletics Championships in Canada in August, British selection times were set at 4:00:00 for the 50k and at 83:00 and 96:00 for the two 20k races. No walkers qualified and it is sobering to note that the set times would only have gained twenty-first, tenth and sixteenth places respectively. The most interesting statistics in Edmonton were the tallies of disqualifications; for the three events they were ten of forty-eight starters, nine of thirty-six and fifteen of forty-two, an overall figure of 27%. The Chief Judge, Peter Marlow, ascribed the high disqualification rate to simply the bad standard of walking; there had, he insisted, been no crackdown, although Jane Saville described the judging as “brutal”. The Norfolk Islander Angela Keogh, walking as her country’s only competitor in the entire

Games, repeated her distinctive Commonwealth performance in finishing last. Given the disqualifications, however, this did make her, in some way, *better* than the likes of Liu (the defending champion), O'Sullivan, Fedoskina, Saville, Saxby-Junna, Nikolayeva, Plätzer and Feitor, even if she did take close on one-and-a-half times as long as Olimpiada Ivanova's new Olympic Record.

If British participation in the World Championships was disappointingly absent in Edmonton, it was dreadful in Sheffield for the national women's 20k championship. Only three of the four entrants started; the winner was an overseas walker, ranked only sixteenth at home in Italy and one of the two actual championship contenders was disqualified at half way, leaving the recently seriously ill Sheila Bull as the lone finisher in the slowest-ever championship time of 138:53.



Matt Hales

The European Cup of 2001 in Slovakia three months earlier had not been a distinguished affair for British walkers, either. Matt Hales was forty-fifth at 20k and Steve Hollier and Chris Cheeseman thirty-third and thirty-seventh in the 50k; there were no British women among the sixty-eight starters.

“What’s wrong with British walking?” was the question that came to mind – not for the first time, of course – and a seminar with that title was organised by the P.S.T. to find the answer. The day was reasonably well supported and many views were expressed – some of them, as is frequently the case, along the lines that “they” should do something about it – but, as is also frequently the case, most people had forgotten about it all a month later.

One point made at the seminar was that not enough people raced in the national championships, and the women's 20k previously referred to is a case in point. However, during that same summer, two 50k championships took place; in Victoria Park, London, the R.W.A. event had twenty-four starters and in Dudince, the combined championships of Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Lithuania had twenty-seven. This does not of itself suggest that the problem was a lack of numbers in nationals. The R.W.A. 50k, incidentally, was moved to Victoria Park at short notice for a reason that not even race walking, with its tendency to attract eccentrics and bizarre circumstances, had previously suffered. Colchester, the scheduled venue, was in a foot-and-mouth disease area, not to mention having security concerns over the Army garrison; anything, it might have been thought, to be different.

The Association, harbouring ambitions of putting on the European Cup to celebrate its centenary in 2007, held another recognised E.A.A. Grand Prix event in Leamington Spa in April. The results were an improvement on the already excellent record of the previous year, as the home team won, although admittedly in the absence of Spain. In 2000, the course had gone outside the park to make the lap up to one kilometre, but this time the gates remained closed and the event took place on a 765-metre perimeter path. Conditions were improved for the spectators, and the walkers were spared a hairpin bend in a narrow adjacent road. As had been intended, the course did indeed prove fast, as Colin Griffin set an Irish Junior 10k record of

42:29 and Kjersti Plätzer, on the way to winning the women's 20k in 1:30:01, set an all-comers' record of 43:44 at half way.

At the A.G.M., all elections, including that of the President, Bob Dobson, were unopposed and the only motion, on the election to Life Membership of Bill Wright, who had been Honorary Treasurer since 1984 and President in 1995-1996, was similarly adopted. It was one of the quietest and shortest A.G.M.s ever held.

It has always been a matter of debate as to how walkers should prepare for a major event and how selections should be managed. Very rarely does the opportunity arise, as it did in 2002, to hold the Commonwealth Games Trials over the actual course in Manchester.¹¹ The Isle of Man, for the sake of convenience, held its own Trials in conjunction, as did Scotland, although it was not especially convenient for their only contender, Sara-Jane Cattermole, who lived in Australia and had to travel to England to satisfy her national selectors.

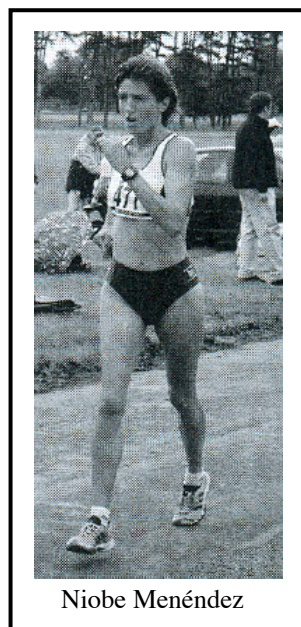
England's selection policy was to take the first two in each race, if they had reached the qualifying times, with a third (also qualified) walker to be added by the 16th June closing date, which was handily the day of the Dublin Grand Prix meeting. In the women's 20k, Lisa Kehler and Niobe Menéndez were selected, in the men's 20k Andy Penn and in the 50k Mark Easton and Steve Hollier, with Gareth Brown and Chris Cheeseman also achieving the standard. In the 50k race, the American, Al Heppner had built up a considerable lead by half-way and led by some six minutes at 40k. As Heppner¹² tired the four Englishmen closed on him, with Easton falling only twenty-two seconds short.

By way of assisting in the acclimatisation, there was rain during the trials, but nothing like what was to come at the Games.

In accordance with the stated policy, Penn, Kehler, Menéndez, Easton and Hollier were selected immediately, the remaining four being named in Dublin. There, Dominic King, who

had been second in the Trial, met the other half of the condition by finishing twelve seconds inside the standard to claim his spot. Sharon Tonks was added to the women's team and Gareth Brown to that for 50k. At 20k, choice of the third walker was difficult. In the trial, Daniel King, Stone and Drake had been disqualified, leaving Matt Hales and Don Bearman as the third and fourth Englishmen, and in Dublin Stone and Drake were again disqualified and Bearman retired. As happens from time to time, the selectors had to conjecture what would or might happen in July, and the choice fell on Bearman, who had previously beaten the standard. Naturally, the choice was not universally acclaimed.

The Isle of Man selected Cal and Steve Partington, as for the previous Games, and Scotland chose Cattermole, thus making worthwhile her earlier long journey to walk in the trial.



Niobe Menéndez

The competitions at the Commonwealth Games were interesting for different reasons. In the women's 20k, perhaps with memories of a number of recent disqualifications behind her, Jane Saville was careful not to overdo it again, but was perilously close to *underdoing* it, as she

beat Lisa Kehler by only eleven seconds, the Englishwoman thus adding a silver medal to her bronzes of 1990 and 1998. In one of her country's occasional flourishes, the Malaysian walker Yu Fang Yuang was third, isolated between Kehler and the other Saville, Natalie. Menéndez and Tonks were seventh and eighth, Cattermole was ninth and Partington retired early in the race.

The men's 20k, held, like the women's, in a temperature of about 80°F, resulted in victory for Nathan Deakes of Australia, with team-mate Luke Adams half a minute behind and two minutes ahead of a representative of an unusual walking country, David Rotich of Kenya. Penn finished fourth, a minute from the bronze, with Bearman coming home fifth but King and Partington were both disqualified.

The big contrast for the 50k was in the weather. Manchester's rain is a reliable standby for comedians short of ideas, but the downpour during the long race was truly spectacular and culminated in the collapse of the plastic sheeting trown on top of the finish gantry and the drenching of the recorders and timekeepers, as well as any walkers unfortunate enough to be passing under it at the time. A different type of collapse had befallen Deakes in Kuala Lumpur, brought on by the heat, but there was no such problem in Manchester and he waded to a double gold and a four minute victory over Craig Barrett (New Zealand) and the former Englishman Tim Berrett of Canada. Hollier and Brown, the latter with an injury, were sixth and seventh while Easton was disqualified.

Not only was the weather remarkable in Manchester; the crowds of spectators – even when it rained – made a usually solitary and rather quiet event extremely lively. Of course, watching was free of charge, but it did take some energy to make the effort to reach the banks of the Ship Canal.

The World Cup of the same year in Turin took place under the shadow of the recommendation by the I.O.C.'s Olympic Programme Commission to have walks

excluded from the Games. Their report had stated that, "The Commission reviewed the judging difficulties experienced in recent editions of the Olympic Games, and noted the resulting poor image of the racewalk events. In addition, the operational difficulties for OCOGs¹³ in conducting racewalk events were noted. The Commission therefore recommended the exclusion of racewalk events from the Programme of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad." The I.A.A.F. reply to the I.O.C. (whose President, Jacques Rogge, seems to have been generally thought to be behind the proposal) pointed out that the problems in Sydney had stemmed from "bad management of the competition" and stressed their anger at lack of consultation by the Commission. The I.O.C. eventually backed down in face of an I.A.A.F. undertaking to improve the standard of judging. This outcome was probably inevitable, given the strong opposition from around the world, including from the R.W.A., to the deletion of the walks.¹⁴

The popularity of walking was indicated by the participation in Turin; a hundred and eleven started the men's 20k, ninety-five the women's and ninety-three the 50k; again there was no "slackness" in the judging with eleven, six and seventeen pulled, a total of 11%.

The British team in the men's 20k finished about where it might have been expected, fifteenth, with Partington forty-sixth, Hollier sixty-third, Drake sixty-sixth and Dominic King sixty-eighth. In the women's 20k, the surprising disqualification of Lisa Kehler, who was suffering from cramped muscles, left Tonks in seventy-first position and Cattermole seventy-fifth, one short of a team. There were no British men in the 50k.

After the manner of Beryl Randle, Bob Dobson found something different for his President's Appeal, promoting a two-hour track walk, the first in this country since Ron Wallwork recorded a National Record of 26,037 metres in 1971. Unfortunately, as in the case of the Brighton 24-hour attempt of 1980, the weather was the winner again in Nuneaton,

where winds of 90 m.p.h. threatened the adjacent half-built swimming pool. Given the conditions, Hollier's 25,441m was an astonishing effort. Only two others finished; Luke Finch set a new National Junior 20k track record of 95:20 on the way to 23,648m and Nathan Adams recorded 21,909m.

Another senior figure in the sport was lost in mid-year when Chairman Ken Smith, who had been President from 1994 to 1996, died after several months' illness. He had been a walking family, with son Mike being national 50k champion from 2001 to 2003, daughter Karen, a Commonwealth Games representative for England, and wife Ann an enthusiastic organiser and supporter and for several years the R.W.A. Minutes Secretary; son-in-law Dave Ratcliffe, Karen's husband, was also a walker, Midlands Area Secretary and a top official.

The A.G.M. in 2002, at which Peter Markham was elected as Chairman in succession to Ken Smith featured another unusual item, a club motion that was so lacking in support that it produced an odd formal gesture. Worcester A.C. proposed that in races under the jurisdiction of the R.W.A. cautions (later called *warnings* and colloquially known as *yellows*) should *not* be given. By some mischance, the debate took place – entirely against it – before it was realised that it had not been seconded. The Honorary General Secretary, who opposed the motion, then formally seconded it so that a vote could be taken and its unpopularity minuted. A single hand was raised in its favour, perhaps with no great enthusiasm, by the sponsoring club's representative, and it fell by twenty-one votes to one; quirkiness continued to rule in the arcane world of race walking!

Two of the great classic road races reached their centenaries in 2003, the Stock Exchange London to Brighton and the Bradford 50k. Both had had their problems, largely due to the intervention, in the Brighton's case, of two world wars, which caused its suspension from 1914 to 1918 and from 1940 to 1946; in addition, traffic problems had made things

increasingly difficult for the organisers, and the decision had been reached that this was to be the final fling. As, following the initial promotion in 1903, it had not been held for the next nine years, the centenary celebration was only the eightieth actual contest; still, it was, strictly speaking, a centenary.

The Bradford, by contrast, had not missed a Whit Monday since its inauguration and had carried on regardless; a case of the gritty Yorkshire working man against the cloistered City gents, they probably thought. Starting on a 39½ mile route from Bradford to York, it had changed to a circular 40½ mile course in 1906 and a 32¼ mile one from 1915 to 1940; its concession to the Second World War was to shorten to 15½ miles, and from 1946 it was settled on 50k. For such a gruelling event with such high-class competition, the Bradford was noteworthy for successions of victories, including an eight-year series by Albert Johnson. On the Brighton Road, Paul King had also won eight times, although not consecutively, but all were outshone by Dickie Green's thirteen successes, including, like Johnson, a straight series of eight.

As a final salute to all who had gone before, the Brighton walk was thrown open and won by Mark Easton of Surrey Walking Club (whose own "Brighton" had ceased in 1984) in 8:06:15, thirty-eight minutes ahead of Yorkshire's Martin Fisher. A mere nineteen days later, Fisher had his own victory, winning the Bradford, by only twenty-nine seconds from Steve Arnold, in 5:15:24.

An unusual event took place at Coventry in May, when a team "representing" the U.S.A. met one similarly designated as Great Britain in a track meeting over various distances and age groups. It was as much social as sporting, but that did not prevent some disqualifications!

Although the big international events of the year were the European Cup and the World Athletics Championships, the most interesting development was the announcement by the I.A.A.F. of its Race Walking Challenge. Six

events were to be held during the year, initially in Tijuana, Rio Maior, Sesto San Giovanni, Shanghai, La Coruña (or A Coruña in Galician) and Paris (at the World Championships); points were to be accumulated (on the basis of the best four performances) and the prize money was to range from \$50,000 for first place to \$5,000 for eighth; it was anticipated that the prize money would ensure support, as proved to be the case.

For the European Cup, U.K.Athletics took the unusual step of setting not just “ordinary” guideline times for selection, but also slightly easier ones for Under-23s newly competing as seniors; the allowance was not great (4:18:00 against 4:15:00, 1:30:00 against 1:26:00 and 1:43:00 against 1:38:00, for the standard distances) but it was at least a move forward. In the Cup, held in Cheboksary, Russia, the best British performance was probably that of Luke Finch, fifteenth in the Junior 10k in 44:05, although his female opposite numbers, Sophie Hales and Katie Stones, did well in twentieth and twenty-first. Leader of the 20k men was Daniel King (forty-third), supported by his twin Dominic (forty-eighth). With no competitors in the men’s 50k or women’s 20k, Britain’s position of sixteenth was all that could be hoped for.

No British walkers at all gained selection for the World Championships in Paris, where Jefferson Pérez set a world-best time of 1:17:21 and the judges, still showing that they were up to the mark, disqualified thirty-three – 28% – of the starters over the three races.

A blow on the domestic scene was the dropping of the walks from the Counties’ Athletic Union track and field championships. The reason given was “lack of support” and the campaign for reinstatement was immediately – and successfully – started by the R.W.A. Chairman and Secretary, Markham and Cassidy. The Association, meanwhile, was also in discussions with the A.A.A. over the distances to be included in the latter’s championships, having previously rejected a suggestion from within its own ranks to remove them altogether and hold a separate day of races.

Having previously sampled the horse-racing establishment at Newmarket in 2000, the long-distance championship returned there in 2003 and produced one of its closest finishes as Sheffield’s Peter Ryan, suffering severe back-strain and developing a dangerously increasing list to port, just survived the late challenge of Dutch guest Willem Muntze to win by fifty-five seconds in 19:57:35 for the hundred miles. Third overall in 20:23:25, Sandra Brown recorded her eighth victory (all consecutively, since Lillian Millen had won the first); she was to extend the sequence to eleven, until Cath Duhig of Loughton A.C. won in the Centenary Year in London, after which Brown returned to her gold medal position.

A seminar with the theme of *More Walkers, Better Walkers* was organised by the Race Walking Policy and Support Team in November, when it was announced that there would be a restructuring of the P.S.Ts in the near future; the restructuring proved to be abolition! It was confirmed that, building on the series of Grand Prix events at Leamington, a bid would be made to hold the European Cup there to celebrate the Association’s hundredth birthday; it was expected that the budget would be £50,000-£70,000¹⁵.

No concrete conclusions were reached at the seminar – nor were they supposed to be – but ideas were aired, views exchanged and experiences compared; not the least interesting contribution was from the Irish coach Michael Lane, who tried to explain how it had come about that Ireland, with a very small number of walkers and no solid administrative structure, was so successful in the sport.

The year ended with yet another very tranquil Annual General Meeting at which, in recognition of his considerable contributions domestically as well as at the European and World levels, Peter Marlow was elected President.

There was some seriously forward planning evident in 2004. Not only were the selection criteria for April’s World Cup fixed by the end

of the previous year, but the 2005 European Cup and 2006 Commonwealth Games levels had been set by mid-year.

The World Cup, held in Naumburg, Germany, in May had British teams finishing in the two Junior 10k races; Luke Finch and Nick Ball were ninth in the men's and Katie Stones, with an excellent individual twelfth, Sophie Hales and Jenny Gagg were two places higher in the women's. In the 20k, Dominic King and Andi Drake were the finishers, with Daniel King disqualified at 17k.

The thoroughness of the response to the reinstatement of the walks in the Inter-Counties' Track and Field Championships was shown by the size of the fields, both men and women providing the largest distance-event fields of the weekend, fifteen and eleven respectively. The standard was also good, as Andi Drake's time of 11:48.72 and Sophie Hales's of 13:49.64 testify. Again the walkers had rallied to the cause, but only after some perilous brinkmanship.

The work on preparation for the European Cup bid continued, with Peter Marlow devoting his Presidential Appeal to funding the bid¹⁶. The publicity began in earnest with a launch dinner at Leamington Spa Town Hall in November. Civic dignitaries, renowned walkers and European Athletic Association delegates ensured a strong start to the process. Other names from athletics, including David Moorcroft of U.K.A. also showed their support for the enterprise. Earlier in the day, a fixtures meeting and seminar had been held, at which one of the items considered had been a proposal to amend I.A.A.F. Rule 206.¹⁷ The discussion was lively but one-sided; the meeting was in no doubt that enough was enough and that no more tinkering with the definition was called for.

One consequence of the discussions with the A.A.A. mentioned earlier was the reduction of the men's distance in the track championships to 5000m, in line with the women's. The reward for the organisers was, as in the Inter-Counties, a pair of good races, with the King twins, Dominic and Daniel, and Stephen Hollier in the

men's event and Niobe Menéndez, Sophie Hales and Rebecca Mersh in the women's taking the medals. With winning times of 20:11.35 and 23:53.75, sixteen male and twelve female walkers and a couple of disqualifications, there was plenty of action for the unusually enthusiastic spectators.

After the World Cup, the main international event was the Olympic Games in Athens. Appropriately enough, the surprise women's winner was a relative outsider from Greece, Athanasia Tsoumeléka, who beat Olimpiada Ivanova by four seconds. The margin in the men's 20k was only one second greater, as Ivano Brugnetti held off Francisco Javier Fernández, but Robert Korzeniowski, in the fastest of his three Olympic 50k wins, had four minutes in hand over Denis Nizhegorodov. Again, there were no British walkers, but with only 7% disqualifications the judging showed more of a gentle hand – or the walking was considerably better.

Probably in recognition of an ageing population, the R.W.A. A.G.M. changed its Rules to give the British Masters' Athletic Federation a permanent seat on the General Committee. Apart from some perfunctory tidying-up of administrative details, only two matters stood out. The meeting decided that the time had come to reconsider the ten-year-old basis on which *Race Walking Record* was managed; registration of the title at the Patent Office was in hand and it was proposed to discontinue the old agreement and negotiate a new one involving licensing the use of the title to the editor; this, as subsequently became apparent, was easier to declare than to achieve. Indeed, an acrimonious debate promptly broke out between the General Committee and the Editor over attempts to reach agreement on a new contract and the old one continued on an interim basis for some years until the Association exercised its right of termination at the A.G.M. in 2008.

The other, and rather peculiar, matter involved the Northern Area. During the year the Area Committee had declared itself to be "The

Race Walking Section of the Track and Field Committee of the North of England Athletic Association”; there was no constitutional provision for such a move, but the Area had thought that it would provide a stronger financial future. Others were not convinced, but an amendment to the R.W.A. Rules was necessary to accommodate the change and to give it some semblance of legitimacy. Most people outside the North thought that it would soon be necessary to undo the change. The arrangement proving not to be working as the Area had expected – indeed, the position being worsened – the undoing duly took place two years later.

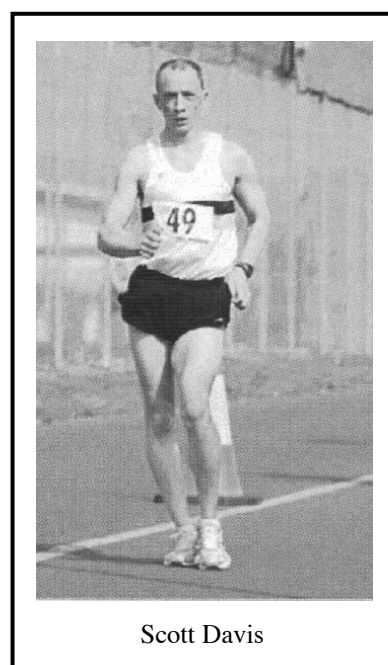
Midway through 2005, the European Athletic Association confirmed the award of the 2007 Cup to Leamington Spa; this was not unexpected, as there had been only one other potential candidate, which had not pursued the matter. Before then, of course, there was the question of the 2005 staging, taking place in Miskolc (like Leamington, a spa town) in Hungary. The competition was dominated by Russia which, winning all races except the women’s 20k, where some disqualifications ruined its hopes, left all others nowhere. Even in that unfortunate 20k, and bereft of any supporting compatriots, Olimpiada Ivanova was the individual winner. Britain’s junior man Nick Ball was eighteenth, while the junior woman Rebecca Merish was disqualified in the last lap. The only Briton in the men’s 20k, Dominic King, was also a victim of the judges, while Jo Jackson, showing not much indication of what was to come, was a lowly last-but-two. Disqualifications amounted to 10% of the starters, much the same as in Turin three years earlier.

At the World Athletic Championships in Helsinki, there were yet again no British walkers, as Ivanova, with a world record of 1:25:41, continued her series of top-level victories; here, the disqualification rate doubled to 21%, including a spectacular 30% in the 50k.

Aside from these two international events, interest centred on those yet to come the

following year, the Commonwealth Games and the World Cup. For the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, selection was to be the first home – subject to reaching the standard – in the trials, which were held at a rather breezy airfield at Earl’s Colne in Essex in September.

Winner of the 50k was Scott Davis, close on half-an-hour outside the 4:20:00 set for selection, but in any case Scottish, leaving the first English finisher not far short of an hour outside the time. In the men’s and women’s 20ks, both winners, Daniel King and Katie Stones, were too slow by a couple of minutes. King, however, had already achieved the time, as had second finisher Andy Penn, and they were nominated. Among the women, Stones had not achieved the time – and never did – but the second and third finishers, Jackson and Menéndez, had. Eventually, the only addition was Dominic King at 20k, although the Isle of Man had Steve Partington at 50k.



Scott Davis

Concerned about the – albeit distant – approach of the London Olympic Games of 2012, the R.W.A. set up a Development Plan Group to look at longer-term strategy, including

not only the Chairmen of its International and Coaching & Development Subcommittees, but the National Coach Martin Rush, Derek Hayward of the E.S.A.A. and, as an outsider, Alison Wyeth from the A.A.A. of E. Development Department. An open call was issued to all those who had criticised the General Committee, inviting them to submit their ideas; fewer than half-a-dozen did so. It was the old problem, by no means unique to race walking, that it was easier to criticise “them” than to join “them” and help constructively. Perhaps some critics were embarrassed by a recent experience; there had been agitation to raise the Under 17 championships distance from five to ten kilometres, so that the even longer senior competition distances did not come as too much of a shock. In response, General Committee had done so for 2005, whereupon the complaint was that the distance was too great. The 5k was reintroduced in 2006, in the hope that everyone would be pleased; the result might have been foreseen – some complaints that there were now too many championships in the age group. It is scarcely surprising that the Development Plan Group never made much headway.

Very likely on the basis that the Devil finds work for idle hands, the I.A.A.F. had another tweak at the Rules, deciding that, if the Chief Judge exercised his authority to disqualify a walker on the track or in the last hundred metres regardless of what had gone before, the walker would still be allowed to finish the race. This had the effect of reintroducing the possibility of post-finish disqualifications with all the attendant arguments, but did at least mean that such a competitor, after a *successful* appeal would have his time and position ratified. Another change made was to alter “cautions” and “warnings”, which were inappropriate in some languages – including, it could be argued, English – to “yellow cards” and “red cards”.

The threat of the exclusion of race walking from the Olympic Games was lifted during the year, although no-one imagined that the enemies of the sport would thereupon give up their campaign entirely.

Domestically, another reorganisation of athletics was looming. Sir Andrew Foster had been commissioned to review “The Future of Athletics in the United Kingdom”. By way of consultation, all sections of athletics were invited to submit their views, with an indication that there would then be further, in-depth, discussions. After much debate, the R.W.A. duly submitted its analysis of the problems besetting British athletics; the only response was an acknowledgement. Foster’s report, when it appeared, proposed the creation of a new body, England Athletics, to replace the A.A.A. of E., the doing-away with the three English Areas and the creation of nine regions (for a time called “hubs”, for no very obvious reason) with their own budgets and partially-elected Councils, whose duty would be to supervise “local delivery”, which made them sound like errand boys. It appeared to the R.W.A. that the proposals did not go to the heart of the problem, which was the increasing attempts by U.K.A. to take over from the Home Countries their responsibility for their own affairs. Eventually, despite the resistance in particular of the three English Areas, the Report was put into effect and the new arrangements were imposed. All was supposed to be very progressive and prosperous – “modernisation” was the vogue word – and there was the lure of £21,000,000 of so-called “legacy” from the Government, following the shambles of U.K.A.’s withdrawal from the promotion of the 2005 World Athletic Championships after the failure to build a stadium at Pickett’s Lock in north London.

The new regions never seemed really to grasp what they were about and as the money disappeared their operations, staff and premises evaporated. The Areas and the Special Associations, including the R.W.A., did their best to ignore the chaos and carry on.

It is all too seldom that civil honours come the way of the race walking world, but one did in the Queen’s Birthday list in June, when Ann Sayer, who had become the first female Centurion in 1977, was made M.B.E. for, as she believed, her past record-breaking achievements in athletics.

Some discussion took place at the A.G.M. on the subject of *Race Walking Record*; the Editor had, somewhat optimistically, proposed an “irrevocable licence”, but the General Committee preferred a fixed-term licence, renewable for additional periods, and the Meeting agreed. On another matter connected with *Record*, there had long been a feeling that the 200 Club monthly draw had been created solely for the support of the magazine, although no evidence had ever been produced; for the sake of clarity, the A.G.M. resolved, at the General Secretary’s request, to regard the proceeds of the Club as part of the Association’s general finances. Finally, with the intention of having him as President during Centenary Year, the A.G.M. installed Paul Nihill as President-elect, Brian Ficken, long-distance specialist of Surrey W.C. and the Stock Exchange, becoming President for 2006.

“Are numbers in the sport falling?” was a frequent question as the Centenary approached. For five years, Tim Watt in *Race Walking Record* had published counts of participants and he started 2006 by listing the numbers recorded in results notified to the magazine, showing the *performances* – the total number of finishers – and the *individuals* – the number of different names:

Year	Performances	Individuals
2001	5255	1449
2002	4934	1828
2003	6115	2380
2004	6824	2515
2005	6737	2502

Additionally, the *regulars* – competing ten or more times in each year, numbered 157, 128, 163, 177 and 175 and the Clubs, etc., represented were 184, 157, 283, 229 and 225. The reasonable answer to the question was, “Apparently not.” The next question was, “Are they good enough to compete internationally?” to which the answer had to remain open.

A continuing strand in race walking in this country has been the feature of long-established events held year after year. Many of the original

point-to-point road races, as has been shown, had been driven to extinction by traffic, but the Loughton A.C. New Year’s Day meeting, which had well exceeded the quarter-century, changing from public highways in the City of London to Victoria Park in Hackney, finally had to close because of the difficulty in obtaining sufficient officials willing to forego their firesides for the often windswept park. As with many “curtain calls”, attendance was up – nearly 50% on 2005. In contrast, growth piled on growth at the long-standing Manx Harriers Open Walks in Douglas in February, with some brisk times and, generally, a sizeable Irish contingent of competitors. The annual Parish Walk, visiting every parish church in the island, also showed – and continues to show – no sign of losing its public appeal. It seems that once an event is established then, barring outside influences like insupportable danger from traffic, it develops its own momentum.

2006 was a year of three top-level international events. The Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in March gave Nathan Deakes the satisfaction of achieving a “double double”, by winning both races as he had four years earlier in Manchester and this time Jane Saville did get into the stadium in a big event in Australia – unlike at Sydney in 2000 – repeating *her* Manchester placing. In fact, eight of the nine medals were won by Australians, with only the New Zealander Tony Sarginson interrupting the sequence by taking the silver in the 50k. Jackson and Menéndez were seventh and eighth, Daniel and Dominic King and Penn were sixth to eighth and Partington, flying the triskelion, sixth in the 50k. Was it because the Commonwealth Games are known as the “Friendly Games” that the disqualification rate was only 7%?

British results in the World Cup in La Coruña in May were rather farther from the front. Jackson’s personal best of 1:41:47 was only good enough for fifty-fourth, while Katie Stones did not finish. In the junior women’s race, Sarah Foster was thirty-ninth and, as in Miskolc, Becky Merish was disqualified, while the sole British scoring team of Nick Ball

(eleventh) and Ben Wears (forty-third) finished twelfth. Perhaps the World Cup had become friendly as well, but again only 7% were disqualified; oddly there were no non-finishers in the two junior races, won, in portents for the future, by Sergey Morozov and Vera Sokolova.

Last of the big three of the year, the European Championships in Gothenburg, had no British representatives, for want of someone able to reach the qualifying standard.

Having had a dinner to launch the European Cup bid, the R.W.A., in keeping with its tradition, had another one – in the same place and with the same menu – in conjunction with the seventh Leamington Spa Grand Prix, which served as something of a dress rehearsal for the real thing. It also included a Small Nations' Match, won by Switzerland, from Denmark and Ireland with the English hosts somewhat embarrassingly coming in only fourth.

Marketing Director for the European Cup, Mike Smith, opened a fund for contributions to the expenses of the Cup; while several did rally round, many, unfortunately, did not and in the final balance sheet the margin of solvency was small, with less than £200 being transferred to the funds of the R.W.A.

Smith had himself won the National 50k three times in succession and one of his greatest predecessors as holder of that title, Don Thompson, who took it eight times, together with the Rome Olympic Gold, died in October, aged seventy-three. He had completed several hundreds and latterly had also taken to marathon running.

Two other old masters, Paul Nihill, marking the fiftieth anniversary of his first walk – and building his stamina, no doubt, for an active forthcoming Presidency – and Ron Wallwork, met over the four miles of the Surrey Walking Club Gazette Cup. The European (1969) and Olympic (1964) medallist had the edge over the Commonwealth Champion from 1966. At the A.G.M., Nihill was duly elected President for the centenary year and called for a sterling

effort not only for the European Cup but, raising his eyes to a distant horizon, the Olympic Games of 2012.

All was in place for an exciting 2007, which began with the count of walkers showing a continuance of the trend previously noted. *Performers* were up to 7502 and *individuals* to 2781, while the *regulars*, at 172, remained steady. *Regular* but less frequent walkers, competing five or more times in the year, were shown as 322, 295, 303, 319, 322 and 348 over the six years analysed.

Given that some fixtures had been lost for various reasons, a little good news was that the London Inter-Club Challenge, a general athletic league, would continue to include walks which, although on a non-scoring basis – *and* Category B – provided a little more opportunity for competition in the metropolitan area.

More cheer was brought to the scene by the inception by U.K.A. of a summer-long challenge. Five specified events were included, with the top ten men and women competing in the final at Crystal Palace. At that event in August, the winners were Verity Snook (from Becky Merish and Katherine Granger) and Dominic King (with Mark Williams and Ben Wears completing the podium).

A low point, on the other hand, was the proposal to remove the walks from the Commonwealth Games to be held in India in 2010; again, there was resistance and again the danger was averted¹⁸, and an even lower point was the British representation at the World Championships in Osaka; the sole walker, Jo Jackson again, finished twenty-fifth in 1:39:34.

Part of the R.W.A.'s birthday celebration was a commemorative dinner at the Royal Air Force Club in London. It would be pleasant to record that a century of people turned out to mark the century of years, but unfortunately only half that number attended. Apart from President Paul Nihill, there seemed to be a policy that speakers had to be named *Peter*, as General Secretary Cassidy, Chairman Markham

and the guest, well-known supporter of walking, statistician and commentator Matthews, offered their thoughts and advice, ceremonies being mastered by Dave Ainsworth. In an anteroom, Brian Ficken had arranged a display of memorabilia and documentation for inspection and reminiscence. Tickets were £25; the 1957 version had cost only one guinea – gratuities included – with the organisers' added observation that alcohol prices in the Houses of Parliament, the venue for that earlier celebration, were well below London restaurant levels. One wonders what the 1907 pioneers, holding their pre-meeting dinner – if, indeed, such an event actually took place – had paid; probably half-a-crown. Unlike with the half-century celebration, it had not been thought necessary this time to appoint a Dinner Subcommittee for the later event and Peter Marlow had largely done it himself.

The actual birthday of the Association fell on the 11th September; a more modest gesture of a birthday cake and champagne was provided a day late by Loughton A.C. at a Woodford Wednesday Walk, the event closest to the date on the birth certificate.

All other events of 2007, even the surprising 25-24 defeat of the young walkers in the Nihill Trophy match in Dublin, took second place to the *real* celebration, the staging of the seventh European Cup in Leamington Spa.

Although the European Athletic Association required all five of the races to be held on the same day, which was a Sunday, the Organising Committee provided a full day of interest and some competition on the Saturday as well:

Saturday, 19th May
 11:30 Nordic Walking display
 14:30 Health Walk (Warwickshire C.C.)
 15:30 Competitors' training
 17:00 Under 11s' race
 17:15 Open 3k Race
 18:00 Opening Ceremony
 Sunday, 20th May
 08:00 Men's 50k
 09:00 Junior Men's 10k
 10:00 B.B.C. Coventry and Warwickshire Road Show
 10:00 Junior Women's 10k
 13:00 Vintage Car Display (National Heritage Museum)
 13:30 Women's 20k
 15:30 Men's 20k

The Cup competition itself lived up to its heralding as something special on home territory, with sizeable fields in all the events. There were many outstanding performances, too, as all five British all-comers' marks were beaten, and the chief officials and referee spent some time signing certificates for walkers claiming their own national records, etc. The races are summarised in the following table:

Event	Started	Finished	DQ	DNF	Winner	Winning Team
Men 20k	61	53	6	2	Y.Diniz, France, 1:18:58	Belarus
Women 20k	57	53	0	4	R.Turava, Belarus, 1:27:27	Belarus
Men 50k	47	36	4	7	V.Kanaykin, Russia, 3:40:57	Russia
Jun.Men 10k	40	37	3	0	S.Morozov, Russia, 40:25	Russia
Jun.Women 10k	39	38	0	1	A.Kornikova, Russia, 43:17	Russia
Overall	244	217	13	14		Russia

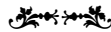
The unfortunate aspect of the Cup event was that, as before, there were few British walkers and nowhere were they sufficient to score as a team. At 20k, Daniel King was forty-eighth in

the men's with Jo Jackson and Lisa Kehler thirty-eight and forty-third in the women's, while at the Junior level Ben Wears finished twenty-sixth and Becky Mersh thirty-second.

Although the result for the hosts was familiar enough there was a great change from the foundation days; at Leamington Spa, 80% of the British walkers were either under twenty years old or women – one of them being both. The original men in their flat caps would have been surprised, as they would at the sight of dozens of Russians, Italians, Spaniards, Ukrainians and Poles going round a small park in a provincial English spa town at phenomenal speeds. H.V.L.Ross had won the first championship over twenty miles at about 8:50 per mile; Kanaykin went over half as far again at 7:06 pace with no Englishman to challenge him. That was how much things had changed in a hundred years.

Something else had *not* changed much; when the S.C.R.W.A. had been a mere infant, it

had been perpetually worried about its finances and now, with the A.G.M. closing its centenary year, its national successor worried about them again. It decided to impose a levy of 50p on each entry fee charged in open races, with certain specified exceptions; it was estimated that the annual income would be in the region of £2000. There was recognition that the three Areas of the Association were no longer receiving support from the corresponding Areas of the A.A.A. of E., although doing some of their work for them, and the arrangement was for half the levy income to be retained centrally and the remainder to be divided equally between the Midlands, Northern and Southern Areas. It was not a particularly great sum, but it would, it was hoped, make the headaches of the second century's treasurers milder than those of the first's.



PART II

**ASPECTS OF
RACE WALKING**

WALKING IN THE MIDLANDS

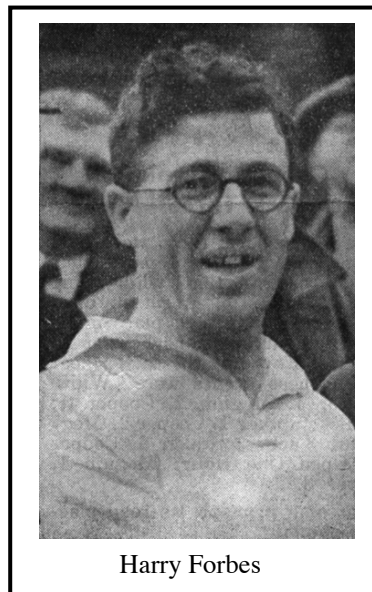
THE FOUNDATION

The Midland Road Walking Association was formed in 1931 with W. Golland, of Leicester W.C., as Chairman and J. Smith and H. Mason, both of Birmingham W.C., as Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary.

Up to the outbreak of the War in 1939, the dominant club was Birmingham W.C., which had been founded in 1910 and had won the National 50 kilometres team title in 1932 and 1933, fielding the same three individuals in the same three positions: Jack Medlicott, third, Harry Forbes, fourth and Fred Smith, fifth. In the following two years, the club was second behind Belgrave Harriers and in 1935 Medlicott won the National 20 miles.

This superiority was challenged, in a minor way, by a number of other clubs such as Dunlop Walking Club – something new in the walking world, being a works club – founded by George McCombe in 1930, and Coventry Godiva Harriers, whose walking section was started in 1937 by Eric Kennell, a former member of Birmingham W.C. Among other pre-war clubs were Lozells, Burton and Royal Sutton Coldfield.

However, the main rival to Birmingham's dominance was Leicester Walking Club, which had been founded in 1927 at the instigation of T. Lloyd Johnson, after the success of a 20 miles race sponsored by the *Leicester Mercury*. He had placed in the National 20 miles throughout the 1920's, representing Leicester Harriers or, in 1927, Surrey Athletic Club. In 1931, walking for Leicester W.C., he took the double of National 20 miles and 50 kilometres, and he was the first Midland Champion – at 50 kilometres in 1932 and at 20 miles in 1933.



Harry Forbes

In the 1936 National 50 kilometres and Olympic trial race, Harold Whitlock finished six seconds ahead of Lloyd Johnson, who was then disqualified; however, he was selected for the Berlin Olympics, although failure to recover from sea-sickness led to a rather below-par performance behind Whitlock.

Leicester W.C. soon gained National Championship team medals; at 50 kilometres they were third in 1932 and 1935 and second in 1938. However, it was at 20 miles that the club won its first National team title, progressing from third in 1934, fourth in 1935 and second in 1936, to equal first in 1937. This last result was the only tie in the history of the race when Leicester W.C. and Surrey W.C. finished on 40 points, Leicester's team consisting of Albert Staines, Lloyd Johnson, and Cashmore. Leicester maintained its form with second and third team places in the next two years.

THE WAR YEARS

After the A.G.M. of the R.W.A. on 21st September 1940, the control of Road Walking was delegated to the three District Committees¹. During the war years the active Midlands clubs were Leicester, Birmingham and Godiva, with Royal Sutton Coldfield, Dunlop, Lozells and Burton being dormant.

From 1943 the three active clubs, plus Sheffield United Harriers from the Northern Area participated in a series of inter-team races over seven miles. Through the driving force of Kennell, the Godiva Secretary, later to become Honorary Championship Secretary and President of the R.W.A., and the victories of their leading walkers, Vic Burr and Dick Edge, Godiva were, almost without exception, the winners of the races in 1943, 1944 and 1945.

As the war came to an end there was a return to more ambitious ventures and the Godiva 15 miles was staged on Whit Monday, 1945. The race was a triumph for the Metropolitan Walking Club, with first and third finishers (the Whitlock brothers) and first team, but the Midland presence was notable with second and fourth individuals, H.J. Forbes and Lloyd Johnson, the latter of whom, with Kenny and Cashmore, made Leicester second team with Godiva third.

For the walking world the end of the war was recognised when Eastleigh promoted their "Victory" 50 kilometres. The race was a success for the great Midlands pair of Forbes of Birmingham and Lloyd Johnson; Harold Whitlock led from Lloyd Johnson seven miles from home, but Forbes took over and finished in 4:48:59, ahead of Lloyd Johnson's 4:50:27, with Whitlock fading to fifth. Leicester (Lloyd Johnson, Cooke and Clegg) were placed.

THE POST-WAR PERIOD

The post-war period began with success for the Midlands in the first National Championship

– the "Junior" 10 miles. Godiva finished second, with their four men packed between eleventh and sixteenth positions, and established club history, for it had never previously been placed in the first three teams in the event.

Forbes recorded some fine individual successes in this period, including winning the first post-war 20 miles Championship in 1946; he was selected for the European 50k walk that year and finished second behind the Swede J.Ljunggren.

However, the period was dominated by Leicester Walking Club and their leading individual, Lloyd Johnson. In the National 20 miles he led his team (himself, Staines, Kenney and Clegg) to a remarkable victory over Metropolitan Walking Club, completing a "double" by beating the same club in the 50k. He also won the second Eastleigh 50k with Leicester again the winning club. The triumphal year for Lloyd Johnson and Leicester W.C. included victory in the London to Brighton, where the team of Lloyd Johnson, Staines, Braithwaite and Clegg held off second place Birmingham Walking Club, despite Forbes's winning the race in 8:20:12.

Such successes ensured that Leicester were recognised as undisputed team champions of 1946, although they did not reach such heights again in that decade. The 1948 Olympic year proved a spur to Lloyd Johnson, who recorded a personal best of 4:36:02 to gain selection for the 50 kilometres. His performance also gave him the Midland title and, with it, now in his 48th year, he accomplished the treble of the Midland Championships, a feat never achieved before or equalled since. A week after winning the Leicester Mercury 20 miles on 24th July 1948, in 3:00:00, the veteran was at Wembley for the Olympic event where, with a time of 4:48:31, he won the bronze medal. In the summer of 1949 he finished the decade in superb form, winning the National 50k on 18th June, the County 15 miles on 2nd July, and the Birmingham Outer Circle a week later.

There can be no doubt that this period belonged to Leicester W.C. and Lloyd Johnson but in 1949 Lozells Harriers had their most successful season. Thanks to Ernie Warwick, the club secretary, and Alf Haddock, their most successful walker, they gained awards in a number of Midland events, including third place at the Birmingham Outer Circle.

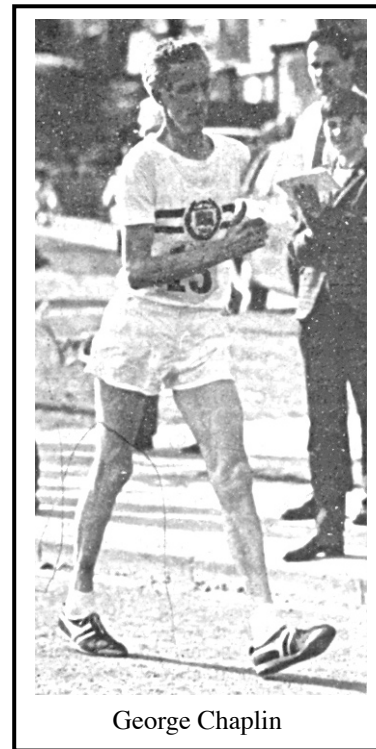
THE FIFTIES

The 1950s was a decade when no real challenge came from the Midland clubs at National level. At the National 20 miles in 1951 Leicester gained third place and in 1955 repeated the placing in the National 50k. They were third again in 1959, “evergreen” Albert Staines leading in his young clubmates Mel Blyth, Peter Markham and Jack Rawling. Meanwhile, Lloyd Johnson had bowed out with second place in the 1951 National 20 miles in his fifty-third year, with a time of 2:57:21.

George Chaplin, of Godiva, made his mark in the second half of the decade, finishing third in the National 50k – his first race at the distance – just twelve seconds outside the 4:35:00 Olympic selection time. The following year he was third in the National 10 miles and second in both the 20 miles and the 50k.

In 1957 Coventry Godiva had one of its best seasons with sixth place in all three National championships, followed by second in the Bath to London 100 miles and in the London to Brighton, where Chaplin, supported by Stone, Webb and Friend, took second place. Chaplin, described as the most consistent walker in the country, won international selection in the Grand Prix de Suisse 50k, finishing second in a time of 4:53:17. A year later he was awarded his second international selection, over 100 kilometres in Italy, where, finishing third behind Tom Misson and Don Thompson, he completed the British clean sweep.

The death in 1959 of George Lacey Morris, who had founded Worcester Harriers Walking Section in 1948, came at a time when his club was beginning to show promise. Alf Poole had



George Chaplin

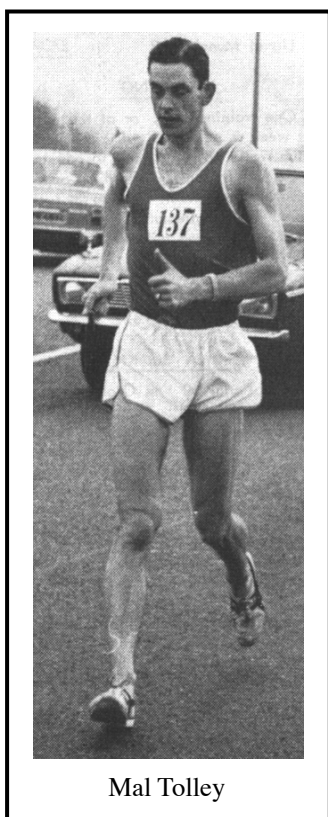
progressed from Midland “Standard” champion to win Winter League races and the Belgrave Open 7 in 1955. In 1957 he was sixth in the National 10 miles and won the Pontypool Open, leading Worcester to the team victory. The novice prize was won by Bill Wright, later to become Life Member and President of both the Midland and National R.W.As, and son of Percy Wright, Life Member of Belgrave Harriers.

Royal Sutton Coldfield’s only previous success had been in winning the *Sunday Dispatch* Birmingham to London in 1953, but the arrival of Ken Matthews boosted the club as he won the National 10 miles in 1959, resulting in selection for the Berlin 25k, where he finished tenth in a race won by Stan Vickers.

THE SIXTIES

Matthews won the National 10 miles every year from 1959 to 1964, his 1960 time, 70:57, being the fastest ever recorded on track or road, while in 1964, at Morden, he clocked 70:22,

lowering the championship best performance by 22 seconds. In 1960 he won the National 20 miles at his first attempt, leading in fellow Olympians Don Thompson and Paul Nihill. During the 1960s the Royal Sutton Club produced not only Matthews, but also fellow Olympians John Paddick and Bob Hughes.



Mal Tolley

However, such outstanding individuals failed to produce National Championship Team medals for Royal Sutton Coldfield. In the 1964 National 50k, John Paddick, in his first ever race at the distance, came fifth with Ken Harding ninth, but with Karl Abolins twenty-ninth and Derek Harding thirty-ninth, the team could only gain fourth place. In 1965 Ken Harding placed third in the National 10 miles and Paddick took a similar place in the 50k. A year later the efforts of these two stars in the National 10 miles, with Paddick sixth and Ken Harding eleventh, could only get fourth place for the club. In 1967 Roy Lodge was fourth in

the National 20k and followed up by winning the 20 miles from internationals Don Thompson, Ron Wallwork, Charlie Fogg and Ray Middleton, but yet again a star lacked club support. The story was repeated at the end of the decade, when Hughes came to the fore, winning the Olympic Trial and finishing fourth in the National 10 in 1968 and 1969, but still with no team success.

In contrast to Royal Sutton, Leicester's failure to dominate the Nationals was because their worthy "pack" lacked the cutting edge of a leading individual. In the National 10 miles in 1960 the team picked up third place, when Markham led home Staines, Thrall and Rawlings, and the next year the club placed third again in both the National 20 miles and the 50k.

In 1966 Leicester improved to second in the 20 miles, led by Markham (ninth), with Trigg, Blyth and Rawlings, but in 1967 dropped back to third. It was in 1969 that they found that cutting edge, with the arrival of Mal Tolley, from Sheffield, and the progress of their own Brian Adams, and they recorded their first team win in the National 10 miles, with Tolley in fifth place and Adams in nineteenth providing the spark for the ever consistent Markham and Peter Stapleford.

Godiva in the 1960s followed the Sutton Coldfield, rather than the Leicester, pattern, their star being John Edgington, second in the 1961 National 20 miles and third in the 10 miles in 1963 and 1964. In this race he was supported by Chaplin in sixth place, but with their other scorers twentieth and fifty-fifth, the team could only manage fifth. Edgington's performances gained him selection for the Tokyo Olympics, but Godiva had to wait another five years before making their national mark. In the 20 miles, held on a hilly course at South Croydon, on what turned out to be the hottest Saturday of 1969, they really pulled one out of the bag with their first-ever National placing; with only four men available, Chaplin was tenth and Bob Turney twentieth, while Joe O'Brien and Bill Wright gave sterling performances to take third

team position. At the National 50k, Chaplin produced what was perhaps his best ever performance when he was fourth in 4:30:30, so that the 1960s ended for him with the dual satisfaction of gaining an international vest, and leading his club to its first National team medal.

Although Lozells Harriers had previously enjoyed some regional success, it was not until the 1960s that the club became well known at national level, through the outstanding performances of long distance walker, Frank O'Reilly. Having won the London to Brighton and Back in 1959, he won the 1960 Leicester to Skegness 100 miles in 16:54:15, the best ever time for the distance, and in the same year he was selected to represent Ireland at 50k in the Rome Olympics.²

In 1961 he won the Chigwell "100", and repeated his Skegness victory in 1962 with a time of 16:58:16. In August 1963 he won his fifth race of 100 miles or over, when he dominated the London to Brighton and Back, but in the Skegness in 1964 he finished second to Karl Abolins of Royal Sutton Coldfield; nine days later O'Reilly said, "I am calling it a day!"

THE SEVENTIES

During the 1960s Terry Simons, the enthusiastic Welshman, had used his energy to produce a string of fine Youth and Junior walkers at Bromsgrove and Redditch Athletic Club. Senior success eluded him until he had formed the new Nomads Walking Club, with whom he finally produced a Champion, not from his stable of youngsters, but from a Charity Walk; Eric Taylor, third in the National 10 miles in 1974, had come into the sport after competing in a firm's Sponsored Charity Walk. Motivated by the desire to get his Managing Director out of bed in the early hours of the morning, Taylor finished well ahead of the estimated lunch time arrival! Such potential was rewarded not only with a Senior national medal, but also with an International vest.

In 1971, Royal Sutton, the club of stars, recorded one of its intermittent National team

places, achieving third in the National 50k, with Ken Harding, Dave Berry, Woodward and Paddick. By the end of the decade the club had amalgamated with neighbours Birmingham Walking Club, and in 1979, at the first national 100 kilometres Championship, Royal Sutton and Birmingham W.C. secured second place, with Ken Harding, Geoff Tranter and Karl Abolins.

In the 1970s Godiva still relied on George Chaplin for national prominence; in the 1972 National 20 miles his third place was the same as fifteen years earlier but his time of 2:39:41. was almost seven minutes faster! Six years later he won another national team medal in the 50k, in which Midland walkers took the first three individual places: Dave Cotton of Holloway Poly, Ian Richards of Coventry Godiva and Brian Adams of Leicester. Chaplin was ably supported by his third team member, Ken Smith, in thirty-eighth place. Smith, previously a good club runner, had entered walking after securing third place in the Godiva 5 miles Novice Walk in 1970. He proved to be an outstanding acquisition to the sport; his administrative ability led to his being elected chairman of the R.W.A. and to the advent of numerous initiatives. The same Novice Walk a year later produced a third place for Dave Moorcroft; however, he chose not to convert to walking, but became world record holder at the 5,000m run!

Dave Cotton had been coached from boyhood by Les Lewis of Birmingham and finished third in the National 20k in 1977; Lewis did not hesitate to encourage his young walkers to tackle distance events and in 1978 he became, at the age of 21, the youngest winner of the 50k title.

Throughout the decade Leicester were a strong presence and seemed to be able to take third National team place consistently, in the 10 miles in 1970, the 20k in 1976 and 1979, the 20 miles in 1972 and the 50k in 1974 and 1977. They also managed two second places, in the 20k in 1977, with Adams, Toone, Markham and Lewis, and, a year later, in the 10 miles.

In similar fashion to his club, Brian Adams spent most of the 1970s within reach of a Senior National title, but not actually grasping the trophy. In 1975 he was third in both the 10 miles and the 20k, in 1976 second in the 10 miles and fourth in the 20k, in 1977 third in the 20k and in 1978 second in the 10 miles, the 20k and the 30k, the metric replacement of the 20 miles.

Both Adams and Leicester achieved just one Senior National in the decade. After finishing third in the A.A.A. 3000 metres the previous night, Adams coursed to victory in the 20k in 1977 at Milton Keynes, finishing two minutes ahead of Commonwealth Games medallist John Warhurst, but the club had to wait until two years later for its Senior 10 mile title. Adams, in second place, led Alan King, John Paddick and Graham Squires to victory, winning by one point, but not until several hours after the Trophy had, due to a miscalculation, been presented erroneously to Steyning.

THE EIGHTIES

In June 1980 English men's and women's walking at last came under the one administration, that of the Race Walking Association. Prior to this amalgamation, the Midland women had provided one of the greatest female walkers, Beryl Randle, of Birchfield Harriers, but even her presence amongst the Officers of the R.W.A. failed to lead the Midland women to further success under the new régime. The Midland participation was small in the newly instituted R.W.A. women's championships. In 1981 Bolehall Swifts, a team trained by Albert Stokes at a sports club outside Tamworth, secured third place in the National 5k, with Elaine Worth, Melanie Brookes and M. Barker. The club repeated this placing on two occasions, but a dispute there led to the demise of local race walking.

In the middle of the decade Midland women's success transferred to Bromsgrove and Redditch. In 1983 Ruth Sugg, Pauline Leader and Amanda Field finished third in the National

5k and this placing was repeated two years later at both 5k and 10k, when the team benefitted from the arrival of Bolehall Swifts walkers Brookes and Worth. A new impact from the Midlands was made by the D.A.S.H. women's team. Formed in 1960 D.A.S.H. (Dudley and Stourbridge Harriers), rewarded the efforts of Eric and Pam Horwill by securing National team medals in the 1980s. In 1984 their team of O'Connell, Bellfield and Glover were third in the 10k and third again in 1987, in the newly established 15k. Finally, from a team point of view, the mighty Leicester Walking Club found some women, the trio of Andrea Croft, Suzie Pratt and Michelle Venables managing third place in the 5k in 1988 and second in the 10k a year later.



Melanie Brookes

On a team basis the Midlands clubs had scored nationally without dominating, but individually in the second half of the 1980s the area launched the career of one of Britain's greatest female walkers. A member of Wolverhampton and Bilston A.C., Lisa Langford soon went to the front of women's championships. In 1986 she placed second in the 5k and third in the 10k and in 1987 won

both the National 10k and the 5k. In 1989, despite recording an improved time, she was second to Betty Sworowski of Sheffield over 10k.

On the men's side, the 1980s was an incredible decade for Leicester. In the ten years they won twenty-two National team titles, were second on five occasions and finished third three times. In 1980 the winning distances were 35k, 50k and 100k, the scorers being Alan King, John Paddick, Brian Adams and Chris Berwick for the 35k, while at 50k Peter Markham joined the trio in place of King. At 100k Berwick was assisted by Reg Colver and Chris Bent. Also, replacing the established Leicester to Skegness with the Leicester 100 miles, the club won the team race, in which the Midland long-distance walker Tony Collins took second place behind the legendary Dave Boxall of Brighton. In 1981 Leicester were third in the 35k and second in the 50k, but a team of Phil Vesty, Brian Adams, Alan King and Andy Trigg won both the 10 miles and the 20k.

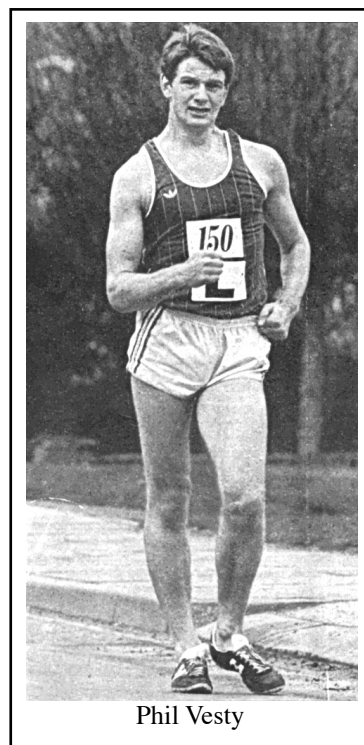


Andy Trigg

In 1982 a future challenge to Leicester was foreseen when, in Coventry, talks began which led to one walking club for the city. Coventry

Godiva's walkers formally resigned from their club and Greyfriars Walking Club agreed to a new name and so was born Coventry Race Walking Club. Despite this development, Leicester's success continued both individually and for the teams; Vesty, King and Adams were second individuals in the 20k, 35k and 50k, respectively, and Berwick won the 100k, with team victories in the 35k, 50k and 100k.

In 1983 a total of eight Leicester walkers won National medals to secure all five Senior team titles. Adams was in every scoring team, the remaining seven being Vesty, King, Smith, Trigg, Berwick, Markham and Sturgess.



Phil Vesty

In 1984 Leicester had an off year, as its team of Vesty, Adams, King and Tolley could only come second in the National 10 miles at Southend, with Vesty as runner-up behind Ian McCombie. Their only other team medals were won by Berwick, Bent, Markham and Sturgess, who finished third in the 50k. However, 1985 witnessed a resurgence of the Leicester team. The year began with Vesty again runner up to

McCombie in the National 10 miles at York, but Leicester won the team race.

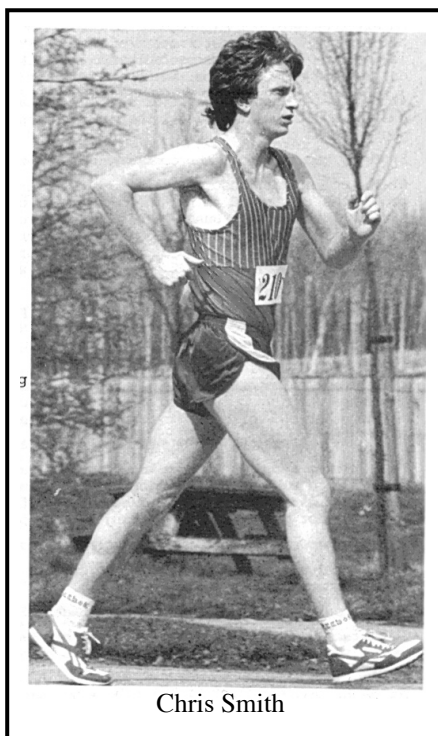
The 20k saw Vesty once more follow McCombie home, with the same Leicester quartet as at York (Vesty, Chris Smith, King and Trigg) taking the team award, and the 50k was another Leicester success. However, as predicted, the "Young Lions" of Coventry Race Walking Club had been sharpening their teeth year by year and in 1983 were third team in the 20k and second in the 35k. Clearly the longer distance required some experience to help them and youngsters Mike Smith and Daz Thorn needed assistance from paternal walker Ken Smith and the ageless veteran George Chaplin. The following year, Chaplin closed in behind Mike Smith, Thorn and Dave Ratcliffe to gain third team place in the National 35k. Coventry's youth, Andi Drake, Thorn, Harvey and Mike Smith, placed third in the 10 miles in 1985 and then the same quartet were second in the 20k. In the 35k, with Harvey, Drake, Steve Lewis and Ratcliffe, they were third and at 50k the club improved to second, where the veteran George

Chaplin in eleventh place assisted Harvey, Lewis and M. Smith.

The inevitable happened in 1986 at the National 10 miles; the young walkers of Coventry won their first team title, placing Thorn, M. Smith, Drake and Harvey, ahead of Leicester, who, sadly, were involved in an internal dispute which resulted in King's walking as an individual; had he been in the team, Leicester would have won the title. In the 20k Coventry slipped back to third place but there was no disputing the Coventry victory at 35k, when Mike Smith overtook Thorn with barely 400 metres left, and led home the victorious team of Thorn, Ratcliffe and Harvey. The season finished with the 50k in which the Midlands provided the first three teams and, arguably, the Champion; the race was won by G. de Jonckheere of Belgium, but Berwick, runner up, was the leading British walker. His performance gave the impetus for the Leicester team of himself, Trigg, Paddick and Adams to beat Coventry R.W.C's team of M. Smith, Harvey, Thorn and Ratcliffe. The surprise was third place, taken by Royal Sutton and Birmingham; this was the grand finale of R.S.B., because on 1st July 1989, the club was absorbed by Birchfield Harriers.

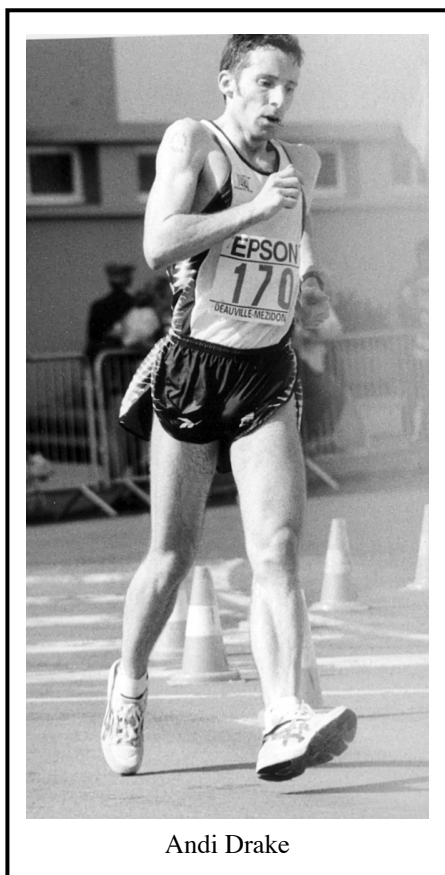
It seemed certain that 1987 would herald a formidable Coventry-Leicester battle. The opening championship, the 10 miles, was a success for Coventry, Drake finishing second. With the even younger Andy Penn taking fourth place, Mike Smith twelfth and Ian Harvey thirty-sixth, it was sufficient to take the team title from Leicester, who responded strongly, winning the 20k. This was followed by the 35k, won by Berwick, Harvey's third place failing to stop an overwhelming Leicester team victory. In the Open 50k held at Leamington, Drake and Mike Smith had taken first two positions, but when it came to the National Championships, although Ian Harvey again won the bronze medal, the team title went to Leicester, Berwick leading home Adams, Trigg and Sturgess.

Although the decade ended without the former dominance of Leicester, the team was



Chris Smith

strong enough to win the 1988 20k and 35k; Berwick was there at 50k, getting third place. In the same year Coventry was third team in the 10 miles and in the 20k Penn made a remarkable breakthrough to take the bronze.



Andi Drake

The final year of the decade saw the rivalry continue in the 10 miles, when Coventry finished second ahead of Leicester, whose only further success was Berwick's third place in the 50k, whereas Coventry celebrated some fine victories. At 20k they achieved the double with the team title and an individual victory for Drake. This race was the start of low fields, "so low as to be abysmal" wrote the editor of *Race Walking Record*.³ Thus, Coventry, with three in the first ten, won by two points from Steyning. At 35k Coventry's Mike Smith finished in second place, the same position as his team of Smith, Harvey, Arnold and Keith Richards. The

50k saw another runner-up spot for Mike Smith and third place for the team.

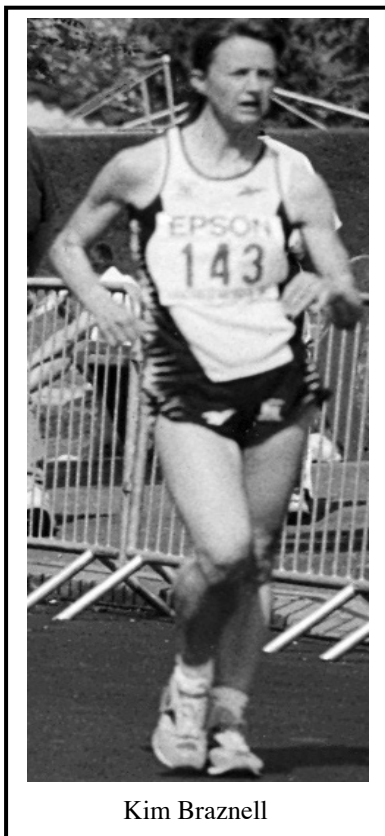
THE NINETIES

The Leicester women's trio of Andrea Croft, Suzie Pratt and Michelle Venables continued the good work of the 1980s by winning team medals in the next decade, placing second in the 10k and winning the 5k, and with third in the 15k in 1991, but it was eclipsed by D.A.S.H. who, in 1992 won the 15k with Kim Baird, Katherine Horwill and Julie Bellfield, the individual winner being Melanie Brookes of Nuneaton Harriers. Brookes, who had been a supporting act in both the Bolehall Swifts and Bromsgrove and Redditch teams in the previous decade, now came to prominence representing Nuneaton. Following her 15k victory she shone in the 10k, where she was second in 48:08, just outside the Olympic qualifying time of 48 minutes. D.A.S.H., represented by Baird, Horwill and Bellfield, won the team race, in spite of recording the same score as the mighty Sheffield.

Over the 5k distance the D.A.S.H. trio of Horwill, Bellfield and Mills were reduced to second in a race where the Midlands provided the first three individuals, Sylvia Black of Birchfield, Croft of Leicester and Karen Smith of Coventry. So Smith joined father Ken and brother Mike as national medallists. Midland individual successes continued in the 10k, where Black was second and Brookes third, and the 10 miles, with Brookes second, ahead of D.A.S.H.'s Kim Baird. The D.A.S.H. team's further successes in the first half of the decade were: first in the 10k and second in the 10 miles in 1993 and first in the 5k the following year.

Solihull and Small Heath, the club coached by the inspirational Stan Hill, found a star with Elaine Callinan, who, after taking third place at 5k, won the National 20k. Recording a time of 1:45:11 and leaving the field nowhere over the final five kilometres, she became the inaugural Champion at the distance, her success at distance races producing two second positions in 1995, at 20k and 10 miles.

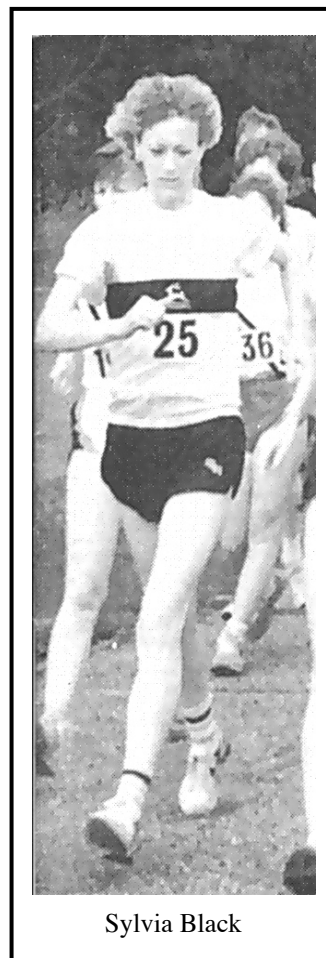
The Commonwealth Games 10k selection race of 1994 was an all Midland affair. Smith got away from Brookes before halfway and held on to win in 48:30; Callinan took third place, some two minutes back. Some consolation came when Melanie Wright (née Brookes), won her second National Championship, the 5k, holding off the D.A.S.H. pair of Baird and Horwill; Baird repeated her second place in the 20k. Over 10k Wright picked up thirds in 1995 and 1996, whilst Baird, now Kim Braznell, again took runner up spots, in 1997 in the 20k, and in 1998 in the 10k.



Kim Braznell

Over both races she had to yield to Birchfield's Sylvia Black, who had also won the National 10k of 1997. At last Braznell's Gold Medal came with the 5k in 1998; the Birchfield Harriers trio of Sally Warren, Nicky Huckerby and Sarah Bennett won the team race. A further medal would have fallen to Braznell in 1999 in the 20k, but Irishwomen took first and third

places, whilst she crossed the line fourth. Wolverhampton Olympian Lisa Langford had her National appearances restricted by injury, but won the 5k in 1990, 1995 and 1997, racing as Lisa Kehler, and over 10k was second in 1995 and 1996 and first in 1998.



Sylvia Black

The rivalry between Leicester and Coventry at the front of English men's race walking continued into the nineties. In the first year of the decade Coventry seemed superior, when Daz Thorn took third place in the 10 miles, with the team of Thorn, Harvey, Walmsley and Guy Jackson second, and they held the same position in the 20k, with Ratcliffe replacing Jackson as fourth scorer. However, as the season reached the longer distances Leicester responded by taking third in the 35k. In the 50k, Berwick

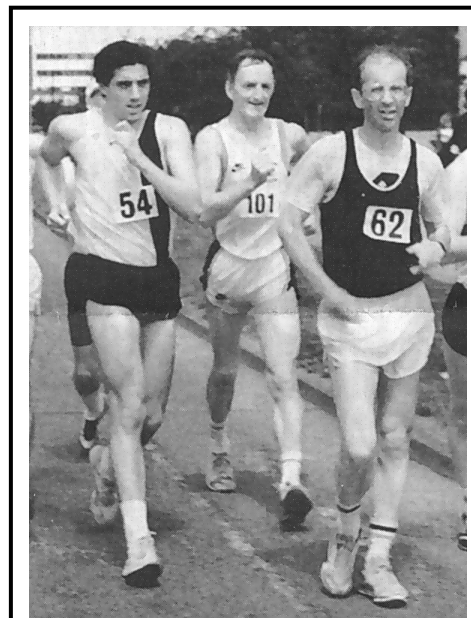
became National Champion of 1990 and led home the victorious team of Sturgess, Vesty and Jones, with the newly formed Birchfield's men's team of Geoff Tranter, Parminder Bhatti, Dave Baker and Tony Collins second.

In the Long Distance Championship over 100 miles Tranter, Collins and Baker were second team. Coventry then took the honours in 1991, Penn placing third in the 20k and his team securing the title with himself, Thorn, Smith and Walmsley, a further team victory following in the 35k when Thorn, second, and Smith, third, were supported by Harvey and Ratcliffe. The hat-trick of titles came with the 50k when, in spite of Berwick's taking second position ahead of Mike Smith, Coventry's quartet of Smith, Harvey, Ratcliffe and K. Richards was supreme. Battle lines were drawn between Coventry and Leicester.

The Olympic year of 1992 stimulated competition. At 10 miles Leicester placed second, one position ahead of Coventry and in the 50k, although Leicester's Berwick was second and King third, the only Midland team to win a medal was, surprisingly, Bromsgrove and Redditch with Barlow, Bill Rawlins and Kevin Worth finishing in third place. The critical race for Olympic selection was the 20k held at Lancaster. With ten judges on a just over two kilometre lap, some leading walkers saw red. The race was a triumph for Coventry, which provided the runner-up, Penn, with team gold going to Penn, Walmsley, Ratcliffe and, in twenty-fourth place, the amazing veteran George Chaplin – inspired by the Olympics again?

Penn, invigorated by his Barcelona Olympic experience, won the 1993 20k but the team title went to Leicester, King, Atton, Vesty and Berwick outshining Coventry's quartet of Penn, Thorn, Harvey and Ratcliffe. The struggle between the two clubs continued throughout the season. Leicester won the 10 miles, with Chris Smith replacing Alan King in the scoring four, but Coventry won the 20 miles, led home by Thorn in second place. Head to head, the Coventry trio won each duel: Thorn v Berwick:

Harvey v Smith; Clarke v Adams, but Leicester took their revenge in the 50k. Leicester's successes continued throughout 1994 as winners of the 30k, the 20k and the 10 miles. However, despite Berwick's third place in the 50k, the team was unable to improve on runner-up position. After such a spell of victories it was surprising that Leicester should not have another title until 1998, when they won the 20k, thanks to the youngsters Michael Kemp and Tommy Taylor adding zest to the trusty Adams and Berwick.



Coventry v Leicester
54 Mike Smith – 62 Chris Berwick
Between them – Ed Shillabeer

Meanwhile Coventry responded; in 1995, Penn was third at 20k and Scott Davis, a recruit from Essex, was third at 20 miles; Penn took second in the 10 miles, to lead the winning team of Davis, Ratcliffe and the indestructible Chaplin. Over the same distance a year later Penn won and, with Davis, Phil King and Thorn in support, victory went to Coventry, who also took the 20 miles title with Penn, Davis and Thorn. The 1997 20k was won by Penn, but the team only managed second place. In 1998

Coventry were boosted by Drake's return to race walking from marathon running; competing in his first National for decades, he finished second in the 20k and so helped the team to silver medal position. He consolidated his return by victory over 10 miles, "winning by a street" in 71:14.

Away from the tension of the Leicester-Coventry clashes, Birchfield continued to impress over the longer distances. In 1996 the team of Collins, Bhatti and John Fenton won the R.W.A. Long Distance title, all three completing the 100 miles race within twenty-four hours.

1997 opened with a National 10 miles, which could be construed as the "City of Leicester Challenge." Leicester W.C. found themselves competing against not only Coventry, but also another club based in their own city. Leicester Road Hoggs, comprising two O'Rawe brothers from Essex and transfers from Leicester W.C., was a formidable team. Even Brian Adams, in seventh place, was not strong enough to hold the "Young Turks" of Essex and the "transfer boy" Alan King. With Jamie O'Rawe second, Andy O'Rawe third and King fourth, it only needed Dave Keown to finish twenty-first to win the team title. Road Hoggs followed this victory by coming second in the 20 miles, and collected more gold medals when they won the 20k; in that race, they showed their class with the O'Rawes, King and Karl Atton packing strongly at the front of the field.

Road Hoggs' achievements carried through into 1998 when they won the 10 miles team title. A post-race disqualification of Leicester W.C.'s Kemp changed the leading team positions, so that the Road Hoggs quartet of the two O'Rawes, King and Martin Young pipped Steyning by one point. Leading individual King was runner-up in the 20 miles but lacked support over this distance. The end of the decade was marked by two highly contested challenges over 50k between Leicester and Coventry. In 1998, the field was reduced to eleven finishers; Tim Watt of Steyning A.C.,

future editor of *Race Walking Record*, won, ahead of Mike Smith and Berwick. However, the Midland order was reversed in the team race; with Berwick, Adams and George Smolinski giving Leicester the edge over Smith, Arnold and Ian Richards, son of Keith Richards, an erstwhile National medallist for Coventry.

A year later, Leicester and Coventry met again over 50k; Mike Smith, Berwick and Adams all maintained their positions and Steve Arnold improved to fifth place, but the critical duel was between Neale Smith and George Smolinski. Ultimately, it was Coventry's indomitable Smith who finished one place ahead of his rival, so clinching the team title.

Road Hoggs were a force at the shorter distances, closing the decade as National 20k champions. The O'Rawes, King and Atton won the title in a race in which Coventry's Drake took third place. The Coventry team of M. Smith, Thorn and I. Richards were runners-up at 35k. So, overall perhaps, honours were even between the three clubs, but on an inter-city basis the two Leicester teams were triumphant over the lone Coventry club.

THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

With the advent of the new century race walking was threatened by the arrival of the world of electrical frivolity, in which sport was virtual, not real, and the number of participants fell dramatically. There were areas of resistance, led initially by Coventry and Road Hoggs; Coventry maintained their strong 50k profile by taking second place in 2000 and Road Hoggs continued their 20k form by winning in 2001, with a formidable trio of Jamie O'Rawe, Martin Young, and Alan King. Then both teams evaporated, Road Hoggs quitting through retirement and Coventry through disbandment. Coventry's Mike Smith returned to Coventry Godiva Harriers and stormed into the new century with a treble of 50k titles in 2001, 2002 – when with Arnold third and Ratcliffe fifth, the team title was also won – and 2003, when Arnold maintained his third place. The sequence ended when Smith was relegated to runner-up in

2004. Fellow Godiva star Drake continued his successful return to walking with victories in the 20k in 2002 and a year later at 35k. His performance, supported by Smith and Arnold, gave the Godiva trio the team title.

Not all the ex-Coventry R.W.C. members joined Godiva. The influx of Terry Morris, Andy Flear, Neale Smith, and, above all, Andy Penn, transformed Nuneaton Harriers. Penn produced a treble of outstanding 20k performances; in 2001 he won ahead of Steve Hollier of Wolverhampton and Bilston and in 2002 he finished second, behind Drake, the culmination coming in 2003 with another win, leading home the victorious team of himself, Morris and Smith. The team title was won again in 2005; Penn was relegated to second place, but this time the Penn-Morris combination was supported by Uli Fullerman – a Nuneaton product made in Germany! Arnold added to Nuneaton glory with a silver medal in the 50k in 2006 when Birchfield's duo of John Constandinou and Dave Fall took the team title.

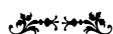
To complement the men at Nuneaton, the women picked up National 5k medals. Ann Wheeler had begun her walking career as a veteran, but her application and sound style won her a bronze medal in the 5k in 2003 and two years later she led her daughter, Laura Matkin, and Claire Yeomans to the National 10k title. Outstanding performances came from the formidable Lisa Kehler and the industrious Sharon Tonks. Kehler, competing at the new international distance of 20k, won in 2000 and again two years later with Tonks close behind. Kehler and Tonks, the 1999 5k champion, both

gained the qualifying time for the Manchester Commonwealth Games, where Kehler won the silver medal.

Kim Braznell (third in the 20k in 2000 and 2002) and Katherine Horwill (second at 5k in 2003 and at 10k in 2004), led D.A.S.H. to team titles. In 2002 and 2004 Julie Bellfield was their third scorer in winning the 20k and in 2003, without the two stars, Bellfield, Pam Horwill and Jill York took the 10k title. The following year Bellfield was again in the winning team, with mother and daughter pair of Pam and Katherine Horwill. It was a performance to bring credit to coach, husband, father and club guiding genius Eric Horwill.

The disappearance of Road Hogs meant that Leicester W.C. was the sole walking team in the city. Inspired by the metronomic Chris Berwick, runner-up in the 50k in 2002 and 2003, and third in 2004, they won the title in 2005. Berwick, in second place, and Dwayne Butterley, in third place, were supported by Australian Mark Wall. The same trio had previously taken the 10k title, ahead of a sextet of Nuneaton walkers, Simon and Mark Hambridge and Arnold finishing second and Paul Hayden, Bill Wright and Terry Morris third. Whilst being a great achievement for Nuneaton, it was also proof of the decline in the number of participants.

Finally, it is fitting that Leicester W.C., the dominant team of the past seventy-five years, won the 2006 20k title, and that their young prospect, Fiona McGorum, came third in the women's 10k.



WALKING IN THE NORTH

Although the great impetus towards organisation, standardisation and control in race walking came in the south with the foundation of the S.C.R.W.A. in 1907, it is not to be thought that the sport was limited to the metropolitan area. Even in the south, in fact, the metropolitan bias was misleading and unrepresentative and much walking existed away from the capital. Indeed, much was going on “north of Watford” and various midland and northern personalities and events are referred to in this book.

Naturally enough, the North of England Athletic Association held track walking championships from its earliest times, but many road walks were also provided by various clubs. The Club structure itself, though, was seemingly not very strong; as lately as 1907, a Surrey Walking Club member, recently moved to Manchester, was complaining in *Sporting Life* that he now found himself “in the unenviable position of being without a club that caters for competitive road walking or long-distance pleasure walks” and he called upon some “influential North-country gentlemen” to form one. As the same paper two days later carried a report on the flourishing state of Lancashire Walking Club, it may well be that then, as now, walkers and their clubs were too reticent about making themselves well-known! The attitude of the newly-migrated southerner himself is also interesting, with more than a hint of an earlier time of forelock-tugging when what would now be called “community activities” depended for their creation, organisation and finance upon the local bigwigs; if the squire, the parson or the retired colonel took no action, then no action would be taken by anyone else either!¹

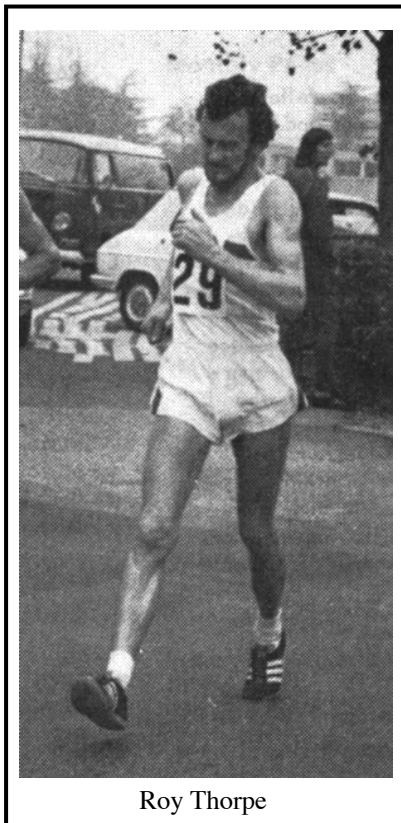
So far as race walking, as distinct from walking as an ancillary or conditioning activity of athletics, was concerned, there was, then, very little northern organisation despite some worthy activity.

This absence of regional organisation, with clubs simply doing as they pleased, could not have been expected to lead to much progress or development, but the belated adoption by the S.C.R.W.A. of its national status was rapidly followed by the foundation of the “Northern Section”². By its first Annual General Meeting in 1912 the Northern Section could claim ten affiliated clubs and had already held its first championship, which was over twenty miles at Fallowfield, won by Bobby Bridge of Lancashire Walking Club in 3:06:15, with his club also finishing second, third and fourth individuals to take the team title ahead of South Shields. Needless to say, that first Annual General Meeting, while receiving such good news as regards numbers, also heard of the appearance of the normal and perennial problem of race walking, an excess of expenditure over income.

The beginnings of organisation in the North did not have much immediate impact nationally. Tom Payne, of course, wearing his Middlesex A.C. colours, had won the S.R.W.A. Championship at Chislehurst in 1911 but had been disqualified when the event went National, and it was not until the R.W.A. risked a venture northwards by taking its Championship to Derby in 1925, that a northern vest took the event, in the shape of F.Poynton of the home club, although he had already won in the previous two years, representing Leicester. It was to be five years before the event was once more held in the North (and again at Derby), when the home club finished second, but in 1931 at Enfield and the following year at Fort Dunlop Derby Walking and Athletic Club, followed home in each case by Sheffield United Harriers, finally took the team trophy to the north and made the championship seem *really* national.

When the 50 kilometres Championship was established in 1930, Northern claims were

established rather more briskly; J.H.Ludlow of Derby, who also featured in the two previously mentioned Championship 20 miles teams, was third in each of the first two competitions (held at Croydon and Bradford) and Derby finished second in 1932 at Leicester. Remarkably enough, it was not until four decades later – after the interruption of the Second World War – that the team trophy went north, when Sheffield improved the averages markedly by winning every year from 1972 to 1979 and again in 1981, with John Warhurst (twice), Roy Thorpe, Denis Jackson and Barry Graham taking the individual title northwards during this period of burgeoning activity in the rest of the country.



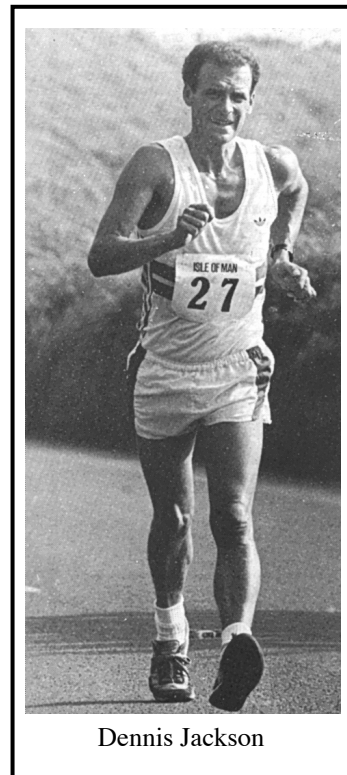
Roy Thorpe

As Sheffield won the 20 miles in 1972, 1973 and 1975 to 1979 (the last two after the distance was changed to 30 and then 35 kilometres) and the 10 miles “Junior” Championship from 1948 to 1952, when it was discontinued, it might be

safely said that despite its slow start the North was, by the latter half of the century, on a par with the other Areas.

It was to be several more years until, with the appearance of the likes of Helen Elleker, Vicky Lupton and Betty Sworowski, all from the Sheffield Club, the Northern Area gained similar prominence on the women’s side, the short period of dominance by Carol Tyson and Marion Fawkes having pre-dated by a few years the transfer of women’s walking to the R.W.A.

The Northern women’s superiority, when it came, was, perhaps, even more emphatic than the men’s. The end of the men’s remarkable sequence, in 1981, coincided with the first year of the Sheffield women’s purple patch, as they took the new 10k Championship from 1981 to 1991, with the exception only of 1988; the missed year at 10k seemed hardly to matter, as it was itself the first of another sequence of ten championships in eleven years for them, this time at 10 miles.



Dennis Jackson

Our Midlands chapter compares the fortunes of two clubs, one with a series of sparkling stars who won individual titles but lacked team support, and the other with a collection of solid “middle men” but no outstanding individuals, while the situation was quite different during the decades of northern superiority. Thus, while Sheffield were winning the men’s 10 miles from 1949 to 1956, Lawrence “Lol” Allen and Roland Hardy were leading them home as individual champions and John Warhurst, twice, and Roy Thorpe, once, were winners during the 50k sequence. On the women’s side, while Sheffield were ruling over the 10k, Helen Elleker, Betty Sworowski and Vicky Lupton took five individual first places and at 10 miles Sworowski won three times and Lupton seven during the Sheffield golden years, even managing to dead heat in a Championship Best Time in Victoria Park, London, in 1991. Unlike the Midlands, therefore, the North achieved its successes with a series of star-studded teams, largely from Sheffield, which crushed the opposition at all levels.

Oddly, the Sheffield men’s power in the Nationals never extended to the 20k, where Northern success was limited to individual wins by Ron Wallwork of Lancashire W.C., Sean Martindale of York Postal and Les Morton of Sheffield and to just four team wins for Sheffield, two for York Postal and one for Lancashire W.C. in a stretch of forty-five years.

As can be seen, both the men and women of the Northern Area had their periods of overwhelming national dominance, but one aspect in which the women outshone the men was in the Relay Championships. These events were very short-lived, extending only from 1988 to 1997 and were discontinued through lack of support and the difficulty that clubs had in fielding teams, despite a certain amount of adjustment of the conditions. The races were always held in Birmingham and although Birchfield might have been expected to enjoy home team advantage – and did, indeed, win four times – the dominance lay marginally with Sheffield, which took half the team titles over the ten years. By contrast, the farthest north that

the men’s championship ever went was to Leicester, the winners in 1995 and 1996. The northern men never featured among the winners.



Betty Sworowski

Although track walks did take place, they were, in the north as in the south, seldom considered to be more than some form of light relief and the main emphasis was on the longer road events. Perhaps the most famous of the Northern road walks has been the Bradford, first held over thirty-nine-and-a-half miles from Bradford to York in 1903, when there was no centralised organisation at all, even in the south of England, and maintained over various distances and routes for a century, not being interrupted even by two World Wars or the General Strike of 1926, which had caused the suspension of the National 20 miles.

Not far behind, in terms of seniority, was the Manchester to Blackpool over forty-eight-and-a-quarter miles, started in 1909 and continued, except during the war years, until traffic drove it from the road and confined it to Stanley Park, Blackpool, as a fifty-mile event. We have remarked in Chapter 4 on the great north-eastern races, such as the Newcastle to Hexham and the Newcastle to Haltwistle, which were shorter-lived than the Lancashire and Yorkshire events, and there were, of course, many others. One almost feels that at some time or another any two towns in England twenty to fifty miles apart will have had a race between them. Other pairs routes were sometimes used for “record” purposes and, as reported in our chapter on the *Pioneers of Modernism*, some walkers seem to have nursed quite a fancy for towns that had not previously been paired – such as Cummings’s choice of Hartlepool and Hull, and London and Burton – simply so that a new and somewhat meaningless record could be established.

As we mention in Chapter 8, the Manchester to Blackpool incorporated schoolboys’ eight-mile races when the school-leaving age was fourteen, and the adjacent photograph shows Miss W.Green of Bolton, who walked from Manchester to Blackpool in 1920 in twelve and a half hours, a rare sight.³

The great road walks of the north, perhaps more than those of the rest of the country, attracted crowds that would not have been out of place in a football stadium; indeed, a cup-final turnout might have been thought feeble at times, particularly in the north of England, for it was claimed that 350,000 watched the 1945 Sheffield Star Walk. How much this may have been wishful thinking is not apparent, but contemporary photographs certainly show the roads filled from side to side.⁴ Those who complain nowadays that there are too many over-fifties in most races might give thought to the *Star*’s observation that, “Of the 71 starters, 69 finished the course – sufficient tribute to a good number of walkers in the 60s or late 50s,” although the fifty-five-year-old winner of the Veteran Prize did take 2:34:39 to cover the twelve miles, fifty-five minutes behind the

winner. Like many another “classic”, the Star Walk fell upon hard times, declining from some 1,400 competitors in the early 1980s to 150-odd in the late 1990s, by which time it had been driven off the road into a local park.



The pioneering Miss Green

What Ayton says in his book *The Star Walk* might be said equally of many another such event: “The decline in public spectating, the amount of modern traffic on the course which, allied to safety on the highways, meant that the police personnel needed to provide effective control of both traffic *and* walkers was disproportionate to the number of competitors involved. The cost of policing, which may have included a fair amount of overtime working, was unjustifiable as far as the organisers were concerned.” Thus, after nearly three-quarters of a century, during which most of the top Sheffield walkers, including many future internationals, cut their teeth on the event, the race faded away. References elsewhere show that this was not an entirely northern

phenomenon; the fate was shared by such events as the London to Brighton (and back, sometimes) and the Hastings to Brighton.

Given the distances involved in the North and, in the early days, the considerable obstacle provided by the Pennines during the winter, it is not surprising that isolated pockets of race walking appeared, grew and faded as the needs changed, one such example being the Lake District. Carol Tyson of Lakeland A.C. had a spell as the country's top woman walker, combining, as we show elsewhere, with Marion Fawkes and Irene Bateman to win the Eschborn Trophy⁵. Tyson was National 5k Champion in 1980, leading her club to victory and they took the team title again the following year; it is interesting to note, now that many walkers fuss about travelling any distance taking them more than an hour, that they had to travel to Exeter to do it.

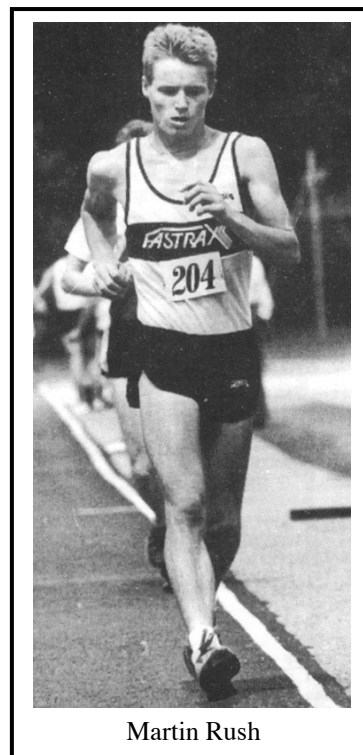
Representing the equally out-of-the-way Cockermouth A.C., Martin Rush won the Junior 10k in 1983 and the A.A.A. 10000 metres ten years later, as well as making several international appearances.

The other principal name from the far north-west was the long-distance specialist Lilian Millen, also of Lakeland, inaugural national champion when the event was held as a 100 mile road race in Battersea Park, London, in 1993, and winner of a multitude of international veterans' distinctions.

Another case in point is Redcar Race Walking Club, started from scratch by former international John Paddick in an area virtually unknown to race walking and springing to prominence toward the centenary year, largely through Ben Wears and Johanna Jackson.

City of Hull A.C. (otherwise Kingston-upon-Hull A.C.) was another club that sprang suddenly into life due to individual enthusiasm and blazed up briefly with its young female walkers, only to flicker out again almost as rapidly. During their mere four years of race walking prominence – 2001 to 2004 – they won

eleven individual championships of the R.W.A., A.A.A. or E.S.A.A. – six falling to Katie Stones, four to Jenny Gagg and one to Bryna Christmas, and three R.W.A. team championships. An average of more than three titles per year must be some kind of record and the total is to be envied even by some clubs whose histories extended five times as long as Hull's.



Martin Rush

Most isolated of all the Northern Area's territory, of course, is the Isle of Man, so remote that, like the Channel Islands, it merits its own chapter in this book, and making a fair contribution over the years to the North's score in the Nationals. The peculiar Manx contribution to northern ruggedness is the annual Parish Walk, visiting each of the Island's parochial churches and covering eighty-five miles or thirty-two-and-a-half for the Under-21 entrants, who finish at Peel. The event involves as much as 2.5% of the entire population – possibly the pinnacle of national involvement in any sporting event in the world.

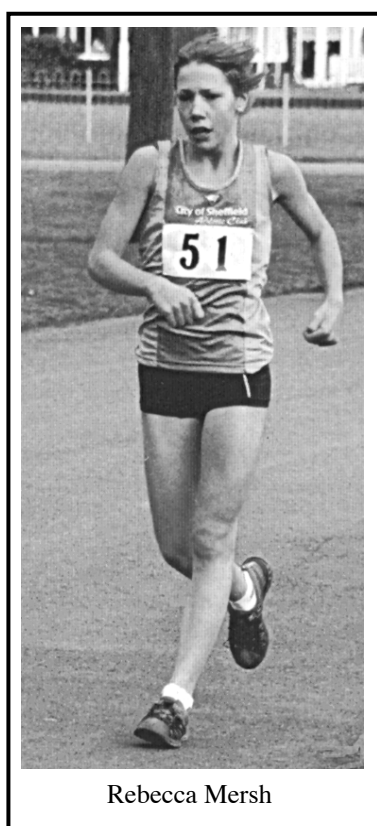


A Cup-final crowd? The Star Walk in the 1950s



A smaller crowd at Bradford in 1923, but how far will they follow the race?

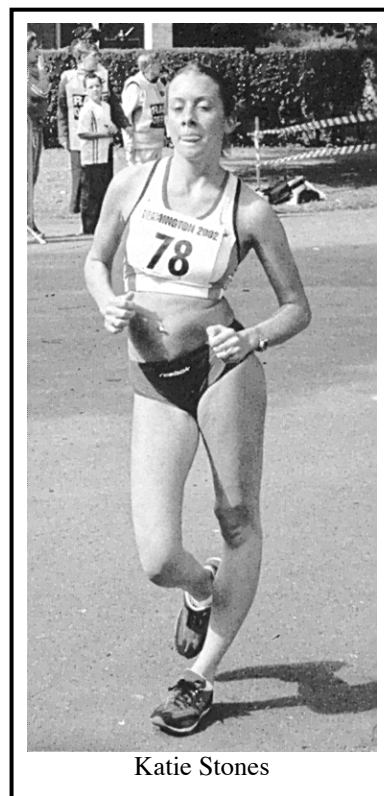
In the last few years of the R.W.A's first century, it was perhaps the younger athletes who were the North's main strength, such walkers as Ben Wears, Nathan Adams, Kathryn Granger and Rebecca Chambers doing well at national level. The most successful was probably Rebecca Mersh, who, apart from gathering a clutch of R.W.A. and A.A.A. titles, achieved the remarkable feat in the English Schools Championships of winning the Junior title in 2002 and 2003, the Intermediate in 2004 and 2005 and the Senior in 2006 and 2007. This achievement (in the colours of South Yorkshire) has been equalled only by Sarah Bennett of West Midlands among the girls and Nick Ball of Hampshire among the boys. It is unfortunate that so many talented young walkers – and not only in the North – do not go on to perform as well or as consistently when they reach the senior ranks.



Rebecca Mersh

One northerner appearing seemingly from nowhere, but actually from Redcar and cross-

country running, was Johanna Jackson. Coming to prominence just in time for the centenary year, she won the National 10k from 2005 to 2010, also collecting the 20k titles in 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2010. As well as improving the national record on a number of occasions, Jackson went on to round off 2010 by becoming the first non-Australian woman to win the Commonwealth Games walk title since the inauguration of the event in 1990; a photograph of the occasion appears elsewhere.



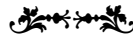
Katie Stones

The North, after the initial years during which the South rather tended to dominate the Officer ranks of the Association, has made just as great a contribution as the other areas and it was a northern incumbent, John Eddershaw of Sheffield, who became the first post-war President to serve two consecutive years⁶. Since the unwritten but nonetheless strictly observed "one year rule" was broken, the occurrence has become not uncommon. It should go without saying that the North's own Area officers have

worked long and diligently over the years and, given the particular conditions in their area referred to above, have probably had more problems to contend with than those of the Midlands and the South.

As far, too, as officials – judges, recorders, timekeepers and all the necessary components of succesful competition – are concerned, again the North, domestically, nationally and internationally, has never been backward. In common with the rest of the sport, however, it has recently had to contend with increasing age, economic hardship in the industrial regions and the frustrations generated by too many frequent

and seemingly quite arbitrary reorganisations of the systems of qualification, development, vetting and advancement, not to mention the repeated changes to the rules. In addition, walkers are now competing well into their sixties and seventies, while those who retire younger are often unwilling to move on to officiating. The consequence – and this is something that is becoming noticeable throughout all sports in the country – is a constant shortage of new officials and a reluctance among those who have been “in the business” for years to trouble themselves about keeping up to date with ever-changing regulations.



WALKING IN THE SOUTH

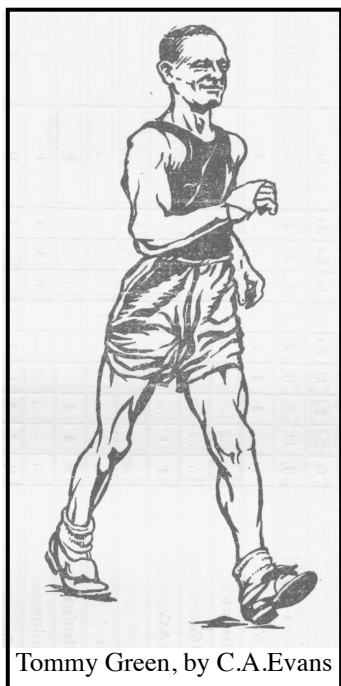
From the founding of the Amateur Athletic Association in 1880 the staple diet of walkers in the South consisted of the two- and one-mile handicaps held at various meetings throughout the area. With the gradual introduction of the Saturday half day, competition for individual walkers was limited to venues which were reasonably accessible and the Bank Holiday meetings became particularly popular, with long-established meetings being held at such places as St Albans, Bishops Stortford, Windsor, Reading and Southampton. The Essex Championships, which were started in 1882, incorporated a two-mile track walk from 1888 onwards.

As the turn of the century approached, road events began to appear, including an Ilford to Chelmsford and back in 1898, and Polytechnic Harriers promoted a race from Wembley to Rickmansworth and back in 1900. The first London to Brighton race had been held in 1886 but the next was not until 1897 and there were another five up until the First World War. The Stock Exchange promoted their own championship, open to members only, over the same course from 1903 onwards and the Southern Counties Road Walking Association established a 20 miles championship in 1908 with the first race being held at Ruislip. This continued until 1912 when the Southern R.W.A. became the national body. By the time of the First World War, there was a regular programme of road walks in the London area with competitors often drawn from offices in the City. The races were held at venues on the fringe of the built up area of London including what were then still semi-rural parts of Middlesex and Surrey. The races could usually be reached by train after work had finished at 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The Civil Service, too, promoted its championships from the earliest days, often using the Stamford Bridge track, while the London Business Houses added a road walk to their cross country championships at

Greenford from 1911 onwards and later at other venues.

After the First World War competition increased. At its A.G.M. in 1919 the A.A.A. recommended the establishment of county championships and the Home Counties generally included a two-mile walk in their track championship meetings from the start. Hampshire and Sussex also did so on a regular basis while other counties such as Cambridgeshire, Devon and Wiltshire did so from time to time. In 1922 most added a ten mile road walk to the championship programme. The first Southern Counties A.A.A. two-mile championship on the track was held in 1923 and continued regularly from then on. Surrey Walking Club took over the organisation of the annual London to Brighton open event from 1919 onwards with Polytechnic Harriers putting on an additional race in April 1920. In 1920 Belgrave Harriers and Enfield A.C. started their open seven-mile races and in 1923 the Kent-based Cambridge Harriers put on an open ten miles, changing to seven miles in 1927.

The 1920s and 1930s saw other events added to the fixture list and the gradual spread of paid holidays (not made a statutory requirement on employers until 1938) made it a little easier to take time off to travel to a race. The Colchester to Ipswich started in 1929 and the Highgate Open 7 and the Hastings to Brighton in 1930. Metropolitan Walking Club was formed in 1928 and initially had its headquarters in Hampstead Garden Suburb, eventually producing the 1936 Olympic Champion Harold Whitlock. The Eastleigh railwayman Tommy Green, of Belgrave Harriers, won the 1932 Olympic 50 kilometres title and had to take unpaid leave to make the return journey by sea and rail to Los Angeles. Woodford Green walkers Alf Pope and Bert Cooper regularly topped the two and seven mile rankings in this period.

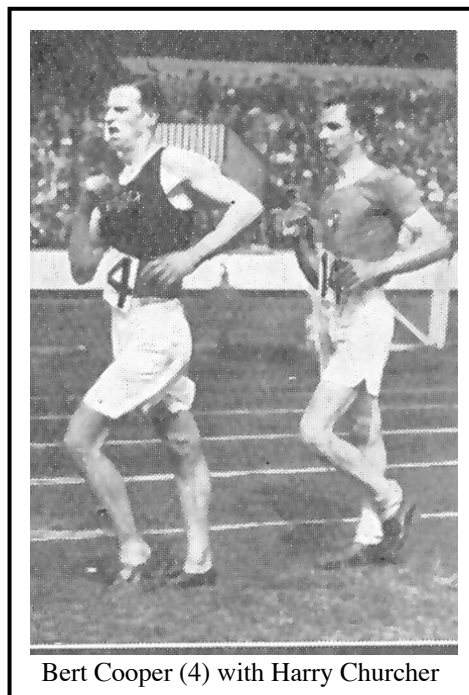


Tommy Green, by C.A.Evans

In 1932 the R.W.A. decided to set up district¹ committees and the first Southern Committee had Norman Easlea (Enfield A.C.) as its chairman. The other areas started their own road championships but the South decided not to follow. In 1937 the Ashcombe 10, held in the Putney/East Sheen area since 1922, became a seven miles but did not survive the War and a similar fate befell the London Tramways Open 10 which had started in 1926.

In 1940 the R.W.A. General Committee decided to suspend its authority for the duration of the War and delegated its functions to the area committees. A substitute ten-mile championship was held in 1940 and 1941 saw the Highgate 7 move finally to its famous course from the bottom of Highgate West Hill and out to the Great North Way, returning via Hampstead Garden Suburb to Hampstead Heath Station and on to the finish past Parliament Hill Track. In 1942 the Metropolitan Police Open 7 Miles and the Highgate 1 Hour track walks began. The latter originally had two sections, a third being added in 1946 and, as participation

increased, a fourth in 1947. Highgate's walking secretary Alf McSweeney did a lot to keep walking going during the War. Judging by the calibre of the fields, it would seem that a large number of walkers must have been in reserved occupations, even after allowing for the appearance of servicemen on leave.



Bert Cooper (4) with Harry Churcher

In 1942 Metropolitan Walking Club's Regent's Park Open 15 Miles also began, being changed in 1958 to the international distance of 20 kilometres; in 1965 the venue moved to Battersea Park. In 1947 the Southern Committee of the A.A.A. started a seven miles track championship but there was a gap of two years before it was held regularly from 1950. Cambridge Harriers revived its open seven miles in 1947 after a break of several years. The gradual adoption of the five day week in many occupations made travelling to events easier, though the largest network of clubs and races still tended to be within a sixty- or seventy-mile radius of London. The Colchester to Ipswich race was revived in 1949 and continued for another ten years, eventually falling victim to declining numbers and increasing traffic.

1950 saw the start of the Chippenham to Calne Open 6 Miles, which regularly attracted a large field from both inside and outside the South. The organiser of the race was Harry Callow, who had been a walker with Essex Beagles before moving to the area. He was able to get the support of local businesses including a certain Gordon Smith, who used to preside over the lengthy prize-giving which followed the

event. One of the prizes was a set of the local Harris pork pies! Of more interest to the leaders was a gold medal for breaking the course record. Official support was forthcoming and the race was usually started by the Mayor of Chippenham and competitors were greeted by the Mayor of Calne on their arrival at the finish, where both would appear on the platform at the prize-giving..



The "Chippenham" in its heyday, 1959; 143 walkers leave the town centre.
Ken Matthews led home the 139 finishers 6 miles away and 43:04.6 later

In the 1950s Harry Callow was instrumental in building up the Trowbridge and District A.C. team of walkers. The first Western Counties Championships were held on grass at the Bournemouth Gasworks ground in Poole and a two-mile walk was included, which was won by Gerald Gregory of Belgrave Harriers. A South Western inter-counties meeting was added later and also a South Western six-miles road title, which was held in conjunction with a race for R.W.A. six miles in the hour badge. 1951 saw the formation of Steyning Athletic Club with 27 active walkers under the guidance of Johnny

Henderson, who had been a distance walker pre-war in the colours of Sussex Walking Club. The club built its headquarters in the centre of the town. In the same year, Brighton and County Harriers amalgamated with Sussex Walking and Athletic Club to form Brighton A.C., later to become Brighton and Hove A.C., with Harry Tyler as its secretary.

After 1952 the so-called R.W.A. "Junior" 10 Miles Championship for the Garnet Cup ceased and the trophy and race were transferred to the Southern Area. The race was never junior by

age and previous winners and winning teams were excluded subsequently as well as internationals.

The year 1959 saw the affiliation of a new club to the Southern Area and this was Southampton A.A.C. whose leading walker was Cliff Ball, father of Jimmy. Hampshire had always had race walkers and the leading club had been Eastleigh A.C. but they went into decline. Gosport A.C. also came on the scene about this time and they promoted an open seven miles for several years and a little later Basingstoke A.C. had a team and promoted an open ten miles. Hampshire held its ten miles County road championship in conjunction with Wiltshire's on a picturesque course on the outskirts of Salisbury. To this race was added the South Western Championship.

In 1972 a Southern Track Competition was introduced and initially the clubs were divided into three groups, North of the Thames, South of the Thames and West, with races held over 3000, 5000 and 10000 metres, together with an under-18 2000 metres. Two clubs from each group qualified for the final and the first winners were Belgrave Harriers. With a fall in the numbers taking part a new format was adopted in 1978 with Division 1 comprising the previous year's finalists and Division 2 consisting of the rest, and with promotion and relegation in subsequent years. The event continued until 1990, when lack of support led to its abandonment.

Meanwhile the Southern Counties' A.A.A. Championships had gone metric in 1969 with the new distances being 3000 and 10000 metres. The R.W.A. Southern Area then began to add several road championships to the programme at various distances, the first of these being the 50 kilometres in 1975 from 1977 onwards generally held in conjunction with the National Championship. The second was the 20 miles in 1976 and this grew out of the various county championships held in the Home Counties and Sussex with neighbouring counties sometimes holding their events in conjunction.

In 1997 the 20 miles was converted to a 30

kilometres after which it lapsed. In 1983 a 10 miles and a 20 kilometres were added with the former incorporating the long-established Garnet Cup. The 10 miles lasted until 1994. With the transfer of womens' walking to the R.W.A. in 1980, the 3000 metres track and 5 kilometres road championships continued. A 10 kilometres road title was added in 1982 and there has also been the occasional women's 20 kilometres championship.

There was a growth of league races in the 1970s providing good competition, but with walkers able to turn up on the day without having to enter beforehand. The strongest was the Essex League which owed much to the enthusiasm of the late John Hedgethorpe, who was head of the Essex Police Cadet Training School, and this provided a steady supply of recruits for the sport as well as changing accommodation for events on nearby roads. There was also a Southern League mainly based on the Sussex and Hampshire clubs. There was a friendly local rivalry between the Steyning and Brighton clubs and the latter owed much to the drive of Alan Buchanan. There was also the Brighton to Steyning 20 kilometres over a scenic course after the initial short distance along the main London road from near Withdean Stadium. Trips to races across the English Channel were organised and eventually an international inter-regional match was set up between Sussex, Kent, French Flanders and the Belgian province of Hainault for the Magog Trophy.

A number of long-established races have disappeared in the last forty years. The last Colchester to Ipswich was in 1969 as was the Highgate 7, after which Highgate Harriers concentrated on its 1 hour meeting, which survived until 1981 with an attempted revival in 1988 and 1989. In the 1980s Woodford Green took over the hour on its traditional September date. The Highgate 7 was replaced by the Vauxhall Motors Open 7 held at Luton, where there had been a complement of Highgate walkers including George Coleman for many years, and this survived until 1981. Cambridge Harriers held their last Open 7 Miles at Bexley

in 1984 and with worsening road conditions on the course they replaced it with a regular series of league races on a small but testing circuit on quiet roads nearby catering for all age groups in distances up to the senior ten kilometres over some eight laps.

The last London to Brighton open was held in 1983, though there was a final open promoted by the Stock Exchange A.C. in 2003, and the last Hastings to Brighton was also in 1983, both victims of heavy traffic. The 1981 London to Brighton saw the tragic death of Dave King after being run over by a car and the 2003 race only went ahead after police insistence on the provision of marshals at road junctions. The last Chippenham to Calne was held in 1999, a victim too of worsening traffic and the growing reluctance of police forces to assist with races on the road and the likelihood of charging promoters with the costs². The last Metropolitan Walking Club Open 20k was held in 1989 and within a year or so the club itself had folded.

Inevitably some famous clubs have declined while others have flourished from time to time. When Harry Callow retired to Weymouth, he helped the growth of a small team of walkers in the local club Weymouth St. Pauls Harriers in the late 1970s and the 1980s. Elsewhere in the West Country Dawlish and South Devon R.W.C. and latterly Plymouth City Walkers came to the fore but the latter almost folded after the retirement of their Olympic walker Chris Maddocks in 2000. Race walking in the south west has been effectively out of action for some years apart from the efforts of a few individuals and some recent interest in Somerset schools.

Woodford Green and Highgate no longer field teams. In Essex clubs have come and gone, such as Anglia Striders, while Basildon and Havering no longer have walkers. Ilford A.C. continues to cater for walkers as does Loughton A.C., who have fielded walking teams for many years now. In Sussex Brighton and Hove A.C.

are no longer active, effectively leaving the field to Steyning A.C.

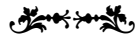
Of the traditional open sevens only those of Belgrave Harriers and Enfield A.C. survived to the centenary year with both opting for the more relaxed “B” definition of walking. The Metropolitan Police Open, which had been held over 10000 metres for several years, was contested for the last time in 2006. Sportsmen in the Metropolitan Police no longer get any favours in the force, which used to provide a steady stream of recruits to walking. A sign of the times is the increased use of the Imber Court facilities by non-police clubs and the increased appearance of outsiders in its Ryman League football team.

Enfield and Haringey A.C. provides regular league races and the London Postal Region continued to hold handicaps over its testing Blackheath Park circuit for a number of years. Following the loss of its clubhouse by fire several years ago, it was able to obtain changing accommodation at a neighbouring ground but that facility has now been lost to housing development.

After the War, the London County Council and then the successor Greater London Council promoted walks in their track championships and also a ten miles road championship in Battersea Park. When the G.L.C. was abolished in 1986, Westminster City Council briefly took over the latter and then the race transferred to Crystal Palace for a short while. As the latter facilities became unavailable and public funding was lost, Loughton A.C. adopted the road events for the various age groups with the senior distance being reduced to ten kilometres, and the event moved to Victoria Park, Hackney. The Victoria Park venue is less than a mile from where the nineteenth century professional runners and walkers used to attract large crowds to the meetings at the Hackney Wick track adjoining the North London Railway line.



“The crowds at Brighton get out of control” – in an orderly manner.
1903; a gathering big enough for Sheffield.



