



HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

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PAUL F DEMEESTER TALKS RACEWALKING

Thanks to US Attorney at Law Paul F. DeMeester for another wonderful article - the 42nd in a row – and it's as good as ever. You can see links to all Paul's articles at the bottom of webpage <http://www.vrwc.org.au/save-the-50km.shtml>.

RECENT ACTION ON CAPITOL HILL AND CONFLICT BREWING IN THE USA

By Paul F. DeMeester

A bit of a tease here in the title so as to get you to read the article. But no, I'm not referring to the events of January 6 in the capital of the United States. I'm referring to recent legislation that amended the law that governs U.S. Olympic sports. Last week's article examined how U.S. law prohibits sports organizations from having eligibility criteria for participation at the Olympic Games and Pan-American Games that are more restrictive than those of the appropriate international sports federation. I wish a recent amendment to that legislation had expanded the list of competitions to include the World Championships. Somebody was asleep at the wheel over at USATF, the governing body for track & field in the United States. That's the recent action on Capitol Hill. Let's move to the more exciting part.

Last week, I examined a situation where the top three U.S. Olympic Trials finishers may expect an Olympic call-up provided they are high enough on the World Rankings list. In each race walking event, 60 spots are available either for those who meet a very stringent entry standard (which no U.S. race walker has achieved so far) or who are placed high enough on the World Rankings list to be offered one of the remaining spots (out of the 60). If a member federation declines an invitation, then World Athletics will contact the member federation of the next ranked athlete to invite that athlete, and so on, until all 60 spots are filled. In other words, unused quota places are reallocated. Reallocation may occur in one of two ways. Some member federations will have more than three athletes who qualify based on the rankings but are limited to three Olympians per event (e.g., Japan, Spain and China in the Men's 20K; Japan, China, Italy and Mexico in the Men's 50K; China, Japan and **Australia** in the Women's 20K; other member federations will join them in bumping into the three-athlete limit once reallocation of quota places occurs - e.g., Poland in the Men's 50K and Spain and Ukraine in the Women's 50K). The second way is when member federations turn down the invitation by World Athletics to fill a quota spot with a qualifying athlete. Both of these circumstances will mean that World Athletics will invite the member federation of the athlete next on the rankings list to send that athlete to the Olympics in that event. World Athletics will keep going down the list until all 60 quota places are filled (or not if they run out of ranked athletes).

Sounds a bit complicated, doesn't it? Don't you wish we were in the old days when entry standards made it very clear whether you were in or out? Let's make it even more complicated by taking a closer look at U.S. Olympic selection. The United States conducts Olympic Trials in every athletics event. Only the top three at the Trials get a ticket to the Olympics (with some exceptions, for instance when one of top three declines a spot, which is what happened in the Olympic 20K in 1968 when fourth place Tom Dooley (at the Trials) took the place of Larry Young who declined a 20K Olympic spot in favor of concentrating on the 50K). Despite World Rankings, USATF is hanging on to its Olympic Trials. Understandably, since the Olympic Trials bring in revenue from ticket sales and broadcast rights. I followed the progress of the U.S. Olympic Trials back in 1972 as a kid growing up in Europe. They are a big deal. In 2000, I plunked down some good cash to attend the Trials when they were held in Sacramento. It was there that I watched Michael Johnson and Maurice Green miss Olympic 200m spots for Sydney because neither finished the Trials Final in the 200m, both pulling up with injuries.

But what if an athlete finished in fourth or worse (including DNF or DNS) at the U.S. Olympic Trials but has either met the Olympic entry standard that allows for Olympic selection irrespective of the World Rankings or is one of three U.S. athletes who are the subject of an invitation by World Athletics to USATF based on the World Rankings. Now we have a problem. This athlete is kept off the Olympic team in that event because of a requirement imposed by USATF (must finish top three at the Olympic Trials) that is more restrictive than that of World Athletics. After all, World Athletics does not have a qualification requirement that athletes must finish in the top three in their member federation's Olympic Trials. Thus, USATF's Trials requirement violates federal U.S. law. This athlete may have a good case to take to court, in order to force her or his selection to the U.S. Olympic Team. Of course, success on the legal front may mean that another athlete, who did make the top three at the Trials, is left off the team if the successful litigant has a better ranking on the world list than her or his colleague. In other words, if more than three U.S. athletes qualify for an event, which three does the U.S. send, the top three from the Trials or the top three from the Rankings? Federal law not only seems to suggest the latter answer, it seems to require it. An Act of Congress is legally superior to a federation rule.

