



HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

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PAUL F DEMEESTER

Thanks to US Attorney at Law Paul F. DeMeester for another wonderful article. That is the 36th in a row and it's a beauty. You can see links to all Paul's articles at the bottom of webpage <http://www.vrwc.org.au/save-the-50km.shtml>.

THE IRISH WAY OF DISCOVERING THE NEXT GENERATION: THE ROB HEFFERNAN RACE WALKING ACADEMY

By Paul F. DeMeester

Just about any sport is always worried about attracting new, young converts. The International Olympic Committee and most international sports federations study the subject using marketing surveys to try to figure out what they should do to capture the hearts and muscles of our youth. The future of revenue streams, fan bases and numbers of participants may depend on it.

How do people become race walkers? Some are runners, who due to injury, have to give up running but switch to less injurious race walking. U.S. masters great Dave Swarts, with several World Masters medals to bolster the designation, is a prime example. Others are born into the race walking world, such as Australia's own Chris Erickson, who went on to inherit his 50K genes from dad Tim, a World Championship 50K walker (1976) and Olympian (1980 - only to see his actual participation thwarted by the fall-out from the boycott of the Moscow Games).

A parent's encouragement can make a difference. It did for me. I had run recreationally as a youth, going to a local park and marking off different distances using a home-made measuring string. My native Belgium did not have much in the way of school sports. Instead, national federations organized all levels of their respective sports. But I was years away from being the minimum age for participation in athletics, the 13-14 year olds ("cadets"). When I was 11, my dad asked me if I wanted to join him for a 20K walk (non-competitive). At the end of the walk, I was presented with a cup for having been the youngest. Three months later, my dad was diagnosed with terminal cancer. When I read about the same event the next year in the local newspaper, I decided to do it again, hoping I might earn another trophy for still having been the youngest walker. By myself this time, I put the mustard on my pace. It impressed some race walking folks who partook in these recreational walks for distance practice. I was asked if I had ever considered race walking. And voilà, a new race walker had been minted. Shortly before his death, after a long struggle lasting more than two years, my dad called my mom and brother into the bedroom where he lay dying, and told them to plan his funeral for the next Thursday, not the next Saturday, a more customary funeral day to allow for people to attend without having to take time off work or school. He died the next day. Six days later, I won my first Belgian national youth title (cadets 5km) on Saturday, September 22, 1973. My dad had wanted to avoid the obvious conflict. I only learned of his wish after I had won. My dad introduced me to walking and allowed me my most wonderful sports memory.

Two other dads have developed a way to inspire today's youngsters by introducing them to our sport during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both dads have a lot in common: four kids each, with continued sports involvement past their competitive days, both race walking greats, both from Ireland and the best of friends. I'm talking about Rob Heffernan and Pierce O'Callaghan. Heffernan, a veteran of five Olympics and eight trips to the World Championships, became World Champion 50K in 2013, one year after earning bronze in the same event at the London Olympics. Pierce would have joined him in the 20K at the 2000 Sydney Olympics but for an injury in training leading up to the Games. The 16-time Irish national champion and World Cup team member may have been kept out of the Olympics by injury but not for long. In 2008, Pierce made his debut as an Olympic race walking judge, a position he repeated at London 2012 and Rio 2016, as well as during four World Championships. Neither has left sports once they retired from competition. Heffernan has been coaching other walkers since he retired with a strong seventh place at the London Worlds 50K in 2017. O'Callaghan has been a sports administrator for the last 15 years. Pierce has his own company, Savvy Sports Management, and has held top positions at European Athletics, the European Olympic Committee, the European Games and the IAAF (now World Athletics). Pierce was the *de facto* campaign manager for Seb Coe's successful run for the IAAF presidency in 2015.