WALKING IN WALES

Athletics meetings of some sort, mostly connected with fairs, were popular in Wales, as in the rest of Great Britain, for many years before they could be regarded as being under any standardised rules. The first Welsh Championships were held in 1893, but only for the 100 yards and mile. Other events were included over the following years and walking, in 1904, was an early addition. This was a one mile walk, won by Norman Moses of Newport, but Wales had already contributed to British walking – and many other sports – long before.

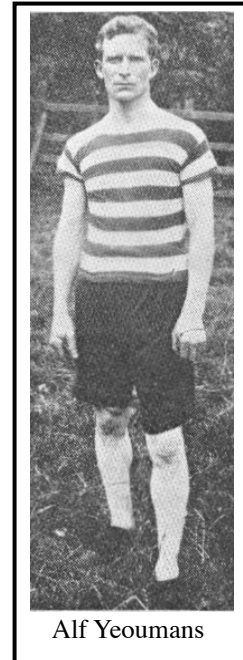
John Graham Chambers from Llanelli was instrumental in setting up the Amateur Athletic Club, a forerunner of the A.A.A., in 1886. He won the 7 miles walk at this meeting in 59:32, the first recognised English Championship. His sporting interests were not confined to walking. He rowed for Cambridge, founded the inter-varsity sports and is credited with structuring sport in Britain.

The next Welsh walker of note was Alf Yeoumans, who was born in Enderby, Leicestershire, and settled in Swansea. He recorded unratified times superior to the existing world record for the half-mile, 1, 2 and 5 miles. His 12:33.2 for 2 miles and 6 minutes for 1 mile would win many races today. In 1906 he won the A.A.A. 2 miles walk and he was in the British team for the 1908 Olympics for the 10 miles walk, then a track event, but was disqualified in the heats.

John Evans, a Metropolitan Policeman, was the next Welshman to be an A.A.A. Champion, winning the 2 miles title in 1921, but the one after that did not arrive for a long time, although Will Ovens had taken third in the 7 miles in 1910 and second in the 2 miles in 1911.

In these early years, looking at walking in Wales is like looking at isolated peaks of success, with everything else invisible. Records

of Welsh Championships exist, but records of other races do not.



Alf Yeoumans

The first of the Welsh Road Walking Championships was the 15 miles in 1929, shortened to 10 miles in 1945 and classed as an open race that year and in 1946.

The dominant forces in the inter-war years were D.J.P. Richards and his club, Newport Harriers. Newport became Welsh Senior Champions in 1929, 1931, 1933-8, 1946-55 and 1957-61. Richards was Welsh Champion twenty-three times, but only twelve of these were for walking. The others were for track running and cross country, starting with the mile in 1923. He was fourth in the English Cross Country Championship in 1925 and won the Midlands title that year. He won his first Welsh walking title, the 15 miles, in 1936 and his last, the 2 and 10 miles, in 1947, at the age of 49. His spread of twenty-four years from his first to his last title is unequalled.

It was already clear that Welsh walkers and walking clubs were from South Wales.

The 1950s was a very successful decade for Welsh walking, especially for juniors. Alone in Britain, the Welsh Secondary Schools included walking in their championships and Welsh success in the A.A.A. Junior Championships followed. In 1951, John Lowther of St. Julian's H.S. and Newport Harriers won the mile in 6:59.2. He was the first British Junior under seven minutes. Gareth Lewis of Aberystwyth University won in 1952 and Gareth Howell of Ferndale G.S., London University and Highgate Harriers in 1953 and 1954; Mike Shannon of Newport H.S. and Newport Harriers won in 1956 and 1957. Newport Harriers' three wins in the decade was unequalled by any other club. Gareth Howell's record of 6:49.8 in 1953, in appalling weather, held until beaten by Shaun Lightman in 1962. Howell also won the R.W.A. Junior 5 miles in 1954 and 1955.

The 1950s also saw a considerable increase in the numbers of clubs and walkers in Wales and this was due to the Licensing Laws. Unlike in England, Welsh public houses could not open on Sundays. Clubs, however, could and this led to a proliferation of clubs, many of them political, though most of the members wanted a quiet drink rather than to change the world. Several walkers were members and they encouraged the clubs to stage walking races, usually of a fairly casual nature. From this basis some clubs, mostly in Cardiff, affiliated to the Welsh R.W.A., staged and promoted Welsh Championships, in which their members competed.

The major open races of this period were organised by Newport Harriers. The *South Wales Argus* 15 miles, which had started before the war, and the Pontypool 7 miles both attracted good support in quality and quantity¹.

Dai Barry, father of Steve, with nine Welsh titles, was the most successful walker of the early 1950s. Mel Pope of Newport Harriers, with thirteen titles up to 1961, and a clean sweep in 1960, was the most successful later.

Times recorded in Welsh road walks in the 1950s and 1960s indicate that course accuracy presented a problem. So did direction. In 1954, the author competed in the Welsh Junior 5 miles from Roath Labour Club in Cardiff. The course was around neighbouring streets and there were no marshals. Gareth Howell, always a fast starter, was soon out of sight. In second place the author disappeared from the others, got lost and wandered around seeking help from passers-by. Eventually he spotted a bridge that would lead to the finish and set off at top speed. As he approached the finish he couldn't help noticing that the officials were facing in the opposite direction. He tapped the nearest one on the shoulder and asked if he had come second. Startled, he leapt into the air. Having regained contact with the road the official asked from whence he had materialised, though not in quite those words. It was shortly confirmed that he had not only finished second in the race, but had missed the world record by only a few seconds. Gareth Howell had removed about three minutes from it. The result stood; the record didn't.

The Pontypool 7 miles used a different course each year. It was never less than seven and a half miles and once nearly nine. One year the competitors all walked into the car park and had to turn round and walk out as there wasn't another exit. On one *Argus* Walk three walkers were walking along three different roads from a common point. Two of them finished up on a building site.

In spite of occasional problems good progress had been made in the 1950s, progress that would not be maintained throughout the next decade, although there were significant achievements.

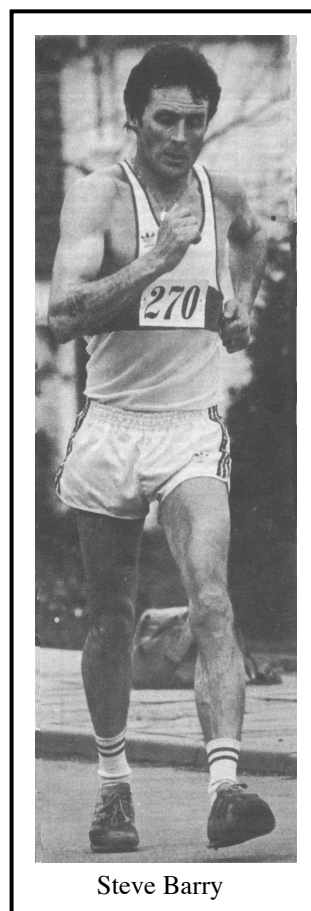
In 1962 Arthur Thomson was selected in the British team for the European Championships, the first Welsh walker to win a British vest since Alf Yeomans, and in 1963 Vaughan Thomas (R.A.F.) followed him. In 1965 the inaugural R.W.A. 20 kilometres was held in Cardiff, but, by the end of the 1960s, there had been a serious decline. With the departure of

John Lowther, Jack Thomas, David Davies and Mike Shannon to India, Woodford Green, Australia and Highgate, Newport Harriers lost their walking section. The decline was sudden. In 1959, when the Welsh A.A.A., Midland Counties and the U.A.U. met at Aldersley Stadium, four of the six walkers were Newport Harriers. Mel Pope and Jack Thomas represented the Welsh A.A.A. while David Davies and Mike Shannon were there for the U.A.U. None of them could prevent Ken Matthews from winning.

Other clubs also lost walkers. Roy Hart and Ken Bobbett ensured quality, Roy made the 1966 Commonwealth Games and Ken had a Great Britain "B" vest, but the numbers had gone. By 1970 no active walkers lived in Wales and the Midlands took over responsibility for walking in Wales. They were very lean times.

The recovery, in the late 1970s, was remarkable. Roath Labour and Splott Conservative Clubs re-formed and Wales' greatest ever walker, Steve Barry, arrived. He had been a good athlete as a schoolboy but had dropped out of athletics. In his first race as a senior he won a 6 miles walk in Cardiff in December, 1977. The following month he won a 10 miles race in Bristol. That summer he won both Welsh track titles and within two years he was A.A.A. Champion. Outstanding talent took him a long way and dedication saw to the rest. Steve called it tunnel vision.

He dominated British walking over the next few years, winning open and championship races with the authority of Divine Right. In 1979 he led Wales to victory over Scotland in Wales' first walking international. In 1981 he broke Ken Matthews' 20k track record by over two minutes with 1:26:22, taking Phil Embleton's hour record en route with 13,987m. He won the Lugano semi-final that year as well, the last British walker to win a Lugano race. In 1973, in the Isle of Man, he broke Paul Nihill's road record at 20k with 1:22:51, breaking every record from 5 miles on in the process. The *Race Walking Record* called it the greatest display of walking ever seen in Britain.



Steve Barry

In 1982 in Brisbane Steve Barry won the Commonwealth 20k, beating the Games record by nearly twelve minutes. Earlier in the year he had finished eleventh in the European 20k. In 1984 he competed in the Los Angeles Olympics, but had to receive pain-killing injections and finished twenty-fourth in the 20k. He is the last British walker to win a major international title.² He was awarded a Meritorious Plaque for services to Welsh Athletics. He was 1982 Welsh Sports Personality of the Year.

The 1980s would surpass the 1950s as Wales' best decade. Both Roath and Splott built strong junior sections. Roath had Nathan Kavanagh, Russell Hutchins and David Pugh and had much success. Splott, a little later in the field, would have more. With Ray Taylor in control they had talented youngsters in Pat Chichester and the

Holloway, Pryor and Taylor brothers. They also had Brian Dowrick and Steve Johnson (Commonwealth Games, 1986) as seniors. Then they got Martin Bell. A team like that was heading for success. In 1988 they won the R.W.A. 30k relay and the R.W.A. 10 miles, a title which had not previously left England, and the R.W.A. Junior 10k as well. Gareth Holloway and Leigh Taylor were in both winning teams and Holloway was in the team that retained the 30k relay the next year. Splott also retained the 10 miles in 1989.

In 1989, Wales won the Randers Trophy in Denmark, beating Denmark, Ireland, North Germany and Austria, and in 1989 defeated Denmark in a two-nations match in Cardiff. During the 1980s Wales won thirty-three British Championships, fifteen individual and four team championships for seniors and nine individual and five team championships for younger age groups. They had, apparently, discovered the secret of permanent success.

The early 1990s reinforced this. Splott lost the R.W.A. 10 miles in 1990, but won the 20k and then regained the 10 miles in 1992. In 1993, Brian Dowrick became the first Welsh walker to win a B.A.F. Championship, with the 50k, and Martin Bell³ won the A.A.A. 10000m. In 1991,

the Welsh Championship and Open 30k was inaugurated and in 1993 Cardiff staged the R.W.A. 20k. Significantly, in 1990, the Welsh R.W.A. was reformed to take charge of walking in Wales, although it owes genuine thanks to the Midlands for their previous management of Welsh affairs.

Would the 1990s surpass the 1980s? Sadly, no. Walkers retired, Roath and Splott ceased to exist and left Penhow Walking Club, founded in 1989, as Wales' only walking Club. Martin Bell's many wins, Scottish records, British vests and two Commonwealth Games meant quality, but the numbers were no longer there.

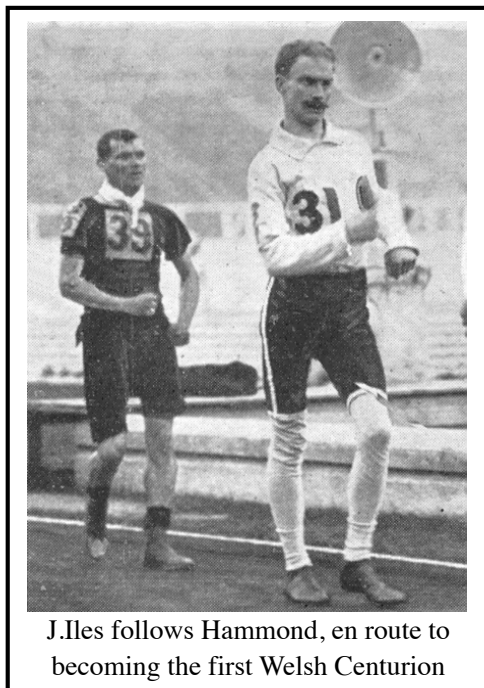
Wales has made a considerable impact on long-distance walking. In the 1952 Bath-London, Jack Morgan of Newport Harriers finished in 22:33:35, nearly 35 minutes ahead of Idris Williams of Coventry Godiva. Both they and everybody else believed Jack to be Wales' first Centurion. However, it has since been discovered that J.Iles, who covered 106 miles, 785 yards at the White City in 1908, was Welsh. He is listed in the results as "unattached" and was a miner from Treharris who had never previously done a walking race. Since then, the Welsh walkers listed below have become Centurions.

1955	Tom Thomas (Newport Harriers)	London to Brighton and back	21:14:57
1959	John Eddershaw (Sheffield)	London to Brighton and back	22:25:55
1974	Dave Ainsworth (Ilford)	Leicester to Skegness	22:44:41
1977	Jack Thomas (Bristol)	Bristol 100	21:57:19
1985	Bob Dobson (Ilford)	Colchester 24 hours	20:58:25
1989	Chris Flint (London Vidarians)	Hendon 100	20:17:28
1989	Colin Bradley (Medway)	Hendon 100	21:15:56

John Eddershaw has completed twelve 100 mile/24 hour races and has represented Great Britain. Chris Flint has completed fifteen and has never failed to finish one. He, too, is an international and has also won two Isle of Man Parish Walks. Mike Lewis and Colin Bradley have both won the Race Walking Association's Cyril Evans Distance Walker of the Year

Trophy and Jack Morgan was captain of the Great Britain team in the Nijmegen marches in 1959.

Wales' greatest long-distance walker has been Bob Dobson. He recorded the fastest 100 with his 17:52:01 at Woodford in 1986, going on to complete 204·330k in the 24 hours.



J.Iles follows Hammond, en route to becoming the first Welsh Centurion

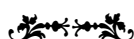
His victory at Colchester in 2001 made him a member of a select group who have won 100s on track and road. He was also, in that race, the oldest walker to win a 100. He has set U.K. records for 10, 11, 12 and 13 hours. His 12 hour record of 118·805k was a world best. He has won the Roubaix 100k, twice completed the Tour de Normandie and ranked in the G.B. top ten at 50k for thirty years. In 2000 he won both the 50 miles and 100k at the Millennium Challenge in Newmarket. He has set one record which will probably never be equalled by completing over a hundred 50k races, and he doesn't count those over five hours. He has won the Essex 50k twenty-one times, set U.K. records for 50k on the road and track and has

competed in the European Championships twice for Great Britain and in the Commonwealth Games for Wales.

At present, Wales still has quality walkers. Mark Williams of Tamworth is one of the leading walkers in Britain, with many good victories and titles to his credit. He is definitely a dominant force in the Midlands. Arthur Thomson has had phenomenal success since his return to competition, setting world age-bests, capturing European and World Veterans' Championships and winning many non-veteran races. Towards the end of the R.W.A's first century, Antonio Cirillo of Swansea Harriers won the Welsh Schools' title several times and, remarkably for a walker, his achievement was recognised by his appointment as Welsh Captain in the Schools' International athletics match against England, Ireland and Scotland, in which he also took part in his event. However, as on previous occasions, the numbers have not been there.

There have been numerous other Welsh contributions to walking over the last century. There are many Welsh officials and Idris Williams, John Eddershaw, Bill Wright and Bob Dobson have all been honoured with the Presidency of the Race Walking Association, while Dave Ainsworth's contribution is not easy to categorise but has been very considerable.

It must be admitted that Welsh fortunes have varied considerably over the years but, in a minority sport in a small nation, talent and, indeed, interest, will fluctuate. If this chapter were being written in the terms of a school report the obvious judgment would be "inconsistent", but one phrase definitely not to be used is "must try harder".



WALKING IN THE ISLE OF MAN

Though it may seem that race walking in the Isle of Man is a relatively recent sporting development, in fact there is a long history of the event, although it was mainly at a local level and thus, while it was publicised on the Island, probably the outside world would be largely unaware of it.

Various sport historians have uncovered long distance and short race walks in the latter part of the 1800s and the early part of the twentieth century though I would suspect that in fact many went unreported in the local press. Challenges and wagers prompted long distance events where it may have been only two competitors and the novelty of such events did lead to good publicity. Short distance races were less likely to be reported, being more mainstream athletics. Dermot O'Toole in his book on the history of the Parish Walk¹ reports a mile walk in the 1868 first all-Island sports and indicates some walking races in the 1870s. Another historian, the late Stuart Slack (who won a Cycling bronze medal in the 1966 Commonwealth Games 120 mile road race at Kingston, Jamaica), had uncovered references to wobbles – races in which the last walker standing won² – and of an indoor 20 mile walk in a hall !

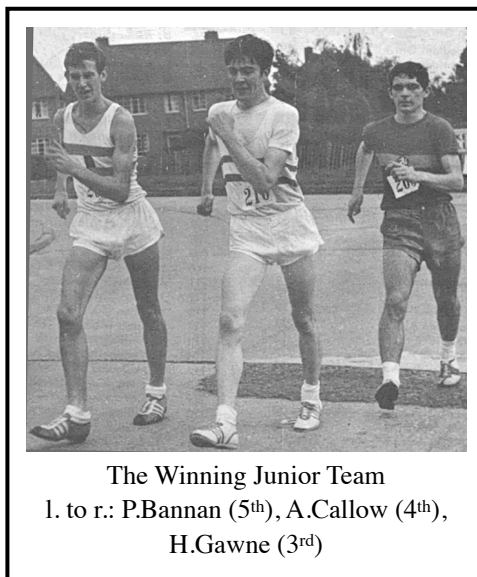
Mention of walking and the Isle of Man should bring to mind the Parish walk, which is at present a major National event where approximately one in fifty of the Island's population takes part including leading figures and politicians. It appears, and again gratitude is due to Dermot O'Toole for his research, that it all started in 1913 as the Parish Walking Match and some ten years later a Parish walk challenge saw a route undertaken that is not dissimilar to the one used at present. There was little local race walking in the Island, perhaps a few races by young farmers or other young people's clubs, until 1960 when things changed dramatically.

It was a pivotal year in which the interest in U.K. race walking was given great publicity by Olympic champion Don Thompson and by the John O'Groats to Land's End walk of Dr. Barbara Moore. This led to the revival of the Parish Walk and the creation of numerous fledgling races. A number of clubs sprang up alongside the established Manx A.C., names such as Malew Beagles, Onchan United Harriers, Laxey Heralds and Boundary Harriers appeared – the latter being the only one to survive, but it in turn merged with Manx A.C. to form Manx Harriers.

Many of the races disappeared quickly but a core of popular ones survived though the growth of traffic has led to it being just one or two now. One event well known off Island was the T.T. Course 37 mile race which attracted many top U.K. distance specialists over to what became a classic event. However, the course was by the early 1990s becoming too dangerous traffic-wise and both the individual and the popular relay events had to be abandoned in the interest of safety.

By 1963 the initial surge of interest had settled down and a local scene was still in place with enthusiasts competing in a small calendar of events. The arrival on the Island of Olympic 50k walker Albert Johnson to his new job changed race walking in the Island dramatically and his legacy lives on to the current day. He started coaching juniors and soon the Boundary Harriers team became competitive on the National scene. 1966 was the year when regular off-Island competition was undertaken by the club and they had success at Northern area level Junior 10 and Senior 20 mile championship team races. In the National Junior 5 mile championship that year they caused quite a stir as Haydn Gawne took individual bronze and the team won the Isle of Man's first ever National team championship in Athletics.

1966 was also greatly significant on the International scene for Manx race walking when three walkers, Haydn Gawne, Phil Bannan and Albert Johnson, were selected to compete in the inaugural Commonwealth Games Walk in Kingston, Jamaica. The Isle of Man can be proud that it has had a race walker at every succeeding games. A total of fourteen Manx race walkers have competed including two women since a ladies' event was introduced in 1990. Only Australia and England have also had a walker at each Commonwealth Games since 1966. The best placing was by Graham Young who was fourth in the 20 miles at Christchurch, New Zealand, while Cal Partington placed sixth over 10 kilometres in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1998 to record the best by a woman. Cal's husband Steve has the remarkable record of competing in six consecutive Games between 1986 and 2006.



The modern era has two distinct trails though they are well integrated on the Island – the Parish Walk and standard distance race walking at junior and senior level both on and off the Isle of Man.

Since the initial ventures to the “mainland” Boundary Harriers and more recently Manx Harriers have regularly raced in championships

and open events and have picked up many individual and team awards. The results have seen selections for British and English teams in International events in various parts of the world. Steve Partington has had numerous selections to his name, including four World Cups, and Cal also competed in the World Team Championship in China in 1995, as well as many other Internationals.



Philip Bannan was the first Manx walker to achieve British International selection when in 1967 he was selected for a 15k junior team to compete in Italy. Notable other names to gain this honour have been Murray Lambden, Joanne Clarke (first female), Martin Young, Carolyn Brown, Steve Taylor, Karen Kneale, Dave Keown, Neil Bates and Derek Harrison, while Roey Crellin walked internationally in long distance events on the continent.

Manx Junior walkers over the last three decades have been prominent at National level and taken many individual titles. Martin Young

won the Junior Boys' title and more recently Lauren Whelan took the Junior Girls' title in two consecutive years. English Schools' titles have been claimed also, the Manx athletes walking for the Merseyside county team.

World records and world champion status have also been achieved by Manx walkers. Derek Harrison broke a number of records at ultra long distance and his 200k track record still stands. Elizabeth Corran in the World Veterans' championship in June 1996 became world champion and record holder at the same time.

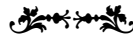
Murray Lambden blazed a trail for Manx Walkers when he broke the British 30k record in 1982 and his fellow Boundary Harrier Irene Corlett also broke a number of British Ladies' senior records at that time.

The interest in the Parish Walk remained through the latter part of the 1960s, though at a lower level to the early 1980s when the number of starters went over 100 again. The standard of performance in this period was high and what appeared to be an unbeatable record was set in

1979 by Derek Harrison who was possibly the best long distance walker in the world at that time. Since then the event has mushroomed. Numbers have increased up to over 1500 entries in 2006 with a remarkable finishers' list of 165 covering the tough 85 mile course, while many take part for the challenge to see how far they can get (which of the seventeen Parish Churches they can get to) and many now train hard or *very* hard to succeed at their goals. This resulted in twenty one Manx walkers finishing the National 100 mile walk for the first time, a truly remarkable feat for a population of about 76,000.

The earlier mentioned Dermot O'Toole has written an excellent book on the Parish Walk called *A Walk Through Time*, published in 2005; it is an up to date history of that great event, covers the broader walking scene also and is well illustrated.

Walking is now an extremely popular pastime at all levels on the Isle of Man and every day one can see large numbers out walking at various levels of performance and they all appear to have a reasonable idea of acceptable technique.



WALKING IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

WHERE ARE WE?

The Channel Islands, a small group of islands situated south of England and close to France, have made their own contribution to the sport of race walking over the years. Guernsey, the second largest, measuring nine miles by five at its biggest point, is currently and has been for the last forty years the only one actively promoting the sport.

GUERNSEY – SARNIA WALKING CLUB

In March, 1965, the first race was promoted by the current walking club, the Sarnia Walking Club, who had broken away from the local athletics club. Incidentally, a question often asked is “Why Sarnia?” The simple answer is that Sarnia is the old Latin name for Guernsey.

Race walks on Guernsey have been continuously staged ever since. Presently, walks for Sarnia’s active walkers, are held year round over distances from one mile to the traditional 19.4 miles Church to Church Walk. The club promotes an annual Summer Championship Series as well as a Handicap Series in the period from September to March. A number of other annual trophies are also walked for. The island has a variety of courses to walk on, some flat, some hilly. The majority of walks nowadays are held on short loops. We have courses of 1500/2500 metres out on the road, whilst a tarmac lap of 633 metres is available in one of our parks. Miles and kilometres are marked out on a coast road route which finishes in St. Peter Port and marked back to fifteen miles away at Pleinmont. This means that any number of distances can be walked on the same course. Traffic nowadays has, as is the case in most places, reduced the number of times we use this course. A popular venue is the Osmond Priaulx Playing Fields athletics track with its 720-seater stadium.

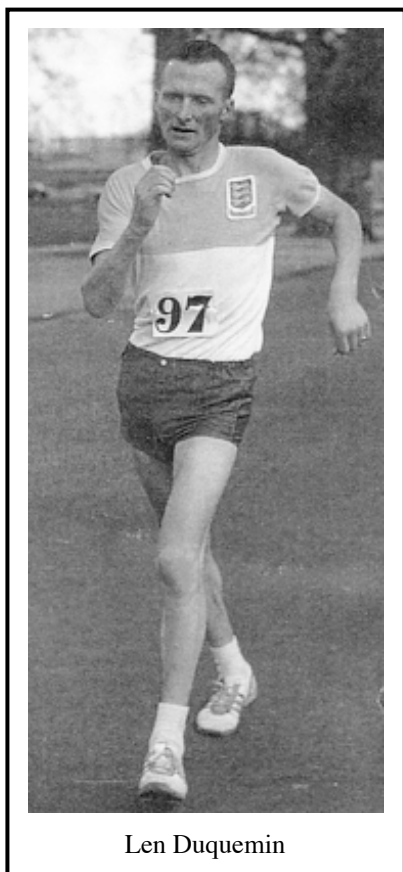
PREDECESSORS, 1837 TO 1946

Well before Sarnia W.C. came along walking was quite popular in the island as delving into the old Guernsey newspapers reveals and it is interesting to reflect on its predecessors.

Probably the earliest recorded walk was back in 1837 when the local *Star* newspaper reported the following on May 1st; “We learn from the Guernsey Gazette of the following walking match...”. Information was found almost a century later in 1936 when a challenge was thrown out to locals to walk between the Parish Churches in under 3 hours and 20 minutes as had been done, it was claimed, by Mr. Eve D. le Page. Later, a St. Peters lady showed that she had a piece of paper containing the 1837 information of two walkers, named as Martel and Robert who had walked around the Churches in 3 hours 38 minutes; the exact route is unknown but times between each church were noted, covering a distance of around seventeen miles. An article in the *Guernsey Press* in 1971 by Guernsey athlete Dave Kreckeler points out that there were “walks”, not “races”, in 1895 and 1902. Results of walks at the schools can be found, up to Inter School level, at the half-mile distance in the 1920s and 1930s.

Back to 1936, and the challenge of a Church to Church Walk was accepted. The event was organized by Guernsey Wanderers Sports and Social Club. This first “race” was won by sixteen-year-old local Basil Bisson just ahead of “experienced walker” H.G.Taylor of Jersey. A total of thirty-eight finished the 19.4 miles course, which included women. The event was held for the next few years, until the German Occupation from 1940 to 1945 meant that the event was unable to go ahead from 1941 to 1944. A few walks were held during this period but only over shorter distances of five and nine

miles. Stan Smith, the Church to Church winner in 1940 and 1945 – either side of the Occupation – won the nine miles in just under 80 minutes.



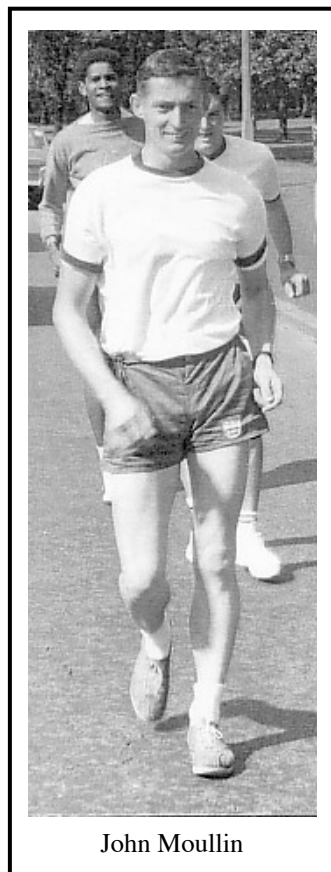
Len Duquemin

Shortly after Guernsey's Liberation in 1945, the Island's Sports Officer from the local Garrison turned his attention to walking with the staging of a fifteen miles walk in the July, over a tough one lap course from the town of St. Peter Port out to the south of the island and along the coast before turning inland and heading back to the Town finish. Winner of the walk was Norman Froome in a time of 2 hours 21 minutes.

GUERNSEY WALKS 1946 TO 1960

In 1946 the Guernsey Amateur Athletic Club was formed (the "I" for "Island" was added later to make it G.I.A.A.C.) and took over

the organization of the Church to Church Walk using the 1945 Victory Cup for the winner after the original "Joybell" trophy went missing. Smith retained his title and even had his picture in the paper. The G.I.A.A.C. continued to hold walks with new events like the two miles won by F.Le Cocq in 18:53. C.Lovering won a six lap one mile walk in 8:32. These short-distance events were held irregularly during this period, and some other clubs also promoted walks, with Sylvans Sports Club putting on a 6¼ mile walk, with the first race winner, John Broughton, recording 56:50. Vale Recreation in 1951 staged a race walk as part of their Festival Week.



John Moullin

GUERNSEY v JERSEY: 1960 TO 1967

Jersey and Guernsey were both fielding race walkers during this short period. They contested

an annual Inter-Island 7 mile event from 1963. Guernsey was winning the Inter-Island match, from 1963 to 1966, helped by future stars Len Duquemin and John Moullin in the early days of their walking careers; Ron Robinson and Denis Le Marinel were the stars of Jersey Athletics Club. Competition at this time was also coming from U.K. walkers. These two Jersey walkers were racing in the Guernsey Church to Church Walk in the early 1960s with Robinson winning three times in a row, each time from Le Marinel. His fastest time was 3:04:15, twenty seconds faster than Le Marinel.

In 1963 the Guernsey Island Amateur Athletic Club affiliated to the Race Walking Association as walking became more popular, with the club holding a small series of races throughout the year. The first G.I.A.A.C. ten miles walk was held in that year and won by future Sarnia President Ossie Naftel in 89:21. Jersey's Robinson won a two miles grass track walk at Cambridge Park in 16:58. John Moullin in 1964 was the first winner of the Sportsman Cup, still used today by the Sarnia Walking Club for their Championship Series.

Guernsey's walkers were soon getting revenge on Jersey's dominance in the Guernsey Church to Church walk, when Len Duquemin came away with two wins and a course record of 4:26:50 for the 27.4 miles Jersey 12 Parishes Walk. This walk was in existence during the 1960s, with Guernsey and Jersey walkers, as well as some from the U.K., taking part. There is a reference to a Grayson Stone winning it in 1928 in just under five hours in one newspaper as well as in the *Race Walking Record*. No references have been found to walks in the intervening years.

At this time regular shorter walks were organized in Jersey over various distances, usually between two miles and ten miles, but they faded away in the late 1960s. Reference has been found showing Robinson and Le Marinel breaking a Round the Island 42.2 miles record when they walked 7 hours 42 minutes for the course. Matches were also held against visiting English teams at Easter time.

By 2006 the only Jersey participation in race walking competitions was at the Hampshire Championships where some youngsters have competed, and a recent 100 miles effort by John Searson in England to become Jersey's second Centurion after Denis Le Marinel walked the distance in under 21 hours in 1962 in England.



Jenny Tostevin

BREAKAWAY

In late 1964 the walkers were thinking of branching out on their own and a request for affiliation to the Race Walking Association was heard in February 1965 and accepted. The President was Wyndham Mann, Vice Presidents Wilson Robin and Mrs. J. H. Robert, Secretary Eddie Robins and Treasurer Graham Mann. The club was twenty-two strong and had a good foundation. Walk trophies were passed on to the new Sarnia Walking Club and along with them the organization of the Church to Church Walk.

Walkers were soon acquainting themselves with regular competition. Some were travelling to England to compete and by 1967, walkers from England were beginning to notice Guernsey. Sarnia walked to gold at the 10 miles "Garner" and in the 1970s claimed a win in the Chippenham to Calne six miles.

HIGHLIGHTS AWAY: JOHN MOULLIN AND LEN DUQUEMIN

In the late 1960s, leading walkers John Moullin and Len Duquemin made the move to leave Guernsey and live in England. They joined Belgrave Harriers with much success and they were both winners of Hampshire titles.

Perhaps the late John Moullin's best walk was in 1971 in the 100 miles at Ewhurst, winning in a world class 16:55:44. Indeed it is reported that he may well have been able to go quicker towards the end if he had known how close he was to the fastest recorded time. He still holds the Guernsey 50 kms record of 4:28:08.

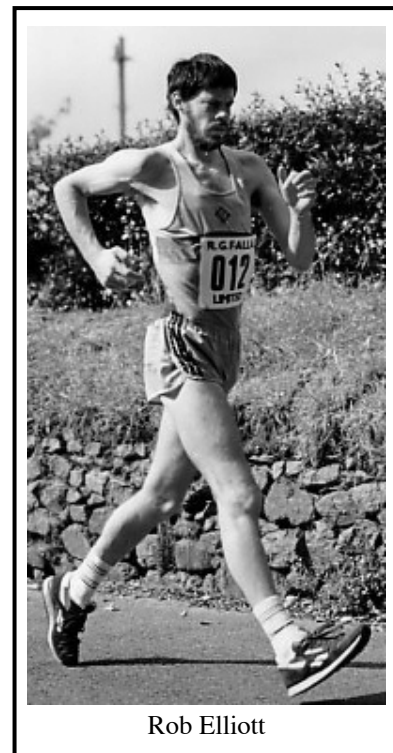
Duquemin's best moment probably came at the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games in 1970 where he finished sixth in the twenty miles event in 2:42:48. Guernsey was also represented by Moullin and current Sarnia President Dave Dorey (tenth in 2:48:07 and sixteenth in 3:03:41). Moullin and Duquemin were joined by Rob Waterman in the next Games in New Zealand, where they finished tenth (2:57:27.2), ninth (2:53:37.4) and eleventh (3:00:14.2) respectively.

THE LOCAL SCENE IN THE 1970s TO 2000s

At this time Andy le Heron was Guernsey's new hope and he joined his fellow Islanders for a short spell with Belgrave Harriers. Locally Mick Elliott was soon challenging for the top spot after starting to race walk in his thirties, bringing his sons Robert and Mark into the sport.

A thriving junior (under seventeen years) section was established at this time by the late

Bob Wright, walkers of all ages taking part in the handicapped walks. Up to thirty walkers could at times come to the start line. Daughter Jayne, a walker, now Race Secretary Jayne Le Noury, has followed Bob's footsteps into the capacity as a walk official. Guernsey's leading woman walker, Jenny Tostevin, (now Elliott) was a product of this era, starting out as a junior walker and going on to create most of the island's walk records. Rob Elliott was one of these walkers; walking from the age of 11 and encouraged by Rob Waterman, he made progress through to the senior ranks. Rob joined the York Postal R.W.C., to have a team to score with in National Championships and improved his times consistently both home and away. He became Guernsey's next Commonwealth walker at the 1982 Games. His last race before flying out to Australia was in the local Church to Church Walk, where he smashed his own course



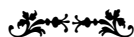
Rob Elliott

record and finished in a time of 2:32:38, more than ten minutes faster than his old record from the year before. In Brisbane he finished in

2:24:28 in tenth position for the 30 kilometres distance and came away with a new Guernsey record, to add to the many he had created prior to the games. During this period Guernsey played host to a number of visiting teams and individuals. From 1977 to 1995 a 10 miles walking match between Sarnia W.C. and the Royal Air Force was held, with other teams from England and Ireland amongst the guests. Races against the Stock Exchange, Newham, Essex, Royal Mail Mount Pleasant and Dawlish and South Devon can also be recalled, leading to some walkers returning again to Guernsey.

CHURCH TO CHURCH TO THE ISLAND OF SARK

Whilst the history of walking in the Channel Islands has followed the path of the longest standing walk, the Church to Church, which now attracts U.K. walkers to take part in this one lap challenge between the Churches, the Sarnia Walking Club has even made its mark on the island of Sark, where for eleven years it held a 5 miles race on the hard “dirt” roads of this car-free island, where you only need to dodge horses and tractors!



VETERANS' WALKING

VETERANS OR MASTERS?

The term *Veteran* was generally adopted during the early development of athletics, including walking, for older athletes. As competition and administration became more organised, *Veteran* remained the standard term in Europe and the U.K. However, the New World adopted *Master*, as did Australia and New Zealand.

There has been prolonged debate at all levels. Many athletes dislike *Master* because of its use in other sports such as golf – and other activities such as chess; on the other hand, there is feeling against *Veteran* because of its implied reference to war and conflict.

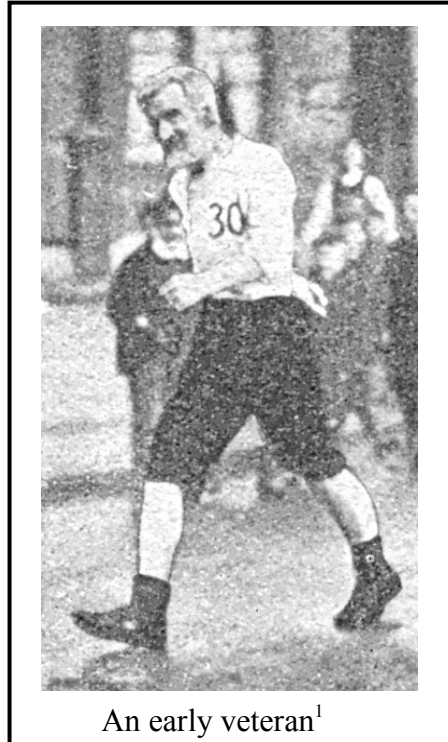
The debate continues. B.V.A.F. became B.M.A.F. in 2002 and we now have Midland Masters and Welsh Masters. Clearly, it would be better for one term to be universally adopted. This will probably eventually happen but it will take many decades to be completed.

The term *Master* is used in this chapter, except where *Veteran* is the accepted term for a particular club or organisation.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The first club formed solely to promote and regulate competition for Masters was the Veterans' Athletic Club, founded in London in 1931. It catered for men aged forty years and over. The first walking event was the one mile championship it promoted in 1937. Following the cessation of its activities for the Second World War, the club elected its first race walking secretary in 1948.

During the late sixties and early seventies, clubs had been formed in the Midlands, the North and Scotland. The Midlands Veterans'



An early veteran¹

A.C. was founded in 1971 at a meeting in Halesowen, which was shortly followed by a more formal meeting in Nuneaton. An open meeting was held in Coventry in 1974 to discuss the formation of a National Veterans' Association and one year later, in Leicester, the first draft constitution of the British Veterans' Athletic Federation was compiled by Jack Fitzgerald, Jack Lawton and George Phipps. A month later, in July, 1975, British Veterans' Athletic Federation was officially formed, initially with the Midlands' and the Southern Counties' clubs. Very shortly afterwards the Northern Irish and Northern clubs joined and it was not long after this that another stalwart, Bill Taylor, became involved.

It is interesting to note that the first National Track and Field Championships appear to have

been held in 1971 in Derby, with events every year following. However, the first *official* B.V.A.F. Championships were held in Leicester in 1975. It seems that the first national championships to include walks were at Copthall in 1973. and M.V.A.C. included walks at Brierley Hill in 1976, while the first international events for walkers took place in Hamburg, Germany, in 1973.

The Women's Veterans' Athletic Club was formed in London in 1973; it included women from thirty-five years upwards and was for some time the only organisation in the country that catered for women veterans. The first national championship for veteran women was a 5000 metres track walk held at Brierley Hill in 1979 and a few months later the first B.V.A.F. 10k road walk for women took place in Coventry.

The first indoor men's and women's events were held at R.A.F. Cosford in a converted aircraft hangar in 1983, with walks included from the beginning.

The first World Masters Track and Field Championships took place in Toronto, Canada, in 1975, the programme including a 5000 metre track walk for men and women and a 25k road walk for men, but with no women's road walk.

Some important changes took place in 2002. Firstly, B.V.A.F. became B.M.A.F. and, secondly, it was decided to divide the existing Road Running and Race Walking Officer's duties into the separate disciplines, so that the first Race Walking Co-ordinator was elected. Walkers are indebted to the road running enthusiasts for helping to develop the walking programme.²

JUDGING MASTERS' WALKS

In the good old days of heel and toe, contact and "instant death"³, there was no need to consider the needs of older walkers who had problems in straightening their legs. Changes and modifications of the I.A.A.F. Rules led to lots of problems – not only for Masters! This

came to a head at the European (Veterans) Track and Field Championships in Potsdam in 2002, where a large number of walkers were disqualified and there was considerable degree of inconsistency in the interpretation of the rules. Since then, judging at the Masters' International events has improved; in the U.K., it is felt that judges do a good job and nearly always come up with satisfactory results. There is, nevertheless, concern, particularly at injury risks in the older age groups when walkers try too hard to straighten the leading leg at first contact with the ground.

The introduction of Category B races⁴, though useful in increasing fields in leagues and some "opens", cannot be adopted for B.M.A.F. events, as no records would be recognised by the W.M.A.⁵ or I.A.A.F. Furthermore, we are aware that a very small minority of walkers alter their style in "B" races compared with their mode of progression in "A" races.

B.M.A.F. has considered a paper entitled *Guidelines for Judges in Masters' Walking Events*. We are aware, of course, that there are many modifications in rules, equipment, weights, heights, etc., for a variety of other events for the older age groups and these proposed *Guidelines* are an attempt to clarify what is, basically, already happening in the U.K. We hope that our judges will accept this as a constructive initiative.

THE CURRENT COMPETITIVE PROGRAMME

World

W.M.A. promotes three meetings every two years. One year there is a full Track and Field meeting, which normally includes a 5000 metres track walk, together with one or two road events, e.g., 10k and 20k.

In the other year, the normal programme is an Indoor Track and Field meeting with a 3000 metre walk; sometimes a 10k road walk is added to the programme. This year also includes a "Non-Stadia" championship, concentrating on

road running, cross country and race walking. The road walking usually includes 10k, plus at least one longer event, such as 20k or 30k.

Europe

The European Veterans' Athletic Association promotes three meetings every two years similar to those of W.M.A but utilising the alternate years. The European "Non-Stadia" programme always includes a men's 30k road walk.

England/G.B.

The B.M.A.F. currently promotes a comprehensive programme of walks. Track championships include 3000, 5000 and 10000 metres, with 5k, 10k, 20k, 30k and at least one other, usually 50k or Long Distance, on the road. Many of B.M.A.F.'s constituent clubs promote a number of walks for their members and often welcome guests.

Many of the promotions mentioned above have developed into quite large events. One of the best aspects of the bigger international meetings is the camaraderie between the walkers and athletes of other disciplines.

THE BRITISH MASTERS' ATHLETIC FEDERATION

B.M.A.F. is responsible for all aspects of Masters' Athletics in the United Kingdom. and the following organisations are fully affiliated members.

V.A.C.	Veterans' A.C.
E.V.A.C.	Eastern Veterans' A.C.
M.M.A.C.	Midlands Masters' A.C.
N.V.A.C.	Northern Veterans' A.C.
S.C.V.A.C.	Southern Counties' Veterans' A.C.
S.W.V.A.C.	South West Veterans' A.C.
I.O.M.V.A.C.	Isle of Man Veterans' A.C.
S.V.H.C.	Scottish Veterans' Harriers Club
N.I.V.A.C.	Northern Ireland Veterans' A.C.
W.M.A.A.	Welsh Masters' A.C.
V.A.A.E.	Veterans' A.A. of England

Most of the member clubs and associations include race walking in their competitive programmes.

Veterans' Athletic Association of England was formed in 1994 to give a cohesive voice to English clubs, similar to that of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland; covering all branches of athletics, it also promotes regular race walking matches with Ireland.

WORLD MASTERS ATHLETICS

W.M.A. is the governing body with responsibility for all aspects of athletics for older athletes. The heading on the first page of its handbook is:

WORLD MASTERS ATHLETICS PROMOTING MASTERS ATHLETICS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN COOPERATION WITH THE I.A.A.F.

The following organisations, based on continents, are the constituent members:

African Masters Athletics
Asia Masters Athletics
European Veterans Athletic Association
North and Central America & the Caribbean
Regional Association of W.M.A.
Oceania Association of Master Athletes
Asociación Sudamericana de Atletos
Veteranos

W.M.A. has recently standardised age groups for men and women, all competition being divided into five-year groups, 35-39, 40-44, etc. In all events an athlete's age on the *first day* of any competition defines his or her age group category. In theory, there is no upper limit!

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

B.M.A.F. has gone from strength to strength despite not receiving any funding from national athletics sources. Its success is due to the dedicated band of helpers and supporters, combined with ever-increasing enthusiasm of

the competitors and it is not uncommon to find members participating in championships in which they have contributed to the administration or organisation and then found an hour or two to officiate at the same promotion.

The recent introduction of M35 (the 35-39 year category for men) has caused some timetable problems in major track and field meetings. Promoters and administrators have worked hard to ensure that this has not reduced attention to the needs of our more senior competitors. This is a problem that needs addressing to some extent in international events also. At the 2007 B.M.A.F. Indoor Championships, the biggest group, by far, of walkers competed in the M70 category.

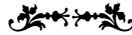
At local level there are some open events that include handicaps. Yacht handicaps seem to be growing increasingly popular. Recruits are

being gained not only from other athletics disciplines but also from other sports.

The future looks promising and there seems no reason why the current programme cannot be sustained and even further extended.

Grass roots athletics, particularly in the case of local clubs, faces major problems. Ever-increasing red tape puts more and more pressure on the club officials, coaches, administrators and volunteers, while local authorities struggle to maintain existing and often inadequate facilities. Will the 2012 Olympic Games catalyse improvements through the “legacy”?

Masters athletics has shown already that it can thrive without major outside support and it is clear that it will continue to flourish and to attract more and more recruits who will enjoy the friendly and healthy competitive sport that it provides.



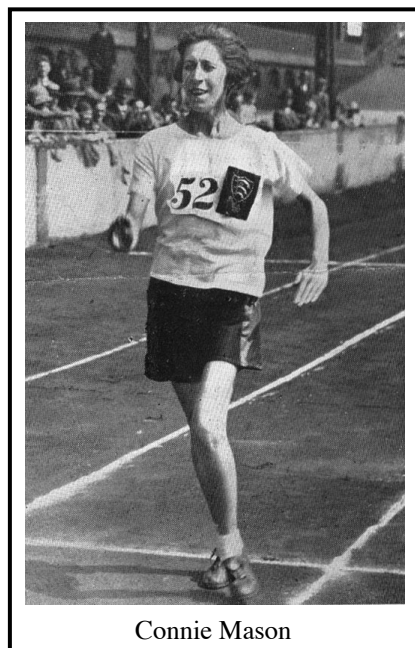
WOMEN'S WALKING

It appears that there were some instances of women appearing in walking events in the nineteenth century, notably Madame Ada Anderson, who hailed from Newport, Monmouthshire and achieved a number of long distance performances between 1877 and 1880. Her greatest feat was to walk 2,700 quarter-miles in 2,700 consecutive quarter-hours between 15th December, 1878, and 13th January, 1879 in Mozart Garden, Brooklyn.

Race walking as we know it began to appear in the programme of womens' athletics during the First World War. A.Garton won a 440 yards walk in a time of 2:17.4 at Stamford Bridge, London on 24th June, 1916, and L.Gittins achieved a time of 4:21.8 for 880 yards at the same venue on 20th May, 1918, and this remained the best recorded time until 30th December, 1920.

With the formation of the Women's Amateur Athletic Association in 1922, women's athletics was established on a more regular basis, and the first national championships were held in 1923, when Edith Trickey won the 880 yards walk in a time of 4:35. She also won the 880 yards run at the same meeting, held at Bromley on 18th August. She repeated the performance of winning both events when the championships were held at Woolwich in the following year, by which time she had become a member of London Olympiades. In 1926, Daisy Crossley of Middlesex Ladies' A.C. won the 1000 metres walk at the Women's World Games¹ in Gothenburg in a time of 5:10. At the W.A.A.A. Championships on 9th July, 1927, at Reading, M.Hegarty of London Olympiades set a world best in winning the 880 yards walk in 3:54. In 1929 the track championship was increased to one mile and Lucy Howes (Middlesex L.A.C.) won it in 8:18. Connie Mason (Middlesex L.A.C.)² won it in the next three years before the event was changed to the metric distance of

1600 metres. 1933 saw the introduction of a national road walking championship with the first race being held over a distance of about 3 miles at Southgate when Jeanne Probekk (Middlesex L.A.C.) was the winner. The distance tended to vary in subsequent years according to the vagaries of the course available at the chosen venue.



Connie Mason

At this time the number of walking races for women was extremely limited and so walkers often competed as middle distance runners on the track or as cross country runners. Apart from the championships, there were few other events. Initially the only clubs catering for women walkers were London Olympiades, Middlesex Ladies, Polytechnic and Manor Park (later Essex Ladies), all located in the London area. The Middlesex Women's Amateur Athletic Association was formed in 1930 and in May, 1931, they held their first road walking championship over a distance of 2 miles at

Perivale; this was won by Connie Mason. They added a one mile walk to their track championships a year later.

Both the Southern and the Midlands Women's A.A.As began to add walks to their championship programmes. The South added a 1 mile track championship in 1933 and the Midlands did likewise in 1934. The Midlands added a road walk in 1934 and the South introduced one in 1937. Activity in the Midlands was then largely based in the Birmingham area with Birchfield Harriers and Small Heath Harriers being the leading clubs. One of the pioneers in the former club was Dorothy Nelson who later adopted the first name of Dorette³ and as Mrs. Nelson Neal had a stand named after her at Alexander Stadium. The winner of the 1935 road title was T. Winter (Westbury Harriers, Bristol) who was also second in the 1934 and 1935 track championships.

Jessie Howes (London Olympiades) was the W.A.A.A. track champion in 1935 and 1936, having been second in the two preceding years, and was the road champion in 1934 and 1935; as Jessie Jones she was later to become a Life Member of the R.W.A. There appears to have been little or no women's walking in the North prior to 1939 and the only event traced was an inter-club race at Fallowfield, Manchester on 27th July, 1935.

Women's walking continued on much the same basis after the War ended in 1945. The Women's Cross Country and Road Walking Association was formed in September, 1950, and took control of road events. The Northern Counties W.A.A.A. introduced a 1 mile into their track championship in 1950 and the first winner was Molly Lightfoot (Leigh Harriers) in a time of 9:17.0. Joyce Heath (Small Heath Harriers) won the W.A.A.A. 1600 metres Championship on four consecutive occasions from 1948 to 1951 and Beryl Randle, formerly Day, repeated the feat between 1952 and 1955⁴. Joyce Heath also won the road title in five consecutive years from 1947 to 1951.

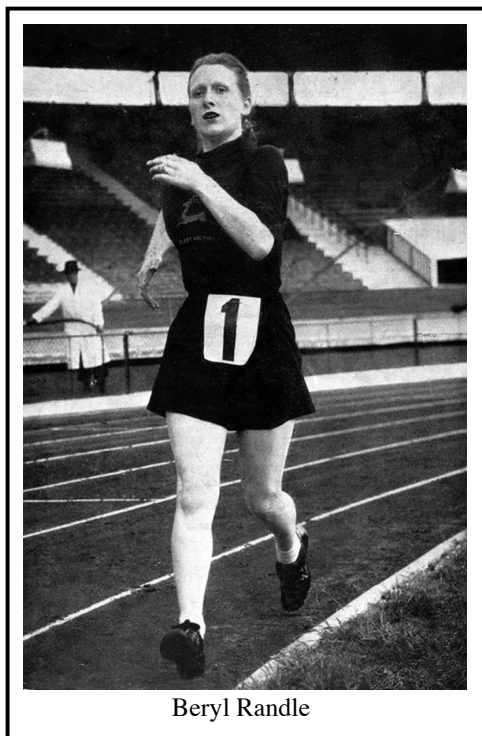


Joyce Heath (No.54)

As soon as the 1960s were reached, the opportunity for international competition appeared. There was an England match against Denmark in Copenhagen on 27th September, 1959, when the Danes were defeated by 15 points to 7 over 5 kilometres on the road, with Betty Franklin winning in 26:30.6 and Beryl Randle second in 26:32. The next international was not until 1964, when there was a triangular match with Sweden and Denmark in Malmö, Sweden, on June 7th, the home country being the winners with England second and Judy Farr (Trowbridge A.C.) finishing third over 5000 metres on the track. Two years later England were the hosts when they beat Denmark over 5.4 kilometres outside Cophall Stadium, Hendon, with Judy Farr finishing first. International competition became more frequent from this date onwards. An international "postal match" was introduced in 1963 and included non-European as well as European countries. The teams competed in races in their own countries and the times recorded in each were

sent to the Danish statisticians Palle Lassen and Egon Rasmussen for collation of the results.

The first of these “virtual races” was held in 1963 with England being the first winners, Judy Farr having the best time of 26:59.



Beryl Randle

Judy Farr had taken her first national title as Judy Woodsford when she won the track title over one and a half miles at White City Stadium, London, in 1960 and her first road title at Bradford in 1962, after being second in the track championship in 1961. By 1962 she had married and she won the W.A.A.A. track title again, and continued to win it until 1969 when the distance was changed to 2500 metres, whereupon she won it again and once more in 1970; she also won the road championship from 1962 to 1965 and again in 1968, 1970, 1975 and 1976.

In the 1970s women's races came to be introduced gradually into established men's events, the Basildon meeting doing so in 1971. The English Schools' Championships held at

Redditch in 1974 included a full programme for girls. The W.A.A.A. Championship distance was increased from 2500 to 3000 metres in 1973, with Betty Jenkins, formerly Franklin, (Birchfield Harriers) being the first winner in 14:59.4, ahead of Marion Fawkes (North Shields Polytechnic) who won the event in the following year in a time of 14:33.6. In 1975 the W.A.A.A. again increased the distance, this time to 5000 metres.



Judy Farr leads Ginny Lovell

Along with the increasing domestic competition, there was generally an annual international match in Europe though often only an England, rather than a Great Britain, squad was sent. In 1974 Marion Fawkes led home the winning team over 5 kilometres at Grand Quevilly, a new housing development south of Rouen. When the Lugano Trophy was held at the same venue a year later a British team consisting of Marion Fawkes, Virginia Lovell and Sylvia Saunders finished second over 5 kilometres. In 1976 the match was held at the Lyngby track in Copenhagen and the English

were only represented in the 5000 metres and not the 10000. The team was second at the shorter distance.

1977 proved to be an eventful year and Ann Sayer (Essex Ladies' A.C.) covered 100 miles in 21:45:52 at Oedenrode in the Netherlands on 4th June. The long established Highgate Harriers One Hour Walks at Parliament Hill track included a senior women's 3000 metres walk for the first time and Carol Tyson (Lakeland A.C.) won it in 13:40, which was just outside the World best. A week later the Lugano Trophy final was held at Milton Keynes and Tyson came second to the Swede Siv Gustavsson, who had recorded the World best over 5 kilometres. In October a women's race was incorporated in the Chippenham to Calne for the first time and Tyson won it. At this time men and women could not start together under W.A.A.A. rules and the women started a short distance in front of the men's field.

In 1978 the W.A.A.A. added a 10000 metres to their championship programme and Carol Tyson won the first race at West London Stadium in a time of 49:59. On 23rd July at Kirkby she repeated her 13:40 clocking, and this was the best recorded in the World for the year. The international match was held at Fredrikstad, Norway, and only an English team was sent and again took part in the 5000 metres, Marion Fawkes coming third and Carol Tyson fourth. In this year two anonymous letters appeared in the *Race Walking Record* criticising the competence of the W.C.C.& R.W.A. in the administration of walking and International selection.

1979 turned out to be the year in which Great Britain reached its peak internationally. Fawkes began by winning the W.A.A.A. title at Hornchurch Stadium, Upminster Bridge, in a new World best time of 48:37.6 and then went on to improve this when she recorded 48:11.4 at Harnosand, Sweden on 8th July. Tyson set new World best times of 23:11.2 for 5000 metres at Östersund, Sweden, on 30th June and 13:25.2 for 3000 metres a week later on the same track. Finally on 30th September at Eschborn near

Frankfurt a women's team competition was added to the programme of the Lugano Trophy final for the first time and Great Britain were the inaugural winners. The scoring members of the team were Marion Fawkes, who came home first in 22:51, Carol Tyson, second in 22:59, and Irene Bateman, sixth in 23:25 over 5 kilometres.



Carol Tyson, Marion Fawkes
and Irene Bateman

Following successful negotiations, it was agreed to transfer responsibility for women's walking from the Women's Cross Country and Road Walking Association to the Race Walking Association with effect from 1st June, 1980. As part of the deal, the R.W.A. added eight new Life Members to the existing twelve; included in the eight were George and Beatrice Carr, Joyce Heath, Jessie Jones, Vera Searle, Mrs C.M.Bickley and Dorette Nelson Neal, the last of whom had continued to further the cause of walking and had acted both as judge and team manager of international teams. Also honoured in this way was Marea Hartman, Honorary Treasurer of the British Amateur Athletic Board. Her employers had provided facilities for

committee meetings at Bowater House, Knightsbridge, for many athletic bodies, including the R.W.A. Southern Area Committee, over many years, and she herself had frequently been the team manager of British women's athletic teams. The first women's national road championships under the new arrangements took place in Battersea Park on 6th December, when the senior race was finally standardised at a distance of 5 kilometres with Carol Tyson being the first winner in a time of 23:05.



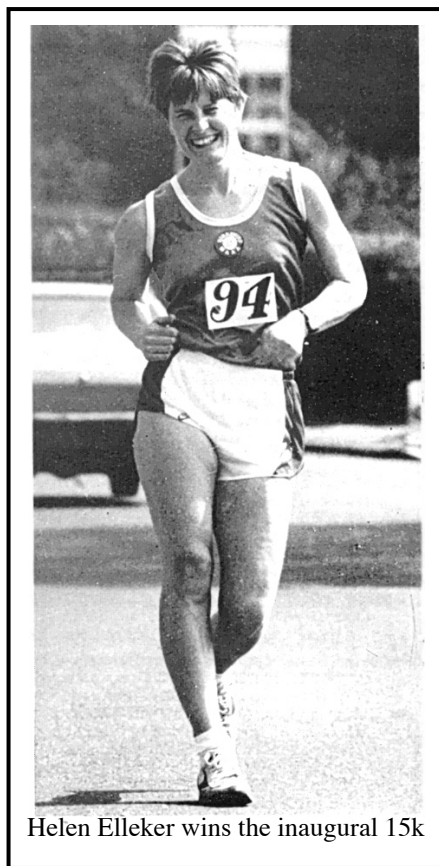
Dame Marea Hartman

From 1981 onwards the women's road championships were held at the same time as the men's at various venues. A 10 kilometres road title was added in this year with Irene Bateman (Havering A.C.) being the first winner at York in a time of 48:47. Walking unofficially in the R.W.A. 50 kilometres Championship at Sleaford in Lincolnshire, Lillian Millen of Lakeland A.C. recorded a world best performance of 5:09:41. In October, the Eschborn Trophy was held just south of Valencia and Britain came fourth.

On 9th April, 1983, Irene Bateman recorded a time of 1:40:45 for 20 kilometres at Basildon, a performance which remained a British best for several years and in the same year Lillian Millen improved on her World best for 50 kilometres when she covered the distance in a

time of 5:01:52, competing unofficially in a men's race at York on 16th April. 1985 saw Ginny Birch set a new national record of 45:56.3 over 10000 metres at Borås in Sweden.

In 1987 a 15 kilometres was added to the R.W.A. Championship programme and Helen Elleker (Sheffield United R.W.C.) was the first winner. Elleker represented Great Britain on several occasions and went on to manage a number of British teams. The Eschborn Trophy was in New York that year with Lisa Langford finishing eighth over 10 kilometres in a time of 45:42, which remained a British best for many years. In the same year she also set new British records of 22:19:04 for 5000 metres and 13:17:56 for 3,000 metres on the way at Derby on 25th May.



Helen Elleker wins the inaugural 15k

Sandra Brown (Surrey W.C.) broke the 20 hour barrier for the first time when covering 100 miles on the road at Colindale in 1989 to win

the R.W.A. Long Distance Championship in a time of 19:56:17 with the women's event held simultaneously with the men's race. Betty Sworowski (Sheffield United R.W.C.) set new national records in the same year of 12:59:1 for 3000 metres, 22:02:06 for 5000 and 46:36:1 for 10000 metres.

In 1990 Sandra Brown improved on her 100 mile time when winning the R.W.A. Long Distance Championship again at Hungarton, Leicestershire, in 18:56:46, while in a track race at Etrechy, France, she recorded 11:17:42 at 100 kilometres and 19:38:53 at 100 miles and covered 193,306 metres in the full 24 hours.

Further improvements were made to the British records, Betty Sworowski clocking 12:49:16 for 3000 metres at Wrexham on 28th July and Julie Drake 45:53:9 for 10000 metres at Fana in Norway in May.

Sandra Brown set new figures of 4:50:51 for 50 kilometres on the road when winning the R.W.A. title at Basildon on 1th June, 1991 and she retained her 100 mile title at Hungarton with a further improvement in her best time with 18:50:29.

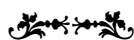
A product of the successful Sheffield squad coached by Jeff Ford, Vicky Lupton set a new 10 kilometres best of 45:28 at Livorno in Italy on 10th July, 1992 and the following year saw the R.W.A. 15 kilometres increased to 10 miles and the standard distance of 20 kilometres was introduced for women.

As we move further into the 1990s improvements in records and performances become rarer as numbers of competitors fall and the number of countries taking part internationally continues to increase, but Vicky Lupton set a new national record of 45:18:8 for 10000 metres when she won the A.A.A. title at Watford on 2nd September, 1995.

The following year proved to be the last in which six or more competitors finished in this race and the event has been held in only two years since. In 1998, the race attracted an entry of only one when it was held in conjunction with the Essex title at Basildon, this being Pam Phillips (Ilford A.C.). Thus, not for the first time, a race was lost for lack of support.

In 1997 Sandra Brown covered 194,758 metres (121 miles and 30 yards) to win the Ware 24 Hour Track race and in 1999 recorded 19:00:47 in a 100 mile track event in Auckland, New Zealand. In 1999 Vicky Lupton finally removed Irene Bateman's 20 kilometres best from the lists when she recorded 1:37:44 at Leamington Spa on 27th June.

In 1998 Lisa Kehler, formerly Langford, under which name she had won the bronze medal in the first Commonwealth Games women's walk at Auckland, New Zealand, in 1990, created a new British record of 22:01:53 when finishing second to the Irish walker Gillian O'Sullivan in the A.A.A. 5000 Metres and then set a new road best of 45:03 to win another bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur. In 2000 she improved on the 20 kilometres best with a time of 1:33:57 when competing in the European Cup at Eisenhüttenstadt, Germany. Later in the year she set a new national record time of 45:09:37 when winning the A.A.A. 10000 metres Championship. 2002 saw her winning her third Commonwealth Games medal when coming second in Manchester, this time over 20 kilometres in a time of 1:36:45. She went on to improve on her British 5000 metre record with a winning performance of 21:42:51 in the A.A.A. Championship the same year in Birmingham. Her long career continued and she welcomed the Association's second century by finishing fourth in New Delhi in which Johanna Jackson finally broke the Australian grip on the women's Commonwealth title.



SCHOOLS' WALKING

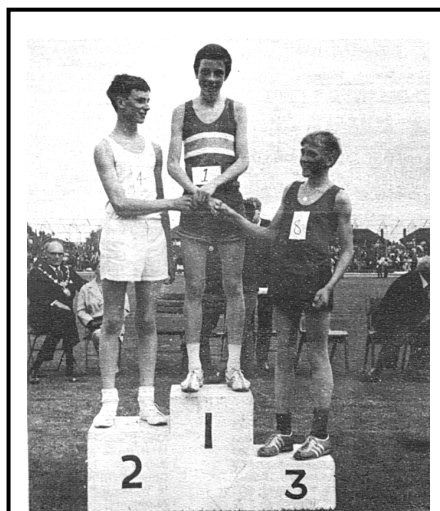
Looking back over record books for the past one hundred years there appears to be very little evidence of organised competitive walking in schools during the formative years of the R.W.A.

History books relating to the introduction of games and physical education into schools during the first decades of the twentieth century make no reference to any form of walking as a worthwhile exercise. Indeed, the inclusion of any form of sporting activity in schools was either based upon the boys' Public Schools' system of organised team games or the elementary school system of drill-type physical training exercises.

Despite continued Government concern over the general fitness level of the nation, starting with the Boer War where, in 1899 in Manchester, out of 11,000 volunteers for enlistment into the army, 8,000 were rejected outright and only 1,200 were accepted as fit in all respects,¹ very little mention has been made of the obvious benefit that can be attained by regular walking activities.

Even after the Second World War ended in 1945 there is hardly a mention of any form of competitive walking for young people, although some Youth (under 17 years) and Junior (under 19 years) inter-county fixtures included one-mile walking track races during the late 1950s, which forced County Associations to include competition for these ages in their county championships. Sadly, lack of enthusiasm from older officials who, themselves, due to the war years had no background or experience of the benefits of walking, resulted in the slow decline of races for the younger generation. This was despite some notable successes being recorded by the older generation at European and Olympic Games in the 1960s and 1970s. It was

partly the successes being recorded by these fine senior athletes that prompted the E.S.A.A. to introduce race walking events into their competitive structure in 1968, following a "demonstration walk" in 1967.



The "Demonstration" winners:
1 O.Caviglioli; 2 B.Swinford;
3 K.Edwards

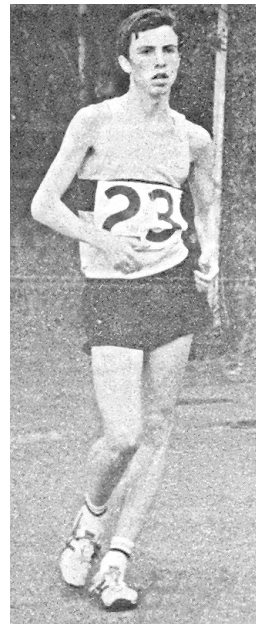
The first Championship events, at Portsmouth, were for boys only and catered for Juniors (under 15), Intermediates (15-17) and Seniors (17-20) with road races then finishing on the track during the Track and Field Championships.

This pattern continued with varied success. The large range of ability of the walkers made it very difficult to timetable within the hectic English Schools' overall Championship programme especially when new events apart from walks were being introduced into the latter, and there was a growing desire to introduce three extra walking championships for girls.

Two of the Inaugural Champions



Senior S.J.Coleman Warwickshire



Junior O.Cavaglioli Essex (again)



More support: the Junior Boys in 1988

In 1974, three girls' races for similar age groups to those for the boys were introduced and the first schools' inter-counties walking road race competition was staged at Redditch with a total of 211 entries. The events proved quite popular among those counties where there were active walking clubs but, although appearing to cater for a great number of competitors, the general standard of performance after the first few placings was often only mediocre with competitors finishing in the lower placings sometimes being considered to be unworthy of an E.S.A.A. national championship. In some archive results, there are examples of there being five minute gaps between competitors at the finish. This, together with difficulties being faced by ever-increasing volumes of traffic and the policing costs and restrictions, was making walking events unpopular among many educationists and local authorities. In an attempt to rectify this problem but still cater for individuals with ability and potential, and after considerable discussion and soul-searching, the team element was discontinued in 1988. Road races continued for a further two years until the 1990 championships in Aldershot. The number of competitors had fallen considerably (109 in 1988), but at least those who competed began to show evidence of coaching and training for the event.

In 1991 the E.S.A.A. decided to incorporate their Walking Championships into the very successful Combined Events Championships track programme at Don Valley Stadium, Sheffield, with six races, varying from 3k to 5k, for children of secondary schools age. An individual entry fee for each competitor ensured that only those with some ability were entered and the level of performance has subsequently improved steadily up to the present time. The E.S.A.A. were then instrumental in getting the Schools' International Athletic Board to include walking events in the annual Schools' Track and Field International Match. The first of these took place at the Morton Stadium, Dublin on 19th July, 1997. In an attempt to further walking for all abilities, the E.S.A.A. incorporated race

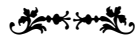
walking standards into their very successful Award Scheme. In 2001 walking was included in the new School's Miniathlon competition as one of the four optional activities that could be chosen by teachers who were using this scheme for Year 6 and Year 7 (under 13 pupils) during curriculum time.

In 2000 the Race Walking Association, and the E.S.A.A. worked in splendid harmony to establish a Development Scheme aimed at helping the development of walking in schools and clubs for young people. After six years of progress, there are now eleven areas of England into which every county is linked and where there are links between representatives from schools and clubs. In 2006 this scheme witnessed over fifty competitions or coaching days in all parts of the country whilst three Schools' Inter County Developmental competitions were staged during June of that year.

The most recent initiative from the joint R.W.A. and E.S.A.A. group has been the introduction of Preliminary Teaching Award for Race Walking Certificate Courses. The first course was organised at the Sheffield Indoor Arena in 2005. The aim of the award is to introduce teachers, parents, coaches and administrators to the basic requirements for coaching, judging and organising race walking. It is hoped that, in turn, successful candidates will feel confident enough to arrange events in their own areas and so promote the sport to a wider audience. At the time of writing it is too early to measure the success of this idea, but it is encouraging to note that already at least two Universities (De Montfort, Bedford, and Leeds Metropolitan) have agreed to incorporate the Award into their P.E. Teacher Training Courses. By using this Award in schools, clubs, local authorities and teacher training establishments, it is hoped that the sport of race walking will grow even more during the twenty-first century and that the writer of an equivalent chapter at the end of the next hundred years will have news of even greater participation at all levels of competition.^{2,3}



Earlier Days: Gentlemen Amateurs in the Making?
The King's College School Championships, 1870



LASTING THE DISTANCE THE CENTURIIONS

Since the creation of the R.W.A., long distance walking has been central to the reasons for its existence and to its grass roots support. The influential and energetic personalities in race walking in the early twentieth century, who were instrumental in the foundation of the R.W.A. in 1907, were men passionate about what has come to be called ultra-distance athletics. Four years later, these same men were again instrumental in the formation of the Brotherhood of Centurions.

“A Centurion is one who, as an amateur, has walked in competition in Great Britain 100 miles within 24 hours.” This definition defines the members of a very special Brotherhood of men and women that was founded in 1911. Each member has a unique number with John Fowler Dixon being given the number 1 in recognition of his having walked a hundred miles in a race at Lillie Bridge London in 1877. In the R.W.A.’s first century there were eighty two races qualifying for Centurion recognition and the 2006 event in the Isle of Man saw number 1054 awarded to the Dutchman Hedwig Vandeputte.¹

The members come from many countries around the world. The numerous Dutch members of the Centurions 1911 have their own active organisation, and each year the English and Dutch Centurions compete for a special trophy. Some other countries organise Centurion races and make their own awards. The other five Centurion organisations worldwide are: the Continental Centurions (based in The Netherlands,) and those of Australia, New Zealand, the U.S.A. and Malaysia.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw many long-distance performances by great “pedestrians”. The most celebrated was Captain

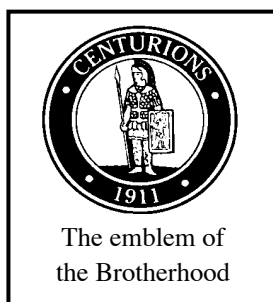
Barclay who walked 1000 miles in 1000 hours for a wager of 1000 guineas in 1809 on Newmarket Heath. Other venues included Blackheath, the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington and of course the London to Brighton Road. Most of these early pedestrians were professional sportsmen (and a few women) who walked for payment or wagers, but with the rise of amateur sport in the mid-nineteenth century there came a growing interest in long-distance walking as an amateur challenge.

On the famous London to Brighton road, around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, walking and running events were organised by the Surrey Walking Club, Stock Exchange Athletic Club, Polytechnic Harriers, Hairdressers’ Athletic Club, and the *Evening News*. Following the Stock Exchange A.C. race in May 1903, according to one commentator, “A craze for walking to Brighton set in.” Following prior publicity of the S.E.A.C. race, it was reported that thirty thousand spectators were in the Westminster Bridge area, and large numbers of mounted and foot police were needed to clear a path through the crowds at Westminster and Brighton.

In 1902, Surrey Walking Club organised the first of twenty time trials over the double journey of a hundred and four miles, the last held in 1967. Indeed it was as a result of Surrey Walking Club, led by the great Ernest Neville, awarding a gold medal to anyone completing the London to Brighton and back that the idea for a Brotherhood of Centurions arose.

The fascination with long-distance walking contributed directly to the formation of the R.W.A. It was in part the same small group of walkers – including Hammond, Neville, and Barnes Moss – who in 1907 founded the Southern Counties R.W.A., and in 1911 were

among the founding Centurions. In the 1920s, on behalf of the R.W.A., Ernest Neville was at the forefront of efforts to introduce a long distance race – initially but without success of 100k, then, successfully of 50km – into the Olympic programme.



Ernest Neville (1882-1972) took to walking at a youthful age. At fourteen years of age, inspired by seeing Teddy Knott (a founder member of Surrey Walking Club) walking to Brighton, Neville did the walk himself. At eighteen, he first made the double journey, with a bath, meal and rest in Brighton. Joining Surrey Walking Club in 1901, Neville devoted the rest of his life and considerable energy and resources to race walking and athletics, as competitor, race promoter, judge, timekeeper, rule writer, a man of national and international stature. Instrumental in the foundation of the R.W.A. in 1907, he played a large part in its development, and was R.W.A. President in 1920-22. In 1911, he was a founder member of the Centurions, becoming Centurion number 7 for his performance in the 1903 London to Brighton and back. Ernest was a great committee man, and when it came to drafting a resolution or constitution, he was the man for the job. The definition of walking used in Britain for many years was his work. Thanks to the efforts of Ernest and others, the first Olympic 50k was held in Los Angeles in 1932. Anticipating this event, the R.W.A. inaugurated a 50k championship, with the Neville Cup for the winner. At the 1936 Berlin Games, he was Chief Walking Judge. Many world and national records were set in races which he organised, from Tommy Hammond's 24 hour records in 1908, to the records from 13 to 24 hours set by

Hew Neilson in 1960. A formidable man, whose voice when commentating did not need amplification, he was also a warm, approachable character, who relished the social side of long distance walking.

Between 1877, when Fowler Dixon walked 100 miles at Lillie Bridge track, Fulham, and 2009 when almost eighty walkers participated at the Newmarket event, eighty-five Centurion qualifying events have been held in the U.K. Organising a long distance race is no small matter. Enormous gratitude is owed by walkers to those many clubs which, over the years, have organised qualifying races, and to all those officials, timekeepers, judges, lap recorders, feeding station helpers, and supporters in many other capacities, who devote their weekend to making such events possible. It takes a very special order of commitment and love of the sport to officiate in all winds and weathers for many hours, then perhaps to grab a few hours sleep before returning yet again for a further dose. Yet without such devotion from such a wide range of R.W.A. officials and volunteers none of the Centurion events would have been possible. We all owe these unsung and sometimes hardly seen heroes a great debt.

Centurion qualifying events have generally been held annually (except during the two world wars when competitions were suspended), and have come to incorporate the R.W.A. long distance championship. In the 1980s, championships were occasionally held also at 100kms. The great majority of Centurion qualifying events have been road races, with just sixteen of the eighty-five events held to date taking place entirely on the track. This has helped expand the fields and enabled other events to be held alongside the 100 mile challenge. Thus Kings Lynn in 2005 saw a "twilight twenty" miles race and the Isle of Man in 2006 saw over a hundred walking a "starlight twenty" for a range of walkers who thought it marvellous that they could experience and be part of the Centurion classic. This is surely one way we can open our sport to a much wider audience. In recent years, hybrid events which combine some road walking with a track circuit

have become popular as they offer the excellent facilities often provided by modern sports centres.

From the earliest events, 24 hours track races took their place alongside the epic road journeys which survived until road traffic pressures of the 1970s caused walkers to seek alternative courses, first around quiet rural lanes and then around safer parks and other “closed” spaces. One attraction of the track has always been the opportunity it presents to achieve super-fast times under conditions which allow for close judging and support. The roads too, however, have inspired some outstanding times and performances. Many walkers prefer the psychological incentive of a journey with a far destination, preferably by the seaside, to the tedium of circling a track around four hundred times.

From the early years of Centurion qualifying events, some excellent times were achieved. Tommy Hammond's 1907 time of 18:13:37 was for the full 104 miles Brighton double journey. For some years, the 100 miles times on the Brighton road were not always recorded. By the time Tommy Richardson (holder of the world 50 mile track record) was awarded Centurion number 100 in 1936 (in a time of 17:35:04) 100 mile times were a feature of all such races. The Brighton double journey was organised by Surrey Walking Club no less than seventeen times between 1902 and 1967. Other point-to-point events took place on the Bath to London Road (1952), Birmingham to London (1953), Blackpool to Manchester and back (1954), and Sheffield to Harrogate and back (1956) – these four races organised uniquely among 100 mile/24 hour events by the R.W.A. itself with sponsorship from the *Sunday Dispatch* newspaper. Between 1958 and 1978, Leicester Walking Club organised eleven times the Leicester to Skegness race. In 1998, the chance to complete a beautiful if arduous journey was presented by the Isle of Man 85 miles Parish walk (during which the walkers touch the doors of all the parish churches on the island) to which was added 15 miles along Douglas promenade.

Events on shorter road courses, during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, included the Chigwell, Bristol, Ewhurst (six times), and Leicester Congerstone and Hungarton courses (a total of eight events). More recent events in public parks, sports grounds, and private spaces have included the Hendon, Battersea Park, Colchester, Newmarket, King's Lynn and Douglas events. The 1993 Battersea Park event, organised by Surrey Walking Club and the Metropolitan Police W.C., was the only British event to date to host a 200 kms qualifying race for the Paris-Colmar ultra walking classic. A variety of tracks has provided venues for the 100 miles race, from Lillie Bridge in 1877 onwards. They include the tracks at White City and Woodford Green, London, Walton and Motspur Park, Surrey, and tracks in Bradford, Brighton, Leicester, Colchester, Ware and Blackpool. Among promoting clubs, the London Vidarians, small in membership but big in enthusiasm for long distance walking, has organised a number of recent events. Behind many successful promotions lie dedicated and energetic individuals; they know who they are, and we thank them all! As the cost and complexity of organising such races has increased, organising clubs have increasingly worked together to share costs and responsibilities and have sometimes been quite entrepreneurial and successful at raising local sponsorship.

At the White City track, 24 hour races in 1908 and 1909 produced thirty-two Centurions. Perhaps the most notable track event took place at Walton in 1960 where Hew Neilson (C145)² set a new world record for 24 hours of 133 miles 21 yards, a performance only beaten in the 1980s by the Italian Claudio Sterpin. Hew went on to finish twenty Centurion events, a record only surpassed by Sandra Brown in 2006. Gerrit de Jong (C456) and Fred Baker (C266) both achieved nineteen completions of 100 miles, and in 2006 Fred completed over 70 miles 50 years after his qualifying performance in the 1956 Sheffield to Harrogate and back.

Colin Young achieved his Centurion status (C317) at Walton, completing over 131 miles in 24 hours. He became the first British walker to

complete the Paris-Strasbourg (now Paris-Colmar) “Olympics of long distance walking” coming an excellent third and fifth in his two participations. Since then only Richard Brown, Sandra Brown and Jill Green have completed this extraordinary event (540km for the men and 340km for the women with only two short breaks). Richard has won a record ten Centurion events (once jointly with Sandra) with Dave Boxall recording six wins.

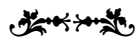
English and Dutch Centurions, including Colin Young, John Hedgethorpe, John Eddershaw, Dave Boxall, Paddy Dowling, Richard and Sandra Brown, Jill Green, Jan Vos, Ad Leermakers and Marleen Radder-Willems have achieved victories in Continental 24 hours and 200k events and have been ambassadors for the sport in many countries and continents. Sandra became the first person to achieve all six worldwide Centurion awards, a feat only equalled so far by Jill Green, and has completed a record 21 English Centurion 100 miles events, 11 of these in under 20 hours, winning three of them outright (once jointly with Richard).

Some other notable achievements include the completion of ten Centurion events between the ages of 65 and 75 by Eddie McNeir (C375) after whom a trophy is named for the first man over 65 to complete 100 miles; the winning of this trophy five times in a row (the latest being 2006) by Jap Visser (C944); the first Centurion qualification by a women, Ann Sayer M.B.E., in 1977; the women's track world record of 19:00:47 set by Sandra Brown in New Zealand in 1999; and the setting of the fastest Centurion qualifying time by John Moullin in 16:55:44 at Ewhurst in 1971.

Notable Olympians who have been Centurions include Tommy Hammond (C10)³ who qualified on the London to Brighton and back in 1907, Frank O'Reilly (C276) (racing for Ireland)⁴ who qualified in 1958, also on the Leicester to Skegness, and the great Don Thompson (C631), gold medallist at 50K in the 1960 Rome Olympics, who qualified in 1978 and who was the oldest athlete to be awarded a G.B. vest (for the international against France at Bazancourt in 1992).

The Centurions have always been open to walkers from all backgrounds and countries and have inspired many with the vision that “*long distance walking is not only the most natural and beneficial of exercises but also leads to the health and happiness of mankind*” (Centurion Handbook). It is perhaps fitting that while number 1 (John Fowler Dixon) provided a link to the nineteenth century pedestrians, number 100 (Tommy Richardson) was a true heel-and-toe stylist, and number 1,000 (Wendy Watson) was an experienced cross country walker. The future of race walking in this and no doubt other countries rests on this spirit of inclusiveness; it will require us all to tap the enthusiasm of thousands of “ordinary” walkers who power walk or who walk for pleasure, as well as aspiring athletes with natural flexibility and style. The Centurions embody this inclusive spirit. Perhaps that is why more walkers take part in 100 mile events than in many shorter distance race walking championships...despite or maybe because of the challenge this represents.

*“Now the matchless deed’s determined,
dared, achieved and done.”⁵*



COACHING

Ever since the early days of athletics and pedestrianism coaches have been an integral part of an athlete's development. Even so they performed slightly different rôles 200 or more years ago. In those days a coach was not only a technical adviser but was also an agent, financier and confidant. Very often these coaches carried out their duties without any technical education at all, coming into coaching at the end of their own athletic careers and wishing to put something back into the sport. This practice has continued to the present day, although the question of insurance and child protection has restricted unlicensed coaches from being involved to the same extent as their forefathers.

It was not until after the Second World War that coaching in Britain was put on a more "professional" basis, and the British Amateur Athletic Board (B.A.A.B.) decided to appoint their first fully paid coach prior to the 1948 London Olympics and this turned out to be Geoff Dyson. During the next 25 years the B.A.A.B. increased the number of its paid coaches in order to give complete coverage of the whole of the U.K.

In the seventies a Director of Coaching was appointed and answerable to him were eight National Coaches, who in addition to their Regional duties were each responsible for a particular group of events. All were salaried staff of the B.A.A.B. Below this band of coaches came the "amateur" group. These were the National Event Coaches, twenty-two in total, being responsible for each discipline ranging from the sprints to the marathon as well as the walks, throws and jumps.

This continued until 1984, when it was decided to appoint National Junior Event Coaches to work alongside their senior counterparts in order to cover the whole spectrum of athletics. This system continued

successfully until 1991 when the B.A.A.B. ceased to function and the British Athletic Federation (B.A.F.) was born. Since the demise of the B.A.F. the Coaching system has been at a crossroads.

The old system was demolished by U.K. Athletics and four professional Group Leaders were appointed responsible for groups of events. Under them came the "Potential" Coaches whose main remit was to identify potential "medallists", organise training weekends and lead them towards major competitions. In 2006 the old system was revisited when, under a group of professional Coaches, U.K.A. Event Coaches were appointed with responsibility for each event.

Race Walking has always run along similar lines to Track and Field. Prior to the Second World War there were a number of individuals, some of whom came from a professional background, who passed on useful hints to their athletes. One such person was Bob Dunmore of Leicester, who had previously been the trainer of Arsenal Football Club. Although his main focus of attention was centred on Tebbs Lloyd Johnson in his attempt at the 1948 London Olympics, he was always on hand to give help to other members of the Leicester Walking Club. In the early 1950s, coming to the end of their careers, at international level at least, two Olympians, Harold Whitlock and Tebbs Lloyd Johnson, turned their thoughts towards coaching. Despite being fierce opponents when out on the road they had similar ideas when it came to coaching.

Although not officially appointed by the B.A.A.B., Harold Whitlock assumed the position of leading Coach and followed this up by writing a book entitled *Race Walking* in 1957. Many of the topics raised were ideas that Lloyd Johnson had introduced earlier. This was one of the first books of its kind, in modern times, to

cover exclusively Race Walking and in particular correct technique and how to walk faster without the fear of being disqualified.

Even so, over twenty years earlier *Walking for Road & Track* was first published in 1934 with a second edition in 1947. This was written by George Cummings, a champion walker himself. He held records ranging from 1 mile in 6:22 to 420 miles from London to Edinburgh in 82 hours 5 minutes put up in 1921. Many of the pieces of advice on technique and the definition are as true today as they were then.¹

After Harold Whitlock had relinquished the position of leading Coach, Lloyd Johnson took over and started to introduce a new concept of squad training. When he moved back to live in the Midlands, Lloyd Johnson continued with these same ideas but on a regional basis, while Alf Cotton covered the national scene. In the early part of the 1960s Lloyd Johnson realised that there was a need for more coaches to cover race walking and in particular receive recognition for their qualifications. He therefore started to organise coaching weekends at Lilleshall where the majority of those attending were still racing regularly. Apart from a training weekend, the candidates began to learn more and more about technique, coaching and the rules. Helping to organise these weekends was Idris Williams of Coventry. After two or three weekends had been held, it was thought that it was now time for the regulars to be tested in order to become qualified. Helping to do this was Bill Marlow, the B.A.A.B. National Coach for the Midlands.

After the original list had qualified others were eventually added and these were classed as Club Coaches. However, Bill Marlow was of the opinion that the standard was so high that a number of these recently qualified Coaches should be encouraged to attain the Senior Coach status. This was done and the original twelve Senior Race Walking Coaches had qualified. In fact during this period coaching was high on the agenda when national and regional squads were formed, not only to improve the standard of competition but also to recognise the

importance of Coaching. The R.W.A. appointed a Coaching Secretary to help administer the A.A.A.'s scheme and there were ten qualified coaches in the Midlands alone in 1965. In the Midlands Idris Williams took over from Lloyd Johnson when the latter assumed national responsibility.

In 1969 a schoolteacher from Liverpool, Julian Hopkins, came into coaching. He was appointed the first National Event Coach for Race Walking in 1974. In 1976 he wrote a book, *Race Walking*, and he continued as the National Coach until 1984. If coaching had been "high on the agenda" in the sixties then it certainly was very much "high profile" during this period. Seldom did a month go by without some heated discussion about selections, training or some new suggestion for improved performances. The National Coach at this time was solely responsible for the selection of the International Teams that were very many during this period. Hopkins very quickly realised that it was important that the Areas were all covered. He himself was responsible in the North while Charlie Fogg looked after the South and Bob Sturdy the Midlands. In 1976 Peter Markham took over in the Midlands and a network of Area Coaches began to work together.

In 1984 it was decided to appoint Junior Event Coaches to work alongside their Senior counterparts but, disillusioned with the current judging system, Julian Hopkins resigned. Peter Markham was appointed Senior Event Coach, while still maintaining Midland responsibilities, and Amos Seddon took over as the Junior Coach. This arrangement continued for about four years until Seddon resigned and Ray Hall replaced him in the Junior position. At this time Peter Markham wrote another book, *Race Walking*, which was published in 1989.

In 1990 Peter Markham and Ray Hall had their appointments revised as they became Technical Advisers. This arrangement lasted for two years when Ray Hall took over as Senior Coach and Jeff Ford was appointed Junior Event Coach. Peter Markham then spent the next two years helping the I.A.A.F. as they set

up their Coaching scheme. During his years as National Coach he had worked for them on their Olympic Solidarity Coaching and Judging scheme by organising courses in Singapore, Manila, Cairo and Teheran. In 1995 Ray Hall resigned, which left the way clear for Jeff Ford to take over the Senior post. This he was not happy to do as he was only willing to deal with the Juniors, so Peter Markham was again appointed to the Senior position.

Upon the demise of the B.A.F. in 1997 the whole system was thrown into disarray. In an effort to try to revitalise the diminishing performances of the walkers, which had been the idea behind the change in titles in 1990, a trio of Chris Maddocks, Jeff Ford and Andi Drake were charged with coming up with ideas. After about two years, when U.K.A. was beginning to reorganise, Andi Drake took over as the National Potential Coach (Race Walking), whose responsibility was to spot and nurture potential International Walkers. On the International stage the state of British walking had reached the point where very few, if any, were selected for a major Games and consequently the top "walking" Coach was only responsible for "potential" rather than for prospective "medallists" as in the past. During a break from holding this position, Andi Drake was replaced by Martin Bell who was assisted by Martin Rush, whose main responsibility was the Junior Track and Field teams. During this period Drake continued with his personal coaching, at the same time producing many articles on the event. When Martin Bell resigned in 2005, Andi Drake again assumed his original responsibility.

In 2006 U.K.A., after tremendous pressure, rethought the whole situation, turning the clock back some ten years. They set about reappointing National Event Coaches and Andi Drake took over the position responsible for Race Walking.

The coaching of Race Walking is very subjective and through the years there have

been many characters involved. Times have changed from the old days when the coaches taught by experience to the present time when it is almost necessary to have a University degree before one can qualify. Nevertheless the theory has changed very little. In the earlier years when contact was the only necessity it was still frowned upon by coaches to walk with bent legs; the question of style or "shape" has been discussed in earlier chapters of the present volume.

Back in 1934 George Cummings spoke of the need for walkers to brace the knee upon contact in order to become more efficient. Lloyd Johnson wrote in 1974, "During my time as a walking coach, a large proportion of my efforts, both in my personal contact and in my various writings, have been to try to combat the bent leg bogey sometimes with success but, more often not, because I feel the attitude was 'Why bother, it doesn't matter'. Well now it does matter and somebody's advice has to be taken." This was of course the time that in Britain the straight leg rule was adopted.

Throughout the past hundred years the general theory behind the walking technique has changed very little. The need to maintain contact was absolute while, despite the fact that to brace the leg at the knee was desirable, it was not a necessity until the International rule was changed in 1972. It is the Judging system that has changed, particularly in Britain, from the times when Judges were not qualified and one Judge could disqualify to the present time when Judges have to qualify and it is necessary for at least three of them to agree before a disqualification takes place.

Coaching has come a long way in the past two hundred years and no doubt will move on in the next two hundred. Without doubt new theories and practices will evolve in the future but the same need will remain; to ensure that the walker acquires a good technique, not only to become more efficient but, more importantly, to abide by the rules and satisfy the Judges.



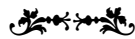
The Coaches assemble at Lilleshall, 1967

L to R: Row 1 D.Smith, J.Lambert, G.Goodair, T.Lloyd Johnson : Row

2 I.Williams, A.Hughes, A.Johnson, P.Dowling, S.Mantor:

Row 3 T.Sharlott, W.Emery, J.Marshall, R.Stone:

Row 4 H.Whitlock, A.Cotton, T.Simons, T.Richardson, J.Rawlings, P.Markham, C.Young



RACE WALKING RECORD

1: THE WAR BABY

“Rash it is to prophecy, especially in such times as these, but I am confident enough of its success to say that in the future we in the world of Race-Walking will wonder how on earth we ever managed without ‘Race Walking Record’ and – what is more – why we struggled for so long against its coming.”

With these words, Sub-Divisional Inspector John Bidgood, Chairman of the Southern Committee of the R.W.A., launched Issue No. 1 of *Race Walking Record*, his Committee’s Official Journal, in November, 1941.



A.D. McSweeney
when President of the R.W.A.

In his first Editorial, A.D. “Alf” McSweeney, Secretary and Treasurer of the Southern Committee, wrote “The Press – especially the Evening News whom we cannot help singling out for special mention – has given us valuable publicity, but with restricted news space at their disposal we felt it incumbent upon us to launch out for ourselves....Gentlemen, your duty is clear. ‘Walking expects....’ and if

we know our subject, it will not expect in vain.” “It is”, he observed, “only the enthusiast who would vote this a propitious moment to launch a journal on sport.” It was, indeed, a dark time in the war; despite the breathing space gained twelve months previously by the Battle of Britain, which had lifted the immediate threat of invasion, it would have been difficult to have full confidence in the future prospects, and the great decisive battles of El Alamein and Stalingrad still lay a year ahead.

It certainly needed some faith and courage, therefore, to spend meagre resources on starting the magazine, but McSweeney saw, and the Southern Committee backed him in his view, that there was great benefit in keeping in touch with the walkers scattered over the globe in the armed forces and working at home in the war effort, so that when peace came reassembly and a fresh start would be less difficult for the sport than a stone-cold start might have been.

Although times were hard and paper was in short supply, fortunately McSweeney ran his own print business and this no doubt made the *Record’s* problems a little easier. It is true, too, that as a printer he did not make a great profit out of the venture; at a price of only 3/- for six months, by subscription – that is, including postage – or 2/- for those in the Services, there was scarcely scope for that. By 2007, 3/- (or 15p in modern terms) would pay about half the postage cost for one copy.¹

One letter from a well-wisher, welcoming the new journal remarked that “I often see results of events I would liked to have attended had I known in time,” and to help redress the problem the back page was devoted to forthcoming fixtures, with seventeen listed between November and May. This may not have solved the correspondent’s problem



RACE-WALKING RECORD

PUBLISHED MONTHLY. By Subscription only—
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All communications and subscriptions to

A. D. McSWEENEY, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer,
Road Walking Association (Southern Committee),
102 East End Road, Finchley, N.3. Phone:
EUSTon 3982 (Business hours).

Welcome to "RECORD" by Chairman

RASH it is to prophecy, especially in such times as these, but I am confident enough of its success to say that in the future we in the world of Race-Walking will wonder how on earth we ever managed without "Race-Walking Record", and—what is more—why we struggled for so long against its coming.

Already we have a good list of subscribers, and we are confident of securing the further number needed to make it a success financially. To those founder members we offer our congratulations as well as our thanks, for it needs no Bernard Shaw to muster the impudence to say that the Record is good; *of course it is good!* Anything which tells so much and so well about so grand a sport as ours must be good!!

And in passing may I say I am so confident of our Editor that I am writing this before I have even seen a single line of the proof matter.

JOHN BIDGOOD,
Chairman Road Walking Association
(Southern Committee.)



Sub. Div. Insp.
J. C. BIDGOOD

At time of going to press 76 entries had been received for Enfield A.C. Open 7 miles on November 8th.

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED"

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NEWS IN BRIEF

entirely as many *unlisted* events subsequently appeared among the results; about a half of all races were not mentioned in advance. The birth of the magazine was a slight enough first appearance, with a mere eight pages, but it had at least started. John Bidgood, whose photograph was the only picture in the issue, had said in his *Welcome*, "Anything that tells so much and so well about so grand a sport as ours must be good!! And in passing may I say I am so confident of our Editor that I am writing this before I have even seen a single line of the proof matter." As it turned out over the next half-century and beyond, his confidence was far from misplaced.

Generally running at eight pages but sometimes reduced to four, *Record* soon established its pattern. The first couple of pages usually contained general news and reports from the Southern Committee, largely written, to judge from the style, by McSweeney himself, and there was an occasional series called *Personalities in Walking*, some of the early ones being W.Batson, C.R.Butcher, C.A.Williams, W.J.Palmer, J.H.Van Meurs and N.W.Easlea.

The main aim of the *Record* was to give notices, results and reports of as many events as it could fit in, sometimes providing travel hints. Any space remaining would contain two- or three-line snippets, often of a light-hearted nature, race walking not being considered to be all grim suffering.²

One item reported the ordination of D.H.A.Christie-Murray, who had fitted the ceremony between coming second in a Surrey W.C. Open 5 and winning the Highgate Open 7. He subsequently combined his two lives by holding a special service for walkers (with a congregation of 200) at St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

There were occasional advertisements, sometimes from walkers with spare kit to sell, but now and then a commercial one. In September, 1942, J.W.Foster & Co. of Bolton advertised "shoes in stock sizes", of which they appear to have had only five pairs altogether, although they were able to make them to

measure "but cannot promise delivery date". The price was 35/- and four coupons per pair.³

The number of photographs increased to three or four per issue, although not many of them were either contemporary or "action", presumably because of the difficulty of covering the events under the awkward wartime conditions. McSweeney offered a "Day and Night Service: Our Hon. Sec. can be obtained – Business Hours EUSon 3982: Other times FINchley 3982 Calls between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. not appreciated".⁴

The magazine continued uneventfully until May, 1943, when its coloured masthead was dropped in favour of a monochrome – although slightly more decorative – one. The "Utility" series was otherwise not much different from what had gone before, except that the first three issues were slightly smaller than the six-page editions of the previous three months. The utility was prompted by the shortage of labour and materials.

The extra space, when it could be managed, allowed the Editor to include *Provincial News and Fixtures* as well as to mention the "boom" in women's walking, especially in the Midlands; there were even occasional schools' results. It now became possible, as well, to include maps and travel directions for the benefit of competitors and spectators; hints were given on watching the Highgate Open 20 Miles by dodging about North London by trolleybus and Underground at a total cost of ninepence. It was cheap at the price to watch what can hardly be imagined sixty years later, a race in which the 82 starters crossed the North Circular Road *six* times!

For the remaining two years of war, *Record* continued in the same way. Except for the obvious absence of colour and the quality of the paper, it was basically the way it was to remain until the present day, although the relative space occupied by the various categories has varied. Sixty years ago, there was far more news and far less overseas content than nowadays, much more detailed race reporting and much longer

letters. That granted, however, the magazine had largely assumed its current nature; indeed, thanks to McSweeney's grasp of what he wanted to do with the new publication, it had practically been born fully formed.

The arrival of peace in 1945 occasioned a "Bumper Number" (of twelve pages against the normal eight) headed "North-South-Midlands Progress" and looking ahead to a return to the pre-war state of race walking; the Southern Committee even appointed a Sub-Committee for Post-War Planning.

That October issue marked an alarming new occurrence for *Record*; for the first time in its four years, the price was increased, but only to 3/6 for six months (Armed Forces 2/6).

Colour – although only in the masthead, and the same every month (as distinct from the monthly change in the early days) – returned in January, 1947. Another change, however, was far more important; "Official Organ of the Road Walking Association Southern Committee" had gone from the front cover, replaced by "The National Paper for Race Walkers". This was McSweeney's own idea and no actual financial or managerial responsibility passed to the national body; in any case, although *Record* had been the "official organ" of the South, it had, in practice, always been McSweeney's own enterprise. He pointed out that another 400 subscribers would ensure his ability to produce twelve pages every month. "Meanwhile," he added, "payment of subscriptions by the 120 who have not yet settled for the current period, would not materially lessen the pleasure of working for nothing."

For once – and it still does not happen all that often – someone in the pages of *Record* spoke up for the officials when John Tempest of Lancashire W.C. wrote, "I think it is most remarkable that when a judge tries to improve or correct a new Race Walker's mode of progression the Competitor often feels vexed or annoyed, but it is the Judge who should be displeased with the Competitor for making a very highly skilled job unpleasant for him. Our

judges are very patient and never vexed. I was (believe it or not) a bible student in my younger days and I would love to hear the Rev. Christie-Murray say a few words on what I call the *Race Walkers' Text*. It is from Jeremiah 10:23-24:– It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Oh Lord, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing."

Notwithstanding the desire to make the *Record* national, it still looked like a Southern magazine with somewhat expanded Midland and Northern notes, the *Provincial Fixtures* being listed separately from the Southern ones; the Midland and Northern fixtures between them hardly amounted to a quarter of the Southern total.

A pretty-well constant feature during this period, which must have helped *Record's* finances, was a full page advertisement for Elliman's Athletic Rub, "the Champion Rub of Champions – Speeds up Action, Promotes Suppleness, Prevents Staleness"; unhappily, no price was quoted for the miraculous balm.

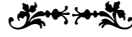
At the Southern A.G.M. in September, 1947, A.D. McSweeney retired as Secretary after six years in the post. The reason cited was "pressure of business" and, although he carried on with *Record* for another year, in the issue of August-September, 1949, there appeared a column entitled *Editor says "I've had it"*, in which he announced that Gerald Swan, now Secretary of the Southern Committee, would forthwith be taking over. McSweeney again mentioned the continuing paper shortage, but was optimistic that Swan could help; since the latter, like the former, was a printer, it was a fortunate line of succession.

The most momentous event connected with the change of Editor was the recognition of *Race Walking Record* by the R.W.A. as its *National Official Organ*, and thereafter the rubric on the front page read "Published by The Road Walking Association". Another part of the rubric indicated, with no previous warning and perhaps in the hope that no-one would notice, that the price had rocketed to the dizzying

heights of 4/6 for six months, but with an emollient discount to 8/6 for twelve months; the Services reduced rate, in recognition of widespread demobilisation, was discontinued.

As McSweeney pointed out in his final editorial, *Record* had been started when Southern walking needed a fillip to keep it going during the war years, at which time press publicity was negligible. It had certainly done that and had grown firstly to cover national

news and then to be the R.W.A's official organ. A brave venture had succeeded through the innovator's own efforts and determination. He signed himself off as "A.D. McSweeney, Hon. Editor-Publisher (R.I.P.)" There was no doubt but that he had earned his rest after six years of toil; as will be seen, however, his retirement turned out to be shorter than his spell in the job; in five years' time, he was to find himself returning to the Editor's chair for a longer innings.



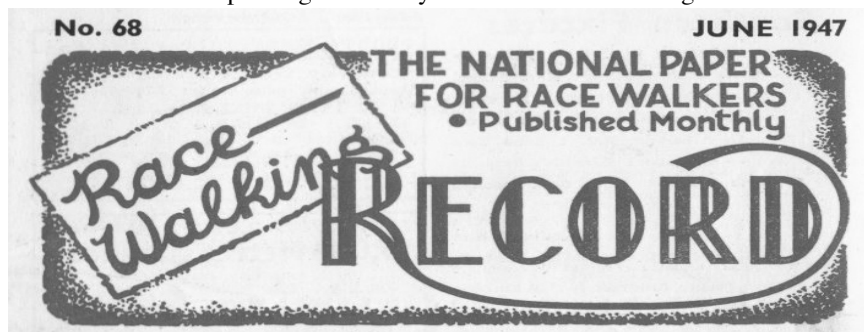
THE EVOLUTION OF A MASTHEAD



Early days: the material here appearing as grey varied from month to month



The printing was always black on a white background



This version was always red on white

(All illustrations are reduced in size)

RACE WALKING RECORD

2: THE ESTABLISHED MAGAZINE

Gerald Swan opened the fifties with an offer from Harold Whitlock, then the General Secretary of the R.W.A., to act as “a Savings Bank” for anyone wishing to accumulate the £17 needed to participate in the Nijmegen Marches; the £17 covered fares, seven days’ board and the entry fee!

About this time, too, there began to appear advertisements by the celebrated shoemakers, Ellis Brigham of Manchester, although they seemed to be too coy to quote their prices.

Social activities were much more a part of all sporting activities then than they are now, and *Record* was always prepared to devote a few hundred words to reporting such functions. A typical one, the annual dinner of the Sheffield United Walkers, not only listed the speakers and summarised their remarks but also named the ladies who had played upon the pianoforte and performed a song and dance act and the gentlemen who had appeared as a tenor, a magician and a comedian. Innes had railed against the drudgery of social events, but others seemed to enjoy them still.¹

By the nineteen-fifties, Northern and Midland Notes by Jim Hackwood and D.J.Austin, respectively, were a regular feature of the magazine. Although *Record* was now the official national organ of the R.W.A. it still concentrated to a considerable extent on the metropolitan area and there was no need for Southern Notes; in effect, they occupied half the space of each issue anyway!

Regular results and reports were, of course, the backbone of *Record* and, in the days when the various distances had their own “seasons” an issue might well have had news of half-a-dozen well-attended events over seven or ten miles; they may have been well-attended, but a

complaint often heard nowadays sometimes surfaced. Of the Essex 10 miles of 1950² it was said that “Apart from Goodall, the leading positions were filled by ‘old hands’, many of whom are over 40. It is hoped that more young men will come to the fore as the need for ‘new blood’ in Essex is very great.” 1950 was a fairly typical year and saw the following 10 mile events: Essex (30 finishers), Suffolk (7), Leicester (15), Midland Championship (46), British Workers’ Sports Association (51), Northern Championship (37), Middlesex (56), Surrey (32), Kent (18), Sussex (23), the National (159), Garnet (116) and many other Club and Inter-Club races. Although these events were well-supported, McSweeney, who was writing the *Coming Events* feature, could still complain that the Southern A.A.A. 7 miles in recent years had averaged *four* competitors and still found it necessary to urge support for the fixture among his readers on the “use it or lose it” principle.

Any Editor may nod at times – largely due to the receipt of copy at the last moment before the printer’s deadline (even if the Editor happens to be his own printer) – and Swan was no exception; in a report of the Trinidad 40 miles, he duly copied out the time at which “Jackson reached Chaguanas junction, a distance of 10·780631 miles from the city....” and “the fifth lap....6·9045 miles....” Of course, it may have been that the route really was measured to the sixteenth of an inch, but it somehow seems unlikely. In any case, the appearance of occasional “news from the Empire” shows that *Record’s* coverage of overseas events is not the very recent phenomenon that some readers might imagine it to be.

Apart from lightening the general appearance of the magazine, it cannot be said

that Gerald Swan made many changes. Possibly there was a shortage of money to do so; the price was still only 4/6 for six months (8/6 for a year) and a full-page advertisement could be had for 55/-. When material for a monthly like *Record* is thin, there is always a tendency for the Editor to seize the opportunity to grind a few personal axes, but Swan seems to have been content to produce a six- or eight-page issue rather than do so, with the result that a particular edition might be 90% results and fixtures; the list of fixtures, incidentally, usually filled the back page and sometimes ran to over fifty events, covering the next eight or nine months. Such a degree of uniformity of arrangements had been achieved by the various event promoters that the Fixture Page could be headed "3 p.m. start unless Track events or otherwise stated" and, indeed, not more than 5% were "otherwise stated".

November, 1951, marked *Record's* tenth anniversary and McSweeney, who described himself as "Ed. pro tem", during Swan's absence abroad (which had been the case since September), expressed entirely justifiable satisfaction and – naturally – called for more subscribers.

A month later the indefatigable McSweeney, who appears always to have been involved in everything – making an enormous contribution recognised when he was elected President in 1953 – was reporting that the Badge Scheme introduced in mid-1950 had been a great success, with 589 gained for six miles in the hour and 116 for seven miles.

After Swan's return, McSweeney continued to edited *Record*, although Swan looked after correspondence and finances. The latter continued to be a problem, despite the support of the "Honorary Members" – in reality the contributors to the President's Appeal each year; an interim report nine months into the 1951-1952 year reported that 72 Honorary Members had so far contributed £61/7/-. Despite the generosity shown, the price had to rise, but only by 9d for the six months, making the new cost 5/3 for six months or 10/- for a

year. The General Secretary, Harold Whitlock, pointed out that the R.W.A. had subsidised *Record* to the tune of £28/4/4 over the previous three years.

In the same issue McSweeney, who had taken to referring to Swan as the publisher and distribution manager, although he still appeared as Editor on the front page, said that he had been asked to continue as *Editor* and would do so. He declared his policy as *editing* without putting up too many of his opinions, promptly declared his deviation from that policy and set about the recently published new Definition with some gusto. He was a great "contact" man and wanted all top walkers in this country to be filmed in slow motion and then brought by their coaches to a point at which they could *prove* that they could keep their feet on the ground; this would also help the judges to recognise the signs of loss of contact. McSweeney seemed to be arguing that, although contact was essential, there were indications, other than a visible gap under the feet, that all was not well with a walker; another echo of the arguments of years before! He raised the basic question, still raised today, of whether there should be anything more to walking than contact; his stance was that it is perfectly possible to "walk", in layman's terms, without straightening, particularly over long distances, and that the new Rule might disqualify 15% of the top walkers in this country.

McSweeney's invitation to join in the debate was accepted. A.H.Pateman of London thought that it did not go far enough and wanted the front leg to be straight as the foot landed, while C.Hatch, who had earlier urged the R.W.A. to set about having *five* walks in the Olympic Games, was back again to say that it went too far and that straightening *weakened* the definition and C.T.Mason of Coulsdon took the view that this country should adopt the new Rule completely. Thus, all possible views were covered in the first three letters; in addition, an article by the President, G.R.Goodwin, although occupying most of a page, further muddled the emotional waters by not really expressing any view at all, except that Judges, for all their

faults, did at least concentrate on the essential point of contact and did not judge by style as in the past. He offered the opinion that if walkers adopted a “smooth, easy, natural action” and were always mentally alert, there would be no problems; presumably he meant for the judges.

In August of 1953, McSweeney’s name reappeared on the front page of *Record*, although the printing continued to be done by G.G.S. (Printing) Ltd., that is to say, by Gerald Swan.³ McSweeney’s second spell as Editor was to last nine years, until August, 1962, so that he was ultimately responsible for 209 of the first 234 issues; still, well over sixty years since the magazine first appeared, he has edited more than a quarter of all editions.

Many Club A.G.Ms and other “social” events continued to be reported and there was the occasional item that showed that things were happening behind the scenes. In March, 1954, for example, it was announced that – apparently having thought about it for some time – the R.W.A. had decided to produce a tie, tentatively approving a design “consisting of a blue silk background with not too conspicuous stripes in red and gold and surmounted with the Association badges in miniature”. It would cost 12/6 (the same as fifteen months of *Record*).

Another enterprise was the holding of a film show of the Olympic Games 10000m race, so that judges and walkers could study the top internationals in action. The “B Feature”, a locally-made film of the Chippenham to Calne showed the competitors “whizzing round bends near the finish at about twenty miles an hour”, which did not help in the study of technique; it is not clear whether it was the filming that was defective or the walkers themselves.

Record was always available for the floating of new ideas (as well the grinding of old axes, of course) and in October, 1954, Surrey Walking Club was proposing the holding of a 100 mile event in four daily stages, the whole thing being held at a holiday camp in Great Yarmouth at which competitors and their supporters could, by special arrangement, stay

at a cost of £5/17/6 for a week’s board. The proposed Surrey event actually came off at the end of May, 1955, Colin Young beating Vic Stone on aggregate by mere seconds with the third man half an hour away. Fourteen of the twenty-two starters completed the whole event and much enthusiasm was expressed by the competitors. Just to show how tough they were in those days, a month later Stone failed by only six and a half minutes to win the “Brighton-and-Back”, despite being eighteen minutes down at half way to the winner, Hew Neilson.⁴

Although generally limited by financial problems to twelve pages, *Record* could be relied upon to carry the Annual Report of the R.W.A. and to describe such things as the “Re-Union Supper” of the Southern Area Judges’ Sub-Committee (for 12/6 a head at “Pimms” in Bishopsgate, London, at the time a favourite location for such social gatherings).

Those who objected to the use of *Record*’s pages for overseas news must have been enraged when a printing trade dispute in Spring, 1956, reduced the magazine to four pages, one of which was used for foreign material; several readers expressed their objections to what they evidently saw as unnecessary waste!

The strain of trying to wedge in all the news, articles, results, fixtures and social events with no increase in the circulation and income began to prove too much and in September, 1966 the price again had to be increased by what was no doubt regarded as an extraordinary amount to 6/6 for six months or 12/- for a year; the modern price inflation was beginning to come into operation, but McSweeney’s cost control was admirable.

From time to time, *Record* affords small glimpses of things to come, such as the brief statement in early 1957 that “The A.A.A. have decided to cut the 7 miles Walk from the main Championships programme at the the White City this year, and the event is to be staged in conjunction with the A.A.A. v. Services Match at Watford, Herts., on Saturday, August 10th”; the argument used was that the programme was

becoming crowded. Later in the year, in his *Midland Notes*, Don Austin was appealing for greater support for the Midland Counties' A.A.A. Track Championships; "I can assure you that unless stronger support is forthcoming this year we shall have to fight very hard to retain the walking events next year." *Midland ears* seem to have been slightly deaf; the Seven and Two Miles events each had six finishers.

Record was disappointingly reticent in reporting on the R.W.A. Jubilee Dinner held at the House of Commons on the 21st September, 1957, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Association's foundation. The three surviving British-born Olympic Champions, Green, Whitlock and Read, were present, as were Billy Palmer and Bob Withers, who had both been competitors in the 1908 Games. Two men were present from those who had attended at the Polytechnic half a century earlier, Ernest Neville of Herne Hill Harriers and Charlie Gunn of Highgate, the latter being mistakenly described as a competitor in the 1908 10 miles⁵ – and that is all that *Record* said of the occasion. That same issue of *Record*, however, did have two interesting items, a short report on the annual 41 mile race round Hong Kong, with 440 starters and 145 finishers in the men's event and 18 and 5 in the women's,⁶ and a remarkably verbose "American Definition": "As the foremost foot in taking a step touches the ground, the knee must not be bent. The heel must touch the ground first and the toe must be the last portion of the foot to leave it. It is imperative that the heel of the foremost foot must touch the ground before the toe of the other foot ceases to have contact with it." This definition was printed in bold type, whether with satirical intent on Alf McSweeney's part, who can say?