The legal puzzle is not over yet. Which court should the overlooked selectee choose to bring the legal challenge? The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)? Don't think so. Remember our effort to have the International Olympic Committee (IOC) allow women 50K race walkers into the Tokyo Olympics? I remember it well, as I was the attorney in the CAS case on behalf of these courageous women and one sympathetic male world-class 50K walker. The CAS Panel decided that CAS did not have jurisdiction to hear the dispute because the walkers were not “ ‘*duly accredited by the IOC*’, *qualified as eligible to compete in the Olympic Games and/or who have signed an agreement with the IOC (such as an entry form for the Olympic Games)*....” (CAS 2019/A/6225 Henriques et al. v. IOC & IAAF; Award of 3 February 2020.) Our potential litigant falls short of these same requirements. An athlete does not obtain IOC accreditation until they are selected for the Olympics and sign the IOC entry form. Would it be enough to qualify for the Olympics but not be selected by one's National Olympic Committee in order to be able to invoke CAS jurisdiction? Not according to this sorry CAS *Henriques* decision, which threw the women's 50K case out on jurisdictional grounds rather than have to rule against sexist Tommy Bach and his coconspirators. Our U.S. litigant may be better off seeking a preliminary injunction in a U.S. court well before the deadline for U.S. selectors to let the IOC and World Athletics know who they are sending to the Olympics.

Last week I applauded U.S. law for creating rights for athletes. That holds true despite the problems I sketched above. These problems are the creation of USATF, which has an Olympic qualification system that is out of tune with U.S. law. If the Olympics take place this year (a big if), don't be surprised if some U.S. athlete (not necessarily a race walker) takes their case to court.

WHAT'S COMING UP

- The long wait is over for Athletics Victoria walkers. Rounds 5-10 have now been confirmed, with competition spread across 2 metro venues and 3 country venues. All meets now offer a full complement of events and are all to be held on Saturdays. See the full timetable breakdown at <https://athsvic.org.au/avevents/avsl2020-21/>. Here's how it pans out.

Jan 16 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 5 (3000m/1500m walks)	Various venues
Feb 6 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 6 (3000m/1500m walks)	Various venues
Feb 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 7 (2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 6 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 8 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 9 (no walks)	Various venues
Mar 20 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 10 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues

- Due to the Mentone track being unavailable and due to the above AV changes, VRWC has had to make a few changes of its own.

The VRWC races that were scheduled to be held at Mentone on Wednesday 27th January will now be held at the Clifton Hill track on Sunday 31st January, following the Elite 10,000m races. That timetable will now read

Sunday 31st January, VRWC Races, George Knott Athletics Track, Clifton Hill

9:00AM	Elite 10,000m walk
10:00AM	VRWC 1500m walk
10:15AM	VRWC 3000m and 5000m walks

The VRWC meet that were scheduled to be held at Mentone on Wednesday 10th February will now be held at Clifton Hill on Sunday 14th March. That timetable will now read

Sunday 14th March, AV and VRWC Races, George Knott Athletics Track, Clifton Hill

9:00AM	VRWC 1500m Walk
9:10AM	VRWC 3000m Walk
9:35AM	AV 5000m Walk Teams Race

The VRWC races scheduled for Mentone on Sunday 21st March will now be transferred to the George Knott Athletics Track at Clifton Hill. This meet includes the VMA 5000m Track Walk Championships for men and women.

So the upcoming VRWC dates now read like this

Jan 17 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Jan 31 (Sun), 2021	Elite 10,000m Track Walk and VRWC Track Walks	George Knott Track, Clifton Hill
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Mar 14 (Sun), 2021	AV 5km Teams Race and VRWC Track Walks	George Knott Track, Clifton Hill
Mar 21 (Sun), 2021	VMA 5000m Walk Champs and VRWC Track Walks	George Knott Track, Clifton Hill

Our online fixture at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwc21.shtml> has now been updated to reflect these changes.