Hard to beat the coaching acumen and organizational savvy of this Irish combo. Enter the pandemic. O'Callaghan was setting up virtual inter-club athletics challenges with the help of former mid-distance runner turned coach Dermott McDermott. Heffernan was brought in to help with the race walk component. What happened next exceeded any of their wildest explanations. This past Sunday,

the Irish app and sport news website *The42.ie* detailed their pandemic creation. (See <https://www.the42.ie/robert-heffernan-race-walking-academy-feature-5271047-Nov2020/>.)

The article details how the effort starting during the first pandemic lockdown in Ireland a few months ago. Parents could send in a video of their kids trying to walk a 100 meters in under 30 seconds. The best 12 were invited to a final once the lockdown was lifted. Rob and Pierce expected about 20 to 30 kids to partake. Instead, Rob's cell phone lit up with 197 videos. Both were impressed with how seriously the kids tackled the project. Input from the two Irish walking champions was not in vain, as evidenced by follow-up videos demonstrating their advice was put into practice. Meanwhile, a second lockdown loomed and word spread of the effort beyond Ireland's borders. This novel aspect of the Rob Heffernan Race Walking Academy - which in itself has existed since 2014 - now counts adherents in England, Canada and Australia, and has blossomed into an ongoing, remote coaching effort using video technology.

It would be great if a future champion arose from this set of young race walk recruits. But it's not a requirement for these two Irish dads. Heffernan is quoted in the article as saying, "*These kids don't have to be racewalkers, but I think kids should be exposed to it and the positive attributes of the sport and the social side and the work ethic and everything, it will definitely stand to you in other areas of your life.*" Heffernan knows of what he speaks. In his 2016 autobiography, *Walking Tall*, Heffernan sketched his life from the tough side of the tracks to becoming world champion and an Olympic medalist. It's a wonderful read and left me in awe of his perseverance and determination. He and Pierce are going back to their communities and rendering a great service to race walking.

We could use more of that in these tough times. A quick perusal of Heffernan's twitter feed shows him urging the authorities to reopen sports opportunities for young folks. Race walking lends itself well to that. We don't need indoor spaces, we can race walk with our masks on (I do it despite wearing eyeglasses that fog up now and then), we usually don't draw huge crowds of spectators (don't we wish, though) making social distancing a lot easier, and our venues have already been built using taxpayer funds and are maintained by the public works and parks departments. Sports federations around the world may see their financial houses of cards come crashing down. But one set of events does not need stadiums and has depended on volunteers from its inception: race walking. Our discipline may survive the pandemic better than most if not all. We may even end up with many new walkers and fans, thanks to example set by our Irish friends. More power to them.

VRWC ROADWALKS, MIDDLE PARK, SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2020

We returned to Middle Park for round 3 of our VRWC summer season competition on Saturday afternoon, and the 29 walkers made the most of the great conditions for some competitive racing under COVID Rules (staggered starts, 1km courses, etc). There were lots of PBs by our young walkers, especially in the 3km walk, which was contested in two parts. And 9 year old **Ela Uzun** continues her record spree, with her 1km time of 4:57 a new U10 record.

Restrictions were eased on Sunday midnight, and we will be able to welcome more walkers next weekend and use our full course. The Bowling Club is under going extensive renovations and is impeding our clubrooms - short term loss for long term gain.

5km Walk

1.	Mark Blackwood	M	23:08	
2.	Corey Dickson	M	24:26	
3.	Marcus Wakim	M	26:48	PB 0:24
4.	Simon Evans	M	30:01	
5.	Heather Carr	F	32:22	
6.	Donna-Marie Elms	F	33:26	
7.	Stephen Murphy	M	33:34	First one

3km Walk

1.	Kevin Cassidy	M	15:00	
2.	Liam Hutchins	M	15:04	PB 0:12
3.	Ariana Pashutina	F	15:15	PB 0:02
4.	Charlotte Hay	F	15:16	
5.	Madeleine Feain	F	15:27	PB 1:06
6.	Riley Coughlan	M	15:46	PB 0:52
7.	Maddison Nash	F	16:57	
8.	Emily Smith	F	17:06	
9.	Daniel Pashutin	M	17:08	PB 0:07
10.	Joel Imbriano	M	17:15	
11.	Jade Chitty	F	18:13	PB 0:41
12.	Mark Donahoo	M	18:52	
13.	Gearard Feain	M	19:02	
14.	Geoff Barrow	M	21:36	
15.	Gwen Steed	F	21:44	
16.	Bob Gardiner	M	22:17	
17.	Steven Haverly	M	26:47	