Although, as is apparent from the Championship Appendices in this book, women's walking certainly did exist, *Record* was not too sharp at noticing it; of course, the magazine was answerable to the R.W.A., which dealt entirely with the men's side, the women's being governed by the W.A.A.A. and the W.C.C. & R.W.A. The latter body's 4 miles

road Championship was reported in January, 1960, won by B.Randall (*sic*) of Birchfield in 35:48, her team, with 1, 4 and 6, winning comfortably from Small Heath (2, 10 and 14) and London Olympiades (28); since the only other team to finish was Harborne Harriers, the competition was something of a Midlands coup.

No doubt the archives of many association and society journals throw an interesting historical light on the attitudes and practices of their times and *Record* is no exception. In its early days, forenames were *never* used – even profiles and obituaries were limited to initials and surnames. A race report in those times would be along the lines of, "A.Brown had a hard-won victory; from the start, Brown, Black and White walked together....Black's style was particularly admired...." Even by the 1960s, when forenames *were* more commonly used, the formality lingered in some circles and a letter from W.Batson of the Police Athletic Association to the Secretary of the R.W.A. giving thanks (and a five guineas donation) for assistance at the recent Police National Championships, began "Dear Woodcock". Travel was rather different, too, and directions to competitors in the National 50k at Essex Beagles' Headquarters at Chigwell Row to proceed by "Underground Railway (Central London Line) to Gants Hill Station, then by No. 150 Bus" advised the allowance of about an hour from central London, nowadays a good recipe for starting a lap behind! (In a kindly gesture, the Beagles paid for all the refreshments at this event, at a cost of some £5.)

The pages of *Record* include from time to time reports of occurrences at whose explanations one can only guess. A one-mile track match between Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire in 1960, for example, was won by Bedfordshire's five men by default; although it was a "home" fixture at Welwyn, Hertfordshire had no starters at all. Had they, perhaps, thought that they were "away" and gone to Luton by mistake?

A possible new slant was put upon keeping the senior citizens occupied, when a ten-mile

race was promoted by the Enderby Old Folks' Entertainment Committee; presumably, though, the idea was to raise money to provide for the Old Folks, rather than to regard the race as a form of entertainment in itself. The Committee boldly described the event as the "First Annual...." which is always risking the wrath of the Gods, but it did, in fact carry on for several years.

McSweeney was always very diligent in pursuing out-of-the-way news and regularly carried reports from unexpected parts of the world, including a two miles handicap in Aden; despite a temperature of 86°F, the organiser and scratch man, Flt-Sgt Bernard Eglinton of Belgrave Harriers and the R.A.F. returned 17:35; it seemed to catch on, at least for a while, as there were no fewer than *six* races in one month. In a more friendly climate, there was room for a touch of the eccentricity that accompanies race walking wherever it is pursued, this time in Co.Tipperary, where, eschewing metric distances, Clonmel Harriers promoted a race of 31½ miles – 50694 metres; at times, it is difficult not to think that we do it deliberately.

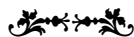
Even *Race Walking Record* was not immune to the effects of post-war inflation – although only rising postal charges were explicitly blamed – and late in 1961 there had to be a price rise, elevating it to 7/- for six months or 12/6 for a year, an increase of just 6d in each case.

An interesting little note of comparison, easily overlooked, showed Balwant Singh setting an Indian record for 50k of 4:28:03 on

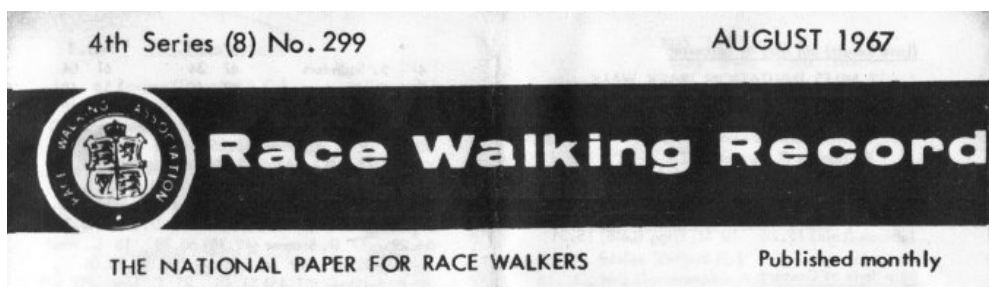
home ground, while the R.W.A. National Championship in Luton was won by Don Thompson in 4:27:26.

As the pages of *Record* continued to show, matches remained popular. In May, 1962, for example, Stock Exchange beat Insurance, Banks and Shipping in a 6¾ mile match with eighty finishers and Woodford Green beat the Metropolitan Police, who had also been beaten by Sussex Clubs the previous month. It was not unusual for an event to contain a match between Clubs A, B and C at, say, ten-a-side and other matches between A and C and between B and C at five-a-side.

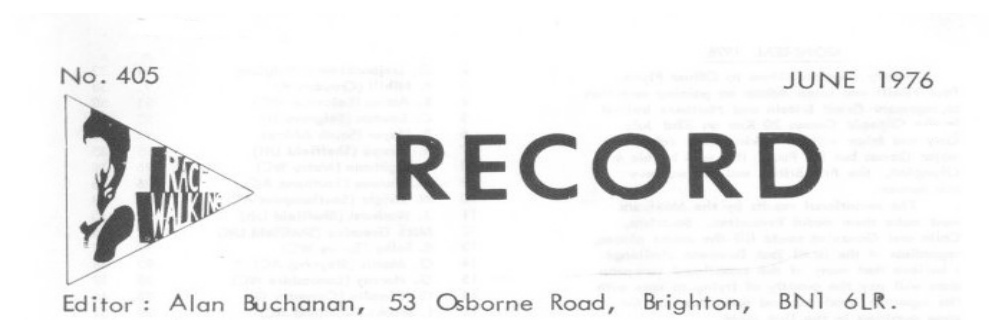
The June, 1962, issue carried the Editor's apologies for late appearance of that edition and his hopes to be back to normal for July. It was not to be, because the unthinkable happened and *Record's* founding father died late in August. Alf McSweeney had edited 86% of the first 243 numbers, printed most of them and written the earliest of them more or less single-handed; he had been in the editorial chair for eighteen of the first twenty-one years. While the R.W.A. nationally had ceased to function during the war years – and, to all intents and purposes, had practically ceased to exist – McSweeney and *Record* somehow kept things going. There had been some lack of enthusiasm in certain circles when the idea was first mooted – which is why, although it was nominally owned by the Southern Committee, it was McSweeney's private project – but his sudden death seems to have produced something like panic in the ranks as the R.W.A. realised that the magazine had now become a positive necessity and that a new editor must be found.



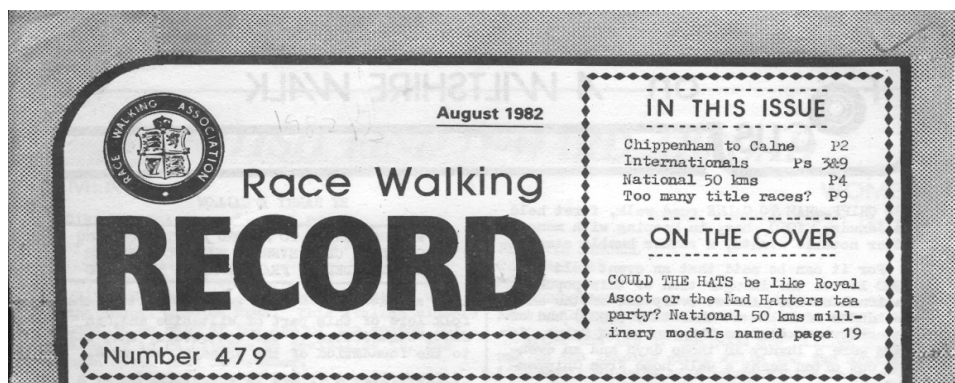
THE EVOLUTION CONTINUES



This was always black on white



This design, too, was always black on white



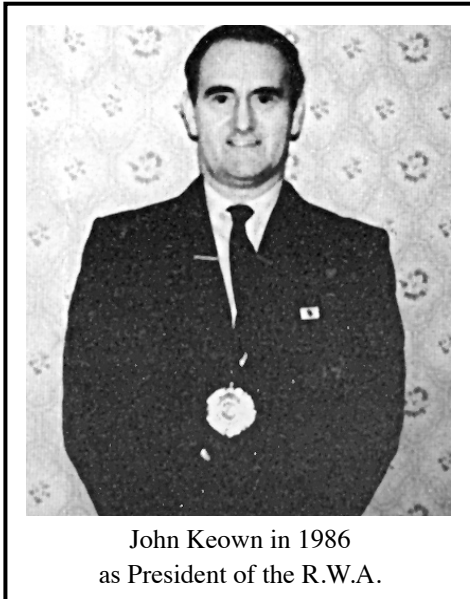
The border, here in stippled grey, was later in various colours

(All illustrations are reduced in size)

RACE WALKING RECORD

3: LIFE AFTER McSWEENEY

A new Editor had to be found quickly and found he was, in the shape of John Keown of Belgrave Harriers, who was so *unofficial*, in the sense of not being a member of the Association's "establishment", that he was co-opted to the Southern and National Committees to keep him informed of events.



The front page of Keown's first issue carried a message from the General Secretary, indicating how thoroughly *Record* was by then accepted as an official organ: "The future policy of the magazine will be considered by the General Committee. There is divided thought over whether we should cut down on the space previously given to the minor club results by only reporting the first three or six to finish and the handicap winner, and, by so doing, using the space saved each month for articles on training, coaching, judging and news items and we wish to receive letters from readers on topical matters."

At least the new Editor did not need to worry about subscriptions; the McSweeney contribution was still not over because the late Editor's widow took charge in that department. She had more money to deal with, as well, the rate immediately rising from 7/- for six months and 12/6 for a year to 10/- and 18/- respectively, a 40% leap! Hidden away on page 9 was a warning; as the subscription rate *had* risen, payment made at the old rate would not ensure a year's supply, a bit of slightly sharp practice that, nowadays, would lead to outbursts of indignation from the subscribers and that showed that administrators could be just as good as walkers at "shifty going".

A few months after McSweeney's death, a Memorial Fund was launched in *Record* to provide a trophy for the club with the best aggregate performance over all R.W.A. Championships each year; the particular object was chosen because, among everything else, "Mac" had spent eight years as Championships Secretary. The rather optimistic £100 target was easily made, and with £70/7/- to spare; some of the surplus went to a trophy for the "most improved" club each year and there was still enough left to help towards a more public memorial.¹

It is always a little difficult for a new editor of an established journal to make his mark; on the one hand he wishes to mould it to his own taste, while on the other he has a going concern with which he should not needlessly tamper. John Keown's innovation was immediately to institute a feature called *Portrait of a Star*. In his introductory note to the series, he said that the appearance of the *Portraits* over the next few months would "probably mean that the club results, in some monthly numbers, will be reduced to cover only the first three or six to finish." He offered, however, to give full club

results if that would mean maintaining the number of subscribers; he thus played the editorial master-card of introducing changes he wanted, while shifting the responsibility to someone else (in this case, General Committee) and offering to change back if there were too many complaints, in the full knowledge, of course, that while many may grumble privately, few will object publicly.

The *Portrait* series (based on questionnaires sent out by the Editor) got under way with items on Don Thompson, Colin Young, Ken Matthews, Eric Hall, Frank O'Reilly and Dickie Green. Although there was apparently some reduction in the "depth" of a number of Club results – and it is, of course, impossible to say whether the appearance of, for example, eleven names in a result is a complete record or an attenuated version – and no perceptible outcry, the *Portrait* series ran as a "regular" no longer than the end of 1963, after which it became fitful. Evidently, the Stars had not been exhausted and it is presumably because it relied on the response of the designated Stars themselves that regularity became difficult.²

Record had always been prepared to print the results of races outside the mainstream whenever it could find them – Keown spent his first year as Editor complaining non-stop that race promoters failed to send in their results – but they were few and far between, although the W.A.A.A. Championship was usually noted, as in 1963, when the second of Judy Farr's nine consecutive wins was recorded, and the R.A.F. Championships were also generally reported,³ together with a small number of boys' and youths' races, often over rather odd distances. One curiosity, mentioned in our Chapter 19, was the women's (or *ladies'* as they were then generally known) paper match over 5k on the road, between Denmark, South Africa, Rhodesia, New South Wales, Victoria and England; with six to count on cumulative time, England beat Denmark by six minutes.

John Keown was clearly working on the other old Editorial precept that there is no point in having the post if you cannot grind your own

axes and he soon proposed that the newly-established Championships Sub-Committee should introduce a 20 kilometre Championship and abandon the 10 miles, simultaneously changing all other 10 mile races to 20k, although he was not explicit about how to make event promoters do so. As it turned out he did half-win; a 20k Championship *was* introduced in 1964, but the 10 miles remained on the calendar until 1988 and was still extremely popular when it was discontinued. Indeed, there are to this day County and Area Championships over the imperial distance.⁴

John Keown soon fell foul of rising costs and overcame them by the device of reducing the type size to about 7 point – and even smaller in places – and using a sans-serif face, so that it looked rather as shown below:

He expressed the hope that it would be possible to "hold the annual subscription at 18/- for this year. No doubt some readers will not like the size of the print now used in the magazine but we ask them to continue their support and we hope that in time when they become accustomed to the change they will find it easier to read."

It would appear that the protests were not too loud – or that the Editor took no notice – because the change was not reversed. Indeed, one reader, while approving the new look, suggested that the price should be raised to the "nice round figure" of £1.

From time to time *Record* had re-advertised *The Sport of Race Walking* but without sufficient success, apparently, because by the beginning of 1965 the price had been reduced from 6/- to 2/6, although the announcement of this was somewhat inconspicuously buried in *Record's* pages.⁵

Having established the new look and his own characteristic way of doing things, Keown forged ahead without much change, except for one strange aberration when the October, 1965 edition, which was otherwise uniform with the rest, appeared with the front cover in landscape rather than portrait format and entirely occupied by a photograph of the competitors in a junior international 10k race in Berlin. No explanation of the phenomenon was ever given.

The December edition had the front and back covers, rather than just the banner, in a puce colour; again there was no explanation, but the following month saw a return to normality.

A year after the revision of presentation, the Editor had to admit that there *had* been complaints, largely that the magazine had turned into a result sheet and fixture list, although the changes had been designed with the very opposite effect in view. The reply was the perennial one that the Editor can print only what he receives and that if people wanted more articles they should write them!

John Keown produced yet another new appearance to the front cover in November, 1966, to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Edition No.1; No.290 was a suitably bumper 20-page issue, with a history (by the Editor) of British walking since 1941. Otherwise, he continued much as before, although the occasional *Portrait of a Star* had been pushed from the centre spread and lurked in the hinterland of the magazine, sometimes being “serialised” over two numbers, so that, for example, the first half of No.21, Malcolm Tolley, appeared in May, 1967 and the second half, with the whole of No.22, Tom Misson, the following month;⁶ given the nature of *Record's* production, perhaps it is not surprising that over the years it came more and more to resemble a jigsaw puzzle.

The decision to curtail results lists, which had provoked such a very small amount of protest, seems to have been maintained, although the cut-off level slowly edged down the field. Whether this was because there was a shortage of news, it is not possible to say, but certainly not very much appeared in the mid-1960s, although there were occasional articles – often by Lloyd Johnson – on aspects of coaching.

John Keown began 1968 by announcing his retirement; Ken Best of Surrey Walking Club was to take over in March. Those who subsequently came to know him as practically omniscient will be surprised to learn that he said

in his farewell editorial that when he had become Editor he had known very little about the sport or the Association. The amount by which his knowledge had grown over the space of six years was shown by his article on *The First 20 Years*, tracing the early history of the R.W.A.

Very soon, the new Editor introduced *Walking Around*, “a column of comment on the current walking scene”. There had, of course, been plenty of comment in the past; in the early days, it had been largely McSweeney’s own, but correspondence had grown and there had been occasional articles discussing matters of interest; the novelty about the new column was that it was anonymous, so anonymous, indeed, that the author did not even invent a pen-name for himself. What did he choose to comment on in his very first contribution? What else, of course, but judging and the judges’ philosophy, “some maintaining that unless they are satisfied that the walker is walking then he should be disqualified, while others maintain that unless they are satisfied he is not walking, they have no right to disqualify.” In his second column he introduced the question of “style” and asked how one judged it! In the event, he seems to have thought better of it and did not revisit the arguments of fifty years earlier.

In his end of year report, the Editor regretted that practically the only response to *Walking Around* had been a suggestion that the author abandon his anonymity! Ken Best had hit upon a novel idea for increasing sales; there was to be a series of Club Histories – “as supplements”, although they were printed integrally – and the featured bodies would buy extra copies of “their” issues; the start was made with Belgrave, Metropolitan Police, Surrey, Cambridge, and Enfield – good support from the London area, but not much else!

We have referred elsewhere to the problems posed to newspapers in the early days when it came to getting results and have noticed the virtual isolation of Oxford once the postal telegraph office had closed on Good Friday. When Lionel Woodcock retired as General

Secretary of the R.W.A. after fifteen years in the office, he wrote an article in *Record* reminiscing about his life. He had spent five years in the 1960s as race walking correspondent of *Athletics Weekly* and recalled that this involved spending every Sunday morning gathering the previous day's results and reports from all over the country, sorting the material, typing out his article and despatching it by the Sunday afternoon post to reach the Editor's desk by first post on Monday. Times – in the Metropolis, at any rate – had certainly changed.

In a farewell to the 1960s and welcome to the 1970s, the Editor remarked that "In the 60s, Britain remained the 'home' of race walking but we shall be hard put to retain this leading position in the 70s." How true that was even the gloomiest of prophets could not have guessed; he referred particularly to Mexico and the German Democratic Republic. He might have added the U.S.S.R. to his list; between them the two socialist countries took the first six positions in both the 20k and the 50k in 1970's World Cup and in the following year's European Championships only Paul Nihill and Phil Embleton in the 20k and the West German Nermerich in the 50k prevented a repeat performance. The British walkers would indeed be hard put to retain their position in world competition.

Evidently set on trying to fend off the threat, Best introduced a regular series of *Coaching Hints*, written by the national coaches, and particularly Lloyd Johnson. In early 1970, Ken Best announced his resignation as Editor because of increasing work commitments; he set no date and appealed for volunteers. The new man turned out to be Alan Buchanan, of Scotland and Brighton, who took over later in the year. As a sort of introductory present to the new Editor, the retiring one set up a debate on judging (in which the incoming Buchanan had participated vigorously before taking office).

There had been some slight increase in *Record's* circulation during 1970, but a price rise was needed, to 22/- for twelve months or

12/- for six; another sign of the times was that, with decimalisation of the coinage in the offing, the new rates were parenthetically described in terms of "new pence".

In an attempt to provoke interest and debate, Buchanan instituted a "Walker of the Year" poll among his readers. In the British category Bob Dobson, with 27.5%, edged out Ron Wallwork (26.5%), with Bill Sutherland third on 12.5%. Interestingly, although only eleven walkers were nominated in that poll, no fewer than twenty-six were voted for as "Most Stylish Walker of the Year seen in Britain", Olly Caviglioli (who was French) beating the tied Phil Embleton and Ron Wallwork by 11.3% to 7.3%. The "Outstanding World Walker of 1970" was very clear-cut, Christophe Höhne of the G.D.R. beating Shaul Ladany of Israel by 88% to 4.5% with the Australian Noel Freeman and Vladimir Golubnichy (U.S.S.R.) on 3%, three others being named as well.

The new Editor had also brought a new look to *Record*, with more articles and comment, and a number of correspondents remarked favourably on the changes. *The Lloyd Johnson Column* continued, but there was another series of items, *For the Record*, consisting of interviews with top personalities in the race walking world, written up by different people. The subjects were not just stars of the road and track, but officials had a small look-in; No.8 was of Bill Harris, an International Judge. The Editor's personal views were also more in evidence than those of any of his predecessors, except, of course, McSweeney, who at times had seemed to run the journal as his personal soapbox.

The Editorial of March, 1971, began with words that, decades later, make one ask why no-one was paying attention. "Contrary to what some readers think," Buchanan wrote, "Race Walking is not a booming sport." He turned to a number of events for support; the Metropolitan Police 7, then the best-supported Open in the country had dropped from 194 finishers in 1951 to 150 in 1971, while the Belgrave 7, over the same twenty years, had fallen from 176 to 155.

There had, he noted, been some improvements, the Leicester 7 having risen from 83 to 137 finishers over the period and the Dick Hudson from 29 to 62 in the past decade. He pointed out the situation and posed the question of what was to be done; providing the answer, he left to the readership.

There was not much response, nor was there when he tried to provoke a debate on “bent knees or straight”; only a handful of readers responded then, although Harold Whitlock returned to the matter – rather fiercely – the following year. Nearly all the letters received were in favour of “straight” and largely for the “International Definition”. One interesting contribution came from Ernest Neville, who had been largely instrumental in establishing that definition; he had been an official at the Paris Olympics in 1924, when a disqualification was overturned by the Jury of Appeal, the restored walker was passed to the second heat and the judges refused to serve, having been responsible for the disqualification. Neville subsequently found that “each country concerned in the Walking Event had a different definition of walking and in at least one case the wording of the definition covered a whole page of printed matter.” Neville’s account, written nearly fifty years after the event, differs somewhat from what appears to be the more generally accepted one, partially derived from contemporary reports, given in Chapter 5.

Record repeated its “Walker of the Year” poll for 1971, Paul Nihill not surprisingly taking over half the votes, while the “World Walker” was Venyamin Soldatenko and the “Most Stylish” was Carl Lawton. Since Nihill was top of the national rankings at 3, 20 and 50k, it was hardly surprising that he should have taken the lion’s share of the votes over Phil Embleton and Jake Warhurst.

A couple of articles called *A Reader’s Eye View* by C.Hatch were published, one of them resurrecting the age-old and hopelessly ambitious suggestion of more walks in the Olympic Games, including twenty, ten and seven miles; Mr. Hatch was opposed to

metrication, to the extent that he retained the pre-decimalisation monetary system, and wanted no metric race distances except those commonly used internationally. “Personally,” he wrote, “I detest the thought of kilometres on the road and metres on the track – and most Englishmen will think the same.”

As Editor, Buchanan was not reticent about expressing strong views and he let fly at the Olympic selectors in the August, 1972, issue in no uncertain manner; to be fair, several others joined in as well, all agreeing with him. No-one, of course, ever thinks that selectors know what they are about, but the main objections expressed then were threefold: (1) they did not announce which races they would be considering; (2) they were sometimes not present at championship races, etc., that they *were* considering and (3) they were completely out of touch with the needs and interests of the walkers. Our Chapter 6 will have revealed the aftermath to this controversy.

Walkers of the Year for 1972 were; British, Paul Nihill, with two-thirds of the votes, World, Bernd Kannenberg of Western Germany with three-quarters and Most Stylish, Peter Marlow with a quarter. The following year the polls resulted in the retention of their positions by Kannenberg and Marlow (who had by then become R.W.A. General Secretary), while Roger Mills took over from the now retired Nihill.

The proposed adoption in this country of the new I.A.A.F. definition of walking led to a positive frenzy of correspondence, which was rather odd, because practically everyone was saying “Yes” and it became quite obvious that, although the wording was ponderous and partly redundant, it was widely accepted.

Apart from the questions of knees and the Olympics, the main feature of *Record* during 1973 was a remarkably ill-tempered (and not very well-mannered) exchange of views on judging in the Isle of Man; the language employed in the debate was, at times, decidedly unparliamentary.⁷

In the April, 1974 issue where, incidentally, Lloyd Johnson observed that the compliance of English walkers' knees was considerably improved, *Record*, making its contribution to closer relations, broke new ground when the *For the Record* profile was of a female walker, Marion Fawkes, the National 6,500 metre road and 3,000 metres track Champion.⁸

There were signs that Buchanan was becoming increasingly exasperated with his readers, who seldom took much interest in any of the topics on which he tried to stimulate debate and he had, in addition, the continuing problem of rising costs; late in 1974 there had to be another minuscule price rise, this time by 2p per copy to 12p, or £1.30 per annum.

One of the reasons for the Editor's disgruntlement was that in the poll for Walker of the Year, "the result has not always been what it should be due to a comparatively small section of the readers voting". He therefore appointed a panel of twelve to take over the job. The list of categories was extended, with the following results; World Man Bernd Kannenberg, again; British Man Brian Adams; World Woman Margaretha Simu, British Woman Marion Fawkes; British Junior David Cotton; Stylist Margaretha Simu. Buchanan's continued spirited support of closer ties with women's walking had led him to introduce the new categories; he did not indicate whether the revised voting system gave "better" results or whether he was surprised that Simu edged out Peter Marlow as the best stylist.

Correspondence broke out in the columns of *Record* over the question whether National Championships would be improved if a cut-off time were to be imposed. There was no suggestion of "classification", as was later introduced for Championships of twenty miles and upwards; the idea was that, if you were too slow, you would simply be ignored. A counter-argument proposed by C.V.Gittins, later to be well-known as custodian of the Rules' dots and commas,⁹ was not exactly for an entry standard but for the idea that entries would not be accepted from competitors "who would not be

expected to be inside a stated time." The R.W.A. response, as published in *Record* was a compromise on a compromise. No cut-offs or entry standards were imposed, but "advice" was published that "Walkers should be capable of (for the 20 miles) 3 hours 45 minutes, (for the 50 kms) 5 hours 45 minutes." It does not appear that any attempt was made to enforce this idea.

A fresh series of profiles was started in *Record*, based on replies to a questionnaire and starting with Shaun Lightman, Steve Gower and Peter Ryan.

Buchanan's editorial in September, while happy about the Olympic situation, again pointed out the problems – ten competitors in the A.A.A. 10,000 and *one* in the Midlands Youth Championships. He had been saying for some years that figures were falling and that the situation was serious, but, again, there were few ears to hear.

In January, 1976, Buchanan was able to celebrate the four-hundredth edition of *Race Walking Record* by publishing a survey by John Keown of the magazine's history, along the lines of his other synopses of the history of the sport itself.

The Walker of the Year poll for 1975, produced by the Editor's hand-picked panel, was, perhaps surprisingly, accompanied by the personal selections for Most Stylish Walkers by Julian Hopkins; the two lists were not entirely consistent.

Meanwhile, Buchanan was fiercely championing the "Keep Walking in the Olympics" campaign being managed by the special R.W.A. subcommittee and, noting the support of the next hosts, the U.S.S.R., confidently predicting eventual success. Simultaneously, he was whipping up support for Boundary Harriers in the Isle of Man, whose promotion of the 1975 National 20 miles at Castletown had been financially embarrassing for the Club; in the normal sluggish but well-intentioned way of walkers, the donations trickled slowly in.

An interesting statistical flourish by Stewart Wood ranked the competitors over the six major London Open Seven Mile races in terms of their average percentage times behind a fifty minute standard.¹⁰ Top of the list was the man of the moment Brian Adams on 1.04%; i.e., he averaged 50:31.4. No-one appears to have commented either for against the production of such tabulations.

It may be of interest, given earlier debate on what *Record* should contain, to note the make-up in pages of a typical issue of the time, that for May, 1976:

Front cover	1
News, comments, letters, etc.	4
Results	8
Advertisements	5

Since the circulation continued to be healthy, it would appear that the devotion of about half the space to results was more or less what the readers wanted.

Record continued in a quarter of its pages to bring forward items of interest, often with the Editor's optimistic intention of provoking reader participation that would go beyond the normal personal grinding of axes. These included, in July, 1976 – to mark the fortieth anniversary of the historic event – Harold Whitlock's entertaining recollections of his Olympic victory in Berlin.¹¹

Another appearance of a statistical tabulation occurred in September, 1976, when Reg Wells listed the National (men's) records. The multiplicity of miles, kilometres and hours has been mentioned elsewhere and this was underlined by the forty different distances, from 1 mile to 200 kilometres, including the oddity of twenty-one miles, and all the hours from one to twenty-four; a handful still stood to the credit of Bobby Bridge and Edgar Horton in 1914, while the three- and four-mile figures had been set by George Larnier in 1905!

In another attempt at two-way traffic, Buchanan invited his readers to forecast the

results of the Olympic 20k (there being no 50k in 1976) but, in a flash of the apathy that from time to time noticeably irritated him, only six responded; Bautista for gold was a popular – and accurate – prediction.

Buchanan devoted an editorial to what might be called the “administrative health” of race walking in the country, believing that a change had come upon the R.W.A. since the 1960s. He attributed this to the activities of the British Race Walkers Club which, by 1976 had three of its founder members leading the Association's hierarchy – Peter Marlow as General Secretary, Alex Banyard as Treasurer and Reg Wells as Championships Secretary. On the other hand, he noted with regret, the B.R.W.C. itself had become largely inactive and there was a worrying shortage of new blood in the officials' ranks. He identified the latter problem as being the result of the holding down by older judges of the top level positions, thus blocking the progress of the younger ones and discouraging the youngest altogether.

Criticism of the 1976 National 50k course in Birmingham led to a small trickle of correspondence – on the lines of should the championships be testing events or speed trials – including a trenchant contribution from Denis Vale urging complainants to do something about it, such as organising events themselves. Buchanan must have enjoyed this, chiming in as it did with his own incessant efforts to encourage more involvement in administration. Like most challenges to become engaged or stay silent, it put an end to the debate!

With the state of British walking at a somewhat low ebb, one matter that sparked correspondence in *Record's* pages was the adoption of new R.W.A. Rules that removed the right to vote at the A.G.M. from Past Presidents. Harold Whitlock, who was perhaps the most distinguished of all Past Presidents, seemed to have been taken by surprise by the change and made his feelings known. Although no-one but Past Presidents was much concerned with the question, the voting right was restored the following year.

Throughout the latter part of 1976 and the beginning of 1977, *Race Walking Record* carried a number of items about the forthcoming Lugano Cup competition in Milton Keynes, even listing conveniently placed hotels, the most expensive of which was asking £8.75 for a single room on a bed and breakfast basis, or £9.05 for a room with a bath. The specially produced tee-shirts were equally cheap, by later standards, at £1.70, including postage. The Editor's equanimity must have been tried to the utmost as issue after issue carried a revised programme for the weekend, with supporting events coming and going, before it finished just as it had started; it was, he stressed, "due to no fault of the R.W.A."

There had always been complaints about the setting of fixture dates¹² but Dave Ainsworth, in his regular column *As I See It* found new grounds for concern, in that clashes with sponsored events tended to detract from the value of the exposure offered to the events' backers. Again, it was to be ten years before anything was done about it by the appointment of a National Fixtures Co-ordinator. Ainsworth was also critical of the practice of excluding "ladies" – as they were still called – from finish lists of some events and calling the female parts of the competitions "trials" instead of "races"; alternatively, the women were sometimes compelled to start after the men.¹³

The eventual success of the campaign, largely run by Dave Ainsworth, to have Ken Matthews' Olympic gold medal of 1964 recognised by his creation as M.B.E. was marked by an unusually lengthy profile (by Julian Hopkins) in the August, 1997 edition of *Record*, the longest single item – reports of the Olympic Games, etc., excluded – that had appeared in the magazine.

Buchanan was very critical of the British performances at Milton Keynes, pointing out that overseas walkers concentrated on either 20k or 50k and did not try to cover both. Noting the previous success of the B.R.W.C. in raising 20k standards, and referring to his earlier observations, he looked to the Club to lead a

revival under a new team of officers. He managed, as always, to combine his strong criticism with positively-formed suggestions for improvement and encouragement for the future.

One peculiar side aspect of the Lugano Cup events was the publication by the *Daily Mail* of an article whose tone was so offensive that the R.W.A. complained to the Press Council; the newspaper duly apologised. Press Officer Ainsworth thanked "all who bothered to put the *Mail* in their place - since they realise what a powerful bunch we are – they have published most of our results." He continued to badger event organisers to send their results to the appropriate press bodies in search of greater coverage.

In another attempt to provoke response, Buchanan asked walkers to state which system of judging administration they wanted – "international" or "domestic" – and there was actually enough reaction for him to have to select some representative letters; he reported that the majority of writers were in favour of falling in line with the world, another blow for the old guard.

Reference has been made elsewhere to the processes of metrication and rationalisation of distances. and, as ever, *Record* was there, urging its readers to participate in the debate. Acerbic as Buchanan's approach was at times, it cannot be denied that, if walkers found themselves presented with decisions and policies they found unwelcome, it was never because the Editor in his eleven years in the post did not give them the opportunity to state their views. In its first thirty years, the magazine had changed from what was basically a newsletter reporting what had happened to a campaigning journal. As McSweeney had tried to hold the sport together with many of its participants scattered round the world on war service, so Buchanan concentrated on trying to stop an imminent rot that he saw as caused by apathy and confusion. His main problem in stirring up either feeling or action, of course, was that the normal response to an accusation of apathy is "I don't care!"

From time to time, Buchanan laced his goading of a largely inert readership with historical items; the Whitlock memoir has been mentioned and the following year he reproduced “from an old magazine” an item by W.J.Coath recounting the origins of the Stock Exchange London to Brighton. It does not appear that the walking world in general ever offered any comment on the retrospective items.

Despite his acerbity, the Editor had, when necessary, a nice tone of innocent amazement. In July, 1978, he reproduced the *Ohio Race Walker's* report on the I.A.A.F. Walking Committee meeting at Milton Keynes ten months earlier, with the remark, “Surprisingly, this is the first we have heard of what went on at the meeting”; no accusations or allegations, simply a bewildered air, leaving the implicit arrows to strike where they would.

While introducing items such as those by Whitlock and Coath, Buchanan kept going some regular features, such as Dave Ainsworth's P.R.O. report, John Powell's *International Notes* and Julian Hopkins' *Training Talk*; these, together with advertisements and results continued to provide the bulk of each issue. His series of profiles, depending as it did upon the assistance of the subjects, was always fitful and eventually more or less disappeared altogether.

Under the heading *All Change* late in 1978, Buchanan reported that John Elston, who had printed the magazine for the previous sixteen years was giving it up, with the result that he, as Editor could take fuller control of the production and distribution; he promised to include “considerably more photographs” if they were supplied by readers; for once the readers seem to have complied!

This – the late 1970s – was the period when the air was thick with talk of the amalgamation of men's and women's walking. One problem, as briefly and warmly aired in *Record's* columns – sometimes with evidence of considerable misunderstanding – was the “constitutional” situation. Men's road walking had always been the responsibility of the

S.C.R.W.A. and then the R.W.A., with control of track walking being transferred by the A.A.A. in 1954, while on the women's side authority lay with the W.A.A.A. which had delegated road powers to the W.C.C.R.W.A.; the question was thus tripartite, but the W.A.A.A. in 1980 rescinded the delegated powers and also transferred control to the R.W.A.

During the negotiations on a merger – and it was not even clear at the time whether they were formally in progress – some vituperative correspondence was published. An anonymous letter on the management of women's walking was answered by another beginning, “I must fully endorse the views expressed in the August anonymous letter concerning women's walking in this country. Anybody involved with this side of our sport will already know that the W.C.C.R.W.A. officials are, with only one or two exceptions, useless and incompetent. The President is well known for her lack of interest in walking.” The writer went on to refer to the W.C.C.R.W.A. as “dithering grannies”. Michael Long, Walking Secretary of the Southern Counties Women's A.A.A., remained estimably equanimous, presumably realising that he was numbered among the incompetent dithering grannies, and obviously in favour of a merger, which came to pass two years later.

Notwithstanding the general reluctance of readers to rise to the Editor's spreading of bait and express themselves, they did sometimes wake up, as in the matter of the issue of standard numbers for the clubs, sponsored by the National Bus Company, and the R.W.A.'s rather curious decision not to permit races of less than 3000m at the televised Crystal Palace meetings, where there had hitherto been events at one mile. The standard numbers had been issued for the sake of uniformity and to aid race administration and were to be worn at all National Championships; the correspondence revealed that not all walkers seemed capable of remembering to take them with them and instances were quoted of various substitutes, including even pencilled numbers. The contract with the sponsors was for three years and the seemingly incurable amnesiac nature of

competitors ensured that it did not continue thereafter. Many people since have rued the demise of the scheme and – without success – urged its resurrection.

With the series of profiles of walkers having withered, Buchanan introduced profiles of clubs, which had already been tried by previous editors, and he reproduced a series of coaching articles by Jerzy Hausleber, who had led the Mexicans to such international success, which ran for several editions.

There was always room for domestic matters, some of which ran throughout the Association's first century – and, indeed, beyond – such as failure to submit race entries on time, and in 1979 Denis Vale let himself go on the apparent inability of walkers to take care of perpetual trophies that they had won, pointing out that they had originally cost money and had in many cases been created as permanent memorials to the departed. They still vanish into attics and sheds!

As the 1970s ended, Alan Buchanan fell into reflective mood on "A Decade of Change". He ruminated on increasing speeds and the difficulties for the judges in dealing with the modern generation of walkers. He offered three possibilities, removal from the rules of the wording about contact, addition of "visible to the human eye" and the use of mechanical aids. "Surely in the age of the Micro Chip," he wrote, "it is not beyond invention to produce a gadget fitted to the shoe indicating whether contact is being maintained." Despite some advocacy from elsewhere on the one hand and considerable toiling in workshops on the other, the first and third options fell, but he will have been satisfied to see his second suggestion – in the identical wording – incorporated into the rules, not, of course, that that finished the argument.

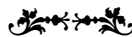
Like many another, Buchanan thought that the "current fitness trend towards jogging" offered an opportunity for recruitment to

walking, but no-one ever quite worked out how to do it and still have not. His hopes for the eighties were the adoption in Britain of the three-card system, to see walking continue its exciting progress at international level "and finally to regain my speed and win a race or two again!" The first two came to pass, but it is not for others to pass judgement upon the third. Buchanan saw the *Record* through the first two years of the next decade before bowing out, having served longer than any of his predecessors except McSweeney. His successor was to set a new record in post, full-time Essex Police Chief Inspector and part-time Essex smallholding farmer, John Hedgethorpe, who took over in October, 1981.



John Hedgethorpe

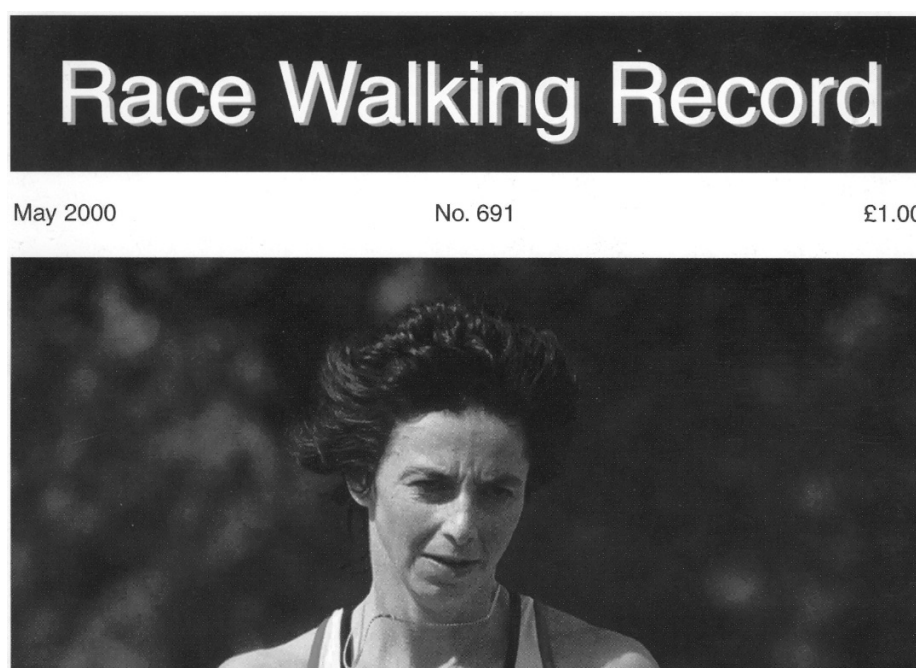
Remarking on Alan Buchanan's tone, Hedgethorpe wrote in his first editorial that, "His writings have not by any means pleased everybody but then nothing would except an unrelieved diet of bromide. It will be the new management's idea not to dish up bromide either so if you feel annoyed write a letter in terms which can be printed...." As the race walking "establishment", for which the new man did not have a great deal of time, was soon to learn, he lived up to his no-bromide promise.



EVOLUTION PART THREE: A DEGREE OF GLOSS



The border, price and “Race Walking Association” were in colour, changing from month to month. The striations in the border varied in a random manner, possibly as a result of the printing process



May, 2000: the first full-colour edition; the frame colour, originally white, varied and a contents panel was later added; the illustration was generally an action photograph

(All illustrations are reduced in size)

RACE WALKING RECORD

4: COLOUR & CONFLICT

Having worked just to get out his first couple of issues on time – although managing to fit in a revamp of the masthead – Hedgethorne was able in December, 1981, to ask, “What is to be the new policy of *Record* as to contents?” Like his predecessors, he had to balance advertisements, results, letters and pictures and adopted the standard editor’s trick of asking the readership what it wanted. No doubt he knew what *he* wanted and expected the normal resounding silence to give him *carte blanche* to steer the magazine where he evidently thought that it should go.

Naturally, he was worried about the financial viability of the enterprise¹ and urged – as which editor does not – an increase in circulation.

Just as Alan Buchanan had signed off with a look back over the decade, so Hedgethorne took a retrospective look at the year. He found “no firm signs that things are getting better. But at least on the international scene there are indications that they have stopped getting worse.” “Judging controversy has mercifully died down,” he thought, but, “it is waiting in the wings to reappear, no doubt....” It did not need great prescience to be convinced of the truth of that observation!

He clearly knew what level of response to expect from his readers, as he concluded, “The RWA questionnaire in the last issue might yield some bright ideas: on this *Comment* is not hopeful!”

Any hint of the serving of bromide was certainly dispelled by January, 1982, when Hedgethorne set about the General Committee for changing the date of the 20k championship “for the sake of two or three taking part in an international.” He claimed that he was only

asking questions and that someone else might know the answers; he obviously did.

Remarkably, one reader, Sue Unwin of Bolehall Swifts, was bold enough to write and chide the Editor on his new layout; he was clearly taken aback, because he agreed with the criticism and undertook to put things right!

If he did not receive sufficient material from outside correspondents, Hedgethorne could, and generally did, interlard his copy with copious reports and information about the Essex Walking League, the introduction of a women’s division neatly coinciding with his assumption of the editorship. This did move some readers to complain that there was excessive concentration on matters in Hedgethorne’s own county, but there is no sign that it bothered him greatly. “Send me your stuff and I won’t use mine,” was his motto.

The National 10 at Dronfield, referred to in Chapter 9, gave Hedgethorne his first real opportunity to sink his editorial teeth into the establishment and he devoted an entire page of the twenty available in the May, 1982, issue to pointing out, somewhat trenchantly, what was wrong with the rule governing the appointment of judges and the way the system worked. Perhaps trenchancy was the way to go, or perhaps everyone else realised the problem with the new rule, labelled by the Editor “Uncle Tom Cobley’s Charter”; whichever it was, the rule was swiftly changed.

Complaints about clashes of fixtures – this being before the post of Fixtures Co-ordinator was created – and a number of spirited rants about the administration of the judging in the National 10 miles gave Hedgethorne plenty to fill his pages and to show his true editorial style of demanding action by those in charge.

A rather rare morsel of relief for the establishment appeared in the form of a letter *praising* the international selectors for getting the teams right, although it was naturally outnumbered by those of a contrary nature; still, every speck of comfort is welcome.

Just to ensure that a word of praise did not go to the hierarchy's collective head, "Ex Major Panel judge (name and address supplied)" wrote to *Record* complaining about the apparent arbitrariness of R.W.A. nominations to the International Panel, with a number of examples. "Is it any wonder," he asked, "that people who have given a lifetime to the sport are getting sick of the present administration?"

Another poke at the establishment was the Editor's own examination of the championship programme, although it was to be another ten years before Ken Smith's attempts at rationalisation, which even then were not altogether successful.

Hedgethorpe returned to the "open vote" system – as distinct from Buchanan's expert panel – to determine the "best of the year" names. Steve Barry and Irene Bateman were top choices; Gill Trower was the most improved, Phil Vesty best junior and Steyning was voted best club. The innovative ballot for best meeting of the year went to the National Under-20 championships at Sleaford, just ahead of the Leicester Mercury and the Chippenham to Calne.

Record looked different from December, 1982, when the stippled grey border of the front cover, sported since July, was replaced by a red one; thereafter, the colour varied for some years. It was a trivial change, but gave a slightly cheerier aspect to the publication.

Trying always to have a substantial item in each issue, Hedgethorpe continually rang the changes; early examples were Julian Hopkins on improving 50k standards, profiles on races such as the Bradford and the Chippenham to Calne and an examination of the requirements of race walking shoes. It is difficult to gauge

whether such features were popular with the readers, but they probably were, as no-one seemed to complain and they continued to appear. If all else failed and there was a shortage of material, the deficiency could always be met by correspondence on an old favourite, and in 1983 Harry Callow got things going again on the subjects of the definition and judging. Quite a healthy flurry ensued over four or five months, one contributor even floating the idea of a "novice category", which is more or less the Category B – continuous contact but knees "optional" – introduced in 2000. Martin Oliver, denouncing race walking's "militant tendency", called upon the sport to stand up and be counted, supporting Callow's call to put the clock back to the supposedly good old days. Kevin Baker joined in and the Editor devoted a couple of pages of his *Focus* column to justifying the use of cameras to detect lifting even if 100% coverage is not possible. He argued that if the camera catches a walker off then he *is* off, regardless of the fact that there is not complete surveillance. He might have strengthened his argument, but did not, by pointing out that invigilation by the human eye is not 100% either.

An intermittent thread in the letters pages was recruitment and how to improve it. Several newcomers to the sport were noticeable in the debate and there was some agreement as to what needed to be done. There seemed, however, to be little idea of *how* it was to be done and who was to do it. Despite the existence of the new subcommittee system, designed to make action easier and more productive – and although there was a Publicity Subcommittee among the number – nothing very much ensued except a continuation of the grumbling at lack of progress and a few sporadic local efforts.²

One of the oddities of *Race Walking Record* during the 1980s was its eccentricity of layout, principally in the Letters section. This usually amounted to two or three pages' worth of copy, but extending over perhaps five pages of the magazine. An individual letter could be continued on a different page – sometimes on an *earlier* one – where it might meet up with the

continuation of a feature from an entirely different page; it hardly made for easy reading. These were, at least for the Editor, the days before computers and the production method was to type the material, cut it up and fit it together, jigsaw fashion, where it would go.

Hedgethorpe waggishly introduced “the year beloved of the prophets of doom”, 1984, by listing all the features of the magazine and pointing out that in each case some loved them and some hated them; even the introduction of coloured borders and the variety of the hues had critics, although as the Editor said, “When you put the year’s issues in a pile they look very jolly.” He had, he wrote, intended to make a New Year’s resolution to please everyone, but some readers disliked New Year’s resolutions; it would, therefore, be the mixture as before.

The same issue contained a long article by Ed Shillabeer on how to prepare for a quadrathon – unfortunately, information for which no-one has subsequently had very much need – and a hint that the Editor had had enough of the debate on turning back the clock as far as the definition of walking was concerned and that he wanted other subjects. Hedgethorpe even kicked off the year of doom with a poem submitted by a reader.³

Proof was soon forthcoming of the Editor’s statement that everything was hated by someone, when the Chairman of the Association’s Publicity Sub-committee, writing as the “Programme Production Department”, sought to draw a contrast between Hedgethorpe’s assertion that he lacked the space to include everything and the contents of the February, 1984, issue. *All the excuses you’ll ever need* was denounced as “another load of Yankee rubbish,” the reference to the proposed compulsory nature of the A.A.A. Registration Scheme was brushed aside on the curious grounds that it could not be compulsory “unless the clubs agree to it, and all clubs have a vote at the A.G.M.,” and objection was taken to the reproduction of material from the Y.A.G. Championship programme with “no acknowledgement to the source or even the compiler or his copyright.” Finally, the use on

the cover of the old badge was criticised. It was all, Hedgethorpe seemed to think, not worth troubling over; his reply to a two-hundred-and-fifty word letter consisted of a mere twenty-three, scarcely amounting to much more than an acknowledgement!

A flicker of interest in a Grand Prix series, proposed by Len Ruddock, provided a short-lived replacement for the continuing debate on the definition, but it ran its course and died away after two or three months; an even more short-lived topic, provoked by the holding of the National 50k in Kendal, was the accessibility of race venues, especially on Sundays, and, on behalf of the unmotorised section of the sport, railway enthusiast Martin Oliver discussed the layout of the network in some detail. It was good, clean fun which, Hedgethorpe was always arguing, was what sport should be about.

A slightly different approach to the definition appeared as Frank Brown produced a legal-semantic analysis of the Rule, showing that much of the wording was redundant, and cutting it all down to five lines.

To mark Issue No. 500 (which, due to an error in 1957, when two editions were numbered 185, was actually the five-hundred-and-first), Hedgethorpe resurrected that favourite of editors everywhere, the *Looking Back* column, in which the incumbent simply lifts his predecessors’ work from ten or twenty years before; it had been used before, would be used again and could quite simply go on indefinitely.

Whether or not *Record* was full, space was still found to list Race Permits issued, although the lists, compared with the results printed, seemed rather short.

Irritated by what he called “apathy which bordered upon deep coma” Hedgethorpe had tried to drop the “Best of the Year” vote, but was urged – presumably by those who had not participated anyway – to continue with it, but he did simplify it to Best Male Walker and Best Female Walker of 1984.

At the same time, he found that combining a voluntary task like editing a monthly magazine, with a full-time job is just too much. In Hedgethorpe's case, there were *two* jobs, as a police officer and as a smallholding farmer, and between those problems and the handover to Peter Marlow as "commercial editor", Julian Hopkins as "features editor" and Reg Wells as "results editor", the outcome of the poll seemed to go astray. Wishing the triumvirate well, he repeated the adage that a camel is a horse designed by a committee, fearing that the next issue might turn out to have two humps.

Although the April, 1985, edition contained Marlow's name as Editor, it was, as Hedgethorpe pointed out, "the last issue under the present management". The layout for the next couple of issues was rather attenuated, with text items in two-column format as heretofore but the actual *printed* area rather narrower; this gave a decidedly sparse look to the magazine, although the style soon reverted.

Apart from that brief anomaly, there was scarcely any difference, except that, as the new management was "establishment" – Wells being R.W.A. General Secretary and Marlow having been so until the previous year – the general tone was not as aggressive, particularly in the Letters Column, which may have been due to the absence of Hedgethorpe's provocative editorials.

The first noticeable innovation under the new régime was actually the cosmetic one of changing to semi-gloss paper, which happened in September and resulted in a marked improvement in the quality of the photographs, which were now to be found throughout the magazine, instead of being confined almost entirely to the covers.

A letter from Chris Maddocks in the first glossy issue showed that the editorial policy was still "open", as he questioned his omission from the Lugano team for the Isle of Man, being the first expression of anti-establishment feeling since the hand-over. Two editions were largely devoted to the Isle of Man events – one to a

preview and one to a report – so that the new editor had no shortage of material, although the printing of the General Secretary's Annual Report in double spacing may suggest that the in-tray was not overflowing with provocative correspondence.

Marlow avoided having to write an editorial at all the following month, reproducing a Mike Hathaway article from *Athletics Weekly* which expatiated upon the friendliness and team spirit seen in the Isle of Man; he was struck by the "honest competition in a spirit of friendly rivalry." It was a rare compliment from outside the bounds of walking and seen as the opposite of the influx of big money into sport and the eruption of cynicism.

Criticism was not entirely absent, however, as Alan Buchanan attacked the R.W.A.'s "lemming-like attitude of dragging walkers and supporters all round the country for championships," when reporting on the Y.A.G. event at Morecambe. He – and Pauline and Keith Tonks in a letter – called attention to the inaccurate measurements and to problems with members of the public accompanied by prams and dogs wandering on the course. Nonetheless, in the afterglow of the Isle of Man the general tone was amiable.

Peter Marlow soon found it necessary to do what his predecessor had been urging upon General Committee for some time and raised the annual subscription for *Record* from £3.50 to £5.00, to overcome continuing losses subsidised by the 200 Club lottery. He also promised a "colour front page⁴, coaching clinic, aches and pains column and a monthly who's who," the first subject of which was Colin Young.

Whenever things were seemingly going smoothly for the Editor – *any* Editor – Martin Oliver of Enfield could be relied upon to put the pressure on with a vengeance and he did so with a five-pronged attack more or less fended off by Marlow's response; as might be expected, the *general* response was very muted, but editorial comment was liberal.

An unusual topic of correspondence was entry fees, some people feeling that there had been too many increases, which led to an analysis by John Powell of price trends over the previous quarter century; it appeared that walkers – at £1-£2 per race – were suffering little compared with runners, a characteristic that held true another quarter century later, while still outstripping inflation.

Among the fitful correspondence on the “new look” magazine, Bob Dobson made the point that controversial editors (Buchanan and Hedgethorpe) had been succeeded by a non-controversial one (because he was felt to represent the official line) dealing with controversial *policies*. The general feeling over the new approach was fifty-fifty, although some thought that *Record* should still be a fixtures-and-results list. Throughout its history, it had always been the case that when an editor asked what was wanted there was little response, but that when he did what *he* wanted there were complaints; most editors had then worked on the basis that “you can’t vote after the election” and carried on regardless.

A manifestation of the desire to do so was shown after the 1986 A.G.M., referred to in Chapter 9, when Dave Rosser was beaten by one vote by Ken Smith in the election for Championships Secretary. A number of correspondents *apologised* for not being present to support Rosser; the outcome of the vote, however, did not have much subsequent effect on the attendance at A.G.Ms.⁵

It seemed that *Record* was about to improve technically when Marlow announced the acquisition of a word processor, with the hope that typing errors would be reduced. It was certainly not before time, as there had of late been several of them, perhaps topped by the gaffe OBITURIES and the extravagant scattering of apostrophes.

The last edition of 1986 was fairly upbeat, as both Buchanan, who as Editor had seemed worried about participation, and Ian Brooks, had items denying that numbers were falling.

Reporting on a race walking seminar in Birmingham, Reg Wells remarked that “only 34 people turned up so perhaps it is fair to say that only 34 people are as dedicated to the sport of race walking as so very many say they are” and provoked a sharp response from John Hedgethorpe. Perhaps relations within the sport were reflected by the former editor’s opening of “Dear Marlow” and his curt reference to “Wells”. He argued that many of Wells’s ideas would be counterproductive and would actually work *against* the club development advocated. John Powell and the perennial correspondent Martin Oliver both weighed in with lengthy contributions. Backing up Hedgethorpe’s assertion that people were *doing* things rather than attending seminars, there was a detailed article on the development methods of Steyning A.C. and a report on a coaching day put on by Brighton and Hove A.C.

One of the things that was happening during 1986 and 1987 was the virtual disappearance from the pages of *Race Walking Record* of an editorial column, although there were several letters and other contributions by Reg Wells who, as one of the triumvirate, might be thought to represent the collective view. Nonetheless, it was rather odd that, apart from Wells’s *Hotline* there was no real indication of what the magazine “thought”. Perhaps it was to be taken as read that it was as one with the General Committee, which, of course, it generally was. One or two correspondents appeared to welcome the fact that the contents of the magazine were now backed by the organisation and that it had indeed become the *official* organ of the Association; others seemed to find it stultifying.

By August, 1987, indeed, the seventeen pages available for content were made up thus: *Hotline* by Wells (largely on the standard of judging), two; notice of the A.G.M., two; Annual Report by Wells, two-and-a-half; results and reports, seven-and-a-half; advertisements, three. This, in view of the imminent A.G.M., was a “formal” issue, but even so there were no letters or “outside” contributions. Perhaps to compensate – or to atone – a quarter of the

October edition consisted of letters, so that it came out about level in the end, although gaps of two months in a running argument do tend rather to take the heat out of things.

The sudden manifestation of inward contemplation provoked by G.Mayes of Essex early in 1988 has been described in Chapter 9 and was stirring enough to occupy four pages of one issue and to lap over into another as correspondents attacked the originator of the theme, with no-one coming forward to support him. Meanwhile, Phil Smillie of Leicester had been looking at the contents of *Record* over the previous six months and discovered that the photographs of walkers had been twenty-seven male, six female and three mixed. He called for the coverage to be more representative, presumably by way of a form of positive discrimination. He also complained about the number and length of reports on overseas events, as had many others, although just as many had welcomed them.

Appealing to the less experienced walker, *Record* spread itself with five pages by Bob Picton on how to achieve the two-minute lap and then extend it to go inside 24:30 for 5000m.

Another rise in subscription rates – to £5.50 p.a., so abrupt that it was hand-written on the “business” page – failed to halt the financial loss on the magazine and Peter Marlow’s editorship came to an end in November⁶. A new name appeared on the magazine; not, actually a new one, but an old one returning, as John Hedgethorpe, having presumably come to terms with the young lambs of Bridge Farm and the black sheep of the Essex underworld, took up the pen once more. A new editor meant a new look, as the coloured borders and curves gave way to coloured lines and a lighter appearance. A couple of issues had been missed and, to show that he meant to play fair, Hedgethorpe immediately made it plain that subscribers were paying for twelve copies of the magazine and *not* a year’s supply of fewer than a dozen.

Perhaps to rub it in that the *ancien régime* was back in command, Hedgethorpe had as his

first item a report on the Essex Walking League, then approaching the end of its twenty-first season, and then followed up with front cover photographs from the League twice in three months. He also reinstated an “occasional club history series,” starting with Colchester!

However, with an “I’ve asked you before, but I’ll ask again, although I’m not expecting much response,” type of air, he published a questionnaire on *Record*’s content, drawn up by an outsider, Jon Tull of the Royal Russell School Business Studies Department, saying that he would view the findings as invaluable. The questionnaire was published in April, 1989, with the summary appearing in August. Results were given in percentages with no response *figures* quoted. On what the content should be, there seemed to be general satisfaction, although two-thirds of the respondents would have appreciated more interviews with walkers and three-quarters, giving the lie to the vociferous minority, would have been interested in *more* foreign material. Again, three-quarters would have been prepared to pay more, with over half apparently being ready to spend up to £1 per month, which was equal to the entry fee for a National Championship.

Reading many years’ issues of *Race Walking Record* straight through, as has been necessary in the preparation of Chapters 23 to 26 of the present volume, tends to bring on a sense not just of *déjà vu* but of desperate *ennui*, as the same subjects arise time and again in the correspondence columns and the same views are reiterated. Over and over, a writer would suggest going back to the good old days, when walking *was* walking, everyone knew what was what and foreigners were expected to do it the English way – the *proper* way. Even granted what the rules may have been at any time, there was clear belief within a large part of the race walking world that most judges were blind, incompetent, insane or prejudiced. Any editor from about 1960 onwards might well have varied his ploys of “looking back” by simply reprinting a few old letters about judging and the definition and probably no-one would have remarked on their antiquity.

Actually, Hedgethorne *did* vary his “Glances at Yesteryear” as he now called it, by quoting a newspaper article of 1903 reporting on a fifteen mile race from Amersham to Aylesbury by nine employees of the Neasden Works Locomotive Section of the Metropolitan Railway, won in two hours and twenty-three minutes. Apart from the normal prizes of smoking items, the last man home, half an hour behind the winner, received a consolation prize of a crutch. Hedgethorne, naturally enough, applauded the organisers’ sense of humour, because it showed a feeling for *fun*.

All editors of *Record*, working on a budgetary knife-edge, have worried about sluggishness of subscription renewals and Hedgethorne was so bothered by this that he offered a “thirteen-for-the-price-of-twelve” deal to anyone paying by the tenth of the month in which it was due. There is no record of whether this ploy worked and, if it did, how much it cost in lost revenue, which is also true of the later offer of £1 discount for the year to anyone introducing a new subscriber.

Hedgethorne himself flirted with the turn-back-the-clock brigade; the 1989 National 35k on a mountainous course at Essex University included the Essex County Twenty Mile Championship, so times were called at that point. The Editor noted walkers’ gratitude and suggested that the *National* twenty miles, the oldest of the R.W.A. Championships, should be resurrected, having been changed to thirty and then thirty-five kilometres in 1978 and 1979. It was restored in 1995, again changed to thirty-five kilometres in 1999 and abandoned altogether after 2004; that was probably *not* what Hedgethorne had in mind.

The August, 1989, issue contained one of the strangest items ever found in *Record*; an advertiser, whose name was followed by “YRWC, CLRWC, MSc, BA, LRAM, Dip Ed, Dip Deaf, Dip Sports Leadership, Soviet Master of Sport 1984 (Bfd Coll., 1984), Emeritus Professor in Psychology to the University of Toronto, National Advisory Council for Special Education (NUT),” offered his psychological

services to the British race walking community at £5 per item of service – these were enumerated – or £15 the lot. He might not have become rich as a result of his consultancy, particularly as he did not include his address in the advertisement, but would surely have merited a place in our Chapter 30, had he not, perhaps, unfortunately tipped over the edge beyond eccentricity.

Hedgethorne’s previously mentioned article about Colchester was as much about the town – and himself – as about the club and, in the same spirit of local civic pride, Martin Oliver contributed an entertaining one on Enfield, “the town the world passed by.” On a more practical note, Peter Markham, the National Event Coach, urged readers to consider taking up coaching. He reproduced the notes on progressing through the stages of B.A.A.B. qualification; given the prospect of working for three years, attending courses and taking two examinations, albeit with the modest pass level of 60%, many prospective coaches may have turned their interests elsewhere. It was, of course, not Markham’s fault that the B.A.A.B. scheme read more like the description of an obstacle course than an invitation to enter. A couple of issues later, Hedgethorne was asking, “Where have all the coaches gone?” “Away, frustrated by the B.A.A.B. bureaucracy,” may well have been the answer from anyone who had tried to master the system.

During 1989, continuing from the previous year and drifting on into 1990, the question of British 50k walking kept being raised in *Record*; “Are we any good? Can we improve? How?” was the drift of the matter. The oddity – or perhaps it was only to be expected – was that, although the questions kept being raised, there were very few serious attempts at replies. As it was continually floated, presumably no-one thought that the answers were, “No. No. It’s impossible,” respectively but the marked shortage of anything leading to progress was conspicuous.

A positive – if unpopular for various reasons – view of how to progress by presenting race

walking as an athletic event rather than a separate sport, was advanced by John Delaine of Aldershot, Farnham and District A.C., which was then a very strong *female* club with few male walkers. The problem was that, if left to athletics in general, rather than having its own organisation, race walking would be ignored by the (comparatively) rich and powerful and, through being shunned, would waste away. That has always been the difficulty⁷.

In December, Hedgethorpe varied *Looking Back* by glancing not at a particular year but at Christmas issues of the past as far remote as 1943 and gave an added festive touch by having the Christmas greetings, complete with holly, in colour on the front page.

His next innovation was to alter the appearance of the front cover again, a year after his previous change. Taking advantage of the improved, near-photographic quality of the paper, he presented the cover as an edge-to-edge monochrome picture, with the publication information overprinted in black or white, as better suited to the tone of the photograph. Unless it was occupied by an advertisement, the back cover was generally in similar style.

Inside, it was business as usual, still very nearly a "Walking in Essex" publication, with three pages on the death of the Police Barking to Southend and another on the health of the Essex League.

A rare light-hearted correspondence broke out on the arcane subject of double county representation. A number of writers had both walked and run for their counties, while walking and chess seemed a popular combination, but the palm eventually went to Wally Emery, a county representative at both walking and small-bore rifle.

It was not all frivolous jollity, of course; correspondence and discontent rumbled on over international selection, voting rights, the judging system and, as always, the definition, fixture clashes, inertia and all the old favourites. A couple of writers, anticipating a suggestion

floated at international level level twenty years later, actually proposed the replacement of disqualifications by time penalties, offending walkers being hauled off the road for, say, one or two minutes to stand by the judge concerned, which was evidently thought more appropriate than adding the prescribed time to the walker's finishing mark. This would, indeed, have been the better way to manage it, as a walker continuing in ignorance of his penalty might well have provoked an opponent into transgression; on the other hand, who can tell what a detained competitor might do to regain lost time when he was let back onto the road?

One possible explanation for the falling-off of 50k walking in Britain was advanced by John Paddick, who felt that, when he and a few others were breaking four-and-a-half hours without having an international selection, there appeared to be a "closed shop", leading to repeated selection of slower men who could not cope with hot conditions. In consequence, there was no real incentive for those on the verge of catching the selectors' eye to make the effort to improve. It was a changing-room suspicion coming out into the open.

The monthly *Buchanan's View*, provided by the former editor of *Record*, continued, sometimes dealing with topics of his choosing and sometimes taking up matters raised by others. One of the latter was the suggestion of a "winter closedown" of a couple of months when, as some suggested, it would be possible to concentrate on developing the social side of the clubs and building team spirit, although how this was to be done with no races in the calendar was far from clear. In any case, Buchanan thought that the proposal emanated from those "whose only interest was the prospects of our potential international walkers" and he did not approve. Neither, it appeared, did Hedgethorpe and most other walkers took much the same view, equating a pause to a loss of momentum.

Still struggling with finances and with an added twopence on the cost of postage, the Editor had to raise the subscription rate yet again, by 50p to £6.50; it was not a large

increase, half of it going to the Post Office anyway, but still some readers were unhappy about it. They were presumably not those who had been prepared to pay more only months earlier – or perhaps they were prepared to pay more only hypothetically and not with actual money.

If Hedgethorpe had a shortcoming it was that he sometimes got into hot water for making a comment on a letter – and some of his comments were of a similar length to the original – that, upon reflection, he might have moderated a little, and from time to time he was reprimanded by another (or the original) correspondent. From his own point of view, his skin was thick enough, but he did care for the feelings of others and one response to a chiding, typical of several, was, “We have to confess to being a little unkind in the first place.” His hard and sometimes gruff exterior, which must have terrified not a few cadets during his time as Commandant of the Essex Police Training School, covered an interior that was a great deal softer and his victims could always know that after being addressed by surname in a barking tone there would be a gently encouraging follow-up; that did not mean, however, that it would not happen again, especially in the pages of *Record*.

Perhaps a symptom of the increasing age of the race walking community was that as the nineteen-nineties progressed, the number of obituaries published increased, with sometimes three or four per issue; it was often depressing reading, not just for the loss of the great names in the sport but also for the passing of many virtual unknowns who had given the sport so much of their time and energy with no real recognition.

While some – including Hedgethorpe – were urging simplicity and fun and the avoidance of too much bureaucracy, the Southern Counties’ Women’s A.A.A. were holding their track championships in 1991 in a state of rather bewildering complexity. On the 27th May, the Junior Ladies’ 3000m (“intermediates may compete”) and Girls’ 2500m (“minors may

compete”) were held at Crystal Palace; on the 16th June at the same venue were the Intermediate 3000m and the Senior Ladies’ 3000m (“juniors may compete”) and on the 7th September at Enfield appeared the Senior Ladies’ 5000m (“intermediates and juniors may compete”). Remarkably, this gave the intermediates and juniors the opportunity – if they were good enough – to win titles in three different age group events. Commenting on the poor turnout for the National 35k of that year, Hedgethorpe had remarked, as he did from time to time, “It’s no good grumbling that the races aren’t there.” Certainly, the southern women had no cause to do so!

Record reported on the Southern Area’s “Strider” scheme to entice outsiders into the sport by offering a badge for five miles in the hour. In London, only three tried – and two of those belonged to Steyning A.C. – while in Colchester thirty-two participated, seventeen beating the time. The problem with the London exercise was an almost total lack of “public” publicity, with walking clubs being informed and a couple of notices being sent to the local newspaper but never published. Another bright idea faded away due to lack of planning and foresight; there appeared in some quarters to be a rather arrogant belief that race walking was so wonderful that the outsiders would somehow seek it out.

As the results and reports increased, other features became smaller and Alan Buchanan’s monthly musings, which often stirred up debate, disappeared altogether; the “more listings” enthusiasts were having their way. Even the letters, which were growing longer, were becoming less provocative and generally did not arouse much interest. So many results were now appearing that they were no longer displayed in tabular form but were “run on”, so that a walker and his time would often appear on different lines, which made reading difficult.

A brief exchange of views occurred in the correspondence columns, started by statistician John Powell, as to why many walkers in the upper echelons did not support championships.

Apart from a small handful of *individual* justifications such as illness and international preparation there was not much explanation.

Not surprisingly, the November, 1991, edition of *Record*, marking the fiftieth anniversary of its birth, was an occasion for nostalgia, with John Keown's "almanac of fifty Record years" and a reproduction in its entirety of Issue No.1.

A debate on the straight-knee part of the definition – *again* – veered off in the direction of wondering whether some walkers *could* not straighten or simply *did* not do so. Some thought the latter and there were hints of carelessness, to put it no more strongly.

Again, in 1992, John Hedgethorpe found cause for complaint when the previously arranged national championships programme was completely disrupted by the "need" to hold trial races for the very few walkers with anything like a chance of international selection. "Surely," he wrote, "it is time that the national championship dates were fixed and sacrosanct." Surely, one might have thought, in view of previous experiences, the Editor was indulging in pipe-dreams, although there were many letters supporting him. The row was one of the spurs leading to Ken Smith's proposed championship scheme, described elsewhere, with, unfortunately, its more or less wholesale rejection by the R.W.A.

Commenting on the election of Peter Cassidy as Honorary General Secretary, Hedgethorpe noted that, "He believes in communication and one must hope that his election heralds a new era of full R.W.A. openness." That certainly *was* the new policy – as little secrecy and confidentiality as possible – but he soon discovered that communication works only if there is someone listening.

In mid-1992, *Record* reported research by Karen Dunster – National Junior Champion in 1986 and 1987 – and others at the Queen's University of Belfast on physiology and training of female race walkers, in anticipation of the

introduction of the 10000m walk to the Olympic programme that year. The paper presented some interesting conclusions and represented a new and rather more academic approach for the magazine, but provoked only a handful of responses. Possibly discussing carbohydrate intake levels was not as stimulating for the readership as resurrection very few months of the definition and judging.

The inexorable feeling of *déjà vu*, several times in this volume, was maintained in the pages of *Record* by letters and editorials on date clashes, particularly the tendency of some race promoters (including the Southern Area) not to notice that a particular open had been on the same date for twenty years and to promote their own races on the same day. The changing of pre-published "National" dates to accommodate trial races not only contributed to the clashing but also provoked some bitterness and an air of exasperation on Hedgethorpe's part. Indeed, the Editor himself was well aware of the *déjà vu* and headed one of his nostalgia columns *The Same Topics Over the Years*; he referred particularly to what this volume has seen as the perennial problems; the definition, chronic shortage of money and declining participation, especially the first-named.

To alert the readership to Britain's standing in the world, Hedgethorpe published Palle Lassen's lists of countries ranked by the national record time. The nations are interesting. The women's 10k showed 1 Australia (41:30); 2 Russia (41:57); 3 Germany (42:30)....19 Great Britain (45:42)....63 Panama(63:39); 64 Peru (63:53); 65 Chile (70:47). At men's 20k, they showed 1 Czechoslovakia (1:18:13); 2 Russia (1:18:20); 3 Sweden 1:18:35....21 Great Britain (1:22:03)....94 Laos (2:11:32); 95 Papua (2:12:13); 96 Bahrein (2:13:24 and at 50k 1 Russia (3:37:41); 2 Germany 3:38:17); 3 Spain (3:40:46)....18 Great Britain (3:51:37)....64 Virgin Islands (5:09:04); 65 Qatar (5:30:00); 66 Libya (5:39:23). Apart from the fact that Great Britain had its highest ranking at 50k, somewhat offsetting another perpetual *Record* strand of "What's happened to our 50k walking?" a couple of other interesting aspects were China's

three positions of 5 – 19 – 11 and Ireland's of 28 – 24 – 45 (this last being level with Kenya on 4:25:24)⁸.

Oddly, no-one felt moved to comment on Lassen's rankings, despite what was seen as the far from satisfactory British results in the World Cup at Monterey shortly after.

The problems at the World Championships in Stuttgart⁹, however, together with the subsequent outbreak of anti-walking hysteria among the less cultured sections of the press, *did* produce an editorial under the heading *We've made it to the Silliness Hall of Fame*. This led to a flurry of comment in the magazine, most of it being concentrated on the perceived shortcomings of the organisation at the event and the performance of the judging team.

Yet another price rise – although the first for two years – saw the subscription rate for *Record* go up by £1 to £8 per annum but, in exchange, there was the promise of larger type to aid the ailing eyesight of what the Editor called the ageing readership, and an increase to a regular twenty pages to accommodate the change. Nevertheless, the price had doubled in four years and some readers took exception.

Many readers who simply wished to get on with the sport must have experienced sinking of the heart upon receipt of their copy of *Record* when Hedgethorpe had a front cover note calling attention to a feature entitled *The Great Debate rolls on*; the pros and cons of electronic detection against the human eye, and of *better* detection against abolishing contact altogether have been discussed elsewhere and need not be repeated here. It appeared that those thoroughly tired of the whole thing and sharing that attitude held a working majority as, after the first five-page feature, all fell silent and correspondents returned to complaining about clashes, although the comments on the *Stuttgart Scandal* continued to occupy some space in the columns for a few months until they, too, faded out.

Reading through copy after copy of *Race Walking Record*, as the researcher is bound to

do, there arises a sense of wonder at how the successive Editors – and particularly Buchanan and Hedgethorpe (in his second spell), who each did eleven years – kept their enthusiasm at such a high glow for so long. Month after month, they tried to float issues to which few rose, to stir up debates in which few were interested, to start arguments that few took up and to issue warnings that few heeded, all interlarded with criticism of the General Committee that bothered very few – except, presumably, the members of that body, and even *they* seldom responded.

In any period of twelve months, two or three major issues might feature but the readers' contributions came from the same handful. The Editors must have wondered – and one or two actually expressed their thoughts rather pointedly – whether most subscribers simply wanted to see their names in print among the results lists.

Hedgethorpe tried to work up enthusiasm in 1995 for a revision of the National Championship scoring, calling for the adoption of the Lugano system, which would have resulted in more teams' finishing, albeit with fewer than the full complement of scorers. He was to an extent kicking at an open door, because most people – particularly those from small clubs – agreed with him, but it took some time for the change to be made, partly, perhaps, because the response in the letters pages was completely absent. Meanwhile, he undertook to maintain a Club of the Year table based on the Lugano method to show the difference it made.

Even his attempt to rekindle the debate on the proposed new definition was, as he put it, “predictably underwhelming”, with only four contributions, largely expressing a desire to be done with debate and leave things alone. One of the four was scornful of the phrase “seeks to maintain contact”, on the grounds that everyone could claim that they were *seeking* to do so, even if they were conspicuously failing, an obvious point that seemed to have eluded the drafters. As we have noted elsewhere, the proposed peculiar wording was abandoned.

Despite his earlier promise of larger print, by mid-1995 Hedgethorpe was using the smallest type ever seen in *Record*. The printing was done by photo-reduction from larger sheets, resulting sometimes in sizes as small as 5 point,¹⁰ although fairly generous leading made it just about legible in a good light. This shrinking crept in bit-by-bit and no-one appeared to notice; in any case, it kept the price constant despite the rise in production costs.

Even the publication in mid-1995 of the provisional grading lists for officials, which had some very peculiar inclusions and some equally curious omissions, while resulting in a number of appeals from the disgruntled, did not lead to an outbreak of criticism in the pages of *Record*. Those who could not stomach the scheme at all – as distinct from those who felt that they had been misgraded – chose either to remain off the lists while continuing to officiate or to stop officiating, rather than to air their criticisms in public. Had they done so, it might have resulted in an improvement of the scheme.

A letter from Darrell Stone reanimating the call for the inclusion of walks in track and field leagues was welcomed by Hedgethorpe, who was a very strongly-spoken opponent of “Separatism”, the belief that race walking is a sport rather than merely part of a larger one. A number of correspondents agreed with Stone, but – save for the the veterans’ leagues – nothing very much happened. Many walkers evidently thought that it was simply a matter of asking; they had probably never tried.

Another of Hedgethorpe’s pet hates, against which he railed from time to time during his editorship, was preselection for the Olympic Games and other top competitions and his acerbic remarks have been mentioned elsewhere. Some people, naturally enough, were for and some against, so he could generally evince some response to keep the temperature up. In addition, sometimes there was pre-selection and sometimes not, so that every two or three years he could start it up afresh, complaining that, even if the current system were an improvement on paper, it was being done incorrectly.

There was no doubt that he thought the issues he raised really mattered. However, now that it is possible to look at his editorial performance as a whole, there is more than a slight suspicion that at times his tongue was firmly in his well-moustachioed cheek and that he was having a quiet laugh at the effects of his prodding.

For some reason the arrangement of *Race Walking Record* began to drift back towards the former jigsaw puzzle style, with articles, letters and results inter-cut in what was at times a baffling manner. Again, no-one objected and nor did they when the Editor regularly devoted considerable amounts of space to the Essex League. Presumably, as he was always at the races, he could write the reports himself; he continued, in any case, to complain that event organisers did not send in *their* reports. September, 1996, to take an example that was by no means unusual, had four of its fourteen inside pages devoted to Essex events. It was probably not mere chance that the items on the League and Essex matters in general were never subject to the same kind of dismantling and reassembly as the rest of the contents of the magazine.

There had, under various editors, been the occasional club profile, but a departure was a detailed history, serialised over several issues, of Brighton and Hove A.C., written by Alan Buchanan. Such items are, of course, of considerable historic value and Buchanan did it as well as it could be done, but one might wonder how general the interest was. The main purpose was summed up by Buchanan; “These club histories must be written down while there is someone left who can remember all the facts or knows where to find them.” Rising to the challenge, Jack Thomas recorded the history of Newport Harriers and Warren Roe did the same for Ilford A.C.

While there was much said – largely editorially – about developing young walkers, they themselves made very little contribution, apart from, retrospectively, the occasional “When I was a lad....”, so it was a slight relief to

have, early in 1997, an article by junior international Stuart Monk on the exhilaration of gaining a vest, with some helpful notes from his coach on how not to make a mess of the opportunity.

As a change, perhaps, from attacking the R.W.A. administrators, who “are supposed to be the people with the bright ideas,” Hedgethorpe noted that the real problems lay at a lower level; “...more blame must lie with the clubs. It is clubs which have halved in number.” It made no difference what the General Committee did if it was not followed up lower down. “Let’s all try to find a newcomer,” he urged, and passed on the suggestion of walking in open events and fun runs against the runners and power walkers. Those who had actually tried the latter found, as often as not, that the beaten runners were not so much impressed as embarrassed and even affronted.¹¹

Endeavouring to answer the problem of attracting newcomers, one correspondent, appearing as “Lifter”, wrote that one of the difficulties was “lack of consideration for young walkers in having five major events during the main (academic) examination period; walkers would concentrate on the exams and might well be lost to the sport.” He (or she) also proposed more lenient judging, by holding events in which all that mattered was that the competitors “are not actually running.” When they had done a few races like that, “without the judges flashing cautions at them,” they could be introduced to race walking proper. “Yes,” the wearied and overworked active reader might have responded. “Why don’t you do it?” Aye, there’s the rub! Ninety-nine percent of the work was being done by one percent of the people. Probably Lifter raised the idea because, for the same reason, he was too busy to do it himself.

It was back to harrying officialdom when the Editor complained that it was nine years since he had received a report on an international from a team manager; he was, not surprisingly, very frustrated at the lack of *news* being sent for publication to the magazine and suggested that reporting to *Record* should be a

condition of the job. There was a slight improvement afterwards.

Whether or not the aim was to catch the eye of the general public, *Record* chanced its arm by breaking new ground in September, 1997, with a front cover picture of Jill Langford receiving the World Veterans’ medal in Durban, South Africa, from a lady in traditional local dress, which is characterised by having nothing between the hat and the skirt. Remarkably, in an era when Mary Whitehouse was active, there were no cries of censure.¹²

Managing to combine nostalgia with the Essex League, Hedgethorpe began 1998 by comparing the Ilford Christmas 10ks of 1975 and 1997. He found that 10% of the 1975 field had walked in the event twenty-three years later, while another 20% were still present in non-walking capacities. Allowing for rounding of percentages, 29% had survived nearly a quarter of a century. “Not bad,” he commented, but had to admit that the standard was lower, the winning time having gone from 44:46 to 48:45. The same issue reported rises in the Loughton New Year’s Day event, up by 43%, encouraging figures from the Northern Winter League and a record turnout in the Manx League. Again, “Not bad,” was a fair response.

Bemoaning the deletion from the R.W.A. Championships schedule of the relays, the Editor, who had been inspired by short-course ice skating, floated the idea of having *track* relays with “strict rotation by teams of not more than four, change every half lap, time penalties, etc., until the distance is covered, more excitement and therefore more entries might be generated.” It was an idea that was never taken up, although a couple of meetings did feature “ordinary” relays as a type of light relief when the “real” events were over, with the teams often being concocted by the handicapper.

One walker was reported as dropping out of the lists of competitors for an unusual reason – not injury, illness, retirement or disgruntlement, but deportation, Ilford losing an Indian member who had overstayed his visa entitlement; his

attempts to obtain a new one seem to have been unsuccessful. The unfortunate man was never heard from again.

The ninetieth anniversary of the R.W.A. was marked by a serialised item from John Keown based largely on scrapbooks that he had been given. Confusion over the first claim rule has been described previously and Keown mentioned the case of the Honorary Secretary of Surrey A.C. in the 1920s who had been suspended indefinitely from athletics and athletics management because of irregularities in the composition of teams in a mile relay race. Two of the runners were suspended and one entered in the “black book.” We have mentioned elsewhere the strange complex of committees and subcommittees through which the R.W.A. has sought to operate, but the sentences just noted had been promulgated by the A.A.A. Southern Committee’s *Incorrect Entry Form Subcommittee*. At least race walking has never descended to quite such organisational intricacies!

One notable feature of the late ’nineties was *Record*’s predilection for articles on coaching, both philosophical and practical, partly inspired by the coaching triumvirate of Drake, Ford and Maddocks.¹³ There was scarcely a month when such an item did not appear, frequently written by Martin Bell, and there were often letters on the subject as well.

While there was still some concern at falling numbers, a report on the Isle of Man Parish Walk described the field of 595 as “staggering”; indeed it was large for the time, although retrospectively it seems rather modest, as the entry was three times the size twenty years later, with four times well in sight. The Speaker of the House of Keys and the Chief Constable were among the competitors in 1998; rather better known off the Island was the comedian Norman Wisdom, who produced a new category of participant – so far confined to himself – to add to the familiar “finished”, “did not finish” and “disqualified”; “he was seen at some points en route,” it was reported, “but officially just vanished.”

Having increased the subscription to £10 half way through 1998, coinciding with a change of printer, the Editor must have been stung by his conscience, because the year ended with a change of format that was somewhat startling. The appearance became more open and the layout switched to three columns. Although *Record* seemed generally brighter, the column change, despite an increase in type-size, did not necessarily lead to greater readability.

A sprightly discussion broke out in *Record* in 1999 on excessively zealous judging, when Roger Burrows, Editor of the Canadian journal *Race Walking Newsletter* suggested that a disqualification rate above 10% indicated “overjudging, unless there is some exceptional circumstance.” He also felt that a judge every 200 metres was “scrutiny enough”. He was taken to task by, among others, Bob Picton, who put forward the not unreasonable proposition that, “my opinion is that the blame for all DQs must lie with the walkers and their coaches.” Burrows responded, picking particularly on judges who are too keen to give a card rather than a warning, “unless the walker is actually galloping along early in a race.” He also objected to Picton’s blaming of the walkers, writing, “We don’t ‘blame’ a long jumper for missing the board or a hurdler for having a sloppy trailing leg. Why blame walkers for similar technical imperfections?” The obvious answer, of course, is that we *do* blame the jumper and the hurdler and not the judges who rule them out, so why not the walkers?

A useful contribution to that particular discussion came from Andi Drake who, in earlier times, had been disqualified so often that he had dropped out of walking for some time. He had put it down to the judges but now acknowledged that, in fact, he *had* been to blame. “I know today,” he wrote, “that my frequent Dqs ten years ago were the result of poor technique not poor judging – the conspiracy theory was no more real than Father Christmas.” Keith Read, generally considered a fairly strict judge, was so impressed by such a confession that he declared Drake’s comments to be the most honest he had ever read in *Race*

Walking Record, praise indeed from one who would brook no nonsense!

As a peculiar aside to the constant debate on the administration of judging, of which the previous paragraph represents a small segment, *Record* reported on an Eight Nations match held in Italy, where an experimental judging system was tried, under which no yellow cautions were given but warnings – that is, “red cards” – were notified to the walkers by the judges issuing them. Fortunately, it might be thought, the experiment was evidently judged to be a failure and was not heard of again.

An unusual reason for a small field in an event appeared in Hedgethorpe’s monthly write-up of goings-on in Essex. The County 10000m in 1998 had suffered problems over lap scoring and in 1999 visitors from outside the county were asked not to come.¹⁴ Many of the “Essex faithful”, it was reported, also stayed away, resulting in a field of only fifteen, about half the usual number. Never again were walkers likely to be discouraged from entering a race!

Hedgethorpe got in a final dig in October, 1999, at the selectors of the England team for the Roubaix 28 Hours, pointing out that, “assuming that the qualifier was the Battersea Park 24 hours, two of those selected retired from this event at 32 and 62 miles respectively....Is some sort of ‘old boy’ network operating?” Spirited replies from the Honorary General Secretary, from Team Manager Peter Selby and from Kathy Crilley (one of the Battersea non-finishers, but second at Roubaix) helped keep things going, but the best argument for the selection process, however it had been managed, was provided by the teams themselves, the men finishing second and the women winning. In answer to another letter, from Brian Ashwell in December, the Editor, perhaps somewhat grudgingly, conceded that the selectors *had* known what they were doing!

John Hedgethorpe, who was so frequently at odds with the Establishment, would surely have enjoyed the paradox that his last definitive statement in print was to admit that – at any rate

on this occasion – the Establishment had got it right, for in a couple of months, while preparing the February, 2000, issue, he died suddenly following a stroke. The General Secretary shepherded the February issue through production and edited the next two himself; as Caretaker – a term that he immediately adopted to make it clear that he was only doing the job until someone else’s arm could be sufficiently twisted, he did little more than print results and letters and float one or two questions for his definitive successor, who turned out to be Tim Watt, the 1998 National 50k Champion. Most new editors take a time to make their presences properly felt, but Watt started with a leap into modernity with his first edition, in May, 2000, which had a full-colour front cover.



Tim Watt

Watt’s first production returned to three column layout for text as well as results, the combination of wide margins, larger type and

left justification of the text sections leading to a decidedly sparse appearance on the page. A reduction of margins and type size from June onwards gave a more compact appearance, although the left justification, which tended to look “ragged” and was not to everyone’s taste, was retained.¹⁵

Unlike his predecessors, the newcomer did not declare his editorial policy, confining himself to stating that he intended to time publication around big events, with the magazine’s appearance normally earlier in the month.

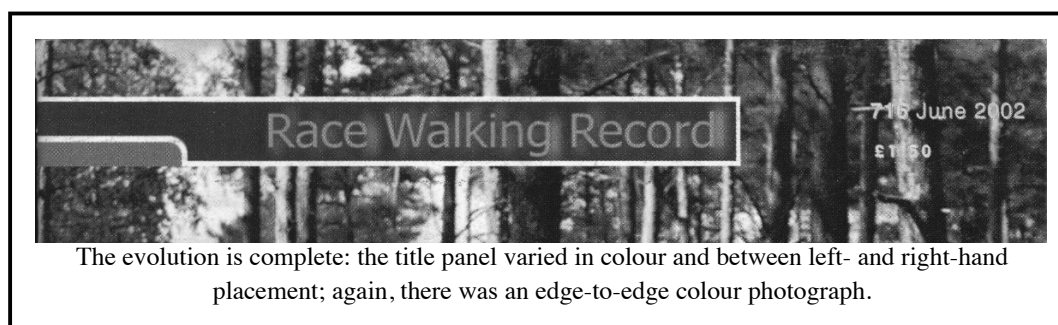
It soon became apparent, however, even without a specific declaration, that he was much more interested in the international aspects of walking than earlier editors, and at times a third of his results were from abroad. He also had more technical articles and some of his readers must rapidly have had more information about VO₂, weights and high/low altitude training than they had ever imagined existed or could put to use. He was also much more technologically advanced than earlier editors and, urging his readers to “walk with the web”, he published a list of web sites likely to be of interest to walkers, unfortunately predating by two months the launch of the Association’s own site.

A steep rise in subscription charges from £11.50 to £15.00 – at 30%, the largest there had ever been – may have caused something of an intake of breath but was justified by rising costs, although he said that printing, even in colour, was cheaper than previously. Perhaps to forestall too many complaints, he published a

number of letters expressing admiration of the new appearance; it may be, of course, that he was receiving too many to ignore or too few about anything else. Certainly, one conspicuous initial absence from the new régime’s production was controversy. It had, as has been shown previously, often occurred throughout *Record’s* history, and when it did not spring up spontaneously, of course, a suitably provocative proposition from the editor would usually generate it. Watt certainly had his views – not least about the way the Association operated – but the pages of *Record*, at least in his early days, were noticeably lacking in the frenzy of argument.

Watt’s international interests led to a four page spread early in 2001 giving world rankings, with a further two pages of domestic performances; Hedgethorne would doubtless have filled in the comparatively quiet season by reporting at length on the Essex League. An earlier editor, Alan Buchanan, would probably have found some very harsh things to say about the fact that no British walkers were tabulated in lists going down to 1:21:44 and 3:55:55 for men and to 44:19 and 1:32:22 for women. Maddocks, Hollier and Easton at 50k and Kehler at 10k and 20k appeared in the lists only as footnotes.

An indication of acceptance by the readers, either enthusiastic or apathetic, is that the continued appearance of highly technical items by Andi Drake, Martin Bell and others – some borrowed from other publications – raised no protests although, as suggested above, they were probably of practical interest only to the top 10%. Watt also included fewer but more



detailed race reports, particularly on higher-level events, such as the Manx Grand Prix, although that may be, of course, because he had received as little response as his predecessors to appeals for results. The strain of organizing an event was often too much for the promoters, who needed a rest afterwards.

The idea of features on leading walkers, which had arisen – and then sunk – over the years, reappeared with extended items on or by Chris Maddocks, Lisa Kehler, Tim Baker, Jozef Pribilinec, Ron Wallwork, Jane Saville and Nathan Deakes. A problem with such items, as other editors had discovered, is that the life and thoughts of one walker will not differ very much from those of another, and the story of progress from inept junior to international star can be dressed up for publication only so many times. Even so, Watt's subjects were more varied than most editors had managed, including more foreign walkers, and the series consequently had a little more interest for some readers; at any rate, there were few objections.

It was clearly only the purest coincidence, but the first couple of years of Watt's editorship seemed to involve an increased number of obituaries, largely by way of contributed letters, sometimes giving the back half of the magazine a sombre air.

A letter from Carl Lawton pointing out the loss of contact among the leaders in the Leamington Spa Grand Prix of 2001, as shown in a photograph in *Race Walking Record*, might have led to a spirited exchange on the oldest of all the sport's well-chewed bones of contention. Martin Bell's interesting response was to ask whether the difference between a walker and a runner could be detected by an observer who could not see the ground because there was a six-inch wall in the way. He reasoned that, because of the varied actions of the knees, the difference *was* discernible and he referred to the 1980 Norwegian work mentioned elsewhere, "I know," he wrote, "a number of readers will consider these the views of a heretic, but all I ask is that they avoid the knee jerk reaction." In

the circumstances, it was a turn of phrase that would have appealed to Hedgethorne.

In October, 2001, the Editor announced a "New Chapter in the History of Race Walking Record" when he introduced an on-line electronic form of the magazine via a specially created web site; the problem in the innovation was that – because, one supposes, the site had to be paid for – the electronic version, at £30 p.a., cost twice as much as the printed one and the innovation did not prove especially popular with the readers.

A report on the "What's wrong with British walking?" seminar, where discussion had been lively, evinced very little reaction, only Keith Read weighing in with a denunciation of Category B, whose retention, he thought, had been decided well before the meeting began; in fact, it had not and it had been opposed. Offering his own opinion, the Editor agreed that "B races are the downfall of our sport."

Watt, in answer to what he thought of as the R.W.A. General Committee's often-expressed desire to know how many walkers there were in the country, offered the not intellectually challenging but very time-consuming solution of actually counting them, announcing in January, 2002, the score for the previous year. The total, which was far higher than most people expected, was 1449, who put in 5255 performances between them. He continued to do such counts for a few years, with the conclusion that numbers of walkers and performances were, on the whole, despite popular supposition, increasing.¹⁶

The later introduction by the Association of the levy scheme allowed a different sort of count. All permit-holding races were required to pay a levy of 50p on each entry fee received, showing that the numbers of leviable entries year by year were:

2009-2010	4056
2010-2011	4332
2011-2012	4367 ¹⁷

An important event is always something of a godsend for an editor, whatever its intrinsic interest, and with the trials, the attempts to put up late qualifying times in Dublin the day before the deadline, the selections – not to mention the usual controversy thereon – and the event itself, the Commonwealth Games of 2002 provided Watt with a great deal of copy.

He also used his international contacts to obtain lengthy interviews with overseas walkers such as Jefferson Pérez. In fact, as remarked previously, he was probably much more interested in overseas events and competitions than his predecessors had been. This showed in his results and reports pages as well as his profiles, interviews and coaching articles, although a sizable item by Paul Warburton on the 1932 Olympic Champion Tommy Green was an unusual and welcome look back to the distant past.

In the early 2000s, *Record* also carried the occasional book review, although they did not feature particularly prominently, given the continuing shortage of literature of the sport.¹⁸

When newly-elected R.W.A. Chairman Peter Markham outlined his views in *Record* in 2003, the Editor was quick to criticise Markham's view that the immediate task was "to retain the status quo"; that is, not to let things become any worse. Watt commented that "it is always a lost cause to argue for no change; in a competitive world you have to walk fast just to stand still!" Editors of *Record* had always been free to question the establishment's position, but the editorial referred to here indicated a departure from the tone of previous criticism and really marked the beginning of a period in which the gulf between General Committee and the Editor was to reach its widest. Rod Hutchison of Steyning A.C. gave the Editor some support, writing that, "We do not have time to defend the status quo."

The discussion of the definition made a brief reappearance in April, 2002, when Carl Lawton proposed (i) continuous contact and (ii) that "the leading leg should not bend (reducing the

angle behind the knee) further (if not already straight) after contact and must straighten before leaving the ground. It was an interesting thought, although it might not have found much favour among the judges, involving as it would, some optical geometry on their part.

Looking back at an earlier issue – that of April, 1985, John Hedgethorpe's resignation edition – Watt stated that Hedgethorpe wrote that he had a few months before asked the R.W.A. for help with *Record* due to pressure of work. "It seems," Watt continued, "such assistance he got involved intervention so as to make the editing of *Record* a committee responsibility, reducing poor John to all but a copy taker/compiler." Watt described it as petty nonsense and evidently considered it to be some form of deliberate obstructionism on the General Committee's part, and it became clear that – although he had more or less unfettered editorial freedom – he felt that the situation had not changed much in eighteen years; this was a foretaste of what later became a state of mutual hostility between Editor and Committee. Much of the recrimination was actually kept off the magazine's pages but, as will be noted later, the Editor occasionally went further in his public criticisms than even Buchanan and Hedgethorpe had in the past.

From time to time through the gloom – some of it genuine, but much of it fuelled by amnesiac nostalgia and personal axe-grinding – a gleam of light flickered. The July, 2003, number of *Record* had seen plaintive letters from Martin Bell and Dave Ainsworth about small fields and date clashes, but in August Bell became quite excited about line-ups of eight and eleven in the A.A.A. Senior Men's and Women's Championships. The latter month's edition carried a letter from a walker recently disqualified in the National 100 Miles, complaining about the lack of coaching advice at a basic level and wondering where some could be obtained, and Watt took this up in his editorial, criticising the R.W.A. – perhaps justly – for concentrating its resources on promising youngsters somewhat to the exclusion of older walkers with differing problems.

In the absence of much British success at international level, and evidently feeling that some “home” triumphs would go down well, Tim Watt became an enthusiastic supporter of Estlé Viljoen, a South African who had been in England (where she had taken up walking) for three years. He followed her progress to her gold medal in the All-Africa Games in Nigeria.¹⁹

As though in response to the complaints about shortage of coaching assistance, Andi Drake contributed a four-page item complete with photo-strips, describing drills for the development of “technique and neuro-muscular co-ordination”. There were no letters of thanks!

The controversy over A and B categories continued, also largely outside the pages of *Record*, but sometimes raising its head in print. This, on one occasion, prompted a rare statement by the Editor supporting General Committee and (more or less) denouncing the “B rule zealots”. In that same issue (November, 2003) David Kates of Ilford A.C. felt it necessary to write a letter of condemnation of those – some within his own club – who were using the issue as “a catalyst for a series of personal attacks and fun-poking directed at a number of officials”. Some had gone so far as to suggest the formation of a *Real* Walking Association that would return to the old isolationist days of “contact only”. Eventually an atmosphere of live-and-let-live developed on the matter and the system *eventually* became an accepted fact.

Remarking in January, 2004, that there had again been an increase in the total number of walkers participating – noting that the General Secretary had somehow managed to race thirty-four times – Watt pointed out the more important point that the “regulars”, doing ten or more events in the year had also increased, and by an impressive 27%.

As has been remarked previously, the Editor, the General Secretary and the General Committee did not always see eye to eye – and, indeed, there was no particular reason why they

should on matters of opinion – and Watt took the opportunity, while reporting on the Annual Report, to set out his editorial policy; “My approach as editor....is to view the work of our administrators as important but as background interest and to focus on athletes and the sport. An inclusive atmosphere is necessary however. The committee should accept that change is a permanent necessity for survival and silence isn’t an option. So let’s help them in making sure they’re in as much hot water as necessary and produce as little fudge to keep athletes this year and in the future even busier.” At least no-one could subsequently complain that they did not know where he stood.

Pursuing his enthusiasm for interviews with the top names, the Editor featured Robert Korzeniowski over two issues and ran a somewhat spread-out three-part item on coaching young walkers by Antonio La Torre. However, with the World Cup in Naumburg and the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004, *Record’s* attention – when not stirring up the General Committee – was rather pre-ordained and about of a third of the year’s pages were devoted to those two events by way of previews, results and comments. This coverage, with domestic and overseas results and the type of interview noted above – including a couple of “home” ones – left very little room for much else, although there was space for comments by Peter Marlow on the new international judging arrangements, with an eye cast back to Sydney and the disqualifications of Perrone, Saville and Segura. One of the I.A.A.F.’s actions for improvement had been to cut the list of panel judges by 80% to ensure top quality and experience at the main international events.

Another unexpected action by the I.A.A.F., reported by *Record* in June, was the provision of one-off funding to the magazine with world-wide distribution. Still, the Editor found it necessary to impose a 25% increase in cover price to £25 p.a.

One matter for which *Record* did find space was the progress toward the R.W.A.’s centenary celebration, as the struggle for funding built up,

and a dinner to launch the bid for the 2007 European Cup in Leamington Spa received very extensive coverage.

The decision at the 2004 A.G.M. to change the financial basis on which *Record* was produced, by discontinuing the £1100 annual payment made to the magazine, upset the Editor – as well it might – and he attacked it in the last issue of the year. This evoked a few readers' contributions, largely agreeing with him but having, perhaps, insufficient basic information about the Association's financial position. Tim Watt thought that the shortage of funds in the R.W.A. was due to a lack of income rather than excessive expenditure, and that it was not possible to determine what the General Committee thought it was doing; "Any lack of reflection of the activity or views of the RWA was purely due to it's (*sic*) preference for obscurity and slowness rather than any lack of willingness of the editor to print them." The Editor – and, it is only fair to say, some others – argued that the pre-existing financial support ("such as it is", in his words) should have continued, although most of those opposing the withdrawal overlooked the fact that it had existed for only about fifteen of the magazine's sixty-five years.

By way of rejoinder and to correct misrepresentations, the Honorary General Secretary issued a statement setting out the financial realities, remarking, among other things, that, "It must also be borne in mind that, with the changes to the organisation of athletics in this country, it is by no means certain that the A.A.A. of E. or its successor will be willing or able to give us the financial support that we now enjoy." He was only too right; promises of subvention to replace the former methods of support that had existed since the transfer of control in 1954 came to nothing. He also took the opportunity to point out that 40% of the Associations' disposable income now went towards supporting *Record*.

Naturally enough, feelings were high on the matter but, as so often, did not long remain so. What could have culminated in either a demand

for the dismissal of the Editor or a call for the resignation of the Officers, depending on where one stood on the subject, died away gently under the weight of mutterings about change of Trials dates and selection principles; one cause for complaint was that the 20k and 50k were to be held on the same day, limiting the contestants' choice.

Strangely, although a number of letters appeared over the following few months praising *Race Walking Record*, there were none offering adverse criticism. The odd thing was that the General Committee and its Officers had not claimed that there was anything wrong with the publication as a publication, but only that the current financial arrangement could not be sustained.

Controversial items had evidently taken up too much space for three months, for the May, 2005 *Record* – in order to catch up – was almost entirely race results and reports; the absence of lively argument for a month may well have contributed to the general simmering-down as walkers' short memories were distracted by other matters; even the Editor laid off General Committee for a while!

One of the "other matters" was the proposed removal of the walks from the Olympic Games; although a spirited international response and the firmness of the I.A.A.F. prevented this, it was a worrying time for the sport, as *Record* reflected²⁰. Simultaneously, the award of the 2012 Games to London slightly renewed ones hopes for the future.

A fair portion of the October issue was devoted to the news that Royal Leamington Spa had been awarded the European Cup to mark the R.W.A. centenary year in 2007, with Peter Marlow and Ian Richards previewing the occasion. A tiny frisson of interest was running through the sport; perhaps swept away with it, Tim Watt made the December issue a full colour one. He said in January that it had been a Christmas treat and would have to be reconsidered in the future and, indeed, January, 2006's issue was less flamboyant, remaining,

like the “ordinary” issues, monochrome except for the covers.

Returning to normal business, *Record* of February, 2006, was designated a “Commonwealth Games Preview Edition,” so close to the actual event that March carried reports on the meeting. It was, perhaps, rather difficult to keep up the domestic enthusiasm, as eight of the nine available medals went to Australians!

As the R.W.A. worked on producing a Development Plan, *Record* called for contributions, but by mid-year the Editor was honest enough to admit that although he *had* called, he had not contributed, which he then did, at the same time writing, “Not that it’s easy to comment on a plan that doesn’t exist – but here goes....” He offered two points of advice; firstly that “every element of a plan should be a requirement that everyone involved....develop a *winning attitude*” and secondly the approach, summed up by a quote from the showman P.T.Barnum, “Without promotion, something terrible happens: nothing!” It was not a contribution that moved the plan forward very far but, to be fair to him, it was no worse than the scanty response from the walking world in general, in which the normal attitude largely prevailed that “*They* should do something!”

Record’s pages continued to carry many results, including several from overseas. One of the oddities of their presentation was that the headings, more often than not, were in the original language. Thus, the edition of July, 2006, had the results of “Campeonato de España”, “Championnat National, France”, “Kauhavan walkkarnevaali”; and “Campionato Svizzero”, and it gave the results pages an air of exoticism, if nothing else.

Probably the anticipation of the European Cup in Leamington Spa in 2007 and the Olympic Games in London in 2012 was beginning to have an uplifting effect, but neither the Editor nor his readers raised any objections when U.K.Athletics amended the previously announced selection policy for Leamington. The

absence of response at least provided space for the Editor’s practice of publishing “bread and butter” letters from those renewing their subscriptions and making admiring remarks.

Man does not, however, live by foreign-language headings and complimentary letters alone, and space was found at the end of 2006 for a long report by Dave Ainsworth of Ilford A.C., who had won a European Cup fund-raising lottery. The prize was five nights at the Addis Ababa Hilton, entry in the Great Ethiopian Run and a meal with the runner Haile Gebreselassie, and Ainsworth (who offered the suggestion that many people did not buy tickets for fear of winning) amused the readers of *Record* for a few pages amid the normal serious stuff of results, previews, advertisements and training schedules.

Commercial enterprise showed itself in the first issue of *Record* in the centenary year with the announcement of the identity – and availability – of the Leamington Spa official mascot; this was a bear (derived from the bear and ragged staff emblem of the Warwickshire coat of arms) and there was a competition to give it a name. The outcome does not appear to have been reported.

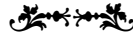
The normal activities went on beside the build-up to the European Cup and in a letter to *Record* Steve Partington took the considerable risk of extrapolating Colin Griffin’s 2:13:16 for 30k in the Isle of Man to a “three fifty-something 50k in Dudince.”. Public prophecy is always a chancy business; it must have been a nerve-wracking wait for Partington’s conjecture to come up and he was surely relieved when the Irishman obligingly won in 3:51:32.

As usual, an extensive preview of the European Cup appeared in April and the review edition in May. Tim Watt obviously *had* reconsidered his earlier warning that full colour had been a “Christmas treat”, for May, 2007, saw rather over half the magazine in polychromatic glory as the Editor let his hair down; it was, after all, a once in a century opportunity. With the addition of the results and

reports, there was, given the restrictions on size, precious little room for anything else, so the June number was a “Post-Leamington results catch-up Special.”

As the Association’s first century drew to its close, the Editor could not resist a last dig at the General Committee for seeming “to project itself as some sort of secretive society.”²¹ “As to the substance of its income generating plans....you’d think with the absence of wider consultation among those affected that a notice period may have been appropriate.” He was referring to the decision at the A.G.M. to

introduce a the levy of 50p per entry in open races; it had, naturally, been listed as a motion in the notice of the Meeting publicised in accordance with the Association’s rules and it had been adopted *nem. con.* and with enthusiasm as a fairly harmless way of raising some revenue. Still, the history of race walking had been beset by controversy and sniping since well before the S.C.R.W.A. had been formed and it was, perhaps, not inappropriate that the R.W.A’s own journal should close the century with a final shot in the direction of officialdom. It was at any rate a change from arguing over the definition.



100 YEARS OF PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT

In 1907 the World Records for the (yet to be) championship race walking distances stood at 1:54:22 for 20k and 5:13:53 for 50k, both set in 1906 by the German duo Fritz Preiss and Richard Wilhelm. The first women's 20k World Record was 2:24:00, set by Antonie Brixiova of Czechoslovakia in 1931. The championship distances we know today date from 1932, 50k; 1956, men's 20k; and 1999, women's 20k. Indeed, the first women's Olympic title was contested as recently as 1992 over 10k. In 1907 the (male) athletes preparing for the 1908 Olympic Games were set to compete over 3500m and 10 miles on the track, both events featuring heats and a final. In 2007 the I.A.A.F.-ratified men's World Records had both been set at the World Athletics Championships in Paris in 2003 and stood at 1:17:21 for 20k, by Jefferson Perez (Ecuador); and 3:36:03 for 50k, by Robert Korzeniowski (Poland) (Denis Nizhegorodov was credited with a superior 3:35:29, not ratified due to no doping control at the Russian Championships in 2004). The I.A.A.F.-ratified women's 20k World Record was 1:25:41, by Olympiada Ivanova (Russia), set at the World Athletics Championships in Helsinki in 2005 (Ivanova was also credited with a superior 1:24:50, not ratified due to record protocol not being completed at the Russian Winter Championships in 2001).

In 1907 the thought of an athlete one day racing 20k in less than 80 minutes would have been hard to believe, yet in 2005 Nathan Deakes (Australia) achieved that feat four times! World standards were fairly static for the last decade of the R.W.A's first century for men's 20k and 50k race walks; world records improved by about one minute in each distance in that time. Women have only competed over the 20k distance since 1999 in major championships (previously 10k, with Olympic debut in 1992) and standards for this event had been fairly static for five years, the world record having

improved by 41 seconds in that time. At some point the limit of human performance in race walking competition will be reached; however we await the first 75 minute and 83 minute 20k performances by men and women, together with a 3 hour 30 minute 50k. The athletes capable of these performances are to be found at the very extremes of the normal population and their physiology gives some clues to how records have progressed in the 100 years of the Race Walking Association and insight into the progression and possible limits to performance in the next 100 years.

RACE WALKING METABOLISM

Athletes who win medals at major championships are able to complete work at a faster rate than their rivals for the duration of their competition; i.e., they are more powerful. Whether the athlete is competing over 20k or 50k, the energy for sustained power will come from aerobic and anaerobic sources in combination. However the duration of these events means that the anaerobic contribution is small and nearly all energy actions will occur in the cell mitochondria by the aerobic metabolism of carbohydrate and fat. The availability of these energetic substrates and/or oxygen can impact on performance, and lactic acid accumulation and heat production are associated with limits to performance during sustained high intensity aerobic metabolism.

In a 20k or 50k race nearly all adenosine triphosphate (ATP) is resynthesised in the mitochondria by aerobic metabolism of carbohydrate and fat. Performance may be limited by fatigue, for which the accumulation of lactic acid may be a correlate, and heat production.

In our ongoing studies of highly trained race walkers at Coventry University the

relationships between several physiological variables and athlete performance suggested that success in race walk competition is largely related to aerobic endurance, i.e. the ability to attain and sustain a high race walking velocity for a long period of time. Aerobic endurance can be quantified in terms of oxygen uptake (VO_2) and the maximum amount of oxygen an athlete can consume in one minute is a common laboratory measure, i.e., maximum oxygen uptake ($\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$). $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ values of elite race walkers (75-80 and 65-70 ml/kg/min for males and females respectively) are similar to values for elite distance runners and considerably higher than the norms for healthy young men of 40-45 ml/kg/min.

A high $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ may well be a prerequisite for success in endurance events but it does not explain differences in performances between elite athletes. The race walker must maintain a submaximal effort for a long period of time and elite athletes do this by sustaining a high fraction of $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ in races. This demonstrates how $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ may establish an upper limit for performance but it does not resolve the outcome of competition. Our research found the two laboratory measures that best related to race walking performance in events ranging from 10k to 50k were speed (i.e. speed at $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$)

and stamina (i.e. speed at lactate threshold - the speed where lactic acid accumulates, associated with fatigue) and in terms of fractional utilisation of $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ the 20k and 50k were walked at about 89% and 78% of $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ respectively (Drake, *et al.* 2003).

Moreover, data from our research computed the relationship between race walking speed and VO_2 (Equation 1, below¹), which allows us to examine the progression of the World Record Performances in terms of their oxygen cost (Figure 1, overleaf). An athlete who wishes to be competitive at international level must be capable of walking 20k in 80 minutes (male) or 89 minutes (female) and 50k in 3 hours 45 minutes. These times translate to speeds of 15.0 km/hr (20k male), 13.5 km/hr (20k female) and 13.3 km/hr (50 km); i.e., athletes must be able to sustain steady state submaximal VO_2 values of about 66.4 ml/kg/min (20k male), 58.5 ml/kg/min (20k female) and 57.5 ml/kg/min (50k), which equate to $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ values of about 74.0 ml/kg/min (20k male), 65.7 ml/kg/min (20k female) and 73.7 ml/kg/min (50k) based on fractional utilisation values of about 89% and 78% of $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ in 20k and 50k athletes respectively. This level of performance is therefore attainable only by very few athletes given the high $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ requirement.

Equation 1

$$\text{VO}_2 = 5.2482 \times \text{speed} - 12.334$$

where VO_2 is in ml/kg of body mass/minute and speed is in km/hr

Figure 1 overleaf shows Progression of World Record performances in championship race walk distances by oxygen cost of the

performance (VO_2) in millilitres of oxygen required per kilogram of body mass per minute of exercise (ml/kg/min).