- In other announcements, the Australian Masters Championships, which were to be held in Canberra from 5-8 March, have now been cancelled, due to covid uncertainty. See more at <https://www.australianmastersathletics.org.au/>.
- And an announcement for our NSW walkers – The NSW 10,000m Track Walk Championship will be held on Sunday 24th January at the Sylvania Waters Athletics Track, starting at 7pm. Entry at <https://www.nswathletics.org.au/events/85141/>.

In summary, this weekend sees two Victorian based walking opportunities

- Round 5 of AV Shield League will be held on Saturday afternoon and features 3000m and 1500m walks. Enter by Wednesday evening via the AV Portal.
- Our next round of VRWC roadwalks will be on Sunday morning at Middle Park. Entries close on Wednesday evening. Enter at <http://vrwc.org.au/wp/race-entries/race-entry-sun-17-jan-21-middle-park/>.

Sun 17th January 2021, VRWC Roadwalks, Middle Park

Venue: Middle Park Bowling Club

9:00am	VRWC 20km Walk
9:05am	VRWC 2km Walk
9:15am	VRWC 5km Walk
9:55am	VRWC 10km Walk

ELITE 10,000M TRACK WALK, GEORGE KNOTT ATHLETIC FIELD, CLIFTON HILL, SUNDAY 10TH JANUARY

Last Sunday morning saw the first of two elite 10,000m Track Walks at the George Knott Athletics Track in Clifton Hill. Numbers were down a bit, with a number of interstate walkers unable to attend due to covid restrictions.

The 9AM start meant that walkers avoided the worst of the day's heat but conditions were still warm. **Rhydian Cowley** and **Declan Tingay** led out and were together for the first 7000m before Rhydian made his break for home. He won with a fine 39:58, finishing 33 seconds ahead of Declan, whose time of 40:31 was an 18 second PB. **Kyle Swan** (42:17), **Mitch Baker** (42:55) and **Will Thompson** (43:39) also produced great times. **Jemima Montag** walked with Will Thompson for most of the race, before breaking clear in the final stages to win the women's division with a PB 43:45 (that better her own Vic record). **Rebecca Henderson** (46:25) recorded a 78 second PB to take second place, ahead of **Katie Hayward** (47:17). With 2001 seeing the delayed World Athletics U20 T&F Championships, attention was on the junior walkers, and Will Thompson and Corey Dickson was the ones on show on Sunday.

10,000m Walk Men

1.	Rhydian Cowley	VIC	1991	39:58	
2.	Declan Tingay	WA	1999	40:31	PB 0:18
3.	Kyle Swan	VIC	1999	42:17	
4.	Mitchell Baker	ACT	2001	42:55	PB 0:52
5.	Will Thompson (U20)	VIC	2002	43:39	PB 0:39
6.	Tim Fraser	ACT	2000	44:18	PB 0:10
7.	Tristan Camilleri	SA	2001	45:21	1 minute penalty
8.	Jared Tallent	SA	1984	45:19	
9.	Corey Dickson (U20)	VIC	2002	45:46	

10,000m Walk Women

1.	Jemima Montag	VIC	1998	43:45	PB 0:05
2.	Rebecca Henderson	VIC	2001	46:25	PB 1:18
3.	Katie Hayward	QLD	2000	47:17	
	Jemma Peart	VIC	2001	DNF	
	Alannah Peart (U20)	VIC	2003	DNF	
	Rachel Tallent	VIC	1993	DNS	



Rhydian Cowley, Declan Tingay and Kyle Swan



Will Thompson, Jemima Montag and Rebecca Henderson (photos Terry Swan)

Thanks to the many officials, judges and helpers who made sure of a successful event. Apologies if I have missed your name.