2km Walk

1.	Albin Hess	M	13:27	
2.	Ralph Bennett	M	13:32	

3. Liam Evans M 13:34

1km Walk

1. Ela Uzun F 4:57 PB 0:04, VRWC U10 Club Record
2. Havana Ali F 5:35

Thanks to all our officials, judges and helpers. Apologies if I have missed anyone.

Officials: Terry Swan, Mark Donahoo, Tim Erickson, Donna Dickson, Simon Baker, Michael Bodey
Judges: Peter Vysma (Chief), Gordon Loughnan, Stuart Cooper, Shane Dickson, Ezo Ali, Diane Lowden, Kathleen Marsh, Peter Price
Photos: Terry Swan (see <http://www.vrwc.org.au/piwigo/index.php?%2Fcategory/%2F569>)



Ela Uzun, Havana Ali, Bob Gardiner, Albin Hess and Emily Smith



Gwen Steed, Marcus Wakim, Jade Chitty, Kevin Cassidy and Liam Evans (all photos Terry Swan)

WHAT'S COMING UP

AV Shield League kicks off on Sunday 29th November. I also understand that AVSL must be pre-entered. No on-the-day entries are possible this year. See <https://athsvic.org.au/avevents/avsl2020-21/>.

The early rounds of AVSL do not include walks, so VRWC to the rescue. Our next club races are on next **Saturday 28th November** at Middle Park. Note that with the latest round of covid easing, we can accommodate up to 50 people per race and we can use the full 2kcourse. It will not be necessary so split races between the north loop and the south loop. Pre-enter online at <http://vrwc.org.au/wp1/race-entries-2/race-entry-sat-28-nov-20/>. Race entries close at midnight Wednesday.

Sat 28th November 2020, Middle Park

Venue: Middle Park Bowling Club

Numbers: 50 per race.

Course: The 2km loop will be used for all races.

1:30PM VRWC 1km Walk

1:35PM VRWC 2km Walk

1:45PM VRWC 5km Walk

2:00PM VRWC 3km Walk

BRWC WILLI SAWALL CUP - 3KM HANDICAP, NORTH GARDENS, BALLARAT, WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER

Kerrie Peart reports from Ballarat, where a warm Wednesday evening brought out the walkers to contest the annual Willi Sawall 3km Handicap Cup.

Ballarat's own Olympic, World & Commonwealth Games walker Willi Sawall joined us to watch the race held in his honour. Below is a snapshot of Willi's fantastic international level achievements, making him one of Australia's greatest racewalkers. Over his walking career, Willi amassed a total of 37 Victorian titles and broke Australian records on 42 occasions, still holding the Victorian 2 hour track record of 27.123 km. Willi, like most walkers of that era, worked full time, juggling training around work commitments. Check out his story at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-willi-sawall.pdf> - thanks Tim Erickson.

Willi Sawall

1976	IAAF World Champs	Malmö	50 km	22 nd	4:18:27
1978	Commonwealth Games	Edmonton	30 km	2 nd	2:22:58
1979	Racewalking World Cup	Eschborn	50 km	10 th	3:51:08
1980	Olympic Games	Moscow	50 km	8 th	4:08:25
1981	Racewalking World Cup	Valencia	50 km	DNF	
1982	Commonwealth Games	Brisbane	30 km	4 th	2:15:23
1983	IAAF World Champs	Helsinki	20 km	30 th	1:28:16
1984	Olympic Games	Los Angeles	20 km	16 th	1:28:24
1984	Olympic Games	Los Angeles	50 km	DNF	
1985	Racewalking World Cup	Isle of Man	50 km	11 th	4:06:38
1986	Commonwealth Games	Edinburgh	30 km	5 th	2:14:29
1987	IAAF World Champs	Rome	50 km	26 th	4:14:25



Willi Sawall leads the walkers from the Stadium in the 1980 Olympic 50 km walk.