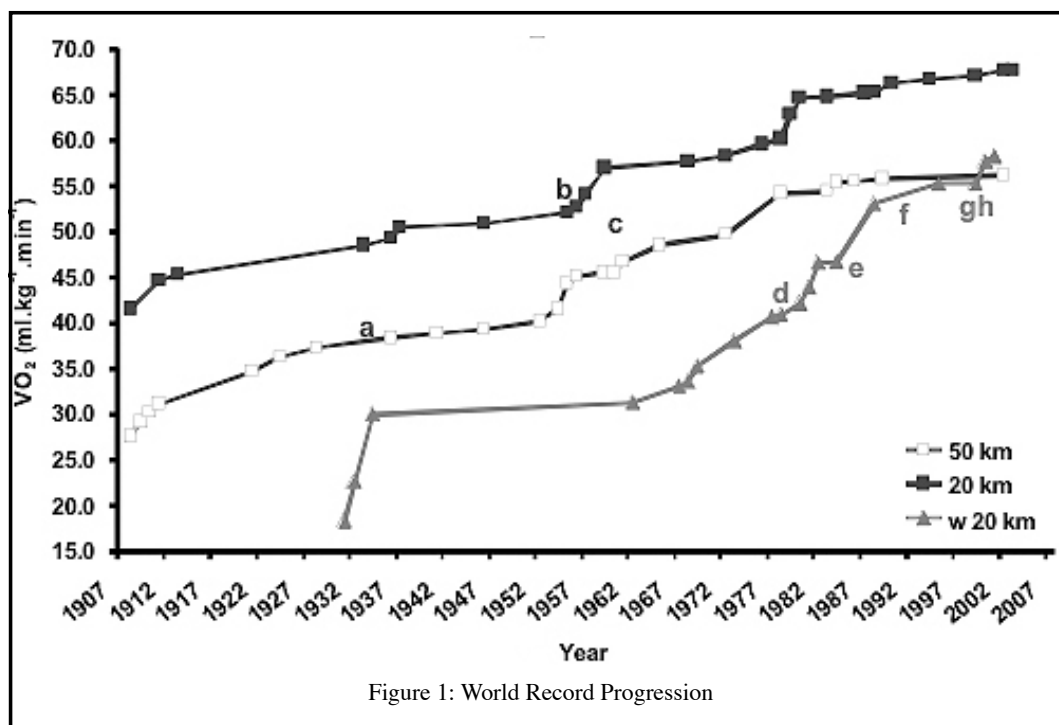


Figure 1: World Record Progression

Notable dates are:

- a 1932: first Men's Olympic 50k;
- b 1956: first Men's Olympic 20k;
- c 1961: first Men's Race Walking World Cup;
- d 1979: first Women's Race Walking World Cup;

- e 1987: first Women's (Lugano) Championships 10 km;
- f 1992: first Women's Olympic 10k;
- g 1999: first Women's World Championships 20k;
- h. 2000: first Women's Olympic 20k

COACHING DEVELOPMENT

Predicting performance and quantifying potential present a coaching challenge; i.e., what must aspiring athletes target in training in order to be truly world class? In their analysis of the 1989 to 1992 Olympic cycle, Reiss *et al.* (1993) drew a number of conclusions for coaching race walking. For elite performance to develop, training must develop also. Therefore in the race walking events coaches should work to increase the speed athletes can walk aerobically. Their analysis identified three areas of focus:

1. Develop greater propulsive forces per movement cycle, i.e., through increased

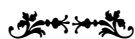
- strength/endurance potential of specific muscles.
2. Develop greater stability of movement in fatigued state, i.e. maintain correct (I.A.A.F. Rule 230) form over complete competition distance.
3. Regulate walking action, i.e. forecast performance, by, for example, using sport science support, in order to meet the specific demands of the start, middle and final sections of competition (Reiss *et al.* 1993).

SUMMARY

The data in Figure 1 show relationships between changes in the competition calendar,

particularly the rapid progression of the male 20k and 50k World Records in the late 1950s between the addition of the 20k event to the 1956 Olympic programme and the advent of the World Cup in 1961, with similar jumps linked to major championship programmes evident in the female 20k World Record. The progression of all three World Record data sets demonstrate a plateau, especially the male records, and our discussion of physiology suggests these

performances are indeed held by athletes at the extreme of the population norm. We are likely to see only small improvements in record performances in years to come²; however if more athletes attain this level of performance, the tactical nature of the events may change with more in the medal hunt in the closing kilometres of races. We will find out in the next 100 years of the Race Walking Association as the events continue their progress.³



HOW THE R.W.A. WORKS

When the Southern Counties' Road Walking Association was founded in 1907, it was run by an elected Committee of twelve members with an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer, a President and four Vice-Presidents. Apart from the rather surprising squad of Vice Presidents, that was the entire organisation, although it must be admitted that, with a Committee totalling nineteen in an association with only fifteen affiliated Clubs, there did seem to be room for everyone and, with a subscription income¹ that cannot have exceeded £10 in the first year, the Treasurer would hardly have been overburdened. As the Association increased its interests and activities, it had to increase its organisation and the first such move seems to have come with the promotion of its inaugural Championship in 1908.

Then, as now, many walkers belonged to more than one club so that they could race in a greater range of events; in particular, clubs such as, pre-eminently, Surrey Walking Club, attracted second-claim members for their longer distance events. It was necessary to scrutinise the entries and the entire Committee of the Association met to do so and eliminated several entrants on first-claim grounds, including one who was in for two different clubs. Given a few imponderables, a subcommittee of three was established to deal with the knotty problems and did so, apparently successfully. The point is that no organisation, however carefully planned, is going to start out in life with an ideal Constitution that will last forever, and changes will have to be made to deal with new and unforeseen situations.

During the past hundred years, many circumstances have arisen that have shown the necessity for change in the Association's structure; as the authority of the R.W.A. became accepted nation-wide, there soon arose a need for Northern and Midlands Area Committees,

while for some time the national committee operated also as a Southern Area one. In time, Wales, too, became an Area although, as shown in Chapter 12, it subsequently merged with the Midlands and then left the Association altogether. Other standing and *ad hoc* committees and subcommittees came and went, merged and de-merged, as the need arose and, although possibly historically interesting, it would not be particularly profitable to trace the process here.

It was, then, through a kind of evolution – which, like biological evolution, sometimes led into dead ends – that the present structure came to be.

The original three officers have increased to five – President, General Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer and Championships Secretary – and these are answerable to the General Committee. On this body, as well as the Officers, there are three representatives from each of the three Areas and the Chairmen of the Standing Subcommittees. These, except for the Area representatives, are all elected at the Annual General Meeting. Outside bodies whose interests are close to those of the Assocmileiation each have one representative; at present these are the English Schools' Athletic Association and the British Masters' Athletic Federation. Finally there are the National Coach, any British member, for the time being, of the Race Walking Committee of the International Association of Athletic Federations and a Minutes Secretary. This gives an apparent membership of twenty-four, but it frequently happens that one person will fulfil two roles, so that the actual membership is generally not more than twenty.

The General Committee meets four times a year, which does not give a great deal of time to consider everything of importance – in contrast

to the S.C.R.W.A. Committee in the early days, which met every month and generally tried to deal with *everything* – so much of the detailed work falls to the Subcommittees, whose interests are outlined below.

The Officials' and Judges' Subcommittee is responsible for the maintenance of the lists of qualified officials and for the appointment of officials for National Championships and similar events, although in practice such appointments are normally made by the Chairman after the circulation of an invitation to apply for consideration.

The Rules, Records and Standards Subcommittee has as its principal duty the maintenance of the Rules of the Association and the Rules for Competition and it recommends to General Committee such matters as the recognition of R.W.A. Best Performances, the standards, the scoring systems for National Championships, etc. The Rules of the Association are changeable only by a General Meeting – Annual or Special – but the Rules for Competition, being items in the management of the R.W.A., may be amended by the General Committee.²

The terms of reference of the International Subcommittee are to make selections or recommendations of walkers for English representative appearances (except as they are dealt with by the Coaching and Development Subcommittee) and generally to supervise international matters.

Like the others subcommittees, Coaching and Development carries its duties in its title and is mainly involved with young walkers. It is probably the busiest of the subcommittees, its many interests including the supervision of the Grand Prix, the organisation of Coaching Days and Weekends and the Nihill Shield matches. The Grand Prix is a year long competition for walkers in the Junior (Under 20) group and below, based on existing events and leading to individual and team awards. To encourage participation, the number of races that a walker may count towards the overall score is greater

than half the total number available; the Association recognises that young walkers are not entirely free agents and that they rely upon parents and coaches to carry them about the country, so the number of scoring races is *only just* greater than half the total.³

Coaching Days and Weekends are arranged three or four times a year and are designed to bring the young walkers together to train, to learn new things, to be looked at by coaches other than their normal ones and to think more widely about the sport and their places in it.

Perhaps top of the list in importance are the Nihill Shield Matches, which were instituted in 1995 and have taken place, generally, at the R.W.A. Younger Age Group Championships and in Dublin, matching the English (and Manx) walkers against their Irish counterparts. The selected walkers receive vests and are treated in every way like the internationals they are. For many young walkers, of course, inclusion in a Nihill Shield team will be the pinnacle of their achievement, but it also serves to help to bind them to the sport and to let the better ones have a glimpse of what may lie ahead for them if they persevere.

The Finance and General Purposes Subcommittee concerned itself with anything that does not fall within the terms of reference of one of the other subcommittees, principally financial matters and the position of the Association within athletics in general, but by the time of the centenary it was generally felt that it tended to have its work duplicated by General Committee and it was abolished.

An interesting point, adopted to make the Subcommittees more effective is that the membership of each consists of the R.W.A. Officers *ex officio*, the Subcommittee Chairman and two representatives of each Area, who need not themselves be members of the General Committee; thus, for example, the Area representatives on the Officials' and Judges' Subcommittee may include the Area Officials' Secretaries, who will bring to the work of the Subcommittee more expert knowledge of the

subject than might be the case with a member of General Committee. After doing their detailed work, the Subcommittees then make their recommendations to General Committee for approval, except where specific powers of action have already been delegated to them; for example, the Coaching and Development Subcommittee has the right to select young walkers for Coaching Weekends and Days.

Much of the life of race walking is, naturally, outside the national interest of the R.W.A. and more local matters are attended to by the Midlands, Northern and Southern Areas, which have their own systems of officers, committees and subcommittees, varying according to local requirements and according to their relationship to the Midlands Counties Athletic Association, the North of England Athletic Association and the South of England Athletic Association, respectively; in addition, there is race walking organisation in many counties.

This has been a very brief outline of how the R.W.A. is structured and how it operates. There remains to be considered the question of what it does with the structure that has taken a century to develop to its present state.

Reference has already been made to some of what the Coaching and Development Subcommittee does and many in the sport would regard those as the Association's most important activities, bearing as they do largely on the future. The Subcommittee also works with the English Schools' Athletic Association on a Joint Development Scheme for Race Walking, started in 2000, which seeks to raise the standard of schools' race walking and to make schoolteachers, in particular, more aware of the attractions and benefits of the discipline.

Starting from necessarily modest beginnings, this had, by the R.W.A's centenary year, led to the annual holding of regional inter-county events for schools; the ultimate aim is that each county will have a designated person from both the schools' and the Association's side to develop the sport still further. From this, there has developed a Preliminary Teaching

Certificate for Race Walking to give physical education staff a grasp of the practical elements of walking, so that they have the knowledge and confidence to introduce their students to the sport. This Certificate will take teachers to the first stage in the U.K. Athletics Coaching Scheme, from which they will be able to pursue their own development as far as they are inclined.⁴

The Association has also realised that, to develop in a controlled and logical way, a master plan was required and that the Coaching and Development Subcommittee was too burdened with its day-to-day business to have time to spare for such an important additional task and in 2005 it set up an *ad hoc* Development Plan Group which, after inviting contributions from race walking at large, produced a Plan for the period up to the Olympic Games of 2012. Having produced the Plan, the Group was kept in existence by the General Committee for two purposes, to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to keep the Plan itself up-to-date by modifying it as circumstances change; the idea has always been to have a Development Plan that itself develops.

An idea that was introduced before the formation of the Development Plan Group was the establishment of Category B races, in which the requirement is for contact only, with no account being taken of the straightness of the knees, which is, of course, as important in the "International definition" as contact itself. The main aim was to make race walking easier for novices to take up, but there was very fierce debate over how widespread Category B races should be and whether the idea was a step forward in innovative thinking or a step back towards the days when British walking ignored the I.A.A.F. definition except in international competitions. To maintain some parallel with the rest of the world, it was decided that Championships down to county level would be to I.A.A.F. standards, known as "Category A" in the R.W.A's area of responsibility, while the categorisation of all other races would be entirely left to the promoters.

One of the responsibilities of the R.W.A. is the issuing of Permits for Open Race Walks, to ensure a reasonable uniformity of standard and to comply with insurance requirements; this has come to be used for control in another way.

Since the very first years of the S.C.R.W.A.'s existence, walkers have been complaining that they had difficulty in finding races – even though *The Sporting Life* and *Sportsman* were covering walking on a daily basis and the general newspapers were also active in the area – and that, when they did find races, there was frequently a clash of fixtures. The S.C.R.W.A. tried to help by approving and publishing lists of fixtures from time to time, but it is quite apparent that they were really interested only in the larger and more important races, to which they liked to appoint officials. Lists were published in *Race Walking Record* when it was founded but they were by no means comprehensive, although it is probable that the Areas, which were by then appointing some officials, had more knowledge of what was happening locally and where the priorities lay.

As a walker fairly new to the sport in 1982, Pauline Wilson was so frustrated at being unable to find information about races until advertisements appeared in *Race Walking Record* that she undertook to produce fixture lists for the Southern Area. These lists clearly filled a need and in 1987 the Association's General Committee recognised their worth and asked her to become Fixtures Co-ordinator and to extend the idea to the whole country; she subsequently included the few walks in Scotland and Wales and the rather larger number in Ireland, together with important international events. The main list appears twice each year, in March (for April to September) and in September (for October to March), compiled largely from replies sent by proforma previously distributed by the Co-ordinator to known and likely organisers of events. The information given is quite condensed but comprehensive and the list is accompanied by a supplementary list of race promoters, so that intending walkers can obtain more details and, just as importantly, ensure that nothing has

changed. It is often difficult for a promoter to give full details six months ahead and it is sometimes necessary for events to be cancelled after the lists are published.

As an ancillary, the Fixtures Co-ordinator tries to persuade promoters to avoid clashes with other events catering for similar sets of walkers; a small local race in the Isle of Man would not clash with a similar one in Guernsey, but two such events in, say, Essex and Middlesex, would. Success in persuading race promoters to think of others in this way has not always been easy to achieve and direct clashes do occur. General Committee has recognised this problem and the General Secretary now has the authority to refuse a Permit to a race that is conspicuously clashing, either with a "more important" event, such as a National or Area Championship or with a meeting previously entered in the list.

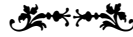
Between the six-monthly issues, the list is kept current on the R.W.A. web site, where amendments can appear immediately but the printed lists are also reissued when major upheavals have taken place in the fixtures. Despite the availability of absolutely up-to-the-minute lists on the web site, the paper versions are still popular and sell – or, rather are distributed free of charge – like the proverbial hot cakes. Apart from the necessity for the Fixtures Co-ordinator to know as soon as possible if anything changes, the only problems arise with walkers from distant countries who may not appreciate how large the R.W.A. area is and that some parts are detached; one group from abroad selected their intended events from the list and proposed to race in London on Saturday and in Guernsey on Sunday. Nevertheless, the Fixture List has finally filled an annoying gap in the structure of walking.

The R.W.A. produces a Handbook, which is in loose-leaf style for ease of modification and contains the Association's General Rules and Rules for Competition, conditions of award of the trophies and other useful information. It is widely available at a modest price and is accessible through the web site.

Reference has been made above to the R.W.A. web site; in the modern electronic age, organisations are expected to have web sites for ease of access to information, provision of readily available archive material, etc., and the Association's site was launched in December, 2000, and is under continual development. The site contains, as well as the up-to-date Fixture List, information on the R.W.A. itself, Archives and Records, a list of Books about Walking, many useful Links, News, Club Contacts and general information about race walking. A service is also included, whereby anyone not finding the required information can make a specific enquiry. One problem that has been

noticed over the years is the difficulty experienced by someone wanting to try race walking for the first time, and the visitor to the site can apply for a free Introductory Package designed to provide enough information for a start at the sport, including the booklet *This is Race Walking*.⁵

It should be mentioned that all posts in the R.W.A. are honorary and many people devote large amounts of time to its business and welfare. The unpaid volunteers are, as in the rest of athletics, the backbone of the Association's activities; it has been so for a century and is not likely to change.



THE LITERATURE OF RACE WALKING

It would be fair to say that the literature of race walking is small but select. McNab, Lovesey and Huxtable,¹ in their outstanding bibliography of books on athletics, list some 2,500 titles, of which only about a hundred concern race walking in even a minor or secondary rôle and of these fewer than fifty are concerned principally with the sport.

The pre-eminent one, described by McNab *et al.* as “almost certainly the first book on competitive athletics to be written in English” is Walter Thom’s *Pedestrianism, or An account of the performances of the celebrated pedestrians during the last and present century: with a full list of Captain Barclay’s public and private matches and an essay on training*, published in Aberdeen in 1813. As well as dealing in full with Barclay’s feat, Thom also includes some notes on various pedestrian performances of the previous hundred years.² His Barclay material has provided the basis for most of what has subsequently been written about the Captain.³ On the events of 1809, there is a good deal of detail and the contrast between the ghastliness of the training régimes of the time and the opulence of the diet during competition is interesting: “He breakfasted after returning from his walk, at five in the morning. He ate a roasted fowl, and drank a pint of strong ale, and then took two cups of tea with bread and butter. He lunched at twelve: the one day on beefsteaks, and the other on mutton-chops, of which he ate a considerable quantity. He dined at six, either on roast beef or mutton-chops. His drink was porter, and two or three glasses of wine. He supped at eleven on a cold fowl. He ate such vegetables as were in season; and the quantity of animal food he took daily was from five to six pounds.”

Barclay’s walking style is described as “a sort of lounging gait, without apparently making

any extraordinary exertion, scarcely raising his feet more than two or three inches above the ground.” Naturally, the betting is reported in detail, beginning “in his favour” and rising to two to one and five to two, but after about five weeks he was ten to one on and on the last morning, “one hundred guineas to one were offered; but so strong was the confidence of his success that no bets could be obtained at any odds.” The massive effort, as Thom reports, showed a feature unusual in record attempts: “...he had before that time provided lodgings for his accommodation, and the ground on which he was to perform was marked out. It was on a public road leading from the house of Mr. Buckle, where he lodged, and by no means adapted to his purpose. His resting apartment was on the ground-floor fronting the south....Thus accommodated, he undertook the match under various disadvantages. On the sixteenth day, however, he removed to new lodgings near the *Horse and Jockey*, where he continued during the remainder of the time. He also shifted his ground, and walked across the Norwich road up the heath for half a mile out and return.” This was a very strange procedure indeed, and one may wonder that those betting against him did not raise some objection.

An interesting book was published in 1887 by Montague Shearman, who, from 1880 to 1883, had been first Honorary Secretary of the A.A.A. and, in fact, one of the three men responsible for setting up the Association. *Athletics and Football* has only one chapter devoted to walking, but it is a very useful contribution from a leading pioneer of organised athletics.

Like many Victorian authors, he shows a tendency to moralise and he was also not immune to snobbishness. He describes James Raby, the A.A.A. Champion in 1881, as “a tall,

PEDESTRIANISM ;
OR,
AN ACCOUNT
OF
The Performances of celebrated Pedestrians
DURING
THE LAST AND PRESENT CENTURY ;
WITH A FULL NARRATIVE OF
Captain Barclay's
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MATCHES ;
AND
AN ESSAY ON TRAINING.

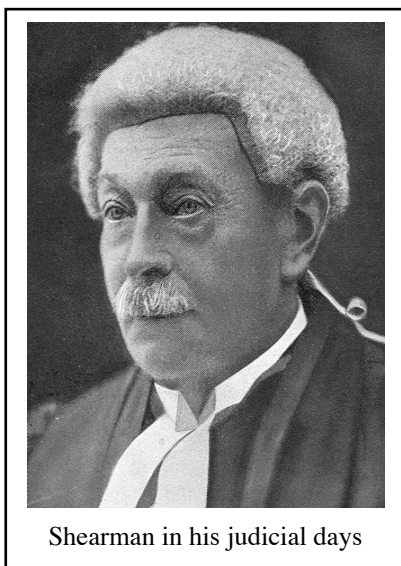
BY THE
AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF ABERDEEN,
&c. &c. &c.

ABERDEEN :
Printed by D. Chalmers and Co.
FOR A. BROWN, AND F. FROST, ABERDEEN ; CONSTABLE AND CO.
AND GREIG, HIGH-STREET, EDINBURGH ; LONGMAN AND
CO. PATERNOSTER-ROW ; FORSYTH, 114, LEADEN-
HALL-STREET ; AND RICE, 28, BERKELEY-
SQUARE, LONDON.

1813.

The flamboyant title page of Walter Thom's book

gaunt lad of the class which has recently received the franchise”; that is to say, the fellow was a *working man*, and from Elland, in Yorkshire, at that! Webster, mentioned briefly below, had been a wheelwright from Knotty Ash; Venn, Webster’s great rival, was more of a gentleman. [In later life, these two somewhat unappetising traits of Shearman’s character reached their pinnacle when, as a Judge, he presided over the Bywaters-Thompson murder trial in 1923 and coerced the jury, on moral rather than evidential or legal grounds, into sending Mrs.Thompson to the gallows.]



Shearman in his judicial days

Shearman shows strong reservations about walking, although it is possibly merely for convenience rather than by way of sarcasm that he has an index entry “Walkers; *see* Runners”. Like many people before him and, as we shall see, like a great walking polemicist a quarter of a century later, Shearman lets himself go on the standard of walking and the weakness of the judges: “Probably no one will disagree with the foregoing description of what the style of a fair walker should be. He should walk with a perfectly straight leg, he should step, not spring, and he must never have both feet off the ground for an instant at the same time. Unfortunately, however, the judges of walking for a great many years have seized upon the last essential, that of one foot being always on the ground, as though

that, and only that, were the only characteristic of fair walking. As long as a man can get over the ground in such a way that daylight cannot be seen under both his feet at once, the judge of walking is willing to ‘pass’ him, and he goes on his way to the end of the race in whatever style he likes.”⁴

Shearman – a pretaste of some modern views, perhaps – blames the judges for being weak-willed. He gives his opinion that in the 7 miles championship of 1877 H.Webster “simply trotted away as he liked from H.Venn, the London representative. The next year Venn had learnt a lesson and although when he had first appeared on the path his fair form had been unmistakable, in the championship of 1878, when he met Webster again, the pair both ran more or less the whole way, Venn running rather faster than Webster and winning in the time of 52 min. 25 sec., which is in some quarters accepted as the best on record, perhaps not unwisely, as it may be considered certain that the next best record was made with the help of some equally shifty going.” Ironically, when the A.A.A. drew up its first list of records in 1887, presumably after Shearman’s book had been published, it disallowed that performance by Venn, who was by then Chief Judge at the Championships. Curiously enough, it was Venn who well-nigh provoked a riot in 1895, when he disqualified the first man home in the Championship.

Shearman ascribes to the performance of the “cracks”, as the top men were then called, the tendency of a newcomer to walking to decide that “What’s good enough for them, I’ll try to get away with,” which continues the downward spiral; a consequence of this is that “spectators are more inclined to laugh than to admire” and interest wanes.

The book was about athletics in general and contains an interesting chapter on *Training*, in which Shearman entertainingly derides the old methods: “Sweating, meat-eating and purging constituted the old system of training, and those who wonder how such a custom could ever have been adopted must recollect that it was chiefly

applied to men of the lower classes, used to coarse food, and with no highly-organised nervous system.”⁵ For all his social attitudes, one cannot help wondering whether at times the gentlemanly tongue might have been in the cultivated cheek. Shearman was not, after all, alone in displaying this somewhat outmoded patrician attitude.

From the same period comes *Modern Athletics* by H.F. Wilkinson of the London Athletic Club, who devotes forty-five of his hundred-and-twenty pages to a *Review of the Athletic Season 1867-8*, and the listed performances make interesting reading. The “Season” incidentally – and the author is writing of what he calls “the *bona fide* athletic season” – ran from October to April, the part of the year nowadays more or less vacant from the track and field point of view. He implies, by the way, that attendance at athletics events was more or less respectable, as ladies “now grace and humanize our meetings” although not, one imagines, by participating. Wilkinson refers to the West London Rowing Club, which “with the exception of the Honourable Artillery Company, who held their first athletic sports in 1856....inaugurated the metropolitan athletic era,” and includes the results of their meetings since 1861, reporting that in the two miles walk of 1865 – their first – Houseman of the host club and Kent of their North London equivalent “passed the post first and second respectively but were disqualified”. J. Westill of yet another Rowing Club, Ariel R.C., who became the beneficiary of the judicial intervention, won in 16:42.5.

Wilkinson gives a short note, cribbed from Thom, on “The Captain Barclay Feat,” saying that “it is the *only* occasion on which the feat of walking one thousand miles in one thousand consecutive hours has ever been performed, although it is *said* to have been performed on several occasions,” which other occasions he dismisses as “gate-money affairs, got up for some professional,” although why he thinks that such circumstances should invalidate their claims he does not say. He offers a tantalising hint of very early organised athletics meetings;

“The first instances of them, as far as they come within my purpose, occurred at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and at our great public schools. We have every reason to believe, from the testimony of an old cadet, that half-yearly meetings were founded as annual institutions as far back as 1812, though unfortunately no record of them is extant at that early date.”

In his brief chapter on *Walking*, Wilkinson, while noting that it is generally called “toe and heel,” makes the odd remark that “The steps are taken as much as possible from heel to heel, which part of the foot must touch the ground first and be firmly dug into it. The ball and toe of the foot should not be on the ground for any perceptible space of time.” One wonders whether he had actually tried it. He is with Shearman in deriding the old methods of training, apparently believing that “temperance, soberness and chastity” formed the basis for fitness. Wilkinson prescribes nourishment only for amateurs, because “a gentleman having in all probability been accustomed to a liberal diet, has consequently good blood in his system, and a foundation on which to commence. On the other hand, the professional pedestrian or oarsman has more than probably been leading a loafing, public-house kind of life for some time past, and living on deleterious ‘slops’ compared with the gentleman’s nutriment. A professional accordingly wants blood put into his system, which is usually done by a liberal allowance of steaks, chops and port wine, before he is fit to undergo the ordeal of training.” How many would-be professionals, one might ask, impressed by the thought that a liberal allowance of port wine is not inconsistent with temperance and sobriety, failed to proceed to the next stage of actually getting out and hurting themselves on the road? Medicine, it seemed, need not be more than mild rhubarb pills, and the old system of training consisting of “constantly ringing the changes on ‘physicking and sweating’....is now quite exploded.”⁶

While Shearman and Wilkinson were deriding the antiquated systems of preparation and training, a book that advocated them

wholeheartedly was reaching its sixteenth edition, having been steadily expanded, but not much modernised, since its first appearance in 1856. This was the comprehensively titled *British Rural Sports: comprising Shooting, Hunting, Coursing, Fishing, Hawking, Racing, Boating, and Pedestrianism*. It also dealt with cricket, rounders, lacrosse, archery, skittles, curling and others, for which, presumably there was no room on the title page; in the manner of the day, this contained nine different type faces.

It was the work of “Stonehenge”, otherwise, J.H.Walsh, “Editor of *The Field*, Author of *The Greyhound*, etc.” Some fifty pages are devoted to *Pedestrianism* and the *General Training of Man*. “Stonehenge” was against two kinds of harmful excess “....in eating and drinking. &c, and....in literary or other sedentary pursuits. Either will for a time entirely upset the stomach....” His prescription for “such indolent free livers”, in order to recover their debased digestive systems, is fierce, to say the least, and stands a full quotation:

If the liver is acting well (which may be known by the yellow or brown colour of the fæces), a simple black draught may be taken, consisting of half an ounce of sweet essence of senna, with a small teaspoonful of salts dissolved in an ounce of warm water; or one or two compound-rhubarb pills may be taken at night. If, on the contrary, the motions are of a clay colour, five grains of blue pill should be taken at night, followed by the above draught in the morning. Should the bowels be relaxed, and inclined to act more than once a day, a wineglassful of decoction of bark, with a teaspoonful of the compound tincture of bark, should be taken two or three times a day. If very loose, 20 or 25 drops of laudanum may be added to each dose; and if very watery with griping pains, 25 to 30 drops of diluted sulphuric acid may also be given with it. This will almost always check the diarrhoea, and is also useful in giving tone to the stomach and producing an appetite. If more severe remedies are required, the aid of a medical man should be sought for.

Keeping in mind that “bark” is that of the Peruvian quinine tree and laudanum is made by dissolving opium in alcohol, while every schoolboy knows the likely consequences of drinking even dilute sulphuric acid, one wonders what the author might suppose “more severe remedies” to be. He was principally interested in horses and hounds; since a decent racehorse would then have cost £150 to £500, he was rather more circumspect about their treatment, not venturing beyond antimony sulphide and corrosive sublimate (mercuric chloride). One way and another, “Stonehenge” seems to have been fortunate not to find himself in Shearman’s court.⁷

Participation in athletics, incidentally, was still regarded three-quarters of a century later as not incompatible with an attachment – albeit in a rather unusual way – to field sports. In a book called *Athletics*, published in 1956, edited by H.A.Meyer and written chapter by chapter by members of the Achilles Club, A.W.Selwyn suggests that for the high jumper, apart from country walks and digging in the garden, a good general conditioner is to “follow the local hunt – on foot, of course – whenever it meets in your vicinity” – an extremely gentlemanly way of improving bodily tone!

Nearly a century separates Thom’s pioneer work from the only early book that challenges it, Hugh Innes’ *Race Walking: A Primer of the Sport*, published in London in 1910 with a Preface “Addressed more particularly to my Colleagues on the S.C.R.W.A.”, of which he was a Vice-President. Innes seems to have spent much of his time engaged in public polemics with people who had the effrontery to disagree with him and some mention is made of this elsewhere in the present work. As we mention in our own *Introduction*, Innes’ volume is of considerable idiosyncrasy, aimed at some of the current trends of which the author disapproved. His Chapter III, *Walking Records – A Critical Review*, might well have had the word *Critical* underlined. Who nowadays would care to say in print (of Harry Thatcher), “He once beat world’s record at eight miles in the hour, but even the referee did not take it seriously,” or,

with reference to Raby, “(he) left behind him records from two miles to fifteen. Here are some specimens....And now – pass the salt, please!”? In a neat twist to the general principle of “I know, because I was there”, Innes says, “Among the records of which I shall now speak, there are some that I cannot believe in, because I saw them made....”⁸

In his chapter on *Training and Tactics*, in which, of course, he has strong – and strongly expressed – views, he inserts a section, *For and Against Club Life*, which he regards as “a necessary evil”; he objects to the non-walking aspects, the administration and the social events; “It would be difficult to describe with sufficient vigour the tediousness of committee meetings and the triviality of whist drives.” Many a present-day walker (and, perhaps, officer) will second that, as well as his enthusiasm for making sure that his training spins take in a sufficiency of public houses. He characterises walkers by the fact that they “swear by massage and ‘rubbing-down’” and have “a passion for beer and bananas.”

When it comes to races, Innes is a great man for having a schedule and sticking to it – if you can! You *should* be able to, because you will have trained not just to be fit and technically good but also to adhere to the ideas of your coach, who will be escorting you by bicycle and issuing food and instructions. Innes has to admit, however, that walkers “have generally taken the bit between their teeth or kicked over the traces for a great part of the journey.” Not many present-day coaches would argue with that.

On *Judging*, Innes is off on another of his hobby-horses when he convinces himself, although not, one might imagine, many of his readers, that “lifting” is not jumping up but jumping *down*, because the jump occurs “after the summit of the push up has been reached or passed.” “The lifter,” he says, “does not lose contact with the back foot until the body has begun to fall.” He also puts himself to some trouble to prove that it *is* possible to lift with a locked knee, a fact apparently not universally accepted at the time.

In his *Au Revoir*, he writes, “Perhaps some day I may have the opportunity of amplifying my outline – perhaps not.” Alas, he never did. He also expresses the hope that “some more skilful pen than mine will fill in my sketch and write the further history of race walking.” In view of his general way of going about his arguments, there are good grounds for giving Innes a place among the eccentrics and characters of the sport, as well as among the authors.

In 1903, C.Lang Neil had published his slender book *Walking: A Practical Guide to Pedestrianism for Athletes and Others*, with contributions by W.Griffin, a well-known writer on training and coaching, and W.J.Sturgess, the distinguished walker, although their individual contributions are not explicitly identified. It is a book that might well raise a few modern eyebrows. For one thing, it advocates the use of castor oil as a treatment for diarrhoea; for another, it argues that what distinguishes “athletic walking” is that “in this form of walking, as the right leg swings forward the right arm and the right side of the trunk swing forward also; and when, in turn, the left leg advances, the left arm and the left side of the trunk swing forward with it, whereas in natural walking, when the right leg advances the right arm goes back, and the same with the left leg and arm.”⁹ He also urges abstention from alcohol – no very bad thing, perhaps, and a principle to which many would adhere if only they could – but also writes, with reference to getting a walker through a bad patch, “Let a trainer who finds that a man is really seriously done up, give him half a tumbler of champagne....but hot strong Oxo is best in most cases.”

Just over fifty years after the appearance of Innes’ book, the R.W.A. itself, in publishing *The Sport of Race Walking*, took up Innes’ challenge. No attribution is given (except for *Supplementary Exercises for the Walker* by Harold Whitlock), but it is generally supposed to have been written, or at least edited, by A.A.Harley, who was Honorary Treasurer at the time. There are two dozen charming line

drawings by C.A.Evans, which also decorate the cover and dust jacket and range in time from Foster Powell to Don Thompson.

Like Innes before him, Harley (assuming that he was in fact the man responsible) feels the need to define the process, in a chapter called *What is Walking?* He is at least more concise than his predecessor and quotes only one dictionary, the Oxford, to which, of course, Innes did not have access. The book consists of a series of essays on various subjects, including history, the Association itself, the international scene and coaching and exercises. Seventy of the 160 pages summarise past championships and give other statistics, including *Records Approved by R.W.A.* There are sixty-one of these Records and, as the old system was still in existence of having records for many different numbers of miles and kilometres and for every hour from one to twenty-four, thus giving a man in form the opportunity to claim several records in one event, they were set in just twelve different races; the palm goes to Hew Nielson who, on the 14th and 15th October, 1960, set eighteen marks, from 80 miles and 13 hours upwards, while Don Thompson was taking the 20 to 30 miles, 25 to 50 kilometres and 3 to 5 hours, eleven for him and twenty nine between them. Never, surely, were so many records set by so few!

Harley ends, as Innes had, by listing the affiliated Clubs, 5 National, 14 Midlands, 28 North, 75 South and 9 Wales, a total of 131; Innes had listed 18, all in the South. Belgrave Harriers, Essex Beagles, Highgate Harriers, Polytechnic Harriers, Queens Park Harriers, Southend Harriers/A.C., Surrey Walking Club and Surrey Athletic Club were common to the two lists. Remarkably, the 1962 list included not only the Metropolitan Police, but seven of its Divisions, all affiliated separately.

The Sport of Race Walking was a book written at the high point of race walking in this country; it listed Olympic Games results, by which time British walkers had won 27% of all medals. Well could the author afford an optimistic note: "Given the right approach, in

the right spirit, to our Sport it will assuredly in time become the World's Sport. This is something we shall work for by precept and example until our ends are attained." So it *has* become, but not quite as he foresaw, led by a succession of British walkers competing in the old spirit; rather, by a new generation who took it, perhaps, rather more seriously and less in the gentlemanly amateur way of the past.

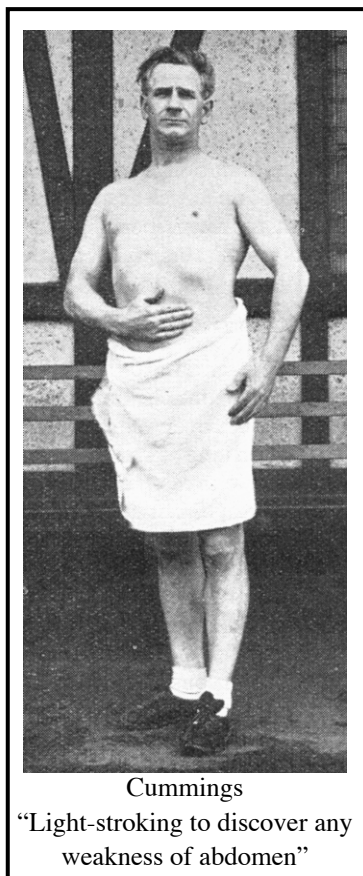
Several authors, such as Egan (who has some detail on the dubious exploits of Foster Powell), Marples and Walker, deal with the odd exploits of the early long-distance pedestrians, not all of them by any means what would be thought of as race walkers, while Jebb brings the endurance-based story up to 1986 and Ann Sayer.

A number of distinguished walkers have produced books of varying merit and interest. One may refer here to Larner, double Olympic Champion of 1908, Cummings who, by 1934, was very much a voice from the past of professional walkers, and the stickler for doing things properly, Westhall.

Cummings's book in particular, is a somewhat strange volume, being something between a sustained essay of self-promotion and a tendentious treatise upon massage and other people's attitudes.

He is not alone in having as Chapter I *A Definition of Walking*; he is also in good company in deciding that the essence of walking is continuous contact. However, he still gives as his "prescription" the following: "A progression by steps with upright carriage of the body, distinct heel and toe action of the feet, the knee joint of the front leg to be locked as the heel touches the ground, unbroken contact with the ground being maintained throughout." Having teetered on the very edge of a more modern definition, though, Cummings immediately seems to have second thoughts and concedes that the carriage, foot action and knee locking have no place in the true definition of walking, another turnabout by one of many who over the years have wanted to establish a truly

objective definition and have then imported subjective taste.

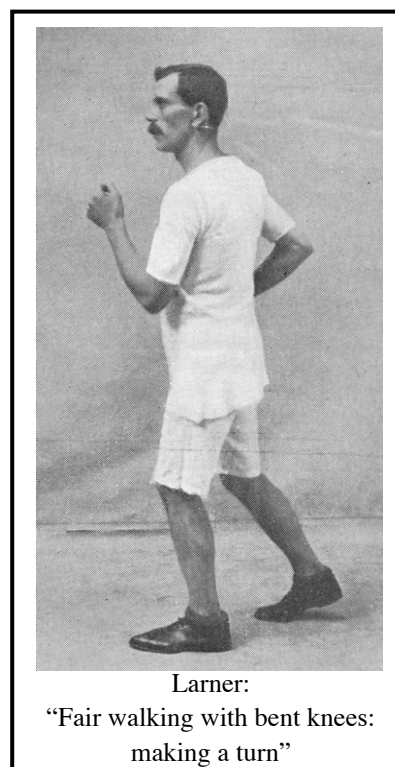


One way in which Cummings is unique is in devoting ten of his eighty-eight pages to *Footcare and Footwear* and seventeen to *Self-Massage*, which latter subject also accounts for twenty-five of his twenty-nine pictures. He does give some advice on tactics and on training but the modern reader will be surprised by his denunciation of “hip rolling”; he has to concede that many top-class walkers do it while he does not, but he justifies his opposition by the conjecture that they would be even better if they dropped the practice; he does not consider how fast *he* would be if he adopted it.

Larner’s book, like Cummings’s, has a chapter on *A Definition of Walking* and another on *The Care of the Feet* – a subject on which he

is rather less obsessive than Cummings – but he also devotes about a third of his space to *Walking as a Pastime* and even suggests a few rambles of thirty or forty miles.

There are two interesting ideas put forward; the first is that judges should be allowed to consult over the walkers’ fairness, tipping each other off about the shiftier competitors and, if necessary, comparing notes before pulling the man. The other idea is that there should be *cross country* walking races of up to twenty miles, although he does admit that judging might present some insuperable difficulties! No-one seems to have adopted the idea and modern-day walkers may be glad that they did not; the possibility for “shifty going” would have been too tempting for many.

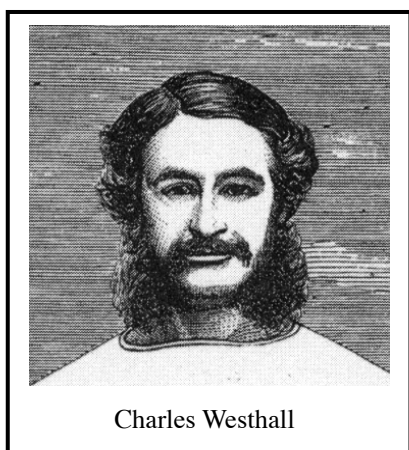


On the subject of training, Larner makes a statement obvious enough in itself, perhaps, but all too often lost sight of by some modern walkers; “There is, as far as I am aware, only

one satisfactory method of training for any kind of walking contest, and that is by walking."

Taking into account the inclusion of Larner's notes on some of his races (including the Olympic 10 miles), his little book was altogether well worth a shilling of anyone's money.

Well before the era of Larner and Cummings, one of the great nineteenth century pioneers of race walking and, indeed, someone who would still be recognised today as a real walker, Charles Westhall,¹⁰ who was the first man ever to beat three hours for twenty-one miles under conditions that were generally found acceptable, was very critical – as were so many others, before and since – of the amount of "shifty going" to be seen and of "the inability or want of courage of the judge or referee to stop the man who, in his eagerness for fame or determination to gain money anyhow, may trespass upon fair walking and run."



Referring to the principle of *fair heel and toe*, he complains: "Even this apparently simple rule is broken almost daily in consequence of the pedestrian performing with a bent and loose knee, in which case the swing of his whole frame when going at any pace will invariably bring both feet off the ground at the same time, and although he is going heel and toe he is not taking the required succession of steps, and he is infringing the great and principal rule of *one*

foot being continually on the ground. The same fault will be brought on by the pedestrian leaning forward with his body, and thereby leaning his weight on the front foot, which, when any great pace is intended or the performer begins to be fatigued, first merges into a very short stride and then into an undignified trot." To avoid this danger, he recommended an upright attitude with the competitor's arms "swinging....well across the chest" a style now generally discouraged as it tends to *lead* to lifting.

Whereas in the twenty-first century there is often criticism at domestic level of the harshness of the judges, Westhall was fairly representative then in denouncing their perceived *slackness* and their apparent willingness to let the walkers get away with almost anything.

Apart from a few "technical" works, such as the I.A.A.F. books, the A.A.A./B.A.A.B. manuals by Whitlock, Hopkins and Markham and a couple of "one-offs", like Radford's exhaustive and excellent biography of Barclay, the seeker after a light on the past will have to be content with general athletics books that devote some space to walking. Three of these stand out: McWhirter, Watman (1968) and Lovesey, although some notice should also be taken of Wilkinson, whose history is the first of amateur athletics, and of Tomlin, in which Whitlock describes his Olympic Victory. Lovesey, in particular, covers race walking very thoroughly and with a degree of humour. Roe, too, provides some entertaining material on nineteenth-century walking, although he is largely concerned with events at one particular East London track. Webster gives interesting personal accounts of the Olympic walks from 1908 to 1936 and may be forgiven for: "It is so difficult to say just where walking ends and running begins, a decision not made easier by the apparently bone-breaking contortions of the competitors. However, the walks usually contributed a humorous relief to the greater excitement of the running races." Then again, perhaps one who should have known better ought not to be forgiven!

Occasionally a book not principally about walking – or even athletics – will lift a corner of the veil of time, and mention might be made of Sir John Astley's *Fifty Years of my Life*, in which he gives, among other information, two sets of accounts for the six-day events that he promoted at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, in 1878. They were not greatly profitable, and, indeed, he had first published the figures to silence the “carping critics” who “imputed all sorts of sordid motives” to him. Nonetheless, it is interesting that, at one shilling entry fee, he took over £2,800 at the gate each time – getting on for 60,000 spectators. Astley also gives a few remarks on his races, explaining that, “as the wobbling gait of (Edward Payson) Weston was open to objection as not being fair heel-and-toe walking, I proposed that the competitors should ‘go as they pleased’.” This at least avoided that peculiar judging impasse in the 1877 event mentioned in Chapter 32 and also promoted by Astley.¹¹ Marshall, mentioned below, deals with some of Astley's promotions.

From time to time works on athletics in general give some mention of race walking and the notes in the *Bibliography* will call attention to a number of them. Although not dealing with the matter in any great depth, the books by Webster are particularly noteworthy, the products of an extremely prolific writer on athletics who has over forty mentions in *An Athletics Compendium*.¹²

Two small classes of books remain to be noticed, histories of individual clubs and other organisations and descriptions of individual events.

Of the histories of Clubs and other organisations, probably Sandra Brown's centenary book on Surrey Walking Club leads the way, with the Watts brothers on the Centurions close behind. John Dowling has written a seventy-year history of Yorkshire Race Walking Club and there is a substantial race walking content in Roe (1998) on Ilford A.C., Benton on Newham and Essex Beagles (with a race walking contribution from Colin Young), Maxwell on Woodford Green A.C. and

Havell's history of the Essex County A.A.A. Readers interested in other Clubs may search the relevant part of McNab *et al.* Williams has a chapter by Jack Thomas on race walking and, while Scotland has always been outside the R.W.A., Keddie covers the chequered history of Scottish race walking. Although – or, indeed, because – he covers a city rather than a Club, Charlott is also of note.

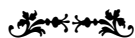
The books on particular events are very few in number, but three may be mentioned here, O'Toole (on the Isle of Man Parish Walk), Ivatt (the Steyning Easter meeting) and Ayton (the *Sheffield Star* Walk). It is inherently difficult to write the history of an event without becoming tediously repetitive, but all three succeed with their different approaches, Ivatt by examining various subjects, O'Toole by describing the race year by year and Ayton by turning aside from time to time to look at the subsequent careers of some of the winners and to quote from the recollections of some of the participants.¹³

One work describes a *class* of events, rather than a *particular* event. Marshall's subject in *King of the Peds* is the flurry of long-distance races, challenges and matches in the 1860s and 1870s. All the important instances on both sides of the Atlantic seem to be dealt with and there are often detailed hour-by-hour or mile-by-mile analyses of the protagonists' astonishing achievements. This work gives a fine insight into a branch of sport and entrepreneurship now otherwise almost lost to memory.

A word, too, must go to the oft-quoted McNab *et al.*, the very existence of which makes the work of all subsequent authors and editors in the field very much less arduous. The Introduction, thirty pages on *The Literature of Athletics*, is very illuminating and the main body of the volume, a list of publications – generally with enlightening and frequently humorous editorial comment – is, unusually for a reference book, highly readable without sacrificing any of the qualities usually looked for in such a work, being arranged by topic and equipped with three Indices, of *Names*, *Subjects* and *Titles*.

There this brief survey of the none too extensive literature of race walking must end. No comprehensive history has ever been written, even of the sport in this country; so many of the earlier books contain mere rehashes of Thom, or rehashes of rehashes of Thom – not to mention inaccurate rehashes of rehashes – that the actual amount of individual material is considerably

less than it seems. Until someone has leisure to take up Innes' challenge with a view to spending several years ploughing through the original documentation – where it still exists and is accessible – and working from scratch without the influence of two centuries of other people's opinions and prejudices, the matter will rest as it now stands.



CHARACTERS, ECCENTRICS AND RUM GOINGS-ON

The greatest enthusiasts and friends of race walking could not deny that the sport has had its fair share – and possibly more than its fair share – of people who might be called “larger than life”, to put it in its most moderate terms; indeed many people within the sport exult over its more bizarre corners.

An early and celebrated example was George Wilson who, in 1813 – four years after Captain Barclay’s performance on Newmarket Heath had made such eccentric capers at least marginally respectable – set out on the similarly challenging but more traditionally structured project of walking a thousand miles in twenty days on Blackheath, then in north-west Kent. In the first fifteen days he covered seven hundred and fifty miles, putting himself on schedule to win his wager, but he was then stopped by a magistrates’ warrant and charged with causing a public disturbance. No doubt he had done so, as had Captain Barclay, with his thousands of spectators milling noisily about Suffolk over a period of six weeks. The difference may have been that Wilson, unlike Barclay, had no noblemen and gentry among his social circle who, even though financially interested in the outcomes of the Scotsman’s forays into pedestrianism, had still been prepared to see something like fair play, as long as they won.

In 1815 Wilson produced the memoirs of his life and exploits and, later in the same year, *A sketch of the life of George Wilson the Blackheath Pedestrian who undertook to walk one thousand miles in twenty days, but was interrupted by a warrant from certain magistrates of the district on the morning of the sixteenth day, after having completed 750 miles; written by himself*. He had previously published a pamphlet in verse, *The quizzical quorum, or*

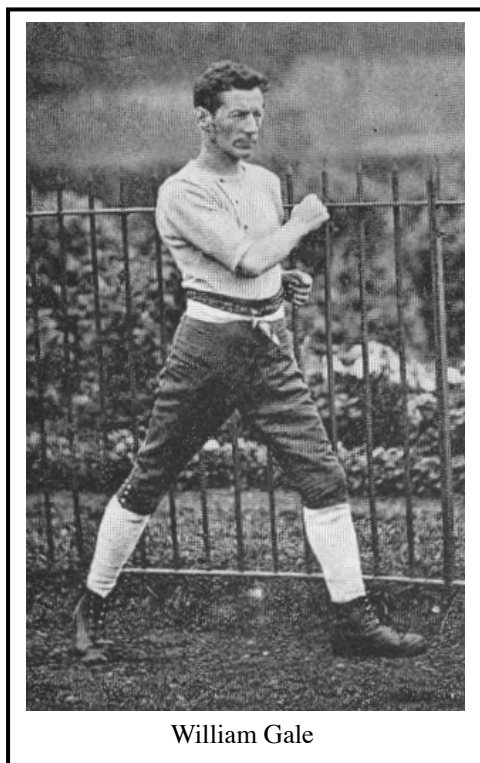
The fortunes and misfortunes of the Black Beaks of Blackheath: a new ballad. 2nd ed., corrected and enlarged showing how they stopped a poor labouring man, named George Wilson, with a comical warrant, whilst walking upon the King’s highway.¹ (As befits an endurance enthusiast, Wilson did not trouble to stint himself on his titles.)

One of the problems, of course, was that many of the walks were done for wagers as between one man and another, with large sums also passing between other interested parties, including bookmakers; Captain Barclay, for example, performed his celebrated feat for a primary wager of 1,000 guineas but actually gained about 16,000 in total, while as much as £100,000 was said to have been made and lost by outsiders. There were disturbances during the walk and many of the public were apprehended for various offences of assorted degree, involving pocket-picking, drunkenness, assault and general misbehaviour, but no suggestion seems to have been made by the authorities that a halt should be called to the event.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that the interested parties tried to influence the results, from bringing in the authorities to stop the event altogether to such milder ploys as drugging or obstructing the contestants and the relatively simple expedient of bribing them, not to speak of the *extremely* cheap one of making them aware that their health depended upon their cooperation.²

There was an intermittent vogue for calling in the authorities; in 1855, William Gale, of Cardiff, set out to walk 1,300 miles in 1,300 half-hours in Swansea for a £50 bet, clearly

being in a different financial class to the Captain. The fact that he did his night-time stints in a specially erected booth surrounded by hooligans – whether to unmask him or to protect him is not clear, but probably some of each – no doubt contributed to the summoning of the police by the locals and Gale's subsequent arrest.



William Gale

More than one event ended in farce as two competitors, each with an eye to improving the odds or the handicap for the *next* event by “throwing” the *current* one, tried to outdo each other in feigning injury or exhaustion. Rioting was not unknown when the outcome of a heavily backed race was “wrong”; in 1887, this was carried a stage further in the running world when a sprint match between Gent and Hutchens did not even start because the two wagering groups could not agree on who was to lose, each of the camps having backed the (nominally) rival runner. The subsequent disorder culminated in the burning down of Lillie Bridge Stadium, which had been the venue for the first A.A.A. Championships in

1880. At least the followers of the walking side of pedestrianism drew the line at the destruction of the premises, although over-exuberance did sometimes lead to collateral damage.³

If it sometimes seems, in looking at early events, with their rather contrived schedules of so many miles in so many fractions of an hour, that the performances were nearer to music hall than to sport, an exuberant lady called Ada Anderson underlined the similarity by walking a mile and a half every hour for 672 hours (a total of 1,008 miles) at Kings Lynn in 1878 actually *in* a music hall; whether the normal acts were suspended for four weeks is not apparent, but the lady herself occasionally played the piano during her rest breaks. Being a music hall artiste by profession, she was not so bound by Victorian dress conventions as many of her contemporaries and an illustration of the time shows her clad in a short dress or long tunic finishing some inches above her knees, and wearing boots with substantial heels, a way in which she habitually dressed during her walks. It is only fair to point out that, by way of compensation, her sleeves reach her wrists and her collar-line is modest to the point of demureness.

There had been a precedent for such demonstrations; Astley's Amphitheatre in London had once hired Foster Powell for twelve nights to “exhibit his pace in a small circle”. The “courses” at Kings Lynn and Astley's must have been very limited, but not more so than that followed by Wilson while imprisoned for debt during 1813 after being disqualified by the Blackheath magistracy; he claimed to have walked fifty miles in twelve hours in an exercise area eleven yards by eight, which surely takes eccentricity to the very borders of insanity. It did him no harm, however, because a man named Carey, who was engaged in producing a road book, paid off Wilson's debts, had him released and used him as a sort of human pedometer to estimate the distances between various towns to the south of the Thames.

If one edge of eccentricity is indeed akin to lunacy, the other edge – the one, one might say,

nearer to the real world – blurs into heroism. Is it brave or foolhardy to undertake, as Foster Powell did several times in the late eighteenth century (for the last time at the age of 57 in 1792), to walk from London to York and back – a distance variously estimated, but about 400 miles – inside six days?



Eccentric performances need eccentric supporters, of course, and, although it was several decades too late in its appearance to serve the heyday of peculiar wagers, there will still have been some who welcomed the publication in 1897 of H.M.Browne's *Sporting and Athletic Records*. As well as covering all standard and several non-standard events and giving, among other things "World records" (although there was no internationally agreed

list until 1921), Browne provided walking records for each distance, mile by mile, from one to 531! At least, before setting out to tackle some bizarre and enormous distance, the walker would have known his target. It is interesting to compare the professional and amateur walking records as quoted by Browne:

	Amateur	Professional	%
10M	1:17:41	1:14:45	105
20M	3:00:09	2:39:57	112
30M	4:46:52	4:34:54	104
40M	6:38:08	6:16:50	106
50M	8:25:25	7:57:44	106
60M	11:11:10	10:04:55	111
70M	13:11:15	11:56:28	110
80M	15:09:16	14:01:53	108
90M	17:37:51	15:59:10	118
100M	19:41:50	18:08:15	109
110M	21:46:05	20:09:15	108
120M	23:53:08	22:06:25	113

The last column shows the professional *speed* as a percentage of the amateur; the comparison stops here because the amateur figures quoted by Browne also stop here. The professional performances, as noted above, continue to 531 miles, while the amateur and professional running records go to 120 and 610 miles, respectively. The last point at which a comparison can be made, mile 447, took George Littlewood 9:19 to walk and Patrick Fitzgerald 11:35 to run. The latter's 610th mile took him 14:15 to run, if "run" is the correct word in the circumstances.⁴

It would have been as well if a statistician, a reliable judge of walking and a competent highways surveyor had been on hand to record and scrutinise such spectacular achievements as those of Captain Thomson and James Watson, referred to in Footnote 1 to Chapter 31, to name but two of the most remarkable and optimistically claimed performances of the early walkers. Perhaps the greatest eccentricity exhibited by such stalwart pedestrians was in believing that they *were* walking, even bearing in mind the allowance, usual in those days, of "trotting occasionally to ward off the cramp". At the least, they may be regarded as doubtful.

Given that it is sometimes difficult to tell where eccentricity merges into heroism at one end and into lunacy at the other, it must also be allowed that eccentricity may cease to be so if it works. Don Thompson, for example, with his policy of adding to his training schedule by doing exercises in a room whose atmosphere was modified by a fume-exuding paraffin stove and a steaming kettle, and of competing in an improvised képi made by his mother, would surely have counted as a Class A eccentric if he had not returned from the 1960 Olympic Games with the 50 kilometre gold medal. The proof of the eccentricity is indeed in the winning!

Against these odd exhibitions and that of the competitor in a more recent 24 hour track race who, while his opponents were changing their shoes and socks every few hours, went through a startling repertoire of hats – some of them not his own – such deviations as shouting at yourself in the home straight or turning round and finishing a race by walking backwards seem mere foibles. Indeed, even the “hat-trick” was modest, because in a report of the 24 hour race in 1908, it was noted that, “F.Webb, Dartford, had a complete change of costume just on midnight. He discarded running knickers and vest for jacket and trousers. Rowland sported a most peculiar get-up ‘when it was dark’. He looked for all the world like a circus performer of the cowboy persuasion, in a wideawake hat and tightly-bound pants. The record for the greatest variety of costumes was won by T.C.Habishaw, Queen’s Park Harriers and Surrey Walking Club. He must have worn at least a dozen differently coloured vests and jerseys at different periods of the race. Another whose outfit looked very curious was B.H.Warden, the vegetarian. He was quickly dubbed the ‘Chinaman’ by the few inhabitants of the stands who stayed all night, and certainly he bore a fair resemblance to a ‘son of the east’.”

Perhaps it is not surprising that it is the contestants in longer events who show most oddities of behaviour; however well they are prepared for the trial, staying awake for such lengths of time is sure to take its toll on a person’s composure.

Organisationally, there is as much scope for rum goings-on in race walking as in any other contest, although our sport cannot rise to the heights of the cross-country runners, whose first English National Championship in 1876 was somewhat spoiled when “the attempt to bring it off in the wilds of Epping Forest proved a great failure, everyone losing his way separately on his own account,” as Walter Rye, the “father of cross-country running”, put it.⁵ Foster Powell did his best in this respect, however, missing the road on a London to Canterbury walk (a mere 55 miles) when a great deal of money depended on the result! In our own chapter on *Walking in Wales*, Jack Thomas shows that the wandering spirit persisted well into the twentieth century. There do remain a number of walkers of whom it is said that they could lose their way on a track; in the days when contestants in long-distance track events sometimes did an about-face every few hours to ease the muscular strain, this may well have happened.

A glance at the Appendices of past national champions will reveal several instances of short courses, although only one long one, and the list of A.A.A. champions shows a short course *on a track* and not by a miscount of the laps, either. That is not to say that all other Championships were held over the correct distances, but simply that no circumstance such as a very fast – or very slow – time arose to cause suspicion. Legend among race walkers speaks of the discovery of an error in measurement in one national championship that was corrected by adjusting the course while the race was actually in progress.

As usual, the indefatigable Innes has views on measurement, particularly on the Brighton Road, where he distinguishes between “short” and “long” miles, but reckons that the “average” Brighton mile is about right and defends the surveyor’s chain against the newfangled cyclometer. There may be an explanation for the variation; in Pash’s book,⁶ W.W.Webb writes, “Most of these wagers were decided upon the road, where the mile-stones of the various turnpike trusts provided ready-made courses. No actual proof exists, but it has been said that

the curious positions of some of our remaining mile-stones are due to those matches and wagers. Interested parties are said to have sallied forth under cover of darkness just before the event, and to have shifted a milestone a trifle up or down the road, as best suited their bets. A plausible theory, this, and the fact that it has been advanced tends to cast a doubt upon some of the earlier performances, splendid as they must have been." When money was involved one could not be too careful.

One occurrence within the editor's own experience involved no error of measurement but one of memory; the course for an R.W.A. Championship had been perfectly accurately determined, the starting point being recorded as "the lamppost by the car park". On the day, the organiser could not remember which of many posts was the one in question and chose wrongly; several walkers,⁷ surprised at their slow times over the first lap, which was a good deal longer than they had been led to expect, retired in despair.

Some peculiarities of behaviour were deliberate, for the benefit of the officials. Elsewhere, we report on the early National Championship shortened by a few yards so that the finish was under a street-lamp, and in the 1990s a match was shortened while it was under way because a fierce rainstorm engendered a lack of enthusiasm among the judges and recorders for continued suffering; walkers were told at a lap's end that the remaining portion of the race had been curtailed. Although this may have upset some carefully planned race strategies, there is no record that any of the competitors complained at having his misery abbreviated.

Miscounting of laps can, of course, occur but – nowadays, at any rate – hardly ever does. Generally speaking, recording is carried out to a higher standard than in the past. Referring to a suggestion that team placing in cross-country races should be determined by aggregate times rather than positions, the incomparably irascible Walter Rye remarked that, "perhaps this would be too much strain on the observant powers of

the judges, who have plenty of room to muddle and mistake in the plain placing of the men without attempting to take each man's time as well." The very idea, to record the finishers' times! Some recording, particularly in long-distance track events, was done with great care and attention to accuracy, but even then mistakes did occur.

In the 1908 24-hour race, A.R. Edwards claimed that two laps had been missed from his score; certainly, his first five lap-times (at five laps to the mile) were recorded as 3:10, 3:03, 3:13, 3:08 and 6:16. As he had retired at about fifty-seven miles, the result was not affected. The same thing, he claimed, had then happened in the 1909 24-hour and 1910 12-hour races, at which he took up a page of *Health & Strength* to lambast the scorers for their incompetence and incivility and propose a "foolproof" system. In a thoroughly dignified reply, Barnes Moss, the Honorary Secretary of the S.C.R.W.A., pointed out that the errors had, in fact, been detected and corrected (except in the first instance, where Edwards had appropriated his scorecard and would not give it back for scrutiny) and that Edwards's proposed system was similar to that already in use, but not so good; Edwards's system of running a check independent of the individual walkers' recorders did not include taking times and therefore proved nothing! After that, Edwards seems to have abandoned the argument in a huff. The recorders, or "scorers" as they were once called, have long been a maligned group – when they were not being completely ignored – and it is a comfort to them to know that when Griffiths completed his twenty mile record in 1870 in the absence of both his sole opponent and the sole judge – both of whom had had enough – it was they and their noble colleagues the timekeepers who faithfully stuck it out to the bitter end.⁸

The 24-hour track race in which a sudden gust removed the recording sheets from the table is well known, but can clearly be put down to "circumstances beyond our control".⁹ Perhaps less famous is the World Veterans' Walking Championship held in Birmingham in which the problem with the lap counting was not so much

that it went wrong as that it was overlooked; not until the race was well under way did it appear that the organisers had appointed no recorders at all. Hurried action by spectators and long hours of study and reconstruction afterwards largely rescued the situation. Not much better was the occasion when the starter at a County road walking Championship asked the customary question, "Ready, Timekeepers?" and received no reply; again, somehow the appointment had been overlooked. Again, it was a case of a spectator to the rescue!

Other examples of eccentricity abound and officials are not immune. There have been judges who, to obtain a better view of contact, have chosen to lie on the road, even in the rain, which would have made Innes proud of them; there was the distinguished international judge who, when a running race overtook a walking race, tried to disqualify a runner who was getting back into proper action after being reduced to a walk by a stiff hill; there was the judge in a Surrey Walking Club event who used public transport to move along the course and issued a disqualification from the platform of a bus and there was the lady walker in very recent years who won her race without problems, set off on a cooling-down jog round the park and received a card. There was even, so legend has it, the judge, faced with two walkers going hell for leather at the end of a race, who called the wrong number from force of habit, because, he said in explanation and some sort of apology, he was so used to disqualifying that particular man. Perhaps most oddly of all, a very distinguished figure in the history of the R.W.A. (whose name must be withheld to spare his reputation) although registered blind, judged a race and disqualified a man; when the competitor protested that the judge could not have seen him, the reply came, "No, but I could *hear* how you were walking!"

Although not connected with walking, an incident of unspecified date at Stamford Bridge related by Arthur Turk in Pash's book, reveals an unusual type of interest taken by an official: "A certain young runner developed ability as a sprinter and won his heat in an open handicap.

As he left the track the timekeeper approached him with, 'Are you trying in the final, Sir?' The question neither shocked nor surprised the youngster; he had heard it before from fellow-competitors. 'Well, I always do,' he replied. The timekeeper, after remarking, 'You did the fastest time but I didn't put it on the board because I thought people wouldn't believe it,' quietly walked over to the bookmakers with the intention, presumably, of making a small investment." One hopes that walking judges did not have the same fiscal interest in the results of races at which they were officiating.

These, however, are mere slips, simple oversights that can be achieved without really trying. The bad old days of betting and bribery are gone and with them the folk tales of "ringers" – professionals, who were generally better than amateurs in the nineteenth century and sometimes appeared under pseudonyms in amateur competitions – men in longer events who were in fact two similar-looking men making an "informal" relay to take on individuals (and there were rumours here about even George Wilson) – timekeepers who, when a record or qualifying time was in the offing, would apparently inspect their watches with their eyes closed – judges who were better at spotting transgressions from Clubs other than their own¹⁰ and supporters who would crowd forward to cheer on their favourites, thus "inadvertently" obstructing fast-finishing rivals. This last occurrence befell at the A.A.A. 4 miles in 1895, when the crowd invaded the track, impeding some of the chasing competitors, and were then frustrated (some of them were, at any rate) by the disqualification of the first man home.¹¹

Occasionally the eccentricity seems to be infectious. In 1912, when the Brighton Road was becoming quite the thing, a Mr. Gerald Hirsch accepted a £1,000 wager that he could not walk from London to Brighton in twenty four hours wearing evening dress – but no hat, presumably as a concession to the sportiness of the enterprise – and dancing pumps, while Mr. Eric Maturin undertook for a mere £50 to do the same journey in cricket shirt, shorts and dancing

pumps. To compound the silliness of the occasion, Hirsch had never worn pumps, so he had to buy a pair for the event, did not bother to try them out first and needed to cut them off when the foolhardy adventurers reached Brighton after twenty-two and a quarter hours through the November frosts.

The two inexperienced pedestrians, and a Mr.B.Cohen – who was on the losing end of the prank and finished the day a thousand guineas lighter in the pocket, to the advantage of his friends – were all members of the Isthmian Club; very likely, as happens with many a subsequently repentant marathon entrant in the present day, the conviviality of an earlier evening had got the better of them! Very possibly Mr.Hirsch and Mr.Maturin expended some of their gains on a proprietary foot-salve and, in the sporting spirit of the times, a couple of bottles of vintage port. They may have been inspired to their frolic by the bizarre example of a Mr.Andrew Pringle who, although not part of the event, had walked all the way with the official competitors in the first Stock Exchange Brighton race in 1903, and disdained stripping down, retaining the attire proper to a man who was something in the City; a rare example of a competitor dressing better than his attendants, even to the furred umbrella, top hat and spats.¹²



Mr.Pringle passes Purley

By way of an indication of how they lived then – and an indication that even the catering could, to modern eyes, appear eccentric – we might wonder whether Mr.Pringle, as a non-entrant, was permitted to partake of the refreshments available. In those days, sponsors fought to outdo each other, with the result that the walkers could choose between meat lozenges, Bovril chocolate,¹³ Oxo and soda, Oxo and champagne, and “stimulants”, which varied according to taste, but port and champagne (without the Oxo) were regarded as good “bracers” late in a long event.

Journalistic participation was also carried to extremes by the *Evening News*, whose two reporters actually walked (dressed in dark flannel suits and fortified by brandy) all the way, to be there at the finish; starting at four in the morning and stopping at Croydon for breakfast, they took eleven hours and fifty-five minutes, only forty-eight minutes slower than the last finisher in the race itself.

Mention has been made elsewhere of the tendency of race promoters to put on races over odd distances, such as 11 miles, and to declare the winners to be the World Champions. They also, from time to time, put on novelty events, such as races in “working” garb for those who normally wore uniform – the police, the Volunteers, etc. – and of these the Postmen’s Walk in Uniform still survives, with postwomen now included. Interest was also worked up by the giving of unusual prizes, such as livestock, in the tradition of the much earlier events referred to in Chapter 1, and in the days before gift vouchers, minor race-winners were likely to be rewarded by “orders” on local shopkeepers and publicans, particularly publicans.

There are occasional examples of the giving of low value spot prizes for the competitors finishing in particular positions and one open event in 1910 had a prize for “the first unplaced member of the Club with the most starters”. Of course, the giving of prizes of any worth was frowned upon in amateur circles when they began to develop; this put a stop to the awarding of “orders”, which could too easily be sold at a

discount to the named shopkeeper for ready cash. The purest of amateurs objected to *any* awards other than medals and trophies and even then the trophies had to be engraved so that they could not be sold on; as the trophies were usually of precious metal, they could no doubt have been sold as bullion, but this thought does not seem to have struck the rather innocent gentlemen amateurs. The purity of amateurism was not always all that pure, though, and there are many stories of “amateurs” declining to compete unless it were made worth their while; the couple of sovereigns slipped quietly to a man along with his medal were hard to detect. Such practices were fairly safe, at least in comparison with the hideous offence of knowingly competing – not even necessarily for money – against the disgusting “notorious professionals”.

Race promoters tried in other ways to entice competitors and as late as 1967 the Cycling and Athletics Sports at Ashby-de-la-Zouche used as its appeal the fact that the two mile handicap walk would take place “on good grass track of County Cricket Standard”; on the other hand, the track, fine though it may have been for batting on, was five laps to the mile, that is, 352 yards, which must have posed problems for those walkers who cannot tell how fast they are going unless they are continually referring to their watches. Just to keep the entrants on their toes, metaphorically speaking, the following year, when a ladies’ one-and-a-half miles had been added, the track had grown to four-and-a-quarter-laps to the mile or about 414 yards.

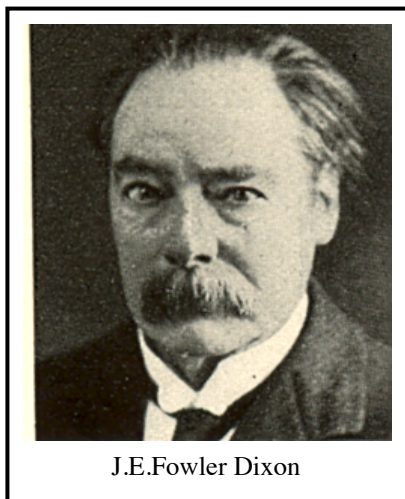
A bizarre and sad event, as reported by Don Blackett in his *Woodford Green Athletic Club: The Birth and Early Years*, befell F.E.Roberts, the Essex long-distance champion for six successive years from 1909 and winner of much else besides. At the age of thirty-three he was still in top form, having in May, 1914, won the Bradford 40 miles in 6:43:01.2; in November of that year, he was charged with being an enemy alien and failing to register. Roberts had always thought of himself as English, until, in 1905, he had had to obtain his birth certificate and discovered that he was actually an Austrian,

although it is far from clear how such a misunderstanding could have arisen. He had told his employers at the Wanstead telephone exchange, and thought that to be sufficient. The Chairman of the Bench evidently did not believe him and gave Roberts a pompous magisterial tongue-lashing and three months. “Where,” asks Blackett, “were the many JPs within the Club when professional help was needed?” As a walker he was never heard of again. It was an unfortunate meeting of a wartime fear of aliens and the wide-eyed innocence of a hapless walker.



F.E.Roberts in happier days:
Essex Long-distance Champion, 1911

A potentially even more serious brush with the law had occurred in 1910. Whereas in his legal career Montague Shearman became responsible, as a judge, for sending several people to the gallows and, as a barrister, for saving several others from it,¹⁴ another of those present at the historic 1880 meeting in Oxford was, at least for a time, a candidate for being on the receiving end of such treatment. John Fowler Dixon, who gave his name to the well-known Style Prize, was questioned by the police investigating the Crippen case because of a fancied resemblance to the notorious doctor.



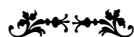
J.E.Fowler Dixon

Certainly, with the heavy moustache, the thinning hair, the slightly drooping eye and the lugubrious expression, there was some similarity to the celebrated uxoricide; on the other hand, Fowler Dixon's likeness to Lloyd George was about equally marked, but there is no record that he was ever at risk of being asked to form a Government.¹⁵

One of the most peculiar occurrences connected to race walking was dealt with in a newspaper report of the Uxbridge and Middlesex A.C. six-and-a-half-mile walk in 1913. The headline to the report "An Exciting Incident", did not, as one might suppose, refer to the fact that H.V.L.Ross beat J.J.Lynch by one-fifth of a second in forty-nine minutes, but to an ancillary happening; "An exciting incident occurred whilst the walkers were passing through Uxbridge High-street. A horse attached to a cart, left unattended, took fright and was on the point of entering the front of a butcher's shop, when Ross and Lynch, who were leading, rushed to the rescue and were just in time to avert a disaster. Both men then resumed their walk, none the worse for their adventure." They still won with a minute and three-quarters in hand over the field.

One last exploit must be mentioned, although it had nothing to do with the R.W.A. in any of its guises (which may be regarded as fortunate for the Association's reputation as a responsible body) and it may well be felt that it really had nothing to do with sport, as proving that eccentricity really can go over the edge into madness and beyond. It will be sufficient to quote from Jebb's *Walkers*: "....But for sheer pedestrian plodding no one can touch the achievement of Dimitru Dan, a Rumanian who entered a contest on a track in France starting on 1 April 1910, to cover 100,000 km. On 24 March 1916 he called a halt after he had covered 96,000 km (60,000 miles), averaging 27.5 miles a day. Towards the end he was the only contestant, which is not surprising in view of the outbreak of world war and general conscription. It is macabre to think of the carnage on the battle front while this solitary Rumanian footed futilely around the empty track." It is very appropriate that the organisers should have chosen that particular day on which to start such a grotesque enterprise, although the whole undertaking seems such a fantastic venture that one may wonder whether it could ever actually have happened at all.

Everyone in the sport, of course, has heard strange tales from the collective memory of race walking, many of them probably more or less partially true, and everyone has his own favourite. Indeed, it might make for some light-hearted entertainment even beyond what has been touched on here, to be able to quote chapter and verse for all these bizarre episodes from race-walking's folklore. It is, perhaps, for the sake of our public image, better not to draw the veil too far back on those sturdier but shadier times when, with wagers, bribes, threats, roping, drugging, personation, illicit payments, favouritism and double-dealing, the race was not necessarily always to the swiftest or the strongest, but sometimes merely to the craftiest and least principled.



PART III

**THE PEOPLE OF
RACE WALKING**

THE PIONEERS OF MODERNISM

As has been pointed out, a good deal of walking before the great period of transition at the close of the nineteenth century was professional and involved matches between individuals or attacks on specific time and distance targets. To a considerable degree, also, there was a concentration on prodigious feats of stamina and survival and the pedestrians carrying out those exercises – the Trojans of the Road, as they might be called – will be looked at in Chapter 33. In the present chapter the spotlight falls on those who were engaged in something more akin to the modern idea of what constitutes sensible and well-organised race walking.

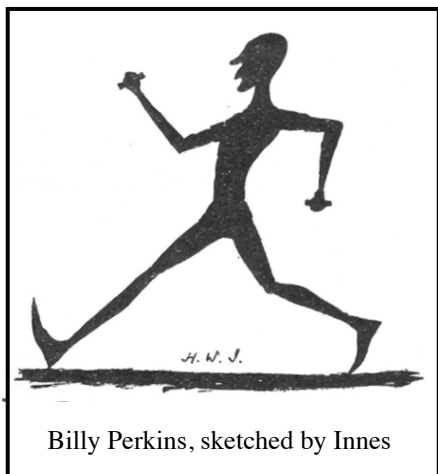
Perhaps the first man who would now be reckoned a *race* walker was Charles Westhall (1823-1868), who was also an accomplished runner, with 15 seconds for 150 yards and 4:28 for the mile, actually being the first man to beat four and a half minutes, and that on a very muddy track. He became known for his speed over the six to ten miles range and, indeed, his first walking race, as a nineteen-year-old, saw him beating fifty minutes for six miles. In his more mature years, he did some fine times for the then very popular seven miles, and over the unusual seven-and-a-half miles he recorded 58:25 (or about 48:24 for 10k) in 1857.

Performances such as those – which were approached by other walkers as well – put into the minds of the pedestrians of the day the possibility of walking twenty-one miles in three hours and a number of unsuccessful attempts were made.¹ Westhall's enduring fame rests upon his having finally accomplished it, after which it became an achievable target, rather as the four-minute mile did just under a century later; in recognition of his success it became known as the "Westhall Feat". Like the better-known walk by Captain Barclay fifty years before, it took place on Newmarket Heath; the

influence of the sporting gentry was evidently still at work. The wager – of course, there had to be one – was for a hundred guineas and Westhall's success was made all the more meritorious by the icy weather and fierce wind on the 20th February, 1858. All details were meticulously observed – bearing in mind, of course, that no-one was entirely certain what walking was – and individual mile times were recorded. Westhall's seven-mile splits of 56:00, 59:50 and 63:11 for a finishing time of 2:59:01 show how difficult it was, the last seven miles taking about as long as the first eight. Its magnitude is perhaps underlined by the fact that James "Jemmy" Miles, a well-known walker of the period with a seven-mile best of 54:30, a time on a par with Westhall's own, made three attempts at "The Feat" and failed, once with a tantalising 3:00:05. It is, incidentally, a testimony to the current scrutiny of walking (which, with the vagueness of the definition, must have been entirely intuitive) that he actually fell short by so little; it would not have taken very much "shifty going" to find five seconds in three hours or seventeen yards in the distance. It was seven years before George Topley did 2:58:24 and another four before it was beaten again, and by a considerable margin, when George Davidson recorded 2:53:34. Although Topley beat three hours several times, no-one was very much impressed by his legality, but Davidson was admired and there was no doubt about what he did.²

An athlete often held up at the time as the epitome of fair and fast walking was Billy Perkins, to whom fell another landmark as noteworthy in its way as the Westhall Feat. He was certainly fast over the shorter distances, having done three miles in 20:47, with the first mile in 6:23. His particular target was eight miles in the hour, which, after two failures, he managed with a time of 59:05. In 1887, however, in a three hour match against Billy

Howes, he covered 22 miles, 218 yards, to win by 198 yards, a performance reckoned by those experts who saw it to have tarnished somewhat his reputation for technical excellence and fairness.



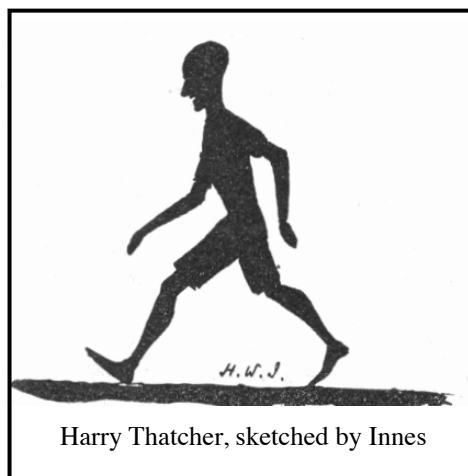
Billy Perkins, sketched by Innes

A number of walkers about the last quarter of the nineteenth century put up rather surprising times over the six to twenty miles range but their performances often fell foul of Innes' criticism, as he struggled to make the sport somewhat more legitimate, because they often combined slack walking and lax judging.

One man who did meet with even Innes' hypercritical approval was Harry Thatcher, although many other followers were less favourably disposed, especially in his early days.

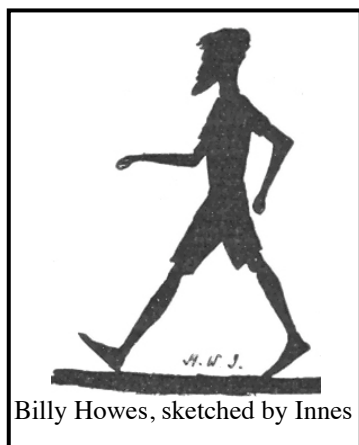
He beat Perkins in a three-hour race, falling short of twenty-one miles, and then in a one-hour match with only just over seven miles to his credit. In something of a reverse of the normal process by which walkers' styles deteriorated as they went for more and more ambitious marks, Thatcher's seems to have improved during his career and no-one had a bad word for him when he covered 22 miles, 456 yards in three hours, 238 yards better than Perkins' record; his seven-mile splits were 55:03; 55:34 and 58:31 for a "Feat" time of 2:49:08. Thatcher had a shot or two at the eight-mile time set by Perkins, actually beating the

distance by 300 yards but, according to Innes, even the referee did not take it seriously, the event being "a match in which he was to walk against a rival who ran with a stone jar balanced on his head"; who won is not recorded.



Harry Thatcher, sketched by Innes

By the end of the 1870s, amateur walking was beginning to show itself, but all the "records" were still being held by the old-style pedestrians, who would seldom take to the track or the road unless there was money in it for them. Consequently, as we point out elsewhere, conditions were not always what might have been hoped for and some of the performances were so surprising that it did not need a cynic as hard-boiled as Innes to question whether the walking was altogether up to scratch. The two silhouettes from Innes' pen included above, although obviously rather exaggerated, show how much variation was to be found, not just between sprinters and longer-distance exponents but between men who raced over similar distances. Imagining people with the techniques of Perkins and Thatcher competing in the same race, it is perhaps not so very astonishing that the judges, for all their diligence and honesty, sometimes found the task of even-handed adjudication beyond them. To complete the range of styles and make the task even harder, there were walkers like Billy Howes, whose appearance would provoke no comment nowadays.



Howes favoured the longer distances, beating eight hours for fifty miles and eighteen and a quarter for the hundred, the latter being achieved twice, in 1878 and 1880, on a 220 yard track; on one of those occasions, he went on to do 127 miles and 1100 yards in the twenty-four hours. Various other walkers went for longer distances, George Littlewood, in 1882, going up to 531 miles in 6 days, although contemporary reports refer to “some inaccuracy in the lap scoring”; while the figures may not be entirely reliable, the general magnitude of the achievement is presumably fairly near the truth.³

With the development of walking no longer based largely on challenge matches and gambling, track racing began to have more importance, particularly for the gentlemen amateurs, and from the institution of the so-called “Amateur Championships” in 1866 and more especially of the Amateur Athletic Association Championships in 1880, the days of the professionals were numbered, although in fact they lingered on until the twentieth century.

The emphasis during that period was switching to the track, where the opportunity for scrutinising the walkers’ progress was so much greater than on the road;⁴ there was rather less scope for the walker to engage in dubious progression, despite the high “sprint” speeds, or for the supporters and backers to do rather more to influence the result than is permitted nowadays.

Perhaps the first of the noteworthy amateurs was Tom Griffiths, one of whose “records”, set under the oddest of conditions, is referred to in Appendix XLVIII. His one- and two-mile times of 6:48 and 14:20 on a worn grass track in the 1860s were quite noteworthy. As always, it is difficult to tell just how “fair” they were and what the judges regarded as proper walking, but they appear to have satisfied Innes, which is something in their favour, although, as mentioned elsewhere, the figures were several times dismissed and reinstated.

Fortunately for later generations of statisticians, in 1895, Bill Sturgess set new figures for everything up to one hour (eight miles, 274 yards) and everyone regarded them as satisfactory.

Nothing can be judged from the rigid pose adopted in the photograph on the following page – indeed, it is difficult to imagine how anyone could get into such a position while actually moving – but he was generally accepted as being fair. This is the crucial point; after years of rejection of various times, on the grounds that a particular judge had – or had not – approved some performance or that it had been set in the North – or, alternatively, in the South – here was a walker whose style was widely approved. During Sturgess’s *annus mirabilis* the only record over which there seemed to be doubt was the one mile, although, as Innes remarked, “as no one seemed to know what the mile record was, it didn’t particularly matter”.

Sturgess’s style seems to have been so good that some experts had their doubts about subsequent improvements, apparently on the grounds that such times could not be done under fair conditions; even Larner’s right to recognition as record-holder for the two miles (his 13:11 being decidedly better than Sturgess’s 13:45) was not universally granted. Sturgess last did anything of note in 1902, when he won the A.A.A. two- and seven-mile titles; when he finally came to be disqualified, “it almost took one’s breath away”.⁵



Bill Sturgess

Sturgess was by no means unbeatable, as Jack Butler showed by defeating him over three hours while the record-holder was at his peak. Again, the wooden stance – even more unnatural than Sturgess's⁶ – tells us nothing about Butler's way of walking, but it was thought, *on the whole*, to be acceptable. In spite of this, there *were* doubts about Sturgess's style in the three-hour race in question, as there were about Butler's, if it comes to that. Sturgess actually set new records at twelve and thirteen miles (1:34:34 and 1:42:49) but thereafter they fell to Butler, culminating in 21 miles, 50 yards in the three hours. Butler, too, had a preference for longer distances, which reached its peak in 1905, when he recorded 7:52:27 for 50 miles (a five minute improvement of the record) and 1906, when he set a "Brighton" record of 8:23:27.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, "modern" race walking was fairly comfortably established and the R.W.A. itself was only a handful of years away; consequently, the walkers of the time fulfilled a dual rôle. While they were, indeed, the pioneers of the sport and had shown the way forward, they were also in a position to be the first of the moderns. Walkers like Hammond, Payne, Lerner and Ross, while closing what we can call the prehistory of the R.W.A., may also be regarded as the men who,

having seen through the gestation, gave the new infant the vigorous start that was to set it on its way.



Jack Butler

One last man, however, deserves some mention as a pioneer of a sort. George Cummings was a walker who filled a niche in the history of the sport that was all his own, as a professional walker – perhaps the last notable one – who had actually won the "Junior" 10 miles in 1911, at which time, as he says in his book, he was quite old enough to be the father of the majority of the competitors. He subsequently went in for racing (or performing against the clock) for money, modestly describing himself on the title-page of his book as "The World's Greatest and Fastest Walker" and "Holder of World Records from one to 420 miles"; the last claim was on account of his having walked from London to Edinburgh in 82 hours and five minutes.⁷

Cummings carried the penchant for obscure walks mentioned in our chapter on Trojans of the Road to perhaps even greater lengths than most, covering such routes as London to Burton and Hartlepool to Hull. He also presented himself as the breaker of the world one-hour record at the age of fifty-nine, covering almost eight and a quarter miles and beating the previous record by forty-three and a half yards.

However, since George Larnier, in 1905, had done eight miles, four hundred and thirty-six yards, one can only suppose that Cummings was claiming the *professional* record and that it was, in any case, inferior to the amateur one. On the other hand, he probably stood alone in the number of times on which he beat horses in pursuit of wagers.



Cummings on a training spin in Hyde Park, paced by Miss Evelyn Laye in a phaeton

On one occasion, he beat a horse in a race from London to York and he more than once engaged in short-distance competitions against the beasts, which sometimes had traps to pull; he seems to have chosen the nature of the competitions with some care. If the Editor may be permitted a personal aside, he must mention that one of his problems is that of wondering whether practically *all* race walkers should not appear under “Eccentrics”. Cummings is a case in point, as we note in Chapter 29, although it must be borne in mind that professional walking – the grand old tradition of pedestrianism – was in its dying throes and the same was true, too, of professional athletics in general, with one or two exceptions, such as the Powderhall meetings. Consequently, finding himself short of “peds” to challenge for a wager of a few pounds, Cummings was bound to find his

opponents where he could, if necessary non-human ones.

Being professionals, Cummings and his like needed to have an eye to seizing the attention of the public as much as possible, and they would do anything to that end, as can be seen from the photograph. Whether Evelyn Laye, a very famous musical comedy actress of the time, simply happened to be out taking the air in the Park or *her* publicity agent was at work as well, we cannot say. In any case, it was not a very vigorous training session for Cummings; the crowd of fully-dressed men does not seem to be having any difficulty in keeping up with the pace! Quite possibly, as red-blooded English sportsmen, they were more interested in the glamorous Miss Laye than in the doughty Mr. Cummings.⁸

The era that had seen the beginnings of race walking may be said to have started in the distant days of Foster Powell and company, for all that there was frequently not much organisation involved and “events” consisted largely of solitary men tramping hundreds of miles of road and, as often as not in the most remote times, validating their own claims. As our brief historical survey has shown, it was the professionals who first began to bring order to the sport and to make it respectable and it was largely the professionals who caught the public eye and attracted the crowds.

With the passing from the scene of the lingering likes of Cummings (whose book, by the way, appeared in a second edition as late as 1947), the pioneers of the sport may be said to be well and truly gone and the professional era was thoroughly into its fading stage. Even though the last dim flickerings continued for years – indeed, decades – to come, the era of the amateur, competing under more-or-less uniform conditions within some occasionally informal but still more-or-less understood definition of walking, was beginning to move to centre stage.

Some of the pioneers who have been mentioned, such as Butler and Sturgess, were amateurs and some of the later walkers, such as

Cummings were firmly rooted in the old days of Westhall and company and were to remain professionals to the bitter end and, in the view of some, beyond it.

Except in the case of revolution, times of change are by their nature gradual and the transition in the case of race walking is further blurred by the fact that, while some of the pioneers carried on into the modern age itself as noted above, other walkers came upon the scene as fully-fledged exponents of the twentieth century approach. Among these were such as Payne, Hammond, Ross and Larner, for example, all twentieth century men.



Tommy Payne with attendants

Tommy Payne, whose position as a Modern is due to his being the first “provincial” walker to win the 20 miles title, although at the time representing his second-claim Middlesex Walking Club because his first-claim one, North Shields Walking Club, was ineligible for the *Southern* title, ended a very promising career after his brush with officialdom mentioned in

Chapter 3 and does not figure as prominently in the story as he might have been expected to. He features as one who disappeared from the sport at the height of his powers; not many walkers, fortunately for the sport, took disqualification as a cause for retirement.

Much attention during the years of transition was focussed on the Brighton Road. Teddy Knott, the first President of the S.C.R.W.A., had set a good time of 8:56:04, in 1887, improving by about half-an-hour on J.A.McIntosh’s time of eleven years before.

Although it was comparable to A.Sinclair’s track performance of 8:25, given the difference in conditions, it might be worthy of gathering more credit than it has actually received; Jack Butler improved the time to 8:43:16 in 1903 and to 8:23:27 three years later.



Tommy Hammond

Oddly, Tommy Hammond never won the Surrey W.C. “Brighton” or any National Championship, perhaps the two “plum” events, but he did win the Stock Exchange version in 1912 and the London to Brighton and Back event in 1907 in 18:13:37, an improvement of two and a quarter hours on the record, and he made something of a habit of winning the Bradford, which he did five times. He also won

the great twenty-four hour track race at the White City in 1908, his 131 miles and 580 yards giving him a margin over the second man just 185 yards short of nine-and-a-half miles, and he removed over an hour from the London to Oxford record in 1907 with 8 hours and 52 minutes.

H.V.L.Ross, while also successful on the Brighton Road, winning the Surrey version twice, in 1909 and 1920, had a remarkable record in the National 20 miles, then, of course, the only National Championship, with six wins between 1908 (the inaugural one) and 1920, a second place in 1911 and a third in 1922. Ross was no sluggard when it came to shorter races, either, winning the A.A.A. 2 miles in 1911 in 13:55.4, a time for the event beaten only once in the next twenty years.



H.V.L.Ross

An interesting photograph taken from Innes' book and reproduced here shows a trio of the pioneers, J.Butler – described as the World's Record Holder for 50 Miles – H.F.Otway – Winner of the Central Markets' "Brighton" – and E.Knott – ex-"Brighton" record holder. The quality of reproduction must have been poor even by 1910 standards but the picture is instructive in that it appears to show that the

first two at least knew about straight knees. Innes refers to the trio as "Three Veterans", but it is not apparent when or at what event the photograph was taken, except that if Knott was the ex-record holder it cannot have been before 1903, when Butler beat his time. Similarly, there is no hint as to location, although it appears to be on a rather pockmarked dirt or cinder track, possibly with an outer embankment for cycle-racing, which was not an uncommon arrangement at the time but had the disadvantage that in a crowded field the only way round might be via the banking.⁹ Perhaps one aspect of social transition is that only Butler seems to be wearing a moustache.



Butler, Otway and Knott

On the track, what would, from our point of view, have been an interesting transitional time is not available, so far as races "under reasonable scrutiny" are concerned, because the A.A.A. 7 miles was not held during the period from 1894 to 1900. Thus, we cannot trace the progress between 1893, when Harry Curtis won in 56:37.2 and 1901, when Jack Butler was Champion in 54:37.0, a gain of about a lap in the interval. In 1902, Billy Sturgess gained another lap with 52:49.4; the following year, Butler did a remarkably slow 56:17.2 and then George Larner, Fred Thompson and Ernest Webb took it in hand, reducing the time to 51:37.0 by 1910, roughly equivalent to an

improvement of two-thirds of a mile in sixteen years.¹⁰

It should be noted, however, that Webb's final time was only forty-eight seconds faster than Venn's performance in 1878, about which Shearman was so scathing. One might harbour suspicions about the missing years and, so far as non-A.A.A. Championship performances are concerned, the views of Innes have been referred to. It would, however, have been good to have had those seven missing times.



One track walk that did take place over a considerable distance and also under what seem to have been entirely acceptable conditions was the fifty miles in 1904, organised by Blackheath Harriers and Surrey Walking Club, which gave it the stamp of authenticity. Not only were all records from twenty-two miles to thirty broken by Butler, but after his retirement from the race F.B.Thompson took over and recorded 7:57:38 for the full distance. The important feature of

this was not only that Thompson and Butler were pioneers while Hammond, who finished fourth, was definitely a modern, but also that Thompson's time beat Sinclair's record *and* Billy Howes' professional, but not very highly regarded, time of 7:57:44. At last the amateurs were displacing the professionals *and under the right conditions* into the bargain. There were honest judges who were as good as they could be in days of such dubiety of definition, there were timekeepers, there was proper recording, it was light and, unlike the road courses, such as London to Brighton and London to Oxford, a mile on the track *was* a mile of 1760 yards and neither more nor less.

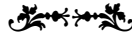
Of course, there continued to be fast times turned in by professionals and questionable performances by amateurs, and reference has been made to such as Yeoumans, with his six-minute mile. It was noticed that most change tends to be gradual and it is not generally possible to point to an instant as being crucial. It is a matter of personal choice where one says that the change has already happened, but the Crystal Palace fifty miles of 1904 can lay claim to being a race that was indubitably modern. Even Innes thought that it was beyond reproach and, as we have seen, he was a man who took some satisfying.

It is certainly true that by the time of the First World War the moderns were in the ascendancy and the old-style professionals and those who sought to emulate them were well on the way out, but George Cummings was, in some ways, a curiosity. His peculiar book has been mentioned and he was certainly not short of admiration for his own ability, but the interest he generates lies principally in the fact that he was not, as a professional, really a leftover from the past so much as a throwback to it, being also one of the moderns who developed while the R.W.A. was being born. As we have said, he was the third winner of the R.W.A. "Junior" 10 miles Championship in 1911, leading his Herne Hill Harriers team to victory as well. There can have been few walkers who turned to professionalism at such a late date. Perhaps he was not just among the

first of the Moderns but also the last of the “Peds”.

The fifty miles of 1904 seemed to have brought the amateurs up to the level of the professionals over the longer distances and the Olympic Games of 1908 did the same for the sprinters, as George Larnier’s ten miles in 1:15:57 equalled the top mark of the best of the old professionals, Billy Perkins. Again, Larnier’s performance was very open, with the eyes of the world – or, at least, of that minute part of it that cared a fig about the sport – focussed upon him for an hour and a quarter.

It is, we have remarked, a matter of taste whether one takes a race as definitive in establishing the arrival of the Moderns and, if so, which particular race it is. If one *does* seize on an instant as indicating that something has changed, then these two of 1904 and 1908 have strong claims. If one prefers to see a longer transitional period, it must be those four years, and a couple on either side, as Hammond, Ross, Larnier, Webb and others instituted a new era of race walking, despite the continued existence of some of the old professionals and the retrogressive steps of Cummings and a very few others.



INTERNATIONAL MEDAL-WINNERS

For several reasons, it is not known how many British walkers have appeared in international events; the status of many a race is far from clear, some results show only the first few finishers or not all finishing times and it is not possible to tell how many such contests went unrecorded or recorded only in such a manner that their standard cannot now be determined. It follows that only a small selection of those so honoured can be mentioned here; if full details were available, no doubt some hundreds of names would appear.

There may be grounds for argument about the selection of those to be dealt with in this chapter. Some will regret the exclusion of men and women whom they particularly admire, while others will question some of the inclusions. Any such listing, of course, must be a matter of taste, but those appearing here would be on most connoisseurs' lists and those omitted would be on few. That is the best that can be hoped for in such an exercise.

It is true that the best walkers will have appeared in the greatest of the international events – the Olympic Games, the World and European Championships and Cups and the Commonwealth Games, with the exception of the best women, whose scope for such appearances will have been limited by the late appearance of women's walks at that level. It is unlikely that any of the "best of the best" will have failed to obtain such selection and had their international careers limited to matches. These main international festivals, therefore, provide the basis for this chapter, in which we shall survey those who have gained individual or team medals in such events. A list of all these British medal-winners appears in Appendix XLV.

The first to succeed at such exalted levels were George Larnar and Ernest Webb, who won

the gold and silver medals in the 1908 Olympic Games. Larnar was an officer in the Brighton Borough Police, where he first took seriously to walking. At the national level, he was A.A.A. Champion at 2 and 7 miles in 1904 and 1905, at the shorter distance again in 1908 and at the longer in 1911. His two Olympic victories were by convincing margins (12 seconds in the 3500m and 1:34 in the 10 miles) but, by his own account he found it a great effort to keep going.¹

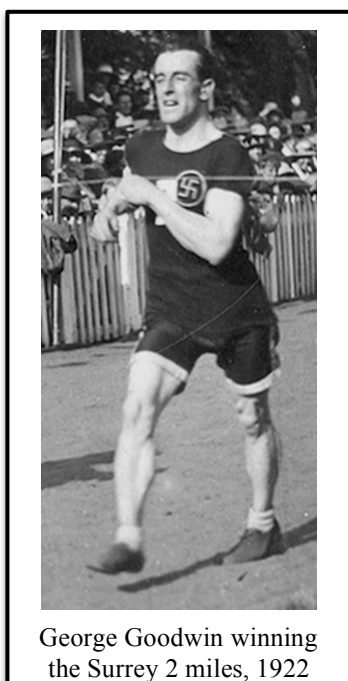


The first Olympic walk:
Larnar leads Webb

Webb himself, a member of the then powerful Herne Hill Harriers, was one of the most unfortunate of walkers. Having taken the two silver medals behind Larnar in 1908, he must have felt some degree of confidence in 1912, after the Champion's retirement. Like Larnar, he had won both the A.A.A. track

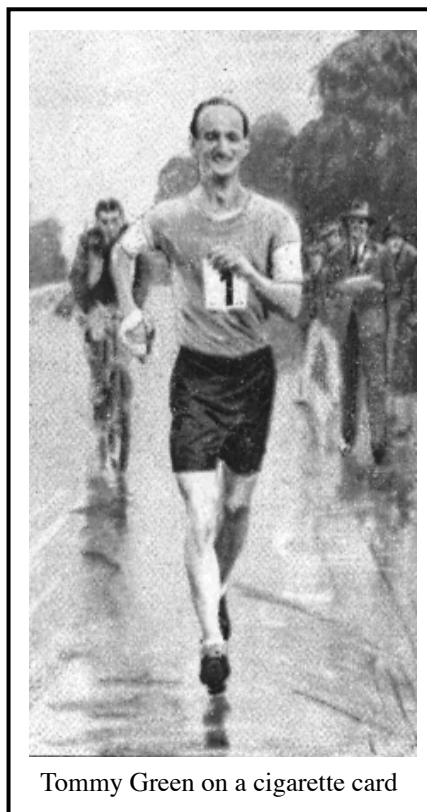
championships, the 7 miles in 1908-10 and the 2 miles in 1909 and 1910. Sadly for him, he found himself against the Canadian George Goulding, who beat him by just 22 seconds – 46:28 to 46:50 – over 10000 metres. As we describe elsewhere, the Games were somewhat of an anticlimax for the British walkers; of the five, one did not finish in his heat and in the final one did not finish and two were disqualified. As Edward Spencer of Polytechnic Harriers had taken the bronze in the 1908 10000 metres, 1912 was a decided comedown.

Charles Gunn, a clerk in the Railway Clearing House, for whose Club (a founder-member of the S.C.R.W.A.) he competed, never won a National Championship but nonetheless maintained the British record of at least one medal per Olympic Games by finishing third in the 10000 metres in 1920, as did George Goodwin (Surrey Walking Club) in coming second at the same distance in 1924. At the time of his Olympic medal, Goodwin had not yet won a National title, but repaired the omission at 7 miles in 1924 and 1926 and at 2 miles in 1924 and 1925.²



George Goodwin winning the Surrey 2 miles, 1922

If things had been less than completely successful after 1908, the situation was well corrected in 1932³ and it was another man from the railways who did it, T.W Green of Belgrave Harriers, who worked for the Southern Railway at Eastleigh.



Tommy Green on a cigarette card

Any 50k walker has to be ready to battle against adversity to win but Tommy Green had enough problems to keep most people out of the sport altogether. He was a childhood sufferer from rickets, and during his army service was injured by a horse, wounded in action and gassed. He did not take up walking until he was about thirty years old, but was immediately established as a top distance man, winning the London to Brighton four times, the Hastings to Brighton three times, the Manchester to Blackpool six times and the Bradford three times, not to mention the Milan 100k. Oddly, Green's only National titles were the "Junior" 10 miles in 1927 and the inaugural 50

kilometres in 1930, although he also had two second places and a third in the 20 miles, the last in 1933, when he was nearly forty.

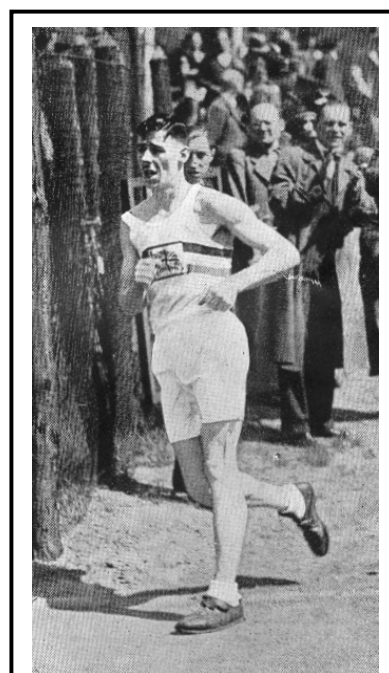
The story of his epic battle with Dalinsch and Frigerio is well known, with Green recovering from a minute behind to seven minutes ahead over the last few kilometres

Green had been generally recognised as the best distance walker in the world, but his successor in Berlin in 1936 was at least of equal rank. Harold Whitlock who, with his brother G.B.R. (known as "Rex"), was a member of the illustrious Metropolitan Walking Club, was much more successful at the National level than Green, winning the 50 kilometres six times (with two seconds) and the 20 miles twice (with three seconds and a third), as well as being nearly on a par with Green in the classic open races.

He won the London to Brighton four times, the Bradford five times and the Hastings to Brighton twice; one of his Brightons (1935) was won in 7:53:50, a record time that endured for twenty-one years. He recorded his thoughts on the Berlin 50k, including his surprise at finding that the course included some woodland paths among "every conceivable type of surface", something of which Lerner might have approved. He had the coolness to be last out of the stadium, worked his way up to third by halfway, was leading at forty kilometres and shook off a bout of sickness to win by just under a minute and a half from the Swiss walker Schwab in 4:30:42.

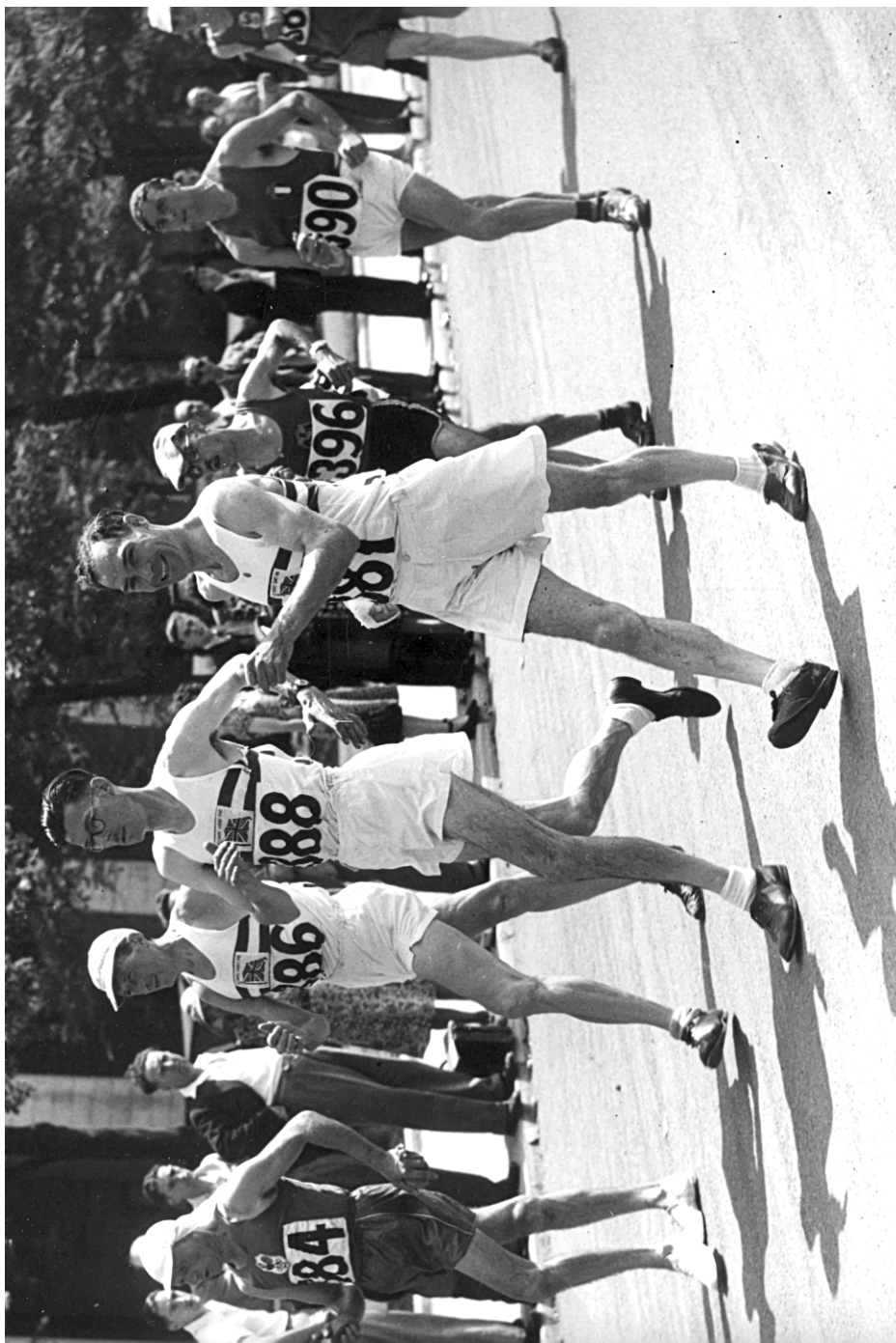
This victory did not exhaust Whitlock's international successes, for two years later he won the European Championship in Paris with 4:41:51. Robbed by the Second World War of the chance of retaining his Olympic title, he nevertheless returned in peacetime and was eleventh in 1952, when Rex was less than a minute away from bronze. Off the road, Whitlock gave sterling service, as National Coach, General Secretary of the R.W.A. from 1948 to 1953 and President in 1955-1956. Internationally he did just as much, with a long

spell as Chairman of the I.A.A.F. Walking Commission and as a distinguished judge, including being Chief Judge at the Rome Olympic Games of 1960.

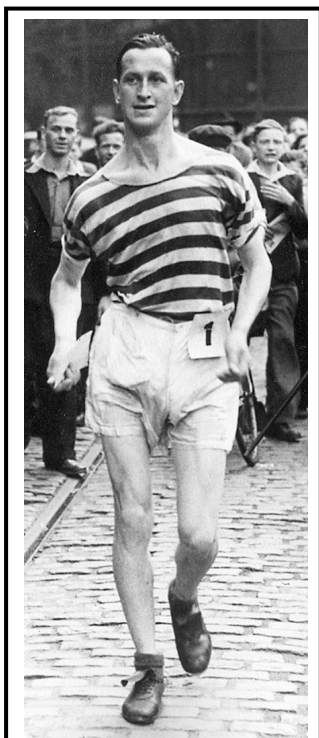


Control at all times:
Whitlock takes a downhill corner

The first of the top international events after the war was the 1946 revival of the European Championships. Only two British walkers were sent to Oslo, both for the 50k, Charlie Megnin of Highgate and Harry Forbes of Birmingham, respectively National Champions at 50k and 20 miles; in fact, Megnin had somehow managed to win the "Junior" 10 miles in the same year and Forbes had finished second in the 50k, four minutes behind Megnin at Bradford. The first two or three years of peace were the best years for both of them; Forbes won both the 20 miles and 50k in 1947 and Megnin was third at the shorter distance in 1948. Megnin did not reproduce his "Bradford" form in Oslo, finishing third, but Forbes surpassed himself with second place in 4:42:58, nearly a quarter of an hour faster than in the National, while Megnin's time had slackened by over three minutes.



London, 1948 Team packing: Johnson, Whitlock and Martineau

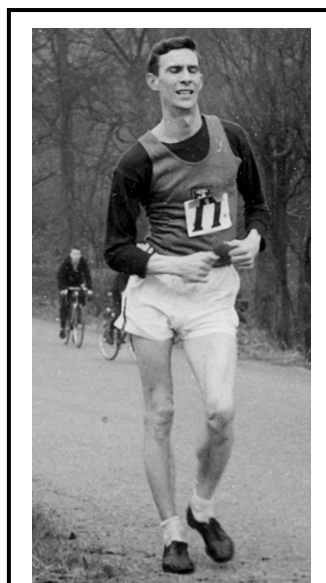


Charlie Megnin

In a subsequent letter to *Race Walking Record*, Megnin reckoned that the real battle in the 50k “was taking place in the official car...Freddie Blackmore against The Rest”. Four of the eight competitors were disqualified in the first five kilometres, although some of them declined to stop walking; only Forbes and Megnin escaped warnings.⁴

If Whitlock’s achievement in appearing in the Olympic Games of 1952 at the age of forty-eight was remarkable, so, too, was that of T.Lloyd Johnson of Leicester Walking Club who not only walked in the 1948 Games at the same age, but actually won the bronze medal, only fourteen seconds behind the second man and some six minutes faster than his time in finishing seventeenth in 1936. Johnson had a remarkable span as a national champion, winning the first of his three 20 miles titles in 1927 and the last of his three at 50 kilometres in 1949 after a fifteen year gap. Overlapping as he

did firstly with Tommy Green and then with Harold Whitlock, he did not have such a strong record in the great open road races as those two, although he did win the Bradford in 1931 and 1934. It is possible that, like many sportsmen – including, indeed, Whitlock himself – he was robbed by the war years of doing even greater things.



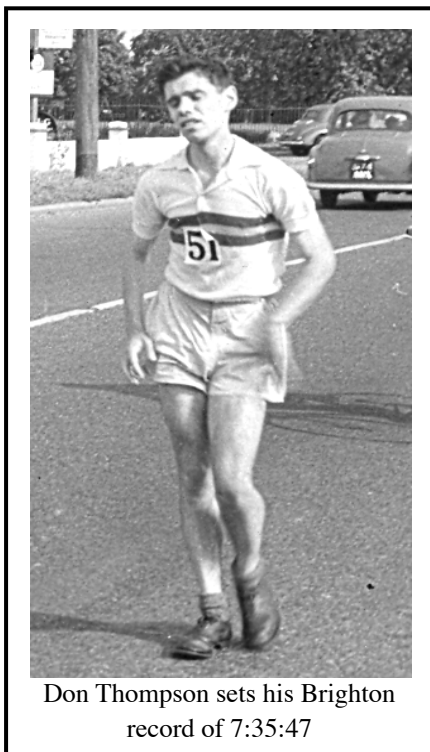
Stan Vickers

No medals came Britain’s way in the 1952 Olympics, in which Hardy and Allen were both disqualified in the 10000m, as they had been in the European Championships in Brussels two years previously. Eventually, uniformity of judging began to creep in, but not without a struggle, and meanwhile success eluded British walkers until late in the nineteen-fifties. The 20 kilometres race at the European Championships in Stockholm in 1958 was the occasion for the recovery and Stan Vickers of Belgrave Harriers was the man for the occasion, as he won by two minutes in 1:33:09.

He had already won the National 10 miles twice and he later added the 20 miles, as well as finishing fifth to Spirin in Melbourne in 1956. He was a noted track man as well as a success

on the road, winning the A.A.A. 7 miles twice and the 2 miles three times.⁵

In Rome, two years after Stockholm, Vickers improved his earlier Olympic performance by finishing third to Golubnichy (who beat him by only forty-nine seconds) and this would have been the top British athletic performance of the Games, but for Don Thompson of Metropolitan Walking Club.



Don Thompson sets his Brighton record of 7:35:47

Thompson won the National 50k seven times in succession (1956-62), doubling up with the 20 miles in 1961 and finishing off with another 50k in 1966. He won every Brighton from 1955 to 1962 and the Hastings-Brighton four times. In a single day, 14th October, 1960, at Walton-on-Thames, he set records from 20 to 30 miles, 25 to 50 kilometres and 3 to 5 hours.⁶ He was also the bronze medallist in the European 50k in 1962. However, it is principally for his Olympic achievement that he is remembered. He had failed to finish in the 1956 Olympics, collapsing at 42 kilometres while lying fifth.