Judges: Di Lowden (Chief), Shane Dickson, Ralph Bennett, Frances Attard, Stuart Cooper, Gordon Loughnan
Peter Vysma (Recorder)
Lap Scorers: Darlene Swan, Donna Dickson, Kerrie Peart, Simon Baker, & Supernova Team
Referee: Tony Williams
Time Keepers: Peter Price, Stuart Schnaars, Bob Hallett
Photos: Terry Swan (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10223980484240747&set=pcb.3616372848448121>)

The second of the two 10,000m races will be held in 3 weeks time, on Sunday 31st January, at Clifton Hill, so we are hoping to see even more of our top walkers in action then.

NORTH ISLAND COLGATE GAMES, TET STADIUM, INGLEWOOD, NZ, 9-10 JANUARY 2021

The New Zealand Colgate Games, which have been running for over 50 years, are held each January and are made up of two events, one in the North Island and one in the South Island. It's their biggest athletics event for children, with the Games attended by hundreds of athletes aged 7-14 years old. The North Island Games were held last weekend and the South Island Games will be held next weekend. See <https://kidsathletics.nz/colgate-games> for more details.

Full results at <https://athletics.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/north-island-colgate-games-2021-results.pdf>. Walk results here are restricted to the first 5.

Girls 1200m Track Walk Grade 10

1.	Morgan Day	10	PAKU	7:29.83
2.	Aaliyah Smith-McM	10	NORM	8:02.08
3.	Maika Rauputu	10	NORM	8:16.44
4.	Millie Lyford	10	NAPA	8:41.76
5.	Kaitlin Leake	10	INGL	8:46.07

Boys 1200m Track Walk Grade 10

1.	Kieran Dunlop-Bro	10	Mana AAC	6:57.47
2.	Luke Kalolo	10	BVEA	8:49.46
3.	Noah Watts	10	Hawera	9:02.61
4.	Kase Bason	10	STRA	9:18.95
5.	Bryden Ashworth	10	GRER	10:16.10

Girls 1200m Track Walk Grade 11

1.	Jordyn Tukukino	11	Manurewa AA & HC	7:52.65
2.	Keara Halliday	11	INGL	8:05.13
3.	Isabel Taylor	11	Mana AAC	8:23.25
4.	Veronique Koole	11	PAKU	8:25.10
5.	Teaghan Meacheam	11	TOKO	8:53.59

Boys 1200m Track Walk Grade 11

1.	Harrison Day	11	PAKU	6:59.56
2.	Ricco Korewha	11	PAKU	7:47.21
3.	Finn Anderson	11	WHKE	7:47.29
4.	Joseph Du Toit	11	WHAC	8:05.14
5.	Ethan Devine	11	FAIR	8:25.18

Girls 1200m Track Walk Grade 12

1.	Kobi Maslin	12	CANU	6:27.59
2.	Yandri Fourie	12	PAKU	6:28.68
3.	Teegan Leake	12	INGL	7:15.81
4.	Emma Zieltjes	12	STRA	7:54.48
5.	Sinead O'Sullivan	12	STRA	7:55.30

Boys 1200m Track Walk Grade 12

1.	Campbell Donovan	12	Egmont Athletics	7:50.74
2.	Nathan Baylis	12	NORM	8:15.56
3.	Lucas Nairn	12	NAPA	8:27.62
4.	Jayden Poole	12	KAPG	8:36.32
5.	Rory Cuff	12	FAIR	8:38.89

Girls 1600m Track Walk Grade 13

1.	Amelie Wood	13	FAIR	11:01.65
2.	Lily Frieswyk	13	BVEA	11:21.55
3.	Charli Gardiner-H	13	WUKU	11:35.06
4.	Nora Caffrey	13	Manurewa AA & HC	12:46.19
5.	Mynaro Filipo	13	Eltham Athletics	12:51.99

Boys 1600m Track Walk Grade 13

1.	Richie Trathen	13	PAKU	9:07.66
2.	Ari Bennett	13	Ashhurst A & HC	10:32.69
3.	Caden Kooper	13	STRA	11:14.09

Girls 2000m Track Walk Grade 14

1.	Sarah Dutoit	14	WHAC	12:12.80
2.	Hannah Coogan	14	Hawera	14:10.38
3.	Amber Trow	14	PNTH	14:40.29
4.	Janelle Dhedadig	14	INGL	14:58.05
5.	Emma Hickson	14	LCTY	16:25.95

