



## HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club  
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### WALKING FIGHTS FOR ITS SURVIVAL AGAIN

We became aware of the latest push from the IAAF RW Committee on Sunday and I included some information on it in my weekly walking newsletter on Tuesday. If you missed it, have a read at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/newsletters/heelandtoe-2019-num16.pdf>.

A lot has happened in the few days, so time for a special edition of the newsletter to review where we are at.

#### **FAQ and Counter FAQ**

Firstly, you may have seen a FAQ, put out on Thursday by the IAAF RW Committee, in an attempt to explain their position. I think this is what you call panic! For purposes of transparency, this can be viewed at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/documents/FAQ%20Final%20.pdf>.

I am not won over by their arguments and have put out my own FAQ, to rebut their assertions and to argue for the continuing retention of the 20km and 50km distances. You can read this at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/documents/FAQ%20Response.pdf>.

You as a reader have to make up your own mind as to who is correct. If like me, you are in favour of retaining the status quo, read on.

#### **What Next?**

Already, lots of people have emailed Luis Saladie to express their concerns and to push back on the proposals. Many of them have copied me in on their email. I have received some 60 emails so far, with only ONE in favour of the changes. All the others are strongly in favour of keeping our Olympic distances intact.

Where to from here? It seems we need a multi pronged response

- **Every single racewalking supporter (walker, parent, coach, judge, official, friend, follower) needs to email Luis Saladie at [luis.saladie@iaaf.org](mailto:luis.saladie@iaaf.org). He needs to get thousands of emails, so many that he can't handle the response. Have you emailed yet? Have you spread the word to others? Are your family also emailing him? Are your friends also emailing him?**

I like the email sent by David Sim, President of Racewalking New Zealand

Dear Luis,

I write to express my displeasure with and give feedback to the IAAF Race Walking Committee concerning the Race Walking Programme Proposals dated 10 January 2019.

I support that the Race Walking Committee supports gender equality.

I support the Race Walking Committee favours maintaining events over two distances, as opposed to just one distance.

I do not support the 10km/30km proposal, though I do support that the Race Walking Committee has abandoned the shorter distances ideas the Committee floated earlier, like the 5,000m (in relay format) and the notion that the longest distance walked would be the 20K or half-marathon (21.1K).

I do not support the introduction of the Race Walking Electronic Control System (RWECS) at this time. The RWECS needs to move from the experimental to the demonstrable stage, which means seeing if the electronic shoe device works.

Best Regards  
David Sim  
President, RWNZ  
Chairman of the Board, Athletics Auckland Inc.  
Club Captain, Race Walking Auckland

- **We need to ensure that the IAAF Member Federations are aware that this proposal does not have the support of the wider walking community.**

This IAAF Race Walking Committee ‘recommendation’ has been sent to all IAAF Member Federations. Most will assume, incorrectly, that this has the support of the wider racewalking community, especially since it is coming from the IAAF RWC. Nothing could be further from the truth. Contrary to what is purported in the document, there has been no attempt to liaise with the racewalking community. Their proposition of ‘extensive consultation’ is a lie.

Here in Australia, we are liaising with Athletics Australia, and are confident that they will push back. This needs to happen in every country. It needs to happen in New Zealand, Great Britain, Poland, USA, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, etc, etc.

- **We need to mobilise the various racewalking clubs and communities.**

Here in Australia, our overall governing body Racewalking Australia, is on the case, and has been liaising with Athletics Australia and the wider Australian racewalking audience. The same is happening with Racewalking New Zealand and with the Race Walking Association in England. All racewalking clubs around the world need to become involved, alert their members, liaise with their IAAF Member Federation and push back.

- **The top walkers need to also come together to put out their own response.**

This is something outside my control, but they are the ones who will be directly impacted by this change, short and medium term. I do know that the large group of international walkers currently in Canberra have met and discussed this and I await feedback from them. The initial word is that the vast majority of them were also against any change to the 20/50 distances.

### **Time for a Moratorium**

In finishing, I wish to make one further point.

The IAAF RWC meeting, held on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2017, voted YES to recommendations which were to be forwarded to the IAAF Council, effectively killing off the 50km in early 2018. The recommendations, developed in secret by the IAAF Race Walking Committee, were that

- The 50km event was to be deleted from all future World Cup/World Championship and Olympics
- The 20km event was to be discontinued, to be replaced by half marathon distances in all the above competitions

Luckily, these recommendations were defeated.

Sadly, the IAAF RWC continues to propose these or similar changes on an ongoing basis, choosing time and time again to ignore the wishes of the racewalking community.

It is now time for the IAAF Council to step in and give us some certainty and stability. We need a freeze on such propositions. Our walkers need to have some certainty regarding the 20km and 50km walk distances.

**I propose a moratorium up to and including the 2024 Olympics, during which the 20km and 50km will remain our prime international events.**

The outcome of this latest push is now in your hands. Every person who reads this is now urged to get involved, even if only at an individual level. This will only be stopped if we all work together in a common cause.

Yours in racewalking

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