We refer elsewhere⁷ to Thompson's method of preparing for the heat and humidity to be expected in Rome and the efficacy of that preparation speaks for itself, although he had only seventeen seconds in hand over Ljunggren, who, at the age of forty, knocked fifteen minutes off the time that had won him the title in London twelve years earlier. Thompson evidently thought that he was in form and should take advantage of it, because little over a week later he won the Brighton, in October came the Walton track race and he followed up a month later by a 25-minute margin in winning the Milan 100k.⁸

The following year, 1961, saw the inaugural holding of the Lugano Cup competition (later to be incorporated, with the women's Eschborn Trophy, into the World Cup) and, as everyone might have been expected, Britain duly secured first place.

The Cup was the first of several first-rate international victories for Ken Matthews, who won the 20k, with George Williams⁹ third and Robert Clark seventh while the 50k team of Don Thompson (second), Ray Middleton (fourth) and Charles Fogg (ninth) did a great deal more than provide support. The British team overall was level on points with Sweden, but won by the rule that, in the event of a tie, the winner would be the country that had finished higher in the 50k.

During his career, Ken Matthews won a total of fifteen Nationals – one at 20 miles, four at 10 miles, five at 7 miles (track) and five at 2 miles (track) – but 1961 was the first of four incomparable international years. Lugano was followed in 1962 by first place in the European Championship, in 1963 he won the Lugano 20 kilometres at Varese and his career was topped off in 1964 by the Olympic gold medal, a minute and a half ahead of Lindner of the G.D.R.

The 1963 World Cup in Varese, mentioned above, was also a team triumph, Matthews being joined in the 20k by Paul Nihill (second) and John Edgington (sixth), while the 50k team

of Ray Middleton (second), Ron Wallwork (fifth) and Charles Fogg (sixth) ensured victory. Domestically, Middleton won the National 50k the same year and in 1964, while he and Wallwork (National Champion at 10 miles and 20 kilometres once each and the track 2 miles twice) were to meet again later when walks entered the Commonwealth Games.

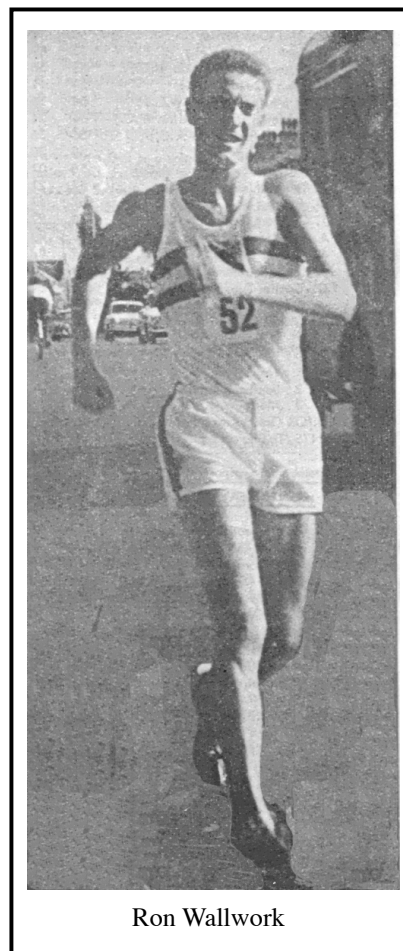
Paul Nihill, having taken the silver medal in Tokyo and contributed to the team victory in Varese, subsequently won the European 20k in 1971 and was third in 1974. His record in Nationals was second to none, with a total of twenty-seven wins, from his first 20 miles in 1963 to his last 3000 metres in 1975, a remarkable collection of titles.¹⁰

In a sign of things to come, the British team, which had won the World Cup at Varese, slipped to second at Pescara in 1965¹¹ and third two years later in Bad Saarow,¹² although there were still individual European medals to come.

In 1966, the Commonwealth Games Federation introduced a 20 miles walk to the Games and the inaugural title was won in Jamaica by Ron Wallwork, who had featured at 20k in both Pescara and Bad Saarow, with Ray Middleton second, less than a minute behind. That same year, Wallwork won the A.A.A. 2 miles and repeated the feat in 1967, adding the R.W.A. 10 mile and 20k titles. If *he* was moving up for the Commonwealth Games, Middleton was moving down, his National titles having been the 50ks of 1963 and 1965; he had also, of course, had a long spell, from 1961 to 1967, in the medal-winning World Cup teams.

The 1974 Commonwealth Games saw a repeat of the English one-two, with John Warhurst beating Roy Thorpe. Warhurst was also the winner of a 20 mile and two 50k Nationals, while Thorpe had one of each. The same year was marked by the last British medal at international level on the men's side (although *English* medals were still to come), when Roger Mills was third in the Rome European Championships. Mills, too, had a string of National titles, one each at 35k, 20

miles, 10k and 10 miles, two in the 10000m track and ten in the 3000m track; no athlete has ever won more individual A.A.A. titles.



Ron Wallwork

Olly Flynn kept up the Commonwealth Games tradition by winning the first 35 kilometres in Edmonton in 1978; he was another man moving up somewhat for the Games, as his Nationals were a 30k, three 10 miles and five 20ks, one of each occurring in Commonwealth Games year. He is pictured with Roger Mills at the start of Chapter 8.

The last English male medallist in the Games was Ian McCombie, who was third in both 1986 and 1990. The most noteworthy feature of his eighteen Nationals, which extended from 1984 to 1992, was that he won

the 10 miles in each of those nine years, including “hat-tricks” of 10 miles, 20k and 10000m track in 1984, 1986 and 1988.

Before leaving this brief survey of male medallists, it should perhaps be mentioned that two British but non-English walkers won Commonwealth medals, Bill Sutherland of Scotland finishing third in 1970 and Steve Barry of Wales winning in 1982.

As we pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, the scope for women to participate in competition at such levels as men has been severely limited. One early winner of such a medal was an often overlooked pioneer, Daisy Crossley, previously mentioned in Chapter 19. In the International Women’s Games in Göteborg in 1926, she beat the only other starter in the 1000 metres, a Frenchwoman called Albertine Regel, by 2·4 seconds in a world record time of 5:10·0 (with another at 880 yards – 4:03·0 – en route).



Daisy Crossley

It was a good year for her, as she had won the National 880 yards walk in 4:06·0 and an

earlier 1000m record of 5:13·8. The photograph probably shows her on the way to her World title; this, incidentally, was the only occasion upon which a walk was included in the Games.

The first years in which women walked in the various “modern” events were:

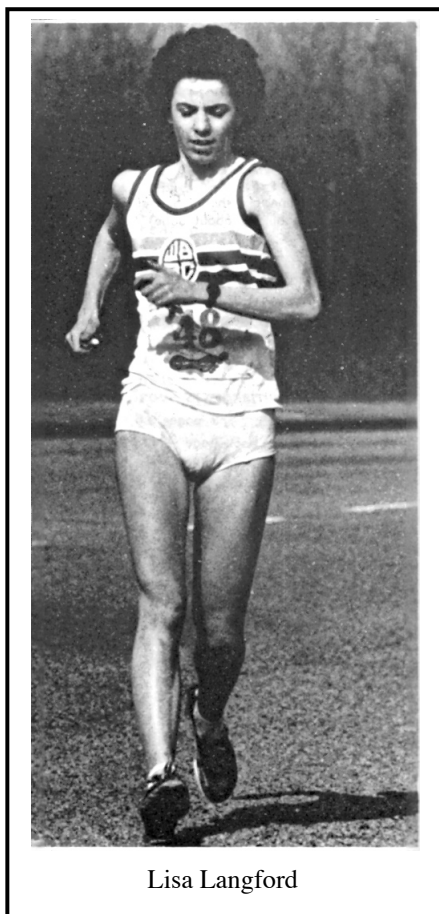
- 1979 World Cup
- 1986 European Championships
- 1987 World Championships
- 1990 Commonwealth Games
- 1992 Olympic Games
- 1996 European Cup

From the English point of view, the start was exceedingly bright. In the first World Cup competition, then known as the Eschborn Trophy, with Marion Fawkes first, Carol Tyson second and Irene Bateman sixth, there was a fairly emphatic win over Sweden and Norway. At home, the three team members had very similar records; Fawkes won four track and two road titles, Tyson two and three and Bateman one and five. In a sense, 1979 was the best possible year for the Trophy to start, as Fawkes’ top years were 1974 to 1979, Tyson’s 1978 to 1981 and Bateman’s 1980 to 1983; they were thus at their best more or less together.

It was, in fact, only *just* the first of the Championships, because unofficial women’s competitions had been held *annually* since 1968, all but one being won by Sweden, and a women’s 5k had been held with the Lugano Cup in Milton Keynes in 1997; two-thirds of the competitors were British, the “scoring team” being Carol Tyson second, Judy Farr fourth and Beverley Francis seventh. Interestingly, in view of the outcome when the competition became official two years later, the only non-finisher from the twenty-three starters in Milton Keynes in 1997 had been Marion Fawkes.

By the time of the eventual introduction of a women’s walk into the Commonwealth Games in Auckland, New Zealand in 1990, Lisa Langford (later Kehler) was the top English walker and she finished third there and in Kuala Lumpur in 1998 and second in Manchester in

2002. Like some of the men noticed above, she has produced a remarkable series of National championship wins, with five at 5k, three at 10k, two at 20k and four in the A.A.A. track championships for a total of fourteen, another example of near domination by an individual.



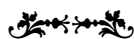
Lisa Langford

At these highest levels of competition, thirty-three English walkers have achieved either individual or team medals, with a total of sixty-seven between them. If the net is widened to include other British walkers, as noted under the paragraphs on the Commonwealth Games, then these figures are to be increased to thirty-five and sixty-nine, respectively. Given the

long-term international superiority of British walking over such a period, the number of individuals is not large; Matthews and Middleton with six each, Nihill and Thompson with five and Wallwork with four won twenty-six of the medals between them. Although impressive at the time, it was, as subsequently became apparent, far too insubstantial a basis on which British race walking could confidently rely for future dominance.

For the next two decades, it was always the case that the British teams and those from the individual home countries were incomplete and often non-existent. This was not entirely due to falling domestic standards, although it must be granted that they were not very impressive compared to world levels. Another strong contributory factor was the increased number of countries appearing on the scene, not just because race walking was spreading in absolute terms but also because, although the strong international position – one might almost say dominance – of the U.S.S.R. was gone with the dissolution of the athletic megalith, half a dozen of the former Union Republics such as Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and others, appeared as strong contenders in their own right.

Add to this a series of reorganisations and upheavals in the athletics structure of the United Kingdom, the much wider range of competing attractions, the apparent belief among young people that computer games had some objective reality and an increase in personal disposable income and it is not to be wondered at that the hard and sometimes lonely world of race walking failed to produce anyone to compete on level terms with the world's best. It was no surprise that, while its first century had begun on a high note with practically a clean sweep in the 1908 Olympic Games, domestic race walking's hundredth birthday was far less distinguished from that point of view and that England – and Britain – had become "also-rans".



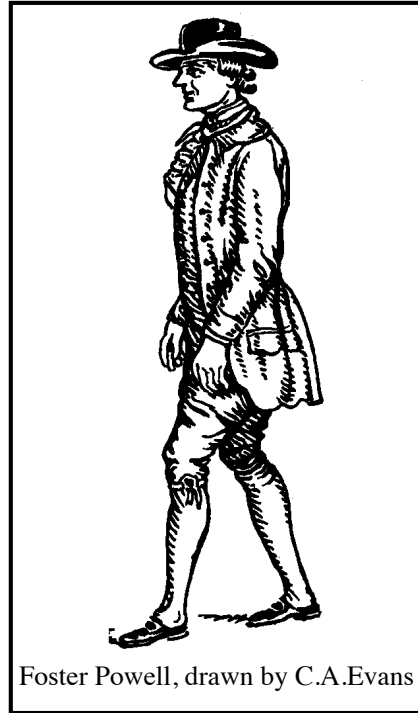
TROJANS OF THE ROAD

At one time, as has been mentioned elsewhere in this book, there was much enthusiasm – generally in pursuit of purses, wagers and side-bets – for enormous feats of pedestrian endurance. Nowadays, there is still considerable attachment among some elements to the hundred mile or twenty-four hour race¹ but the *really* long-distance effort is largely gone, faded with the triumph of amateurism over professional walking; while it might have been worthwhile to walk half the length of the country or for a week or two in pursuit of a couple of hundred guineas, there is now little wish to do so purely for the sake of it.

Some of the old pedestrians became known outside sporting circles, but the only one whose memory has really lingered is Captain Barclay, who somehow seems to have caught the public imagination in his own time in a way quite different to the others, so ensuring his immortality. He was, however, by no means the first of such performers, or the most prodigious; it might be held by some that he was not even the best.

One of the earliest of the long-distance men was Foster Powell, born in Horsforth, near Leeds, in 1736. His father was a lawyer and he himself became clerk to an attorney in London, where his duties required him to go to York; for some reason that remains unclear, he chose to walk, rather than take the coach, doing the round trip in just over six days. This seems to have given him a taste for such activity, because he then went in for it in a fairly big way. One of his early achievements is described by Pierce Egan as being to walk “from London to Maidenhead and back, (twenty-seven miles) in seven hours”.²

In November 1773, he felt sufficiently confident to attempt the York-and-back trip



Foster Powell, drawn by C.A.Evans

again, but this time in under six days, for a hundred guineas.³ Powell’s detailed record shows that he covered 394 miles in about four hours and fifty minutes inside the target. (All his times are “about” and it appears that he spent “about” thirty-four and a half hours off the road, including eight hours the first night, after covering eighty-eight miles in twenty-one hours.) “What rendered this exploit more extraordinary,” reports Egan, “was that he set out in a very indifferent state of health, being compelled, from a pain in his side, to wear a strengthening plaister all the way; his appetite, moreover, was very indifferent, for his most frequent beverage was either water or small beer; and the refreshment he most admired was tea, and toast and butter.” Presumably he stopped (untimed) at wayside inns to top himself up.

He did not confine himself to walking for wagers; another of his dubious achievements was to *walk* 50 miles on the Bath road in seven hours, which he did, “although encumbered with a great-coat and leather breeches.” Since it is alleged that he covered the first ten miles in one hour on his way to success, the level of dubiety must be considered high even for those days of free-and-easy going! In 1787 he was doing it for money again, winning a wager to walk from Canterbury to London and back in twenty-four hours, finishing the 114 miles ten minutes inside the target.⁴

Having polished off another York round trip in five days, nineteen hours and forty-five minutes in June, 1788, he then won a hundred guineas by going from Hyde Park Corner to the fiftieth mile stone on the Bath road and back in twenty-four hours, finishing “with several minutes to spare”. He was by then becoming well-known for his feats and could only raise a wager of twenty guineas to fifteen in 1790 for York and back in five days and eighteen hours; he did it with one hour and fifty minutes in hand. His offer to do a hundred miles the next day if someone would make it worth his while, financially speaking, fell upon deaf ears and short pockets.

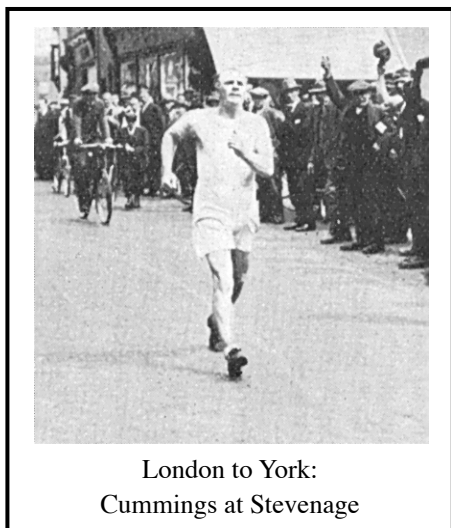
In November, one West, a Windsor publican, beat him in a forty mile walk for forty guineas (the only *race* in which he seems to have engaged as a walker, although he may have done some as a runner) and Powell then failed in an attempt at London to Canterbury by falling several times and losing the road as he crossed Blackheath. Perhaps the enthusiasm for betting against a near “cert” was waning towards the end of his career; at any rate, in 1791, he could find only fifteen guineas to say that he could not walk to York and back in five days and fifteen hours; naturally, he beat the target by eighty-five minutes. Foster Powell’s pedestrian income was spread over less than twenty years and he died in 1795 at the age of fifty-five.

While some walkers were establishing their reputations by such feats as Foster Powell’s – walking between towns or for measured

distances of a hundred miles – others were striking out on much bolder schemes. One of the difficulties – and simultaneously one of the opportunities – of measured distances, such as 100 miles on the Bath Road, was that some roads were harder than others. A man who could do 100 miles in twenty-four hours in Norfolk might well have found the same thing in Yorkshire a very different kettle of fish. Alternatively, to set a good time, it would have been sensible to choose an “easy” course, perhaps one going from an inland place to the coast, and therefore predominantly downhill. An out-and-back course would be “fairer”, having a nett change of altitude of zero, and might even give an advantage if the “out” were harder than the “back”, matching increasing ease of gradient with increasing tiredness. However, as various critics have noted, some miles are longer than others, even on the same road; it is difficult to compare notional hundred mile routes on different roads. There appears to be no inherent virtue in walking from London to Canterbury or Maidenhead, although some of the holiday-makers’ routes such as Manchester to Blackpool or London to Brighton do seem more “real”.⁵ The expert at strange routes must have been Cummings with his trips from Hartlepool to Hull, Barrow-in-Furness to Middlesborough and London to Burton, although he was also capable of putting in good performances on more recognisable routes, at one time setting a record for the “Brighton” and a “world record” for 200 miles from London to York, although in the latter case he was racing against a horse, presumably a hand-picked one of indifferent pedigree.

The only way of comparing such efforts fairly is for everyone to use the same routes. Town A’s cathedral to town B’s market cross may be a hundred miles, or it may be as little as ninety-five or as much as a hundred and five, but it is the same for everyone. It is suggested that this gives a reason for the multiplicity of pedestrian stunts got up by the performers; the man who knows that the stagecoach is half-a-mile an hour faster on one road than on another over an allegedly measured distance will not need much intelligence to decide where to have

a crack at a record. This – apart from the logistic convenience of the matter – is also why, when road *racing* as distinct from individual time-trialling developed about the turn of the nineteenth century, the events were point-to-point rather than conjectural distances dependent upon the efficiency of the old turnpike trusts' measurement procedures. Similarly, when it was desired at the same period to hold races over some definite distance, fifty or a hundred miles, for example, they were held on tracks. It is true that the tracks tended to be different sizes, but at five or six miles an hour there is no material difference between four laps to the mile and five.



London to York:
Cummings at Stevenage

Some walkers, seeking to provide a record that would be unchallenged, would set out to tackle phenomenal distances, in the hope, one supposes, that others would be frightened off. Thus, in 1758, a little before Foster Powell got under way, George Guest – for a wager, of course – undertook to cover 1000 miles in under 28 days in Birmingham. This is “only” 35·7 miles a day (or a little under one and a half miles an hour) evenly spread, but Guest only did it with five hours to spare. No doubt he had time off, so that his average speed while actually on the move was considerably higher; it certainly was at the end, when he is alleged to have covered six miles in his last hour of walking! It appears that this performance was

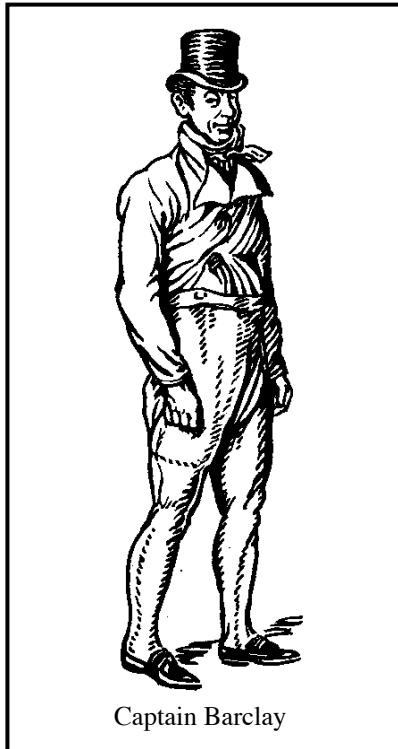
the first time that anyone had walked 1000 miles under any sort of scrutiny.

George Wilson, whose brushes with authority are mentioned in Chapter 29, had another attempt at 1000 miles in 1816 (this time in Hull, well away from the Blackheath magistrates) and succeeded in forty minutes and fifty seconds inside eighteen days. This was promptly trumped by Daniel Crisp, who, on the Uxbridge Road, added thirty-seven miles to Wilson's distance and knocked an hour off his time, despite having to contend with a flooded road.⁶ The matter of the “straight” thousand miles, with no gimmicks or peculiar conditions, was thus settled until the American Edward Payson Weston came to England in 1877 and upset the parochial native apple cart by wagering that he could cover 1000 miles in 400 hours in Newcastle upon Tyne. Perhaps due to his practice of observing the Sabbath, he must have had the closest call in the history of such endeavours, finishing nineteen minutes inside the target time.

These “events” – if that is quite the correct word in the circumstances – were all attempts to *do* a thousand miles in a set time with time off taken whenever and for whatever period the pedestrian fancied; Weston, for example, was only in action for 250 of his allotted 400 hours, using the rest of the time to rest and recover.

The standard for making things as difficult as possible had been set by Robert Barclay Allardyce – the celebrated Captain Barclay – who, with others, hit upon the idea of setting up challenges with restrictions. In 1801, for example, for five hundred guineas he attempted ninety miles in twenty one and a half hours, which was as contrived a target as might be imagined. Having scratched because he had caught a cold in training, he had another go for two thousand guineas, but withdrew due to “the injudicious use of reviving stimulants”⁷; it would seem that the opposition did not rate his chances of ultimate success very highly, as they carelessly let themselves be talked into accepting his offer of trying again for five thousand guineas. He finished sixty-eight

minutes to the good and the gamblers paid for their error. Had the Captain not been a gentleman one might have been forgiven for smelling a rat.



Captain Barclay

Barclay's great scheme in 1809 was to walk one thousand miles in each of one thousand consecutive hours for a wager of one thousand guineas. If this seems a small sum, even for those days, in exchange for such endeavour, it should be borne in mind that he probably made twenty times as much from side-bets. Whether those gambling against him naïvely supposed that he would make it even harder by starting on the hour every hour for his next mile is not apparent, but if so they reckoned without Barclay's intelligence. Early on in his effort, when he was averaging about fifteen minutes per mile he would start just at the right time to finish before the hour was up, wait until the clock struck and start on another mile. By this ruse, he had about an hour and a half before he had to do another more or less continuous two miles. Even at the end of his six weeks, when he had slowed to twenty-one minute miling, he still

had rest periods of eighty minutes; this gave him just enough time to doze briefly and awake a little refreshed, although his weary attendant had sometimes to resort to a little mild violence and some degree of verbal abuse to get the pedestrian on his feet again.

By the time that he finished, Barclay had lost two stones in weight; this is not much over such a period with such exercise, but he did "recruit his strength" with four meat meals a day. Barclay continued to indulge in various events, although not on such a scale, and died at the age of 75 after being kicked by a horse that he was breaking.⁸

It might have been thought that such a feat would discourage others from anything similar. It seems, on the contrary, to have inspired them, for in 1815 Josiah Eaton, a Colchester man, did 1100 miles in 1100 successive hours. There seems, however, to have been some degree of doubt about this performance at Blackheath; although it was not disrupted by the magistrates as Wilson's had been. Barclay, who had been present, was not convinced that all was above board. Whether or not Eaton was nettled by this rejection,⁹ he did the same feat again in July of the next year, making it even harder by removing the possibility of Barclay-like timing; he undertook to start each mile within twenty minutes after the hour and on this occasion there was to be no doubt about his achievement. This time, Barclay was not there to see it and was therefore unable to object.

It was, incidentally, by no means unknown for long-distance walkers to carry a stick, but it would appear from Eaton's general stance in the sketch that he was using his for support rather than as an aid to balance.

Evidently wishing to hit Barclay while he was down, so to speak, and discourage him from doing something even better, Eaton then set out in December, 1816, to do the seemingly impossible by walking 2000 half miles in 2000 consecutive half-hours. It *was* impossible – at any rate for Eaton – but only just; he retired after 1998 repetitions! He then, in 1817, entered

a 2000 mile *race* against a Mr. Baker at Wormwood Scrubbs and won in forty-two days, and followed up by walking from his home town to London and back on successive days ten times over, at 51 miles each way – 1020 miles in twenty days; since he could presumably have a good night's rest at each end of the route, he must have found it as easy as any such trek could reasonably be.



Josiah Eaton

After that, the fashion for walking a thousand miles became quite the thing and eventually went the way of all fashions.

Before it did so, however, events were occurring that would have shocked Captain Barclay very considerably, not only because he would not have thought them possible but because he would very likely have regarded them as shameful. In July, 1884, two months after his death, his feat was attempted by a *married woman*, a Mrs. Dunn, at Birkenhead. Research has not revealed whether she succeeded but she definitely subsequently did 1000 half miles in 1000 half hours.

What is fairly beyond doubt is that between the 17th September and the 29th October, 1864, Barclay's feat *was* repeated by a woman, one Emma Sharp of Bradford, walking on a 120 yard stretch of path at the Quarry Gap Hotel, Laisterdyke. Mrs. Sharp was in many ways ahead of her time; she wore men's clothes, smoked a clay pipe, although probably not while walking, and carried a brace of pistols to deter interference. No definite contemporary information exists about the exact financial arrangements, but family tradition spoke of "four figures"; for the family of a mechanic, that was a small fortune. Gate money must have helped, because it is reputed that 100,000 spectators paid to watch the attempt.

In 1876, Ada Anderson repeated the "thousand in a thousand" achievement and two years later she walked a mile and a half every hour for 672 hours. Perhaps it is a little harsh to regard this feat as an act of eccentricity; nevertheless, it is described in more detail in Chapter 30, as Miss Anderson was, on that particular occasion, more of a Trojan of the Music Hall. She then went on tour in the United States of America giving exhibitions of pedestrianism and is said to have made \$30,000. The pinnacle of her career, during her American trip, was to walk 2,700 quarter-miles in 2,700 consecutive quarter-hours over the period of four weeks. As with all these repetitive performances, the problem was not so much muscular fatigue – in those times, many people would have walked more than twenty miles a day in their ordinary lives – but sleep deprivation, now regarded as a variety of sophisticated torture that leaves no bruises, but then, it seems, a form of sport.

As an aside on a matter that forms a thread running through this book – the definition of walking – when Weston met the Irishman-become-American Daniel O'Leary at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, in 1877, a statement was signed by four of the five judges setting out what they were looking for in walking: "We, the undersigned, who have been appointed judges in the walking-match between E.P. Weston and D.O'Leary, that commences at

the Agricultural Hall on Monday, April 2, 1877, have mutually agreed to consider all walking fair so long as neither of the two competitors has both feet off the ground at the same time. We consider the distinction between running and walking to be that the former is a succession of springs, in which both feet are off the ground at the same moment; the latter to be a succession of steps, in which it is essential that some part of one foot must always touch the ground – A.G.Payne, J.G.Chambers, Charles Conquest, Geo. W. Atkinson. March 31, 1877.”¹⁰

Here we have a simple, straightforward statement of the definition, which, as well as establishing the conditions for the match, might have settled the matter once and for all at the very beginnings of modern walking, had not the fifth judge, J.Watson, declined to sign, arguing that there should be further stipulation that “the toes of one foot should not leave the ground till the heel of the other was down”. A plain statement of “contact and nothing else” was immediately muddled – and muddled – by “heel and toe”. The two parties would apparently not yield and the match duly took place, presumably with one of the judges working to different Rules from the other four. The reporter observed that “There was little fear however, of either of the competitors departing from the rules of fair walking,¹¹ as to have done so would have endangered his own chance,” which seems a trifle innocent.

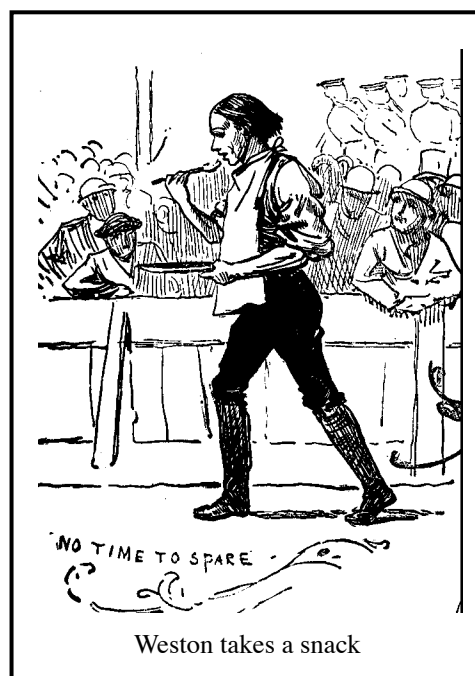
Listed among the timekeepers at this match, incidentally, was the celebrated Charles Westhall, involved in an event very different from his own entry into the record books.

Although this match might be better suited to a chapter on *Trojans of the Indoor Arena*, it is worth digressing to consider the conditions under which it was held. Whatever one may think of the dispute over judging, by the way, it is of note that the two had previously met in Chicago and were so dissatisfied with the organisation of the event and the evidently unreliable count kept of their miles that they seem to have had no confidence in the

outcome¹² and chose to race in England to “have an unprejudiced record taken.”

A track was set out in the Hall and each man had to remain within his own lane throughout the race. An area of no-man’s-land between the two lanes made it possible for O’Leary, on the outside to have six-and-a-half laps to the mile, while Weston, on the inside, had seven. This must have made pace judgement a trifle difficult for the walkers; if they had walked at exactly the same speed, then after about eleven laps Weston would have “lapped” his opponent.

Just as Weston, in his performance in Newcastle, had made things difficult for himself by keeping the Sabbath, so it was noted of O’Leary: “He is a Roman Catholic, and had strictly observed the diet of Lent before starting in this arduous contest; a priest of his own Church was seated beside the course, with whom he occasionally conversed when he stopped for rest or food.”¹³



O’Leary won by 520 miles to 510 and it “was said” that such a distance had never before been covered in six days; how strange it seems

now that they should have embarked on such a trial without positively knowing the existing record. O'Leary obviously stopped from time to time for food although it is likely that he took light refreshment "on the hoof"; it is plain that Weston did, as the accompanying engraving shows. In such a grinding endeavour, the napkin adds a fine touch of fastidiousness and saves a change of shirt. When walking ordinarily, rather than during his mobile feeding sessions, Weston "held a slight cane or switch in the right hand and sometimes rested the left hand upon his hip, in the attitude styled 'akimbo'", while O'Leary "grasped in his hands a pair of bone castanets". The significance of the reporter's observation on this point is only in the *nature* of what was carried; most contestants in such events carried something.

The Weston-O'Leary match had been a straightforward man-to-man race, but the old Barclay-inspired idea of competing against self-imposed awkward conditions still lived. Later the same year, William Gale, whose tangles with the law are mentioned in Chapter 30, brought yet more refined difficulty to the task by walking 4000 quarter-miles in 4000 ten-minute periods, again at the Agricultural Hall. Despite the fact that only a fortnight earlier he had walked 1500 miles in 1000 hours and a couple of months before that had already performed the "4000 quarters", he completed his task.

For a while, the Agricultural Hall was much used for long-distance events of one kind or another and Roe's *Jack White: the Gateshead Clipper*, while mainly concerned with the eponymous runner, provides some interesting background.¹⁴

There was, however, a limit to the complications that could be invented and the walkers must eventually have begun to think that whatever they did in the realms of endurance, someone would soon exceed it. Could there have been anything more daunting than 4000 quarter-miles in 4000 ten minute periods? As a matter of fact and record, there could, but only by venturing into the realms of

incomparable silliness. William Buckler's name lives on through his achievement in 1898 of repeating Gale's walk, but with the periods reduced by forty-five seconds to nine and a quarter minutes and the concentrated endurance tests reduced to a nearly farcical level. Since a quarter-mile in nine minutes is not, on paper, much harder than what Buckler did, it is surprising that no-one tried it.

There has been a brief enthusiasm in this country for the John O'Groats to Land's End – or vice-versa – walk, sparked by the exploits of one Barbara Moore, who, in 1960, covered the distance, southwards in twenty-three days. She did it not in competition or for a wager but to promote the health benefits of vegetarianism, a far cry from Barclay's daily consumption of several pounds of meat and poultry. Billy Butlin, the proprietor of a string of holiday camps, set up a walking race over the same course, the interesting thing about which was not the ladies' winner, eighteen-year-old Wendy Lewis, but the close second, Beryl Randle, much better known as a fast and stylish track walker, setter of a British one-mile record of 7:38.4 in 1954¹⁵. The precise nature of the race seems rather dubious, however; D.A.Walthen, under the none too subtle pseudonym "A.Walker", in his book *The Big Walk* has a photograph of the start in which most of the participants are running, and the winner, J.Musgrave, wrote, "The last 103 miles I covered in 14 hours, 31 minutes non-stop – except for a quarter-of-an-hour rest for cramp." In the same work, an anonymous official reports, "We all smiled in the chill of first light as the cheers and handclaps grew into thunder for the winner trotting home," while, "Wendy Lewis, the hot favourite to win the ladies' class, passed me in her scarlet anorak, skipping along at a gentle run." Despite the specifications for the race, it may well be that "walk" was perhaps the wrong word for the stunt.

One walker who much preferred the roads to the tracks – or the concert-halls – and had considerable success on them was Ann Sayer, a former international rower, who in 1964 did the trip northwards, which is generally regarded as the harder way, in thirteen days and eighteen

hours, about a week less than Butlin's ladies had taken and just under two days better than Musgrave.

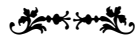
Although it was not actually done on the road, mention should be made of the remarkable walk performed by Bert Couzens in 1946. Many early walks of varying distances were, of course, carried out on tracks of grass, compacted dirt, cinder and shale, but Couzens may have been the only man to undertake such a challenge on a greyhound track, using the one at Romford in west Essex. His advertised aim was to beat Captain Barclay's "1000 in 1000". He set out with the intention of doing just that, at times with the additional problem of having to fit in his progress between the dog races on Thursdays and Saturdays. Having reached the end of the time, during which he apparently covered the first 1000 miles in 335 hours and 2652 miles in the first 1000 hours – so that it appears that his "specification" was different to Barclay's – he carried on, eventually recording 3000 miles in what reports loosely described as "eight weeks".

It has not been possible to discover the conditions under which this extraordinary walk was undertaken but a newspaper photograph shows knees of commendable straightness. His diet was "tablets and a few sandwiches – no meat", supplemented by "buckets of tea and

forty cigarettes a day," rather far from Barclay's heavy diet.

Stamina for long-distance races may well spill over into stamina in general; in an obituary in *Race Walking Record* in 1972, Gordon Doubleday reported a remarkable performance; after winning the London to Brighton and Back in 1951 in a time of 18:46:00, Jack Stirling-Wakely, a Belgrave Harrier, went on to play percussion in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at Covent Garden, another five-hour stint but without the benefit of changing scenery or a supportive friend on a bicycle; one had to be hard in those days!

Nowadays there is – perhaps to the relief of the potential officials, who would have a similar endurance test without the glory – little enthusiasm for engaging in such trials, although from time to time some brave soul sets out to traverse North America or trudge round the world in pursuit of a private dream, as a public act of repentance for past misdeeds or as thanksgiving for perceived favours received. While it may be heroic to an extreme degree to trek across deserts and mountains on such a Trojan mission, these achievements are, fortunately, beyond our scope; we may presume to discount them on the assumption that the scrutiny by properly qualified judges will have been insufficient for our purposes.



OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

It goes without saying that any voluntary organisation is very dependent upon its Officers and that no sporting governing body could function at all without its Officials – in the case of race walking, the men and women who judge, record, time, referee, plan courses, provide refreshments and do all the other things that are required to make events happen.

A glance at Appendices I to V will show a list of names of those who have served as Officers of the Association in its first century, but there is no list of those Officials who have planned, brought into being and controlled the progress of the races that have been held over that period.

The National Fixture List at present contains perhaps 150 events, and it omits many races, such as Veteran Leagues, School races, closed events, club championships, etc., not notified to the co-ordinator or not requiring a permit. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the real figure is nearer to 250. During the heyday of walking in this country – say, from 1900 to 1950 – there were many weekends where now there are one or two races, but then there would have been ten or twenty; over the century under review there may well have been a quarter of a million races that all had to have their officials. Obviously, many of them attended many different events but it seems equally clear that there must, over the years, have been tens of thousands of them on duty at one time or another. Nothing like a list of this army of volunteers has ever been made or *could* ever be made; they have, however, like the walkers who have turned out week after week to bring up the rear of the field, been the backbone of the sport for a century. Although they cannot be named, they deserve recognition of some sort and a later section of this chapter offers a brief look into Officialdom as a class and assesses their contribution.

THE ASSOCIATION'S OFFICERS

It has, for most of the Association's history, been customary for the President, generally either someone distinguished as a competitor or someone who has worked long and hard for the organisation as an administrator or official, to serve for one year. Exceptions were made necessary by the two World Wars; during the First, A.Fattorini served from 1914 to 1919 and during the Second, R.T.Martin from 1939 to 1945. As will be seen from Appendix I, a few others have had two years as President and most recently Paul Nihill has become the first to have two *separate* terms in that office.

As is the case in many bodies, the President of the R.W.A. has generally had no specific *executive* duties or functions and the office may be regarded as a reward for or recognition of past achievements and services and nothing more. Consequently, it would be vain to search for many positive contributions of the Association's early Presidents *as* Presidents although, as champion walkers or long-serving administrators or officials they will generally already have made their contributions, and their views are listened to with respect and their suggestions and opinions have usually carried considerable weight with the General Committee. In later years, the President does seem to have taken a more active role.

A new body frequently takes its first Presidents from among its founders, but interestingly of the R.W.A's first ten Presidents only Messers Knott, Otway, Barnes Moss and Neville had been present at the inaugural meeting at the Polytechnic in September, 1907.

In the early years, when there was no real structure over which to preside and not many more than about a dozen clubs in affiliation, it is



A judge gets down to work in the 1912 Olympic Games.
The Canadian Gould survived the scrutiny to win.

highly probable that the President had a definite job to do and, indeed, until 1976 he chaired all General Committee meetings and the A.G.M. The last duty still falls to him, while the Association now has a separate Chairman. Another duty that usually devolved upon the President was that of refereeing the National Championships, but that post is now usually taken by a senior official from the technical side. A look at the list of Officers will suggest which Presidents were selected to reward their years of service to walking and which to celebrate their achievements on the road, although one or two, such as Harold Whitlock, Olympic Champion and, for five years, General Secretary, as well as a leading coach and judge, might have qualified under more than one heading.

The Association has not always felt the need for a Vice President, although the S.C.R.W.A., as is recorded in Chapter 3, had *four* of them and in later years the number varied considerably; at one period there were no fewer than ten, subsequently reduced to eight, National Vice Presidents, four from the South and two each from the Midlands and the North. Nowadays, one is considered sufficient. Although from the 1940s to the 1980s, *Race Walking Record* often listed the names of Vice Presidents, the practice was not invariable and, again, it is probably impossible to reconstruct a complete list. During the period in which there were Vice Presidents in specified numbers from the Areas, those officers were nominated by their Areas and there was no election at the A.G.M. Not only were the Vice Presidents nominated by their Areas, but at one time there was a gentlemen's agreement that the Presidency would rotate among the R.W.A. Areas. However, there were some obvious shortcomings in such a policy, not least a strong element of inter-Area animosity at times, and the practice faded away.

It is, of course, upon the Secretary – originally the Honorary Secretary and now the Honorary General Secretary – that the majority of the organisational work falls and there is some advantage in having continuity of tenure. Although the Association's first ten years saw

six Secretaries (two of them simultaneously), things did settle down and H.W.Brockhouse, in office from 1920 to 1934, established what was to be the pattern of official longevity. Thus, the last eighty-seven years up to the centenary have seen only thirteen Secretaries (one acting for a few months) with an average length of service of just over six-and-a-half years.

In a position such as Secretary, the ability to deal with routine matters almost without thinking increases with length of service but perhaps the other necessary ability – that of being innovative and continuingly forceful – may decline with the years. Whether it is down to the Secretary or to his colleagues to notice when the decline sets in is a matter of opinion.

From the nature of the office, it follows – or should follow – that its occupancy should not be a reward like the presidency but should fall to someone with a sufficient grasp of the Association's business and an understanding of how organisations work. It is always the fate of the backroom boys to be good at making an association function but to receive no very particular recognition of their presence until they do something wrong, and the Secretary is especially well placed to achieve this type of notice.

If the fact that the Association has had only twenty Secretaries in a hundred years is testimony to their tenacity, then the record of the Treasurership – which has had only eleven holders in the time – is remarkable. It is no simple task to be Treasurer of an organisation like the R.W.A., which has never really had enough money and has never been altogether sure where the funds would come from next year. We have referred earlier to the joy with which a Treasurer in the adolescent days would announce at the A.G.M. that the bank balance had improved by a pound or two, and the finances have generally had more than a hint of hand-to-mouth existence about them.

As it is the fate of the Secretary to grind away unnoticed, so the Treasurer is the man who says "No," and it takes a strong will

sometimes to talk enthusiastic Committee members out of their pet schemes on financial grounds, all the more so if the Treasurer himself would actually like to do as they urge. There are always many elements in the Association that want to spend money on perfectly proper items and the Treasurer must work with the other Officers to balance their entreaties and to try to steer the generally inadequate resources in the right direction. It is not easy, and perhaps even more than the Secretary he must combine technical competence with a fairly thick skin. The Association's finances, it will be recalled, showed at the end of the first year of existence a balance of £2/6/-, not enough nowadays to pay a race entry fee; the situation *is* rather improved nowadays, but the problems remain unchanged with a few zeroes at the end of all figures!

As has already been indicated, the Chairmanship of the Association is a new office; in fact, it is the newest of all. In 1976, the President ceased to chair meetings of the General Committee, which then, on the orders of the A.G.M., appointed its Chairman from among its members; it was evidently none too pleased at being told how to conduct itself, because in the first year it actually elected the President to the position. The Chairman during the next seven years was therefore only the Chairman of the Committee, but in 1983 the Rules were changed to make the post an Office *of the Association*, elected, like the rest, at the Annual General Meeting.

Although practically the first thing that the S.C.R.W.A. did after it had been established was to organise a championship for the following year, it was not until nearly forty years later that the need was felt for a Championships Secretary. The inaugural Championship had been arranged in a rush, taking place only six months after the foundation, although nothing much practical seems to have been done until five or six weeks before the date. Taking their cue from the normal cross-country practice of the time, as was shown in Chapter 3, the Association's Committee constituted itself an *ad hoc* Championship Committee and organised the

events collectively. This was workable with only one championship a year with a modest entry – modest for those early days, anyway – but it is somewhat astonishing that the Association carried on without a single designated Officer to do the organising until 1946, when E.Kennell served for a year before becoming General Secretary. Including Kennell, there have now been thirteen Championships Secretaries, averaging nearly five years in the office. Perhaps of all the Association's Officers, it is the Championships Secretary with whom the "ordinary" walker is most likely to make contact. Evidently, the qualities required are meticulousness, care for the Rules and a degree of friendly and understanding flexibility; Championship Rules must be applied firmly but sensibly.

It is worth mentioning that at the time of the Centenary, the Association's General Secretary P.J.Cassidy (sixteen years) and its Treasurer W.K.D.Wright (twenty-three years) were the longest-serving incumbents of those posts, while the Chairman P.Markham (five years) was second only to C.V. Gittins, who was in office for fourteen years. It may be debated whether these lengths of service represent stability or stultification; being one of the Officers concerned, the Editor does not care to venture an opinion.

We have been able to deal here only with the *national* officers of the Association. The administrative structure, and therefore the officer system, was more or less mirrored in the Areas, usually three in number but, while Wales functioned as an Area of England, four. Each Area will probably have had its President, Vice President, Treasurer, General Secretary, Championships Secretary and Chairman and several Committee Members, the details being varied slightly according to local conditions and requirements. This might have involved fifteen or twenty volunteers working in each Area; adding the non-Officer members of General Committee, and even allowing for multiple membership and representation, there will always have been perhaps eighty committee members at one level or another maintaining the

functioning of a sport that was not, even at its most prosperous, very large compared with, say, cross country running, when that sport had grown beyond the gentlemanly bounds to which Walter Rye¹ and his like had clung for so long.

Over the century, then, how many thousands of unpaid volunteers must have given up their time to race walking in this way?

RACE WALKING OFFICIALS

The earliest athletic officials, whatever they may have been called at the time, were probably referees, whose duty was simply to see that the rules – quite possibly invented for a specific contest – were properly observed. That was all that was required, because before national or centralised organisation and control were conceived all that mattered was who had won, times and distances being of no great account. To take a very early example mentioned in Chapter 1, “casting the barre”, if there were no national records to be maintained and the throws were measured in barre-lengths, it was of no consequence how long or heavy the implement might be, whether it was of wood or iron, or the actual distance in feet that it had been cast; all that was needed was for the distance to be counted off accurately and for there to be no foul play. Similarly, if a man wagered to beat another in a race between two points, either he did beat him or he did not and, provided that there was no bumping, boring or taking of short cuts, that was that.

It was only when wagers against the clock began that a new kind of official, the timekeeper, came to be necessary. Even then, the matter was fairly rudimentary and timekeeping did not begin to become more sophisticated until handicappers needed to have faith in the times submitted by the competitors with whom they were dealing; in short, they had to be sure that one timekeeper’s minute was not another’s fifty-nine seconds. They also needed to know that one surveyor’s twenty miles was not another’s nineteen-and-a-half or thereabouts. The difficulties in the latter respect are touched upon in Chapter 30; it must be said that they

were sometimes seen not as difficulties but as opportunities!

It was with the advent of “records” that timekeeping became really scientific with such ingenious inventions as the ink-marking chronometer, which deposited a spot on the dial when the button was pressed; still, though, such a device had to be in the hand of a man who would press it precisely at the signal to start and precisely as the athlete’s torso crossed the line, passed the post or touched the worsted thread.²

Race walking differed from most other sports as it developed and became more formal during the nineteenth century. It had its timekeepers, its measurers, its recorders and its referees, all of whom were, in parallel with officials in the other sports, taking note of particular points in the contest and verifying that all was well. However incompetent or careless they may have been, they knew what they were about. Race walking’s special – and possibly unique – feature is that what might be regarded as the most important officials, the judges of walking, did *not* know what they were about. One of several threads running through the historical parts of this book has been the problem of the definition of walking. In the twenty-first century, whether the definition is revered or derided, whether it is, in practice, possible or not to judge according to its parameters, at least it is known what the judges are *supposed* to be looking for. A century and a half ago, walking judges had what is surely the most difficult task ever put upon a set of sporting officials. They were required to determine whether competitors were or were not doing something that had not been properly described; in effect, they had to say if a man was complying with a definition that did not exist and they had to try to do it fairly and consistently!

This was an astonishing state of affairs for a serious sport, because even children making up their own games in the school playground will agree upon the rules, generally to take into account some local peculiarity.³ What was even more remarkable, looking back from the present

day of ultra-formality and the need of a certificate to be allowed to exercise pretty well any sporting function, is that the judges actually tried to come to fair decisions and that, by-and-large, the walkers accepted those decisions. As we have shown, despite the simplicity of Teddy Knott's dictum that "if you're on the ground, it's walking; if you're off the ground, it's running," there has been the occasional hankering to include "form" or style. However the fashions of the times may have affected the undefined action, the judges did their jobs; the times of difficulty were not when there was no definition but, as in the Paris Olympic Games of 1924, when there were several!

It is, one might say, due to the clear honesty of the judges that race walking survived at all until the happy day in 1974 when England and Wales fell into line with the rest of the world and everyone agreed – albeit changing their collective minds from time to time – on what walking actually *was*.

Although, in the main, walking races are now over shorter distances than in the nineteenth century, a new breed of official has arisen and become recognised over the past two decades – the refreshment station expert.

In olden times, when a man would be reckoned weak of resolve and feeble of body if he could not walk for a mere two or three hours without "recruiting his strength", he had no option but to provide his own probably shamefaced arrangements with an attendant to keep his energy-levels topped up. In a race like the Brighton, of course, it was recognised that something must be taken on the way, but one suspects that the concession was not because the journey was fifty-odd miles but because it was unreasonable to expect anyone to go eight or ten hours without sustenance, regardless of the exertion.

A man on a long walk would have his attendants strategically placed to serve him, probably riding bicycles in order to keep up; indeed, so recognised was this that many races had specific regulations that the bicycle-borne

helper must remain *behind* the walker, except when actually handing over the replenishments, in order to avoid the risk of disqualification for pacing. With even hundred-mile races now held on two- or three-mile laps, individual attention "on the go" is simply not feasible and the race organisers will need to appoint refreshments stewards to supply the "official" feeding. In such an event as a hundred miles or more, the competitors will generally also have static supporters at some point on the lap to provide their own particular private balms, consolations and concoctions.



In the absence of official feeding stations, walkers may become as desperate as T.E.Hammond in the 1907 London-Brighton and back

Manning the official refreshment station is not a matter of merely standing behind a table and keeping the cups filled. Skill is required to remember the competitors' preferences and to meet their needs. Here, too, a thick skin and emollient manner come in useful, because a walker who has covered fifty or sixty miles by

two o'clock on a cold wet morning is rather liable to overstep the bounds of courteous behaviour if given orange squash instead of lemonade or offered sponge cake in place of banana. It is not a duty for those of a nervous or timid disposition and personal relationships may feel the strain.

When race walking first began to organize itself and, at the urging of a few enlightened enthusiasts, began to realize that at least a minimal amount of rigour was called for in order to maintain some small degree of credibility, there was no real way of judging the judges. All that the event promoters – and competitors, if it comes to that – could wish for was to avoid the most unreliable and inconsistent of officials and to hope for the best. It was a long time before anything more formal developed and the present situation was reached.

Officials in the modern age have strict grading systems and are required to work their way through the ranks by a combination of examination and demonstration of sufficient experience. The old days of learning the job by “sitting with Nellie” – or, indeed, of becoming an official simply by declaring oneself to be one – are well past and it is no longer possible for someone to say, “I am a judge/timekeeper/recorder” and be believed. Whether this has resulted in a higher standard of officiating is a moot point, but one hopes for the sake of the sport that it has.

Naturally, the main focus in walking events – as in all others – has very properly always been on the competitors and not on the officials, so that there is not a great deal of archive evidence about the way in which the officials themselves worked (except when they were manifestly misguided) although some observers seemed to think the judges of walking were largely idlers opting for a quiet time. Occasionally, the normally self-effacing servants of the walkers are stung into action to defend themselves against the generally unwarranted criticisms of those who should know better but, alas, seldom do. Thus, in Chapter 30, we saw how Barnes Moss dealt

with a highly opinionated walker who thought that he could organise the recording better than the many established experts.

Judges, of course, have a high profile, except for the gentleman in the photograph at the beginning of this chapter, who is maintaining a very low profile indeed, and the Chief Judge often finds himself in an unpleasantly public position as he goes about his ultimate duty of removing a contestant from the race. It is only by chance that the other officials ever come into the public gaze, and then only if they happen to be in the vicinity of some interesting activity and a press photographer cannot avoid them. A case in point is the famous photograph of Roger Bannister's first performance of the four-minute mile in 1954, where a fair collection of officials – and a couple of “extras” – at last appear before the cameras. It is rather reminiscent of the illustration on the next page of the spectacular finish of the A.A.A. 7 miles Championship of 1913 when Ross and Bridge produced a dead heat in 52:08.4. Several officials catch the eye in this case, too. What office is being filled by the three hatted gentlemen in the foreground is not evident, although two of them appear to be holding watches. They are certainly in no position either to take times or to judge the finish. The function of the official running along the track is equally difficult to fathom. He is in an even worse position to time or adjudicate and he can hardly be a judge of walking bent on a late disqualification, because both walkers finished. It is to be hoped that he had enough presence of mind to know where the third competitor was.

The clarity of the original photograph is insufficient even to allow a guess at the reasons for the presence of the hazy gentlemen – no ladies allowed in those days, of course – in the background. In these times of polo shirts and general informality, the dress of these officials – hats, overcoats and shining shoes – is a refreshing reminder of what was thought appropriate a century ago. Compare this with the other photograph of officials at work, only two years earlier, when the hats were mostly

bowlers; perhaps the decline in standards of gentlemanly formality and decorum is not

modern but had already begun just before the First World War.



H.V.L. Ross and R. Bridge leave the judges nowhere. Note the finishing "tape".



How many recorders does it take....?

It is sometimes suggested by those who have to pay for the officials at modern events, or at least to provide some modest expenses and light refreshments, that Chief Recorders are becoming excessive in their ever-increasing demands for additional "staff". The photograph above shows the impressive row of "lap scorers" for the A.A.A. Championship in 1911; it was not a mass-participation event, but only a 7-mile race on a 440-yard track with thirty-four starters. It seems to have been reckoned, judging from the number of officials present, that about two walkers to one recorder was considered a sensible ratio, an allocation that is fit to make a

modern chief recorder weep with envy; nowadays, fifteen or twenty to one is far from being unknown. In fact, behind the scenes of an event of any size, there is a perpetual battle between the Chief Officials, who *never* think that they are adequately supplied, and the promoters who cannot comprehend why so many officials are required. Generally, a compromise is reached, frequently in the promoters' favour because they are footing the bill, but as is clear from the illustration the officials from time to time came out on top in the question of staff numbers. They even, in this case, were supplied with desks at which to work,

although it would appear from a couple of men at the left-hand end that the officials outnumbered the furniture. Their modern successors can only look upon such a scene and wonder at the success of the Chief Recorder in arguing for what he wanted!

As in any sport, race walking officials will be only too happy at times to point out that the whole thing would be a good deal easier without the competitors – and some walkers falling foul of the judges would probably offer the contrary view – but, again as with any sport, both are necessary; without the walkers, the officials would have nothing to do and without the officials there would be the kind of dubious chaos that reigned in olden times before the Association emerged from the primæval swamps in which pedestrianism was mouldering away and started to set things straight. Although many of the officials are former – or current –

walkers, there does seem to be occasionally a distinct lack of rapport between the two aspects of the sport. It is not unknown for the active walker to do a little judging and subsequently, secure in his new-found knowledge, to bewail the standard of technique and, on the other hand, in his rôle as competitor, to complain that the judges are ruining the sport.

Officials give their time, generally speaking, for love for the sport, but it is perhaps a feeling of glumness at the prospect of what the day has in store that imparts the feeling of gloom manifest in the attitudes of the gentlemen pictured below. The original newspaper caption locates the venue as being outside the Clayton Arms Public House in Godstone, Surrey, and recollection that the town of Clayton in Yorkshire was the home of the Pierrepont family of executioners does nothing to dispel the aura of depression.



Officiating is not to be taken lightly, but there is surely an excessively funereal air about those waiting to take up their duties at the Surrey Cup in 1912.

In present times, of course, the officials arrive by car, carry out their functions and depart by car as soon afterwards as they can decently make their escape. In the days when they went by train or omnibus and were taken to

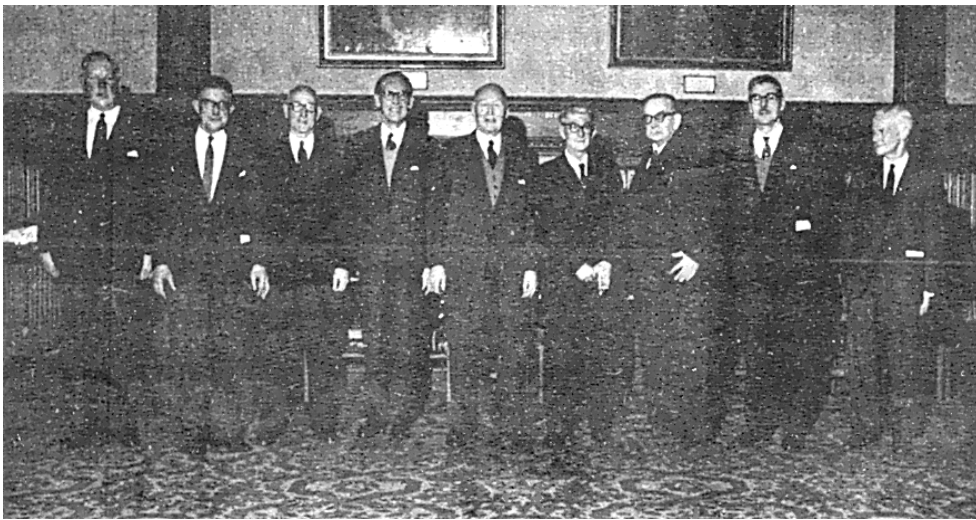
their posts and collected afterwards behind a pair of horses, there was more conviviality involved, despite the drab solemnity of this particular scene. Can one doubt that the event would afterwards have been reviewed *inside* the

Clayton Arms over a pint or two of ale (or a glass or two of something stronger if the day had been as dismal as it appears) and a pipe or three of strong dark tobacco, very probably accompanied by references to how much better things had been, “when we were racing”? Had there been a presentation evening or smoking concert a day or two later, as was frequently the practice, there would have been the opportunity to go through the whole nostalgic business once again, with additional refreshment.

Many officers of the Association have, of course, also been officials – “technical officials”, as they tend to be called nowadays – and this was rather more the case in the early days than it is now, when specialisation in one or other

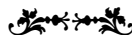
activity – either labouring in the back room or working in public – is more common.

We end this brief survey of our officialdom over the years with a picture of a remarkable assemblage of some of the top men of past days, for the most part both officers and officials – and all of them retired successful walkers as well – gathered at the Association’s Seventy-fifth Anniversary Dinner in 1968.⁴ Many of these gentlemen – all gentlemen, of course, for this was well before the ladies were permitted to do more than hover on the fringes of the sport offering tea and support – were of the utmost distinction both within and outside the sport. But for them, where should we and the sport be now?



A Panoply of Presidents

Left to right: A.A.Harley, W.J.Harris, J.Hackwood, S.C.Roberts, W.Batson,
S.Pryor, E.H.Neville, H.H.Whitlock, W.Bell



A WALKING MISCELLANY

A number of items are in themselves likely to be of interest to readers of this book but are not sufficiently large – or not enough is known on the subject – to constitute a full chapter. They are here dealt with more briefly than the principal subjects.

SCOTTISH RACE WALKING

As will be seen elsewhere, Wales for a time operated for race walking purposes as an Area of the Race Walking Association and for a time as a part of the Midlands Area. In contrast, the R.W.A. has never had any responsibility for Scotland, where the sport has always fallen under the control of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association and its successors. It is, however, impossible not to observe that there was a close connexion between England and Scotland, if only because many Scottish walkers competed for English clubs, especially in later years. The story of Scottish race walking up to 1983 is covered by Keddies' centenary book of the Scottish A.A.A., upon which this note is partly based.

Keddies very well remarks that "race walking has had a chequered history in Scotland". As in England, it appeared in the first Championship in 1883, when J.Harvie won the three miles in 24:10, retaining the title the next year in 23:16; this is about 7:45 for the mile, while in England at that time, the seven miles was being won at about 8:28 pace, so that the Scottish performance was by no means negligible. Harvie was a member of Queen's Park F.C. and Keddies notes that the most successful of early Scottish walkers were generally footballers, although the reason is not apparent.¹

Scotland did not introduce a seven mile event until 1923, when C.McLellan won in 57:25.0, by which year the English time was close on three minutes faster, although by 1925

the same man recorded 51:42.4, over a minute faster than the English champion, who, as in the earlier year, was G.Watts; while the top Englishman had improved by 1:38, the top Scot had done so by 5:43!

The three mile championship was dropped after J.Dickison had a walkover in 1892 and won in 29:10.6 the following year, and the distance did not reappear until 1904, when Richard Quinn won the first of his seven consecutive titles, working down over the years from 24:57.8 to 22:10.6. As was shown in Chapter 3, Quinn walked in the 1908 Olympic Games but did not finish.² The unfortunately-named D.Trotter won in 1911 and 1912, followed by two years of Alexander Justice, after which a number of individuals each won several times until the event was discontinued after 1948; Justice (who had finished second to Quinn five times in succession) won twice, Colin McClellan six times, J.Jordan twice, G.T. Galloway four times, Alexander Jamieson seven times and E.McCleod, J.E.Creegan, C.R.Scott Daly, A.D.Galloway and W.B.Thomson once each. The standard was definitely going off towards the end and when the championship was abandoned for lack of support the best performance still stood to G.T.Galloway at 21:43.4 in 1934; there had, of course, been no competition in 1940-1945, which probably robbed Jamieson of a few victories, as he won four times before the war and three times afterwards.

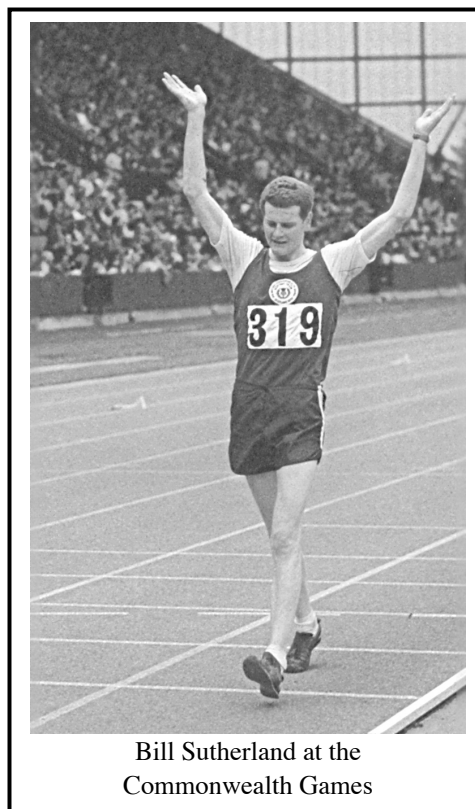
The seven miles was short-lived and was dropped after 1932, that is, before Jamieson came to prominence; the seven mile winners over the period were similar to the three mile champions, being McLellan three times, G.T.Galloway four times, A.D.Galloway and T.McAllister once each. As noted above, the three miles continued until after the Second World War – "lingered" might be a better word

– the finish being put to it by the appearance of four, two and two competitors respectively in the final three competitions.

After the dropping of the three-miles championship, as is often the case, the sport itself declined; low numbers lead to the abandonment of competitions and lack of competitive opportunity leads to even lower figures. As a fully functioning sport race walking in Scotland was more or less extinct by the nineteen-sixties.

What remained was largely in the hands of Scots living in England and Wales, notably, in the early days, Alan Buchanan in Brighton and Bill Sutherland in North London. Buchanan, as well as being a top-class walker, had a long spell as Editor of *Race Walking Record*, during which time he was never averse to some trenchant remarks about the way the sport was going – and where it was going wrong. Sutherland was the most successful at international level of all Scotland's walkers. Having won the briefly reinstated Scottish national seven-mile road title in 1967, 1968 and 1969, he had his most successful year in 1970 when, as well as winning the A.A.A. 10000 metre track Championship in 45:16.8, he gained the bronze medal in the Commonwealth Games twenty miles with 2:37:24, suitably enough in Edinburgh.

Sutherland's appearance in the Games was not only Scotland's first, but also its most successful, claiming what has, until the present, been its solitary medal. Two Scots competed in 1994 in Victoria, Canada, Martin Bell, who did not finish, and Verity Larby, seventh in the women's 10k in 46:06. Bell was rather more successful four years later in Kuala Lumpur – seventh in the 20k with 1:29:20 – where again the country had two representatives, Graham White being sixth in the 50k in 4:40:17. Scotland's only Commonwealth Games representative since then was the Western Australia-based Sara-Jane Cattermole, who finished ninth in Manchester with a time of 1:50:29, having been required to visit Manchester to walk in the *English* trial.



The last two paragraphs pretty well also constitute a list of Scottish record-holders. The men's 3000m, 5000m, 10000m, 10k, 20k and 30k times being held by Bell, the 20000m by Buchanan and the 50k by White. With the women's records at 3000m, 5000m, 10000m, 5k and 10k belonging to Snook (née Larby) and the 20k to Cattermole, the only new name to be listed is that of Kathy Crilley at 50k.

One other Scot should be mentioned here, Jamie O'Rawe, one of a positive dynasty of walkers based in Southend-on-Sea, his father Alan, his brothers Richard and Andy, his sisters Elizabeth and Margaret and his niece Chelsea all being fairly successful. Jamie did not represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games but did appear in the British team in the World Cup in Mézidon in 1999, leading home the squad in 1:33:16.

In this brief glance at Scotland, sight should not be lost of the fact that Captain Barclay was a

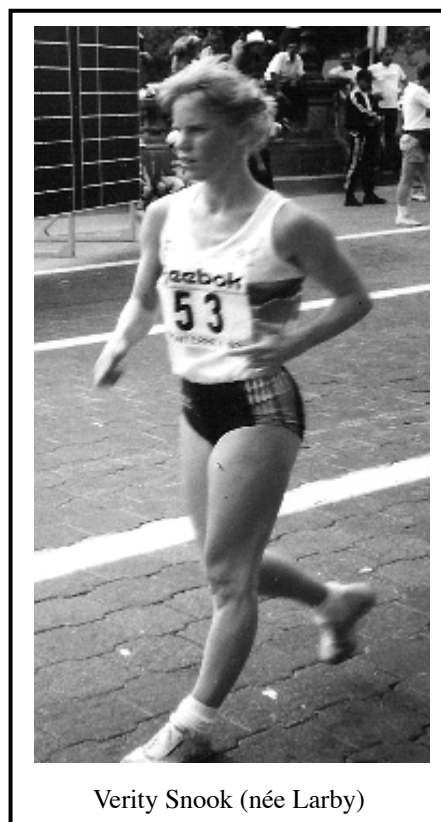
Scot and, to show that his country was not immune from the general eccentricity that has always marked the sport, we can refer also to a strange incident mentioned by Keddie in his excellent work.



Sara-Jane Cattermole

Odd challenges have always featured – see, for example, the walk to Brighton in evening clothes described in Chapter 30 – and Barclay himself was rather prone to such escapades. He was, however, by no means been the only Scot to be so inclined. In 1826, at dinner after a day's shooting, at Blackhall in Kincardineshire – and who is to say that a glass or two of local stimulant had not been taken? – Sir Andrew Hay challenged Lord Kennedy to walk about a hundred miles to Inverness for a £2,500 stake; the challenge being accepted, the two men started there and then, dressed as they were in evening wear. To make the contest even odder, they travelled by different routes, Kennedy via

the Grampians and Hay by the coach road.³ His Lordship, who presumably had the shorter, if tougher, route and, it might be supposed, had the choice of roads, as the recipient of the challenge, covered his distance in just under thirty-two hours, winning by about six hours.



Verity Snook (née Larby)

A somewhat less eccentric long-distance Scottish performer was A.W.Sinclair, who competed in the colours of North London A.C., although born in Ayr. He described himself as the *Amateur Walking Champion of the World* – a title freely claimed, in those days, by anyone who felt inclined to make the assertion with little or no sustainable justification– and set records for everything from thirty-one miles (in 5:02:36) to one hundred and twenty miles (23:52:03) at Lillie Bridge in August, 1881. Strikingly, according to “Stonehenge”, he was off the track only three times, for a total of 57 minutes and 39 seconds; every time from 51 miles onwards was a record.⁴

IRISH RACE WALKING

Like the Scottish variety, Irish walking has never been under the control of the R.W.A. and since the establishment of the Free State Irish walkers from all but the Six Counties of Northern Ireland have been ineligible to represent Britain internationally. The Irishman who seems to have been the first actually to appear in a British team, however, strenuously denied that he was doing so. Tom Kiely (1869-1951) was born at Ballyneale, Co.Tipperary and as was the case with many Irish athletes of the early days was principally a thrower. However, at the 1904 Olympic Games in St.Louis he entered the decathlon, which at the time included an 880 yard walk.⁵



Tom Kiely as Hammer-thrower

On the strength of his throwing, Kiely had been offered membership of both the British and the United States teams, but he insisted that he would compete only for Ireland and paid his own expenses. However, Ireland was, at that time, still part of the United Kingdom and was not recognised by the International Olympic Committee, so he is recorded in the I.O.C. archives as a British representative. The Games were hardly representative of anything, as it

happened; of the seventy-four medals won in athletics⁶ only five were not won by Americans and only two champions were non-American.

One of them was Kiely, and it should be recorded here that he was joint winner of the walk section of his event (with the Englishman John Holloway) in the ordinary time of 3:59.

As we have seen, there was some degree of walking in Ireland and J.J.Reid, being Irish Champion, was selected for the 1908 Olympic Games, probably to change the team from English to British. It was a move that had no effect on the results, as Reid, together with the Scot Quinn, failed to finish, while the token Welshman, Yeoumans, was disqualified. There is no evidence to suggest that Reid, like Kiely, reserved his position on which country he was representing.

The Republic was, of course, no longer eligible to compete in the Commonwealth Games by the time that walks were introduced and since then the only representative from Northern Ireland has been Dave Smyth, who finished fourteenth in the 20 miles at Edinburgh in 1970 in a time of 2:53:49. If the Six Counties have not been very distinguished at race walking over the past forty years, the Twenty-Six certainly have, with several successful competitors, of whom the only one to achieve a major international medal has been Gillian O'Sullivan, winner of the silver medal in the 2003 World Championships in Paris in 1:27:34.⁷

Irish walkers – and those of Irish descent – have made significant contributions to English race walking and we might point to John Keown, Editor of *Race Walking Record* for five years, President of the R.W.A. from 1986 to 1988 and a Life Member of the Association. Despite becoming a Centurion, he was never in the top rank of walkers, although sharing in several team medals with Belgrave Harriers. At his death, the R.W.A. instituted an award in his name for “backroom services” to race walking, to be awarded by the General Committee without restriction as to frequency or number of presentations.

A glance at the names of past Champions, Officers and Officials in England will suggest to the reader many additional examples of Irishmen who have made contributions on the eastern side of the Irish Sea.⁸

HANDICAPPING

[A Note contributed by Eric Horwill]

When I first became involved in race walking in 1960, one of the main “attractions” of most open athletics competitions was the phenomenon of Handicapping.⁹

For those who specialised in “beating the handicapper”, there were track meetings most weekends and holidays during the summer season. These often included a walk handicap, though the majority of walks handicaps were in road races.

While most track walk handicaps were of the “yacht” system, in which the slowest went off first and the fastest last with the others arranged in between, most road events were open handicaps, with the handicap deducted from the performance time as soon as possible after the race. Lists of handicaps were published in the programme and usually on a notice board in the changing rooms as well. Very occasionally a “sealed handicap” took place, when the athletes only learned of the handicapper’s efforts after they had performed!

It should be mentioned that at this time, women’s walking was catered for by an entirely separate organisation, the Women’s Cross-Country and Road Walking Association, which was subordinate to the Women’s A.A.A. Our ladies had a short road walking season in the autumn as well as a number of track walks in the summer. They had separate official handicappers, the last Midlands one being Miss Ada Kenn.

The R.W.A. relied on three Area Handicappers, North, South and Midlands. The Midlands Handicapper in 1960 was Albert

Johnson (Leicester); he had been preceded by Fred Cox, also of Leicester, who had taken over in the 1930s. Albert Johnson was followed many years later by Tom Sharlott, again of Leicester, who also did a long stint during which period the number of handicap events declined. I took over from him a few years ago.

For a long period the Northern Area Handicapper was Jack “Waggy” Wagenheim, who was followed by Dick Holland, Keith French and Graham Jackson. In the South, the post was filled for many years by Phil Collins, briefly by Steve Wynn and then by Brian Ficken.

Currently, the Midlands have about five Open Handicaps each year together with the three Winter Leagues. The North has a few Opens plus Winter Leagues, but it seems that handicapping on a formal basis has virtually died out in the South.

There has recently been an initiative from England Athletics to introduce handicap events into track and field meetings. Graded races and leagues developed over the years have been a major factor in the demise of handicap events. While the initiative seems to have been put on one side due to the many organisational changes, it is clear that there is a need for the revival of this type of meeting; graded races are in decline and leagues are losing popularity.

There is clearly a keen enthusiasm for handicaps for our walks; the handicap results always create considerable interest in the Midland events. In 2006, the Yacht Handicap in the Claire Powell Open meeting was the best supported and most popular race, and most of the running and throwing athletes present took a noticeable interest in this event.¹⁰

Is there a future for handicapping – with or without modern technology? If we are going to provide incentives for those who are unlikely to get to the top, and thus help increase the number of regular walkers, there is a very strong case to encourage the return of more handicap events.

A NOTE ON THE DEFINITION OF WALKING

In the historical chapters of this book, an attempt has been made to report the various definitions of race walking and the procedures for judging, from the early days of leaving the whole matter to the discretion of the judges – surely one of the most curious sporting “rules” ever to have been thought up, although it was at least one that could easily be applied – to the modern position of absolute precision of definition, with some considerable difficulty at times in deciding whether it was being obeyed. It may, in view of the twists and turns over the years, be of use to summarise the progress of the definition.

At the very beginning there was not even a hint as to what walking was, presumably on the grounds that everyone knew, until, in the 1880s, there came the declaration that at least the judges were supposed to know walking when they saw it and to use their discretion; that discretion, however, was not entirely unfettered, for they still had to bear in mind the vague concept of “fair heel and toe” which might be regarded as meaning “continuous contact”.

In 1928, the I.A.A.F. produced its rule declaring continuous contact to be the criterion, abandoning the concept of “fair heel and toe”. There seems nothing to question about the meaning of this definition, but in 1949 the definition was adopted as “Walking is a progression by steps so taken that unbroken contact with the ground is maintained. At each step the advancing foot of the walker must make contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground.” The second sentence is an addition to the 1928 definition, which consisted solely of the first sentence.

The next change added, after the same definition as in 1928 (and now actually labelled “Definition”), the baffling, “Judging: Judges of

walking must be careful to observe that the advancing foot of the walker must make contact with the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground, and in particular, that during the period of each step in which a foot is on the ground, the leg shall be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) at least for one moment.” That is, the requirement for unbroken contact was reiterated in different words and the matter of straightening – not actually mentioned in the “Definition” – was dragged in. In any case, the requirement to straighten “at least for one moment” was very difficult to judge and the rule became more specific, requiring the leg to be straight “at least for one moment and, in particular,...in the vertical upright position.”

This was not all that helpful and by 1996 the requirement had become that the knee must be straight from first contact until the upright position and that contact was to be judged by the human eye. Clearly, the straightness requirement was designed to give the judges longer to determine what was happening and the reference to the human eye was to overcome the production of slow-motion films showing that walkers were actually “off” when the judges thought that they were not. As things now stand, the definition is as in I.A.A.F. Rule 230.1: “Race Walking is a progression of steps so taken that the walker makes contact with the ground, so that no visible (to the human eye) loss of contact occurs. The advancing leg shall be straightened (i.e. not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until the vertical upright position.” The language is inelegant, but at least everyone now knows precisely what it means, even if they disapprove!

The effect of these changes of definition has been traced through our historical chapters, with particular reference to what has seemed at certain times the highly perverse determination of the English authorities to show that the rest of the world was out of step.

THE YEAR 1907

Although the most important sporting occurrence of 1907 was quite clearly the foundation of the S.C.R.W.A., other events were also taking place. To help place that momentous event in perspective, it may be of interest to list a few of them.

THE SPORTING YEAR

County Cricket Champions – Nottinghamshire

England won the Test series against South Africa 1-0, with two matches drawn; England's star was Colin Blythe (8-59 and 7-40). Remarkably, this was not his best performance of the year; for Kent against Northamptonshire, he took 10-30 and 7-18.

F.A. Cup Final at Crystal Palace – Sheffield Wednesday 2: Everton 1

F.A. Amateur Cup Final at Chelsea – Clapton 2: Stockton 1

Football League Champions – Newcastle United

Second Division Champions – Nottingham Forest

Scottish F.A.Cup Final – Celtic 3: Heart of Midlothian 0

Rugby Union International Championship – Scotland

Rugby Union County Championship – Durham and Devon, joint holders

Open Golf Championship – A.Massy (312 strokes)

Women's Open Golf Championship – Miss M.Hezlet beat Miss F. Hezlet, 2 and 1

Wimbledon Tennis Champions – Men's Singles N.E.Brookes; Ladies' Singles Miss M.Sutton; Men's Doubles N.E.Brookes and N.F.Wilding. There were no Ladies' Doubles or Mixed Doubles at Wimbledon, but the "All-England Doubles" were held elsewhere: Ladies Mrs.Hillyard and Miss C.Meyer: Mixed N.E.Brookes and Mrs.Hillyard

Davis Cup – Australasia 3: British Isles 2

The Derby – Orby (J.Reiff) at 100-9

The Oaks – Glass Doll (H.Randall) at 25-1

The 1000 Guineas – Witch Elm (B.Lynham) at 4-1

The 2000 Guineas – Slieve Gallion (E.Higgs) at 11-4 on

The St.Leger – Wool Winder (W.Halsey) at 11-10

The Grand National – Eremon (A.Newey) at 8-1

The Boat Race – Cambridge beat Oxford by 4 lengths

National Cross-Country Champions – Birchfield H. (Area Champions: Midland – Birchfield H.: Northern – Hallamshire H.: Southern – Highgate H.)

The first Tourist Trophy Races were held in the Isle of Man, more or less by chance, it seems. The Marquis de Mouzilly St.Mars offered a trophy for a race to be held on the public roads. There were difficulties over closing the roads and waiving the speed limit, so the Isle of Man, being independent of United Kingdom legislation, and having passed a Law in 1904 allowing the roads to be closed for the Gordon Bennet Motor Car Trials, seized the new opportunity. The single-cylinder race was won by C.R.Collier (Matchless) at 38.23 m.p.h. and the twin-cylinder by H.Rem Fowler (Norton) at 36.22 m.p.h. [In 2007, the Senior Race was won by J.McGuinness (Honda) at 127.255 m.p.h.!]

The World Heavyweight Boxing Champion was Tommy Burns, who had beaten Marvin Hart over 20 rounds in 1906; he held the title until beaten by Jack Johnson in 1908. (Police stopped the contest.)

Some A.A.A. Champions: 100y – J.W. Morton 10.8; 440y – E.H.Montague 52.6; 1 mile – G.Butterfield 4.22.4; 10 miles – A.Underwood 54.03; 2 miles walk – R.Harrison 14.01.8; 7 miles walk – F.B.Thompson 52.46.4; Long Jump – D.Murray 22'0"; High Jump – C.Leahy 6'0"; Pole Vault – A.E.A.Harragin 10'4". The Joint Best Performances in the Championships were reckoned to be by J.W.Morton (see above) and A.Duncan (4 miles – 19.51.4)

In 1907, the Olympic 1500m record, set in 1906, was 4:05.4 (J.Lightbody, U.S.A.)

THE WORLD AT LARGE

While the momentous events were taking place at Regent Street Polytechnic and Epsom, the rest of the world quite unfeelingly went on its way.

In the political sphere, the British Prime Minister was Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (Liberal), the President of the U.S.A. was Theodore Roosevelt (who claimed to have shaken a record 8,513 hands on New Year's Day), and Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, China and Korea were still empires. Oklahoma became a State of the U.S.A. while Newfoundland and New Zealand became Dominions.

It was a good year for twentieth-century literature, as W.H. Auden, Christopher Fry, Louis MacNeice and Alberto Moravia were born. The winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature was Rudyard Kipling.

Laurence Olivier, Katharine Hepburn, James Robertson Justice, Peggy Ashcroft and Jacques Tati were born.

Two famous paintings were completed, *Les Femmes d'Alger* by Picasso and Chagall's *Peasant Women*.

The composer Grieg and the violinist Joachim both died in 1907, while the operas *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Delius) and *The Merry Widow* (Lehár) had their first performances. Schönberg's first string quartet also had its premiere but to many people's minds the gloom of that event was alleviated by the inauguration of the *Ziegfeld Follies* in New York.

Perhaps a bad event for race walking was the invention by August Musger of slow-motion photography; it has caused us some problems since!

The Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov was working on conditioned reflexes; these, too, are

well-known to us, the most common such reflex among spectators being, "It's the race walk; let's go to the bar!"

Louis Lumière developed the three-screen method of colour photography and Dmitri Mendeleev, the inventor of the periodic table of the elements, died.

The Boy Scouts and the Garden City Movement were founded and the liners Lusitania and Mauretania were launched. All walkers who have had a target time will sympathise with the former, which sailed from Cobh to New York in 5 days and 45 minutes, missing its own target time of 5 days by the equivalent of 22 seconds in the hour.

Women received the vote in Finland, leading the way for Europe.

In a flourish of sporting futility quite on a par with some walking endeavours, Tom Reece made a billiards break of 499,135 in 85 hours and 49 minutes, no doubt rueing the shortfall of 865 points for the rest of his life.

Scandal in high places is not a new development; the abundantly named Luise Antoinette Maria Theresia Josepha Johanna Leopoldine Caroline Ferdinande Alice Emmeline, Princess Imperial and Archduchess of Austria, Princess of Tuscany, Hungary and Bohemia, had been divorced by the Crown Prince of Saxony (later King Friedrich August III) in 1903, after she had run away, leaving behind her six children but taking with her the unborn seventh and their French tutor. In the *annus mirabilis* of 1907, twelve days after the S.C.R.W.A. was launched, she put the final touch to the matter by marrying the Italian composer Enrico Toselli (who was, appropriately enough, responsible for an opera called *The Bizarre Princess*), a union that lasted four years and resulted in a "kiss and tell" book by the musician that made him a small fortune. *Plus ça change....*

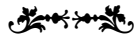
AND, FINALLY....

The reader of this book will have gathered that race walking has frequently been under attack from those who do not understand it or are, for some reason, afraid of it.

If we need protection from our enemies, we could do a lot worse than appeal to the Greek God Antaios, the son of Poseidon; he was an immensely powerful deity, whose great strength was inherited from his mother, Ge, the Earth Goddess. There was, however, a limit to his tremendous strength; it endured only so long as he remained in touch with his mother by

keeping his foot in unbroken contact with the Earth. He was finally defeated by Herakles, who overcame that strength by lifting him and squeezing him to death.

On the ground, Antaios was invincible; upon losing contact, he was immediately defeated. He is an appropriate Patron God for race walkers and a terrible warning to us all of the consequences of failing to abide by the definition that took so many years and so much effort to “perfect”, if, indeed, we have succeeded.



PART IV

IMAGES OF WALKING

IMAGES OF WALKING

The selection of images on the following pages may give a taste of what race walking is to its competitors,
officials and supporters.

(Some old originals had been retouched with more enthusiasm than skill
before coming into the editor's hands.)



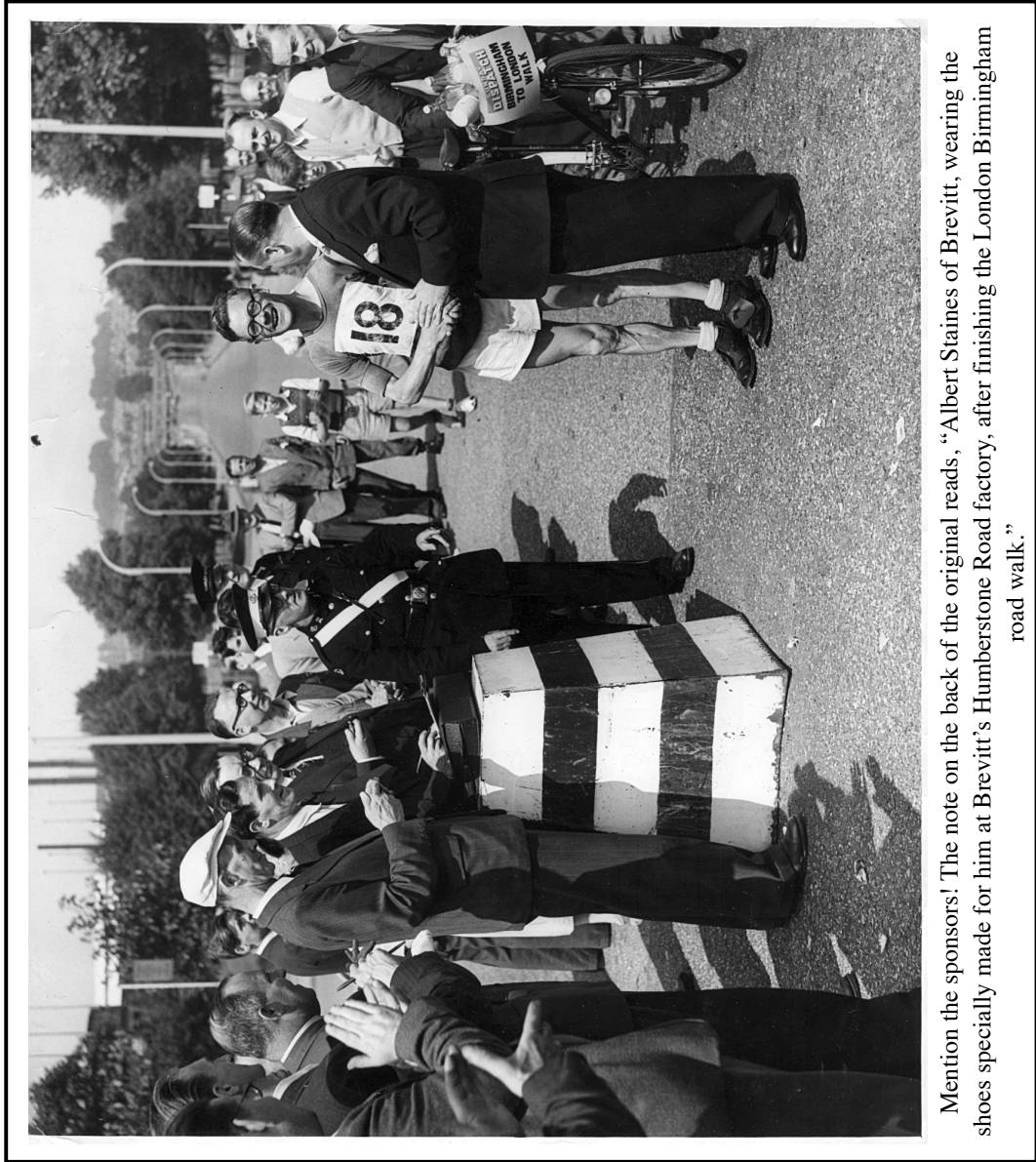
The Joy of Officiating....

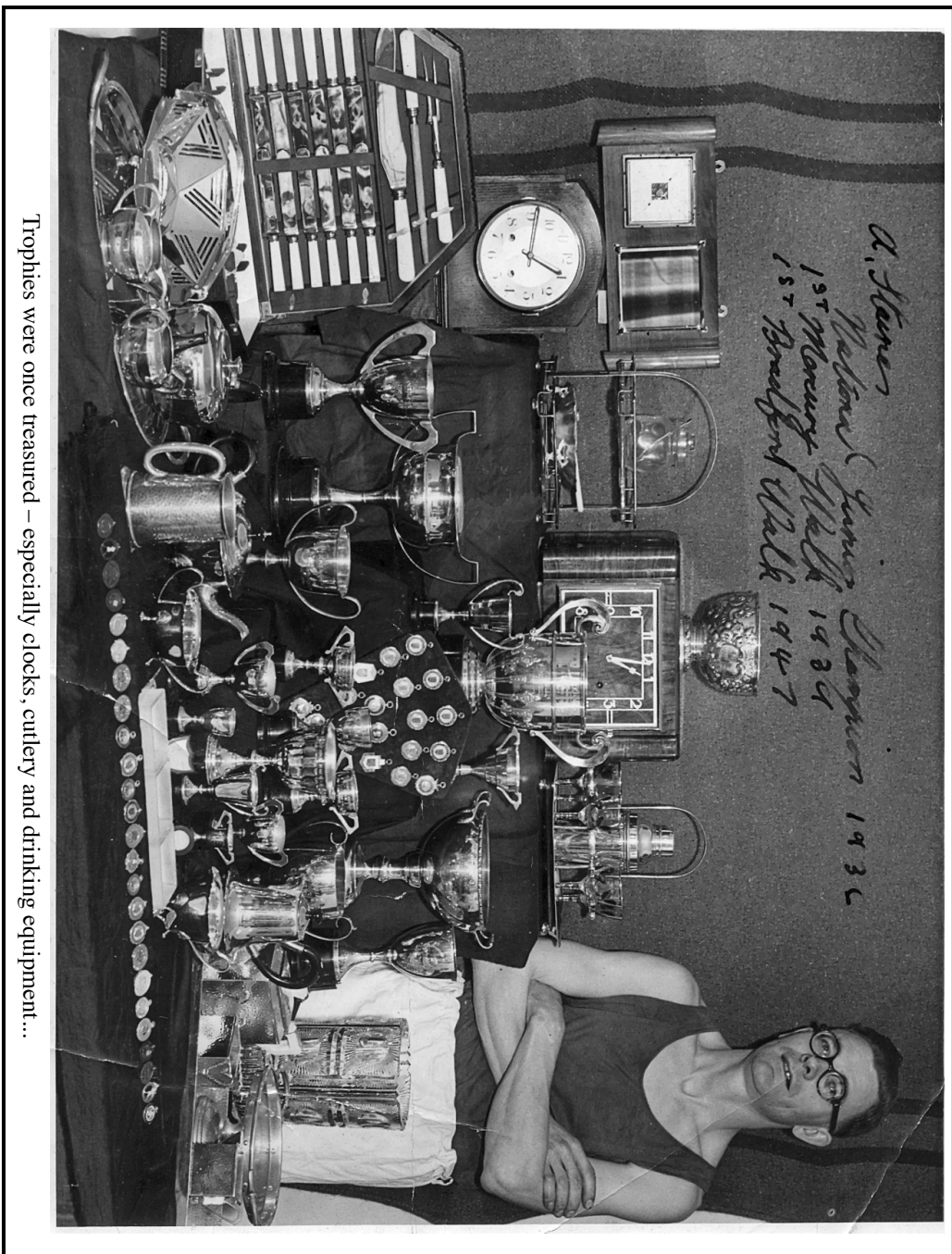


....whatever the weather

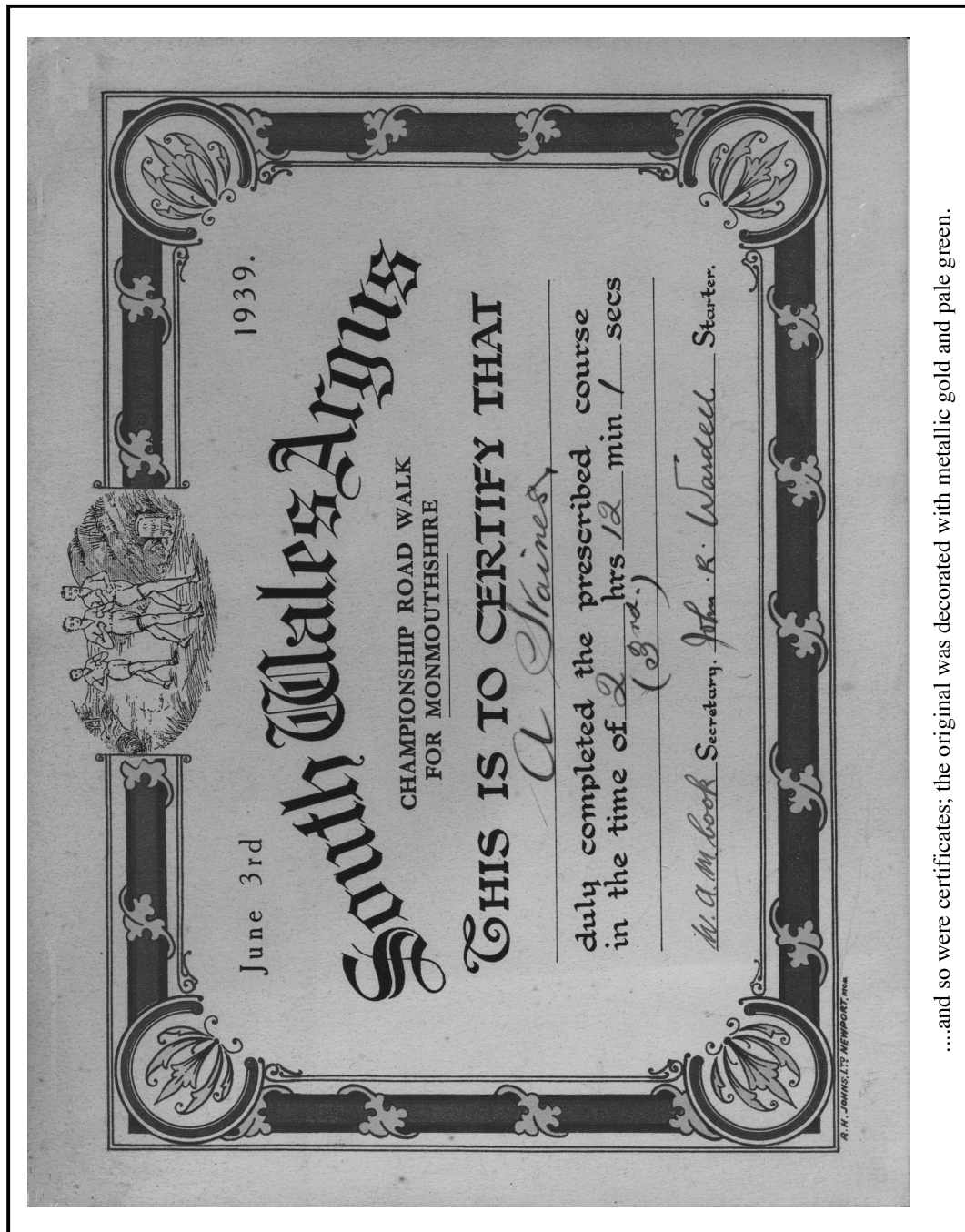


In 1936, The Surrey Walking Club badge and Whitlock's matching moustache were not so shocking!

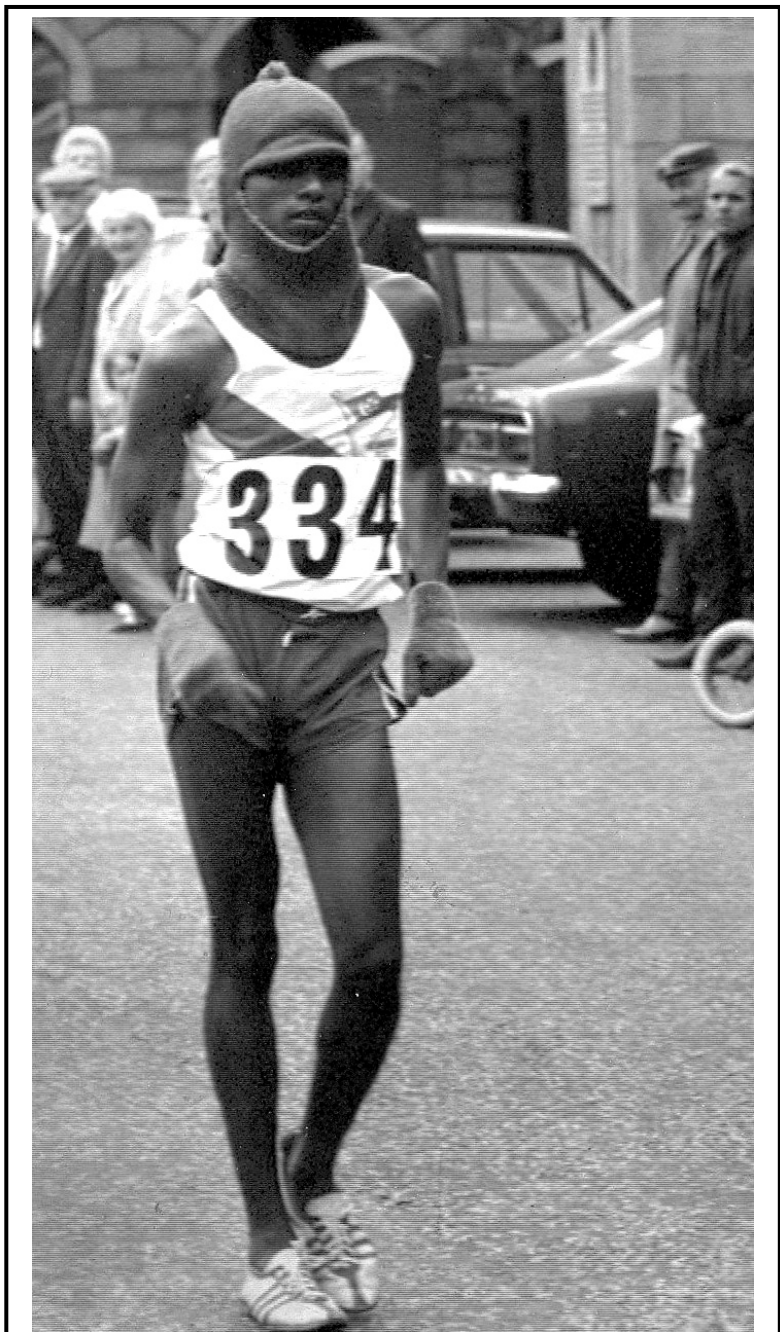




Trophies were once treasured – especially clocks, cutlery and drinking equipment...



....and so were certificates; the original was decorated with metallic gold and pale green.



Welcome to Scotland! Singaporean competitor B.K.S. Manam,
Commonwealth Games, Edinburgh, 1970



A Loyal Royal Occasion: Dunlop Coronation Walk, 22nd May, 1937

Dealing with perspiration? A headband like...



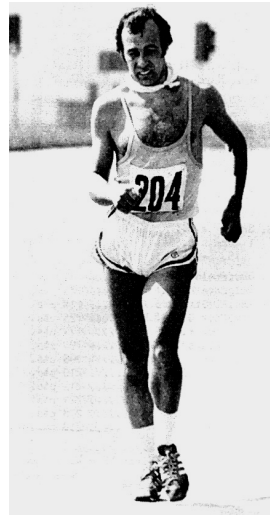
...Adrian James...



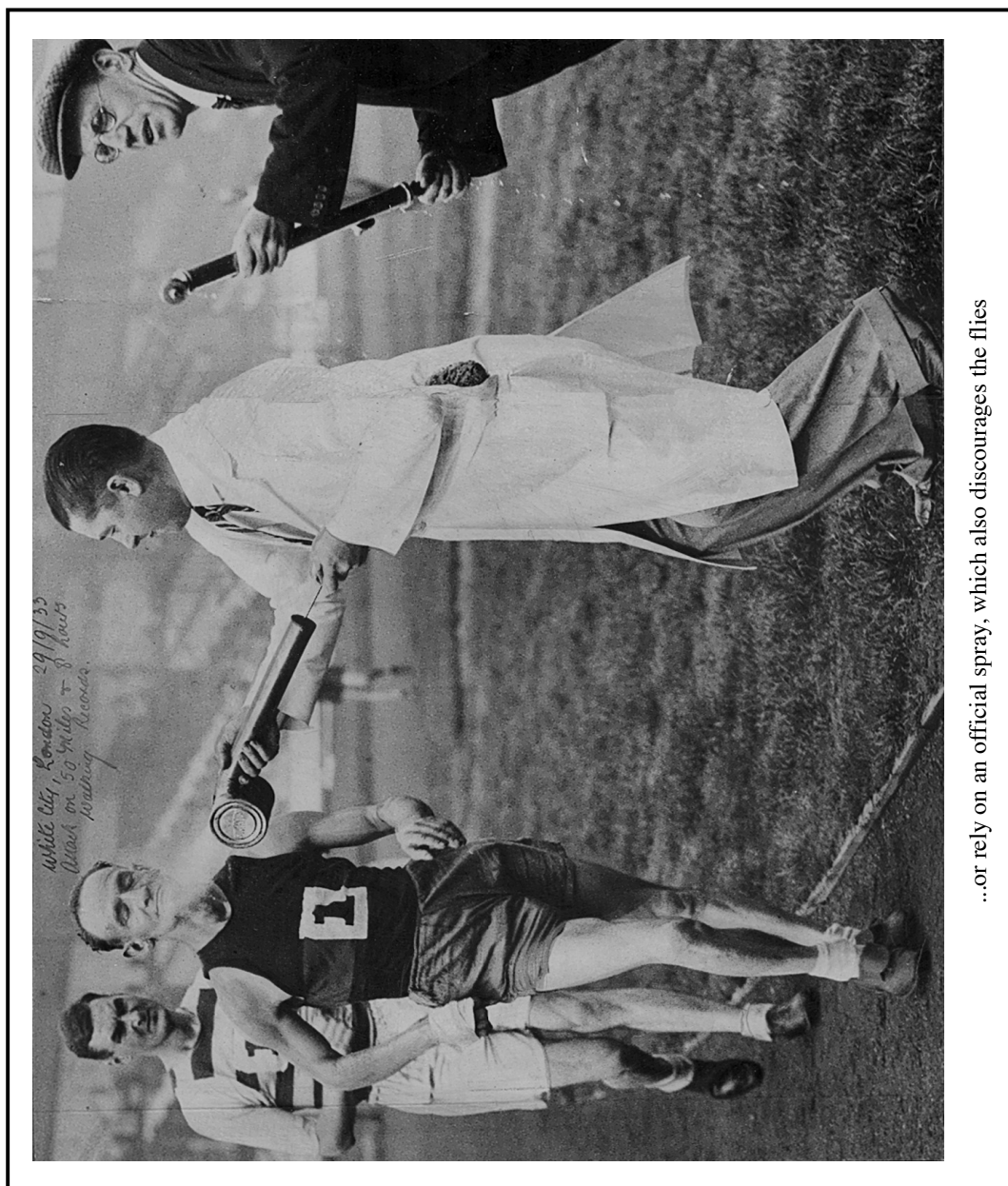
...Chris Maddocks...



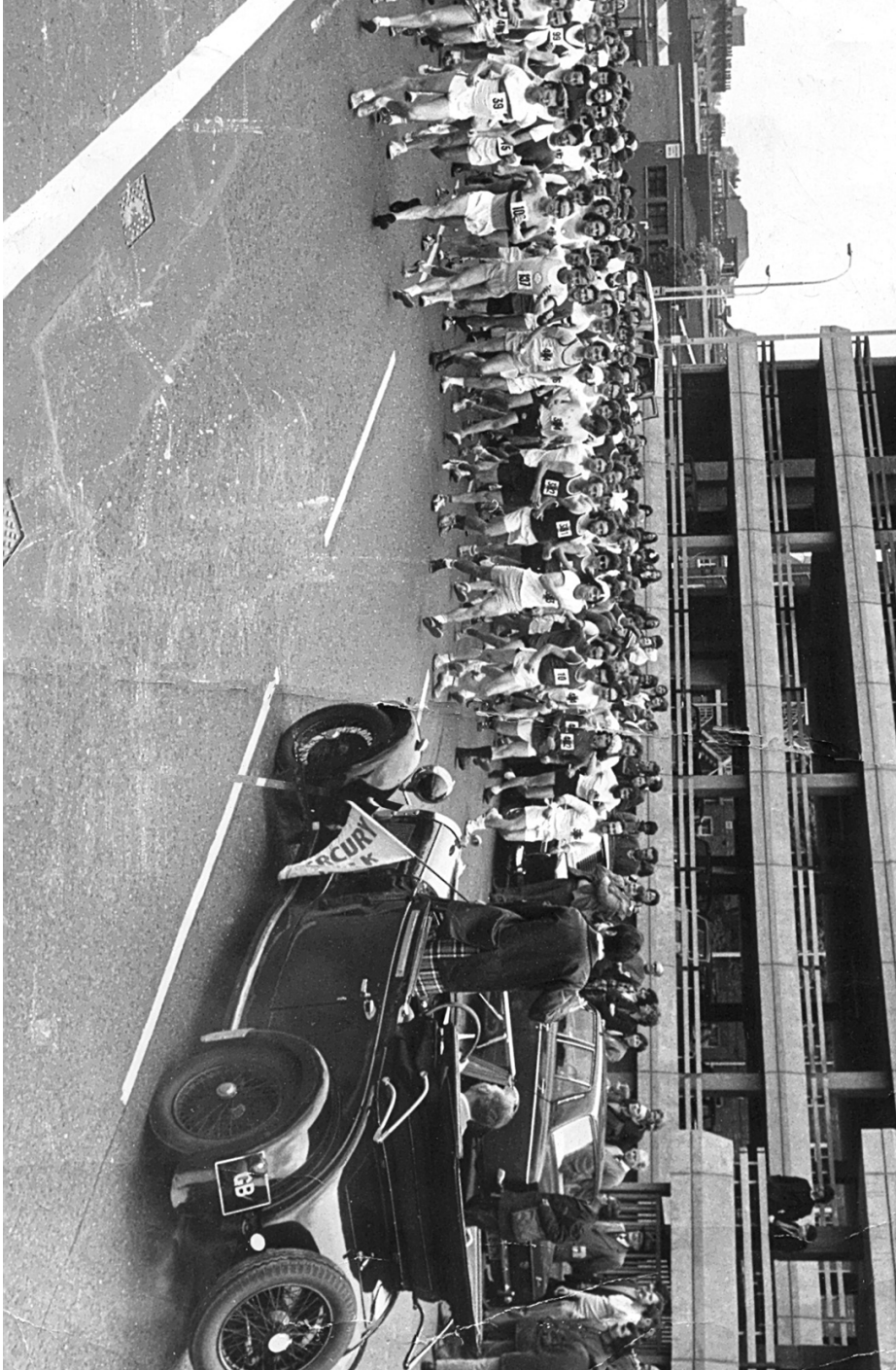
...Amos Seddon...



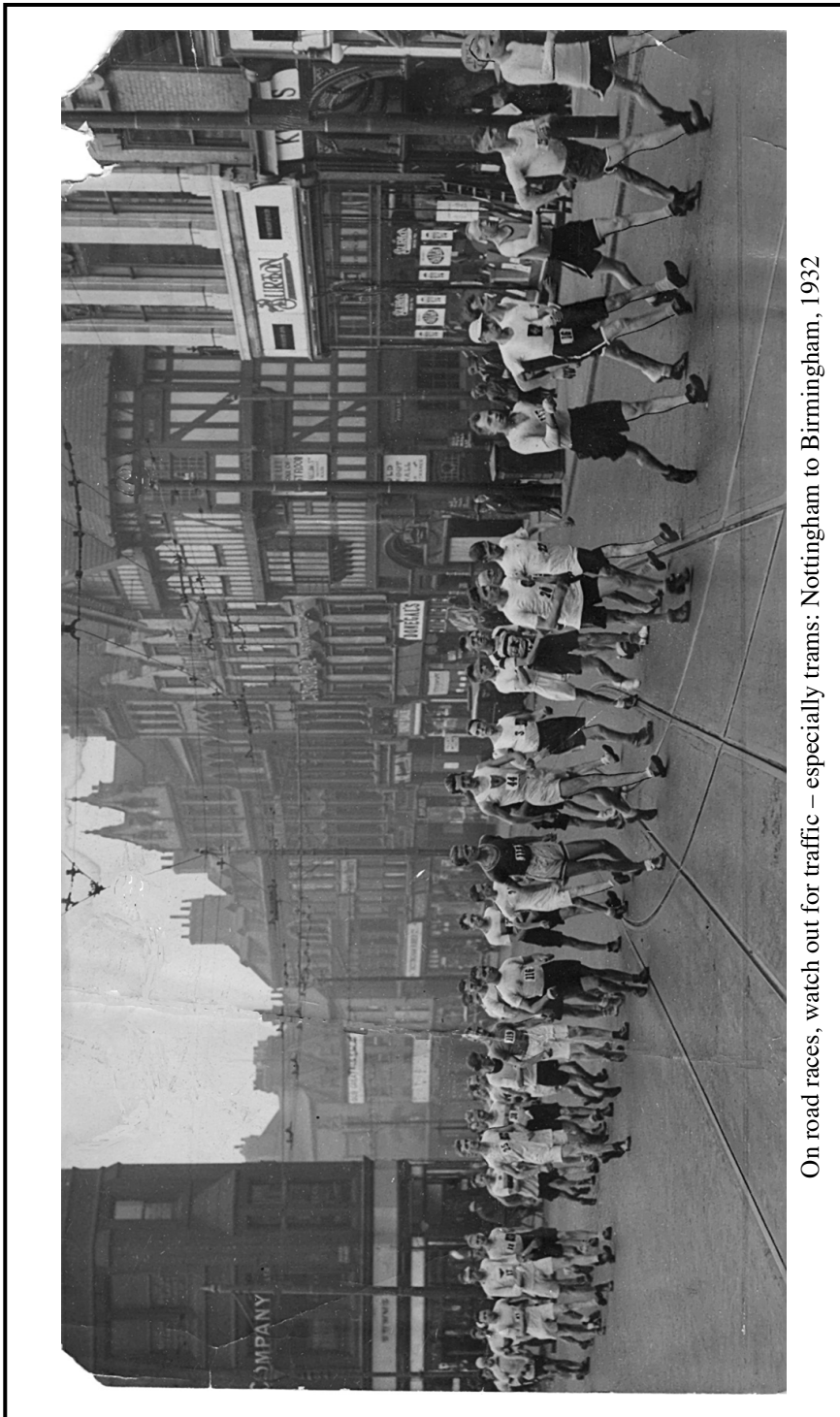
...Ian Richards neckerchief...



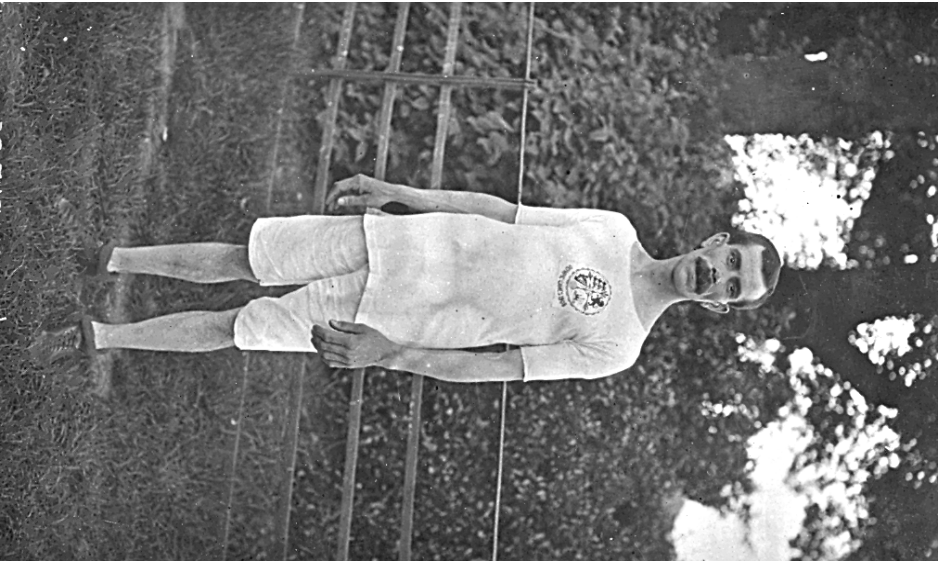
...or rely on an official spray, which also discourages the flies



Where not to park; Madam Starter takes a risk at the Leicester Mercury, year unknown



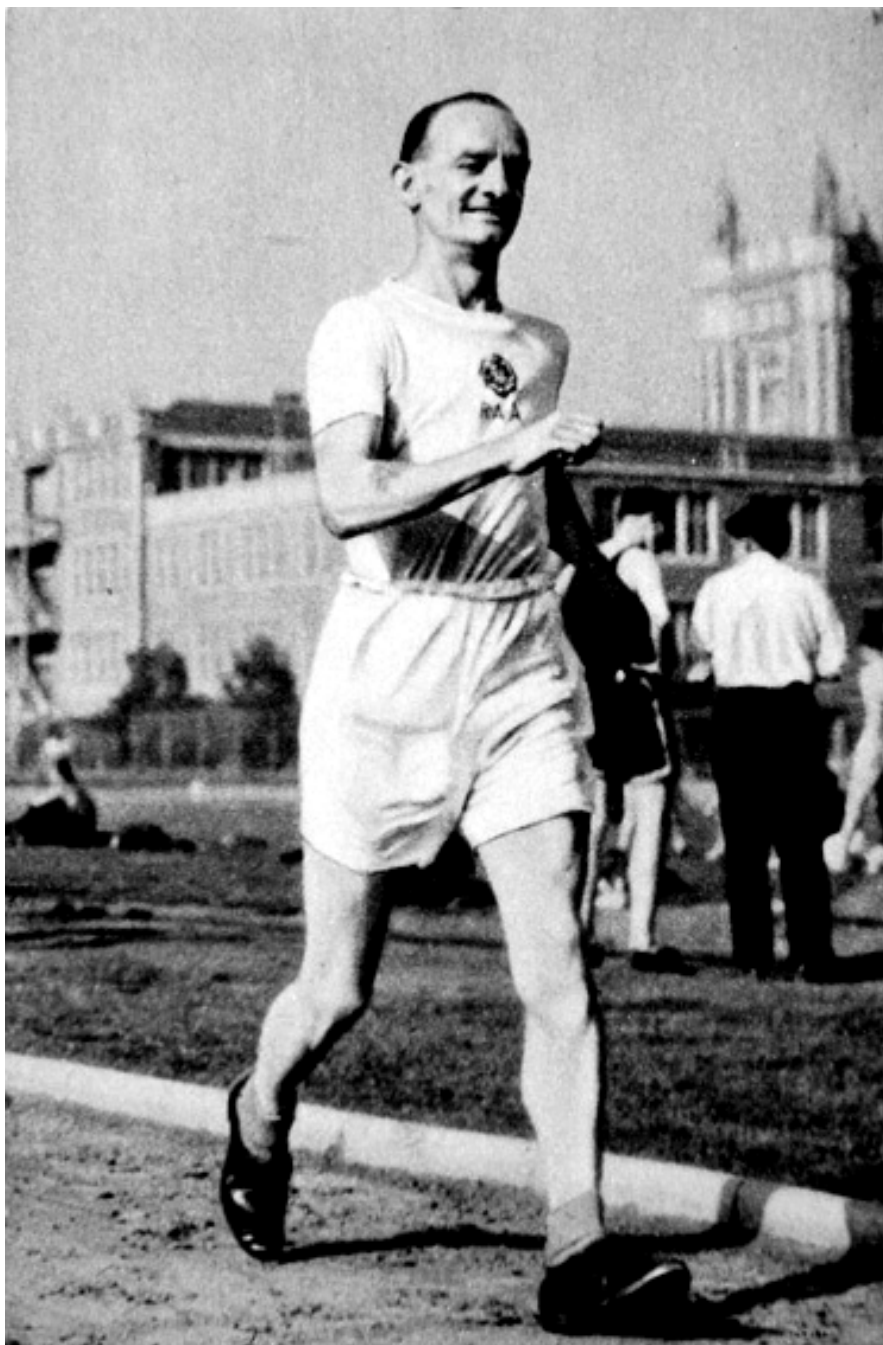
On road races, watch out for traffic – especially trams: Nottingham to Birmingham, 1932



Standards of dress have changed: George Larner and Johanna Jackson



They also serve....