Boys 2000m Track Walk Grade 14

1.	Quinn Gardiner-Ha	14	WUKU	9:55.56
2.	Toby O'Rorke	14	Opunake AAC	11:36.94
3.	Liam Dunlop-Brown	14	Mana AAC	13:31.51

PORTUGUESE NATIONAL ROAD WALKING CHAMPIONSHIPS, PORTO DE MOS, SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

The Portuguese 50km and 35km Road Walking Championships were held in Porto de Mos last Sunday morning. The meet also included non-championship 20km walks for men and women. The women's races all started together at 8:30am, while the men's 35km and 50km got underway at 9am, and the men's 20km at 9:30am. Well reported, as always, by marciadalmondo (see http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3953).

It was impressive to see so many Portuguese walkers in action (30 in total). Their numbers were complemented by Colombians Eider Arévalo, Manuel Esteban Soto, Diego Pizon, Jorge Ruiz and José Montaña, along with Mauritian Jerome Caprice.

20km Walk Men

1.	Eider Arévalo	93	Sen	COL	1:22:04
2.	Manuel Esteban Soto	94	Sen	COL	1:25:51
3.	Rúben Santos	00	S23	POR	1:34:30
4.	João Pedro Vieira	99	S23	POR	1:47:45
5.	Hélder Ribeiro	76	V40	POR	1:55:06

20km Walk Women

1.	Edna Barros	96	Sen	POR	1:35:19
2.	Maria Bernardo	99	S23	POR	1:40:36
3.	Vera Portela	95	Sen	POR	1:56:18
4.	Raquel Pimentel	1	S23	POR	1:58:00
5.	Juliana Galvão	1	S23	POR	2:14:35
	Ana Cabecinha	84	V35	POR	DNF

	Inês Henriques	80	V40	POR	DNF
35km Walk Men					
1.	José Montaña	92	Sen	COL	2:37:05
2.	João Vieira	76	V40	POR	2:39:47
3.	Diego Pizon	85	V35	COL	2:42:27
4.	Jorge Ruiz	89	Sen	COL	2:46:15
5.	Hélder Santos	96	Sen	POR	2:53:53
6.	Rui Coelho	94	Sen	POR	2:54:27
7.	Luís Gil	75	V45	POR	2:59:45
8.	Manuel Marques	78	V40	POR	3:02:34
9.	António Pereira	75	V45	POR	
10.	Cristiano António	88	Sen	POR	3:47:09
11.	Luís Bidarra	71	V45	POR	3:48:02
12.	André Miranda	92	Sen	POR	3:54:04
	Jerome Caprice	83	V35	MRI	DNF
35km Walk Women					
1.	Vitória Oliveira	92	Sen	POR	3:09:27
2.	Sandra Silva	75	V45	POR	3:27:26
3.	Sandra Campos	77	V40	POR	4:17:48
4.	Joaquina Peixoto	67	V50	POR	4:21:15
5.	Joana Silva	1	S23	POR	4:47:57
50km Walk Men					
1.	Rui Coelho	94	Sen	POR	4:11:27
2.	Hélder Santos	96	Sen	POR	4:15:47
3.	Luís Gil	75	V45	POR	4:20:10
4.	Manuel Marques	78	V40	POR	4:41:06
	Amaro Teixeira	89	Sen	POR	DNF
50km Walk Women					
1.	Sandra Silva	75	V45	POR	4:56:50

SARNIA WALKING CLUB WALKS, LES AMARREURS, VALE, GUERNSEY, SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

Sarnia Walking Club completed the Bob Wright Handicap Series Race Five last Sunday at Les Amarreurs, Vale, Guernsey. Rob Elliott reports:

Kevin Le Noury moved into the lead in the Bob Wright Handicap Series after five of the seven races, in a race held in cold and wind free conditions. Repeating his race win from the corresponding race last year he held off the faster finishing **Donna Allan** by sixteen seconds to cross the line in an actual time of 35.04. **Mick Le Sauvage** took third pace ahead of **Stuart Le Noury** who recorded the fastest time of the day with his 26.37.