Our young juniors dominated the numbers in our field this week, with 7 year old **Tara Deb** stepping out for her first racewalk (700m 6:48), and **Alex Tolson** joining us from Maryborough for his first BRWC race. **Ted Brennan** walked the 1km with great style, recording 6:55. Twins **Lachlan and Millie Hill** tested themselves over 2km in 15:11 and 14:12 respectively.

The Covid starting restrictions spread the field out over the 1km loop track, with **Fraser Saunder** and **Alanna Peart** both walking solidly through the handicapped field, and Fraser storming home in a 15sec PB to place second in the days fastest time of 13:23. **Charlotte MacDonell** (20:54) and **Alanna Peart** (13:49) placed equal 3rd on handicapped times, but it was **Laura Ballinger** (who also is an on pointe ballerina) who walked a very determined and focused race to finish in a 7sec PB (19:10) and take home the coveted Willi Sawall trophy. And a BIG thank you to Graeme Saunder who has revamped our start/finish sign to this impressive state. Any new signs required, please see Graeme Saunder.

Willi Sawall Cup 3km Handicap

1.	Laura Ballinger	19:10	PB: 7sec
2.	Fraser Saunder	13:23	PB: 15sec
E3.	Charlotte MacDonnell	20:54	
E3.	Alanna Peart	13:49	
5.	Alex Tolson	22:20	

2km Walk

1.	Millie Hill	14:12
2.	Lachlan Hill	15:11

1km Walk

1.	Ted Brennan	6:55
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700m Walk

1.	Tara Deb	6:48
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All are welcome to our next Ballarat Race Walkes Club races at the North Gardens, Lake Wendouree.

Wed 25/11/20
Sun 29/11/20

Benita Van Raaphorst 3km Handicap – 6pm
Graeme Nicholls Lap of Lake 6km Handicap and Jastec trophy 1.5km Handicap - 10.30am



*Willi Sawall Handicap attendees: Front: Ted Brennan, Lachlan Hill, Millie Hill and Tara Deb
Back: Alanna Peart, Fraser Saunder, Laura Ballinger, Daryl Biggin, Alex Tolson, Charlotte MacDonnel and Willi Sawall*



Charlotte MacDonnel



winner Laura Ballinger



Millie and Lachlan Hill

ATHLETICS WEST INTERCLUB, WAAS, PERTH, WEDNESDAY 18 NOV 2020

This week's Western Australian T&F meet was a mid week one. Good idea considering the approaching hot summer weather. Another good walk by **Declan Tingay**.

5000m Walk

1.	Declan Tingay	99	Uwa Athletics Club	22:25.86
2.	Ben Reid	01	Front Runner	26:00.52
	Bradley Mann	99	Front Runner	DNF

QMA T&F MEET, SAF, BRISBANE, SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER

The Queensland Masters walkers were bak in action in Brisbane last weekend, with a double header – a 1 mile walk and a 3000m walk.

1 Mile Walk

1.	Jimenez, Ignacio	M55	QMA	7:34.01
2.	Bennett, Peter	M65	QMA	8:56.58
3.	Woodward, Erika	W54	QMA	9:17.06
4.	Kirwin, Roslyn	W31	QMA	11:27.22
5.	McKinven, Noela	W78	QMA	13:03.51

3000m Walk

1.	Jimenez, Ignacio	M55	QMA	14:23.96	87.38%
2.	Gee, Tamika	W13	QA	16:08.35	71.77%
3.	Bennett, Peter	M65	QMA	17:13.01	80.69%
4.	Woodward, Erika	W54	QMA	17:51.37	73.09%
5.	Kirwin, Roslyn	W31	QMA	22:35.41	51.28%
6.	McKinven, Noela	W78	QMA	25:19.93	69.26%

WARWC ROADWALKS, WILSON, PERTH, SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER

Thanks to Terry Jones for Sunday's results from the WA Race Walking Club in Perth.