Tommy Green polished his shoes....



...and George Goodwin was just as smart off the track



Numbers shall be clearly worn – even when setting out for Skegness

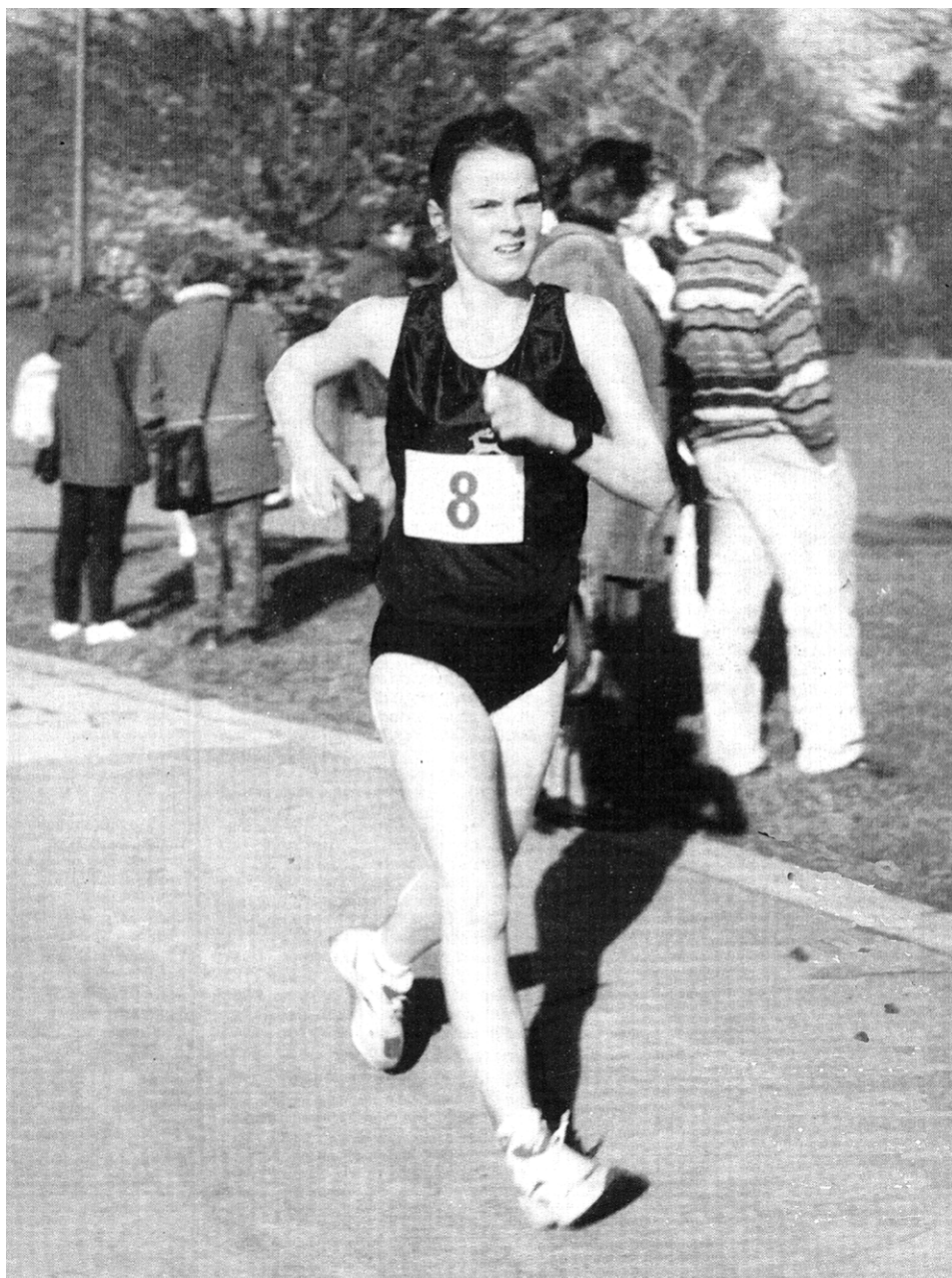
“Opens” are more open....



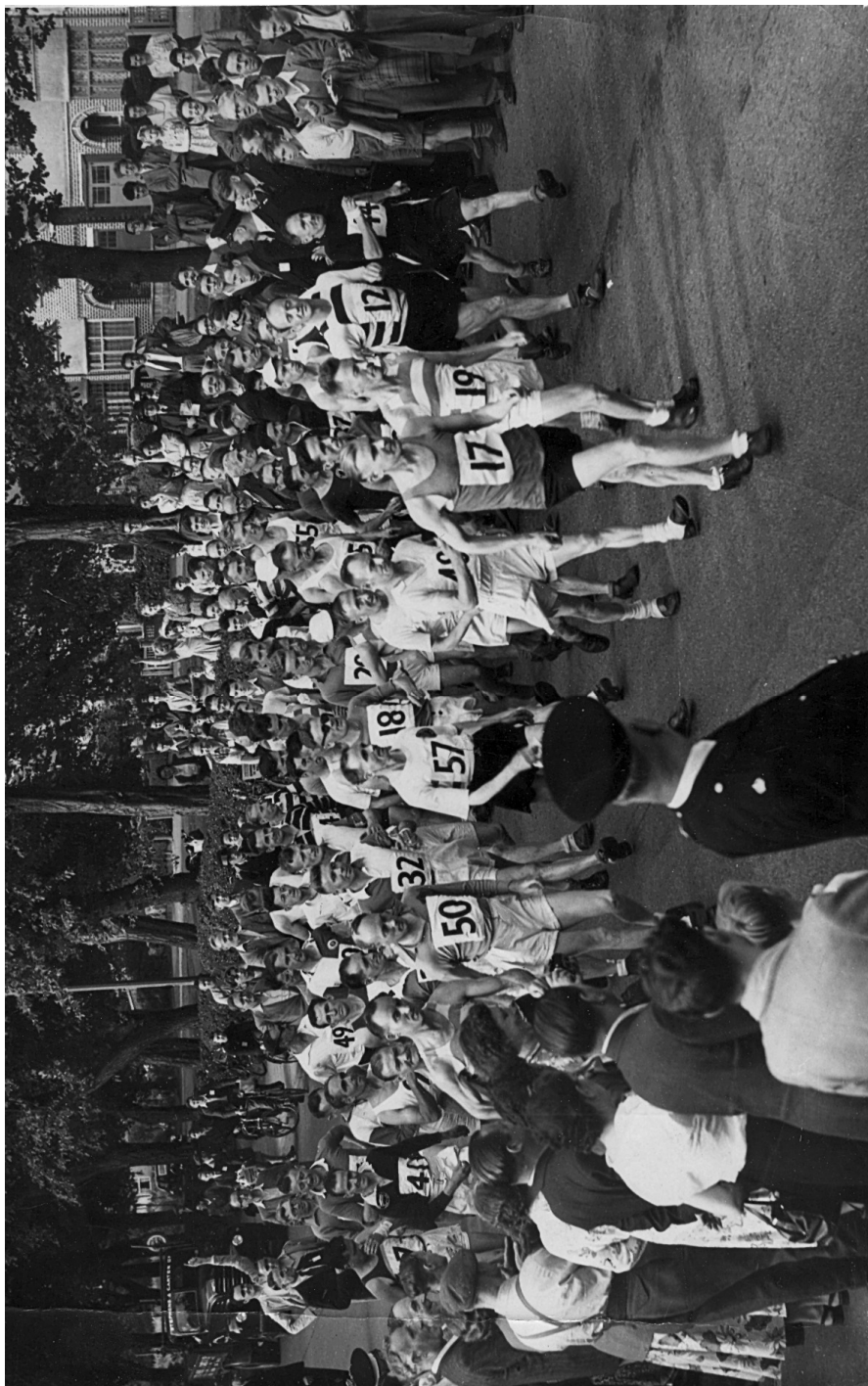
Leicester, 1958



London, 2008



The walks are on – let's watch the ducks!
Lynsey Tozer fails to catch the attention of the spectators.
Crystal Palace, 1995



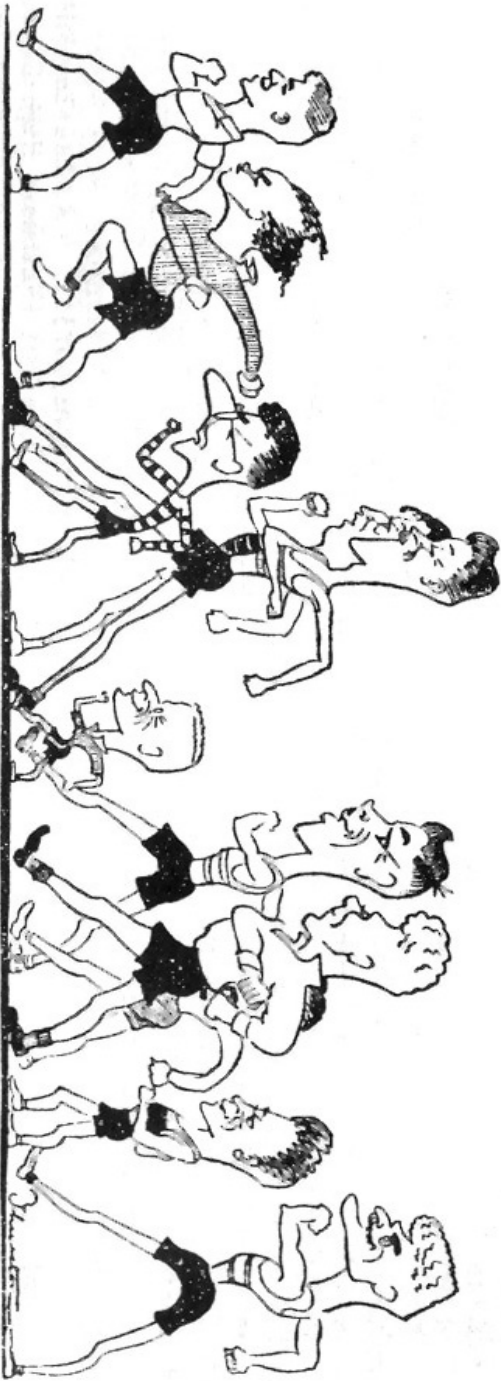
In the old days, crowds were often one deep....



....coaches were given full attention....



....and you hoped that they were strong enough.



They won't have ordered copies!

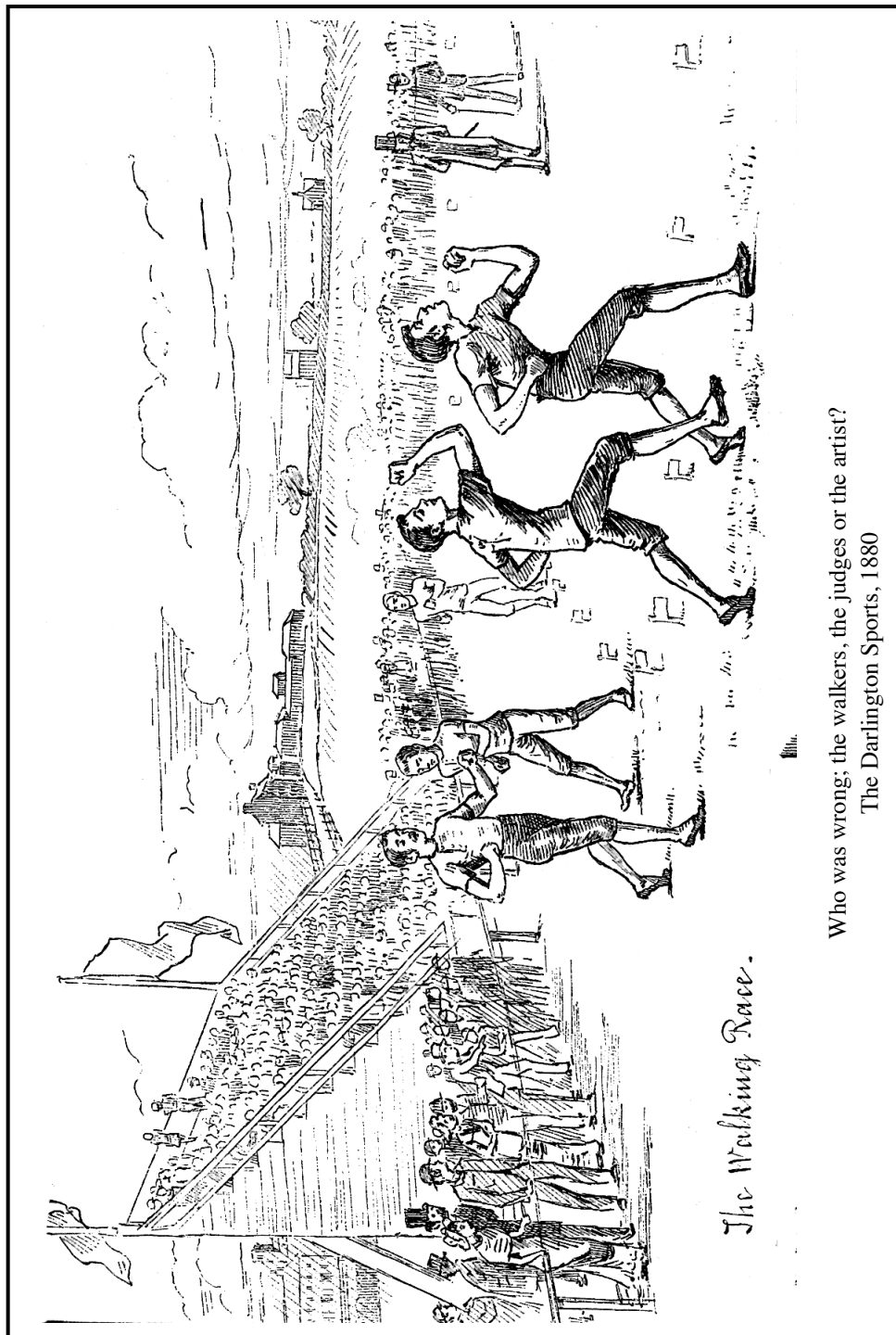
The Croydon Advertiser shows the finishing order of the of the Godstone Walk, 1946: H.J. Forbes, D.Christie-Murray, A.Pope, C.Megnin, G.Whitlock, J.Henderson, H.Whitlock, J.Wincer, J.Johnson, R.Pantling, F.Redman



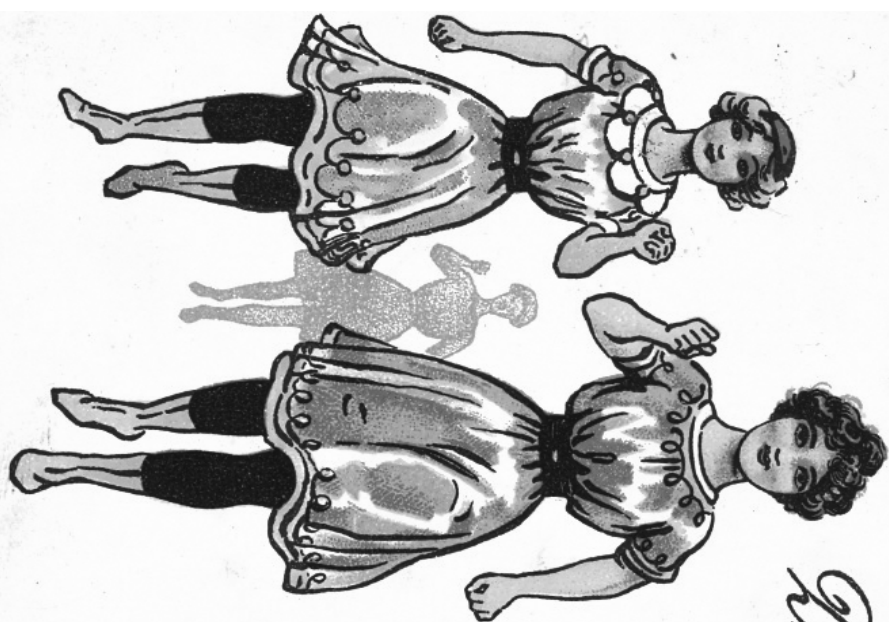
They *looked* like walkers: Stan Vickers, George Coleman and Roland Hardy in 1956



For the pure joy and pleasure of the thing....



Who was wrong; the walkers, the judges or the artist?
The Darlington Sports, 1880



Dear Alice
 Come for a walk
 days at-
 if you can,
 by can be
 cant and hule
 dont inlone
 coming this
 In on

Sporting Ladies need not be unfeminine: a picture-postcard from 1904



Even Editors were once Contenders.

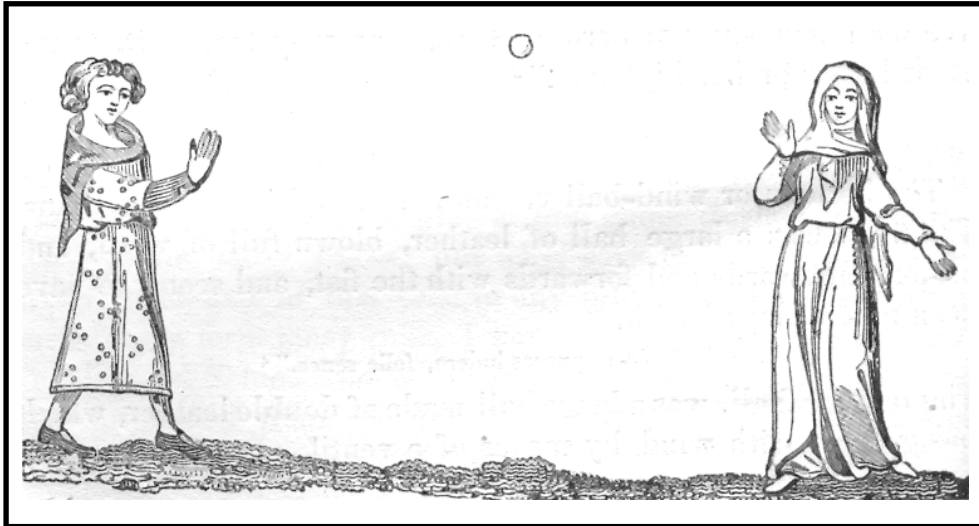
PART V

**NOTES, REFERENCES,
APPENDICES AND INDEX**

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Chapter 1 The Background: The Development of Athletics

- 1 Joseph Strutt: *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*: London, 1830.



The man seems to have lobbed the ball underhand and it would appear to be about the width of a hand – three or four inches in diameter; there is no clue to its structure.



Our reason for regarding this game as more competitive than the previous one is Strutt's remark that, "Behind the woman at a little distance appear in the original delineation several other figures of both

sexes, waiting attentively to catch or stop the ball when returned by the batsman: these figures have been damaged, and are very indistinct in many parts, for which reason I did not think it proper to insert them.” Two things should be noted; firstly the ball seems much bigger here, being about the size of a head – say eight inches in diameter – and, secondly, the apparent proximity of the players, bringing the bowler within swinging distance of the club, is probably due to Strutt’s excision of the whole middle of the picture to remove the damaged “fielders”. It is also worth pointing out that the dress is more rustic; the players are probably of a lower social class.

- 2 This is not to say, of course, that no sporting activities existed previously or, indeed, that other sports were unknown. In his *History of the Kings of Britain*, completed about 1136, Geoffrey of Monmouth, describing the court held by King Arthur at Caerleon-on-Usk, writes of the recreation of those attending: “Invigorated by the food and drink which they had consumed, they went out into the meadows outside the city and split up into groups ready to play various games. The knights planned an imitation battle and competed together on horseback, while their womenfolk watched from the top of the city walls and aroused them to passionate excitement by their flirtatious behaviour. The others passed what remained of the day in shooting with bows and arrows, hurling the lance, tossing heavy stones and rocks, playing with dice and an immense variety of other games.” [Translation by Lewis Thorpe] A manuscript three hundred years later, illustrating the occasion, shows one man holding a large stone – about the size of his head – into his shoulder in a fairly normal modern shot-putting stance while another is preparing to throw a spear whose length is a little more than his own height. Caerleon is in Wales rather than England and there is no real reason to suppose that at Arthur’s time in the sixth century such things actually happened (given that it is quite probable that Geoffrey invented the whole of his *History*); what is clear is that in the middle of the twelfth century it *was* possible to write about stone- and lance-throwing, so they certainly existed then, and that in the middle of the fifteenth they looked much as they do today. The winner of each contest, by the way, was rewarded by Arthur with “an immense prize”.
- 3 See the Bibliography for details of this and other works cited.
- 4 It is, though, difficult to conceive of crowds of frenzied golfers rampaging through town smashing windows and looting shops; possibly their Scottish Majesties’ objection was purely on grounds of time-wasting. Writing of the twelfth century, Birley, in his illuminating history (see the Bibliography) observes that “No doubt a great deal was drunk at the holiday sports...Drinking, on its own or as an essential part of festivals and sporting activities, was the principal British leisure pursuit.” Part of the excuse was the dubious nature of the water supplies and part was the popularity of “scotales”, or drinking contests. The water supply in this country is now assured, but informal pre- and post-event scotales seem to remain popular, particularly among the spectators of certain ball-games.
- 5 In his diary entry for 4th January, 1663-4, Pepys records: “Thence to the Tennis-court....and there saw the King play at Tennis and others; but to see how the King’s play was extolled without any cause at all was a loathsome sight, though sometimes, indeed, he did play very well and deserved to be commended; but such open flattery is beastly.” Possibly the desire to record such dangerous thoughts was one reason why Pepys, who was Secretary to the Admiralty, wrote the diary in cypher that required over a century to be worked out. It is also well known (and recorded in the play by Shakespeare) that the French had sent Henry V some tennis balls as a gift, although this was intended more as an insult than as a recognition of his attachment to the sport.
- 6 The *barre* was a length of heavy wood or metal, which was thrown hammer-style; the throw was measured in barre-lengths, thus cleverly avoiding the need for a standard implement.
- 7 Although the sentiment quoted here was quite at variance with Henry’s view, he settled a pension on Roger, possibly because the book was a treatise on archery.
- 8 As an interesting aside, the present Editor could not find *ensult* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and consulted the Editors of that work. They deduce that the word is a variant spelling of *insult*, which, as well as its common meaning of *be offensive*, once meant *make an attack or assault*; our butcher

was evidently taking things easily towards the end. The spelling was previously unknown to the *O.E.D.*; thus, sport has aided lexicography.

- 9 To quote Pepys again, writing on 30th July, 1663; “The towne talk this day is of nothing but the great foot race run this day on Banstead Downes, between Lee, the Duke of Richmond’s footman, and a tyler, a famous runner. And Lee hath beat him; although the King, Duke of York, and all men almost, did bet three to four to one upon the tyler’s head.” Apparently, among the frustrated noble gamblers there was no aroma of rat.
- 10 Astonishingly enough, such incidents were not unknown. In *The Age of Scandal*, published in 1950, T.H.White, writing of the latter half of the eighteenth century, says, “When a passer-by fell down opposite Brooks’s, apparently dead, they betted whether he was alive or not, and those who said that he was dead objected to the use of restoratives, as affecting the bet.” Another buck “betted that a man could live under water, hired a desperado, sank him in some receptacle, and drowned him. He promptly hired another desperado to try again.”
- 11 This insistence that competing for money did not constitute professionalism persisted for a very long time. Astley, the soldier, impresario, gambler and all-round oddity, records as late as 1857 an entry in *Bell’s Life* concerning his own exploits: “AMATEUR RACE FOR £200 – Captain Brine, R.E., on the part of Lt.-Col. Astley, Scots Fus. Gds., has made a match with F.Leigh, Esq., for J.Taylor, Esq., of Passage, in the vicinity of Cork, to come off on or about the 18th December....” Apart from the £200 stake, Astley backed himself at two to one with £500 (borrowed from his tailor) and won “anyhow” – his usual expression for “easily”. There are two points worthy of mention; firstly, Astley was still a serving army officer (managing somehow to spend inordinate amounts of time attending to his sporting interests) and secondly, in his own words, “In those days, mind you, an amateur meant a gentleman, whether he ran for money or honour, or both – I used to combine the two.” As he was referred to as “Esq.”, Taylor also was presumably a gentleman. Wagers were sometimes entered upon in a remarkably off-hand sort of way. Lord William Lennox in his *Pictures of a Sporting Life* (1860) recounts an incident of 1857: “I was dining at Crockford’s in the month of July, and had indulged in all the luxuries of the table – turtle, venison, punch, champagne, and claret – when the above-mentioned ‘lightweight’ (a ‘gallant officer of the 9th Lancers’ - Ed.) made his appearance....After a slight pause the newcomer commenced the subject of Pedestrianism, and finally offered to give any person present ten yards in a hundred, and run him for the same number of pounds. The challenge having thus openly been made, I was urged to throw down my gage, which, after another glass or two of claret, I did.” The race took place that midnight in Hill St., Berkeley Square, Lord Lennox having filled in the intervening hour with “gentle exercise”. He won “in a canter”, for two reasons. Quite fortuitously, the gallant officer collided with one of his own backers, who had wagered two hundred pounds on the outcome, which “threw him out of his stride”. The other reason was that Lennox had previously run a challenge – without a wager – and, realising that he was being “set up”, held back and “went at half speed, puffing and panting like a broken-down poster.” A sense of fair play does not seem to have been uppermost in the minds of those who would probably have cheerfully horsewhipped a jockey who had reined-in his mount to their disadvantage.
- 12 A sidelight on this breed of men is shed by the notice in *The Morning* of the 5th April, 1896, of the burial the previous day of Sam Cliffe, who had been born in Shrewsbury in 1803 and died in Forest Gate, London, and who claimed to be the last survivor of the running footmen. He had at various times been employed by, among others, the Earls of Wilton and Balcarres, the Marquises of Queensberry and Waterford and “Mad Jack” Mytton, an archetypal Regency buck who matched King George III’s insanity with his own, riding a bear through his own dining room, dressing his sixty cats in livery, drinking six bottles of port a day, trying to jump his horse over a gate while it was pulling a coach, curing his hiccups by setting fire to his shirt and finally expiring in a debtors’ prison. The obituary says of Cliffe that “His general run was sixty miles a day.” This seems rather excessive and may have been coloured by the old man’s failing memory. To the end of his life, he received a weekly pension of £1.

- 13 A pound of tea was not a prize to be sniffed at. In the period concerned, it was customary for the lady of the house to keep her tea in a locked caddy and to supervise its use to protect such a valuable commodity from the thieving servants; it was expensive not only because it had come half way round the world, but because excise duty was payable on it.
- 14 See Roe, *Front Runners*, for the history of such a “ground” at Hackney Wick in East London.
- 15 Towards the end of the century, Shearman, in discussing the merits of various tracks, wrote of Lillie Bridge that it “was certainly a very good one, perhaps as good and as fair a track as has ever been made. Like most other good paths, it was a third of a mile in circumference, but its chief merit in our opinion lay in the fact that the turns were well graduated. Although the corners were apparently sharp, by making the path slope downwards to the corner, the runners were prevented from running wide, and were given four straight stretches, one on each side of the ground.” In contrast “The Stamford Bridge track is, we think, about as badly shaped as a ground can be for any short races....The path is only a quarter of a mile in circumference, the lap consisting of two straight stretches of 120 yards at the sides and gradual curves of 100 yards each at the ends.” That is, an “oval” of, in modern terms, 110m straights and 90m bends – much as tracks are now – was not as good as a “square” with rounded corners. In a chapter on *Athletics at School* in the later editions of Montague’s book, W.Beach Thomas goes further: “There must almost of necessity be one long straight for the hundred, but there is no need to make the opposite side a parallel. An irregular pentagon, or where economy of space is necessary a hexagon, will provide all requisites. There is no particular harm in a rather abrupt corner (as at Fenner’s and Queen’s Club) so long as it does not come very near the start; indeed a continuous curl is much less satisfactory, as being directly against the interests of those runners who have to take the outside.” He did not commit himself on the total length of the track.

Chapter 2 Order from Chaos

- 1 The extent of their sense of élitism is that by “Universities” they meant “Oxford and Cambridge”.
- 2 Lovesey suggests that Rye may have suffered feelings of inadequacy, as he had not been to University; he had, as it were, become a gentleman by application, attending evening classes on his way to a career as a solicitor; perhaps, even then, he felt inferior in the company of barristers.
- 3 Shearman had been born in Wimbledon, Surrey, and had no Northern qualifications, but the Championships were open in those days.
- 4 See Chapter 29 for a mention of Shearman’s own tendency to moralise in court, with rather more severe consequences for the defendant.
- 5 The arrangement began to go ragged in 1898 – South, Midlands, South, North, South, Midlands, North, South, South, North, South and thereafter in the South until the end of the twentieth century.

Chapter 3 Birth and the First Steps

- 1 Railway Clearing House Athletic Club. The Railway Clearing House was an organisation set up by the many independent railways of the time to distribute the income from ticket sales among the various companies over whose tracks a complicated journey might pass, thus making it possible for a passenger or the sender of goods to purchase a through ticket, instead of having to rebook every time he or his merchandise changed trains.
- 2 Barnes Moss was “Acting hon. secretary” only in the sense that, by agreement with the other instigators, he arranged the Polytechnic meeting, invited attendance and recorded the proceedings.
- 3 Although the report says only that those attending “included” the men listed, one might suppose that had Vowles been present he would have been noted.
- 4 The rather wayward punctuation is original; as the meeting was an evening one and *Sporting Life* was a morning daily, there was little time to worry over niceties. The alternating presence and

absence of an apostrophe at the end of *Counties* in the early years seems to have been the Association's own fault.

- 5 The Surrey Walking Club's *Gazette* of the time was very justly proud that its own Messrs Callow, Stessiger, Hammond, Hurley, Innes, Jull, March, Neville, Otway, Barnes Moss and Mariette – eleven of the eighteen Committee members – were also S.W.C. members; they were so excited that they forgot to mention Teddy Knott.
- 6 In *Apollo's Magazine* of January and February, 1908.
- 7 Possibly Yeoumans "got the nod" over others principally because he was Welsh, or at least lived in Wales, having actually been born in Leicestershire.
- 8 Yeoumans had done a spectacular 6:00 in exhibition and 6:15 in competition for the mile, but these had never been ratified.
- 9 This took place a month after the 3500m; the Games as a whole lasted from 27th April to 31st October, with lengthy pauses.
- 10 Following the disqualification of an American from the 400m final, the other two American qualifiers withdrew in protest, leaving the British athlete Halswelle to run a lap in solitude for the gold medal. There were also mutterings and allegations about the boots worn by the Liverpool Police team in the Tug of War, and the story of Dorando Pietri's disqualification for receiving last-gasp assistance in the marathon is well known. One of the problems is that *all* the officials were British, including the medical officer for the marathon, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, of Sherlock Holmes fame (although he reports the finish of the marathon *as seen from his seat in the stand*). Baker deals entertainingly with the carryings-on in his book *The 1908 Olympics*.

Chapter 4 Adolescence: Rules, Regulations and Confusion

- 1 Some lessons remain hard to learn; the 1969 European Championships 20k in Athens started in a brightly lit stadium but was largely on the road in near total darkness with the occasional street lamp.
- 2 See Chapter 30 for another example of Roberts' misfortunes.
- 3 It is to be remembered that, although the Association was responsible only for road events, track ones being in the hands of the A.A.A., it did provide judges for the latter races.
- 4 Miss Gilling?; the reporter seems to have become overexcited at the experience. A year later, *everyone* was overexcited: "Of the other events little need be said, but the waitresses' walk was a fiasco through the laxity of the officials, who allowed the leaders to trot nearly all the way and then disqualified them at the finish.," and in 1911 it was reported that "The waitresses' walk caused much amusement"; Miss M. Warwick of the Royal Oak (giving 30 yards) won the race, shortened to 880 yards, by a yard in 4:48.2. Note that in the event quoted in the main text, Miss Davies had done enough racing to earn a fifty-yard handicap in one mile. How much the attitude to women's walking changed in a decade or two can be seen from the history outlined in Chapter 19.
- 5 *Sporting Life*, 13th April, 1909.
- 6 Walkers very seldom seem to have tired; they always broke down, collapsed, dropped away, failed or went to pieces. It was presumably something of a strain for the reporters to keep finding different ways of saying the same thing.
- 7 The A.A.A. subsequently fell into line with the R.W.A.'s practice; nowadays, acceptance of second-claim members is down to the event promoters, who generally permit them unless the first-claim club is competing, which is what has always happened in walking anyway.
- 8 It was not clear whether he had been born like that or had suffered an accident; both explanations were current.

Chapter 5 Going National: Theory into Practice

- 1 The following year, it was down to fifty-one individuals, while nine teams scored.

- 2 He was, of course, upset and in a letter to the *Sporting Life* he announced his retirement from the amateur ranks, implying bias among southern judges. He claimed to be “undefeated long-distance walking champion” and offered to prove it for £200 a side over any distance from 20 miles upwards. It is not apparent that anyone took up his challenge
- 3 Herne Hill Harriers.

Chapter 6 Consolidation and Growth: Walking between the Wars

- 1 Although Ross thought of himself as a distance man rather than a sprinter, he also won the A.A.A. 7 miles in 1913 and 1921.
- 2 An eyewitness’s comments appear in Chapter 25.
- 3 Poynton was the first man to win a National as the representative of a non-metropolitan club; Payne of North Shields had won the 20 miles in 1911 – before it was “nationalised” – but walking for Middlesex A.C.; see Chapter 4.
- 4 See Chapter 25.
- 5 See the *Introduction*.
- 6 Lovesey remarks that, “without surrendering its autonomy, the (Amateur Athletic) Association steadily adapted its rules to international standards in the mid-twenties.” As will be seen, the next forty or fifty years, so far as race walking was concerned, were spent in regretting such a move and dithering over reversing it.
- 7 These articles, and other notes by John Keown, have been freely drawn on to supplement other research in the production of this book. More detail of individual events will be found particularly in the copies of *Record* from March, 1971 to January, 1972.
- 8 The maximum possible size of the General Committee at the time of the Centenary had become 25, although “doubling-up” generally reduced it to about 18 or 19.
- 9 The Association was sometimes a little vague as to its nomenclature; it was actually *Inter-Area*. Appendix L shows that the purpose of the Hammond Cup has now changed and that the *Inter-Area* award is the President’s Trophy, a paper competition.

Chapter 7 Maturity: War, Concern and Success

- 1 Air Raid Precautions; a civilian organisation designed to help the citizenry during air raids by clearing the streets, supervising shelters, dealing with casualties, etc.; not to be confused with the Home Guard (“Dad’s Army” of the television series) which was an armed force under military command.
- 2 McSweeney, *Race Walking Record*, August, 1952.
- 3 It was, perhaps, a pointer to the future that the Junior 3 miles at the Highgate Hour had only *two* competitors.
- 4 The Nijmegen Marches are an annual event in the Netherlands, in which service and police teams wearing uniform participate. The marches are over a varying number of days and the team is required to remain together during each day.
- 5 In those days, the appeals were for general revenue support, rather than to promote specific projects.
- 6 It was a race that showed tenacity in the face of adversity; one year it was postponed because of icy ground and took place instead a fortnight later in a blinding snowstorm.
- 7 The Editor dares to hope that the same may be said of its successor!
- 8 It was not clear whether one judge at a Selection Committee meeting could “disqualify” a walker from international selection or it needed the agreement of all three.

Chapter 8 Over the Hill

- 1 Australia, Canada, England, Isle of Man, New Zealand, Trinidad & Tobago and Wales.
- 2 Not quite no-one, perhaps; as we show in Chapter 25, Alan Buchanan was mentioning the problem in *Record* in 1971.
- 3 An interesting precedent exists for such considerate treatment of distant competitors. In the first Football Association Cup Competition in 1871-72, fourteen of the entrants were from the South of England, one was from the Midlands and the sixteenth was Queen's Park (Glasgow). On financial grounds, the Scots were excused competing until the semi-final, when, funded by a public subscription at home, they met Wanderers at Kennington Oval. The result was a draw and Queen's Park, unable to afford to return for the replay, scratched. To complete the picture, South Africa, like Queen's Park, apparently could not afford the trip.
- 4 Chapter 25 refers to a particularly forceful expression of this attitude.
- 5 For a remark on "roping", see Chapter 1.
- 6 The reader will, perhaps, excuse such flowery language, as the proposition seems fetchingly archaic.
- 7 Nihill had originally been selected just for the 20k, only Howard Timms and John Warhurst having satisfied the selectors in circumstances mentioned in Chapter 24. Shortly after the Games, Nihill himself said that "Britain has fallen behind the rest of the world and must now take up the sad role as has-beens."
- 8 He was slightly at fault here; he should have said "England and Wales", as Scotland *did* use the I.A.A.F. definition, which cannot have helped the "home" situation.
- 9 Stone's time was 52:21.2, 1:26.8 faster than Hake in 1935 but actually 0.8 seconds *slower* than Johnson in 1934; see Appendix XXXVI.
- 10 This is what Shearman was complaining about in 1887, the adoption of poor style in order to gain speed and keep up with the other shifty goers; see Chapter 29.
- 11 They do not, however, seem to have been so unpopular that they were often disqualified!
- 12 It has not been possible to determine whether this was ever used to disqualify someone walking within the definition but "unfairly"; it is, anyway, a peculiar concept.
- 13 There were also a National Event Coach, Lloyd Johnson, and a Chief National Coach, A. Cotton, a rather complex arrangement.
- 14 The Editor's emphasis.
- 15 This was just as well; the old position of ignoring knees would have been replaced by one of taking note of them – like the I.A.A.F. – *but in a different way!*
- 16 Over the same period, the price of *Record* rose from £1.10 a year to £30!

Chapter 9 Stabilisation – or Stagnation?

- 1 In *Race Walking Record*, Alan Buchanan said that he could not understand the logic behind the choice of venue, given the somewhat minimal condition of women's walking in Wales; others agreed with him. He also queried the strange choice of distances.
- 2 In a sense! Intermediate women were certainly described as "15-17", but Seniors were described as "15-60". Intermediates entering the R.W.A. Championships had to "have attained the age of 15 years at midnight 31st Aug/1st Sept in the year of competition" while Seniors in the Championships had to have "attained the age of 15 years and be under 60 years on the day of competition", so that it was possible to be an Intermediate and a Senior simultaneously. Similar peculiarities existed in the male regulations. The difficulties arose from the fact that "where possible the R.W.A. championship age groups have been brought into line with those used by the AAA AND WAAA," the emphasis on the word *and* being John Keown's in his description of the new arrangements. Further consideration of the matter was promised, pending the outcome of a review by the W.A.A.A. Eventually, the female age groups became, (working upwards from the youngest) Minors, Girls, Intermediates,

Juniors and Seniors, while the male remained Colts, Boys, Youths, Juniors and Seniors. To everyone's relief, the female Euro-Junior designation, depending on the age on the 31st December, did not survive for long, the old "ordinary" Junior category being redesignated to match the rest of the continent, thus removing the possibility of being in *three* age groups simultaneously. An Under-23 group was later introduced for males and females and still exists, although generally regarded as being largely superfluous. The attention of readers is particularly called to the barring of *all* sexagenarians from the Association's Championships, another of the R.W.A's extraordinary provisions that was later, to general relief, abandoned.

- 3 It still hasn't; walkers in the B.B.C. – and in the commercial television – broadcasts tend to appear as sets of legs in the background of a long jump competition.
- 4 The attempt was rather upset by the weather, as it rained more or less the whole time.
- 5 This was part of a sponsorship deal of £22,000 negotiated in 1980 with the distillers by Messrs. Marlow, Wells and Hopkins; it was intended to "assist a squad of top internationals in their Olympic preparation and general training over the next couple of years." The squad numbered a dozen men, and the occasional support for a few women, who had not been the R.W.A's responsibility when the sponsorship had been arranged, was clearly a retrospective idea.
- 6 At that rate, probably about a dozen red cards would have been necessary to disqualify a competitor at the highly-judged Battersea Park Championship.
- 7 It is, however, quite possible that those disqualified with the normal three cards might have collected a few more if they had not been pulled when they were.
- 8 Brian Adams subsequently claimed a British record for having been notified thirty-three days later!
- 9 In his acerbic manner, John Hedgethorpe, editor of *Race Walking Record*, in reply to a letter criticising the top walkers for missing the National 50k, said that they had been instructed not to take part. "The trouble," he wrote, "is when selection decisions are taken in January the selectors can only retain their credibility if chances of being proved wrong are avoided."
- 10 Among the women, Sandra Brown won the Long-Distance Championship from 1994 to 2006 (although it was not held in either 1996 or 1998). Her eleven successive titles included all possible formats of the championship, both 24 hours and 100 miles on both track and road.
- 11 The limits were: for Men 10 miles, 1:50:00; 20k 2:15:00; 35k 4:20:00; 50k 6:15:00, and for women 5k 35:00; 10k 1:12:00.
- 12 One might be forgiven for wondering what kind of "vertical" position other than "upright" the authors of Rule 171 in its various versions thought might occur, since "downwards" scarcely seems credible; it was a turgid piece of draftsmanship.
- 13 He drew a mechanical analogy; "In running the supporting leg acts like a spring, compressing when the weight of the body comes upon it and recoiling shortly afterwards." It might be thought that the analogy was pushed a little too far. The leg does not "recoil" like a spring but has to be straightened by muscular effort; unlike a compressed spring, a bent leg left to itself will do nothing. The analogy, however, did help the reader to visualise the situation.
- 14 A devastating earthquake in Mexico City less than a fortnight before the competition meant that that country had far more important things on its collective mind and it did not participate in the final. An interesting contrast with later years was that all four of the Chinese competitors in the 20k appeared as "dnf". Three were also walking the 50k (in which they finished as sixth team) and seem to have started the 20k only so that they could be counted in the overall classification, where they were thirteenth. Their women easily won the Eschborn Cup and the individual gold and silver with their other two competitors in sixth and eighth. It was a considerable rarity for a country's women to lead its men into success in international competition.
- 15 Or, rather it should have been, but between the trial and the Games changes were made so that the turning-point was not at half way and competitors' schedules were upset.
- 16 In his *Race Walking Record* report, Ian Brooks remarked that "the method of judging on the course left much to be desired. Television film....shows judges totally ignoring the leaders in the 20

kilometres while one judge is filmed actually obstructing Canto in order to caution the luckless Smith....it is time judges were accountable to tests or examinations and not as at present elected to such posts by 'connections'. As presented judging is a farcical lottery, the I.A.A.F. must sort out the problem with extreme urgency." [Canto, of Mexico, was fifth and the Australian Smith was disqualified after 10k.]

- 17 The standard at the front of the race was always variable; a few years later, the editor won.
- 18 For no apparent reason, "England", athletically speaking, included the Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey, although they were not even in the United Kingdom, never mind England.
- 19 For an insider's view of the evolution and demise of the B.A.F., the reader is referred to John Lister's book *Athletics in the United Kingdom*, details of which may be found in the Bibliography.

Chapter 10 A Level is Reached

- 1 The proposal was that the B.A.F. would be run by a Council containing, among others, representatives of the four Home Countries and of the various disciplines. Each discipline was to be run by a Commission, which would be in an undefined relationship with the bodies – if any – controlling that discipline in the four countries.
- 2 The cumbersome opacity of the proposed structure was reflected in the occasionally uncouth wording of the constitution intended to implement it.
- 3 It was subsequently pointed out, however, that there had been only three northern delegates present, one of whom, the Northern Area Secretary, confessed later that he had inadvertently voted against the motion, when his instructions had been to support it. Either way, the proposition would have fallen and Eddershaw suggested that the cause was disagreement among the southern delegates.
- 4 Smith later served as President from 1994 to 1995.
- 5 He *was* subsequently consulted and *did* accept the duty; over twenty years later he was still doing it.
- 6 This may have had something to do with the fact that the Editor, John Hedgethorpe, was a Chief Inspector in the Essex Police.
- 7 The Metropolitan Police Open, which also changed its route from time to time in a traffic-dodging exercise, was still in existence at the Force's Imber Court Sports Ground but had become that oddest of betwixt-and-betweens, an 11k.
- 8 It could not be known at the time, but Cassidy went on to become the Association's longest-serving General Secretary; as the R.W.A. entered its centenary year, he overtook L.W.Woodcock, who was in office from 1953 to 1968.
- 9 He had achieved the distinction of being the oldest British debutant international in any branch of athletics, when he was selected in 1978 for a match from Compiègne to Paris to celebrate the Armistice of 1918.
- 10 It was reckoned that some of the back markers in the walk may have been up to four laps short.
- 11 It is only fair to record that the organisers subsequently produced a long statement on the shortcomings of the organisation, from which it appeared that practically everything was someone else's fault; this was particularly true in the case of the theft of the start lists.
- 12 It was not just that he feared for his own job; he foresaw that race walking would be either totally ignored if it had no organisation to speak up for it or else edged out to the very extremities of athletics and then given a final push over the precipice. He also warned that abolition was irreversible.
- 13 The President's Annual Appeals had heretofore raised finance for the general support of the Association or were for something fairly vague, such as "development", and they had disappeared into the funds. It was a new departure to focus on a specific event or project.
- 14 The course was, naturally, different each year and only Hedgethorpe knew before the day what it was and how far it was.
- 15 There was provision for appealing against one's initial grading, but as the appeal was to the working

group it was generally considered not to be worth the effort.

- 16 China, Russia, Mexico, France, U.S.A. and Germany are larger; Italy, Spain and Ukraine have populations more than three-quarters of the United Kingdom's.

Chapter 11 The Century is Attained

- 1 It is worth quoting at length from Hedgethorpe's editorial of June, 1996:
"Sixty years ago, as he strode round the Berlin track on his way to the Olympic gold medal Harold Whitlock certainly seemed to be planting a straight knee on contact. And this at a time when the rule required only unbroken contact with the ground and so on. The implication is that Harold was walking in this fashion because it was the *proper* way to walk. One can hardly disagree with this because on this particular day Whitlock was the best walker in the world. When the rule did not *compel* him to have a straight knee on contact, he did it just the same – and so did all the other *proper* walkers, no doubt. If this is so, what is so revolutionary about this 'new' rule which *requires* walkers to do what *proper* walkers have always done anyway? Are we really so outraged at the wicked IAAF imposing their extremist measures upon us? Or are we being just a teeny bit resistant to change which isn't really a change at all, except that it has put into writing what Whitlock was doing sixty years ago anyway. What is really interesting is what has been going on between 1936 and the present time to make such a codification necessary. Lenient judging and walkers hoping that they are going too fast for the naked eye to detect their misdemeanours, that's what."
- 2 An undated but apparently early twentieth-century dictionary in the editor's possession has:
"CHIMERA: a monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon, vomiting flames [Mythology]: an incongruous and impossible conception of the fancy." It seems appropriate!
- 3 One difficulty, of course, was the problem of judging veterans' events with mixed age groups, where over- and under-sixties would have to be judged differently. The main counter-argument, however, was that British veterans would then be out of step with the world, as the general body of English walkers had previously been for many years. However unpalatable something may be, retrograde steps are always difficult.
- 4 Née Langford; she had recently married.
- 5 The English trials, the 50k in Stockport in June and the 20k and 10k in London, had all resulted in the selection of the first three finishers, although White had just beaten Hollier for third in the race; unable to nominate him themselves, the R.W.A. recommended White to the Scottish selectors.
- 6 Another suggestion, to have the U.K. championships at recognised international metric distances and the R.W.A. ones at imperial distances did not find much favour.
- 7 Possibly there were still some who thought that women should not do such things and that ignoring it would somehow make it go away. An earlier expression of the feeling was by one W.F.Sanderson in *The Sunday News* of 12th July, 1931, the day after Connie Mason had set her world mile record of 7:45.6; "I am not going to pretend that I like women's athletics. There are certain phases which could well be dispensed with, and which, in time, the organisers of the sport will realise are against progress. I am convinced that it is unwise for a woman to walk according to the rules as laid down for racing. Then there are jumping and throwing. These things are not suitable for a woman. I do not think there is much harm in the shorter track events; in fact, I can well believe that a girl training for these things will help herself. But extremes will not pay." His attitude of wanting to go backwards is reminiscent of Rye's railing against "the loathsomeness of roping and betting", as mentioned in Chapter 2.
- 8 The Borough of Royal Leamington Spa, to give it its full title.
- 9 As President of the I.O.C., Samaranch preferred to be addressed as "Your Excellency", putting him on an equal footing with his fellow presidents in 2000, Jacques Chirac, Jiang Zemin, Vladimir Putin and Bill Clinton, who may or may not have enjoyed the implied equality of status and esteem.

- 10 Harold Whitlock had been President in 1955-1956.
- 11 Strictly speaking, the walks were not in Manchester, but at Salford Quays, which is at least in *Greater* Manchester, one of the metropolitan counties cobbled together from disparate parts in the local government reorganisation of 1974 and subsequently virtually abolished in 1986. Strictly speaking, too, the Trials course was not the same as the Games course, although they had about 95% in common.
- 12 Heppner was very unfortunate. Despite being ranked second in the U.S.A., he had failed to finish in the 2000 Olympic trials, where the first three were automatically selected. In the 2004 Trials he finished fourth, again missing a Games place; this second failure was apparently too much disappointment to bear and he committed suicide.
- 13 OCOG=Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, the body responsible for the local organisation. The initial letter of the host city is usually placed before the four initials; e.g., SOCOG, the Sydney OCOG. Should the Games ever be held in Quebec or Omsk, problems of pronunciation would be added to all the other worries of the OCOG.
- 14 The I.O.C. had previously wished to remove walks from the Olympic Games in Moscow, when the U.S.S.R. was probably the leading walking power and it was trying to remove them from the Beijing Games, when China was very strong!
- 15 When the Olympic Games had been held in London in 1908, the Revenue Account – for *all* sports for the entire period of the Games – showed an income of £21,591/13/3, with a surplus of £6,377/15/9.
- 16 At the A.G.M. in December, it was agreed that the surplus from the National Championships would go to the same cause.
- 17 The I.A.A.F. Rules had previously been renumbered.
- 18 This was just as well from the “home” point of view, as Jo Jackson became the first non-Australian woman to win the event.

Chapter 12 Walking in the Midlands

- 1 As mentioned elsewhere, the Association seems not always to have been certain whether it had Areas or Districts.
- 2 He finished twentieth in 4:44:40.
- 3 The Editor in question was John Hedgethorpe.

Chapter 13 Walking in the North

- 1 This was not an attitude confined to the North, but was country-wide. It is odd that men who could organise themselves into trades unions *against* the interests of the gentry (with the prospect of finding themselves imprisoned for their efforts) could not gather together a few like-minded fellows to form a sports club. It is well attested that even in later years some would modify their religious beliefs – presumably not very strongly held – because the local Catholic church had a football team and the Anglicans did not. One wonders how deeply this philosophical flexibility may have run. How many, for example, turned a blind eye to their reservations about nonconformism in order to compete for Gateshead Congregational Harriers, who were organising walks just before the First World War?
- 2 The foundation was undoubtedly, at least in part, prompted by the desire to establish Championships in which such existing and successful provincial clubs as Lancashire, Nottingham, South Shields and Salford could compete. Having the R.W.A. Championships now open to all was one thing, but promoting events from which the long-established, more experienced and better organised Southern clubs were excluded gave more encouragement to Northern walkers.
- 3 Miss Green was not unique, of course. In 1922, a Miss Lilian Salkeld, a sixteen-year-old from

Manchester, walked from London to Brighton in twelve hours and twenty minutes, leaving Big Ben at 8:30 in the evening. Two “City girl clerks” also covered the course. Miss Maude Brown and Miss Christine Wright arrived at Brighton at 11:05 a.m., having started out after office hours. “No official time was taken” according to a newspaper report. The time was probably not very sharp, as they were wearing high-heeled shoes. The ladies were bound to do these things solo, of course; in 1920, Surrey Walking Club, according to a newspaper report “resolved to accept no entries under 21 years of age, as it is considered that walking to Brighton in an open competition is decidedly ‘a man’s job’.”

- 4 An interesting aside on changes in social behaviour is that in the 1923 photograph on page 137 most men are wearing hats, while thirty years later there is scarcely a covered head in sight.
- 5 Carol Tyson was described by journalists, probably with admiring intent, but actually with condescending effect, as “a red-haired moppet from Keswick” and “our little Cumberland redhead”; the impression is unfortunate, but walkers have been called worse.
- 6 During the two world wars, when activity was largely suspended, the last pre-war Presidents continued in office until, with the return of peace, others could be elected and the Association could return to normal.

Chapter 14 Walking in the South

- 1 We remark elsewhere on the R.W.A.’s occasional vagueness of nomenclature and, in particular, on its inability to decide between “districts” and “areas”.
- 2 Despite having many enthusiastic walkers among their numbers, the police, as authorities, were none too keen on road races in general. In 1922, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police had issued a notice in stately and discouraging terms; “In consequence of the number of athletic and other competitions on the highway, the Commissioner of Police desires to point out to promoters and competitors that the use of the highway for other purposes than bona-fide travelling has no legal sanction. It is the duty of the police to ensure that the primary object of the highway, i.e., availability for travellers, is maintained. Although in no way anxious to interfere unnecessarily with legitimate sport, the Commissioner wishes to draw attention to the increasing congestion of our streets, which renders it more and more difficult to prevent interference with legitimate traffic if athletic or other competitions take place on the highway, and he feels bound to give notice that in the event of any considerable nuisance or obstruction being caused or of any disorder arising from events of this description, the promoters and persons taking part are liable to prosecution by indictment or by summary procedure. Moreover, with the present need for economy in every direction, the Commissioner would not feel justified in providing extra police, or any other facilities, to assist in carrying out events of the nature referred to.” One wonders whether the Commissioner had heard of the “Case of Uxbridge High Street”, referred to in Chapter 30.

Chapter 15 Walking in Wales

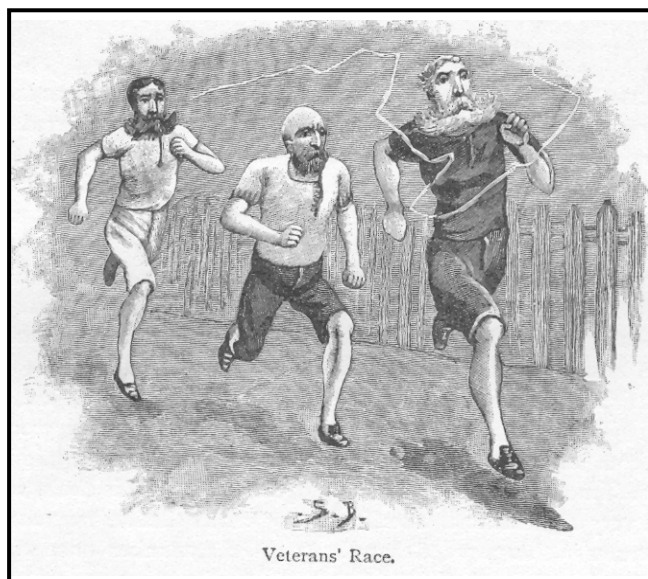
- 1 One of that newspaper’s certificates appears in *Images of Walking*.
- 2 In the R.W.A.’s second century, Johanna Jackson also became Commonwealth Champion.
- 3 Martin Bell was actually a Scot; for his achievements for his own country see Chapter 35.

Chapter 16 Walking in The Isle of Man

- 1 See Chapter 29.
- 2 It was not unknown. for a loser in a “wobble” and sometimes even the winner – to end up in hospital, sometimes never to re-emerge. Much the same thing happened in the twentieth century “dance marathons”, where the last couple standing won the prize.

Chapter 18 Veterans' Walking

- 1 The illustration, which was poor in the original, is taken from *Health & Strength* of 14th October, 1911. The accompanying text includes the following: "THE NESTOR OF RACE WALKERS: I really do think that Mr. Leonard Norwood is the most wonderful veteran athlete in the land. He is 69 years of age, and yet I don't believe there ever is a grand walking race anywhere in England in which he does not take part.....perhaps his most wonderful achievement of all was in the 24 hours' walk promoted by the Blackheath Harriers in September, 1909. I never shall forget how bravely he stuck it then, covering 100 miles in 23 hours 53 minutes. Now, opinions may differ as to whether it is wise for one so old as he to take part in such strenuous athletics; the marvellous thing is that there should be any old man capable of doing it.....He gave me (his secret) himself. 'It's because of my temperate habits,' he said, 'my life in the open air, and my constant exercise.'" [In Greek legend, Nestor, king of Pylos, was the oldest, most experienced and wisest of the Greek heroes at the siege of Troy.]
- 2 As with many subjects, Shearman had something to say about elderly athletes: "Having dealt with the boys, we will end our criticism of athletic meetings with the veterans. Some clubs give races to 'veterans' – a 'veteran' in the athletic sense being usually a man over thirty-five years old. We do not see that there is anything wrong in giving those who are '*rude donati*' an opportunity of coming out again to exhibit themselves to the rising generation of runners, but in practice the veterans' race is usually rather an absurd sight than otherwise. At one of these competitions, which is an annual affair, an old gentleman, who must by this time have passed his allotted span of three score years and ten, comes out regularly to exhibit himself, many others who are well over fifty appear in the race, while a good many younger men compete whose bodies from disuse have so far thickened about the middle as to render their movements anything but graceful! On the whole, we think that the veteran who is too slow to take part in the early races 'lags superfluous on the stage' of athletic sports." [N.B.: *rude donati*: "given their wooden swords", a reference to a ceremony marking a gladiator's retirement from "competition"; lawyers never miss an opportunity to drag in a Latin tag!] To rub it in, Shearman provides an illustration of a Veterans' Race.



Nowadays, of course, most of the old ones have never received their wooden swords, but have

simply carried on when they entered their dotage – as Shearman would have regarded it – at thirty-five; he was, incidentally, *thirty* when he wrote the above.

- 3 “Instant death” was also known as “One shout and you’re out,” a reference to the early provision that a judge could disqualify a walker single-handedly, as distinct from the modern necessity for three judges to agree.
- 4 For a description of Categories A and B, see Chapter 10 and for a proposed earlier version, see Chapter 9.
- 5 The international body was founded as the World Association of Veteran Athletes in 1977. An attempt at its Assembly in Gateshead in 1999 to change *Veterans* to *Masters* was narrowly defeated but the Assembly in Brisbane in 2001 agreed on a name alteration.

Chapter 19 Women’s Walking

- 1 The Women’s World Games were instituted by the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale because the I.A.A.F. and I.O.C. had declined to provide for women’s events in the 1922 Olympic Games. The Games were abandoned after 1934, when the men’s organisations grudgingly acknowledged the existence of women. See Appendix XLIV.
- 2 Connie Mason’s winning time of 7:45.6 in 1931 was the first occasion on which a woman had walked inside eight minutes. It took until 1954 for Beryl Randle to improve on that time. Miss Mason had some misfortune in her “not-quite” world record times. On the 13th June, 1931, her 7:53.8 could not be ratified because there were only two timekeepers, instead of the required three and one week later her spectacular 7:29 proved to be due to the track’s being a little over eighteen yards short of the quarter-mile. It appeared that the surveyor who had measured the track, being ignorant of the requirements, had done so along its centre line, instead of on the inside. On the 17th July, the track was accurate and the timekeepers were present in sufficient numbers for her record to stand. Astonishingly, just a year previously, Lucy Howes’ record time of 8:12.4 was not claimed because the track had not been measured at all.
- 3 Whatever her actual forename, she was always known as *Nelson*. She ranks with Marea Hartman, referred to elsewhere in this volume, as a dominant and authoritative character, not to be crossed, save at ones peril.
- 4 Something similar to Connie Mason’s misfortune befell Beryl Randle in 1954 when she broke the National and All-comers’ 1600m records twice and would have done so a third time had not the timekeeper, in a handicap race, stopped his watch on the first finisher before Randle came in second.

Chapter 20 Schools’ Walking

- 1 *Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, H.M.S.O., 1904*
- 2 The following references will further illuminate the matter of this chapter:
P.C.McIntosh *Physical Education in England since 1800* 1952
D.Young *The History of the English Schools’ Athletic Association, 1925-1995*
J.Hopkins *Race Walking* 1976
- 3 A full list of winners of English Schools’ Athletic Association Race Walking titles appears in Appendices XLII (Boys) and XLIII (Girls).

Chapter 21 Lasting the Distance: the Centurions

- 1 Since this Chapter was written, there have been several more qualifying events, at both 100 miles and 24 hours, on both the track and road; the number of new Centurions arising from each race is generally of the order of half-a-dozen.
- 2 The Centurions generally refer to each other by use of their numbers on the Roll of Members.

- 3 Although selected for the 10 miles at the 1908 Games in London, Hammond did not walk.
- 4 O'Reilly was twentieth in the 50k in Rome.
- 5 The Motto of the Centurions, this appears to be an adaptation – or misquotation – from *Song to David* by Christopher Smart (1722-1771): “....And now the matchless deed’s achiev’d, determined, dared and done.”

Chapter 22 Coaching

- 1 Cummings’s book is noted in the Bibliography and looked at in Chapter 29.

Chapter 23 Race Walking Record 1: The War Baby

- 1 Looking back ten years later, McSweeney recalled that the first edition had been distributed at the Enfield 7, the copies being folded and stapled with a small office machine on the top of a tram. “I think that some at least (of the other passengers) thought we were subversive agents connected with an underground press.”
- 2 For example, in February, 1942: “REMORSE? Judges report that two ‘pulled’ competitors in the recent Met. Police Open actually apologized for breaking contact. This is a new development of war-time politeness, and we may find walkers dropping out of their own accord when not complying with the definition – kind of walkers’ ‘hari-kiri’.”
- 3 During the War – and for some time after – clothing was rationed and could be obtained only if the purchaser had the appropriate number of Clothing Coupons, issued by Government order; the amount mentioned was about one-twelfth of the annual allowance for *all* clothing.
- 4 Another example of McSweeney’s sense of humour; his subscriber numbers really *were* the same.

Chapter 24 Race Walking Record 2: The Established Magazine

- 1 See Chapter 30.
- 2 Won by R.Goodall of Woodford Green in 86:11. Some things have improved slightly; S.Davis’s winning time in 2007 was 79:50, but Goodall would still have been second with four and a half minutes to spare!
- 3 It is, of course, possible that old stocks of pre-printed covers were being used. Whatever the reason, it seems to have given rise to the generally accepted view that Swan remained Editor until 1953, when, in fact, Issue no.115 of September, 1951 had been the last he produced.
- 4 The aggregate times for the Great Yarmouth event given in *Record* show Young winning by 15:22:35 to 15:23:01, but addition of the four stage times shows a margin of 15:22:35 to 15:23:37; it was close, in any case! Sandra Brown’s figures in *Unbroken Contact* show the same discrepancy.
- 5 He was actually third in the 10000m and tenth in the 3000m in Antwerp, 1920.
- 6 Won by Miss Ada Hwang in 10:10:30, a pace of about 24:30:00 for the hundred miles.

Chapter 25 Race Walking Record 3: Life after McSweeney

- 1 Highgate Harriers obtained the permission of the London County Council to install a memorial bench at Parliament Hill Fields track; it was still there over forty years later.
- 2 The “stars” sometimes produced some humour; Bryan Hawkins, Star No.12, recalled – rather detachedly in the third person – “During a 15km road race in Stockholm in 1955 a judge rode beside every competitor on a push bike. Bryan’s judge never stopped talking until at last he told him to ‘shut up’. The judge then produced a warning flag, waved it and fell off his bike.”
- 3 In 1964, Bomber Command alone had 52 finishers in its Championships.
- 4 The Areas and many counties continued with the 10 miles championship and, in a somewhat

- haphazard way, the start of the Association's second century was marked by its reintroduction nationally in 2008 with more or less its old popularity.
- 5 The Association dares to hope that the present volume will sell more rapidly.
 - 6 The feature on Tolley contained references to "so-called coaches", and his denial that there is any push through the feet in walking led to a small flurry of correspondence from a couple of them. About 90% of the flurries of opinion in the Association's history have been small, in length of existence, significance of the subject or eventual effect; this one followed the pattern.
 - 7 "We just haven't got one judge who really understands what walking is all about", "About time he was asked to resign from Race Walking at once", "Big-headed style and wide-mouthed complaints", "Many bees in his enlarged bonnet" were some of the turns of phrase that decorated *Record's* pages.
 - 8 A glance at the Appendices will show that the Women's Championship distances were not always entirely rational.
 - 9 He was also, incidentally, the introducer for his Rules, Records & Standards Subcommittee of the welcome principle of not having a meeting unless there were some real purpose.
 - 10 The standard was 51 minutes for the Belgrave, which was conspicuously hillier than the rest.
 - 11 Whitlock's report is remarkable for two main reasons;
 - (i) the course contained cobbles, dirt paths, woodland tracks complete with tree roots, ditches, parkland and furrows as well as tarmac roads;
 - (ii) in marked contrast to the situation nowadays, Whitlock had *never* competed abroad; of his team-mates, Joe Hopkins was in the same position and Lloyd Johnson had done a single 22k in Paris.
 - 12 Chapter 5 indicates that the problem existed even as early as 1913, when dates changed rapidly and races arose and were cancelled before the ink was dry on the fixture list.
 - 13 The campaign for equality took some time to become successful, but was helped by the insistence of some "ladies" on taking part in the longer races, particularly those of the Essex League, and beating several of the men. The final blow may have been struck in a track race at Battersea Park where the officials declined to start a "mixed" race; largely at the instigation of Roger Mills, the men declared that unless the women were allowed to race, there would be no event at all; after that, it was impossible to maintain the silliness.

Chapter 26 Race Walking Record 4: Colour and Conflict

- 1 He might well have been, at £3.50 p.a. (£4.00 overseas) with a club advertisement charge of £2.00 per half page.
- 2 A problem with the new system was that an item referred to one of the subcommittees was likely to be referred to the Areas for their views, then, when they had commented (probably after reference to *their* sub-committees), reported upon to General Committee and referred back for reconsideration of detailed objections. It all took a long time and some matters simply evaporated as they went round the system. The national subcommittees, in general, lacked delegated authority to take definitive action, an omission that was subsequently corrected, not by rule changes, which would have taken just as long, but by General Committee directive..
- 3

HAWKEYE THE DEMON JUDGE

Here's a tale of a callous judge
Whose vicious calls you couldn't budge.
A demon devil in disguise
Equipped it seemed with x-ray eyes.

A rigid follower of the law
Which says, "One foot upon the floor
At all times and with straightened limb",
Was the only way you'd get by him.

Walkers feared his evil gaze,
Saw very well on misty days,
Once told a fellow to depart
Who hadn't lined up at the start.

Noted 'cause he sometimes might
Hide himself just out of sight,
In cars and ditches, bushes too
To gain an undetected view.

Many stories have been told
Of Hawkeye's deeds in days of old,
The best of which you'll all agree
Was when he hid inside a tree.

A walker long time in the game
Queried how he got his name.
Didn't you know, came grunted shout
Once Hawkeye pulled the whole field out.

Although there wasn't much to view
'Cause the whole field constituted two
Just four feet pounding out the pace
But Hawkeye quickly stopped that race.

So there's a moral to this ode
Be careful of your walking mode.
Heed this rhyme and there's no doubt
The demon judge won't pull you out.

Reg Eade

It was not, perhaps, great literature but, bearing in mind that the Poet Laureate at the time was John Betjeman, it was surely worthy of publication.

- 4 This did not actually appear until Tim Watt took over in 2000.
- 5 In the circumstances, Smith's reply to the editorial comments was, for a fairly outspoken character, remarkably restrained.
- 6 It had lasted for one issue fewer than Hedgethorpe's first spell and was "beaten" only by the tenures of Ken Best and Gerald Swan.
- 7 See p.93 for an extreme example of such a death wish.
- 8 The tables must have provoked the same feeling of superiority in many readers as they did in the present writer: "If only I'd been Albanian when I set my 50k p.b. at Basildon...." The domestic equivalent among veterans is "I'm not too slow, I'm just not old enough."
- 9 See p.92.
- 10 The results in question were about this size!
- 11 The editor of this volume, while walking the London Marathon, was accused by another participant of cheating, because it was supposed to be a run. Slowing for long enough to explain that it was a foot race, the "cheat" then moved on.
- 12 Mary Whitehouse was the founder of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association and made it her business to complain continually about salaciousness in the broadcast media. When Anne von Bismarck won a World Veterans' gold medal in Tokyo a couple of years later, there was a similar front cover picture, but the traditional Japanese dress was altogether more modest, not to say all-encompassing.
- 13 See Chapter 22 for a note on their respective rôles.
- 14 It is extraordinary, in retrospect, to complain about over-large fields. Would that it were so still!
- 15 The layout later became the most flexible yet seen in *Record's* history, when a basic two-column, fully justified design had occasional display panels when the content warranted it. The wide availability of computer systems and cheap colour printing had led to the best visual impact in the magazine's history. Most of this book is fully justified, the left and right ends of the lines being in alignment; to clarify the change in format of *Record*, this Note alone is left justified.
- 16 The figures are reproduced in Chapter 11.
- 17 The figures appear smaller than those gathered by Watt; it must be remembered, however, that they refer only to events holding R.W.A. Permits. Various other events, which Watt will have included, such as schools events, national and area championships, open track and field meetings and Veterans' track and field leagues cannot be counted in this way, but are clearly significant. In 2011,

for example, strictly beyond the scope of this volume, the Eastern Veterans' League had 283 performances.

- 18 See Chapter 29, which discusses the principal contributions to the literature, and the Bibliography.
- 19 Those who complain about “unfriendly” courses might note Viljoen’s descriptions of the conditions under which she won her medal “...in a car park! A 60m straight, then a sharp left turn, 30m straight with a sharp right turn, a 40m straight with a sharp right again, 20m uphill – 14 times....”
- 20 The International Olympic Committee actually decided to drop baseball and softball; it was within the power of the *Executive* to drop individual events within sports, such as the Walks, but this was overcome by sheer weight of opinion and international solidarity.
- 21 It is an unusual concept for a “secretive society” to project itself as anything, but perhaps the Editor had a deadline to meet.

Chapter 27 100 Years of Performance Development

- 1 Statisticians may wish to note that the sample size was 67 (44 male and 23 female) and that $R^2=0.996$. The R^2 figure, in everyday terms, can be taken as showing how much of the variation in the VO_2 figure is “explained” by the equation. (Editor’s note)
- 2 Up to 2013, this prediction, made in 2007, appears justified. Men’s world records in 2013 were, at 20k 1:17:16 by Vladimir Kanaykin (2007) and, at 50k 3:34:14 by Denis Nizhegorodov; Women’s 20k record was 1:25:02 by Yelena Lashmanova (2012). All the walkers named are Russian. (Editor’s note)
- 3 The following references provide further background and information:
Coyle, E.F. (1999) “Physiological determinants of endurance exercise performance”, *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, 2: 3, 181-189.
Drake, A.P., Cox, V., Godfrey, R., Brooks, S. (2003) “Physiological variables related to 20 km race walk performance” *Journal of Sports Sciences* 21: 269-270
Reiss, M., Ernest, O., Gohlitz, D. (1993) “analysis of the 1989-1992 Olympic cycle with conclusions for coaching distance running and walking events” *New Studies in Athletics* 8: 4, 7-18

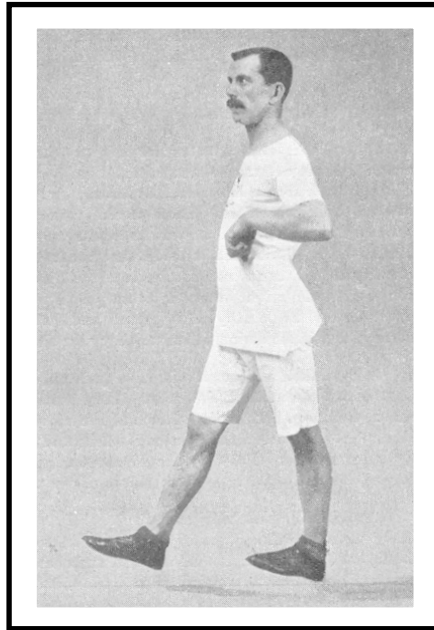
Chapter 28 How the R.W.A. Works

- 1 See Chapter 3.
- 2 Shortly after the centenary, the Judges and Officials and Rules, Records and Standards Subcommittees were merged.
- 3 For those of a mathematical turn, if the number of races available, n , is even, the number to score is $(n/2)+1$; if n is odd, it is $(n+1)/2$. Thus, if there are ten races in the season, six score and if there are nine, five score.
- 4 See also Chapter 20.
- 5 At the time of publication of this volume, the U.R.L. of the Association’s web site is: <http://www.RaceWalkingAssociation.org.uk>

Chapter 29 The Literature of Race Walking

- 1 See the Bibliography for details of all books mentioned in this chapter.
- 2 Nowadays, sporting achievements tend to be measured in hundredths or thousandths of a second, but, as Thom shows, accuracy is not new; describing the performance of Mr. Joseph Edge of Macclesfield in walking one hundred and seventy-two miles in forty-nine hours and twenty minutes, he observes that “He walked at the rate of three miles, three furlongs, thirty-five perches and 11-74ths feet per hour.” In modern measure, one seventy-fourth of a foot (a little less than one-sixth of an inch) is about four millimetres!

- 3 Peter Radford's book is in a different class; while being more scholarly than many of those dealing with the Captain, it is also very readable.
- 4 In his introduction to Shearman's book, Richard Webster, later Lord Alverstone – see Note 15 to Chapter 30 for a remark on this gentleman – echoes these reservations: “....and while on the subject of walking, I wish to call particular attention to the extraordinary feats of long-distance walking which have been performed in late years, by which I mean distances of 40 and 50 miles and upwards, which are, in my opinion, of far greater value than the so-called performances of walking eight or more miles in the hour by a mode of progression so nearly resembling a shamle or trot as to defy the most watchful of judges.”
- 5 Athletes under such a régime may have reckoned themselves fortunate; it was said of the eighteenth century Welsh distance runner Guto Nythbrân that he kept his muscles supple by sleeping on horse manure.
- 6 Wilkinson, like many another author, tried to cover everything, his practical advice sometimes being decorated with strange additional remarks: “The two commonest ailments which a walker suffers from are shin-soreness and stitch. The former is often felt by ordinary walkers along a road or street; and in this case is very frequently caused by wearing heavy boots, a great drag on the shin bones; or by wove drawers which fit tight to the leg and thereby heat the muscles.” So far, so good, but he adds a footnote: “This description of drawers is the most unhealthy that can be worn for the above reason; besides being most dangerous in case of the wearer falling into the water, which collects in them all down the legs; and, being unable to escape at the bottom, renders swimming very difficult.” He also advises that “a man cannot start too fast in a walking race,” but should “get off at his very utmost speed, thereby getting through the ‘aches and pains’ stage the sooner, after which he blows freely, goes with more ease to himself; and, since the action then becomes mechanical, can generally keep on at the same rate till nature is exhausted” which, one fears, may come all too soon!
- 7 “Stonehenge” would have been disappointed by the Act introduced by Sir John Astley making it an offence to feed horses on arsenic and antimony to improve their appearance but, perhaps, cheered by the fact that it did not apply to human athletes. Athletes were more careful of their muscles than of their digestions. Wilkinson quotes Westhall's recipe for an embrocation consisting of a quarter of a pint each of spirits of wine (i.e., alcohol), white vinegar and spirits of turpentine, warmed and mixed with a well beaten new-laid egg, a not unreasonable concoction.
- 8 Verification of “records” was always difficult. Shearman, writing of the high jump, mentions a novel way of doing it; “In 1880 P.Davin is reported to have beaten Brooks' record by clearing 6'2¾" at his native place at Carrick-on-Suir, and in proof of the record we believe that the certificates of two local justices of the peace as to the correctness of the measurement were lodged with *The Field*.” “Stonehenge”, reporting on the same occasion, lists eight “gentlemen” as having signed a letter of confirmation of the achievement, among them the Assistant County Surveyor. The town is in Co.Tipperary, but the surrounding region also includes areas in Co. Waterford and Co. Kilkenny; it is not known which of the three provided the signatory. Either way, it seems that where records were concerned it was better to be safe than sorry, even if the signatories were *gentlemen* rather than *experts*.
- 9 This is indeed a bizarre notion and one is bound to wonder where it came from. However, the posed picture of Larner in this chapter shows just such a stance, as does that of Jack Butler in the chapter on *The Pioneers of Modernism*, although Bill Sturgess on the same page is “the right way round”. In the same chapter, however, both Butler and Larner are seen *racing* in the normal way. Larner's book, from which the posed photograph comes, has “Fair Walking” illustrated in three different views, two with normal limb co-ordination, while “Unfair Walking with Straight Legs: Jumping from the heels with knees straight,” reproduced overleaf, is so utterly bizarre that it is impossible to say one way or the other which way round he is. Is it any wonder that the double Olympic Champion looks surprised?



In an inspection of hundreds of photographs and drawings of the time, the Editor has failed to find a single example of anyone racing in the manner described by Neil. Why such distinguished walkers should have posed so – rather as though an orthodox boxer had adopted a southpaw stance – and why at least one seemingly fairly sensible author should even have thought it possible to compete like that remains a mystery. It may well be that Lang Neil himself had doubts about his statement, because the illustration on the front cover of *Walking* (above, right) shows an “athletic walker” with perfectly normal co-ordination of his limbs.

- 10 His name was originally Hall; it is not apparent why he changed it.
- 11 Astley had an interesting life and would surely have fitted in well in Regency days. He was a very succesful sprinter, was wounded in the Crimea, got through his own fortune and his wife’s, largely because his enthusiasm for horseracing was greater than his judgement, and promoted not only the six-day walks (or runs) but the even more outlandish six-day swim; in 1879, Capt. Webb, who had just become the first man to swim the Channel, did 74 miles in 84 actual hours of swimming (16 hours a day) at Lambeth Baths and the following year floated for 60 hours in the Westminster Aquarium. Astley describes him as having been a “judge” at the Weston–O’Leary match. He was not listed by the *Illustrated London News* among those who could not agree on the rules at that event, but nomenclature at the time was vague – what are now *judges* were then often *referees* and vice versa – so that the omission is no negation of Astley’s remark.
- 12 Webster’s *Lessons in Athletics* was published (and “presented”, presumably meaning “distributed free of charge”) by the manufacturers of Ovaltine and at intervals throughout the book people as diverse as Bob Pearce, a famous sculler, Ted Jackson, trainer of Wembley Lions Ice Hockey team, Jack Milne, the World Speedway Champion, the Swiss Caucasus Expedition of 1934 and Miss Patricia Bourne, “22-year-old English girl lion-tamer”, all attest to the drink’s excellent properties. This is a contrast with Neil, in his *Walking*. He advocates the consumption of strong cups of Oxo (with fresh egg yolks beaten in) during races; it may not be a coincidence that the back cover of the book carries endorsements of the product by Edgar F.Broad, winner of the recent Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton, and W.J.Sturgess, the amateur record holder.
- 13 Readers of the book may be surprised to learn that the second man home in the *Sheffield Star* walk in 1956 was twenty-four-year-old miner Dennis Skinner, subsequently M.P. for Bolsover and a

perpetual scourge of his own and the other side's benches alike; he was just over three minutes away from winning.

Chapter 30 Characters, Eccentrics and Rum Goings-on

- 1 McNab *et al.* describe this appalling doggerel as “possibly written by Wilson himself”; unlike his heroic pedestrianism, it reflects little credit on the man.
- 2 It was not only in the early nineteenth century that such skullduggery took place; a century later, there were allegations that J.R.Barnes Moss, who was fancied to do well, was “poisoned” in the 1908 twenty-four hour race, although nothing was proved. Nowadays, of course, drugs are more likely to be self-administered to *improve* performance.
- 3 Another version of the affair has it that the problem arose because Gent's backers wanted to withdraw; either way, the spectators were upset at having neither the race nor a refund of their entrance money and expressed their displeasure rather pointedly. So alarming a prospect did the crowd present on its way home that the unfortunate West Brompton stationmaster suffered a heart attack and died.
- 4 Littlewood, as well as holding all the professional walking records from 143 to 531 miles, had set the professional running times from 49 miles (6:0:0) to 84 miles (11:09:50); this remarkable man's career is described in Marshall's *King of the Peds*.
- 5 In an Appendix to Shearman's book.
- 6 See the Bibliography for details.
- 7 Including, he is ashamed to admit, the Editor.
- 8 See Appendix XLVI.
- 9 Or “Act of God” and, therefore, beyond the reach of insurance and reasonable criticism.
- 10 Jack Crump, who was himself a walking judge, remarks with reference to the 1920s that “in those days walking judges had not reached the exceptionally high standards of current times and strict impartiality was not particularly associated with certain judges”; he was writing shortly before his death in 1966.
- 11 There was an interesting example in the U.S.A. in 1889 of the opposite kind of thing committed in all innocence, when the Englishman Sid Thomas was tiring towards the end of a five-mile running race. His friends dashed forward to catch him as he collapsed, but their concern overcame their judgement and they caught him before he had finished, thus robbing him of second place or, indeed, of any place at all.
- 12 Some of the photographs of the race show a few attendants wearing wing collars; all of them are wearing hats. Mr.Pringle did not quite have the moral fibre to go through with it; he removed his collar, tie and hat on the way.
- 13 For the avoidance of doubt, the Editor must assure his readers that he has not overlooked a comma; it really was “Bovril chocolate”.
- 14 Not, however, George Joseph Smith, the “Brides in the Bath” murderer, Shearman's most famous client, who was less fortunate and was hanged.
- 15 In an interesting twist, Fowler Dixon, had he actually been charged instead of Crippen, would have found that the case was heard by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Alverstone – formerly Richard Webster – who had preceded Shearman as President of the A.A.A. The photograph of Crippen shown overleaf, which was taken, presumably illicitly and under difficult conditions at his trial, which may excuse the quality, does show some degree of resemblance.



Chapter 31 The Pioneers of Modernism

- 1 We speak here of *respectable* attempts and may, like Innes, take with a fair-sized pinch of salt the statements by Thom in *Pedestrianism* that Captain Thomson of the 74th Regiment walked twenty-one miles in four and a half minutes inside three hours on the 5th May, 1808 and that on the 22nd February, 1812, one James Watson, a glazier, walked from Whitechapel Church to Romford and back (thirty-three miles) in two hours and fifty-six minutes to win a wager of £10, a modest enough return for such a phenomenal performance. Lest it be supposed that Thom simply swallowed anything he might hear about walking, it may be pointed out that he seems to have had the same attitude to running performances. Thus, he quotes Curley, “the Brighton Shepherd”, and Grinley, a boot-closer, as having run a hundred and twenty yards in “twelve seconds and a half” in 1805 and twelve seconds in 1806, while Cooke, a soldier, did two hundred yards in twenty seconds in 1808 and Skewball, “the famous Lancashire shepherd” performed one hundred and forty yards in twelve seconds that same year. It does not need much timing error at the start and finish, together with a little waywardness of course measurement, to obtain such surprising standards in sprints (especially downhill), but we are reminded of the remarks of Innes on the question of road distances, quoted in Chapter 30, when Thom tells us that John Todd, “a Scotchman”, ran one mile on the Uxbridge Road, starting at Hyde Park Corner, in four minutes and ten seconds in 1803!
- 2 No-one seems to have raised serious doubts about Topley’s *first* performance of The Feat, even though it finished in the dark, perhaps because Westhall himself was the referee.
- 3 On the way, Littlewood did 215 miles in 2 days, 308 in 3, 396 in 4 and 470 in 5; compare this with Foster Powell’s York performances and see also Note 7, below.
- 4 It is as well for the modern reader to bear in mind that in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth “the road” meant the *open* road, races frequently being from one town to another or, indeed, there and back again. If judges were in short supply, the walkers might well be on their own for miles at a time; see Innes’ remarks in Chapter 3.
- 5 He was a “victim of the judges” in the first Manchester to Blackpool; F.W. Breakell, who was an official on that occasion, recalled that “...the winner, J.Butler, tired out the amateur champion, W.J.Sturgess. Poor Sturgess set up a waddling kind of running gait, and met with disqualification.”
- 6 See the comments in Note 9 to Chapter 29.
- 7 He also did London to York (200 miles) in 37 hours (5.4 m.p.h.), another interesting comparison with Foster Powell.
- 8 Evidently, when it suited him, Cummings co-operated with horses rather than raced against them.

- 9 Such tracks are not extinct. Palmer Park, Reading, for example has the athletic track surrounded by a 3.5 laps to the mile cycle track. When the straight of the six-lane athletic track was extended to eight lanes, the extra two had to be put on the *inside*. The Editor can testify to the peculiar experience of coming into the home straight on the kerb and suddenly finding oneself in lane 3.
- 10 Butler's time is equivalent to about 48:30 for 10000m – not an excessively fast time nowadays but sprightly enough for its era; Webb's mark is equivalent to 45:49. The eventual Championship Best Performance was by Steve Barry with 40:54.7 in 1983.

Chapter 32 International Medal Winners

- 1 See his recollections in Chapter 3.
- 2 A very formal studio photograph of Goodwin appears in Part IV.
- 3 There had been no walk in the 1928 Games, but pressure led by British walkers and officials had resulted in the staging of a 50k four years later; this was the first Olympic *road* walk.
- 4 Such was what Megnin called the “fiasco” that in the 10000m walk, in which there were no British walkers, Blackmore took complete control, some recent record breakers being disqualified and the others being “compelled to walk in a style that we in England would find possible to match.”
- 5 The 1960 2 miles is reckoned to be one of the best walking races seen, as Vickers and Matthews battled for most of the distance, Vickers winning in a new record time of 13:02.4. Unfortunately for him, the R.W.A. did not introduce its own 20k championship until 1965; no doubt he would have shone in that, given the chance.
- 6 Still, he was not entirely the star of the day – or, rather, the weekend – because Hew Neilson occupied the time in setting eighteen records of his own.
- 7 See Chapter 30.
- 8 Bearing in mind that he also won the Hastings to Brighton and the National 50k in that year, his winning distances totalled over 210 miles; there were also, naturally, many shorter races.
- 9 Williams won the A.A.A. 7 miles in 1962.
- 10 He won 3 at 50k, 6 at 20 miles, 6 at 20k, 4 at 10 miles, 3 at 7 miles track, 1 at 10000m track, 1 at 2 miles track and 3 at 3000m track, including, in 1968, all four R.W.A. titles and the A.A.A. 7 miles.
- 11 20k P.Fullager, R.Wallwork and M.Tolley: 50k D.Thompson, R.Middleton and C.Fogg
- 12 20k P.Fullager, J.Webb and R.Wallwork: 50k D.Thompson R.Middleton and S.Lightman (Lightman was National 50k champion the same year.)

Chapter 33 Trojans of the Road

- 1 See Chapter 21.
- 2 This is rather puzzling. It is indeed about 27 miles between the two towns. The round trip of 54 miles could hardly have been done in seven hours (at nearly 8 m.p.h.), but seven hours for one way (at just over 3.75 m.p.h.) scarcely seems noteworthy; the performance remains enigmatic.
- 3 Marples (see the Bibliography) says that the wager was £10, which barely appears worthwhile. The figure of 100 guineas is agreed by Egan.
- 4 Some insight into what Foster Powell (and his backers) meant by “walking” is given by the report of the *Annual Register* of 1787 that he came “running into Canterbury amidst thousands of spectators”.
- 5 Geoffrey Chaucer, of course, had thought it worthwhile to send his tale-telling pilgrims to Canterbury in the fourteenth century, but they made the journey more gently and it took Chaucer twenty-seven years to write up his “report”.
- 6 His actual time was 16 days, 23 hours and 8 minutes; the previous year he had done a longer but markedly slower walk of 1134 miles in 21 days on the same road.
- 7 He overdid the brandy.
- 8 For an extract from Thom's description of the walk, see Chapter 29.

- 9 Barclay had similarly chosen to reject Thomas Standen's "1000 in 1000" in 1811; he was somewhat jealous of his own achievements!
- 10 *The Illustrated London News*, 14th April, 1877.
- 11 An odd remark, given that the judges were apparently working to different definitions and a walker could have departed from one definition without infringing the other.
- 12 O'Leary certainly won in Chicago, but seems not to have believed that it was by 50 miles.
- 13 *The Illustrated London News*, 14th April, 1877.
- 14 Reference is also made to this in our chapter on *The Literature of Race Walking*, and Marshall's *King of the Peds* is the definitive word on the subject.
- 15 Randle's prize of £1,000, a considerable amount in those days – but still a far cry from modern purses, when even pacemakers receive thousands (and are frequently ignored by the rest of the field, anyway) – cost her her amateur status. It also half cost her a trophy. She had gained the Midland Area Best Performance Cup for her Midland and National victories; after a great deal of haggling at the Midland meeting, it was agreed that her name could be engraved on the cup but that she could not physically have it for the next twelve months, a singularly mean decision.

Chapter 34 Officers and Officials

- 1 See Chapter 2 for a flavor of Rye's ranting.
- 2 In earlier days, "breasting the tape" was more or less literal, except that the "tape" was usually a strand of worsted, which was cheap, visible, easily distorted on contact and readily broken. Even today, long after the use of worsted was dropped, many of the posts fitted to mark the finish line at athletic tracks have a rebate to take the thread.
- 3 At the Editor's primary school, for example, in informal games of playground cricket, it was a rule that a ball hit into the caretaker's garden counted as six runs but the batsman was out *and* had to go and ask for it back.
- 4 As well as all having been President, three of the gentlemen illustrated had held other offices:
A.A.Harley, President, 1951-52, Treasurer, 1946-69
W.J.Harris, President, 1965-66, Championship Secretary, 1947-49
J.Hackwood, President, 1948-49
S.C.Roberts, President, 1963-64
W.Batson, O.B.E., Q.P.M., President, 1949-50
S.Pryor, President, 1967-70
E.H.Neville, President, 1920-21
H.H.Whitlock, M.B.E., President 1955-56, General Secretary, 1948-53
W.Bell, President, 1962-63

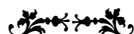
Chapter 35 A Walking Miscellany

- 1 It will be recalled (see Chapter 6) that the inaugural Essex 2 mile walk in 1888 was won by a member of Chelmsford Football Club, A.Searle, in 16:44.6; he won again in 1899, in 16:04.0, and was succeeded by his Club-mate, H.J.Cheverton, (15:56.8); as another example of Club-hopping, mentioned elsewhere, Cheverton won as a member of Walthamstow Harriers from 1891 to 1893 and as a member of Essex Beagles in 1894, by which time he was down to 15:07.2. Perhaps it was simply an active way for footballers to spend the summer when their first sport was actually restricted to the winter, just as rowers took to cross country running in the winter.
- 2 Keddie says that he was disqualified, but contemporary reports, which distinguish between "D.Q." and "D.N.F." put him in the latter category, as does Damilano. The *Official Report* on the Games, meticulously compiled by Sir Theodore Andrea Cook, however, states that, "...at this point Reid was disqualified. The same fate befel (*sic*) Quinn soon afterwards." which may be taken as conclusive.

- 3 This was was probably on the basis of “You take the high road and I’ll take the low road....”
- 4 Marshall mentions a number of long-distance events either in Scotland or featuring Scottish performers, including the curiously named George Noremac, who was by trade a lithographer; perhaps it was his normal practice of dealing with material originated in reverse that impelled him to spell his name backwards; if he was simply trying to avoid being identified, it is not very subtle. An event rather out of the main stream of walking is commemorated in the postcard reproduced below. The precise year is not evident, but the specimen shown was posted in August, 1910.



- Dornoch is a coastal town about thirty miles north of Inverness. The Games themselves continue to this day, although there are fewer fishwives.
- 5 The other events were 100y, shot putt, high jump, hammer throw, pole vault, 120 yards hurdles, 56lb. weight throw, long jump and one mile run.
 - 6 So poor was the attendance that there were only two teams in the four mile team race, which is why the number of medals is not a multiple of three.
 - 7 After the end of our centenary period, Olive Loughnane equalled this achievement in the World Championships in Berlin in 2009 with 1:28:58 and as we went to press Robert Heffernan won the gold medal in the 50k at the Moscow World Championships in 3:37:56.
 - 8 As this chapter is a Miscellany, it may not be stretching things too far to note that O.St.J. Gogarty, the Irish politician and man-about-town, in his book of memoirs *As I was Walking Down Sackville Street*, says that he remarked to F.E.Smith (Lord Birkenhead) the British Attorney General and architect of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, that he – Smith – held the record for walking from Oxford to London; as Smith did not deny it, it may well be true, but the details have not been found.
 - 9 The reproduction of Issue No.1 of *Race Walking Record* in Chapter 23 shows that Handicapping was sufficiently widespread (and perhaps sufficiently misunderstood) to make the front page. (Editor’s Note)
 - 10 The Claire Powell Handicap is on the Yacht basis, with the slowest walker being sent off first and the fastest last. In a 2000 metre track race, this may mean that a very good walker is giving the first starter two laps’ advantage. (Editor’s Note)



BIBLIOGRAPHY

This selective Bibliography contains information on the most noteworthy books about race walking published in this country, together with some from elsewhere. There are many others – rather more than a hundred in total – that contain some references to race walking, either as a minor part of a work on athletics or on sport in general, or of narrower scope, such as club and county athletic histories. These works of more secondary interest are generally not listed here but may be found, together with a number of overseas publications, on the *Books about Race Walking* page of the Race Walking Association's web site. An excellent reference book is the *Annotated Guide to the U.K. Literature of Track and Field*, referred to in this list under *McNab*. A rather more elderly bibliography, largely limited to race walking, can be found under *Strangman*.

Programmes, results booklets, etc., are completely excluded and purely statistical publications mostly so; thus, in the latter category, we list below only *Damilano, S.* and *Various Editors*.

It should go without saying, given the dates of publication shown, that most of the books in this list are out of print and difficult to obtain; they will, in many cases, be available through public libraries or on the shelves of the British Library.

Readers interested in the general history and social background of sport in Britain may find Birley's book of use.

Note: The format of the entries is:

Author *Title of the Book* Place of Publication: Publisher, date [In some cases, a comment on the work, attributed unless it is by the Editor] *N.B.: Where no country of publication is shown, it may be read as England.*

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- Strutt, J.** *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* London: Thomas Tegg and Son, 1801, with several later editions [The Sports are considerably outnumbered by the Pastimes, most of which, being largely rural, have disappeared in the last three centuries with the great changes that have

- taken place in country life. The early editions of the book were entitled *Glig-Gamena angel Deod*, presumably to enhance the antiquarian air of the work.
- Thom, W.** *Pedestrianism* Aberdeen, Scotland: D.Chalmers & Co., 1813 [Described by McNab as “almost certainly the first book on competitive athletics to be written in English.” Inspired by the methods and feats of Captain Barclay.]
- Tomlin, S.** (ed.) *Olympic Odyssey* Croydon: Modern Athletics on behalf of Bovril, 1956 [Harold Whitlock describes his Olympic Victory.]
- Various Editors** *British Athletics* London: National Union of Track Statisticians, annually since 1959 [Ranking lists, records, performance lists, important results, etc., for the previous year.]
- Various Editors** *Track Stats* London: National Union of Track Statisticians, quarterly since 1982 [Continuation of NUTS Notes (1959-1981). Quarterly digest with single-topic editions.]
- Walker, A.** (pseudonym of D.A.Walthen) *The Big Walk* London: Prentice-Hall International, 1961 [Diary-style description of the Billy Butlin John O’Groats to Land’s End walk of 1960.]
- Walker, D.** *British manly exercises....* London: T.Hurst, 1834 [“....reiteration of Captain Barclay’s training methods, which by the mid-nineteenth century had become the standard procedure.” (McNab) Purging figured highly, with an admirable diet of beef, mutton and strong ale.]
- Walsh, J.H.** *see Stonehenge*
- Walthen, D.A.** *see Walker, A.*
- Watman, M.** *All-time Greats of British Athletics* Cheltenham: Sports Books, 2006 [Three- or four-page biographies of 78 eminent British athletes; walkers included are T.Green, K.Matthews, P.Nihill, D.Thompson and H.Whitlock.]
- Watman, M.** *History of British Athletics* London: Hale, 1968
- Watts, K. & Watts, R.** *The Centurions: a History* London: The Centurions, 1997 [The Official History of the exclusive Brotherhood.]
- Webster, F.A.M.** *Athletics of Today* London: Frederick Warne, 1929 [As well as a chapter on early walking champions, contains a useful synopsis of athletic history.]
- Webster, F.A.M.** *Great Moments in Athletics* London: Country Life, 1947 [One chapter describes Olympic walks up to 1936.]
- Webster, F.A.M.** *Lessons in Athletics* London: A Wander. 1938 [A couple of pages on race walking, with exemplary photographs of Whitlock, Pope, etc.]
- Westhall, C.** *Hints upon training* London: Ward, Lock, 1890 [First appeared in 1860. Westhall was the first man to walk 21 miles in 3 hours.]
- Westhall, C.** *Training for Pedestrianism* London: Ward Lock, 1860? [The authors are described as *The Champion Players of Old England* but Westhall wrote the chapter on walking.]
- Whitlock, H.H.** *Race Walking* London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1957 [Official coaching book by the 1936 Olympic 50 kilometres Champion; later superseded by Hopkins, J. and Markham, P.]
- Wilkinson, H.F.** *Modern Athletics* London: “The Field”, various editions, 1868-1880 [An early history of amateur athletics, but including the customary section on Captain Barclay.]
- Williams, C.** (ed.) *The History of Welsh Athletics* Cardiff, Wales: Dragon Sports Books, 2002 [Has a chapter on race walking by Jack Thomas.]

PERIODICALS AND JOURNALS

Pre-eminence among periodicals and journals must be granted to *Race Walking Record*, the Association’s own magazine, founded in a fit of astounding optimism by A.D.McSweeney in 1941 and still going strong, but many others are useful to the seeker after

information about the earlier days of our sport. Although *Record*, as it has generally been known, has always been the official organ of either the Southern Area or the R.W.A. as a whole, it has not been merely a mouthpiece for the pronouncements of the Association’s

“establishment”; it has never, under a succession of Editors, felt inhibited from saying what it thought, and it has provided a unique channel for the expression of views by the walking fraternity quite frequently at variance with the “party line”.

In the nineteenth century, and even sporadically before, there were several weekly and monthly publications covering sport of all kinds, the first of them being *The Sporting Magazine* (1793-1870). We make reference in the present volume to *Sporting Life* which existed from 1859 to 1999, taking over on the way its rival *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* (1822-1886), and we also quote from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, which, including its previous existence as *The Illustrated Sporting News* (1862-1863) and *The Illustrated Sporting and Theatrical News* (1865-1870) and with its later manifestations as *Sport and Country* (1945-1957) and *Farm and Country*, lasted well over a century until its closure in 1970. *Baily's Magazine of Sport and Pastimes* (1860-1926), although largely interested in field sports, also dealt with other sports, including, from time to time, walking, largely in its “pedestrian” manifestation.

In modern times, the longest-lived general periodical has been *Athletics Weekly* (from 1950), started as *Athletics* in 1945 and incorporating *Women's Athletics* (a monthly that lasted barely a year from its foundation in 1968) and *Modern Athletics* (1957-1964), while the rival magazine *Athlete's World*, although incorporating *Athletics Monthly* (1980-1981) and then becoming *Athletics Today*, still only survived from 1979 to 1993. It seems that throughout the past two centuries, publishers have thought that they perceived a niche in the athletics periodical market, only to find that it became more of a tomb, for the examples just quoted are not the most ephemeral. Even such a respectably fathered publication as *Amateur Sport and Athletics*, the official journal of the A.A.A. and the Scottish A.A.A., managed only five issues in 1935. The various journals usually started with rather grand ideas; *The Sporting Repository* launched Vol.I, No.1, in January,

1822, with the remark that “ungracious, indeed, is the task of professing intentions, and avowing motives which so many have done before us, and in which too many have completely failed: we, therefore, will say little, and endeavour to perform more than we promise.” Alas, they did no better than those they mocked and, despite spinning-out their material with such items as eight pages *On Falling in Love* and generous coverage of cock-fighting, although “we do not exactly approve of this diversion”, they quietly slipped away after No.6 in June of the same year without even a *Farewell*.

Naturally, many general newspapers have material dealing with race walking, especially when they have an interest – perhaps through sponsorship, as in the case of the *Sheffield Star*, the *Leicester Mercury*, the *News of the World* and the *News Chronicle* – and one general journal that noticed race walking (particularly, in its earlier days, pedestrianism) was *The Illustrated London News*; founded as a weekly in 1841, it closed as a quarterly in the 1990s. Some of its reports on the great pedestrian events of the nineteenth century make entertaining reading and like many others it frequently carried illustrations, line engravings in the early days and photographs later.

Club and association magazines and newsletters are too many to mention and they, too, have tended to come and go as the members' enthusiasm flared up and editorial perseverance faded. Few of them, in any case, except rare examples such as the *Gazette* of the Surrey Walking Club, would now make particularly gripping reading.

The various veterans' clubs in the country have their own newsletters or magazines and the British Masters Athletic Federation produces a quarterly *Masters Athletics*, delivered free to all members of its affiliated clubs.

For the most part, club newsletters are transient, quite often being simply photocopies – or cyclostyles in earlier times – and tend to be unrecorded, uncatalogued and forgotten; some of them are now published only in electronic

form and have no “physical” existence at all. It may very well be, of course, that where such publications, even those in paper formats, were

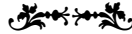
produced by now defunct or merged bodies no remaining copies even exist to enlighten the researcher.

MINUTES AND OFFICIAL PAPERS

The remarks of the last paragraph apply even more thoroughly to minutes, reports and other official papers of the many bodies that have existed over the years. When the Secretaryship of an organisation changes, there is a woeful tendency for the historical papers to fail to make the transition from one officer to the next. If World Wars intervene, with their attendant decreases in sporting activity and the deaths of those interested, the situation often becomes even worse. There are, therefore, unfortunately considerable gaps in the early documents of many sporting bodies, not excluding the Race Walking Association and its predecessor the S.C.R.W.A. If this is true of the minutes, it is even more significant in the case of Championship details, and in addition the

scant regard had for the fate of superannuated financial accounts and their attendant papers when they cease to have legal purpose is well known.

It is generally only if the founders of an organisation have the prescience to realise that one day their history may be written and that last year’s seemingly redundant Handbook is still of some possible use, that the subsequent historian is helped. Sadly, that type of foresight is all too seldom to be found! The best that can generally be hoped for is that the Officers of dissolving bodies may sometimes have been unable to make the effort to dispose of the papers; they may still exist somewhere, although no-one knows where.



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I PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

1907-1908	E.Knott	1961-1962	G.G.Swan
1908-1909	H.Stessiger	1962-1963	R.W.Bell
1909-1910	C.Otway	1963-1964	S.C.Roberts
1910-1911	W.C.Cambray	1964-1965	J.W.Lambert
1911-1912	F.W.Ashford	1965-1966	W.J.Harris
1912-1913	J.R.Barnes Moss	1966-1967	J.S.Grant
1913-1914	H.G.Brockman	1967-1968	S.Fryer
1914-1919	A.Fattorini	1968-1969	J.Twells
1919-1920	W.C.Cambray	1969-1970	H.Callow
1920-1922	E.H.Neville	1970-1971	T.Lloyd Johnson
1922-1923	W.F.May	1971-1972	J.W.Goswell
1923-1924	W.W.Webb	1972-1973	F.O'Neill
1924-1925	J.Russell-Rose	1973-1974	F.Jarvis
1925-1927	F.H.Lister	1974-1975	I.Williams
1927-1928	W.Golland	1975-1976	P.Collins
1928-1929	C.R.Butcher	1976-1977	R.Smith
1929-1931	E.Waddilove	1977-1978	L.Mitchell
1931-1932	W.J.Palmer	1978-1979	R.Stone
1932-1933	S.C.Packer	1979-1980	J.F.Henderson
1933-1934	H.C.Lomax	1980-1981	J.Burns
1934-1935	C.M.Turner	1981-1982	R.Davies
1935-1936	F.G.Thomson	1982-1983	L.Lewis
1936-1937	G.F.McCombe	1983-1984	F.A.James
1937-1938	J.H.van Meurs	1984-1986	J.H.T.Eddershaw
1938-1939	A.Scorer	1986-1988	J.F.Keown
1939-1945	R.Y.Martin	1988-1989	C.V.Gittins
1945-1946	G.Stone	1989-1990	D.Fotheringham
1946-1947	R.C.Mawbey	1990-1991	P.Worth
1947-1948	F.W.Blackmore	1991-1992	P.Markham
1948-1949	J.Hackwood	1992-1993	A.Hall
1949-1950	W.F.Batson, O.B.E., K.P.M.	1993-1994	F.W.Denny
1950-1951	E.Kennell	1994-1995	K.G.Smith
1951-1952	A.A.Harley	1995-1996	W.K.D.Wright
1952-1953	G.R.Goodwin	1996-1998	B.E.M.Randle
1953-1954	A.D.McSweeney	1998-2000	R.W.Holland
1954-1955	T.V.Clarke	2000-2001	P.Nihill, M.B.E.
1955-1956	H.H.Whitlock, MBE	2001-2003	R.W.Dobson
1956-1957	F.Clay	2003-2005	P.Marlow
1957-1958	N.W.Easlea	2005-2006	B.Ficken
1958-1959	J.W.Jennings	2006-2007	P.Nihill, M.B.E.
1959-1960	H.S.Bassett	2007-	G.Jones
1960-1961	A.Roberts-Downing		

II GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1907-1912	J.R.Barnes Moss	1947-1948	E.Kennell
1912-1913	F.H.Cain and W.T.Sheppard	1948-1953	H.H.Whitlock, M.B.E.
1913-1914	O.V.A.Temple	1953-1968	L.W.Woodcock
1914-1915	H.G.Brockman	1968-1972	F.Jarvis
1915-1919	C.Otway	1972-1984	P.Marlow
1919-1920	J.R.Barnes Moss	1984-1988	R.P.Wells
1920-1934	H.W.Brockhouse	1988	J.F.Keown*
1934-1938	R.J.Martin	1988-1991	B.E.M.Randle
1938-1940	L.L.Hind	1991-	P.J.Cassidy
1940-1947	H.W.Blackmore	* J.F.Keown held the office for part of the year after the resignation of R.P.Wells.	

III HONORARY TREASURERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

1907-1910	A.C.Mariette	1969-1974	F.A.James
1910-1915	N.L.March	1974-1979	A.Banyard
1915-1920	J.H.van Meurs	1979-1983	P.Worth
1920-1926	F.W.Ashford	1983-1984	R.P.Wells
1926-1946	R.Churchill	1984-	W.K.D.Wright
1946-1969	A.A.Harley		

IV CHAIRMEN OF THE ASSOCIATION

1976-1977	R.Smith	1988-1989	R.P.Wells
1977-1980	C.V.Gittins	1989-1998	C.V.Gittins
1980-1981	J.Burns	1998-2002	K.G.Smith
1981-1983	R.Davies	2002-	P.Markham
1983-1988	C.V.Gittins		

Note: Until 1976, the Chair at Committee Meetings was taken by the President. Thereafter, a separate Chairman was elected by General Committee from among its members and from 1983 the Chairmanship became an Office of the Association, filled by election at the A.G.M.

V CHAMPIONSHIP SECRETARIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1946-1947	E.Kennell	1978-1980	J.Burns
1947-1949	W.J.Harris, M.B.E.	1980-1985	A.L.Burns
1949-1954	G.G.Swan	1985-1986	D.Rosser
1954-1962	A.D.McSweeney	1986-1997	K.G.Smith
1962-1967	J.W.Goswell	1997-2005	J.Howley
1967-1976	J.Hadley	2005-	P.Marlow
1976-1978	R.P.Wells		

VI LIFE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

B.Adams	J.F.Keown
P.Adams	J.W.Lambert
W.Batson, O.B.E., K.P.M.	L.Lewis
W.Bell	T.Lloyd Johnson
M.Bickley	P.Markham
H.W.Brockhouse	P.Marlow
H.Callow	K.Munro
B.Carr	D.Nelson Neale, O.B.E.
G.Carr	B.E.M.Randle
P.J.Cassidy	T.Reynolds
F.Clay	V.Searle, OBE
P.Collins	T.Sharlott
C.V.Gittins	K.G.Smith
Jack Goswell	R.Smith
Joan Goswell	R.Stone
J.Hackwood	R.Wells
J.Hadley	H.H.Whitlock, M.B.E.
W.J.Harris, M.B.E.	I.Williams
Dame Marea Hartman, C.B.E.	P.A.Wilson
J.Heath	L.W.Woodcock
F.Jarvis	W.K.D.Wright
J.Jones	

Note: In earlier days, no comprehensive list was kept of those honoured by Life Membership of the Association. As a consequence, this list is probably incomplete. The Editor would be grateful to hear of any omissions.

VII HOLDERS OF THE JOHN KEOWN AWARD

P.Adams	M.Marshall
J.Howley	T.Sharlott

VIII EDITORS OF RACE WALKING RECORD

A.D.McSweeney	Nov 1941-Sep 1948 Nos. 1-81	J.Hedgethorpe	Oct 1981-Mar 1985 Nos. 469-511
G.Swan	Nov 1948-Sep 1951 Nos. 82-115*	P.Marlow	Apr 1985-Nov 1988 Nos. 512-553
A.D.McSweeney	Oct 1951-Sep 1962 Nos. 116-243	J.Hedgethorpe	Dec 1988-Jan 2000 Nos. 554-687
J.Keown	Oct. 1962-Feb 1968 Nos. 244-305	P.J.Cassidy**	Feb 2000-Apr 2000 Nos. 688-690
K.Best	Mar 1968-Aug 1970 Nos. 306-335	T.Watt	May 2000- Nos. 691-
A.Buchanan	Sep 1970-Sep 1981 Nos. 336-468		

* Due to the continued appearance of Swan's name as Editor, it had been widely thought that he

remained in post until July, 1953; in fact, McSweeney had been doing the job since the date shown above. The circumstances are described in Chapter 24.

** Following the sudden death of the Editor, the General Secretary edited three editions of the magazine as an emergency measure, after which a new Editor was appointed. No. 688 had been partly done by John Hedgethorpe and Peter Cassidy completed the edition.

IX A NOTE ON CHAMPIONSHIPS

The following pages list the individual and team winners of all R.W.A. Championships from the first 20 miles in 1908 to the centenary events in 2007. The list of Championships reflects the way in which the R.W.A. has changed over the years, particularly in its perception of the distances over which various walkers should compete. An especially interesting example is the very first of the Championships, held over 20 miles from 1908 to 1977, 30 kilometres in 1978, 35 kilometres from 1979 to 1992, back to 20 miles in 1993, 30 kilometres in 1994, 20 miles again from 1995 to 1998 and then 35 kilometres until it was finally abandoned altogether in 2004. In later years, the Association was clearly torn between keeping in step with the Commonwealth Games distance – 20 miles from 1966 to 1974, 30 kilometres from 1978 to 1994 and then 20 and 50 kilometres – retaining a traditional event and going fully “international”; the resulting six changes in twenty years were somewhat unsettling to top walkers and club men alike.

It was not until the 1950s that the various younger age groups for males came to be catered for. When the R.W.A. became responsible for women’s walking in 1980, it continued the existing Championships of the W.C.C.R.W.A. and thereafter integrated them with its own Championships, with the same kind of changes taking place for both male and female walkers.

An interesting experiment in the late 1980s was the introduction of the Relays, which had been held as open races at Brighton for a couple of years. Despite the changing of the distances and the introduction of age limitations for some of the legs, they never quite caught on and the idea was abandoned after ten years. Most other

changes in Championship distances were caused by metrication, although the dropping of the Under 17 Men’s and Women’s 5 kilometres in favour of 10 kilometres as a step toward International distances met with widespread disfavour and the shorter Championship was reintroduced after only one year’s absence; it at least had the roundabout effect of doubling the number of Championships available for that age group.