			Watch Time	Handicap	Actual Time
1.	Kevin Le Noury	M60	37.04	2.00	35.04
2.	Donna Allan	W45	37.20	7.00	30.20
3.	Mick Le Sauvage	M80	37.49	0.00	37.49
4.	Stuart Le Noury	M35	38.37	12.00	26.37
5.	Phil Lockwood	M45	39.10	4.00	35.10
6.	Rob Elliott	M60	40.27	6.30	33.57

MARCIADALMONDO AND OMARCHADOR ROUNDUP

Marciadalmondo has 3 press releases for us this week

- Tue 12 Jan - **Evan Dunfee** (CAN): How jumping the queue could destroy amateur sport
http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3955
- Sun 10 Jan - Porto de Mos (POR): Portuguese 50km and 35km championship results
http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3953
- Fri 8 Jan - Chita, Aichi (JPN): 52nd New Year's Race Walk
http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3952

Omarchador has 6 press releases.

- Mon 11 Jan - Happy birthday to **Bohdan Bulakowski**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/no-aniversario-de-bohdan-buakowski.html>
- Sun 10 Jan - Sandra Silva and Rui Coelho win Portuguese 50km national championships
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/sandra-silva-e-rui-coelho-sao-campeoes.html>
- Sun 10 Jan - João Vieira and Vitória Oliveira win Portuguese 35km national championships
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/colombiano-jose-montana-vence-35-km.html>
- Fri 8 Jan - History of Racewalking Part II (Peter Marlow)
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/para-historia-da-marcha-atletica-ii.html>
- Thu 7 Jan - History of Racewalking Part I (Peter Marlow)
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/para-historia-da-marcha-atletica-i.html>
- Wed 6 Jan - Portuguese Olympic walkers (1984-2016): Ana Cabecinha and Vera Santos
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/marchadores-olimpicos-portugueses-1984.html>
- Tue 5 Jan - Results from Espartaquiada Jovem de Brest, Belarus
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/01/espartaquiada-jovem-de-brest.html>

OUT AND ABOUT

- Separated by 18,000 kilometres, race walking couple **Adrian Blocki** and **Alana Barber** face long distance challenges one day at a time. Read a great article at <https://worldathletics.org/news/feature/alana-barber-damian-blocki-race-walk>.
- Congratulations to 2016 Olympian **Dane Bird-Smith** and his wife Katie on the birth of their first child, Astrid, on Monday 21st December 2020. Astrid weighed in at 2.7kg. Well done to mum and dad!
- The Essex Walker issue No.1 hit the streets back in June 1970, and has now been going for over 50 years - not a bad effort! Thanks to John Constandinou who has posted that historic first issue to his newsletter archive: See <http://racewalkingassociation.com/Newsletters/EWJune1970.pdf>.
- There has been speculation that quarantine requirements for international arrivals in Australia would make it logistically difficult to stage the Australian 2021 Motor Grand Prix at Albert Park as planned on March 21. It now looks likely that the race will be postponed to the backend of the Formula 1 season, with Bahrain replacing it as the opening race in March. That means we may be able to start our VRWC winter season earlier - hurray. See <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-01-08/australian-f1-grand-prix-postponed-covid-says-aston-martin-owner/13041460>.
- **Paul Nihill's** family has setup a web tribute page for their dad. It has his funeral details and (soon) details of the funeral service live stream. See <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/paulnihillmbe>.
- World Athletics President Sebastian Coe has claimed curbing the development of high-tech footwear would only "suffocate innovation" after a number of world records were broken last year by athletes wearing Nike's new track spikes. I seem to remember he was a highly paid Nike ambassador in a previous life. He must be very pleased for his old company. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1102633/coe-rejects-curbing-high-tech-footwear>.
- This summer's delayed Tokyo 2020 Olympics are losing public support, according to the latest opinion poll conducted by Kyodo News. Some 80 per cent of respondents want the Games to be cancelled or further postponed, Kyodo reported on Sunday after their weekend telephone survey. See <https://www.scmp.com/sport/other-sport/article/3117169/tokyo-2020-support-new-low-public-turn-against-olympics>.
- Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has declared a state of emergency in Tokyo and three other prefectures in an attempt to reduce the spread of coronavirus. The measure, which will come into force last week, will be in place in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama and Chiba and will remain until at least February 7. It comes as Tokyo reported a record 2,447 daily cases of COVID-19, shattering the previous high of 1,591. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1102732/japan-state-of-emergency-coronavirus>.
- Senior IOC member Richard Pound has raised eyebrows with his proposal that prioritising athletes for the COVID-19 vaccine would be the "most realistic way" of ensuring the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games take place. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1102701/pound-prioritising-athletes-for-vaccine>.
- Have things really changed for the better in Russia. An investigation has been launched there after a host of athletes withdrew from a biathlon event following the arrival of doping control officers. The Russian Biathlon Union (RBU) and RUSADA are looking into the circumstances surrounding the withdrawal of 33 competitors from the Izhevsk Rifle All-Russian competition last month. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1102637/rusada-rbu-investigate-athletes-withdraw>.