16km Walk

1.	Andrew Duncan	1:27:29
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10km Walk

1.	Ben Reid	55:42
2.	Bradley Mann	58:24

5km Walk

1.	Karyn Tolardo	30.16
2.	Ashlyn Spence	30.41
3.	Victor Munoz	32.42
4.	Marcela Ruiz	33.37

3km Walk

1.	John Ronan	14.34
2.	Xavier Bernard	17.30
3.	Riley Wood	17.57
4.	Kaytee Bogaers	18.04
5.	Emily Bogaers	26.22
6.	Glenys Duncan	27.47

1.5km Walk

1.	Xavier Bernard	9.00
2.	Keaton Bailey	9.15

MARCIADALMONDO AND OMARCHADOR ROUNDUP

Marciadalamondo has 5 press releases this week

- Mon 23 Nov - Sagamiyara (JPN) - Walks results from the 99th edition of the Kanto Inter-University T&F Championships
http://www.marciadalamondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3925
- Sun 22 Nov - Results of XVIII Galician Winter Race Walk Championship in memory of Jordi Llopart
http://www.marciadalamondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3924
- Sat 21 Nov - It's a real example of "You can do anything"
http://www.marciadalamondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3923
- Sat 21 Nov - Maurizio Damilano remembers Ernesto Canto
http://www.marciadalamondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3922
- Fri 20 Nov Ernesto Canto passes away
http://www.marciadalamondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3921

Omarchador has also had a busy week, with 10 reports, two from Australia! Now that's what I like to see. Again, lots of great reading here. It's in Portuguese but that's not an issue if you open with Google Chrome and then right click anywhere in the text and choose to 'Translate to English'.

- Mon 23 Nov - Results of Brazilian U18 Championship walks in Bragança Paulista
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/campeonatos-brasileiros-caixa-de.html>
- Sun 22 Nov - Results of indoor walks at Fort Wayne, Indiana
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/strive-for-greatness-indoor-em-fort.html>
- Sun 22 Nov - European Athletics qualifying standards - U23, U20 and U18
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/minimos-ea-para-os-campeonatos-sub-23.html>
- Sat 21 Nov - Vale Ernesto Canto (1959-2020)
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/ernesto-canto-1959-2020.html>

- Fri 20 Nov - Results of Central League Meeting in Whanganui, New Zealand
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/central-league-meeting-2-em-whanganui.html>
- Thu 19 Nov - On Maris Peterson's Birthday
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/no-aniversario-de-maris-peterson.html>
- Wed 18 Nov - Latvian postal service issues postage stamp in honor of Janis Dalinš
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/correios-da-letonia-lancam-selo-postal.html>
- Tues 17 Nov - Ilse Guerrero and José Luis Doctor win at the 4th Caminata de Coatzacoalcos (Mexico)
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2020/11/ilse-guerrero-e-jose-luis-doctor-vencem.html>