In the early part of the twentieth century, competitors’ times were sometimes returned to the second and sometimes to a fraction (either a half or a fifth) of a second. For consistency, all times are given here in the current style of decimal fractions.

In the following Appendices, where the list of champions stops short of 2007, the implication is that the Championship had been discontinued. The younger age group names used in the Appendices are the current ones. Under 13, Under 15 and Under 17 correspond to the old Colts, Boys and Youths for males and Minors, Girls and Intermediates for females (although previously Under 17 females had been called *Juniors* and Under 20s *Intermediates*).

For the sake of brevity and to conserve space, the following abbreviations have been used for Clubs.

A.F.D.	Aldershot, Farnham and District
Blackheath	Blackheath and Bromley
Bolehall	Bolehall Swifts
Brighton	Brighton and Hove
Bright. Rly.	Brighton Railway
Bromsgrove	Bromsgrove and Redditch
Cambridge	Cambridge Harriers

Coventry	Coventry R.W.C. and Coventry Godiva H.	R.Sutt.C. Sheffield	Royal Sutton Coldfield Sheffield United W.C., Sheffield R.W.C. and City of Sheffield A.C.
Dawlish	Dawlish and South Devon		
Dudley	Dudley and Stourbridge		
Epsom	Epsom and Ewell	Solihull	Solihull and Small Heath
E.Beagles	Essex Beagles	Sploft C.	Sploft Conservative
E.Police	Essex Police	S.Rly.	Southern Railway
Hercules W.	Hercules Wimbeldon	S. & W.G.	Southgate and Wood Green
Holl.Poly. Hull	Holloway Polytechnic Kingston upon Hull A.C. and City of Hull A.C.	Uxbridge	Uxbridge and West Middlesex
I.of M.Vets	Isle of Man Veterans	W.Germ.	Western Germany
London Vids	London Vidarians	Wolves	Wolverhampton and Bilston
Manx	Manx Harriers	Weymouth	Weymouth St.Pauls
Met. W.C.	Metropolitan W.C.	Woodford	Woodford Green
Met. Police	Metropolitan Police	W.F.S.	Waltham Forest Schools
Middlesborough	Middlesborough and Cleveland	York C.I.U.	York Club and Institute Union
Plymouth	Plymouth City Walkers		
Q.P.H.	Queen's Park Harriers	York Post.	York Postal
Road Hoggs	Road Hoggs Leicester	Yorks.	Yorkshire R.W.C.
Roath L.	Roath Labour		

X MEN'S 20 MILE CHAMPIONSHIP^{1,2}

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1908 Ruislip	H.V.L.Ross (Tooting)	2:56:32	Surrey W.C.
1909 Woodside	S.C.A.Schofield (Surrey W.C.)	2:56:48.4	Surrey W.C.
1910 Barnet	H.V.L.Ross (Tooting)	2:53:45.4	Surrey W.C.
1911 Chislehurst	T.Payne (Middlesex)	2:50:30	Middlesex
1912 Uxbridge	H.V.L.Ross (Middlesex)	2:51:21.4	Surrey W.C.
1913 Aylesbury	H.V.L.Ross (Uxbridge)	2:49:53.4	Surrey W.C.
1914 St.Albans	H.V.L.Ross (Uxbridge)	2:50:37.4	Surrey W.C.
<i>1915-1919 not held due to the First World War</i>			
1920 North Wembley	H.V.L.Ross (Herne Hill)	2:57:59.6	Herne Hill
1921 Chislehurst	W.Hehir (Surrey A.C.)	2:58:56.4	Herne Hill
1922 Richmond Park	W.Hehir (Surrey A.C.)	2:50:12	Surrey W.C.
1923 Leicester	F.Poynton (Leicester)	2:51:35	Surrey W.C.
1924 Windsor	F.Poynton (Leicester)	2:57:17.5	Belgrave
1925 Derby	F.Poynton (Derby)	2:48:17.4	Belgrave
<i>1926 not held due to the General Strike</i>			
1927 St.Albans	T.Lloyd Johnson (Surrey W.C.)	2:55:53	Surrey W.C.
1928 Leicester	L.Stewart (London Vids)	2:50:20.6	Belgrave
1929 Hayes	A.E.Plumb (North London)	2:50:18	Belgrave
1930 Derby	A.E.Plumb (North London)	2:46:30.4	Birmingham
1931 Enfield	T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester)	2:52:41	Derby
1932 Birmingham	A.E.Plumb (North London)	2:43:28	Derby
1933 London ³	A.H.G.Pope (Woodford)	2:48:38	Surrey W.C.
1934 Sheffield	T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester)	2:49:58	Surrey W.C.

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1935 Chingford	J.Medlicott (Birmingham)	2:47:46	Surrey W.C.
1936 Leicester	H.A.Hake (Surrey W.C.)	2:47:23	Surrey W.C.
1937 Epsom Downs	S.A.Fletcher (Derbyshire)	2:47:54	Leicester ⁴ Surrey W.C. ⁴
1938 Birmingham	J.Hopkins (Lancashire)	2:49:10	Belgrave
1939 Hendon	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	2:51:03	Belgrave
<i>1940-1945 not held due to the Second World War</i>			
1946 Coventry	H.J.Forbes (Birmingham)	2:50:43	Leicester
1947 Hendon	H.J.Forbes (Birmingham)	2:47:40	Surrey W.C.
1948 Sudbury	G.B.R.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	2:52:07	Surrey W.C.
1949 Manchester	L.Allen (Sheffield)	2:51:18	Sheffield
1950 Bellingham	L.Allen (Sheffield)	2:51:52	Woodford
1951 Coventry	L.Allen (Sheffield)	2:51:52	Woodford
1952 Enfield	J.W.Proctor (Sheffield)	2:52:07	Belgrave
1953 Derby	R.F.Goodhall (Woodford)	2:50:40	Woodford
1954 Birmingham	L.Allen (Sheffield)	2:47:48	Belgrave
1955 Wimbledon	G.W.Coleman (Highgate)	2:40:08	Belgrave
1956 Sheffield	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	2:38:27	Sheffield
1957 Hendon	E.W.Hall (Belgrave)	2:45:12	Belgrave
1958 Birmingham	L.Allen (Sheffield)	2:43:21	Met. W.C.
1959 Imber Court	T.W.Misson (Met. W.C.)	2:45:19	Met. W.C.
1960 Gomersall	S.F.Vickers (Belgrave)	2:41:41	Belgrave
1961 Chiswick	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	2:44:49	Sheffield
1962 Birmingham	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	2:38:39	Surrey W.C.
1963 Ewell	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:39:43	Surrey W.C.
1964 Sheffield	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:40:13	Surrey W. C.
1965 Ewell	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:44:03	Surrey W.C.
1966 Hinckley	N.Read (New Zealand)	2:39:33	Met. W.C.
1967 Swindon	R.Lodge (R.Sutt.C)	2:42:43	Trowbridge
1968 Sheffield	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:35:07	Met. W.C.
1969 Croydon	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:44:51	Enfield
1970 Redditch	W.Wesch (Belgrave)	2:38:15	Belgrave
1971 Sheffield	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	2:30:35 ⁵	Surrey W.C.
1972 Wordsley	J.Warhurst (Sheffield)	2:35:19	Sheffield
1973 East Ewell	R.Dobson (Basildon)	2:40:07	Sheffield
1974 Redditch	R.Thorpe (Sheffield)	2:39:47	Southend
1975 Castletown	R.Dobson (Southend)	2:36:26	Sheffield
1976 Stevenage	R.Mills (Ilford)	2:32:13	Sheffield
1977 Sutton Coldfield	A.Seddon (Enfield)	2:35:15	Sheffield
<i>Distance changed to 30k</i>			
1978 Sheffield	O.Flynn (Basildon)	2:21:54 ⁶	Sheffield
<i>Distance changed to 35k</i>			
1979 Leicester	R.Mills (Ilford)	2:52:08	Sheffield
1980 London ⁷	A.Seddon (Enfield)	2:40:04 ⁸	Leicester
1981 York	R.Dobson (Ilford)	2:48:30	Sheffield
1982 Kenilworth	D.Jarman (Belgrave)	2:48:41	Leicester
1983 Colchester	C.Lawton (Belgrave)	2:58:44	Leicester
1984 Sheffield	P.Blagg (Cambridge)	3:03:54	Sheffield
1985 New Park	D.Jackson (York)	2:41:03	Sheffield

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1986 Plymouth	C.Maddocks (Dawlish)	2:47:54	Coventry
1987 York	C.Berwick (Leicester)	2:56:38	Leicester
1988 Leicester	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	2:45:09	Leicester
1989 Colchester	D.Stone (Steypning)	2:50:44	Steypning
1990 York	L.Morton (Sheffield)	2:50:50	Sheffield
1991 Sutton Coldfield	S.Phillips (Ilford)	2:55:21	Coventry
1992 Colchester	L.Morton (Sheffield)	2:59:38	York Post.
<i>Distance changed to 20 miles</i>			
1993 Sutton Coldfield	S.Martindale (York Post.)	2:33:58	Coventry
<i>Distance changed to 30k</i>			
1994 Horsham	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	2:22:45	Leicester
<i>Distance changed to 20 miles</i>			
1995 Enfield	G.Brown (Steypning)	2:41:36	Steypning
1996 Stockport	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	2:35:15	Coventry
1997 Leicester	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	2:34:04	Steypning
1998 Brighton	L.Morton (Sheffield)	2:43:01	Coventry
<i>Distance changed to 35k</i>			
1999 Stockport	D.Stone (Steypning)	2:49:45	Steypning
2000 Dartford	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	2:51:20	Steypning
2001 Birmingham	M.Easton (Surrey W.C.)	2:55:00	Coventry
2002 Sutton Park	M.Young (Road Hogs)	3:04:39	Coventry
2003 Sutton Park	A.Drake (Coventry)	2:54:36	Coventry
2004 Sutton Park	N.Adams (Sheffield)	3:06:25	Steypning

Notes

- ¹ This event was the Southern Championship until 1911, when it became the first of the National Championships.
- ² Note that the distance varied from time to time; see Appendix IX.
- ³ Crystal Palace
- ⁴ No procedure existed for resolving a tie if two teams had equal scores. Subsequently, resolution was by way of aggregate times
- ⁵ and then by the now standard criterion of the positions of the last scorer in each team.
- ⁶ Championship Best Performance for 20 miles
- ⁷ Championship Best Performance for 30 kilometres
- ⁸ Victoria Park
- ⁸ Championship Best Performance for 35 kilometres

XI MEN'S 10 MILE "JUNIOR" CHAMPIONSHIP¹

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1909 Brentford	H.Evans (Belgrave)	81:37	Middlesex
1910 Ruislip	E.Rogers (Birmingham)	83:50	Herne Hill
1911 Woodford	G.J.Cummings (Herne Hill)	83:30	Herne Hill
1912 Ruislip	J.W.Dowse (Middlesex)	81:52.6	Woodford
1913 Hackbridge	E.J.Hurley (Garratt)	80:43	Highgate
<i>1914-1919 not held due to the First World War</i>			
1920 Blackheath	F.W.Pizzey (S. & W.G.)	84:25.2	Belgrave
1921 Bowes Park	E.G.Cooper (Surrey A.C.)	84:31.8	S. & W.G.
1922 London ²	H.F.King (Belgrave)	82:20.4	Belgrave
1923 Merton	W.H.Day (Slough)	78:24	Surrey W.C.

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1924 Uxbridge	A.A.Ward (Ashcombe)	85:20	Bright. Rly.
1925 Chingford	A.J.Burnett (Q.P.H.)	85:39.6	Surrey A.C.
1926 Bellingham	E.T.Sharman (S.Rly.)	80:42	Sheffield
1927 Sheffield	T.W.Green (Belgrave)	81:53	Attercliffe
1928 Wembley	E.F.N.Presland (Herne Hill)	75:58 ⁵	Sheffield
1929 Birmingham	E.E.Brewster (Surrey W.C.)	81:16	Surrey W.C.
1930 Enfield	H.A.Amies (Enfield)	80:24	Belgrave
1931 Luton	T.W.Richardson (Woodford)	79:08	Enfield
1932 London ²	F.J.Redman (Met. W.C.)	77:59	Sheffield
1933 Birmingham ³	W.J.Hogan (S. & W.G.)	79:38	Belgrave
1934 Southgate	W.Bullock (Sheffield)	79:00	Surrey W.C.
1935 Birmingham ³	V.W.G.Stone (Polytechnic)	78:48.8	Surrey W.C.
1936 Hendon	A.Staines (Leicester)	84:07	Belgrave
1937 Leicester	R.Sims (London Vids.)	81:59	Met.W.C.
1938 Golders Green	J.G.Coleman (Belgrave) ⁴	80:14.6	Belgrave
	L.J.Coleman (Belgrave) ⁴	80:14.6	
1939 Manchester	W.S.Dunn (Lancashire)	80:49	Belgrave
<i>1940-1945 not held due to the Second World War</i>			
1946 Sudbury	C.Megnin (Highgate)	80:24	Highgate
1947 Leicester	C.P.Brown (Enfield)	84:45	Surrey W.C.
1948 Bradford	L.Allen (Sheffield)	81:06.4	Sheffield
1949 Enfield	J.Copperwheat (Highgate)	80:02	Sheffield
1950 Coventry	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	80:43	Sheffield
1951 Sudbury	G.Ruston (Sheffield)	80:06	Sheffield
1952 Sheffield	W.P.Woods (Surrey W.C.)	79:41	Sheffield

Notes

¹ This Championship was "Junior" by ability rather than by age. After its discontinuation, the team trophy, the Garnet Cup, was returned to the Southern Area, whence it had originally come when the event had become national, and competition continued for a few years as the Southern Garnet Championship, before it, too, was

abandoned. Falling numbers of walkers and the debarring clauses in the rules meant that it was impossible to mount a worthwhile competition.

² Regents Park

³ Fort Dunlop

⁴ Dead heat

⁵ Championship Best Performance

XII MEN'S 50 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1930 South Croydon	T.W.Green (Belgrave)	4:35:36	— ¹
1931 Bradford	T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester)	4:55:48	—
1932 Leicester	F.Pretti (Italy)	4:41:54	Birmingham
1933 Birmingham	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:39:00	Birmingham
1934 Croydon	T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester)	4:36:30	Belgrave
1935 Bradford	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:39:08	Belgrave
1936 Derby	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:30:38	Belgrave
1937 Enfield	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:38:43	Met. W.C.
1938 Bradford	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:31:01.2	Belgrave

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1939 Enfield	H.H.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:40:43	Met. W.C.
<i>1940-1945 not held due to the Second World War</i>			
1946 Bradford	C.Megnin (Highgate)	4:53:25	Leicester
1947 Eastleigh	H.J.Forbes (Birmingham)	4:40:06	Surrey W.C.
1948 Birmingham	G.B.R.Whitlock (Met. W.C.)	4:35:35	Surrey W.C.
1949 Chigwell	T.Lloyd Johnson (Leicester)	4:51:50	Surrey W.C.
1950 Sheffield	J.W.Proctor (Sheffield)	4:43:04	Woodford
1951 Brighton	D.Tunbridge (Highgate)	4:45:34	Belgrave
1952 Leicester	D.Tunbridge (Highgate) ²	4:38:02	Woodford
	G.B.R.Whitlock (Met. W.C.) ²	4:38:02	
1953 Shirley	F.G.Bailey(Polytechnic)	4:46:10	Polytechnic
1954 Sheffield	J.Ljunggren (Sweden)	4:32:47	Belgrave
1955 Coventry	A.Johnson (Sheffield)	4:31:32	Polytechnic
1956 Enfield	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:24:39	Belgrave
1957 Leyland	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:41:48	Belgrave
1958 Wimbledon	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:21:50	Belgrave
1959 Baddesley	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:12:19	Met. W.C.
1960 Chigwell	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:32:55	Belgrave
1961 Sheffield	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:22:51	Belgrave
1962 Luton	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:27:26	Surrey W.C.
1963 Baddesley	R.Middleton (Belgrave)	4:16:44	Surrey W.C.
1964 Enfield	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	4:17:10	Belgrave
1965 Bolton	R.Middleton (Belgrave)	4:17:23	Surrey W.C.
1966 Chigwell Row	D.J.Thompson (Met. W.C.)	4:28:26	Belgrave
1967 Redditch	S.Lightman (Met. W.C.)	4:26:56	Belgrave
1968 East Ewell	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	4:18:59	Belgrave
1969 Redditch	B.Eley (Bristol W.C.)	4:19:13	Belgrave
1970 East Ewell	R.Dobson (Basildon)	4:20:22	Belgrave
1971 Redditch	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	4:15:05	Surrey W.C.
1972 Badminton Park	J.Warhurst (Sheffield)	4:18:31	Sheffield
1973 Redditch	R.Dobson (Basildon)	4:14:29	Sheffield
1974 Hendon	R.Dobson (Southend)	4:16:58	Sheffield
1975 Whetstone	J.Warhurst (Sheffield)	4:20:32	Sheffield
1976 Birmingham	R.Thorpe (Sheffield)	4:23:43	Sheffield
1977 Milton Keynes	B.Adams (Leicester)	4:25:28	Sheffield
1978 Stretford	D.Cotton (Holloway Poly.)	4:14:25	Sheffield
1979 Coventry	M.Parker (Brighton)	4:14:26	Sheffield
1980 Basildon	D.Jackson (Yorks.)	4:16:25	Leicester
1981 Sleaford	B.Graham (Yorks.)	4:10:46	Sheffield
1982 Leicester	A.James (Enfield)	4:14:11	Leicester
1983 Enfield	B.Graham (Yorks.)	4:24:18	Leicester
1984 Kendal	P.Blagg (Cambridge)	4:20:31	York Post.
1985 Corby	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:19:09	Leicester
1986 Enfield	C.Berwick (Leicester)	4:23:22	Leicester
1987 Sheffield	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:23:40	Steyning
1988 York	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:17:05	Sheffield
1989 Brighton	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:21:19	Sheffield
1990 Sutton Coldfield	C.Berwick (Leicester)	4:33:23	Sheffield
1991 Basildon	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:15:48	Coventry

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1992 Redditch	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	4:13:25	Trowbridge
1993 Horsham	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:03:55	Leicester
1994 Chesterfield	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:32:25	Sheffield
1995 Stockport	L.Morton (Sheffield)	4:01:36 ³	Sheffield
1996 Horsham	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	4:22:42	York C.I.U.
1997 Stockport	M.Easton (Surrey W.C.)	4:07:45	York C.I.U.
1998 Chesterfield	T.Watt (Steypning)	4:32:00	Leicester
1999 Leamington Spa	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	4:31:08	Coventry
2000 London ⁴	D.Stone (Steypning)	4:21:23	Steypning
2001 London ⁴	M.Smith (Coventry)	4:33:17	Surrey W.C.
2002 Colchester	M.Smith (Coventry)	4:42:58	Coventry
2003 Stockport	M.Smith (Coventry)	5:00:41	Coventry
2004 Earls Colne	S.Partington (Manx)	4:30:08	Lancashire
2005 Earls Colne	S.Davis (Ilford)	4:47:34	Leicester
2006 Earls Colne	S.Davis (Ilford)	4:52:51	Birchfield
2007 London ⁵	S.Davis (Ilford)	4:35:39	Surrey W.C.

Notes

- ¹ For the first two years, no Team Competition was held.
- ² The July, 1952, issue of *Race Walking Record* shows Whitlock's name above Tunbridge's, but with both men given first position, and also refers to the pair as "deadheating". *The Sport of Race Walking* in its Appendices of Past Champions has

Tunbridge above Whitlock but, again, both marked as first. Although there are occasional references to Tunbridge as the sole winner, there seems no reason to suppose that it was not a dead heat.

³ Championship Best Performance

⁴ Victoria Park

⁵ Battersea Park

XIII MEN'S 10 MILE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1947 Sheffield	H.G.Churcher (Belgrave)	81:23	Belgrave
1948 London ¹	H.G.Churcher (Belgrave)	75:10.4	Belgrave
1949 Leicester	L.Allen (Sheffield)	75:09	Sheffield
1950 London ²	L.Allen (Sheffield)	74:38	Sheffield
1951 Sutton	L.Allen (Sheffield)	75:41	Sheffield
1952 Imber Court	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	73:16	Sheffield
1953 Cheltenham	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	74:53.4	Sheffield
1954 London ³	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	74:16	Sheffield
1955 Southport	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	74:47	Sheffield
1956 London ²	R.Hardy (Sheffield)	74:31	Sheffield
1957 Coventry	S.F.Vickers (Belgrave)	76:51	Belgrave
1958 London ⁴	S.F.Vickers (Belgrave)	73:44	Belgrave
1959 Sheffield	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	71:01 ⁵	Belgrave
1960 Hendon	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	70:57	Belgrave
1961 Loughborough	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	74:21	Sheffield
1962 New Southgate	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	76:10	Highgate
1963 Manchester	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	73:00	Belgrave

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1964 Morden	K.J.Matthews (R.Sutt.C.)	70:22	Surrey W.C.
1965 Leicester	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	74:55	Surrey W.C.
1966 Hendon	P.McCullagh (Met. W.C.)	74:05	Met. W.C.
1967 Bolton	R.Wallwork (Lancashire)	75:06	Met. W.C.
1968 Leicester	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	72:28	Met. W.C.
1969 Morden	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	71:14	Leicester
1970 Liverpool	W.Wesch (Belgrave)	72:07	Belgrave
1971 Redditch	P.Embleton (Newham)	69:29	Belgrave
1972 London ⁶	P.Nihill (Met. W.C.)	73:33	Belgrave
1973 Leyland	J.Webb (Basildon)	72:43	Sheffield
1974 Leicester	P.Marlow (Southend)	72:58	Belgrave
1975 Southwick	O.Flynn (Basildon)	71:15	Ilford
1976 York	O.Flynn (Basildon)	69:59	Enfield
1977 Coventry	R.Mills (Ilford)	72:36	Sheffield
1978 London ⁶	O.Flynn (Basildon)	67:29 ⁷	Ilford
1979 York	C.Harvey (Lancashire)	71:25	Leicester
1980 Leicester	R.Mills (Ilford)	68:45 ⁸	York Post.
1981 Exeter	M.Parker (Brighton)	73:37	Leicester
1982 Sheffield	S.Barry (Roath L.)	68:01	Belgrave
1983 Kenilworth	S.Barry (Roath L.)	66:41	Leicester
1984 Southend	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	67:32	Belgrave
1985 York	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	66:32 ⁹	Leicester
1986 Redditch	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	66:35 ¹⁰	Coventry
1987 Kingston	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	67:36	Coventry
1988 Sheffield	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	67:22	Splott C.
1989 Redditch	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	65:39 ¹¹	Splott C.
1990 Southend	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	68:36	Cambridge
1991 London ⁴	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	68:17	Steyning
1992 Birmingham	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	69:42	Splott C.
1993 Sheffield	L.Morton (Sheffield)	73:16	Leicester
1994 London ⁴	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	73:17	Leicester
1995 Sutton Coldfield	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	69:11	Coventry
1996 Sutton Coldfield	A.Penn (Coventry)	71:14	Coventry
1997 London ⁴	S.Partington (Manx)	75:34	Road Hoggs
1998 Leicester	A.Drake (Coventry)	71:14	Road Hoggs

Notes

¹	Hyde Park	⁷	850 yards short
²	Regent's Park	⁸	60 yards short
³	Parliament Hill	⁹	Course short by unknown amount
⁴	Victoria Park	¹⁰	Championship Best Performance
⁵	350 yards short	¹¹	69 yards short
⁶	Crystal Palace		

XIV JUNIOR MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 5 miles</i>			
1951 Cheltenham	N.Read (Steyning)	38:32	Sheffield
1952 London ¹	B.Shepherd (Walton)	38:49	Met. W.C.

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1953 Luton	C.Young (E. Beagles)	39:49	Met. W.C.
1954 Alpertton	G.Howell (Highgate)	38:46	Met. W.C.
1955 Birmingham	G.Howell (Highgate)	38:19	Highgate
1956 London ¹	J.Edgington (Coventry)	39:17	Trowbridge
1957 London ²	F.Winter Sheffield)	39:19	Trowbridge
1958 Luton	T.Clark (Belgrave)	38:38	Belgrave
1959 Wembley	C.Manning (Highgate)	39:59	Steyning
1960 Mitcham	R.Wallwork (Lancashire)	39:02	Steyning
1961 Enfield	J.Paddick (R.Sutt.C.)	38:03	Met. W.C.
1962 London ¹	J.Paddick (R.Sutt.C.)	37:22	Met. W.C.
1963 London ¹	P.Selby (Surrey W.C.)	38:00	Met. W.C.
1964 Leicester	M.Tolley (Sheffield)	37:53	Highgate
1965 London ¹	D.Watts (Met. W.C.)	38:13	Leicester
1966 Leicester	B.Hughes (Smethwick)	37:10	Boundary
1967 Leicester	G.Toone (Leicester)	36:56	Leicester
1968 Little Hulton	R.Mills (Ilford)	37:14	Ilford
1969 Bromsgrove	B.Adams (Leicester)	37:22	Leicester
1970 Steyning	O.Flynn (Basildon)	37:05	Lancashire
1971 Wombourne	S.Gower (E.Beagles)	36:11 ³	Lancashire
1972 Birmingham	J.Lord (Highgate)	37:45	Steyning
1973 Sheffield	J.Lord (Highgate)	37:39	Sheffield
1974 Chelmsford	J.Lord (Highgate)	37:13	Sheffield
1975 Coventry	D.Cotton (Holl.Poly.)	36:38	Sheffield
<i>Distance changd to 10 kilometres</i>			
1976 Sheffield	G.Seatter (Belgrave)	44:59	Belgrave
1977 Wimbledon	C.Harvey (Lancashire)	45:50	Belgrave
1978 Coventry	M.Miley (Harborne)	46:42	Belgrave
1979 South Croydon	G.Vale (Surrey W.C.)	44:30	Harborne
1980 Coventry	R.Dorman (Belgrave)	43:18	Belgrave
1981 Southend	P.Vesty (Leicester)	43:19	Leicester
1982 Sleaford	P.Vesty (Leicester)	43:59	Coventry
1983 Birmingham	M.Rush (Cockermouth)	45:15	Coventry
1984 Steyning	T.Berrett (Tonbridge)	44:31	Coventry
1985 Morecambe	D.Stone (Steyning)	44:25 ⁴	Steyning
1986 Birmingham	D.Stone (Steyning)	43:56	Steyning
1987 Swindon	G.Brown (Steyning)	45:33	Splott
1988 Sheffield	G.Holloway (Splott C.)	46:25	Splott
1989 Worcester	K.Butler (Trowbridge)	46:11	Sheffield
1990 Aldershot	G.Jackson (Coventry)	47:55	Coventry
1991 Holmewood	K.Butler (Trowbridge)	48:01	Leicester
1992 Birmingham	P.King (Brighton)	46:09	Leicester
1993 Horsham	P.King (Brighton)	43:23	—
1994 Holmewood	S.Davis (Ilford)	46:55	—
1995 Sutton Coldfield	S.Hollier (Wolves)	46:52	—
1996 Folkestone	S.Monk (Loughton)	46:26	—
1997 Sheffield	S.Taylor (Leicester)	48:01	—
1998 Sheffield	M.Kemp (Leicester)	43:53	—
1999 Hickstead	N.Adams (Leicester)	51:34	—
2000 Dartford	Dominic King (Colchester)	45:52	—

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2001 Birmingham	Lloyd Finch (Leicester)	45:30	–
2002 Sheffield	Dominic King (Colchester)	42:21 ⁵	Colchester
2003 Leamington Spa	Luke Finch (Leicester)	46:09	–
2004 Leamington Spa	Luke Finch (Leicester)	46:02	–
2005 Leamington Spa	N.Ball (Steyning)	44:05	–
2006 Sheffield	N.Ball (Steyning)	44:47	Nuneaton
2007 Coventry	B.Wears (Redcar)	50:39	–

Notes

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|--|--|
| ¹ Battersea Park | ⁴ Course short by unknown distance |
| ² Regents Park | ⁵ Championship Best Performance for 10 kilometres |
| ³ Championship Best Performance for 5 miles | |

XV UNDER 17 MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 3 miles</i>			
1961 Enfield	I.Taylor (E.Beagles)	24:44	–
1962 London ¹	I.Randall (Leicester)	24:15	E.Beagles
1963 London ¹	W.Holloway (Met. W.C.)	24:57	Leicester
1964 Leicester	B.Hughes (Smethwick)	23:17	Trowbridge
1965 London ¹	J.Smith (E.Beagles)	23:53	Leicester
1966 Leicester	S.Fish (Steyning)	24:11	Leicester
1967 Leicester	P.Belcher (Leicester)	22:25	Leicester
1968 Little Hulton	O.Caviglioli (Basildon)	23:01	Steyning
1969 Bromsgrove	P.Dallow (Bromsgrove)	23:02	Bromsgrove
1970 Steyning	P.Sturdy (Bromsgrove)	22:57	Bromsgrove
1971 Wombourne	J.Lord (Highgate)	22:09 ²	Bromsgrove
1972 Birmingham	K.Sturdy (Bromsgrove)	22:06	Holl.Poly.
1973 Sheffield	B.Lines (Sheffield)	22:11	Holl.Poly.
1974 Chelmsford	M.Dunion (E.Police)	22:05	E.Police
1975 Coventry	S.Maxwell (Belgrave)	23:37	Steyning
<i>Distance changed to 5k</i>			
1976 Sheffield	I.McCombie (North Shields)	23:16	W.F.S.
1977 Wimbledon	G.Vale (Surrey W.C.)	23:30	Surrey W.C.
1978 Coventry	G.Vale (Surrey W.C.)	22:11	Surrey W.C.
1979 South Croydon	P.Vesty (Leicester)	22:50	Leicester
1980 Coventry	T.Berrett (Tonbridge)	23:46	Tonbridge
1981 Southend	T.Berrett (Tonbridge)	22:39	Tonbridge
1982 Sleaford	D.Hucks (Cambridge)	22:29	Sheffield
1983 Birmingham	N.Kavanagh (Roath L.)	22:39	Steyning
1984 Steyning	K.Taylor (Splott C.)	22:42	Steyning
1985 Morecambe	D.White (Bromsgrove)	21:58 ³	Leicester
1986 Birmingham	J.Vincent (Leicester)	22:13	Splott C.
1987 Swindon	J.Vincent (Leicester)	22:31	Leicester
1988 Sheffield	M.Young (Leicester)	23:31	Leicester
1989 Worcester	J.Deakin (Coventry)	24:13	–

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1990 Aldershot	P.King (Brighton)	23:28	Coventry
1991 Holmewood	P.King (Brighton)	22:21	–
1992 Birmingham	B.Allkins (Coventry)	23:42	–
1993 Horsham	G.Bailey (Coventry)	24:53	–
1994 Holmewood	D.Crane (Surrey)	26:17	Leicester
1995 Sutton Coldfield	S.Monk (Loughton)	24:16	Steyning
1996 Folkestone	M.Kemp (Leicester)	23:23	Leicester
1997 Sheffield	T.Taylor (Leicester)	22:41	Sheffield
1998 Sheffield	D.King (Colchester)	24:24	–
1999 Hickstead	Lloyd Finch (Leicester)	22:06	–
2000 Dartford	J.Davis (Portsmouth)	22:56	–
2001 Birmingham	Luke Finch (Leicester)	22:35	–
2002 Sheffield	Luke Finch (Leicester)	22:04 ⁴	Leicester
2003 Leamington Spa	N. Ball (Steyning)	23:32	–
2004 Leamington Spa	L.Hayden (Nuneaton)	24:44	Nuneaton
<i>2005 Not held⁵</i>			
2006 Sheffield	B.Wears (Redcar)	22:10	–
2007 Sheffield	M.O’Kane (Coventry)	25:03	Tonbridge

Notes

- ¹ Battersea Park
- ² Championship Best Performance for 3 miles.
- ³ Course under distance by an unknown amount
- ⁴ Championship Best Performance for 5 kilometres.
- ⁵ In 2005, the Championship distance for

Under 17 Men and Women was changed from 5 kilometres to 10 kilometres. The following year, ever responsive to the concerns of coaches and athletes, the R.W.A. General Committee reintroduced the 5 kilometres *in addition to* the 10 kilometres. The 10k results are listed in Appendix XXXII.

XVI MEN’S 20 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP¹

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1965 Cardiff	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	93:33	Surrey W.C.
1966 Sheffield	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	93:45	Surrey W.C.
1967 East Ewell	R.Wallwork (Lancashire)	97:21	Trowbridge
1968 Coventry	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	91:19	Belgrave
1969 Gomersal	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	90:07	Belgrave
1970 London ¹	W.Wesch (Belgrave)	91:47	Lancashire
1971 Luton	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	92:06	Surrey W.C.
1972 Redditch	P.Nihill (Surrey W.C.)	88:45	Sheffield
1973 London ²	R.Mills (Ilford)	91:13	Belgrave
1974 Sheffield	O.Flynn (Basildon)	92:06	Southend
1975 Coventry	O.Flynn (Basildon)	88:58	Southend
1976 Southend	O.Flynn (Southend)	90:00	Sheffield
1977 Stretford	O.Flynn (Basildon)	88:42	Sheffield
1978 Coventry	O.Flynn (Basildon)	88:44	Steyning
1979 London ²	C.Lawton (Belgrave)	94:25	Belgrave

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1980 Southport	M.Parker (Brighton)	89:20	York Post.
1981 Kenilworth	M.Parker (Brighton)	91:08	Leicester
1982 Enfield	S.Barry (Roath L.)	88:51	York Post.
1983 Southport	S.Barry (Roath L.)	83:15	Leicester
1984 Redditch	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	85:34	Sheffield
1985 London ³	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	82:37 ⁴	Leicester
1986 York	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	87:14	Steyning
1987 Birmingham	L.Morton (Sheffield)	91:17	Leicester
1988 Hoddesdon	I.McCombie (Cambridge)	83:31	Leicester
1989 Doncaster	A.Drake (Coventry)	86:55	Coventry
1990 Leicester	S.Martindale (York Post.)	87:37	Splott C.
1991 Sheffield	M.Easton (Surrey W.C.)	85:36	Coventry
1992 Lancaster	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	83:38	Coventry
1993 Cardiff	A.Penn (Coventry)	85:57	Leicester
1994 Birmingham	C.Cheeseman (Surrey W.C.)	89:11	Leicester
1995 Horsham	D.Stone (Steyning)	87:44	Steyning
1996 Cardiff	D.Stone (Steyning)	86:44	Manx
1997 Stoneleigh	A.Penn (Coventry)	88:41	Road Hogs
1998 Leicester	M.Bell (Cardiff)	87:22	Leicester
1999 Leamington Spa	C.Maddocks (Plymouth)	86:22	Road Hogs
2000 Holme Pierrepont	D.Stone (Steyning)	87:08	Steyning
2001 Sheffield	A.Penn (Nuneaton)	91:09	Road Hogs
2002 Thames Ditton	A.Drake (Coventry)	84:43	Steyning
2003 Sheriff Hutton	A.Penn (Nuneaton)	88:52	Nuneaton
2004 Leamington Spa	Daniel King (Colchester)	91:01	Manx
2005 Earl's Colne	Daniel King (Colchester)	92:55	Nuneaton
2006 Sheffield	Dominic King (Colchester)	91:26	Leicester
2007 Coventry	A.Penn (Nuneaton)	95:24	Nuneaton

Notes

¹ Crystal Palace

² Victoria Park

³ Thamesmead

⁴ Championship Best Performance

XVII UNDER 15 BOYS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 2 miles</i>			
1972 Birmingham	G.Morris (Steyning)	15:06 ¹	Bromsgrove
1973 Sheffield	W.Bolton (Blackburn)	15:24	Sheffield
1974 Chelmsford	C.Pope (Steyning)	15:39	Steyning
1975 Coventry	I.McCombie (North Shields)	15:48	Woodford
<i>Distance changed to 3 kilometres</i>			
1976 Sheffield	S.Marshall (Cambridge)	14:14	Leicester
1977 Wimbledon	M.Nicholls (Newham)	14:22	Haverling
1978 Coventry	I.Lewis (Holloway)	14:56	Dawlish
1979 South Croydon	A.Drake (Greyfriars)	14:16	Greyfriars
1980 Coventry	D.Hucks (Cambridge)	14:16	Steyning
1981 Southend	N.Kavanagh (Roath L.)	13:58	Steyning
1982 Sleaford	G.Ringshaw (Steyning)	14:04	Steyning

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1983 Birmingham	H.Lippett (Bromsgrove)	15:24	Bromsgrove
1984 Steyning	P.Whitehouse (Coventry)	14:00	Roath L.
1985 Morecambe	J.Vincent (Leicester)	12:27 ²	Leicester
1986 Birmingham	M.Young (Boundary)	14:17	Steyning
1987 Swindon	S.White (Sheffield)	14:36	–
1988 Sheffield	J.Deakin (Coventry)	14:05	Coventry
1989 Worcester	P.King (Brighton)	13:48	Coventry
1990 Aldershot	J.Nunn (Steyning)	14:02	–
1991 Holmewood	R.Meacham (Steyning)	14:26	Leicester
1992 Birmingham	R.Meacham (Steyning)	15:05	Wolves
1993 Horsham	M.Hales (Steyning)	14:21	Steyning
1994 Holmewood	M.Hales (Steyning)	14:28	Leicester
1995 Sutton Coldfield	J.Murphy (Leicester)	14:11	Leicester
1996 Folkestone	N.Adams (Sheffield)	15:01	Colchester
1997 Sheffield	Lloyd Finch (Leicester)	14:08	Leicester
1998 Sheffield	Lloyd Finch (Leicester)	12:58 ³	–
1999 Hickstead	J.Davis (Portsmouth)	14:19	–
2000 Dartford	L.Davis (Portsmouth)	14:53	–
2001 Birmingham	L.Davis (Portsmouth)	15:07	Steyning
2002 Sheffield	N.Ball (Steyning)	14:42	Steyning
2003 Leamington Spa	L.Hayden (Nuneaton)	14:23	Nuneaton
2004 Leamington Spa	C. Taylor (Manx)	15:26	Coventry
2005 Leamington Spa	M. O'Kane (Coventry)	15:08	Coventry
2006 Sheffield	C.Ball (Steyning)	15:54	Tonbridge
2007 Sheffield	C.Ball (Steyning)	15:54	Tonbridge

Notes

¹ Championship Best Performance for 2 miles

³ Championship Best Performance for 3 kilometres

² Course short by an unknown amount.

XVIII MEN'S LONG DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIP¹

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1979 Birmingham ²	P.Hodkinson (Cambridge)	9:46:36	Leicester
1980 Sutton Coldfield ²	I.Richards (Coventry)	9:45:46	Leicester
1981 Stoke Mandeville ²	G.Young (Boundary)	9:36:23	Boundary
1982 Corby ²	C.Berwick (Leicester)	10:02:03	Leicester
1983 Boreham ²	B.Adams (Leicester)	10:13:16	Leicester
<i>1984 not held</i>			
1985 Colchester ³	E.Shillabeer (Dawlish)	9:41:54	York Post.
<i>1986 not held</i>			
1987 Ewhurst ⁴	J.Cannell (Boundary)	17:55:10	Boundary
1988 Leicester ⁴	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	17:00:35	Boundary
1989 Hendon ⁴	E.Shillabeer (Plymouth)	18:11:08	Medway
1990 Leicester ⁴	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	17:54:28	Birchfield
1991 Ewhurst ⁴	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	17:52:47	Surrey W.C.
1992 Hungarton ⁴	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	18:50:29	–

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1993 London ^{4,5}	C.Berwick (Leicester)	17:57:07	–
1994 Hungarton ⁴	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	18:39:42	London Vids
1995 London ^{4,5}	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:27:16	Surrey W.C.
<i>1996 not held</i>			
1997 Ware ⁶	C.Flint (London Vids)	20:21:41	London Vids
<i>1998 not held</i>			
1999 London ^{4,5}	R.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:08:16	London Vids
2000 Newmarket ⁷	I.Statter (Surrey W.C.)	120 miles ⁸	London Vids
2001 Colchester ⁴	R.Dobson (Ilford)	19:46:11	London Vids
2002 Blackpool ⁶	K.Perry (Southend)	182-591k	London Vids
2003 Newmarket ⁴	P.Ryan (Sheffield)	19:57:35	London Vids
2004 Colchester ⁴	I.Statter (Surrey W.C.)	20:10:31	I. of M. Vets
2005 Kings Lynn ⁴	S.Hands (Manx)	19:02:57	Surrey W.C.
2006 Douglas ⁷	S.Hands (Manx)	19:16:03	–
2007 London ⁵	C.Flint (London Vids)	21:14:40	Birchfield

Notes

¹ The Championship was originally 100 kilometres; it was changed in 1987 to the “Long Distance Championship” and is held in conjunction with an open long distance race in each year. In 1984, 1996 and 1998, no such races were promoted. The Championship may be held on the road or track. The road races sometimes contain a short distance on the track.

² 100 kilometres road

³ 100 kilometres track

⁴ 100 miles road

⁵ Battersea Park

⁶ 24 hours track

⁷ 24 hours road

⁸ Time taken 23:35:55; the Referee judged that Statter would not complete another full lap before the expiration of 24 hours.

XIX WOMEN'S 5 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1980 London ¹	C.Tyson (Lakeland)	23:05	Lakeland
1981 Exeter	I.Bateman (Havering)	25:00	Lakeland
1982 Enfield	I.Bateman (Havering)	24:09	Steyning
1983 Southport	I.Bateman (Havering)	23:28	Sheffield
1984 Redditch	J.Barrett (Verlea)	23:38	Brighton
1985 London ²	J.McCaffrey (Canada)	23:12	Sheffield
1986 York	B.Allen (Brighton)	23:29	Steyning
1987 Birmingham	L.Langford (Wolves)	23:07	Steyning
1988 Leicester	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	23:43	Sheffield
1989 Colchester	J.Drake (Brighton)	24:04	Sheffield
1990 York	L.Langford (Wolves)	22:24	Leicester
1991 Basildon	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	22:50	Sheffield
1992 Colchester	S.Black (Birchfield)	25:18 ³	Steyning
1993 Sutton Coldfield	J.Pope (Brighton)	25:13	Sheffield
1994 Birmingham	M.Wright (Nuneaton)	24:27	Dudley
1995 Enfield	L.Langford (Wolves)	23:00	Sheffield
1996 Bolton	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	23:05	Sheffield

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1997 Leicester	L.Kehler ⁴ (Wolves)	23:20	Steyning
1998 Hove	K.Braznell (Dudley)	24:45	Birchfield
1999 Stockport	C.Charnock (Dudley)	23:09	Sheffield
2000 London ⁵	N.Menéndez (Steyning)	24:19	Sheffield
2001 London ⁵	S.Tonks (Bromsgrove)	24:51	Dartford
2002 Sutton Park	L.Kehler (Wolves)	22:20 ⁶	Nuneaton
2003 Stockport	K.Stones (Hull)	26:49	Dudley
2004 Sheffield	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	26:09	Sheffield

Notes

¹	Battersea Park	⁴	née Langford
²	Thamesmead	⁵	Victoria Park
³	Course over distance by an unknown amount	⁶	Championship Best Performance

XX UNDER 17 WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 5k</i>			
1980 London ¹	S.Brown (Steyning)	23:57 ²	Bolehall
1981 Southend	H.Ringshaw (Steyning)	25:44	Steyning
1982 Sleaford	H.Ringshaw (Steyning)	25:17	Bromsgrove
1983 Birmingham	E.Ryan (Epsom)	26:15	Bromsgrove
1984 Steyning	K.MacAdam (Coventry)	26:09	Steyning
1985 Morecambe	K.MacAdam (Coventry)	23:31 ³	Solihull
1986 Birmingham	V.Lawrence (Reading)	25:32	Leicester
1987 Swindon	A.Crofts (Leicester)	25:49	Sheffield
1988 Sheffield	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	25:14	Sheffield
1989 Worcester	Z.Lindley (Sheffield)	26:08	Steyning
1990 Aldershot	N.Greenfield (Dudley)	26:21	–
1991 Holmewood	C.Jarvis (Bromsgrove)	25:17	A.F.D.
1992 Birmingham	L.Tozer (Birchfield)	26:30	–
1993 Horsham	N.Howley (Sheffield)	25:59	Steyning
1994 Holmewood	N.Howley (Sheffield)	26:10	Steyning
1995 Sutton Coldfield	S.Bennett (Birchfield)	28:09	Bingley
1996 Folkestone	S.Bennett (Birchfield)	26:33	–
1997 Sheffield	B.Tisshaw (Dartford)	25:35	Dartford
1998 Sheffield	K.Ford (Sheffield)	24:55	–
1999 Hickstead	N.Phillips (Dartford)	25:28	Solihull
2000 Dartford	S.Hales (Steyning)	26:21	–
2001 Birmingham	S.Hales (Steyning)	25:30	Hull
2002 Sheffield	K.Stones (Hull)	26:01	Hull
2003 Leamington Spa	J.Gagg (Hull)	26:24	–
2004 Leamington Spa	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	24:48	–
<i>2005 Event not held</i>			

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2006 Sheffield	K.Granger (Sheffield)	25:34	Blackheath
2007 Sheffield	K.Granger (Sheffield)	27:22	Sheffield

Notes

- ¹ Battersea Park ³ Championship Best Performance
² Course under distance by an unknown amount

XXI UNDER 13 BOYS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 3 kilometres</i>			
1980 Coventry	G.Brown (Steyning)	15:04	Steyning
1981 Southend	R.Hutchings (Roath L.)	16:03	Leicester
1982 Sleaford	S.Savage (Bromsgrove)	15:10	Steyning
1983 Birmingham	R.Hutchings (Roath L.)	15:18	Leicester
1984 Steyning	M.Young (Boundary)	14:40 ¹	Boundary
1985 Morecambe	S.Woodsford (Trowbridge)	14:37 ²	–
1986 Birmingham	J.Dowdeswell (Worcester)	15:28	Steyning
1987 Swindon	J.Nunn (Steyning)	15:39	Steyning
1988 Sheffield	J.Nunn (Steyning)	15:45	Wolves
1989 Worcester	R.Mecham (Steyning)	16:18	Wolves
1990 Aldershot	R.Mecham (Steyning)	16:54	–
1991 Holmewood	M.Hales (Steyning)	16:27	–
1992 Birmingham	M.Hales (Steyning)	16:48	Steyning
1993 Horsham	T.Taylor (Leicester)	15:42	Leicester
1994 Holmewood	N.Adams (Sheffield)	17:13 ³	Colchester
<i>Distance changed to 2 kilometres</i>			
1995 Sutton Coldfield	Dominic King (Colchester)	10:06	Colchester
1996 Folkestone	A.Parker (Wolves)	10:05 ⁴	Leicester
1997 Sheffield	P.Graham (Belgrave)	10:52	Belgrave
1998 Sheffield	S.McNally (Belgrave)	11:12	Steyning
1999 Hickstead	L.Davis (Portsmouth)	10:25	Steyning
2000 Dartford	N.Ball (Steyning)	10:15	Steyning
2001 Birmingham	D.Brown (Steyning)	10:09	Nuneaton
2002 Sheffield	A.Graham (Belgrave)	10:50	Coventry
2003 Leamington Spa	M.Halliday (Coventry)	10:34	Coventry
2004 Leamington Spa	M.Halliday (Coventry)	10:08	–
2005 Leamington Spa	M.Silvester (A.F.D.)	10:11	Leicester
2006 Sheffield	C.Gill (Leicester)	11:51	Sheffield
2007 Sheffield	C.Elcock (Dudley)	13:29	–

Notes

- ¹ Championship Best Performance for 3 kilometres ³ Course long by an unknown amount
² Course short by an unknown distance ⁴ Championship Best Performance for 2 kilometres

XXII UNDER 13 GIRLS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>2.5 kilometres</i>			
1980 London ¹	H. Lawley (Weymouth)	12:53	Steyning
1981 Southend	S. Cooper (Birchfield)	12:50	Bromsgrove
1982 Sleaford	S. Cooper (Birchfield)	12:31 ²	Bromsgrove
1983 Birmingham	C. Rice (Sheffield)	13:39	Solihull
1984 Steyning	C. Walker (Solihull)	13:19	Splott C.
1985 Morecambe	C. Walker (Solihull)	11:37 ³	Sheffield
1986 Birmingham	Z. Hollier (Birchfield)	13:14	Steyning
1987 Swindon	N. Greenfield (Dudley)	13:12	Worcester
1988 Sheffield	J. Moore (Solihull)	13:04	Solihull
1989 Worcester	H. Ford-Dunn (Steyning)	13:41	Steyning
1990 Aldershot	H. Ford-Dunn (Steyning)	13:42	Steyning
1991 Holmewood	J. Pickett (Birchfield)	13:03	—
1992 Birmingham	S. Bennett (Birchfield)	13:20	Birchfield
1993 Horsham	A. Hales (Steyning)	12:39	Sheffield
1994 Holmewood	A. Hales (Steyning)	13:38 ⁴	Steyning
<i>Distance changed to 2 kilometres</i>			
1995 Sutton Coldfield	K. Mann (Solihull)	10:22	Solihull
1996 Folkestone	K. Mann (Solihull)	10:10 ⁵	Solihull
1997 Sheffield	S. Hales (Steyning)	11:05	Steyning
1998 Sheffield	J. Hobson (Steyning)	10:48	Steyning
1999 Hickstead	J. Hobson (Steyning)	11:31	Steyning
2000 Dartford	C. Tomlin (Dartford)	10:53	Sheffield
2001 Birmingham	F. McGorum (Leicester)	10:15	Steyning
2002 Sheffield	K. Granger (Sheffield)	11:03	Steyning
2003 Leamington Spa	K. Granger (Sheffield)	10:15	Sheffield
2004 Leamington Spa	L. Whelan (Manx)	10:57	Sheffield
2005 Leamington Spa	L. Whelan (Manx)	10:37	Manx
2006 Sheffield	J. Tandy (Nuneaton)	12:24	Steyning
2007 Sheffield	S. Kaneen (Manx)	11:48	Manx

Notes

- | | |
|---|---|
| ¹ Battersea Park | ⁴ Course long by an unknown amount |
| ² Championship Best Performance for 2.5 kilometres | ⁵ Championship Best Performance for 2 kilometres |
| ³ Course short by an unknown amount | |

XXIII UNDER 15 GIRLS' 3 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1980 London ¹	L. Langford (Wolves)	14:55	Bromsgrove
1981 Southend	L. Langford (Wolves)	15:02	Solihull
1982 Sleaford	S. Clark (Steyning)	15:18	Steyning
1983 Birmingham	K. MacAdam (Coventry)	15:09	Birchfield
1984 Steyning	S. Ashforth (Sheffield)	14:19 ²	Bromsgrove

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1985 Morecambe	J.Snead (Solihull)	14:21 ³	Solihull
1986 Birmingham	T.Devlin (Sheffield)	15:23	Sheffield
1987 Swindon	S.Edwards (Birchfield)	15:20	Steyning
1988 Sheffield	P.Savage (Steyning)	15:08	Steyning
1989 Worcester	C.Jarvis (Bromsgrove)	15:36	Leicester
1990 Aldershot	N.Parsons (A.F.D..)	16:06	Birchfield
1991 Holmewood	H.Ford-Dunn (Steyning)	15:54	Steyning
1992 Birmingham	N.Howley (Sheffield)	15:57	Steyning
1993 Horsham	S.Bennett (Birchfield)	15:24	Birchfield
1994 Holmewood	S.Bennett (Birchfield)	15:30	Birchfield
1995 Sutton Coldfield	A.Hales (Steyning)	15:52	Steyning
1996 Folkestone	A.Hales (Steyning)	15:05	Steyning
1997 Sheffield	N.Phillips (Dartford)	15:20	Solihull
1998 Sheffield	K.Mann (Wolves)	15:08	Solihull
1999 Hickstead	S.Hales (Steyning)	15:37	Steyning
2000 Dartford	N.Fox (Dartford)	17:03	Steyning
2001 Birmingham	J.Hobson (Steyning)	16:44	Sheffield
2002 Sheffield	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	15:08	Sheffield
2003 Leamington Spa	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	14:42	Manx
2004 Leamington Spa	K.Granger (Sheffield)	15:39	Blackheath
2005 Leamington Spa	K.Granger (Sheffield)	15:22	Sheffield
2006 Sheffield	N.Myers (Sheffield)	16:13	Sheffield
2007 Sheffield	L.Whelan (Manx)	16:49	Manx

Notes

¹ Battersea Park

³ Course short by an unknown amount

² Championship Best Performance

XXIV WOMEN'S 10 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1981 York	I.Bateman (Basildon)	48:47	Sheffield
1982 Leicester	I.Bateman (Basildon)	51:18	Steyning
1983 Colchester	V.Birch (Brighton)	51:48	Sheffield
1984 Kendal	V.Birch (Brighton)	50:25	Sheffield
1985 Corby	S.Ashforth (Sheffield)	53:08	Sheffield
1986 Enfield	H.Elleker (Sheffield)	49:27	Sheffield
1987 Ham	L.Langford (Wolves)	46:37	Sheffield
1988 Hoddesdon	J.Drake (Brighton)	49:26	Brighton
1989 Redditch	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	45:30 ¹	Sheffield
1990 Southend	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	46:40	Sheffield
1991 Sheffield	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	47:23	Sheffield
1992 Lancaster	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	46:04	Dudley
1993 Cardiff	V.Larby (A.F.D.)	47:51	Dudley
1994 Horsham	K.Smith (Coventry)	48:30	Steyning
1995 Horsham	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	47:44	Manx
1996 Cardiff	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	44:48 ²	Sheffield
1997 Stoneleigh	S.Black (Birchfield)	49:39	Sheffield
1998 Leicester	L.Kehler ³ (Wolves)	47:10	Sheffield

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1999 Leicester	C.Charnock (Dudley)	47:51	Dudley
2000 Dartford	S.Tonks (Bromsgrove)	52:00	Steyning
2001 Birmingham	N.Menéndez (Steyning)	46:35	Steyning
2002 Leicester	E.Viljoen (Hercules W.)	49:06	Steyning
2003 Sutton Park	L.Kehler (Wolves)	49:44	Dudley
2004 Sutton Park	S.Hales (Steyning)	54:37	Dudley
2005 Sheffield	J.Jackson (Redcar)	48:37	Nuneaton
2006 Earls Colne	J.Jackson (Redcar)	51:24	Leicester
2007 Earls Colne	J.Jackson (Redcar)	47:49	Leicester

Notes

¹ Course short by 31 metres

³ née Langford

² Championship Best performance

XXV JUNIOR WOMEN'S 5 KILOMETRE/10 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance 5k</i>			
1987 Swindon	K.Dunster (A.F.D.)	24:33	A.F.D.
1988 Sheffield	A.Crofts (Leicester)	24:52	Bromsgrove
1989 Worcester	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	24:05 ¹	A.F.D.
1990 Aldershot	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	24:55	–
1991 Holmewood	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	24:13	–
1992 Birmingham	K.Horwill (Dudley)	26:22	–
1993 Horsham	K.Horwill (Dudley)	25:32	–
1994 Holmewood	K.Horwill (Dudley)	26:10	–
1995 Sutton Coldfield	N.Huckerby (Birchfield)	26:31	Steyning
1996 Folkestone	D.Wallen (A.F.D.)	25:18	Steyning
1997 Sheffield	N.Huckerby (Birchfield)	24:46	Bingley
1998 Sheffield	S.Bennett (Birchfield)	25:16	–
1999 Hickstead	A.Hales (Steyning)	25:26	–
<i>Distance changed to 10k</i>			
2000 Dartford	N.Phillips (Dartford)	55:09	–
2001 Birmingham	C.Reeves (Dartford)	56:12	–
2002 Sheffield	S.Hales (Steyning)	53:40	Dartford
2003 Leamington Spa	S.Hales (Steyning)	51:31	–
2004 Leamington Spa	S.Hales (Steyning)	51:16 ²	Hull
2005 Leamington Spa	R.Woolley (Leicester)	64:35	–
2006 Sheffield	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	52:27	–
2007 Coventry	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	55:32	Sheffield

Notes

¹ Championship Best Performance at 5 kilometres

² Championship Best Performance at 10 kilometres

XXVI MEN'S RELAY CHAMPIONSHIP¹

Year	Team	Time	Year	Team	Time
<i>Distance 2k-4k-6k-8k-10k</i>			1993	Steyning	1:45:04
1988	Splott C.	2:20:58	1994	Surrey W.C.	1:43:26
1989	Coventry	2:18:23	1995	Leicester	1:46:24
1990	Coventry	2:23:14	1996	Leicester	1:49:46
1991	Steyning	2:16:13 ²	1997	Steyning	1:40:35 ²
<i>Distance 2k-4k-6k-4k-6k</i>					
1992	Steyning	1:42:43			

Notes

¹ All Relay Championships were held in Perry Park, Birmingham.

² Championship Best Performances for the long and short relays

XXVII WOMEN'S RELAY CHAMPIONSHIP¹

Year	Team	Time	Year	Team	Time
<i>Distance 2k-4k-6k-8k</i>			1993	Birchfield	1:23:29
1988	Bromsgrove	1:52:04	1994	Birchfield	1:21:48
1989	Sheffield	1:41:09	1995	Sheffield	1:22:17
1990	Sheffield	1:44:30	1996	Sheffield	1:20:28 ²
1991	Sheffield	1:37:18 ²	1997	Birchfield	1:21:51
<i>Distance 2k-4k-6k-4k</i>					
1992	Birchfield	1:23:31			

Notes

¹ All Relay Championships were held in Perry Park, Birmingham.

² Championship Best Performances for the long and short relays

XXVIII WOMEN'S 15 KILOMETRE/10 MILE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1988 Dronfield	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	79:03	Sheffield
1989 Leicester	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	82:00	Sheffield
1990 Leicester	B.Sworowski (Sheffield)	72:36	Sheffield
1991 London ¹	V.Lupton (Sheffield) ²	72:32	Sheffield
	B.Sworowski (Sheffield) ²	72:32	
1992 Birmingham	M.Brookes (Nuneaton)	76:17	Dudley
<i>Distance changed to 10 miles</i>			
1993 Sheffield	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	81:19	Sheffield
1994 London ¹	C.Reader (Ryston)	90:37	Steyning
1995 Sutton Coldfield	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	81:23	Sheffield
1996 Sutton Coldfield	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	82:11	Sheffield
1997 London ¹	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	85:11	Sheffield
1998 Leicester	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	81:15 ³	Sheffield

Notes¹ Victoria Park³

Championship Best Performance for 10 miles

² Dead heat: Championship Best Performance for 15 kilometres**XXIX WOMEN'S 20 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP**

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1993 Horsham	E.Callinan (Solihull)	105:11	Sheffield
1994 Holmewood	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	104:48	Sheffield
1995 Stockport	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	102:47	Sheffield
1996 Horsham	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	106:43	Sheffield
1997 Stockport	S.Black (Birchfield)	105:48	Steyning
1998 Holmewood	V.Lupton (Sheffield)	104:35	Steyning
1999 Leamington	N.Menéndez (Steyning)	100:12	Sheffield
2000 Holme Pierrepont	L.Kehler (Wolves)	99:28	Dudley
2001 Sheffield	S.Bull (Midland Vets)	138:53	–
2002 Thames Ditton	L.Kehler (Wolves)	103:08	Dudley
2003 Sheriff Hutton	J.Hesketh (Steyning)	107:50	–
2004 Leamington Spa	N.Menéndez (Steyning)	110:59	Steyning
2005 Earls Colne	K.Stones (Hull)	106:48	–
2006 Sheffield	J.Jackson (Redcar)	104:37	–
2007 Coventry	J.Jackson (Redcar)	98:34 ¹	–

Note¹ Championship Best Performance**XXX WOMEN'S LONG DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIP¹**

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1993 London ^{2,3}	L.Millen (Lakeland)	20:13:15	–
1994 Hungarton ³	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:09:17	–
1995 London ^{2,3}	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	21:37:21	Surrey W.C.
1996 <i>not held</i>			
1997 Ware ⁴	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:27:15	–
1998 <i>not held</i>			
1999 London ^{2,3}	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	20:01:49	–
2000 Newmarket ⁵	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	114 miles ⁶	–
2001 Colchester ³	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	20:36:45	Surrey W.C.
2002 Blackpool ⁴	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	186-324k	London Vids
2003 Newmarket ³	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	20:23:25	–
2004 Colchester ³	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:17:28	–
2005 Kings Lynn ³	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:25:07	–
2006 Douglas ⁵	S.Brown (Surrey W.C.)	19:28:38	–
2007 London ²	C.Duhig (Loughton)	23:28:11	–

Notes¹ The Championship is held in conjunction with an Open Event and therefore varies

between 100 miles and 24 hours and may be on road or track.; the road races

	sometimes contain a short distance on the track.	⁵	24 hours road
²	Battersea Park	⁶	Time taken 23:38:22; the Referee judged that Brown would not complete another full lap before the expiration of 24 hours.
³	100 miles road		
⁴	24 hours track		

XXXI MEN'S 10 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2005 Sheffield	Dominic King (Colchester)	45:01	Leicester
2006 Earls Colne	Daniel King (Colchester)	43:49 ¹	Colchester
2007 Earls Colne	Daniel King (Colchester)	44:30	Ilford

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

XXXII UNDER 17 MEN'S 10 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2005 Leamington Spa	S.Hambridge (Nuneaton)	50:03	Nuneaton
2006 <i>Not held</i>			
2007 Earls Colne	B.Wears (Redcar)	48:19 ¹	—

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

XXXIII UNDER 17 WOMEN'S 10 KILOMETRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2005 Leamington Spa	R.Mersh (Sheffield)	51:38 ¹	—
2006 <i>not held</i>			
2007 Earl's Colne	C.O'Rawe-Hobbs (Blackheath)	58:35	—

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

XXXIV WOMEN'S 50 KILOMETRES

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
2006 Earls Colne	C.Duhig (Loughton)	6:09:38	—
2007 London ¹	M.Noel (Belgrave)	5:52:02 ²	—

Notes

¹ Battersea Park

² Championship Best Performance

XXXV A NOTE ON OTHER CHAMPIONSHIPS

Appendices X to XXXIV list the Champions of the R.W.A., but there have, of course, been other bodies that have organised National Championships for race walking in England, in particular the Amateur Athletic Association and the Women's Amateur Athletic Association; the A.A.A. actually held its first Championship in 1880, over a quarter of a century before the R.W.A. was founded. For the completeness of the record, these champions are briefly listed here. It should be noted that George Backley and Edith Trickey were the first national race walking champions, male and female respectively, in the world, although the table of "Amateur Champions" should also be consulted as far as men are concerned. The "Amateur Championships" were held by the Amateur Athletic Club from 1866 to 1879, with a rival meeting promoted by the London Athletic Club in 1879 only. The results of these "championships" are included in Appendix XL.

Until 1991 the track championships were promoted by the Amateur Athletic Association and the Women's Amateur Athletic Association; although the occasional event was actually staged by the R.W.A. on behalf of the track authorities; from 1992 the two bodies were merged into the Amateur Athletic Association of England and began to hold joint championships meetings with the walks incorporated in the track and field championships. In 2005, the authority became England Athletics, which continues the practice. For ease of reference, the men's and women's championships are each given here as single lists; the above note on dates will show which of the successive bodies promoted the Championships in any given year. The Men's Championships appear in Appendices XXXVI and XXXVII (for outdoor and indoor) and the Women's in Appendices XXXVIII and XXXIX, similarly divided.

The men's road championships have always been held by the R.W.A., but the women's were promoted by the Women's Cross Country and Road Walking Association until control of all women's walking was handed to the R.W.A. in 1980. These Championships are recorded in Appendix XL.

The other principal organiser of championships has been the English Schools' Athletic Association; the history of those championships is recounted in Chapter 20 and the winners are listed in Appendices XLI and XLII.

It should be noted that there have been numerous "National" Championships in which entries were in some way restricted. The restrictions have generally fallen into four classes:

- 1 by employment, such as the championships of the armed forces, the police and fire services, the civil service, the railways, the General Post Office, etc.;
- 2 by age, that is, veterans' championships;
- 3 by engagement in educational establishments other than Local Education Authority Schools, such as universities and public schools;
- 4 by types of physical disability, such as blindness.

As these events have not been open to all – or, at least, to all achieving a specified entry standard – they are not dealt with here, although no reflection is intended upon the validity of the performances or the standards achieved by the participants in such "closed" competitions, most of which have long-since ceased to exist.

Also omitted from these lists are professional "Championships" from the era, noted in Chapter 1, when anyone who saw the chance of turning a few pounds – legitimately or otherwise – could put on, or claim for himself, such a title, under any rules and restrictions that might take his fancy. Many of these

titles were not contested on an annual basis as is the custom nowadays, but were managed after the normal manner of boxing championships, the holder remaining in possession until challenged and beaten by an aspirant; generally speaking, when a challenge had been issued the race had to take place before a specified date or the title was forfeit.

XXXVI MEN'S TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS – OUTDOOR

The distances of the Championships varied from time to time and for some periods there were two races, a longer and a shorter.

SENIOR MEN

7 MILES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1880	G. Backley	56:40·0	1922	G.Watts	53:24·2
1881	J.Raby	54:48·2	1923	G.Watts	54:35·4
1882	H.Whyatt	55:56·5	1924	R.Goodwin	52:00·6
1883	H.Whyatt	59:16·0	1925	G.Watts	52:53·8
1884	H.Meek (U.S.A.)	59:15·0	1926	R.Goodwin	53:56·0
1885	J.Jervis	56:10·6	1927	W.Cowley	55:46·4
1886	J.Jullie	56:30·2	1928	C.Hyde	55:46·2
1887	C.Clarke	56:59·8	1929	C.Hyde	53:38·6
1888	C.Clarke	57:08·6	1930	C.Hyde	53:32·4
1889	W.Wheeler	56:29·4	1931	U.Frigerio (Italy)	54:09·0
1890	H.Curtis	52:28·4	1932	A.Pope	51:25·4
1891	H.Curtis	54:00·2	1933	J.Johnson	52:01·6
1892	H.Curtis	55:56·2	1934	J.Johnson	52:20·4
1893	H.Curtis	56:37·2	1935	H.Hake	53:48·0
1894-1900	<i>not held:</i>		1936	V.Stone	52:21·2
1901	J.Butler	54:37·0	1937	J.Mikaelsson (Sweden)	50:19·2
1902	W.Sturgess	52:49·4	1938	J.Mikaelsson (Sweden)	51:48·2
1903	J.Butler	56:17·2	1939	H.Churcher	52:37·0
1904	G.Larner	52:57·4	1940-1945	<i>not held: World War II</i>	
1905	G.Larner	52:34·0	1946	L.Hindmar (Sweden)	52:30·0
1906	F.Carter	53:20·2	1947	H.Churcher	52:48·4
1907	F.Thompson	52:46·6	1948	H.Churcher	52:32·8
1908	E.Webb	53:02·6	1949	H.Churcher	52:41·8
1909	E.Webb	52:37·0	1950	R.Hardy	50:11·6
1910	E.Webb	51:37·0	1951	R.Hardy	51:14·6
1911	G.Larner	52:08·0	1952	R.Hardy	50:05·6
1912	R.Bridge	52:45·6	1953	R.Hardy	51:47·0
1913	R.Bridge & H.Ross	52:08·4	1954	G.Coleman	51:22·8
1914	R.Bridge	52:32·0	1955	R.Hardy	53:04·6
1915-1918	<i>not held: World War I</i>		1956	G.Coleman	50:19·0
1919	W.Hehir	53:23·6	1957	S.Vickers	51:34·4
1920	C.Dowson	53:50·0	1958	S.Vickers	51:10·0
1921	H.Ross	55:48·6	1959	K.Matthews	50:28·8

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1960	K.Matthews	49:42.6	1965	P.Nihill	51:54.4
1961	K.Matthews	49:43.6	1966	P.Nihill	50:52.0
1962	C.Williams	52:15.0	1967	M.Tolley	52:32.4
1963	K.Matthews	49:52.8	1968	P.Nihill	51:10.4
1964	K.Matthews	48:23.0 ¹			

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

10000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1969	P.Nihill	44:07.0	1984	I.McCombie	41:33.0
1970	W.Sutherland	45:16.8	1985	M.Day (New Zealand)	43:35.3
1971	P.Embleton	45:26.2	1986	I.McCombie	41:42.28
1972	P.Embleton	44:26.8	1987	I.McCombie	41:16.14
1973	R.Mills	44:38.6	1988	I.McCombie	41:36.51
1974	P.Marlow	44:58.4	1989	M.Easton	41:39.93
1975	B.Adams	42:40.0	1990	M.Easton	41:32.80
1976	B.Adams	42:58.0	1991	I.McCombie	41:24.29
1977	B.Adams	44:10.0	1992	M.Rush	41:46.42
1978	B.Adams	43:44.0	1993	M.Bell	42:29.63
1979	B.Adams	43:48.2	1994	D.Stone	43:09.28
1980	R.Mills	43:21.2	1995	D.Stone	41:10.11
1981	S.Barry	43:22.4	1996	S.Partington	42:29.73
1982	S.Barry	41:14.7	1997	P.King	42:32.32
1983	S.Barry	40:54.7 ¹			

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

2 MILES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1901	G.Deyermond (Ireland)	14:17.4	1914	R.Bridge	13:57.2
1902	W.Sturgess	14:46.6	<i>1915-1918 not held: World War I</i>		
1903	E.Negus	14:34.4	1919	R.Bridge	14:18.4
1904	G.Larner	13:57.6	1920	C.Dowson	14:32.0
1905	G.Larner	13:50.0	1921	J.Evans	14:40.2
1906	A.Yeoumans	14:20.4	1922	U.Frigerio (Italy)	14:30.0
1907	R.Harrison	14:01.8	1923	G.Watts	14:24.0
1908	G.Larner	13:58.4	1924	R.Goodwin	14:11.2
1909	E.Webb	13:56.4	1925	R.Goodwin	14:07.4
1910	E.Webb	13:54.4	1926	W.Cowley	14:32.4
1911	H.Ross	13:55.4	1927	A.Pope	14:21.6
1912	R.Bridge	13:55.4	1928	A.Pope	14:04.8
1913	R.Bridge	13:51.8	1929	A.Pope	13:57.6

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1930	C.Hyde	13:56.4	1952	R.Hardy	13:27.8
1931	A.Pope	13:52.6	1953	G.Coleman	14:02.2
1932	A.Cooper	13:44.6	1954	G.Coleman	13:52.0
1933	A.Cooper	13:39.8	1955	G.Coleman	14:01.0
1934	A.Cooper	13:41.0	1956	R.Goodall	14:20.8
1935	A.Cooper	13:46.6	1957	S.Vickers	14:05.6
1936	A.Cooper	13:50.0	1958	S.Vickers	13:33.4
1937	A.Cooper	13:58.2	1959	K.Matthews	13:19.4
1938	A.Cooper	14:02.2	1960	S.Vickers	13:02.4 ¹
1939	H.Churcher	13:50.0	1961	K.Matthews	13:24.6
<i>1940-1945 not held: Word War II</i>			1962	K.Matthews	13:59.0
1946	L.Hindmar (Sweden)	13:59.0	1963	K.Matthews	13:18.2
1947	L.Hindmar (Sweden)	13:54.4	1964	K.Matthews	13:22.4
1948	H.Churcher	13:49.8	1965	P.Nihill	13:20.0
1949	A.Borjesson (Sweden)	14:06.6	1966	R.Wallwork	13:25.0
1950	R.Hardy	13:46.8	1967	R.Wallwork	13:44.8
1951	R.Hardy	13:43.2	1968	A.Jones	13:35.6

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1969	R.Mills	12:57.0	1978	R.Mills	12:05.83
1970	P.Nihill	12:13.8	1979	R.Mills	12:09.07
1971	P.Nihill	12:08.4	1980	S.Barry	12:00.44
1972	R.Mills	12:31.54	1981	R.Mills	11:44.68
1973	R.Mills	12:16.8	1982	R.Mills	11:58.18
1974	R.Mills	12:27.0	1983	D.Smith (Australia)	11:36.04 ¹
1975	P.Nihill	12:43.14	1984	P.Vesty	11:42.94
1976	R.Mills	12:22.6	1985	I.McCombie	11:41.73
1977	R.Mills	12:08.36	1986	M.Day (New Zealand)	12:04.00

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

4 MILES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1894	H.Curtis	30:05.8	1898	W.Sturgess	29:10.0
1895	W.Sturgess	30:17.4	1899	W.Sturgess	29:20.6
1896	W.Sturgess	28:57.6	1900	W.Sturgess	30:20.8
1897	W.Sturgess	28:24.8 ¹			

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

5000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
2001	Lloyd Finch	20:47.23	2005	C.Griffin (Ireland)	20:44.45
2002	S.Hollier	20:41.29	2006	C.Griffin (Ireland)	19:43.40 ¹
2003	S.Hollier	20:59.46	2007	Dominic King	20:57.90
2004	Dominic King	20:11.35			

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

JUNIOR MEN

1 MILE

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1947	K.Harding	7:30.2	1958	D.Read	6:51.8
1948	E.Sharp	7:22.6	1959	P.Marlow	7:05.4
1949	D.Bolt	7:06.0	1960	R.Wallwork	6:59.1
1950	N.Read	7:04.8	1961	S.Lightman	6:54.5
1951	J.Lowther	6:59.2	1962	S.Lightman	6:46.2 ¹
1952	G.Lewis	6:53.6	1963	M.Tolley	6:57.9
1953	G.Howell	6:49.9	1964	C.Trimming	7:12.4
1954	G.Howell	6:54.0	1965	R.Care	6:58.2
1955	J.Edgington	7:13.4	1966	K.Smith	7:33.0
1956	M.Shannon	7:07.4	1967	P.Embleton	7:04.9
1957	M.Shannon	6:55.3	1968	O.Flynn	6:58.4

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1969	R.Evans	14:04.0	1971	B.Laver	13:39.0
1970	D.Ward	13:22.4 ¹	1972	J.Lord	13:27.8

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

10000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1973	J.Lord	45:39.6	1981	G.Vale	42:06.35 ¹
1974	J.Lord	45:20.0	1982	P.Vesty	47:54.38
1975	D.Cotton	46:29.6	1983	T.Berrett	43:21.28
1976	M.Dunion	47:24.4	1984	D.Hucks	46:11.38
1977	G.Morris	46:51.0	1985	I.Ashforth	45:04.37
1978	M.Miley	47:44.84	1986	D.Stone	45:15.68
1979	G.Vale	45:55.01	1987	D.Stone	44:09.29
1980	G.Vale	45:06.24	1988	J.Vincent	45:19.11

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1989	C.Walmsley	51:26.82	1998	T.Taylor	45:56.16
1990	G.Jackson	46:50.69	1999	Lloyd Finch	45:52.39
1991	P.King	46:07.60	2000	C.Griffin (Ireland)	46:45.31
1992	D.Cullinane (Ireland)	44:13.91	2001	Lloyd Finch	44:29.4
1993	P.King	46:07.60	2002	Dominic King	42:49.8
1994	D.Russell (Australia)	43:26.22	2003	N.Ball	49:38.49
1995	J.Costin (Ireland)	44:12.51	2004	Luke Finch	46:48.40
1996	J.Costin (Ireland)	44:55.20	2005	N.Ball	45:36.24
1997	T.Taylor	48:44.42	2006	N.Ball	43:50.94

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

UNDER 17 MEN VARIOUS DISTANCES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
<i>1 mile</i>			1987	J.Vincent	48:53.17
1968	O.Caviglioli	7:04.0	1988	D.Lawrence	51:55.14
<i>2000 metres</i>			1989	S.Tilbury	51:02.15
1969	P.Dallow	9:00.8	1990	P.King	46:34.50 ³
1970	P.Sturdy	8:41.8	<i>5000 metres</i>		
1971	V.Hands	8:54.6	1991	P.King	21:31.18 ⁴
1972	K.Sturdy	8:36.6	1992	P.O'Callaghan (Ireland)	23:38.65
1973	M.Dunion	8:52.4	1993	J.Costin (Ireland)	23:48.29
1974	M.Dunion	8:33.4 ¹	1994	S.Taylor	28:00.12
1975	S.Maxwell	9:06.8	1995	S.Monk	24:39.70
<i>3000 metres</i>			1996	M.Hales	23:49.89
1976	S.Maxwell	13:05.8 ²	1997	D.Kidd (Ireland)	22:57.20
1977	I.McCombie	13:28.8	1998	C.Griffin (Ireland)	23:41.47
1978	N.Troy	13:10.6	1999	A.Parker	23:22.81
1979	G.Maynard	13:39.63	2000	A.Parker	22:48.91
1980	T.Berrett	14:09.71	2001	Luke Finch	23:50.61
1981	T.Berrett	13:23.76	2002	Luke Finch	23:46.41
1982	D.Hucks	13:33.33	2003	N.Ball	22:59.03
1983	N.Kavanagh	13:12.84	2004	N.Ball	22:30.26
<i>1984 not held</i>			2005	B.Wears	24:09.16
1985	P.Whitehouse	13:55.75	2006	B.Wears	22:48.35
<i>10000 metres</i>			2007	M.Halliday	24:14.82
1986	R.Hutchings	47:53.45			

Notes

¹ Championship Best Performance for 2000m

² Championship Best Performance for 3000m

³ Championship Best Performance for 10000m

⁴ Championship Best Performance for 5000m

UNDER 15 BOYS 3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1991	M.Cross	16:08.72	2000	Luke Finch	14:09.93
1992	R.Warren	19:35.37	2001	L.Davis	15:47.32
1993	M.Hales	15:45.20	2002	N.Ball	14:43.39
1994	M.Hales	14:51.12	2003	L.Hayden	14:14.56
1995	J.Murphy	14:48.40	2004	A.Cirillo (Wales)	15:49.32
1996	Lloyd Finch	15:02.70	2005	A.Cirillo (Wales)	14:54.81
1997	Lloyd Finch	13:52.79	2006	C.Ball	15:48.72
1998	Lloyd Finch	13:29.59 ¹	2007	H.Hall	14:48.86
1999	J.Davis	14:04.41			

Notes

¹ Championship Best Performance

XXXVII MEN'S TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS – INDOOR

SENIOR MEN 3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1997	A.Penn	12:14.42	2000	R.Heffernan (Ireland)	11:38.20
1998	M.Bell	12:08.61	2001	R.Heffernan (Ireland)	11:19.27
1999	A.Drake	11:56.72	2002	R.Heffernan (Ireland)	11:10.02 ¹

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

JUNIOR MEN 3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1995	S.Monk	12:50.67	2001	Lloyd Finch	12:30.97
1996	S.Monk	12:43.33	2002	Dominic King	12:24.78 ¹
1997	D.Kidd (Ireland)	12:40.17	2003	Luke Finch	13:14.69
1998	D.Kidd (Ireland)	12:45.85	2004	N.Ball	12:47.41
1999	D.Kidd (Ireland)	13:24.21	2005	N.Ball	12:47.40
2000	Dominic King	12:44.51	2006	N.Ball	12:44.75

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

XXXVIII WOMEN'S TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS – OUTDOOR

SENIOR WOMEN VARIOUS DISTANCES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
880 yards			1925	F.Faulkner	4:15.0
1923	E.Trickey	4:35.0	1926	D.Crossley	4:06.0
1924	E.Trickey	4:17.4	1927	M.Hegarty	3:54.2 ¹

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
<i>1 mile</i>			<i>2500 metres</i>		
1928	L.Howes	8:27.4	1969	J.Farr	12:45.8
1929	L.Howes	8:18.0	1970	J.Farr	12:34.0
1930	C.Mason	8:14.4	1971	B.Cook	12:39.8
1931	C.Mason	7:45.6	1972	B.Jenkins	12:31.2 ⁵
1932	C.Mason	7:47.8	<i>3000 metres</i>		
<i>1600 metres</i>			1973	B.Jenkins	14:59.4
1933	J.Probekk	7:51.2	1974	M.Fawkes	14:33.50 ⁶
1934	J.Probekk	7:38.2 ²	<i>5000 metres</i>		
1935	J.Howes	7:57.8	1975	G.Lovell	25:02.8
1936	J.Howes	8:14.2	1976	M.Fawkes	24:10.0
1937	F.Pengelly	8:36.5	1977	M.Fawkes	24:50.6
1938	E.Webb	8:39.0	1978	C.Tyson	24:08.2
1939	F.Pengelly	8:19.9	1979	M.Fawkes	23:31.5
<i>1940-1945 not held: World War II</i>			1980	I.Bateman	24:09.0
<i>1 mile</i>			1981	C.Tyson	23:12.55
1945	J.Riddington	8:42.8	1982	S.Cook (Australia)	23:03.52
<i>1600 metres</i>			1983	A.Peel (Canada)	24:26.04
1946	D.Mann	8:38.6	1984	J.Barrett	23:51.63
1947	J.Riddington	8:36.4	1985	G.Birch	23:53.47
1948	J.Heath	8:17.8	1986	H.Elleker	24:27.17
1949	J.Heath	8:25.0	1987	L.Langford	22:35.04
1950	J.Heath	8:17.0	1988	B.Sworowski	24:24.32
1951	J.Heath	7:50.0	1989	B.Sworowski	22:30.59
<i>1 mile</i>			1990	B.Sworowski	22:23.35
1952	B.Day	7:58.2	1991	B.Sworowski	22:29.04
1953	B.Randle (née Day)	7:48.2	1992	V.Lupton	22:12.21
1954	B.Randle	7:38.4 ³	1993	V.Lupton	22:34.50
1955	B.Randle	7:59.4	1994	V.Snook	23:32.52
1956	D.Williams	7:47.6	1995	L.Langford	22:20.03
1957	G.Williams	8:08.4	1996	V.Lupton	23:37.47
1958	B.Franklin	8:09.4	1997	O.Loughnane (Ireland)	24:09.18
<i>1.5 miles</i>			1998	G.O'Sullivan (Ireland)	21:52.68
1959	B.Franklin	12:56.4	1999	V.Lupton	23:37.47
1960	J.Woodsford	12:31.2	<i>2000 not held</i>		
1961	S.Jennings	12:18.4	2001	N.Menéndez	23:46.30
1962	J.Farr (née Woodsford)	12:20.0	2002	L.Kehler	21:42.51 ⁷
1963	J.Farr	12:26.4	2003	L.Kehler	23:10.15
1964	J.Farr	12:06.8 ⁴	2004	N.Menéndez	23:53.75
1965	J.Farr	12:14.2	2005	J.Jackson	23:34.12
1966	J.Farr	12:09.2	2006	A.Loughnane (Ireland)	22:54.9
1967	J.Farr	12:09.2	2007	J.Jackson	22:03.65
1968	J.Farr	12:39.0			

Notes

- ¹ Championship Best Performance for 880y
² Championship Best Performance for 1600m

- ³ Championship Best Performance for 1 mile
⁴ Championship Best Performance for 1.5 miles

⁵ Championship Best Performance for 2500m
⁶ Championship Best Performance for 3000m

⁷ Championship Best Performance for 5000m

10000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1978	C.Tyson	49:59	1990	V.Lupton	48:12.2
1979	M.Fawkes	48:37.6	1991	B.Sworowski	46:23.08
1980	C.Tyson	49:30.4	<i>1992 not held</i>		
1981	I.Bateman	49:54.3	1993	V.Larby	47:10.07
1982	I.Bateman	48:57.6	1994	V.Snook (née Larby)	48:05
1983	I.Bateman	48:52.5	1995	V.Lupton	45:18.8
1984	H.Elleker	49:52.5	1996	V.Lupton	49:15.0
1985	H.Elleker	51:22.3	1997	C.Charnock	54:33.6
1986	H.Elleker	49:21.8	1998	P.Phillips	64:08.9
1987	S.Brown	51:48.7	<i>1999 not held</i>		
1988	B.Sworowski	50:12.0	2000	L.Kehler	45:09.57 ²
1989	L.Langford ¹	47:15.0			
	B.Sworowski ¹	47:15.0			

Notes

¹ Dead heat

² Championship Best Performance

JUNIOR WOMEN 5000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1986	K.Dunster	27:43.33	1997	N.Huckerby	25:01.55
1987	L.Carr	26:26.22	1998	K.Ford	25:30.29
1988	J.Drake	24:07.22	1999	A.Hales	24:35.55
1989	V.Lupton	25:06.27	2000	S.O'Keeffe (Ireland)	25:07.32
1990	V.Lupton	23:41.5	2001	S.Hales	26:29.35
1991	C.Jarvis	25:13.8	2002	S.Hales	25:18.56
1992	T.Ashman	25:32.95	2003	S.Hales	25:16.90
1993	K.Horwill	26:49.41	2004	S.Hales	24:54.62
1994	N.Saville (Australia)	23:12.03 ¹	2005	R.Mersh	25:32.85
1995	N.Huckerby	26:03.46	2006	C.O'Rawe-Hobbs	26:22.51
1996	R.Comerford (Ireland)	24:40.2			

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

UNDER 17 WOMEN VARIOUS DISTANCES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
<i>1 mile</i>			1963	S.Higgleton	10:14.5
1961	J.Keen	9:11.4	1964	S.Dyer	8:36.0
1962	J.Keen	8:45.6	1965	J.Peck	9:01.8

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1966	J.Matthews	8:58.4	1986	N.Massey	15:38.79
1967	D.Froome	8:23.4 ¹	1987	A.Crofts	15:01.22
1968	C.Russell	8:45.2	1988	T.Devlin	15:06.71
<i>2000 metres</i>			1989	T.Devlin	15:33.76
1969	B.Brown	10:58.4	<i>5000 metres</i>		
1970	C.Daniels	11:11.0	1990	C.Jarvis	27:08.29
1971	K.Braznell	10:31.6 ²	1991	K.Horwill	26:48.37
1972	M.Davis	12:20.	1992	L.Crump	28:42.12
<i>2500 metres</i>			1993	N.Howley	26:54.99
1973	P.Branson	12:42.8 ³	1994	N.Howley	25:25.07
1974	S.Saunders	12:47.8	1995	S.Bennett	27:01.1
<i>3000 metres</i>			1996	S.Bennett	27:53.4
1975	B.Francis	16:27.0	1997	S.O'Keeffe (Ireland)	25:00.6
1976	E.Cox	15:29.56	1998	S.O'Keeffe (Ireland)	24:35.02 ⁵
1977	J.Wickham	15:30.0	1999	N.Phillips	26:32.96
1978	C.Brooke	16:43.8	2000	N.Evans	27:24.88
1979	J.Mullins	15:47.5	2001	B.Christmas	27:42.35
1980	J.Barrett	15:34.8	2002	K.Stones	25:57.11
1981	K.Nipper	14:59.32	2003	J.Gagg	25:03.91
1982	H.Ringshaw	15:05.82	2004	R.Mersh	24:47.75
1983	E.Ryan	15:41.66	2005	L.Reynolds (Ireland)	25:19.67
1984	K.Macadam	15:22.4.3	2006	C. O'Rawe-Hobbs	26:44.55
1985	S.Ashforth	14:35.5 ⁴	2007	F.Denehy (Ireland)	26:52.49

Notes

- ¹ Championship Best Performance for 1 mile
- ² Championship Best Performance for 2000m
- ³ Championship Best Performance for 2500m

- ⁴ Championship Best Performance for 3000m
- ⁵ Championship Best Performance for 5000m

UNDER 15 GIRLS VARIOUS DISTANCES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
<i>2000 metres</i>			1982	S.Clark	12:53.83
1971	S.Saunders	11:13.8	1983	S.Ashforth	12:55.77
1972	P.Branson	10:12.8	1984	S.Ashforth	11:59.8 ¹
<i>2500 metres</i>			1985	J.Snead	12:40.5
1973	D.Ilderton	13:26.2	1986	R.Devlin	12:49.49
1974	E.Cox	12:53.2	1987	T.Devlin	12:21.94
1975	E.Cox	13:09.4	1988	N.Greenfield	13:01.12
1976	K.Eden	13:34.27	1989	C.Jarvis	12:56.32
1977	K.Eden	13:17.0	<i>3000 metres</i>		
1978	J.Mullins	13:07.6	1990	N.Parsons	16:28.92
1979	A.Copeland	13:26.0	1991	L.Butterley	16:27.48
1980	K.Bowers	12:43.0	1992	N.Howley	16:16.52
1981	L.Langford	13:04.52	1993	S.Bennett	15:47.0

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1994	S.Bennett	15:28.31	2001	R.Mersh	16:03.25
1995	K.Mann	15:41.0	2002	R.Mersh	15:26.01
1996	K.Ford	16:07.95	2003	R.Mersh	15:09.10 ²
1997	N.Phillips	15:40.37	2004	K.Granger	16:04.35
1998	N.Evans	15:41.71	2005	K.Granger	15:43.76
1999	N.Geens	16:03.49	2006	N.Myers	16:08.65
2000	C.Burtenshaw (Ireland)	16:43.43	2007	L.Whelan	16:07.97

Notes

¹ Championship Best Performance for 2500m

² Championship Best Performance for 3000m

XXXIX WOMEN'S TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS – INDOOR

JUNIOR WOMEN 3000 METRES

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1995	S.Bennett	15:22.58	2001	N.Phillips	14:49.90
1996	S.Bennett	15:22.20	2002	S.Hales	14:34.11
1997	S.Bennett	15:07.08	2003	S.Hales	14:20.83
1998	K.Ford	15:01.32	2004	S.Hales	13:36.43 ¹
1999	S.O'Keeffe (Ireland)	15:06.55	2005	R.Mersh	14:28.70
2000	N.Phillips	14:38.22	2006	R.Mersh	14:40.94

Note

¹ Championship Best Performance

XL THE “AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIPS”

7 MILES¹

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1866	J.Chambers	59:32	1874	W.Morgan ²	55:26.8
1867	J.Farnworth	58:12	1875	W.Morgan	53:47
1868	W.Rye	57:40	1876	H.Venn	55:11.2
1869	T.Griffith	58:35	1877	H.Webster	53:59.6
1870	T.Griffith	55:30	1878	H.Venn	52:25
1871	J.Francis	58:09	1879 ³	H.Webster	53:34.5
1872	T.Hogg	57:22		H.Venn ²	56:10
1873	W.Morgan	54:57			

Notes

¹ The Amateur Athletic Club held Championships from 1886 to 1879 and the London Athletic Club held a rival meeting in 1879; both bodies claimed that they were promoting *the* Amateur Championships.

The background is discussed in Chapter 1.

² Walk overs

³ The first “Championship” listed for 1879 was that of the A.A.C and the second that of the L.A.C.

**XLII THE WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY AND ROAD WALKING ASSOCIATION
ROAD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

SENIOR WOMEN VARIOUS DISTANCES

Year and Venue	Winner	Time	Year and Venue	Winner	Time
1960 Wordsley	S.Jennings	36:01 ¹	1971 Wombourne	B.Jenkins	33:50
1961 Croydon	S.Jennings	34:30	1972 Bromsgrove	B.Jenkins	33:51
1962 Bradford	J.Farr	32:55	1973 Bolton	M.Fawkes	31:55
1963 Wordsley	J.Farr	39:33	1974 Quinton	M.Fawkes	27:25
1964 Stourbridge	J.Farr	35:51	1975 Uxbridge	J.Farr	32:12
1965 Wordsley	J.Farr	33:35	1976 Whitley Bay	J.Farr	29:24
1966 Quinton	S.Jennings	28:15	1977 Birmingham	C.Tyson	24:02 ²
1967 Sheffield	B.Jenkins	35:21	1978 Melksham	C.Tyson	24:08
1968 Enfield	J.Farr	34:05	1979 Birmingham	E.Cox	22:30 ³
1969 Holloway	B.Jenkins	32:57	1980 London ⁴	C.Tyson	23:05
1970 Birmingham	J.Farr	34:02			

Notes

¹ The distance was about 4 miles from the inception of the event.

² The distance was standardised at 5k.

³ Course about 600 metres short

⁴ Battersea Park

UNDER 17 WOMEN 5 KILOMETRES

Year and Venue	Winner	Time
1979 Birmingham	J.Barrett	23:50 ¹

Note

¹ Short Course

UNDER 15 GIRLS 3 KILOMETRES

Year and Venue	Winner	Time	Year and Venue	Winner	Time
1968 Enfield	V.Charlesworth	11:20 ¹	1974 Quinton	M.De Giovanni	14:39 ¹
1969 Holloway	K.Braznell	11:48 ¹	1975 Uxbridge	E.Cox	15:40
1970 Birmingham	K.Braznell	13:13 ¹	1976 Whitley Bay	L.Whitehead	14:56
1971 Wombourne	P.Branson	12:49 ¹	1977 Birmingham	K.Eden	14:56
1972 Bromsgrove	Not known	–	1978 Melksham	F.Rider	15:08
1973 Bolton	K.Hill	12:56 ¹	1979 Birmingham	H.Ringshaw	15:01 ¹

Note

¹ Short course

UNDER 13 GIRLS 2.5 KILOMETRES

Year and Venue	Winner	Time	Year and Venue	Winner	Time
1975 Uxbridge	K.Eden	13:06	1977 Birmingham	S.Brown	13:14
1976 Whitley Bay	Y.Eden	13:49	1978 Melksham	H.Ringshaw	13:51

Year and Venue	Winner	Time	Year and Venue	Winner	Time
1979 Birmingham	K.Bowers ¹	11:00	1980 London ²	H.Lawley	12:53
	L.Langford ¹	11:00			

Notes

¹ Short course and dead heat

² Battersea Park

XLII ENGLISH SCHOOLS' ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP BOYS

JUNIOR			INTERMEDIATE	
Year	Winner	Time	Winner	Time
	<i>2 miles</i>		<i>3 miles</i>	
1968	A.Grant (Essex)	15:42	O.Caviglioli (Essex)	23:40
	<i>3000 metres</i>		<i>3000 metres</i>	
1969	P.Dallow (Warks)	14:08	O.Caviglioli (Essex)	13:13
1970	L.Dordoy (Essex)	14:22	P.Sturdy (Warks)	12:57
1971	D.Cotton (Warks)	14:08	P.Dallow (Warks)	13:39
1972	N.Gibbons (Warks)	14:48	K.Sturdy (Worcs)	13:26
1973	S.Maxwell (Lancs)	14:21	M.Dunion (Warks)	13:24
	<i>3000 metres (no change)</i>		<i>5000 metres</i>	
1974	N.Odnell (Worcs)	14:49	M.Dunion (Essex)	23:31
1975	I.McCombie (N'bland)	15:09	C.Pope (Sussex)	23:40
1976	S.Marshall (Kent)	16:02	I.McCombie (N'bland)	23:46
1977	P.Vesty (Leics)	14:31	I.McCombie (N'bland)	23:26
1978	S.Mortimer (Surrey)	14:55	G.Vale (Surrey)	22:32
1979	M.Corbett (Heref/Worcs)	14:52	M.Nicholls (Kent)	23:19
1980	J.Boulton (W.Mids)	14:24	T.Berrett (Kent)	24:31
1981	A.Ethell (Leics)	14:31	T.Berrett (Kent)	23:37
1982	G.Ringshaw (Sussex)	14:12	D.Hucks (London)	23:20
1983	D.Ethell (Leics)	15:14	D.Leigh (W.Mids)	22:44
1984	D.Ethell (Leics)	14:43	I.Ashforth (S.Yorks)	22:52
1985	J.Vincent (Leics)	14:12	P.Whitehouse (Warks)	24:14
1986	M.Young (Cheshire)	14:23	J.Vincent (Leics)	22:27
1987	S.White (S.Yorks)	14:41	J.Vincent (Leics)	23:04
1988	J.Deakin (W.Mids)	14:17	K.Atton (Leics)	23:51
1989	N.Simpson (S.Yorks)	13:39	J.Deakin (Warks)	24:37
1990	J.Nunn (Sussex)	14:59	P.King (Sussex)	23:30
1991	R.Meechem (Sussex)	15:08.58	P.King (Sussex)	22:21.69
1992	R.Meechem (Sussex)	16:03.2	B.Allkins (Warks)	24:19.1
1993	M.Hales (Sussex)	15:04.1	G.Bailey (Warks)	24:59.8
1994	M.Hales (Sussex)	14:49.73	S.Monk (Essex)	25:46.71
1995	J.Murphy (Leics)	14:05.27	S.Monk (Essex)	23:22.78
1996	Lloyd Finch (Leics)	15:02.62	M.Kemp (Leics)	23:06.26
1997	Lloyd Finch (Leics)	14:04.61	T.Taylor (Leics)	23:16.70
1998	A.Parker (W.Mids)	14:24.58	N.Adams (S.Yorks)	24:45.49
1999	J.Davis (Sussex)	13:58.21	Lloyd Finch (Leics)	22:19.11
2000	L.Davis (Sussex)	15:08.07	A.Parker (W.Mids)	23:14.55
2001	N.Ball (Hants)	15:40.08	Luke Finch (Leics)	22:19.70

Year	Winner	Time	Winner	Time
2002	N.Ball (Hants)	14:08.26	Luke Finch (Leics)	22:15.93
2003	L.Hayden (Leics)	14:24.8	N.Ball (Hants)	23:21.4
2004	C.Taylor (Mers)	15:29.92	N.Ball (Hants)	23:39.07
2005	M.Halliday (W.Mids)	14:47.92	B.Wears (Cleve)	23:24.99
2006	C.Ball (Hants)	15:31.20	B.Wears (Cleve)	21:49.66
2007	M.Silvester (Hants)	15:17.32	A.Wright (Soms)	23:39.89

SENIOR

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
<i>5 miles</i>					
1968	S.Coleman (Warks)	39:38	1987	G.Brown (Sussex)	45:52
<i>5000 metres</i>					
1969	R.Evans (Sussex)	23:56	1988	J.Vincent (Leics)	45:58
1970	C.Eyre (Cumb)	23:14	1989	J.Vincent (Leics)	44:40
1971	P.Le Bas (Hants)	24:08	1990	M.Young (Mers)	50:26
1972	K.Brewster (Cumb)	24:32	1991	D.Lawrence (Avon)	51:44.97
1973	P.Sturdy (Worcs)	23:20	1992	S.Davis (Essex)	46:46.6
<i>10000 metres</i>					
1974	P.Dodd (Warks)	49:12	<i>5000 metres</i>		
1975	M.Angrove (Warks)	51:28	1993	P.King (Sussex)	21:00.2
1976	I.Statter (Surrey)	52:00	1994	S.Hollier (Staffs)	26:19.36
1977	M.Wordsworth (Kent)	49:57	1995	R.Meechem (Sussex)	23:36.72
1978	M.Wordsworth (Kent)	47:09	1996	A.Goudie (London)	24:09.16
1979	I.McCombie (N'bland)	47:59	1997	M.Hales (Sussex)	23:04.50
1980	G.Vale (Surrey)	47:22	1998	M.Hales (Sussex)	22:31.84
1981	P.Vesty (Leics)	48:12	1999	N.Adams (S.Yorks)	23:14.00
1982	T.Berrett (Kent)	48:12	2000	Daniel King (Essex)	23:21.71
1983	M.Rush (Cumb)	42:39	2001	Dominic King (Essex)	22:01.1
1984	S.Partington (Mers)	46:34	2002	N.Bates (Mers))	24:20.07
1985	C.Tonks (Heref/Worcs)	46:08	2003	Luke Finch (Leics)	23:13.8
1986	I.Ashforth (S.Yorks)	46:36	2004	Luke Finch (Leics)	22:22.36
			2005	N.Ball (Hants)	22:09.08
			2006	N.Ball (Hants)	21:48.82
			2007	S.Hambridge (Warks)	23:50.00

Notes

¹ Venues were as follows: 1968 Portsmouth: 1969 Motspur Park: 1970 Solihull: 1971 Crystal Palace: 1972 Washington: 1973 Bebington: 1974 Redditch: 1975 Sheffield: 1976 Gillingham: 1977 Keswick: 1978 Croydon: 1979 Southampton: 1980 Birmingham: 1981 Leicester: 1982 Southend: 1983 Douglas: 1984 Nuneaton: 1985 Keswick: 1986 Redditch: 1987 Leicester: 1988 Worcester: 1989 Sheffield: 1990 Aldershot: 1991 Sheffield: 1992 Bebington: 1993 Stoke: 1994 Birmingham: 1995 Stoke: 1996 Birmingham: 1997 Derby: 1998 Hull: 1999 Peterborough: 2000 Birmingham: 2001 Hull: 2002 Derby: 2003 Sheffield: 2004 Exeter: 2005 Southampton: 2006 Derby: 2007 Exeter.

² From 1968 to 1990 the Championships were on the road and thereafter on the track.

**XLIII ENGLISH SCHOOLS' ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS
GIRLS**

JUNIOR			INTERMEDIATE		
Year	Winner	Time	Winner	Time	
	<i>2500 metres</i>			<i>3000 metres</i>	
1974	M.De Giovanni (Surrey)	12:56	S.Saunders (Warks)	14:57	
1975	J.Wickham (W.Mids)	12:58	Y.Rowe (W.Mids)	16:07	
1976	K.Eden (W.Mids)	13:24	J.Wickham (W.Mids)	16:52	
1977	K.Eden (W.Mids)	13:32	E.Cox (W.Mids)	14:54	
1978	J.Harvey (Surrey)	12:24	K.Eden (W.Mids)	15:13	
1979	S.Brown (Sussex)	13:07	F.Rider (Kent)	15:32	
1980	K.Bowers (Heref/Worcs)	13:04	S.Brown (Sussex)	15:31	
1981	L.Langford (W.Mids)	12:44	S.Brown (Sussex)	15:02	
1982	J.Preece (W.Mids)	12:22	H.Ringshaw (Sussex)	14:45	
1983	S.Cooper (W.Mids)	12:32	R.Sugg (Heref/Worcs)	14:53	
1984	S.Ashforth (S.Yorks)	12:58	K.Macadam (Warks)	14:42	
1985	J.Snead (W.Mids)	12:06	N.Ellis (W.Mids)	14:39	
1986	J.Ashforth (S.Yorks)	12:17	V.Lawrence (Berks)	14:29	
1987	T.Devlin (S.Yorks)	12:28	J.Pope (Sussex)	14:48	
1988	C.Brown (Mers)	12:26	T.Devlin (S.Yorks)	15:06	
1989	N.Greenfield (W.Mids)	12:35	P.Savage (Sussex)	14:43	
1990	N.Parsons (Hants)	13:10	P.Savage (Sussex)	15:02	
1991	L.Butterley (S.Yorks)	13:04.14	C.Jarvis (Heref/Worcs)	14:36.39	
1992	N.Howley (S.Yorks)	12:42.8	L.Tozer (W.Mids)	15:50.0	
1993	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	12:55.2	N.Howley (S.Yorks)	15:29.5	
1994	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	12:30.72	N.Huckerby (W.Mids)	15:18.90	
1995	A.Hales (Sussex)	13:10.06	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	15:28.46	
1996	A.Hales (Sussex)	12:42.43	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	14:56.10	
	<i>3000 metres</i>			<i>3000 metres (no change)</i>	
1997	N.Phillips (Kent)	15:26.63	A.Hales (Sussex)	14:47.52	
1998	K.Mann (W.Mids)	15:36.56	A.Hales (Sussex)	14:09.81	
1999	S.Hales (Sussex)	15:25.06	N.Phillips (Kent)	14:58.96	
2000	N.Fox (Kent)	16:46.08	S.Hales (Sussex)	15:44.33	
2001	J.Gagg (Humb)	16:54.34	S.Hales (Sussex)	14:20.70	
2002	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	14:44.39	K.Stones (Humb)	14:25.66	
2003	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	14:53.4	J.Gagg (Humb)	15:05.8	
2004	K.Granger (S.Yorks)	15:44.38	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	14:43.75	
2005	K.Granger (S.Yorks)	14:36.60	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	14:29.09	
2006	V.Morgan (W.Mids)	16:06.29	C.O'Rawe-Hobbs (Essex)	15:07.20	
2007	L.Whelan (Mers)	16:00.06	K.Granger (S.Yorks)	15:17.40	

SENIOR

5000 metres

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1974	S.De Giovanni (Surrey)	28:43	1976	S.Wish (W.Mids)	25:33
1975	S.Wish (W.Mids)	27:42	1977	M.De Giovanni (Surrey)	28:07

Year	Winner	Time	Year	Winner	Time
1978	J.Wickham (W.Mids)	25:26	1993	K.Horwill (W.Mids)	25:48.9
1979	A.Grant (Cumb)	29:21	1994	L.Tozer (W.Mids)	26:14.09
1980	K.Eden (W.Mids)	26:39	1995	N.Howley (S.Yorks)	26:22.87
1981	F.Rider (Kent)	27:52	1996	N.Huckerby (W.Mids)	25:46.52
1982	S.Brown (Sussex)	25:55	1997	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	26:39.45
1983	S.Brown (Sussex)	25:18	1998	S.Bennett (W.Mids)	26:14.79
1984	L.Langford (W.Mids)	25:28	1999	L.Richmond (W.Mids)	28:21.95
1985	L.Langford (W.Mids)	24:22	2000	N.Phillips (Kent)	27:13.02
1986	J.Drake (Sussex)	15:10	2001	C.Reeves (Kent)	27:44.60
1987	J.Drake (Sussex)	25:03	2002	S.Hales (Sussex)	25:31.24
1988	A.Hodd (Kent)	25:20	2003	K.Stones (Humb)	26:28.9
1989	K.Woodcock (Cumb)	25:33	2004	E.Bosworth (Kent)	30:33.06
1990	V.Lupton (S.Yorks)	24:45	2005	C.Tomlin (Kent)	31:59.09
1991	V.Lupton (S.Yorks)	24:37.18	2006	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	25:57.85
1992	C.Jarvis (Heref/Worcs)	25:39.8	2007	R.Mersh (S.Yorks)	27:01.00

Notes

- ¹ Venues were as follows: 1974 Redditch: 1975 Sheffield: 1976 Gillingham: 1977 Keswick: 1978 Croydon: 1979 Southampton: 1980 Birmingham: 1981 Leicester: 1982 Southend: 1983 Douglas: 1984 Nuneaton: 1985 Keswick: 1986 Redditch: 1987 Leicester: 1988 Worcester: 1989 Sheffield: 1990 Aldershot: 1991 Sheffield: 1992 Bebington: 1993 Stoke: 1994 Birmingham: 1995 Stoke: 1996 Birmingham: 1997 Derby: 1998 Hull: 1999 Peterborough: 2000 Birmingham: 2001 Hull: 2002 Derby: 2003 Sheffield: 2004 Exeter: 2005 Southampton: 2006 Derby: 2007 Exeter.
- ² From 1974 to 1990 the Championships were on the road and thereafter on the track.

XLIV THE INTER-COUNTIES' CHAMPIONSHIPS¹

MEN

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>10 miles</i>			
1934 Mitcham	A.Pope (Essex)	78:04	Middlesex
1935 Enfield	F.Redman (Middlesex)	77:17	Middlesex
1936 Woodford	F.Redman (Middlesex)	77:31	Middlesex
1937 Horsham	H.Churcher (Surrey)	75:41	Middlesex
1938 Old Bexley	F.Redman (Middlesex)	78:25	Middlesex
<i>1939-1947 Not held</i>			
1948 London ²	H.Churcher (Surrey)	75:11	Middlesex ³ Surrey ³
1949 Leicester	L.Allen (Yorkshire)	75:09	Middlesex
1950 London ⁴	L.Allen (Yorkshire)	74:38	Middlesex
1951 Macclesfield	L.Allen (Yorkshire)	75:41	Yorkshire
1952 Imber Court	L.Allen (Yorkshire)	75:28	Surrey
1953 Cheltenham	R.Holland (Yorkshire)	77:10	Middlesex
1954 London ⁵	R.Hardy (Derbyshire)	74:16	Middlesex
1955 Southport	R.Hardy (Derbyshire)	74:47	Middlesex
1956 London ⁴	R.Hardy (Derbyshire)	74:31	Middlesex
1957 Coventry	S.Vickers (Kent)	76:15	Essex

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1958 London ⁶	S.Vickers (Kent)	73:44	Essex
1959 Sheffield	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	71:01 ⁷	Middlesex
1960 Hendon	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	70:57 ⁸	Middlesex
1961 Loughborough	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	74:21	Middlesex
1962 New Southgate	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	76:10	Warwickshire
1963 Manchester	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	73:00	Surrey
1964 Morden	K.Matthews (Warwickshire)	70:22	Warwickshire
1965 Leicester	P.Nihill (Surrey)	74:55	Surrey
1966 Hendon	P.McCullagh (Middlesex)	74:05	Middlesex
1967 Bolton	R.Wallwork (Lancashire)	75:06	Middlesex
1968 Leicester	P.Nihill (Surrey)	72:28	Middlesex
1969 Morden	P.Nihill (Surrey)	71:14	Essex
1970 Liverpool	W.Wesch (Surrey)	72:07	Essex
1971 Redditch	P.Embleton (Essex)	69:29	Essex
1972 London ⁹	P.Nihill (Surrey)	73:33	Essex
1973 Leyland	J.Webb (Essex)	72:43	Essex
1974 Leicester	P.Marlow (Essex)	72:58	Essex
1975 Southwick	O.Flynn (Essex)	71:15	Essex
1976 York	O.Flynn (Essex)	69:59	Essex
1977 Coventry	R.Mills (Essex)	68:45	Yorkshire
1978 London ⁹	O.Flynn (Essex)	67:29 ¹⁰	Essex
1979 York	C.Harvey (Lancashire)	71:25	Yorkshire
1980 Leicester	R.Mills (Essex)	68:45 ¹¹	Yorkshire
1981 Exeter	M.Parker (Sussex)	73:37	Leicestershire
1982 Sheffield	S.Barry (Glamorganshire)	68:01	Surrey
1983 Kenilworth	S.Barry (Glamorganshire)	66:41	Leicestershire
1984 Southend-on-Sea	I.McCombie (Kent)	67:32	Essex
1985 York	I.McCombie (Kent)	66:32 ⁴	Yorkshire
1986 Redditch	I.McCombie (Kent)	66:35	Yorkshire
1987 Kingston-upon-Thames	I.McCombie (Kent)	67:36	Yorkshire
1988 Dronfield	I.McCombie (Kent)	67:36	Yorkshire
1989 Redditch	I.McCombie (Kent)	65:39 ⁴	Glamorganshire
1990 Southend-on-Sea	I.McCombie (Kent)	68:36	Kent
1991 London ⁶	I.McCombie (Kent)	68:17	Glamorganshire
1992 Sutton Coldfield	I.McCombie (Kent)	69:42	Glamorganshire
1993 Sheffield	L.Morton (Yorkshire)	73:16	Yorkshire
1994 London ⁶	C.Cheeseman (Surrey)	73:17	Essex
1995 Sutton Coldfield	C.Maddocks (Devonshire)	69:11	Yorkshire
1996 Sutton Coldfield	A.Penn (Warwickshire)	71:14	Essex
1997 London ⁶	S.Partington (Lancashire)	75:34	Essex
1998 Leicester	A.Drake (Warwickshire)	71:14	Sussex
<i>Distance changed to 10k</i>			
1999 Sheffield	M.Bell (Glamorganshire)	41:28	Leicestershire
2000 Sheffield	N.Carmody (Kent)	49:40	Yorkshire
<i>Distance changed to 5k</i>			
2001 Sheffield	A.Penn (Warwickshire)	22:01	Warwickshire
2002 Dartford	M.Hales (Sussex)	21:41	Kent
2003 Royal Leamington Spa	Dominic King (Essex)	43:12	Essex
2004 Royal Leamington Spa	Daniel King (Essex)	42:39	Sussex

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
<i>Distance changed to 10k</i>			
2005 Coventry	Dominic King (Essex)	44:18	Essex
2006 Coventry	N.Ball (Hampshire)	43:38	Hampshire
2007 Coventry	B.Wears (Cleveland)	44:16	Warwickshire

Notes

¹ This event was held as an Inter-Counties *Match* from 1934 to 1939 but became a *Championship* in 1948. It took place as a separate meeting until 1939 and thereafter in conjunction with the National 10 miles. Upon the abolition of the 10 miles in 1998, a separate event was reintroduced and it was subsequently held in conjunction with an "open". The competition was six to score until 1939, four to score until 1979 and thereafter three to score.

² Hyde Park

³ Middlesex and Surrey each scored 18 points (2+3+6+7 & 1+4+5+8) and there

was no provision for dealing with the matter.

⁴ Regents Park

⁵ Parliament Hill

⁶ Victoria Park

⁷ The course was about 350 yards short.

⁸ The course was short by an unknown amount.

⁹ Crystal Palace

¹⁰ The course was about 850 yards short.

¹¹ The course was about 60 yards short.

N.B.: The Inter-Counties track and field championships usually include a walk or walks, initially at 10000m and 3000m but recently at the shorter distance only.