- We all know the IOC dislikes any oversight. So it is not surprising that the USA has raised their ire with the passing of its recent act "The Empowering Olympic, Paralympic and Amateur Athletes Act" which establishes safeguards designed to protect amateur athletes from abuse from coaches and other officials within Olympic and Paralympic sports. That is not the only potential thorn in the side of the IOC, with the Italian government recently passing a draft sports law which could reduce the role of the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) in Italian sport. The IOC jealously guards its independence. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1102858/richard-pound-los-angeles-interference>.

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/vrwc21.shtml>

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

For the Athletics Australia summer fixture, see <https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/cups/aa/files/aexjryarznk08gxh.pdf>

Victorian Key Dates – Summer 2020/2021

Jan 16 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 5 (3000m/1500m walks)	Various venues
Jan 17 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Jan 22-24, 2021	Victorian Country Track & Field Championships	Ballarat
Jan 31 (Sun), 2021	Elite 10,000m Track Walk , VRWC track walks	Clifton Hill
Feb 6 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 6 (3000m/1500m walks)	Various venues
Feb 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 7 (2000m walks)	Various venues
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	Australian 20km Roadwalk Championships	Adelaide, SA
	Entries close on Monday 1 st February - https://www.athletics.com.au/events/83392/	
Feb 19-21, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 1)	Lakeside Stadium
Feb 26-28, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 2)	Lakeside Stadium
Mar 6 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 8 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 9 (no walks)	Various venues
Mar 14 (Sun), 2021	AV 5000m Teams Race Championships , VRWC track walks	Clifton Hill
Mar 20 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 10 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 21 (Sun), 2021	VMA 5000m Walk Championship	Clifton Hill
Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	Australian 50km Championship (Men)	VIC
Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Playoffs	Lakeside Stadium
Apr 12-21, 2021	Australian Athletics Championships	TBA
Apr 23-24, 2021	Australian Little Athletics Championships	VIC
Apr 24-25, 2021	Victorian Masters T&F Championships	Doncaster

2021 World Athletics Race Walk Challenge

Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	RW Challenge Meet, Taicang, CHN)
Apr 10 (Sat), 2021	Rio Grande International Grand Prix, Rio Maior, POR
May 29 (Sat), 2021	Gran Premio Cantones de La Coruña, La Coruna, ESP
Aug, 2021	Olympic Games, Sapporo, JAP
Oct 9 (Sat), 2021	RW Challenge Meet, Mexico City, MEX
Oct 16 (Sat), 2021	Invitational Race Walking Meeting, Coatzacoalcos, MEX

Other International Dates

May 16, 2021	European Race Walking Team Championships, Podebrady, CZE
July 23 – Aug 8, 2021	32nd Olympic Games, Tokyo and Sapporo
July, 2021	23rd World Masters T&F Championships , Tampere, Finland (NOW POSTPONED TILL 2022)
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>)