OUT AND ABOUT

- The funeral service for our old mate **Peter Ryan** will be held on Thursday 3rd December at 1pm at Woking Crematorium in England (that's midnight Melbourne time). Full details at <https://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/funeral-notice/13-11-2020-charles-peter-ryan/>. Because of COVID restrictions, attendance at the funeral is by personal invitation only, but the service will be filmed and streamed live and you will be able to view proceeding at <https://boxcast.tv/view/charles-peter-ryan-n58zpeojj8nsi8fryaes>.
- A great interview with GBR racewalking legend **Ron Wallwork**: <https://lancswalkingclub.com/2020/11/18/ron-wallwork-interviewed-his-humanity-shines-through/>.
- Paul DeMeester has already alluded to the new initiative by Ireland's Robert Heffernan and Pierce O'Callaghan. Here's all the inside info: <https://www.the42.ie/robert-heffernan-race-walking-academy-feature-5271047-Nov2020/>.
- A nice little article on Spanish walks legend **Jesus Garcia** who looks set to participate in his 8th Olympics next year, aged 52. See <https://atleticanotizie.myblog.it/2020/11/23/marcia-a-51-anni-jesus-angel-garcia-guarda-al-record-partecipare-alla-sua-8-olimpiade/>.
- The United States Senate has passed a bill that will allow US officials to prosecute anyone involved in doping at international sporting events. The Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act is named after Russian whistleblower Grigory Rodchenkov. US Anti-Doping Agency (Usada) chief Travis Tygart said it was "monumental" in the "fight for clean sport". However, the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) is concerned about the bill. See <https://www.bbc.com/sport/54973241>.
- Well, here's an interesting one. The AIU has announced that it has suspended the male and female winners of the Sofia Marathon, held on 11th October in Sofia, Bulgaria. Ukrainian Viktoriia Khapilina and Moroccan Youssef Sbaai have both provisionally tested positive to EPO. See <https://antidopingworld.wordpress.com/2020/11/20/doping-at-the-sofia-marathon-positive-winners-both-male-and-female/>.

DATES...DATES...DATES

As usual, I finish with a list of upcoming events on the local, national and international fronts. Let me know of any errors/omissions. It continues to change quickly as a result of COVID-19 issues.

For VRWC race details, see <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwcs21.shtml>

For Ballarat Race Walkers Club race details, see <https://www.ballaratracewalkers.com/wp/>

Victorian Key Dates – Summer 2020/2021

Wed 25 Nov 2020	BRWC Benita Van Raaphorst 3km Handicap – 6pm	Ballarat
Sat 28 Nov 2020	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Sun 29 Nov 2020	BRWC Graeme Nicholls Lap of Lake 6km, Jastec Trophy 1.5km – 10.30am	Ballarat
Sun 6 Dec 2020	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Wed 9 Dec 2020	BRWC Merv Lockyer 3km Handicap – 6pm	Ballarat
Sun 13 Dec 2020	AVSL Round 3 (includes walk)	Various venues
Wed 16 Dec 2020	BRWC Jared Tallent 1.5km Handicap & Christmas break up - 6pm	Ballarat
Sun 17 Jan 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
22-24 Jan 2121	Victorian Country Track & Field Championships	Ballarat
Wed 27 Jan 2021	VRWC Track Races	Mentone
Wed 10 Feb2021	AV 5000m Teams Race Championship	Mentone
Sun 14 Feb2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
19-21 Feb 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 1)	Lakeside Stadium
26-28 Feb 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 2)	Lakeside Stadium
Sun 21 Mar 2021	VMA 5000m Walk Championship	Mentone
24-25 Apr 2021	Victorian Masters T&F Championships	Doncaster

International Dates

July 23 – Aug 8, 2021	32nd Olympic Games, Tokyo and Sapporo
July, 2021	23rd World Masters T&F Championships , Tampere, Finland
Aug 8-19, 2021	World University Summer Games , Chengdu, China
Aug 20-21, 2021	18th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships , Nairobi, Kenya (POSTPONED FROM 2020)
Jan 2022	Oceania Masters Championships , Norfolk Island (POSTPONED FROM JANUARY 2020)
TBA, 2022	9th World Masters Indoor T&F Championships , Edmonton, Canada
Apr 23-24, 2022	29th World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships , Minsk, Belarus
July 15-24, 2022	18th World Athletics Championships , Eugene, USA
July 27 - Aug 7, 2022	XXII Commonwealth Games , Birmingham, GBR
Aug 11-21, 2022	European Athletics Championships , Munich, GER
TBA, 2022	19th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships , Cali, Colombia
TBA, 2023	24th World Masters T&F Championships , Gothenburg Sweden
Aug 2023 (TBC)	19th World Athletics Championships , Budapest, Hungary

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Copies of recent newsletters are kept on the VRWC website (<http://www.vrwc.org.au>)