WOMEN¹

Year and Venue	Individual Winner	Time	Team
1988 Dronfield	T.Devlin (Yorkshire)	25:29	Yorkshire
1989 Redditch	H.Ellerker (Yorkshire)	24:32	Sussex
1990 Southend-on-Sea	V.Lupton (Yorkshire)	23:11	Leicestershire
1991 London ²	S.Black (Warwickshire)	23:48	Yorkshire
1992 Sutton Coldfield	K.Smith (Warwickshire)	26:59 ³	Worcestershire
1993 Sheffield	E.Callinan (Warwickshire)	25:57	Warwickshire
1994 London ²	K.Horwill (Worcestershire)	25:38	Worcestershire
1995 Enfield	L.Langford (Staffordshire)	23:00	Yorkshire
1996 Sutton Coldfield	V.Lupton (Yorkshire)	23:05	Yorkshire
1997 London ²	L.Kehler (Staffordshire)	23:20	Sussex
1998 Leicester	K.Braznell (Warwickshire)	24:45	Sussex
1999 Sheffield	V.Lupton (Yorkshire)	23:52	Yorkshire
2000 Sheffield	W.Bennett (Warwickshire)	25:47	Kent
2001 Sheffield	N.Menéndez (Sussex)	24:53	Leicestershire
2002 Dartford	S.Hales (Sussex)	25:29	Warwickshire
2003 Royal Leamington Spa	E.Viljoen (Surrey)	25:53	Humberside
2004 Royal Leamington Spa	J.Gagg (Yorkshire)	24:27	Worcestershire
2005 Coventry	S.Tonks (Worcestershire)	25:07	Kent
2006 Coventry	S.Foster (Kent)	25:32	Warwickshire
2007 Coventry	L.Kehler (Staffordshire)	24:33	Leicestershire

Notes

¹ From its introduction, this competition was held in conjunction with the National 5k, which generally coincided with the Men's National 10 miles until, following the abolition of the 10 miles in 1998, a separate event was introduced.

² Victoria Park

³ The course was over distance by an unknown but considerable amount.

N.B.: The Inter-Counties track and field championships usually include a walk, which has always been at 3000 metres for women.

XLV INTERNATIONAL MEDAL WINNERS

This Appendix lists all medal-winning performances by British competitors at the major international Games, Championships and Cups up to 2007.

MEN

OLYMPIC GAMES

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1908	London	3500m	1	G.Larner	14:55
			2	E.Webb	15:07
		10M	1	G.Larner	1:15:57
			2	E.Webb	1:17:31
			3	E.Spencer	1:21:20
1912	Stockholm	10000m	2	E.Webb	47:47
1920	Antwerp	10000m	3	C.Gunn	49:44
1924	Paris	10000m	2	R.Goodwin	48:37
1932	Los Angeles	50k	1	T.Green	4:50:10
1936	Berlin	50k	1	H.Whitlock	4:30:41
1948	London	50k	3	T.Lloyd Johnson	4:38:31
1960	Rome	20k	3	S.Vickers	1:34:56
		50k	1	D.Thompson	4:25:30
1964	Tokyo	20k	1	K.Matthews	1:29:34
		50k	2	P.Nihill	4:11:31

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1938	Paris	50k	1	H.Whitlock	4:41:52
1946	Stockholm	50k	2	H.Forbes	4:42:58
			3	C.Megnin	4:57:04
1958	Stockholm	20k	1	S.Vickers	1:33:09
1962	Beograd	20k	1	K.Matthews	1:35:54
		50k	3	D.Thompson	4:29:00
1969	Athens	20k	1	P.Nihill	1:30:48
1971	Helsinki	20k	3	P.Nihill	1:27:34
1974	Rome	20k	3	R.Mills	1:32:33

WORLD CUP

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1961	Lugano	20k	1	K.Matthews	1:30:54
			3	G.Williams	1:34:02
		50k	2	D.Thompson	4:30:35
		Team	1	GBR	53
				20k: K.Matthews, G.Williams, R.Clark 50k: D.Thompson, R.Middleton, C.Fogg	
1963	Varese	20k	1	K.Matthews	1:30:10
			2	P.Nihill	1:33:18
		50k	2	R.Middleton	4:17:15
		Team	1	GBR	93
				20k: K.Matthews, P.Nihill, J.Edgington 50k: R.Middleton, R.Wallwork, C.Fogg	
1965	Pescara	Team	2	GBR	87
				20k: P.Fullager, R.Wallwork, M.Tolley 50k: D.Thompson, R.Middleton, C.Fogg	
1967	Bad Saarow	Team	3	GBR	104
				20k: P.Fullager, J.Webb, R.Wallwork	
				50k: D.Thompson, R.Middleton,	
				S.Lightman	

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1966	Kingston	20M	1	R.Wallwork (Eng)	2:44:43
			2	R.Middleton (Eng)	2:45:19
1970	Edinburgh	20M	3	W.Sutherland (Sco)	2:37:24
1974	Christchurch	20M	1	J.Warhurst (Eng)	2:35:23
			2	R.Thorpe (Eng)	2:39:03
1978	Edmonton	30k	1	O.Flynn (Eng)	2:22:04
1982	Brisbane	30k	1	S.Barry (Wal)	2:10:16
1986	Edinburgh	30k	3	I.McCombie (Eng)	2:10:36
1990	Auckland	30k	3	I.McCombie (Eng)	2:09:20

WOMEN

WORLD GAMES

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1926	Gothenburg	1000m	1	D.Crossley	5:10:0

Note

The Women's World Games were instituted by the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale because the I.A.A.F. and I.O.C. had refused to include women's events in the 1922 Olympic Games. The men's organisations later saw sense and the F.S.F.I. Games were discontinued after 1934. N.B.: the 1000m *run* in 1926 was won by the former national walks champion (and world record holder) Edith Trickey.

WORLD CUP

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1979	Eschborn	5k	1	M.Fawkes	22:51
			2	C.Tyson	22:59
		Team	1	GBR	85
				M.Fawkes, C.Tyson, I Bateman	

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Year	Venue	Event	Pos.	Name	Time
1990	Auckland	10k	3	L.Langford (Eng)	47:23
1998	Kuala Lumpur	10k	3	L.Kehler (Eng)	45:03
2002	Manchester	20k	2	L.Kehler (Eng)	1:36:45

XLVI INTERNATIONAL VETERANS' CHAMPIONS

Please refer to Notes 1, 2, 9 and 10 for some general information.

1972 London, England

15k	M40	K.Harding	72:44	M60	B.Roberts	82:54
	M50	D.McMullen	81:03			

1975 World Track and Field Championships Toronto, Canada

5000m	M40	R.Thorpe	— ³	25k	M40	R.Thorpe	2:02:45
	M70	B.Roberts	26:28.09		M65	S.Smith	2:37:10
					M70	B.Roberts	2:37:10

1977 World Track and Field Championships Gothenburg, Sweden

5000m	W35	J.Farr	24:37.7	20k	M70	B.Roberts	2:08:42
	W45	S.Jennings	28:36.4				

1978 European Championships Viareggio, Italy

20k	M70	B.Roberts	1:59:42
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1979 World Championships Hanover, Germany

5000m	W35	J.Farr	24:28.1	20k	M75	B.Roberts	2:07:32
10000m	M75	B.Roberts	61:17.9		M80	W.Keeler	2:38:12
	M80	W.Keeler	76:06.2				

1980 European Championships Helsinki, Finland

5k	W35	J.Farr	26:58	10k	W35	J.Farr	56:59
	W40	Y.Smith ⁴	30:18		W40	Y.Smith	63:34
	W45	S.Jennings	27:13		W45	S.Jennings	57:36
					M80	W.Keeler	80:34

1981 World Championships Christchurch, New Zealand

5000m	W35	J.Farr	27:30		W45	B.Dunsford	74:54
	M50	D.Fotheringham	25:12	20k	M50	D.Fotheringham	1:46:48
10k	W35	J.Farr	54:58				

1982 European Championships Strasbourg, France							
5000m	W35	L.Millen	25:03.6	10k	W35	L.Millen	55:42
	M40	A.Seddon	22:56.6	20k	M40	A.Seddon	1:36:09
	M45	D.Stevens	23:08.3		M80	B.Roberts	2:14:16
	M80	B.Roberts	31:35				
1983 World Championships San Juan, Puerto Rico							
5000m	W35	L.Millen	25:00.27	10k	W35	L.Millen	52:40
	M40	R.Dobson	23:38.7	20k	M40	R.Dobson	1:44:07
	M50	D.Fotheringham	25:30.77		M50	P.Worth	1:50:19
1984 European Championships Brighton, England							
5000m	W35	L.Millen	24:52.5	10k	W35	L.Millen	52:20
	M45	D.Stevens	22:44.5	20k	M40	A.Seddon	1:34:13
	M50	G.Chaplin	23:58.8		M45	E.Shillabeer	1:38:38
	M55	B.Hawkins	24:36.9		M50	G.Chaplin	1:46:11
	M65	C.Megnin	28:18.1		M65	C.Megnin	2:03:02
	M70	A.Poole	29:53.7		M70	A.Poole	2:09:57
	M85	W.Keeler	43:05				
1985 World Championships Rome, Italy							
5000m	W40	L.Millen	25:23	10k	W40	L.Millen	53:22
	W50	P.Horwill	30:11.6	20k	M70	C.Megnin	2:03:32
	M70	C.Megnin	28:57				
1986 European Championships Malmö, Sweden							
5000m	W40	C.Bean	27:58.4	10k	M70	J.Grimwade	1:58:10
	M70	J.Grimwade	27:55.7				
1987 World Championships Melbourne, Australia							
5000m	M50	D.Stevens	22:54.3	20k	M75	J.Grimwade	1:56:19
1988 European Championships Verona, Italy							
5000m	W55	M.Worth	28:18.1	10k	W55	M.Worth	57:28.2
	M50	D.Stevens	23:38.4				
1989 European Non-Stadia Championships Bruges, Belgium⁵							
20k	W60	R.Scott	2:19:26	30k	M45	R.Dobson	2:32:25
1989 World Track and Field Championships Eugene, U.S.A.							
5000m	W60	M.Worth	28:29				
1990 European Track and Field Championships Budapest, Hungary							
20k	M50	E.Shillabeer	1:41:07		M65	L.Creo	1:56:27
	M60	D.Fotheringham	1:52:59				
1991 European Non-Stadia Championships Mira, Italy							
20k	W55	P.Horwill	2:16:09	30k	M45	A.Callow	2:39:14
	W60	R.Scott	2:21:28				

1992 World Non-Stadia Championships Birmingham, England⁶							
20k	W35	K.Braznell	1:39:06	30k	M45	D.Jackson	2:21:37
	W40	S.Brown	1:39:18		M50	E.Shillabeer	2:32:32
	W45	L.Millen	1:47:19		M60	G.Chaplin	2:40:25
	W60	R.Scott	2:08:29		M70	C.Coleman	3:01:25
	W65	L.Precious	2:45:49		M75	G.Mitchell	3:20:38
1993 World Track and Field Championships Miyazaki, Japan							
5000m	M55 Team	B.Gore, D.Stevens, J.Dunsford		M60 Team	D.Fotheringham, D.Withers, T.Simons		
1994 European Track and Field Championships Athens, Greece							
5000m	M65	T.Simons	29:05.71	20k	M65	D.Withers	2:04:34.0
1994 World Non-Stadia Championships Toronto, Canada							
20k	W35	C.Reader ⁷	1:54:53				
1995 European Non-Stadia Championships Valladolid, Spain							
20k	W65	R.Scott	2:24:10				
1995 World Track and Field Championships Buffalo, U.S.A.							
5000m	M65	D.Fotheringham	27:41.81	20k	M65 Team	D.Fotheringham, L.Creo,	
	M70	L.Creo	29:37.86				
1996 World Non-Stadia Championships Bruges, Belgium							
20k	W40	E.Corran	1:47:10	30k	M80	J.Grimwade	3:24:40
1996 European Track and Field Championships Malmö, Sweden							
5000m	M70	T.Simons	30:20	30k	M70	T.Simons	2:11:20
1997 European Indoor Championships Birmingham, England							
3000m	W35	S.Black	13:52.12 ⁸	M45	R.Care		13:13.07
	W40	C.Reader	16:37.02	M50	P.Hannell		14:37.40
	W45	A.Lewis	16:16.47	M65	G.Chaplin		16:14.30
	W65	B.Randle	18:13.26	M70	T.Simons		17:52.07
	M40	N.Carmody	13:11.90	M80	J.Grimwade		19:50.57 ⁸
1997 World Track and Field Championships Durban, South Africa							
5000m	W55	J.Langford	30:31.79				
1997 European Non-Stadia Championships The Hague, Netherlands							
20k	W40	C.Reader	1:59:27				
1998 World Non-Stadia Championships Kobe, Japan							
20k	W70	A.von Bismarck	2:42:38	M55 Team	R.Dobson, B.Gore,		
30k	M60	B.Gore	2:58:43		C.Young		

1998 European Track and Field Championships Cesanatico, Italy							
5000m	W50	A.Lewis	27:33.54	10k	W50	A.Lewis	56:28.3
	W70	A.von Bismarck	37:37.88		W70	A.von Bismarck	1:14:47
	M50	R.Care	23:49.09				
1999 European Indoor Championships Malmö, Sweden							
3000m	W70	B.Randle	18:26.5		M60	B.Gore	15:12.18
	M50	R.Care	13:42.66		M70	D.Withers	18:52
1999 European Non-Stadia Championships Bruges, Belgium							
20k	W40	C.Reader	2:00:51		W70	A.von Bismarck	78:19.3
	W50	A.Lewis	2:02:20				
1999 World Track and Field Championships Gateshead, England							
5000m	W35	F.Edington	27:59.05		M40 Team	C.Maddocks, N.Carmody, S.Uttley	
	W70	B.Randle	30:55.06				
	M40	C.Maddocks	21:12.94		M50 Team	B.Adams, D.Cross, D.Kates	
	M75	L.Creo	33:26.21				
10k	W50	A.Lewis	59:03		M60 Team	B.Gore, C.Young, D.Stevens	
20k	M40	C.Maddocks	1:35:28				
	M50	B.Adams	1:46:26		M75 Team	L.Creo, C.Coleman, J.Grimwade	
	M85	J.Grimwade	2:24:00				
2000 World Non-Stadia Championships Valladolid, Spain							
20k	W50	A.Lewis	2:08:48		W55 Team	P.Ficken, M.Spellman, A.von Bismarck	
	W65	M.Spellman	2:14:05				
	W70	A.von Bismarck	2:43:05	30k	M40	C.Maddocks	2:31:53
	W45 Team	C.Reader, A.Lewis, P.Phillips			M75	J.Fitzgerald	4:02:44
2000 European Track and Field Championships Jyväskylä, Finland							
5000m	M70	D.Fotheringham	28:42.63	20k	M70	D.Fotheringham	2:04:29
10k	W70	A.von Bismarck	74:55				
2001 European Indoor Championships Bordeaux, France							
3000m	W60	J.Langford	18:43.87		M70	D.Fotheringham	17:28.28
	M60	B.Gore	15:36.10				
2001 European Non-Stadia Championships Sliema, Malta							
20k	W50	A.Lewis	2:02:40	30k	M75	J.Fitzgerald	3:54:1
	W70	A.von Bismarck	2:40:14				
2002 World Non-Stadia Championships Riccione, Italy							
10k	W35	N.Menéndez	47:18		M75	J.Fitzgerald	1:20:20
2002 European Track and Field Championships Potsdam, Germany							
5000m	W35	N.Menéndez	25:26.84	10k	W35	N.Menéndez	51:07
2003 European Indoor Championships San Sebastian, Spain							
3000m	M70	D.Fotheringham	17:57.70		M75	D.Withers	20:27.21

2003 European Non-Stadia Championships Úpice, Czech Republic							
30k	M80	J.Fitzgerald	4:30:22				
2004 World Non-Stadia Championships Auckland, New Zealand							
10k	M65	D.Stevens	1:02:30	50k	M55	D.Kates	5:30:29
	M60 Team	D.Stevens, AO’Rawe, E.Shillabeer		50k	M70	E.Horwill	6:44:40
30k	M60 Team	R.Penfold, E.Shillabeer, G.Jones			M60 Team	P.Ryan, D.Kates, E.Shillabeer	
30k	M65 Team	D.Stevens, D.Mace, H.Jaquest					
2004 European Track and Field Championships Aarhus/Randers, Denmark							
5000m	W70	P.Horwill	35:39.49	10k	W70	P.Horwill	1:11:23
	M80	L.Creo	33:31.55	20k	M80	L.Creo	2:28:49
2005 European Indoor Championships Eskilstuna, Sweden							
3000m	M65	A.Thomson	16:14.92	10k	M65	A.Thomson	54:28
2005 European Non-Stadia Championships Monte Gordo, Portugal							
10k	W70	M.Spellman	1:07:34	20k	W70	M.Spellman	2:20:23
	W45 Team	F.Bishop, A.Wheeler, C.Duhig			W45 Team	C.Duhig, F.Bishop, A.Wheeler	
	M65	A.Thomson	55:20	30k	M65	A. Thomson	3:03:47
	M70	C.Young	63:34		M60 Team	A.Thomson, R.Powell, D.Stevens	
	M70 Team	C.Young, E.Horwill, G.Dowling					
2005 World Track and Field Championships San Sebastian, Spain							
5000m	W70	M. Spellman	32:40.85	10k	W70	M.Spellman	1:07:16
	M75	D.Fotheringham	30:47.25	20k	M75	D.Fotheringham	2:17:37
	M80	L.Creo	34:10.17		M80	L.Creo	2:34:11
2006 World Indoor Championships Linz, Austria							
10k	M65	A.Thomson	54:46.26		M70 Team	D.Fotheringham, J.Payn, E.Horwill	
	M75	D.Fotheringham	64:57.45				
2006 European Track and Field Championships Poznan, Poland							
5000m	M70	A.Thomson	26:34.87	20k	M70	A.Thomson	1:56:44
	M75	D.Fotheringham	31:44.59		M65 Team	A.Thomson, E.Shillabeer, J.Payn	
20k	M55	J.Hall	1:55:59				
2007 European Indoor Track and Field Championships Helsinki, Finland							
3000m	M60	C.Turner	15:40.69				
2007 European Non-Stadia Championships Regensburg, Germany							
10k	W50	A.Belchambers	60:47	20k	W70	M.Spellman	2:26:09
	W70	M.Spellman	69:40		W45/50 Team	F.Bishop, J.Miles, A.Belchambers	
	M70	A.Thomson	55:02				
20k	W50	A.Belchambers	2:12:11	30k	M70	A.Thomson	2:59:47

Notes

- ¹ There is some difficulty in verifying a complete list of these distinctions, especially in respect of earlier events. The Editor offers apologies to anyone whose achievements have been omitted.
- ² The returning of finishing times varies considerably between events and even within a single event; those given here are as originally returned.
- ³ A cloudburst prevented the taking of times!
- ⁴ Later Yvonne Withers
- ⁵ This was the first of the “Non-Stadia” Championships, setting the pattern of European Non-Stadia and World Track and Field events every “odd” year and World Non-Stadia and European Track and Field every “even” year.
- ⁶ Major organisational problems marred this meeting. The R.W.A. organised the judging of the walks entirely successfully but was not involved in any other aspects of the promotion. Meaningful results were only produced after extensive research by Olive and Bob Dobson and Eric Horwill. The distances are quoted in *italics* because, as a result of the failure of the organisation, it is by no means certain that all competitors covered the correct distances. The times recorded are to be treated with caution. The event is described in Chapter 10.
- ⁷ Later Cath Duhig
- ⁸ World Record
- ⁹ In team events, a walker is generally allowed to score as part of a team in a lower age group. Thus an M60 may appear as part of an M55 team.
- ¹⁰ Indoor events sometimes included a road walk, shown here as 10k, etc.

XLVII A NOTE ON RECORDS IN GENERAL

The records given in this set of Appendices are those *recognised* by the I.A.A.F. and by the appropriate National Authorities and they may be relied upon as being valid *by the standards of the day*; therein lies the rub. When the definition of walking changes, of course, the old times become of no great significance at all. When the specification of the javelin was changed, “old” and “new” records were maintained side by side for a while, for comparative purposes; when the combined events scoring tables change, old marks may be recalculated under the new schedule of points. However, when the definition of walking changed – or, in the early days, when it was initially framed – previous marks simply stood until they were overtaken.

Thus, when the I.A.A.F. introduced the first world records in 1921 for a limited range of those times and distances previously “recognised” by various bodies, it was not always entirely clear under what conditions they had been set and it was a matter of research and opinion. It was not claimed, for example, that between 1870 and 1921 no-one had beaten

Griffiths’ twenty mile time, but simply that the circumstances of any better efforts had not been established. Reference has already been made to H.W.Innes’ scornful attitude toward some “records”, because of doubts over the judging and he describes Griffiths’ performance in terms of incredulity. In these days, when an Under-13 County Championship is judged practically to Olympic standards, it is difficult to believe that the following could have been claimed by anyone as a “record” of any sort. To quote Innes: “This is the same Tom Griffiths who was seven-mile champion in 1869 and 1870 and who in the latter year walked twenty-one miles, under very informal circumstances, in three hours....Unfortunately, the twenty-one mile feat is not satisfactory as a record. It was made in what purported to be a match against an opponent; possibly it was really a match against time. The opponent, who had a long start – I have entirely forgotten his name – was caught at seven miles and retired. The judge then left the ground, declaring the match at an end. The winner, however, walked on, completing fifteen miles in 2 hours 27 secs., twenty-one miles in 2

hours 57 mins 25 secs. The timing and lap-scoring, it seems, were carefully looked after, but the responsible referee was absent after the first hour....Griffiths was a noted fair walker, but the record is a matter demanding scrupulous observance of all formalities; and a walking record without a judge is an impossibility.” Nevertheless, the 20 miles time was accepted as an inaugural World Record, by which time Innes had died.

Innes remarks that, as ideas of acceptability varied (and were applied retrospectively in a somewhat haphazard fashion), he saw the mile record recognised successively as 6:48, 6:36, 6:39 and 6:41, the two miles as 14:20, 14:18, 13:55, 14:20 and 14:04 and the three miles as 22:08, 21:28, 21:42 and 21:25. Given the A.A.A. Rules for Competition referred to in our own Introduction, it is hardly surprising that there were problems.

Seventy years later, though, there were still doubts; the McWhirter twins in *Get to Your Marks* observe that by the end of the Second World War the Swede Hardmö had had twenty-two world record performances ratified between 1942 and 1944; “His ultimate performances are plainly quite incredible and have unfortunately made the shorter records quite meaningless.” They also, offer the opinion that the human eye is not fast enough to detect lifting and that “some mechanical aid to judging” is essential.

Record ratification is on firmer ground nowadays and a reasonable degree of official scrutiny can always be expected. In addition, the number of events at which World records may be established has been considerably reduced, with, one may hope, an increase in credibility, even without mechanical aids. It is safe, nowadays, to accept a record as actually meaning something.

XLVIII WORLD RECORDS

This Appendix lists all world records set by British competitors in race walking events that have been ratified by the International Amateur Athletic Federation and the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale, which was founded in 1921 and finally handed over all its powers to the I.A.A.F. in 1936. It will be noticed that some well-known performances do not appear; that is because those performances either were never ratified or were not at recognised distances. So far as distances are concerned, it

will be observed that some of them are decidedly odd and that the multiplicity of distances gave a man in form – such as George Larnar in 1905 and Alf Pope in 1932 – the chance to dispose of several records in one race. A further point to note is that, as world records were not introduced until 1921, several of the inaugural marks were retrospective – in the case of Tom Griffith’s twenty miles, by over half a century. The records are presented in chronological order.

MEN

Date	Venue	Event	Performance	Name
30/12/1870	London ¹	20 miles	2:47:52 ²	Thomas Griffith
13/7/1904	Manchester ³	2 miles	13:11.4	George Larnar
19/8/1905	Brighton ⁴	3 miles	20:25.8 ⁵	George Larnar
		4 miles	27:14.0	George Larnar
30/9/1905	London ⁶	5 miles	36:00.2 ⁷	George Larnar
		6 miles	43:26.2 ⁷	George Larnar
		7 miles	50:50.8 ⁷	George Larnar
		8 miles	58:14.4 ⁷	George Larnar
		1 hour	13,275m	George Larnar

Date	Venue	Event	Performance	Name
17/7/1908	London ⁸	9 miles	1:07:37·8 ⁹	George Larner
		10 miles	1:15:57·4	George Larner
20/5/1911	London ¹⁰	15 miles	1:59:12·6 ¹¹	Harold Ross
		2 hours	24,256m	Harold Ross
7/5/1932	Birmingham ¹²	20 miles	2:43:38	Albert Plumb
31/9/1932	London ⁸	5 miles	35:47·2 ¹³	Alfred Pope
		6 miles	43:07·0 ¹³	Alfred Pope
		10,000m	44:42·4 ¹³	Alfred Pope
		7 miles	50:28·8 ¹³	Alfred Pope
		8 miles	58:04·6 ¹³	Alfred Pope
		1 hour	13,308m	Alfred Pope
26/5/1934	London ⁸	10 miles	1:14:30·6	Frank Redman
20/7/1935	Enfield ¹⁴	3000m	12:38·2	Bert Cooper
14/9/1935	London ¹⁵	5000m	21:52·4	Bert Cooper
5/10/1935	London ⁸	30 miles	4:29:31·8	Harold Whitlock
5/6/1948	Motspur Park	5 miles	35:43·4	Harry Churcher
16/6/1949	London ⁸	5 miles	35:33·0	Harry Churcher
4/8/1951	London ⁸	5 miles	35:24·0	Roland Hardy
31/5/1952	London ⁸	5 miles	35:15·0	Roland Hardy

WOMEN

Date	Venue	Event	Performance	Name
18/8/1923	Bromley ¹⁶	880y	4:35·0	Edith Trickey
28/6/1924	London ¹⁷	880y	4:17·4	Edith Trickey
14/7/1926	France ¹⁸	1000m	5:13·8	Daisy Crossley
28/8/1926	Sweden ¹⁹	880y	4:03·0 ²⁰	Daisy Crossley
28/8/1926	Sweden ¹⁹	1000m	5:10·0	Daisy Crossley
??/1930	Unknown	1 mile	8:18·0	Lucy Howes
16/8/1930	London ⁶	1 mile	8:14·4	Connie Mason
11/7/1931	London ⁶	1 mile	7:45·6	Connie Mason

Notes

- | | |
|--|---|
| ¹ Lillie Bridge | ¹¹ Intermediate time in 2 hour race |
| ² Intermediate time in 21 mile race | ¹² Fort Dunlop, <i>on the road</i> |
| ³ Fallowfield | ¹³ Intermediate time in 1 hour race |
| ⁴ Preston Park | ¹⁴ Durants Park |
| ⁵ Intermediate time in 4 mile race | ¹⁵ Battersea Park |
| ⁶ Stamford Bridge | ¹⁶ Oxo Grounds |
| ⁷ Intermediate time in 1 hour race | ¹⁷ Woolwich |
| ⁸ White City | ¹⁸ Venue not certain, but possibly Paris |
| ⁹ Intermediate time in 10 mile race | ¹⁹ Gothenburg |
| ¹⁰ Herne Hill | ²⁰ Intermediate time in 1000m race |

XLIX BRITISH NATIONAL RECORDS

The performances given below are the best known up to the date of the centenary. Some are recognised as records and some as best performances. *Where a performance is italicised, it was set indoors.* Only the most widely recognised events are included; thus, such events as 2 miles, 7 hours, etc., do not appear. In the normal convention, track distances are shown in metres and road distances in kilometres or miles. Where no country is shown against the venue, England may be assumed. A performance marked with an asterisk dates from after the time of the centenary and may not have been ratified. All walkers listed are English, except Derek Harrison, who is Manx and Alex Wright who, although English at the dates shown, now represents Ireland.

MEN

Event	Walker	Mark	Venue	Date
3000m	M.Easton	11:24.4	Tonbridge	10/5/1989
<i>*3000m</i>	<i>A.Wright</i>	<i>11:23.99</i>	<i>Athlone, Ireland</i>	<i>27/1/2013</i>
<i>*5000m</i>	<i>A.Wright</i>	<i>19:27.39</i>	<i>Birmingham</i>	<i>15/7/2013</i>
<i>5000m</i>	<i>M.Rush</i>	<i>19:22.9</i>	<i>Birmingham</i>	<i>2/2/1992</i>
5k	A.Drake	19:29	Søfteland, Norway	27/5/1990
10000m	I.McCombie	40:06.65	Jarrow	4/6/1989
10k	C.Maddocks	40:17	Burrator	30/4/1989
20000m	I.McCombie	1:23:26.5	Fana, Norway	26/5/1990
20k	I.McCombie	1:22:03	Seoul, South Korea	23/9/1988
20 miles	P.Nihill	2:30:35	Sheffield	12/6/1971
50000m	P.Blagg	4:05:44.6	Fana, Norway	26/5/1990
50k	C.Maddocks	3:51:37	Burrator	28/10/1990
100000m	E.Shillabeer	9:41:54	Colchester	15/9/1985
100k	T.Geal	9:34:25	Grand-Quevilly, France	2/6/1979
1 hour	I.McCombie	14324m	London	7/7/1985
2 hours	C.Maddocks	27262m	Plymouth	31/12/1989
24 hours	H.Neilson ¹	214570m	Walton-on-Thames	15/10/1960
24 hours	D.Harrison ²	219570m	Rouen, France	21/5/1978

WOMEN

Event	Walker	Mark	Venue	Date
<i>*3000m</i>	<i>J.Jackson</i>	<i>12:22.62</i>	<i>Sydney, Australia</i>	<i>14/2/2009</i>
<i>3000m</i>	<i>J.Drake</i>	<i>13:12.01</i>	<i>Toronto, Canada</i>	<i>12/3/1993</i>
<i>3000m</i>	<i>N.Menéndez</i> ³	<i>13:08.64</i>	<i>Cardiff, Wales</i>	<i>2/2/2002</i>
<i>*5000m</i>	<i>J.Jackson</i>	<i>43:52</i>	<i>Coventry</i>	<i>6/3/2010</i>
<i>*10000m</i>	<i>J.Jackson</i>	<i>1:30:41</i>	<i>La Coruña, Spain</i>	<i>19/6/2010</i>
50k	S.Brown	4:50:51	Basildon	13/7/1991
100 miles	S.Brown	19:00:47	Auckland, New Zealand	11/7/1999

Notes

- ¹ Track
² Road

- ³ Mixed race

L THE ASSOCIATION'S TROPHIES

During its hundred years, the R.W.A. has acquired several shields and cups, both for its separate Championship events and for various other categories of achievement. These are listed below with a note of their current designation, as some of them have been transferred from one purpose to another when the Association's requirements and championships changed over the years.

The trophies in List B have a brief statement of purpose; full Conditions of Award, which may be varied from time to time, are recorded in the Association's Handbook.

A INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

These trophies are competed for in separate Association Championships.

Men's 10k

Individual – Christopher Cup: Team – Batson Cup

Men's 20k

Individual – Aries Cup: Team – Phil Embleton Cup

Men's 50k

Individual – Neville Cup: Team – Horlick Cup

Men's Long Distance

Individual – Wilkinson Sword: Team – Reynolds Shield

Women's 10k

Individual – Lewis Cup: Team – Lewis Shield

Women's 20k

Individual – Sheffield Cup: Team – Jim Hackwood Trophy

Under 13 Boys' 2k

Individual – John Henderson Cup: Team Steyning Shield

Under 15 Boys' 3k

Individual – Marlow Cup: Team – Gareth Simon Cup

Under 17 Men's 5k

Individual – R.C.Mawbey Trophy: Team – Lugano Cup

Under 20 Men's 10k

Individual – Schofield Shield: Team – Cheltenham Cup

Best Stylist in Male Younger Age Group Championships

Wally Emery Trophy

Under 13 Girls' 2k

Individual – Uxbridge Cup: Team – Polly Bearman Shield

Under 15 Girls' 3k

Individual – W.C.C. & R.W.A. Trophy: Team – Australia Shield

Under 17 Women's 5k

Individual – J.Henderson Bowl: Team – M.F.Marshall Shield

Under 20 Women's 10k

Individual – Harold Whitlock Cup: Team – Morrison Wells Bowl

Best Stylist in Female Younger Age Group Championships

Audrey Emery Trophy

B SPECIAL CATEGORIES

All these trophies are determined for the calendar year.

Cyril Evans Cup

To the walker obtaining most points in all open and national events at 50k or more.

A.D.McSweeney Trophy

To the best all-round Club in the R.W.A. Male Championships.

Hammond Cup

To the best Club in the R.W.A. Senior Male Championships.

Milan Trophy

To the first Club to finish any four walkers in the Men's National 50k Championship.

Nijmegen Shield

Formerly to the first Club to finish any four walkers in the Men's National 35k (previously the 20 miles, etc.). Following the discontinuation of the Championship, this trophy is now awarded to the first Club to finish any four walkers in the Men's National 20k.

T.Lloyd Johnson Shield

To the Club obtaining the best total of six scores in any open or national event of 50 kilometres or more.

Sparta Trophy

To the Club achieving the greatest improvement from the previous year in the A.D.McSweeney Trophy competition.

Pauline Flora Trophy

To the best all-round Club in the R.W.A. Female Championships.

A.G.Thayer Memorial Cup

To the best all-round Club in the R.W.A. Male and Female Championships.

Bill Harris Trophy

To the Club achieving the highest number of points in the R.W.A. Under 13, Under 15, Under 17 and Junior Male and Female Championships as indicated by the A.D.McSweeney and Pauline Flora Trophy competitions.

Frank Jarvis Plate

To the Club achieving the greatest improvement in position from the previous year in the Bill Harris Trophy competition.

President's Trophy

To the Area achieving the highest number of points in all the R.W.A. Championships.

Note: the above trophies are determined by objective calculation of points; the following are awarded subjectively by the General Committee.

Lancashire Trophy

To the best female walker of the year.

Edgar Horton Cup

To the walker having made the best individual walking performance at 50k or over during the year.

International Trophy

To the walker having made the most worthy performance in International competition.

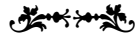
Ken Smith Memorial Trophy

To the Younger Age Group walker making the best performance in a National or Area Championship or International event.

C NON-ANNUAL AWARD

John Keown Memorial Award

To an individual in recognition of his or her contribution to race walking in any capacity other than as a competitor. The Award may be made in any quantity at any time. Current Officers and Life Members and Past Presidents are ineligible.



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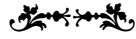
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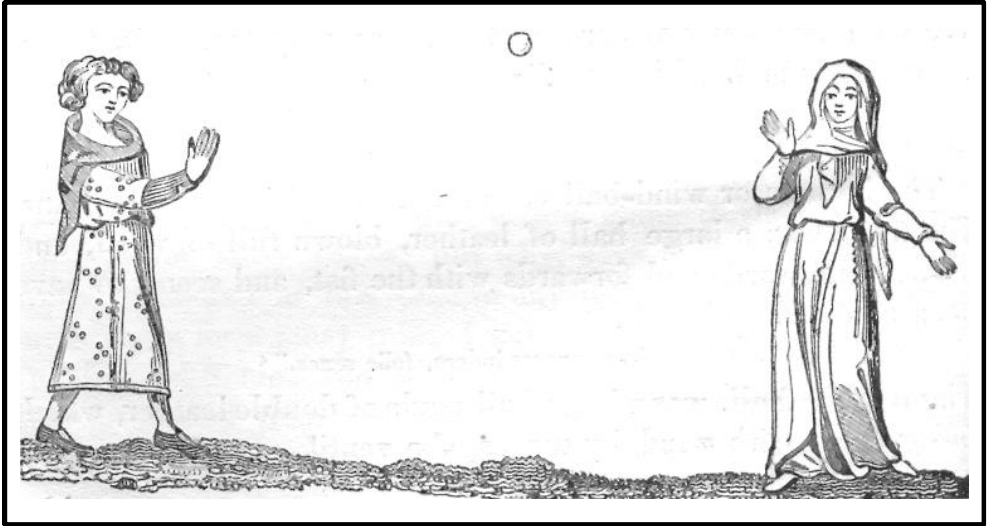
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NOTES AND REFERENCES

Chapter 1 The Background: The Development of Athletics

- 1 Joseph Strutt: *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*: London, 1830.



The man seems to have lobbed the ball underhand and it would appear to be about the width of a hand – three or four inches in diameter; there is no clue to its structure.



Our reason for regarding this game as more competitive than the previous one is Strutt's remark that, "Behind the woman at a little distance appear in the original delineation several other figures of both sexes, waiting attentively to catch or stop the ball when returned by the batsman: these figures have been damaged, and are very indistinct in many parts, for which reason I did

not think it proper to insert them.” Two things should be noted; firstly the ball seems much bigger here, being about the size of a head – say eight inches in diameter – and, secondly, the apparent proximity of the players, bringing the bowler within swinging distance of the club, is probably due to Strutt’s excision of the whole middle of the picture to remove the damaged “fielders”. It is also worth pointing out that the dress is more rustic; the players are probably of a lower social class.

- 2 This is not to say, of course, that no sporting activities existed previously or, indeed, that other sports were unknown. In his *History of the Kings of Britain*, completed about 1136, Geoffrey of Monmouth, describing the court held by King Arthur at Caerleon-on-Usk, writes of the recreation of those attending: “Invigorated by the food and drink which they had consumed, they went out into the meadows outside the city and split up into groups ready to play various games. The knights planned an imitation battle and competed together on horseback, while their womenfolk watched from the top of the city walls and aroused them to passionate excitement by their flirtatious behaviour. The others passed what remained of the day in shooting with bows and arrows, hurling the lance, tossing heavy stones and rocks, playing with dice and an immense variety of other games.” [Translation by Lewis Thorpe] A manuscript three hundred years later, illustrating the occasion, shows one man holding a large stone – about the size of his head – into his shoulder in a fairly normal modern shot-putting stance while another is preparing to throw a spear whose length is a little more than his own height. Caerleon is in Wales rather than England and there is no real reason to suppose that at Arthur’s time in the sixth century such things actually happened (given that it is quite probable that Geoffrey invented the whole of his *History*); what is clear is that in the middle of the twelfth century it *was* possible to write about stone- and lance-throwing, so they certainly existed then, and that in the middle of the fifteenth they looked much as they do today. The winner of each contest, by the way, was rewarded by Arthur with “an immense prize”.
- 3 See the Bibliography for details of this and other works cited.
- 4 It is, though, difficult to conceive of crowds of frenzied golfers rampaging through town smashing windows and looting shops; possibly their Scottish Majesties’ objection was purely on grounds of time-wasting. Writing of the twelfth century, Birley, in his illuminating history (see the Bibliography) observes that “No doubt a great deal was drunk at the holiday sports....Drinking, on its own or as an essential part of festivals and sporting activities, was the principal British leisure pursuit.” Part of the excuse was the dubious nature of the water supplies and part was the popularity of “scotales”, or drinking contests. The water supply in this country is now assured, but informal pre- and post-event scotales seem to remain popular, particularly among the spectators of certain ball-games.
- 5 In his diary entry for 4th January, 1663-4, Pepys records: “Thence to the Tennis-court....and there saw the King play at Tennis and others; but to see how the King’s play was extolled without any cause at all was a loathesome sight, though sometimes, indeed, he did play very well and deserved to be commended; but such open flattery is beastly.” Possibly the desire to record such dangerous thoughts was one reason why Pepys, who was Secretary to the Admiralty, wrote the diary in cypher that required over a century to be worked out. It is also well known (and recorded in the play by Shakespeare) that the French had sent Henry V some tennis balls as a gift, although this was intended more as an insult than as a recognition of his attachment to the sport.
- 6 The *barre* was a length of heavy wood or metal, which was thrown hammer-style; the throw was measured in barre-lengths, thus cleverly avoiding the need for a standard implement.
- 7 Although the sentiment quoted here was quite at variance with Henry’s view, he settled a pension on Roger, possibly because the book was a treatise on archery.
- 8 As an interesting aside, the present Editor could not find *ensult* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and consulted the Editors of that work. They deduce that the word is a variant spelling of *insult*, which, as well as its common meaning of *be offensive*, once meant *make an attack or assault*; our butcher was evidently taking things easily towards the end. The spelling was previously

unknown to the *O.E.D.*; thus, sport has aided lexicography.

- 9 To quote Pepys again, writing on 30th July, 1663; “The towne talk this day is of nothing but the great foot race run this day on Banstead Downes, between Lee, the Duke of Richmond’s footman, and a tyler, a famous runner. And Lee hath beat him; although the King, Duke of York, and all men almost, did bet three to four to one upon the tyler’s head.” Apparently, among the frustrated noble gamblers there was no aroma of rat.
- 10 Astonishingly enough, such incidents were not unknown. In *The Age of Scandal*, published in 1950, T.H.White, writing of the latter half of the eighteenth century, says, “When a passer-by fell down opposite Brooks’s, apparently dead, they betted whether he was alive or not, and those who said that he was dead objected to the use of restoratives, as affecting the bet.” Another buck “betted that a man could live under water, hired a desperado, sank him in some receptacle, and drowned him. He promptly hired another desperado to try again.”
- 11 This insistence that competing for money did not constitute professionalism persisted for a very long time. Astley, the soldier, impresario, gambler and all-round oddity, records as late as 1857 an entry in *Bell’s Life* concerning his own exploits: “AMATEUR RACE FOR £200 – Captain Brine, R.E., on the part of Lt.-Col. Astley, Scots Fus. Gds., has made a match with F.Leigh, Esq., for J.Taylor, Esq., of Passage, in the vicinity of Cork, to come off on or about the 18th December....” Apart from the £200 stake, Astley backed himself at two to one with £500 (borrowed from his tailor) and won “anyhow” – his usual expression for “easily”. There are two points worthy of mention; firstly, Astley was still a serving army officer (managing somehow to spend inordinate amounts of time attending to his sporting interests) and secondly, in his own words, “In those days, mind you, an amateur meant a gentleman, whether he ran for money or honour, or both – I used to combine the two.” As he was referred to as “Esq.”, Taylor also was presumably a gentleman. Wagers were sometimes entered upon in a remarkably off-hand sort of way. Lord William Lennox in his *Pictures of a Sporting Life* (1860) recounts an incident of 1857: “I was dining at Crockford’s in the month of July, and had indulged in all the luxuries of the table – turtle, venison, punch, champagne, and claret – when the above-mentioned ‘lightweight’ (a ‘gallant officer of the 9th Lancers’ - Ed.) made his appearance....After a slight pause the newcomer commenced the subject of Pedestrianism, and finally offered to give any person present ten yards in a hundred, and run him for the same number of pounds. The challenge having thus openly been made, I was urged to throw down my gage, which, after another glass or two of claret, I did.” The race took place that midnight in Hill St., Berkely Square, Lord Lennox having filled in the intervening hour with “gentle exercise”. He won “in a canter”, for two reasons. Quite fortuitously, the gallant officer collided with one of his own backers, who had wagered two hundred pounds on the outcome, which “threw him out of his stride”. The other reason was that Lennox had previously run a challenge – without a wager – and, realising that he was being “set up”, held back and “went at half speed, puffing and panting like a broken-down poster.” A sense of fair play does not seem to have been uppermost in the minds of those who would probably have cheerfully horsewhipped a jockey who had reined-in his mount to their disadvantage.
- 12 A sidelight on this breed of men is shed by the notice in *The Morning* of the 5th April, 1896, of the burial the previous day of Sam Cliffe, who had been born in Shrewsbury in 1803 and died in Forest Gate, London, and who claimed to be the last survivor of the running footmen. He had at various times been employed by, among others, the Earls of Wilton and Balcarres, the Marquises of Queensberry and Waterford and “Mad Jack” Mytton, an archetypal Regency buck who matched King George III’s insanity with his own, riding a bear through his own dining room, dressing his sixty cats in livery, drinking six bottles of port a day, trying to jump his horse over a gate while it was pulling a coach, curing his hiccups by setting fire to his shirt and finally expiring in a debtors’ prison. The obituary says of Cliffe that “His general run was sixty miles a day.” This seems rather excessive and may have been coloured by the old man’s failing memory. To the end of his life, he received a weekly pension of £1.

- 13 A pound of tea was not a prize to be sniffed at. In the period concerned, it was customary for the lady of the house to keep her tea in a locked caddy and to supervise its use to protect such a valuable commodity from the thieving servants; it was expensive not only because it had come half way round the world, but because excise duty was payable on it.
- 14 See Roe, *Front Runners*, for the history of such a “ground” at Hackney Wick in East London.
- 15 Towards the end of the century, Shearman, in discussing the merits of various tracks, wrote of Lillie Bridge that it “was certainly a very good one, perhaps as good and as fair a track as has ever been made. Like most other good paths, it was a third of a mile in circumference, but its chief merit in our opinion lay in the fact that the turns were well graduated. Although the corners were apparently sharp, by making the path slope downwards to the corner, the runners were prevented from running wide, and were given four straight stretches, one on each side of the ground.” In contrast “The Stamford Bridge track is, we think, about as badly shaped as a ground can be for any short races....The path is only a quarter of a mile in circumference, the lap consisting of two straight stretches of 120 yards at the sides and gradual curves of 100 yards each at the ends.” That is, an “oval” of, in modern terms, 110m straights and 90m bends – much as tracks are now – was not as good as a “square” with rounded corners. In a chapter on *Athletics at School* in the later editions of Montague’s book, W.Beach Thomas goes further: “There must almost of necessity be one long straight for the hundred, but there is no need to make the opposite side a parallel. An irregular pentagon, or where economy of space is necessary a hexagon, will provide all requisites. There is no particular harm in a rather abrupt corner (as at Fenner’s and Queen’s Club) so long as it does not come very near the start; indeed a continuous curl is much less satisfactory, as being directly against the interests of those runners who have to take the outside.” He did not commit himself on the total length of the track.

Chapter 2 Order from Chaos

- 1 The extent of their sense of élitism is that by “Universities” they meant “Oxford and Cambridge”.
- 2 Lovesey suggests that Rye may have suffered feelings of inadequacy, as he had not been to University; he had, as it were, become a gentleman by application, attending evening classes on his way to a career as a solicitor; perhaps, even then, he felt inferior in the company of barristers.
- 3 Shearman had been born in Wimbledon, Surrey, and had no Northern qualifications, but the Championships were open in those days.
- 4 See Chapter 29 for a mention of Shearman’s own tendency to moralise in court, with rather more severe consequences for the defendant.
- 5 The arrangement began to go ragged in 1898 – South, Midlands, South, North, South, Midlands, North, South, South, North, South and thereafter in the South until the end of the twentieth century.

Chapter 3 Birth and the First Steps

- 1 Railway Clearing House Athletic Club. The Railway Clearing House was an organisation set up by the many independent railways of the time to distribute the income from ticket sales among the various companies over whose tracks a complicated journey might pass, thus making it possible for a passenger or the sender of goods to purchase a through ticket, instead of having to rebook every time he or his merchandise changed trains.
- 2 Barnes Moss was “Acting hon. secretary” only in the sense that, by agreement with the other instigators, he arranged the Polytechnic meeting, invited attendance and recorded the proceedings.
- 3 Although the report says only that those attending “included” the men listed, one might suppose that had Vowles been present he would have been noted.
- 4 The rather wayward punctuation is original; as the meeting was an evening one and *Sporting*

Life was a morning daily, there was little time to worry over niceties. The alternating presence and absence of an apostrophe at the end of *Counties* in the early years seems to have been the Association's own fault.

- 5 The Surrey Walking Club's *Gazette* of the time was very justly proud that its own Messrs Callow, Stessiger, Hammond, Hurley, Innes, Jull, March, Neville, Otway, Barnes Moss and Mariette – eleven of the eighteen Committee members – were also S.W.C. members; they were so excited that they forgot to mention Teddy Knott.
- 6 In *Apollo's Magazine* of January and February, 1908.
- 7 Possibly Yeomans "got the nod" over others principally because he was Welsh, or at least lived in Wales, having actually been born in Leicestershire.
- 8 Yeomans had done a spectacular 6:00 in exhibition and 6:15 in competition for the mile, but these had never been ratified.
- 9 This took place a month after the 3500m; the Games as a whole lasted from 27th April to 31st October, with lengthy pauses.
- 10 Following the disqualification of an American from the 400m final, the other two American qualifiers withdrew in protest, leaving the British athlete Halswelle to run a lap in solitude for the gold medal. There were also mutterings and allegations about the boots worn by the Liverpool Police team in the Tug of War, and the story of Dorando Pietri's disqualification for receiving last-gasp assistance in the marathon is well known. One of the problems is that *all* the officials were British, including the medical officer for the marathon, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, of Sherlock Holmes fame (although he reports the finish of the marathon *as seen from his seat in the stand*. Baker deals entertainingly with the carryings-on in his book *The 1908 Olympics*.

Chapter 4 Adolescence: Rules, Regulations and Confusion

- 1 Some lessons remain hard to learn; the 1969 European Championships 20k in Athens started in a brightly lit stadium but was largely on the road in near total darkness with the occasional street lamp.
- 2 See Chapter 30 for another example of Roberts' misfortunes.
- 3 It is to be remembered that, although the Association was responsible only for road events, track ones being in the hands of the A.A.A., it did provide judges for the latter races.
- 4 Miss Gilling?; the reporter seems to have become overexcited at the experience. A year later, *everyone* was overexcited: "Of the other events little need be said, but the waitresses' walk was a fiasco through the laxity of the officials, who allowed the leaders to trot nearly all the way and then disqualified them at the finish.," and in 1911 it was reported that "The waitresses' walk caused much amusement"; Miss M. Warwick of the Royal Oak (giving 30 yards) won the race, shortened to 880 yards, by a yard in 4:48.2. Note that in the event quoted in the main text, Miss Davies had done enough racing to earn a fifty-yard handicap in one mile. How much the attitude to women's walking changed in a decade or two can be seen from the history outlined in Chapter 19.
- 5 *Sporting Life*, 13th April, 1909.
- 6 Walkers very seldom seem to have tired; they always broke down, collapsed, dropped away, failed or went to pieces. It was presumably something of a strain for the reporters to keep finding different ways of saying the same thing.
- 7 The A.A.A. subsequently fell into line with the R.W.A.'s practice; nowadays, acceptance of second-claim members is down to the event promoters, who generally permit them unless the first-claim club is competing, which is what has always happened in walking anyway.
- 8 It was not clear whether he had been born like that or had suffered an accident; both explanations were current.

Chapter 5 Going National: Theory into Practice

- 1 The following year, it was down to fifty-one individuals, while nine teams, led by Surrey W.C., scored.
- 2 He was, of course, upset and in a letter to the *Sporting Life* he announced his retirement from the amateur ranks, implying bias among southern judges. He claimed to be “undefeated long-distance walking champion” and offered to prove it for £200 a side over any distance from 20 miles upwards. It is not apparent that anyone took up his challenge
- 3 Herne Hill Harriers.

Chapter 6 Consolidation and Growth: Walking between the Wars

- 1 Although Ross thought of himself as a distance man rather than a sprinter, he also won the A.A.A. 7 miles in 1913 and 1921.
- 2 An eyewitness’s comments appear in Chapter 25.
- 3 Poynton was the first man to win a National as the representative of a non-metropolitan club; Payne of North Shields had won the 20 miles in 1911 – before it was “nationalised” – but walking for Middlesex A.C.; see Chapter 4.
- 4 See Chapter 25.
- 5 See the *Introduction*.
- 6 Lovesey remarks that, “without surrendering its autonomy, the (Amateur Athletic) Association steadily adapted its rules to international standards in the mid-twenties.” As will be seen, the next forty or fifty years, so far as race walking was concerned, were spent in regretting such a move and dithering over reversing it.
- 7 These articles, and other notes by John Keown, have been freely drawn on to supplement other research in the production of this book. More detail of individual events will be found particularly in the copies of *Record* from March, 1971 to January, 1972.
- 8 The maximum possible size of the General Committee at the time of the Centenary had become 25, although “doubling-up” generally reduced it to about 18 or 19.
- 9 The Association was sometimes a little vague as to its nomenclature; it was actually Inter-*Area*. Appendix L shows that the purpose of the Hammond Cup has now changed and that the Inter-*Area* award is the President’s Trophy, a paper competition.

Chapter 7 Maturity: War, Concern and Success

- 1 Air Raid Precautions; a civilian organisation designed to help the citizenry during air raids by clearing the streets, supervising shelters, dealing with casualties, etc.; not to be confused with the Home Guard (“Dad’s Army” of the television series) which was an armed force under military command.
- 2 McSweeney, *Race Walking Record*, August, 1952.
- 3 It was, perhaps, a pointer to the future that the Junior 3 miles at the Highgate Hour had only *two* competitors.
- 4 The Nijmegen Marches are an annual event in the Netherlands, in which service and police teams wearing uniform participate. The marches are over a varying number of days and the team is required to remain together during each day.
- 5 In those days, the appeals were for general revenue support, rather than to promote specific projects.
- 6 It was a race that showed tenacity in the face of adversity; one year it was postponed because of icy ground and took place instead a fortnight later in a blinding snowstorm.
- 7 The Editor dares to hope that the same may be said of its successor!

- 8 It was not clear whether one judge at a Selection Committee meeting could “disqualify” a walker from international selection or it needed the agreement of all three.

Chapter 8 Over the Hill

- 1 Australia, Canada, England, Isle of Man, New Zealand, Trinidad & Tobago and Wales.
- 2 Not quite no-one, perhaps; as we show in Chapter 25, Alan Buchanan was mentioning the problem in *Record* in 1971.
- 3 An interesting precedent exists for such considerate treatment of distant competitors. In the first Football Association Cup Competition in 1871-72, fourteen of the entrants were from the South of England, one was from the Midlands and the sixteenth was Queen’s Park (Glasgow). On financial grounds, the Scots were excused competing until the semi-final, when, funded by a public subscription at home, they met Wanderers at Kennington Oval. The result was a draw and Queen’s Park, unable to afford to return for the replay, scratched. To complete the picture, South Africa, like Queen’s Park, apparently could not afford the trip.
- 4 Chapter 25 refers to a particularly forceful expression of this attitude.
- 5 For a remark on “roping”, see Chapter 1
- 6 The reader will, perhaps, excuse such flowery language, as the proposition seems fetchingly archaic.
- 7 Nihill had originally been selected just for the 20k, only Howard Timms and John Warhurst having satisfied the selectors in circumstances mentioned in Chapter 24. Shortly after the Games, Nihill himself said that “Britain has fallen behind the rest of the world and must now take up the sad role as has-beens.”
- 8 He was slightly at fault here; he should have said “England and Wales”, as Scotland *did* use the I.A.A.F. definition, which cannot have helped the “home” situation.
- 9 Stone’s time was 52:21·2, 1:26·8 faster than Hake in 1935 but actually 0·8 seconds *slower* than Johnson in 1934; see Appendix XXXVI.
- 10 This is what Shearman was complaining about in 1887, the adoption of poor style in order to gain speed; see Chapter 29.
- 11 They do not, however, seem to have been so unpopular that they were often disqualified!
- 12 It has not been possible to determine whether this was ever used to disqualify someone walking within the definition but “unfairly”; it is, anyway, a peculiar concept.
- 13 There were also a National Event Coach, Lloyd Johnson, and a Chief National Coach, A. Cotton, a rather complex arrangement.
- 14 The Editor’s emphasis.
- 15 This was just as well; the old position of ignoring knees would have been replaced by one of taking note of them – like the I.A.A.F. – *but in a different way!*
- 16 Over the same period, the price of *Record* rose from £1·10 a year to £30!

Chapter 9 Stabilisation – or Stagnation?

- 1 In *Race Walking Record*, Alan Buchanan said that he could not understand the logic behind the choice of venue, given the somewhat minimal condition of women’s walking in Wales; others agreed with him. He also queried the strange choice of distances.
- 2 In a sense! Intermediate women were certainly described as “15-17”, but Seniors were described as “15-60”. Intermediates entering the R.W.A. Championships had to “have attained the age of 15 years at midnight 31st Aug/1st Sept in the year of competition” while Seniors in the Championships had to have “attained the age of 15 years and be under 60 years on the day of competition”, so that it was possible to be an Intermediate and a Senior simultaneously. Similar peculiarities existed in the male regulations. The difficulties arose from the fact that “where possible the R.W.A. championship age groups have been brought into line with those used by

the AAA AND WAAA,” the emphasis on the word *and* being John Keown’s in his description of the new arrangements. Further consideration of the matter was promised, pending the outcome of a review by the W.A.A.A. Eventually, the female age groups became, (working upwards from the youngest) Minors, Girls, Intermediates, Juniors and Seniors, while the male remained Colts, Boys, Youths, Juniors and Seniors. To everyone’s relief, the female Euro-Junior designation, depending on the age on the 31st December, did not survive for long, the old “ordinary” Junior category being redesignated to match the rest of the continent, thus removing the possibility of being in *three* age groups simultaneously. An Under-23 group was later introduced for males and females and still exists, although generally regarded as being largely superfluous. The attention of readers is particularly called to the barring of *all* sexagenarians from the Association’s Championships, another of the R.W.A’s extraordinary provisions that was later, to general relief, abandoned.

- 3 It still hasn’t; walks in the B.B.C. – and in the commercial television – broadcasts tend to appear as a set of legs in the background of a long jump competition.
- 4 The attempt was rather upset by the weather, as it rained more or less the whole time.
- 5 This was part of a sponsorship deal of £22,000 negotiated in 1980 with the distillers by Messrs. Marlow, Wells and Hopkins; it was intended to “assist a squad of top internationals in their Olympic preparation and general training over the next couple of years.” The squad numbered a dozen men, and the occasional support for a few women, who had not been the R.W.A’s responsibility when the sponsorship had been arranged, was clearly a retrospective idea.
- 6 At that rate, probably about a dozen red cards would have been necessary to disqualify a competitor at the highly-judged Battersea Park Championship.
- 7 It is, however, quite possible that those disqualified with the normal three cards might have collected a few more if they had not been pulled when they were.
- 8 Brian Adams subsequently claimed a British record for having been notified thirty-three days later!
- 9 In his acerbic manner, John Hedgethorpe, editor of *Race Walking Record*, in reply to a letter criticising the top walkers for missing the National 50k, said that they had been instructed not to take part. “The trouble,” he wrote, “is when selection decisions are taken in January the selectors can only retain their credibility if chances of being proved wrong are avoided.”
- 10 Among the women, Sandra Brown won the Long-Distance Championship from 1994 to 2006 (although it was not held in either 1996 or 1998). Her eleven successive titles included all possible formats of the championship, both 24 hours and 100 miles on both track and road.
- 11 The limits were: for Men 10 miles, 1:50:00; 20k 2:15:00; 35k 4:20:00; 50k 6:15:00, and for women 5k 35:00; 10k 1:12:00.
- 12 One might be forgiven for wondering what kind of “vertical” position other than “upright” the authors of Rule 171 in its various versions thought might occur, since “downwards” scarcely seems credible; it was a turgid piece of draftsmanship.
- 13 He drew a mechanical analogy; “In running the supporting leg acts like a spring, compressing when the weight of the body comes upon it and recoiling shortly afterwards.” It might be thought that the analogy was pushed a little too far. The leg does not “recoil” like a spring but has to be straightened by muscular effort; unlike a compressed spring, a bent leg left to itself will do nothing. The analogy, however, did help the reader to visualise the situation.
- 14 A devastating earthquake in Mexico City less than a fortnight before the competition meant that that country had far more important things on its collective mind and it did not participate in the final. An interesting contrast with later years was that all four of the Chinese competitors in the 20k appeared as “dnf”. Three were also walking the 50k (in which they finished as sixth team) and seem to have started the 20k only so that they could be counted in the overall classification, where they were thirteenth. Their women easily won the Eschborn Cup and the individual gold and silver with their other two competitors in sixth and eighth. It was a considerable rarity for a country’s women to lead its men into success in international competition.

- 15 Or, rather it should have been, but between the trial and the Games changes were made so that the turning-point was not at half way and competitors' schedules were upset.
- 16 In his *Race Walking Record* report, Ian Brooks remarked that "the method of judging on the course left much to be desired. Television film....shows judges totally ignoring the leaders in the 20 kilometres while one judge is filmed actually obstructing Canto in order to caution the luckless Smith....it is time judges were accountable to tests or examinations and not as at present elected to such posts by 'connections'. As presented judging is a farcical lottery, the I.A.A.F. must sort out the problem with extreme urgency." [Canto, of Mexico, was fifth and the Australian Smith was disqualified after 10k.]
- 17 The standard at the front of the race was always variable; a few years later, the editor won.
- 18 For no apparent reason, "England", athletically speaking, included the Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey, although they were not even in the United Kingdom, never mind England.
- 19 For an insider's view of the evolution and demise of the B.A.F., the reader is referred to John Lister's book *Athletics in the United Kingdom*, details of which may be found in the Bibliography.

Chapter 10 A Level is Reached

- 1 The proposal was that the B.A.F. would be run by a Council containing, among others, representatives of the four Home Countries and of the various disciplines. Each discipline was to be run by a Commission, which would be in an undefined relationship with the bodies – if any – controlling that discipline in the four countries.
- 2 The cumbersome opacity of the proposed structure was reflected in the occasionally uncouth wording of the constitution intended to implement it.
- 3 It was subsequently pointed out, however, that there had been only three northern delegates present, one of whom, the Northern Area Secretary, confessed later that he had inadvertently voted against the motion, when his instructions had been to support it. Either way, the proposition would have fallen and Eddershaw suggested that the cause was disagreement among the southern delegates.
- 4 Smith later served as President from 1994 to 1995.
- 5 He *was* subsequently consulted and *did* accept the duty; over twenty years later he was still doing it.
- 6 This may have had something to do with the fact that the Editor, John Hedgethorpe, was a Chief Inspector in the Essex Police.
- 7 The Metropolitan Police Open, which also changed its route from time to time in a traffic-dodging exercise, was still in existence at the Force's Imber Court Sports Ground but had become that oddest of betwixt-and-betweens, an 11k.
- 8 It could not be known at the time, but Cassidy went on to become the Association's longest-serving General Secretary; as the R.W.A. entered its centenary year, he overtook L.W. Woodcock, who was in office from 1953 to 1968.
- 9 He had achieved the distinction of being the oldest British debutant international in any branch of athletics, when he was selected in 1978 for a match from Compiègne to Paris to celebrate the Armistice of 1918.
- 10 It was reckoned that some of the back markers in the walk may have been up to four laps short.
- 11 It is only fair to record that the organisers subsequently produced a long statement on the shortcomings of the organisation, from which it appeared that practically everything was someone else's fault; this was particularly true in the case of the theft of the start lists.
- 12 It was not just that he feared for his own job; he foresaw that race walking would be either totally ignored if it had no organisation to speak up for it or else edged out to the very extremities of athletics and then given a final push over the precipice. He also warned that abolition was irreversible.

- 13 The President's Annual Appeals had heretofore raised finance for the general support of the Association or were for something fairly vague, such as "development" and they had disappeared into the funds. It was a new departure to focus on a specific event or project.
- 14 The course was, naturally, different each year and only Hedgethorpe knew before the day what it was and how far it was.
- 15 There was provision for appealing against ones initial grading, but as the appeal was to the working group it was generally considered not to be worth the effort.
- 16 China, Russia, Mexico, France, U.S.A. and Germany are larger; Italy, Spain and Ukraine have populations more than three-quarters of the United Kingdom's.

Chapter 11 The Century is Attained

- 1 It is worth quoting at length from Hedgethorpe's editorial of June, 1996:
"Sixty years ago, as he strode round the Berlin track on his way to the Olympic gold medal Harold Whitlock certainly seemed to be planting a straight knee on contact. And this at a time when the rule required only unbroken contact with the ground and so on. The implication is that Harold was walking in this fashion because it was the *proper* way to walk. One can hardly disagree with this because on this particular day Whitlock was the best walker in the world. When the rule did not *compel* him to have a straight knee on contact, he did it just the same – and so did all the other *proper* walkers, no doubt. If this is so, what is so revolutionary about this 'new' rule which *requires* walkers to do what *proper* walkers have always done anyway? Are we really so outraged at the wicked IAAF imposing their extremist measures upon us? Or are we being just a teeny bit resistant to change which isn't really a change at all, except that it has put into writing what Whitlock was doing sixty years ago anyway. What is really interesting is what has been going on between 1936 and the present time to make such a codification necessary. Lenient judging and walkers hoping that they are going too fast for the naked eye to detect their misdemeanours, that's what."
- 2 An undated but apparently early twentieth-century dictionary in the editor's possession has:
"CHIMERA: a monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon, vomiting flames [Mythology]: an incongruous and impossible conception of the fancy." It seems appropriate!
- 3 One difficulty, of course, was the problem of judging veterans' events with mixed age groups, where over- and under-sixties would have to be judged differently. The main counter-argument, however, was that British veterans would then be out of step with the world, as the general body of English walkers had previously been for many years. However unpalatable something may be, retrograde steps are always difficult.
- 4 Née Langford; she had recently married.
- 5 The English trials, the 50k in Stockport in June and the 20k and 10k in London, had all resulted in the selection of the first three finishers, although White had just beaten Hollier for third in the race; unable to nominate him themselves, the R.W.A. recommended White to the Scottish selectors.
- 6 Another suggestion, to have the U.K. championships at recognised international metric distances and the R.W.A. ones at imperial distances did not find much favour.
- 7 Possibly there were still some who thought that women should not do such things and that ignoring it would somehow make it go away. An earlier expression of the feeling was by one W.F.Sanderson in *The Sunday News* of 12th July, 1931, the day after Connie Mason had set her world mile record of 7:45.6; "I am not going to pretend that I like women's athletics. There are certain phases which could well be dispensed with, and which, in time, the organisers of the sport will realise are against progress. I am convinced that it is unwise for a woman to walk according to the rules as laid down for racing. Then there are jumping and throwing. These things are not suitable for a woman. I do not think there is much harm in the shorter track events;

in fact, I can well believe that a girl training for these things will help herself. But extremes will not pay.” His attitude of wanting to go backwards is reminiscent of Rye’s railing against “the loathsomeness of roping and betting”, as mentioned in Chapter 2.

- 8 The Borough of Royal Leamington Spa, to give it its full title.
- 9 As President of the I.O.C., Samaranch preferred to be addressed as “Your Excellency”, putting him on an equal footing with his fellow presidents in 2000, Jacques Chirac, Jiang Zemin, Vladimir Putin and Bill Clinton, who may or may not have enjoyed the implied equality of status and esteem.
- 10 Harold Whitlock had been President in 1955-1956.
- 11 Strictly speaking, the walks were not in Manchester, but at Salford Quays, which is at least in *Greater* Manchester, one of the metropolitan counties cobbled together from disparate parts in the local government reorganisation of 1974 and subsequently virtually abolished in 1986. Strictly speaking, too, the Trials course was not the same as the Games course, although they had about 95% in common.
- 12 Heppner was very unfortunate. Despite being ranked second in the U.S.A., he had failed to finish in the 2000 Olympic trials, where the first three were automatically selected. In the 2004 Trials he finished fourth, again missing a Games place; this second failure was apparently too much disappointment to bear and he committed suicide.
- 13 OCOG=Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, the body responsible for the local organisation. The initial letter of the host city is usually placed before the four initials; e.g., SOCOG, the Sydney OCOG. Should the Games ever be held in Quebec or Omsk, problems of pronunciation would be added to all the other worries of the OCOG.
- 14 The I.O.C. had previously wished to remove walks from the Olympic Games in Moscow, when the U.S.S.R. was probably the leading walking power and it was trying to remove them from the Beijing Games, when China was very strong!
- 15 When the Olympic Games had been held in London in 1908, the Revenue Account – for *all* sports for the entire period of the Games – showed an income of £21,591/13/3, with a surplus of £6,377/15/9.
- 16 At the A.G.M. in December, it was agreed that the surplus from the National Championships would go to the same cause.
- 17 The I.A.A.F. Rules had previously been renumbered.
- 18 This was just as well from the “home” point of view, as Jo Jackson became the first non-Australian woman to win the event.

Chapter 12 Walking in the Midlands

- 1 As mentioned elsewhere, the Association seems not always to have been certain whether it had Areas or Districts.
- 2 He finished twentieth in 4:44:40.
- 3 The Editor in question was John Hedgethorpe.

Chapter 13 Walking in the North

- 1 This was not an attitude confined to the North, but was country-wide. It is odd that men who could organise themselves into trades unions *against* the interests of the gentry (with the prospect of finding themselves imprisoned for their efforts) could not gather together a few like-minded fellows to form a sports club. It is well attested that even in later years some would modify their religious beliefs – presumably not very strongly held – because the local Catholic church had a football team and the Anglicans did not. One wonders how deeply this philosophical flexibility may have run. How many, for example, turned a blind eye to their reservations about nonconformism in order to compete for Gateshead Congregational Harriers,

who were organising walks just before the First World War?

- 2 The foundation was undoubtedly, at least in part, prompted by the desire to establish Championships in which such existing and successful provincial clubs as Lancashire, Nottingham, South Shields and Salford could compete. Having the R.W.A. Championships now open to all was one thing, but promoting events from which the long-established, more experienced and better organised Southern clubs were excluded gave more encouragement to Northern walkers.
- 3 Miss Green was not unique, of course. In 1922, a Miss Lilian Salkeld, a sixteen-year-old from Manchester, walked from London to Brighton in twelve hours and twenty minutes, leaving Big Ben at 8:30 in the evening. Two “City girl clerks” also covered the course. Miss Maude Brown and Miss Christine Wright arrived at Brighton at 11:05 a.m., having started out after office hours. “No official time was taken” according to a newspaper report. The time was probably not very sharp, as they were wearing high-heeled shoes. The ladies were bound to do these things solo, of course; in 1920, Surrey Walking Club, according to a newspaper report “resolved to accept no entries under 21 years of age, as it is considered that walking to Brighton in an open competition is decidedly ‘a man’s job’.”
- 4 An interesting aside on changes in social behaviour is that in the 1923 photograph practically everyone is wearing a hat, while thirty years later there is scarcely a covered head in sight.
- 5 Carol Tyson was described by journalists, probably with admiring intent, but actually with condescending effect, as “a red-haired moppet from Keswick” and “our little Cumberland redhead”; the impression is unfortunate, but walkers have been called worse.
- 6 During the two world wars, when activity was largely suspended, the last pre-war Presidents continued in office until, with the return of peace, others could be elected and the Association could return to normal.

Chapter 14 Walking in the South

- 1 We remark elsewhere on the R.W.A.’s occasional vagueness of nomenclature and, in particular, on its inability to decide between “districts” and “areas”.
- 2 Despite having many enthusiastic walkers among their numbers, the police, as authorities, were none too keen on road races in general. In 1922, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police had issued a notice in stately and discouraging terms; “In consequence of the number of athletic and other competitions on the highway, the Commissioner of Police desires to point out to promoters and competitors that the use of the highway for other purposes than bona-fide travelling has no legal sanction. It is the duty of the police to ensure that the primary object of the highway, i.e., availability for travellers, is maintained. Although in no way anxious to interfere unnecessarily with legitimate sport, the Commissioner wishes to draw attention to the increasing congestion of our streets, which renders it more and more difficult to prevent interference with legitimate traffic if athletic or other competitions take place on the highway, and he feels bound to give notice that in the event of any considerable nuisance or obstruction being caused or of any disorder arising from events of this description, the promoters and persons taking part are liable to prosecution by indictment or by summary procedure. Moreover, with the present need for economy in every direction, the Commissioner would not feel justified in providing extra police, or any other facilities, to assist in carrying out events of the nature referred to.” One wonders whether the Commissioner had heard of the “Case of Uxbridge High Street”, referred to in Chapter 30.

Chapter 15 Walking in Wales

- 1 One of that newspaper’s certificates appears in *Images of Walking*.
- 2 In the R.W.A.’s second century, Johanna Jackson also became Commonwealth Champion.

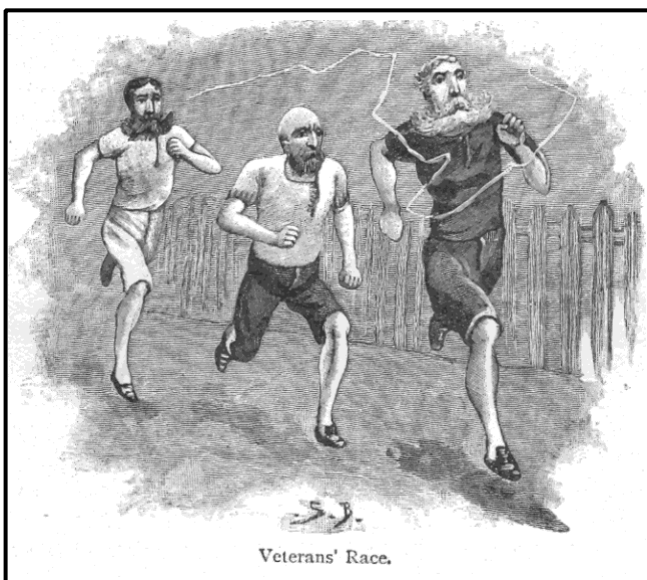
- 3 Martin Bell was actually a Scot; for his achievements for his own country see Chapter 35.

Chapter 16 Walking in The Isle of Man

- 1 See Chapter 29.
- 2 It was not unknown for a loser in a “wobble” – and sometimes even the winner – to end up in hospital, sometimes never to re-emerge.

Chapter 18 Veterans’ Race Walking

- 1 The illustration, which was poor in the original, is taken from *Health & Strength* of 14th October, 1911. The accompanying text includes the following: “THE NESTOR OF RACE WALKERS: I really do think that Mr. Leonard Norwood is the most wonderful veteran athlete in the land. He is 69 years of age, and yet I don’t believe there ever is a grand walking race anywhere in England in which he does not take part....perhaps his most wonderful achievement of all was in the 24 hours’ walk promoted by the Blackheath Harriers in September, 1909. I never shall forget how bravely he stuck it then, covering 100 miles in 23 hours 53 minutes. Now, opinions may differ as to whether it is wise for one so old as he to take part in such strenuous athletics; the marvellous thing is that there should be any old man capable of doing it.....He gave me (his secret) himself. ‘It’s because of my temperate habits,’ he said, ‘my life in the open air, and my constant exercise.’” [In Greek legend, Nestor, king of Pylos, was the oldest, most experienced and wisest of the Greek heroes at the siege of Troy.]
- 2 As with many subjects, Shearman had something to say about elderly athletes: “Having dealt with the boys, we will end our criticism of athletic meetings with the veterans. Some clubs give races to ‘veterans’ – a ‘veteran’ in the athletic sense being usually a man over thirty-five years old. We do not see that there is anything wrong in giving those who are ‘*rude donati*’ an opportunity of coming out again to exhibit themselves to the rising generation of runners, but in practice the veterans’ race is usually rather an absurd sight than otherwise. At one of these competitions, which is an annual affair, an old gentleman, who must by this time have passed his allotted span of three score years and ten, comes out regularly to exhibit himself, many others who are well over fifty appear in the race, while a good many younger men compete whose bodies from disuse have so far thickened about the middle as to render their movements anything but graceful! On the whole, we think that the veteran who is too slow to take part in the early races ‘lags superfluous on the stage’ of athletic sports.” [N.B.: *rude donati*: “given their wooden swords”, a reference to a ceremony marking a gladiator’s retirement from “competition”; lawyers never miss an opportunity to drag in a Latin tag!] To rub it in, Shearman provides an illustration of a Veterans’ Race.



Nowadays, of course, most of the old ones have never received their wooden swords, but have simply carried on when they entered their dotage – as Shearman would have regarded it – at thirty-five; he was, incidentally, *thirty* when he wrote the above.

- 3 “Instant death” was also known as “One shout and you’re out,” a reference to the early provision that a judge could disqualify a walker single-handedly, as distinct from the modern necessity for three judges to agree.
- 4 For a description of Categories A and B, see Chapter 10 and for a proposed earlier version, see Chapter 9.
- 5 The international body was founded as the World Association of Veteran Athletes in 1977. An attempt at its Assembly in Gateshead in 1999 to change *Veterans* to *Masters* was narrowly defeated but the Assembly in Brisbane in 2001 agreed on a name alteration.

Chapter 19 Women’s Walking

- 1 The Women’s World Games were instituted by the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale because the I.A.A.F. and I.O.C. had declined to provide for women’s events in the 1922 Olympic Games. The Games were abandoned after 1934, when the men’s organisations grudgingly acknowledged the existence of women. See Appendix XLIV.
- 2 Connie Mason’s winning time of 7:45·6 in 1931 was the first occasion on which a woman had walked inside eight minutes. It took until 1954 for Beryl Randle to improve on that time. Miss Mason had some misfortune in her “not-quite” world record times. On the 13th June, 1931, her 7:53·8 could not be ratified because there were only two timekeepers, instead of the required three and one week later her spectacular 7:29 proved to be due to the track’s being a little over eighteen yards short of the quarter-mile. It appeared that the surveyor who had measured the track, being ignorant of the requirements, had done so along its centre line, instead of on the inside. On the 17th July, the track was accurate and the timekeepers were present in sufficient numbers for her record to stand.. Astonishingly, just a year previously, Lucy Howes’ record time of 8:12·4 was not claimed because the track had not been measured at all.
- 3 Whatever her actual forename, she was always known as *Nelson*. She ranks with Marea Hartman, referred to elsewhere in this volume, as a dominant and authoritative character, not to

be crossed, save at ones peril.

- 4 Something similar to Connie Mason's misfortune was repeated in 1954, when Beryl Randle broke the National and All-comers' 1600m records twice and would have done so a third time had not the timekeeper, in a handicap race, stopped his watch on the first finisher before Randle came in second.

Chapter 20 Schools' Walking

- 1 *Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, H.M.S.O., 1904*
- 2 The following references will further illuminate the matter of this chapter:
P.C.McIntosh Physical Education in England since 1800 1952
D.Young The History of the English Schools' Athletic Association, 1925-1995
J.Hopkins Race Walking 1976
- 3 A full list of winners of English Schools' Athletic Association Race Walking titles appears in Appendices XLII (Boys) and XLIII (Girls).

Chapter 21 Lasting the Distance: the Centurions

- 1 Since this Chapter was written, there have also been events in 2007 on the road in Battersea Park, London, and on the track at Milton Keynes. The highest number on the Roll at the time of writing was 1067, awarded to Irishman Seán Pender at the latter event.
- 2 The Centurions generally refer to each other in this fashion, by use of their numbers on the Roll of Members.
- 3 Although selected for the 10 miles at the 1908 Games in London, Hammond did not walk.
- 4 O'Reilly was twentieth in the 50k in Rome.
- 5 The Motto of the Centurions, this appears to be an adaptation – or misquotation – from *Song to David* by Christopher Smart (1722-1771): “....And now the matchless deed's achiev'd, determined, dared and done.”

Chapter 22 Coaching

- 1 Cummings's book is noted in the Bibliography and looked at in Chapter 29.

Chapter 23 Race Walking Record 1: The War Baby

- 1 Looking back ten years later, McSweeney recalled that the first edition had been distributed at the Enfield 7, the copies being folded and stapled with a small office machine on the top of a tram. “I think that some at least (of the other passengers) thought we were subversive agents connected with an underground press.”
- 2 For example, in February, 1942: “REMORSE? Judges report that two ‘pulled’ competitors in the recent Met. Police Open actually apologized for breaking contact. This is a new development of war-time politeness, and we may find walkers dropping out of their own accord when not complying with the definition – kind of walkers’ ‘hari-kiri’.”
- 3 During the War – and for some time after – clothing was rationed and could be obtained only if the purchaser had the appropriate number of Clothing Coupons, issued by Government order; the amount mentioned was about one-twelfth of the annual allowance for *all* clothing.
- 4 Another example of McSweeney's sense of humour, apparently.

Chapter 24 Race Walking Record 2: The Established Magazine

- 1 See Chapter 30.
- 2 Won by R. Goodall of Woodford Green in 86:11. Some things have improved slightly; S. Davis's winning time in 2007 was 79:50, but Goodall would still have been second with four and a half minutes to spare!
- 3 It is, of course, possible that old stocks of pre-printed covers were being used. Whatever the reason, it seems to have given rise to the generally accepted view that Swan remained Editor until 1953, when, in fact, Issue no. 115 of September, 1951 had been the last he produced.
- 4 The aggregate times for the Great Yarmouth event given in *Record* show Young winning by 15:22:35 to 15:23:01, but addition of the four stage times shows a margin of 15:22:35 to 15:23:37; it was close, in any case! Sandra Brown's figures in *Unbroken Contact* show the same discrepancy.
- 5 He was actually third in the 10000m and tenth in the 3000m in Antwerp, 1920.
- 6 Won by Miss Ada Hwang in 10:10:30, a pace of about 24:30:00 for the hundred miles.

Chapter 25 Race Walking Record 3: Life after McSweeney

- 1 Highgate Harriers obtained the permission of the London County Council to install a memorial bench at Parliament Hill Fields track; it was still there over forty years later.
- 2 The "stars" sometimes produced some humour; Bryan Hawkins, Star No. 12, recalled – rather detachedly in the third person – "During a 15km road race in Stockholm in 1955 a judge rode beside every competitor on a push bike. Bryan's judge never stopped talking until at last he told him to 'shut up'. The judge then produced a warning flag, waved it and fell off his bike."
- 3 In 1964, Bomber Command alone had 52 finishers in its Championships.
- 4 The Areas and many counties continued with the 10 miles championship and, in a somewhat haphazard way, the start of the Association's second century was marked by its reintroduction nationally in 2008 with more or less its old popularity.
- 5 The Association dares to hope that the present volume will sell more rapidly.
- 6 The feature on Tolley contained references to "so-called coaches", and his denial that there is any push through the feet in walking led to a small flurry of correspondence from a couple of them. About 90% of the flurries of opinion in the Association's history have been small, in length of existence, significance of the subject or eventual effect; this one followed the pattern.
- 7 "We just haven't got one judge who really understands what walking is all about", "About time he was asked to resign from Race Walking at once", "Big-headed style and wide-mouthed complaints", "Many bees in his enlarged bonnet" were some of the turns of phrase that decorated *Record's* pages.
- 8 A glance at the Appendices will show that the Women's Championship distances were not always entirely rational.
- 9 He was also, incidentally, the introducer for his Rules, Records & Standards Subcommittee of the welcome principle of not having a meeting unless there were some real purpose.
- 10 The standard was 51 minutes for the Belgrave, which was conspicuously hillier than the rest.
- 11 Whitlock's report is remarkable for two main reasons;
 - (i) the course contained cobbles, dirt paths, woodland tracks complete with tree roots, ditches, parkland and furrows as well as tarmac roads;
 - (ii) in marked contrast to the situation nowadays, Whitlock had *never* competed abroad; of his team-mates, Joe Hopkins was in the same position and Lloyd Johnson had done a single 22k in Paris.
- 12 Chapter 5 indicates that the problem existed even as early as 1913, when dates changed rapidly and races arose and were cancelled before the ink was dry on the fixture list.
- 13 The campaign for equality took some time to become successful, but was helped by the insistence of some "ladies" on taking part in the longer races, particularly those of the Essex

League, and beating several of the men. The final blow may have been struck in a track race at Battersea Park where the officials declined to start a “mixed” race; largely at the instigation of Roger Mills, the men declared that unless the women were allowed to race, there would be no event at all; after that, it was impossible to maintain the silliness.

Chapter 26 Race Walking Record 4: Colour and Conflict

- 1 He might well have been, at £3·50 p.a. (£4·00 overseas) with a club advertisement charge of £2·00 per half page.
- 2 A problem with the new system was that an item referred to one of the subcommittees was likely to be referred to the Areas for their views, then, when they had commented (probably after reference to *their* sub-committees), reported upon to General Committee and referred back for reconsideration of detailed objections. It all took a long time and some matters simply evaporated as they went round the system. The subcommittees, in general, lacked delegated authority to take definitive action.

3

HAWKEYE THE DEMON JUDGE

Here's a tale of a callous judge
Whose vicious calls you couldn't budge.
A demon devil in disguise
Equipped it seemed with x-ray eyes.

A rigid follower of the law
Which says, "One foot upon the floor
At all times and with straightened limb",
Was the only way you'd get by him

Walkers feared his evil gaze,
Saw very well on misty days,
Once told a fellow to depart
Who hadn't lined up at the start.

Noted 'cause he sometimes might
Hide himself just out of sight,
In cars and ditches, bushes too
To gain an undetected view.

Many stories have been told
Of Hawkeye's deeds in days of old,
The best of which you'll all agree
Was when he hid inside a tree.

A walker long time in the game
Queried how he got his name.
Didn't you know, came grunted shout
Once Hawkeye pulled the whole field out.

Although there wasn't much to view
'Cause the whole field constituted two

Just four feet pounding out the pace
But Hawkeye quickly stopped that race.

So there's a moral to this ode
Be careful of your walking mode.
Heed this rhyme and there's no doubt
The demon judge won't pull you out.

It was not, perhaps, great literature but, bearing in mind that the Poet Laureate at the time was John Betjeman, it was surely worthy of publication.

4 This did not actually appear until Tim Watt took over in 2000.

5 In the circumstances, Smith's reply to the editorial comments was, for a fairly outspoken character, remarkably restrained.

6 It had lasted for one issue fewer than Hedgethorpe's first spell and was "beaten" only by the tenures of Ken Best and Gerald Swan.

7 See p.93 for an extreme example of such a death wish.

8 The tables must have provoked the same feeling of superiority in many readers as they did in the present writer: "If only I'd been Albanian when I set my 50k p.b. at Basildon...." The domestic equivalent among veterans is "I'm not too slow, I'm just not old enough."

9 See p.92.

10 The results in question were about this size!

11 The editor of this volume, while walking the London Marathon, was accused by another participant of cheating, because it was supposed to be a run. Slowing for long enough to explain that it was a foot race, the "cheat" then moved on.

12 Mary Whitehouse was the founder of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association and made it her business to complain continually about salaciousness in the media. When Anne von Bismarck won a World Veterans' gold medal in Tokyo a couple of years later, there was a similar front cover picture, but the traditional Japanese dress was altogether more modest, not to say all-encompassing.

13 See Chapter 22 for a note on their respective rôles.

14 It is extraordinary, in retrospect, to complain about over-large fields. Would that it were so still!

15 The layout later became the most flexible yet seen in *Record's* history, when a basic two-column, fully justified design had occasional display panels when the content warranted it. The wide availability of computer systems and cheap colour printing had led to the best visual impact in the magazine's history. Most of this book is fully justified, the left and right ends of the lines being in alignment; to clarify the change in format of *Record*, this Note is left justified.

16 The figures are reproduced in Chapter 11.

17 The figures appear smaller than those gathered by Watt; it must be remembered, however, that they refer only to events holding R.W.A. Permits. Various other events, which Watt will have included, such as schools events, national and area championships, open track and field meetings and Veterans' track and field leagues cannot be counted in this way, but are clearly significant. In 2011, for example, strictly beyond the scope of this volume, the Eastern Veterans' League had 283 performances.

18 See Chapter 29, which discusses the principal contributions to the literature, and the Bibliography.

19 Those who complain about "unfriendly" courses might note Viljoen's descriptions of the conditions under which she won her medal "...in a car park! A 60m straight, then a sharp left turn, 30m straight with a sharp right turn, a 40m straight with a sharp right again, 20m uphill – 14 times...."

20 The International Olympic Committee actually decided to drop baseball and softball; it was within the power of the *Executive* to drop individual events within sports, such as the Walks, but this was overcome by sheer weight of opinion and international solidarity.

21 It is an unusual concept for a "secretive society" to project itself as anything, but perhaps the Editor had a deadline to meet.

Chapter 27 100 Years of Performance Development

1 Statisticians may wish to note that the sample size was 67 (44 male and 23 female) and that $R^2=0.996$. The R^2 figure, in everyday terms, can be taken as showing how much of the variation in the VO_2 figure is "explained" by the equation. (Editor's note)

2 Up to 2013, this prediction, made in 2007, appears justified. Men's world records in 2013 were, at 20k

- 1:17:16 by Vladimir Kanaykin (2007) and, at 50k 3:34:14 by Denis Nizhegorodov; Women's 20k record was 1:25:02 by Yelena Lashmanova (2012). All the walkers named are Russian. (Editor's note)
- 3 The following references provide further background and information:
- Coyle, E.F. (1999) "Physiological determinants of endurance exercise performance", *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, 2: 3, 181-189.
- Drake, A.P., Cox, V., Godfrey, R., Brooks, S. (2003) "Physiological variables related to 20 km race walk performance" *Journal of Sports Sciences* 21: 269-270
- Reiss, M., Ernest, O., Gohlitz, D. (1993) "analysis of the 1989-1992 Olympic cycle with conclusions for coaching distance running and walking events" *New Studies in Athletics* 8: 4, 7-18

Chapter 28 How the R.W.A. Works

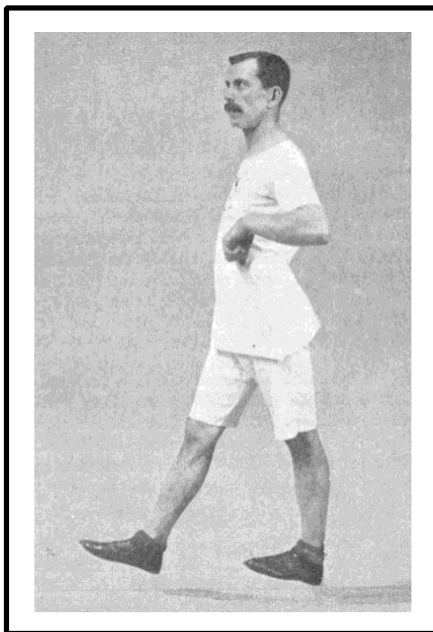
- 1 See Chapter 3.
- 2 Shortly after the centenary, the Judges and Officials and Rules, Records and Standards Subcommittees were merged.
- 3 For those of a mathematical turn, if the number of races available, n , is even, the number to score is $(n/2)+1$; if n is odd, it is $(n+1)/2$. Thus, if there are ten races in the season, six score and if there are nine, five score.
- 4 See also Chapter 20.
- 5 At the time of publication of this volume, the U.R.L. of the Association's web site is: <http://www.RaceWalkingAssociation.org.uk>

Chapter 29 The Literature of Race Walking

- 1 See the Bibliography for details of all books mentioned in this chapter.
- 2 Nowadays, sporting achievements tend to be measured in hundredths or thousandths of a second, but, as Thom shows, accuracy is not new; describing the performance of Mr. Joseph Edge of Macclesfield in walking one hundred and seventy-two miles in forty-nine hours and twenty minutes, he observes that "He walked at the rate of three miles, three furlongs, thirty-five perches and 11-74ths feet per hour." In modern measure, one seventy-fourth of a foot is about four millimetres!
- 3 Peter Radford's book is in a different class; while being more scholarly than many of those dealing with the Captain, it is also very readable.
- 4 In his introduction to Shearman's book, Richard Webster, later Lord Alverstone – see Note 14 to Chapter 30 for a remark on this gentleman – echoes these reservations: "...and while on the subject of walking, I wish to call particular attention to the extraordinary feats of long-distance walking which have been performed in late years, by which I mean distances of 40 and 50 miles and upwards, which are, in my opinion, of far greater value than the so-called performances of walking eight or more miles in the hour by a mode of progression so nearly resembling a shamle or trot as to defy the most watchful of judges."
- 5 Athletes under such a régime may have reckoned themselves fortunate; it was said of the eighteenth century Welsh distance runner Guto Nythbrân that he kept his muscles supple by sleeping on horse manure.
- 6 Wilkinson, like many another author, tried to cover everything, his practical advice sometimes being decorated with strange additional remarks: "The two commonest ailments which a walker suffers from are shin-soreness and stitch. The former is often felt by ordinary walkers along a road or street; and in this case is very frequently caused by wearing heavy boots, a great drag on the shin bones; or by wove drawers which fit tight to the leg and thereby heat the muscles." So far, so good, but he adds a footnote: "This description of drawers is the most unhealthy that can be worn for the above reason; besides being most dangerous in case of the wearer falling into the water, which collects in them all down the legs; and, being unable to escape at the bottom, renders swimming very difficult." He also advises that "a man cannot start too fast in a walking race," but should "get off at his very utmost speed, thereby

getting through the ‘aches and pains’ stage the sooner, after which he blows freely, goes with more ease to himself; and, since the action then becomes mechanical, can generally keep on at the same rate till nature is exhausted” which, one fears, may come all too soon!

- 7 “Stonehenge” would have been disappointed by the Act introduced by Sir John Astley making it an offence to feed horses on arsenic and antimony to improve their appearance but, perhaps, cheered by the fact that it did not apply to human athletes. Athletes were more careful of their muscles than of their digestions. Wilkinson quotes Westhall’s recipe for an embrocation consisting of a quarter of a pint each of spirits of wine (i.e., alcohol), white vinegar and spirits of turpentine, warmed and mixed with a well beaten new-laid egg, a not unreasonable concoction.
- 8 Verification of “records” was always difficult. Shearman, writing of the high jump, mentions a novel way of doing it; “In 1880 P.Davin is reported to have beaten Brooks’ record by clearing 6’2¾” at his native place at Carrick-on-Suir, and in proof of the record we believe that the certificates of two local justices of the peace as to the correctness of the measurement were lodged with *The Field*.” “Stonehenge”, reporting on the same occasion, lists eight “gentlemen” as having signed a letter of confirmation of the achievement, among them the Assistant County Surveyor. The town is in Co. Tipperary, but the surrounding region also includes areas in Co. Waterford and Co. Kilkenny; it is not known which of the three provided the signatory. Either way, it seems that where records were concerned it was better to be safe than sorry, even if the signatories were *gentlemen* rather than *experts*.
- 9 This is indeed a bizarre notion and one is bound to wonder where it came from. However, the posed picture of Larner in this chapter shows just such a stance, as does that of Jack Butler in the chapter on *The Pioneers of Modernism*, although Bill Sturgess on the same page is “the right way round”. In the same chapter, however, both Butler and Larner are seen *racing* in the normal way. Larner’s book, from which the posed photograph comes, has “Fair Walking” illustrated in three different views, two with normal limb co-ordination, while “Unfair Walking with Straight Legs: Jumping from the heels with knees straight,” reproduced below left is so utterly bizarre that it is impossible to say one way or the other which way round he is. Is it any wonder that the double Olympic Champion looks surprised?



In an inspection of hundreds of photographs and drawings of the time, the Editor has failed to find a

single example of anyone racing in the manner described by Neil. Why such distinguished walkers should have posed so – rather as though an orthodox boxer had adopted a southpaw stance – and why at least one seemingly fairly sensible author should even have thought it possible to compete like that remains a mystery. It may well be that Lang Neil himself had doubts about his statement, because the illustration on the front cover of *Walking* (above, right) shows an “athletic walker” with perfectly normal co-ordination of his limbs.

- 10 His name was originally Hall; it is not apparent why he changed it.
- 11 Astley had an interesting life and would surely have fitted in well in Regency days. He was a very successful sprinter, was wounded in the Crimea, got through his own fortune and his wife’s, largely because his enthusiasm for horseracing was greater than his judgement, and promoted not only the six-day walks (or runs) but the even more outlandish six-day swim; in 1879, Capt. Webb, who had just become the first man to swim the Channel, did 74 miles in 84 actual hours of swimming (16 hours a day) at Lambeth Baths and the following year floated for 60 hours in the Westminster Aquarium. Astley describes him as having been a “judge” at the Weston–O’Leary match. He was not listed by the *Illustrated London News* among those who could not agree on the rules at that event, but nomenclature at the time was vague – what are now *judges* were then often *referees* and vice versa – so that the omission is no negation of Astley’s remark.
- 12 Webster’s *Lessons in Athletics* was published (and “presented”, presumably meaning “distributed free of charge”) by the manufacturers of Ovaltine and at intervals throughout the book people as diverse as Bob Pearce, a famous sculler, Ted Jackson, trainer of Wembley Lions Ice Hockey team, Jack Milne, the World Speedway Champion, the Swiss Caucasus Expedition of 1934 and Miss Patricia Bourne, “22-year-old English girl lion-tamer”, all attest to the drink’s excellent properties. This is a contrast with Neil, in his *Walking*. He advocates the consumption of strong cups of Oxo (with fresh egg yolks beaten in) during races; it may not be a coincidence that the back cover of the book carries endorsements of the product by Edgar F. Broad, winner of the recent Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton, and W.J. Sturgess, the amateur record holder.
- 13 Readers of the book may be surprised to learn that the second man home in the Sheffield Star walk in 1956 was twenty-four-year-old miner Dennis Skinner, subsequently M.P. for Bolsover and a perpetual scourge of his own and the other side’s benches alike; he was just over three minutes away from winning.

Chapter 30 Characters, Eccentrics and Rum Goings-on

- 1 McNab *et al.* describe this appalling doggerel as “possibly written by Wilson himself”; unlike his heroic pedestrianism, it reflects little credit on the man.
- 2 It was not only in the early nineteenth century that such skulduggery took place; a century later, there were allegations that J.R. Barnes Moss, who was fancied to do well, was “poisoned” in the 1908 twenty-four hour race, although nothing was proved. Nowadays, of course, drugs are more likely to be self-administered to *improve* performance.
- 3 Another version of the affair has it that the problem arose because Gent’s backers wanted to withdraw; either way, the spectators were upset at having neither the race nor a refund of their entrance money and expressed their displeasure rather pointedly. So alarming a prospect did the crowd present on its way home that the unfortunate West Brompton stationmaster suffered a heart attack and died.
- 4 Littlewood, as well as holding all the professional walking records from 143 to 531 miles, had set the professional running times from 49 miles (6:0:0) to 84 miles (11:09:50); this remarkable man’s career is described in Marshall’s *King of the Peds*.
- 5 In an Appendix to Shearman’s book
- 6 See the Bibliography for details
- 7 Including, he is ashamed to admit, the Editor
- 8 See Appendix XLVI.
- 9 Or “Act of God” and, therefore, beyond the reach of insurance and reasonable criticism.

- 10 Jack Crump, who was himself a walking judge, remarks with reference to the 1920s that “in those days walking judges had not reached the exceptionally high standards of current times and strict impartiality was not particularly associated with certain judges”; he was writing shortly before his death in 1966.
- 11 There was an interesting example in the U.S.A. in 1889 of the opposite kind of thing committed in all innocence, when the Englishman Sid Thomas was tiring towards the end of a five-mile running race. His friends dashed forward to catch him as he collapsed, but their concern overcame their judgement and they caught him before he had finished, thus robbing him of second place or, indeed, of any place at all.
- 12 Some of the photographs of the race show a few attendants wearing wing collars; all of them are wearing hats. Mr. Pringle did not quite have the moral fibre to go through with it; he removed his collar, tie and hat on the way.
- 13 For the avoidance of doubt, the Editor must assure his readers that he has not overlooked a comma; it really was “Bovril chocolate”.¹³ Not, however, George Joseph Smith, the “Brides in the Bath” murderer, Shearman’s most famous client, who was less fortunate and was hanged.
- 15 In an interesting twist, Fowler Dixon, had he actually been charged instead of Crippen, would have found that the case was heard by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Alverstone – formerly Richard Webster – who had preceded Shearman as President of the A.A.A. The following photograph of Crippen taken, presumably illicitly and under difficult conditions, at his trial does show some degree of resemblance:



Chapter 31 The Pioneers of Modernism

- 1 We speak here of *respectable* attempts and may, like Innes, take with a fair-sized pinch of salt the statements by Thom in *Pedestrianism* that Captain Thomson of the 74th Regiment walked twenty-one miles in four and a half minutes inside three hours on the 5th May, 1808 and that on the 22nd February, 1812, one James Watson, a glazier, walked from Whitechapel Church to Romford and back (thirty-three miles) in two hours and fifty-six minutes to win a wager of £10, a modest enough return for such a phenomenal performance. Lest it be supposed that Thom simply swallowed anything he might hear about walking, it may be pointed out that he seems to have had the same attitude to running performances. Thus, he quotes Curley, “the Brighton Shepherd” and Grinley, a boot-closer, as having run a hundred and twenty yards in “twelve seconds and a half” in 1805 and twelve seconds in 1806, while Cooke, a soldier, did two hundred yards in twenty seconds in 1808 and Skewball, “the famous Lancashire shepherd” performed one hundred and forty yards in twelve seconds that same year. It does not need much timing error at the start and finish, together with a little waywardness of course measurement, to obtain such surprising standards in sprints (especially downhill), but we are reminded of the remarks of Innes on the question of road distances, quoted in Chapter 30, when Thom tells us

- that John Todd, “a Scotchman”, ran one mile on the Uxbridge Road, starting at Hyde Park Corner, in four minutes and ten seconds in 1803!
- 2 No-one seems to have raised serious doubts about Topley’s *first* performance of The Feat, even though it finished in the dark, perhaps because Westhall himself was the referee.
 - 3 On the way, Littlewood did 215 miles in 2 days, 308 in 3, 396 in 4 and 470 in 5; compare this with Foster Powell’s York performances and see also Note 7, below..
 - 4 It is as well for the modern reader to bear in mind that in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth “the road” meant the *open* road, races frequently being from one town to another or, indeed, there and back again. If judges were in short supply, the walkers might well be on their own for miles at a time; see Innes’ remarks in Chapter 3.
 - 5 He was a “victim of the judges” in the first Manchester to Blackpool; F.W. Breakell, who was an official on that occasion, recalled that “....the winner, J.Butler, tired out the amateur champion, W.J.Sturgess. Poor Sturgess set up a waddling kind of running gait, and met with disqualification.”
 - 6 See the comments in Note 9 to Chapter 29.
 - 7 He also did London to York (200 miles) in 37 hours (5·4 m.p.h.), another interesting comparison with Foster Powell.
 - 8 Evidently, when it suited him, Cummings was prepared to co-operate with horses rather than race against them.
 - 9 Such tracks are not extinct. Palmer Park, Reading, for example has the athletic track surrounded by a 3·5 laps to the mile cycle track. When the straight of the six-lane athletic track was extended to eight lanes, the extra two had to be put on the *inside*. The Editor can testify to the peculiar experience of coming into the home straight on the kerb and suddenly finding oneself in lane 3.
 - 10 Butler’s time is equivalent to about 48:30 for 10000m – not an excessively fast time nowadays but sprightly enough for its era; Webb’s mark is equivalent to 45:49. The eventual Championship Best Performance was by Steve Barry with 40:54·7 in 1983.

Chapter 32 International Medal Winners

- 1 See his recollections in Chapter 3.
- 2 A formal photograph of Goodwin appears in Part IV.
- 3 There had been no walk in the 1928 Games, but pressure led by British walkers and officials had resulted in the staging of a 50k four years later; this was the first Olympic *road* walk.
- 4 Such was what Megnin called the “fiasco” that in the 10000m walk, in which there were no British walkers, Blackmore took complete control, some recent record breakers being disqualified and the others being “compelled to walk in a style that we in England would find possible to match.”
- 5 The 1960 2 miles is reckoned to be one of the best walking races seen, as Vickers and Matthews battled for most of the distance, Vickers winning in a new record time of 13:02·4. Unfortunately for him, the R.W.A. did not introduce its own 20k championship until 1965; no doubt he would have shone in that, given the chance.
- 6 Still, he was not entirely the star of the day – or, rather, the weekend – because Hew Neilson occupied the time in setting eighteen records of his own.
- 7 See Chapter 30.
- 8 Bearing in mind that he also won the Hastings to Brighton and the National 50k in that year, his winning distances totalled over 210 miles; there were also, naturally, many shorter races.
- 9 Williams won the A.A.A. 7 miles in 1962.
- 10 He won 3 at 50k, 6 at 20 miles, 6 at 20k, 4 at 10 miles, 3 at 7 miles track, 1 at 10000m track, 1 at 2 miles track and 3 at 3000m track, including, in 1968, all four R.W.A. titles and the A.A.A. 7 miles.
- 11 20k P.Fullager, R.Wallwork and M.Tolley: 50k D.Thompson, R.Middleton and C.Fogg
- 12 20k P.Fullager, J.Webb and R.Wallwork: 50k D.Thompson R.Middleton and S.Lightman (Lightman was National 50k champion the same year.)

Chapter 33 Trojans of the Road

- 1 See Chapter 21.
- 2 This is rather puzzling. It is indeed about 27 miles between the two towns. The round trip of 54 miles could hardly have been done in seven hours (at nearly 8 m.p.h.), but seven hours for one way (at just over 3.75 m.p.h.) scarcely seems noteworthy; the performance remains enigmatic.
- 3 Marples (see the Bibliography) says that the wager was £10, which barely appears worthwhile. The figure of 100 guineas is agreed by Egan.
- 4 Some insight into what Foster Powell (and his backers) meant by “walking” is given by the report of the *Annual Register* of 1787 that he came “running into Canterbury amidst thousands of spectators”.
- 5 Geoffrey Chaucer, of course, had thought it worthwhile to send his tale-telling pilgrims to Canterbury in the fourteenth century, but they made the journey more gently and it took Chaucer twenty-seven years to write up his “report”.
- 6 His actual time was 16 days, 23 hours and 8 minutes; the previous year he had done a longer but markedly slower walk of 1134 miles in 21 days on the same road.
- 7 He overdid the brandy.
- 8 For an extract from Thom’s description of the walk, see Chapter 29.
- 9 Barclay had similarly chosen to reject Thomas Standen’s “1000 in 1000” in 1811; he was somewhat jealous of his own achievements!
- 10 The *Illustrated London News*, 14th April, 1877.
- 11 An odd remark, given that the judges were apparently working to different definitions and a walker could have departed from one definition without infringing the other.
- 12 O’Leary certainly won in Chicago, but seems not to have believed that it was by 50 miles.
- 13 The *Illustrated London News*, 14th April, 1877.
- 14 Reference is also made to this in our chapter on *The Literature of Race Walking*, and Marshall’s *King of the Peds* is the definitive word on the subject.
- 15 Randle’s prize of £1,000, a considerable amount in those days – but still a far cry from modern purses, when even pacemakers receive thousands (and are frequently ignored by the rest of the field, anyway) – cost her her amateur status. It also half cost her a trophy. She had gained the Midland Area Best Performance Cup for her Midland and National victories; after a great deal of haggling at the Midland meeting, it was agreed that her name could be engraved on the cup but that she could not physically have it for the next twelve months, a singularly mean decision.

Chapter 34 Officers and Officials

- 1 In earlier days, “breasting the tape” was more or less literal, except that the “tape” was usually a strand of worsted, which was cheap, visible, easily distorted on contact and readily broken. Even today, long after the use of worsted was dropped, many of the posts fitted to mark the finish line at athletic tracks have a rebate to take the thread.
- 2 At the Editor’s primary school, for example, in informal games of playground cricket, it was a rule that a ball hit into the caretaker’s garden counted as six runs but the batsman was out *and* had to go and ask for it back.
- 3 As well as all having been President, three of the gentlemen illustrated had held other offices:
A.A.Harley, President, 1951-52, Treasurer, 1946-69
W.J.Harris, President, 1965-66, Championship Secretary, 1947-49
J.Hackwood, President, 1948-49
S.C.Roberts, President, 1963-64
W.Batson, O.B.E., Q.P.M., President, 1949-50
S.Pryor, President, 1967-70
E.H.Neville, President, 1920-21
H.H.Whitlock, M.B.E., President 1955-56, General Secretary, 1948-53

Chapter 35 A Walking Miscellany

- 1 It will be recalled (see Chapter 6) that the inaugural Essex 2 mile walk in 1888 was won by a member of Chelmsford Football Club, A.Searle, in 16:44.6; he won again in 1899, in 16:04.0, and was succeeded by his Club-mate, H.J.Cheverton, (15:56.8); as another example of Club-hopping, mentioned elsewhere, Cheverton won as a member of Walthamstow Harriers from 1891 to 1893 and as a member of Essex Beagles in 1894, by which time he was down to 15:07.2. Perhaps it was simply an active way for footballers to spend the summer when their first sport was actually restricted to the winter, just as rowers took to cross country running in the winter.
- 2 Keddie says that he was disqualified, but contemporary reports, which distinguish between “D.Q.” and “D.N.F.” put him in the latter category, as does Damilano. The *Official Report* on the Games, meticulously compiled by Sir Theodore Andrea Cook, however, states that, “...at this point Reid was disqualified. The same fate befel (*sic*) Quinn soon afterwards.” which may be taken as conclusive.
- 3 This was was probably on the basis of “You take the high road and I’ll take the low road....”
- 4 Marshall mentions a number of long-distance events either in Scotland or featuring Scottish performers, including the curiously named George Noremac, who was by trade a lithographer; perhaps it was his normal practice of dealing with material originated in reverse that impelled him to spell his name backwards; if he was simply trying to avoid being identified, it is not very subtle. An event rather out of the main stream of walking is commemorated in the postcard reproduced below. The precise year is not evident, but the specimen shown was posted in August, 1910.

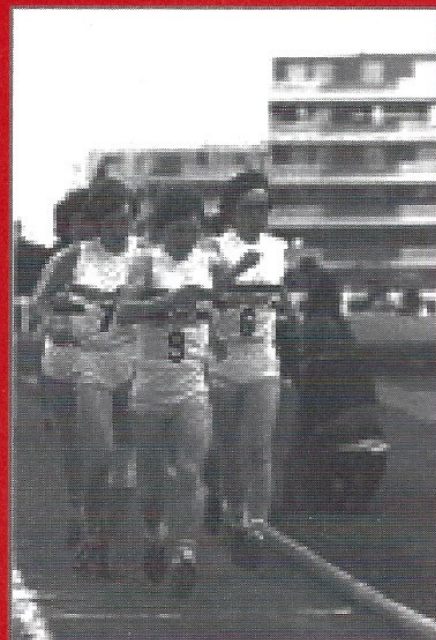
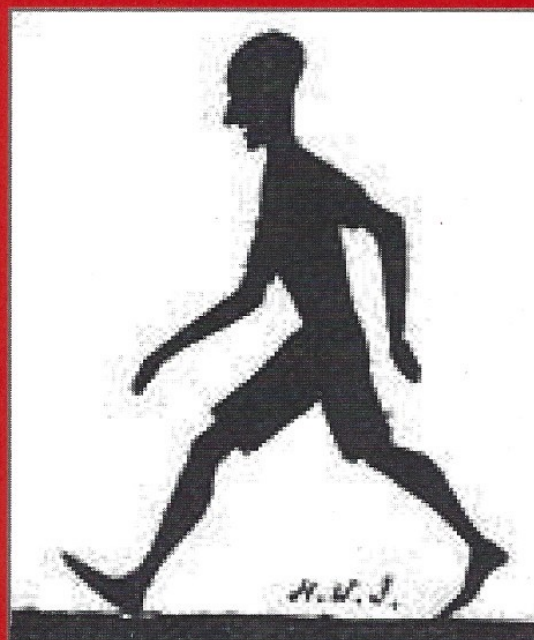
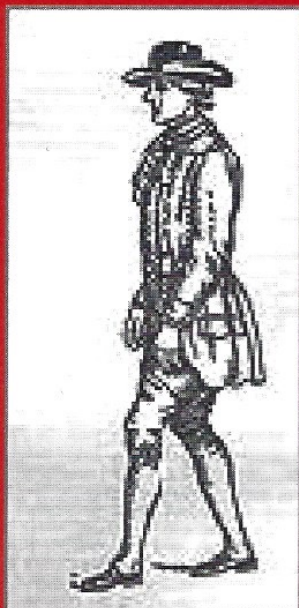


Dornoch is a coastal town about thirty miles north of Inverness. The Games themselves continue to this day, although there are fewer fishwives.

- 5 The other events were 100y, shot putt, high jump, hammer throw, pole vault, 120 yards hurdles, 56lb. weight throw, long jump and one mile run.
- 6 So poor was the attendance that there were only two teams in the four mile team race, which is why the number of medals is not a multiple of three.
- 7 After the end of our centenary period, Olive Loughnane equalled this achievement in the World Championships in Berlin in 2009 with 1:28:58 and as we went to press Robert Heffernan won the gold medal in the 50k at the Moscow World Championships in 3:37:56.
- 8 As this chapter is a Miscellany, it may not be stretching things too far to note that O.St.J. Gogarty, the Irish politician and man-about-town, in his book of memoirs *As I was Walking Down Sackville Street*, says that he remarked to F.E.Smith (Lord Birkenhead) the British Attorney General and architect of

the Anglo-Irish Treaty, that he – Smith – held the record for walking from Oxford to London; as Smith did not deny it, it may well be true, but the details have not been found.

- 9 The reproduction of Issue No.1 of *Race Walking Record* in Chapter 23 shows that Handicapping was sufficiently widespread (and perhaps sufficiently misunderstood) to make the front page. (Editor's Note)
- 10 The Claire Powell Handicap is on the Yacht basis, with the slowest walker being sent off first and the fastest last. In a 2000 metre track race, this may mean that a very good walker is giving the first starter two laps' advantage. (Editor's Note)



A Hundred Years Afoot traces the history of English race walking from the earliest days of organised sport to the Centenary of the Race Walking Association. It shows how the sport developed from informal competitions, through the days of professional pedestrianism, heavy gambling and undercover roguery to the heyday of amateur walking when it was not unusual for fields of hundreds to take to the roads. The rise and fall of British race walking at the world level is traced. Appendices list past champions and copious notes offer additional sidelights on many of the matters covered

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