

HURRY ON THE HEEL AND TOE

It's Nearly As Fast As Running

ONE day last month Wellington weather was, as sometimes happens, impartially unkind to scullers, bandsmen, Exhibition visitors, the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the half-hundred other organisations in the Capital about their various frivolous or serious business. It was unkind, also, to the flappers who customarily stroll around the Oriental Bay waterfront, in short shorts and elongated heels; to the bathers on the golden (sic) sands, the strollers and their myriad leather-cased cameras around Point Jerningham. It was wet. And, incidentally, it blew.

So there were not many around the Marine Drive (locally known as Wellington's Wonderful Waterfront Way) when some queer jiggling figures came jerking into view. First Evans, and Connolly, Muldron and Dumble, Gollop, Pederson, Sinclair, and all.

Along the busier streets on the way to the Basin Reserve the population was better represented by the curious who stared, no doubt shrugged, gave it up, and passed on unmoved, as city people do. For them, these magic names meant little. But they were, in fact, important. They were some among a band of enthusiasts who have been keeping alive, in Wellington almost alone among all the athletic centres of New Zealand, the fine tradition of race walking.

Also Elsewhere

Elsewhere, people do walk in the tippety-toppety heel-and-toe jig-and-jar style of the racer. In fact, New Zealand has set world's records for walking and, indeed, this year Wellington's McCarthy has been watching with interest the work of Hingston, from Hawke's Bay-Poverty Bay. But it is in Wellington, at the moment, that an organised club of walkers is keeping the sport rather more alive than in other parts of the country.

All this to introduce Don Pederson, who is President of the Wellington Combined Road Walking Club, whose photograph (in characteristic pose) appears on this page, and who gives a sparkle of enthusiasm to any discussion of his favourite subject.

Walking styles used by ordinary persons (his words) and by racers, are diametrically opposed, says Mr. Pederson.

son. Ordinary walking comes naturally to man, although very often he makes a mess of it with his hands in his pockets, his head on his chest, and his shoulders anywhere. But race walking is an artificial method of progression. The gait is neither the run of a man in a hurry nor the swing of a comfortable stroller. "The actual speed is gained (Mr. Pederson still talking) by a special action of locked knee, hip roll, heel and toe work, and a forward swing of the arms contrariwise to that of the feet. Also the body from the waist up twists in the segment of a circle and the feet are shot ahead in a straight line, with the forward

MASTERTON AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB

P.O. Box 54,
Masterton,
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We should like to express our thanks for the splendid article that appeared in the last issue of "The Listener." We feel sure it was read widely and with great interest by sportsmen.

*Yours faithfully,
W. M. SELLAR,
Hon. Secretary.*

knee joint locked and one foot always in contact with the ground."

And who will disagree with that?

Walking Is Best is the motto of all keen walkers. For them, and physiologists agree, except when they are talking to swimmers, and other prejudiced people, correct walking is the only exercise which properly contracts and stretches the muscles. "Walking certainly does not cause athlete's heart," Mr. Pederson adds.

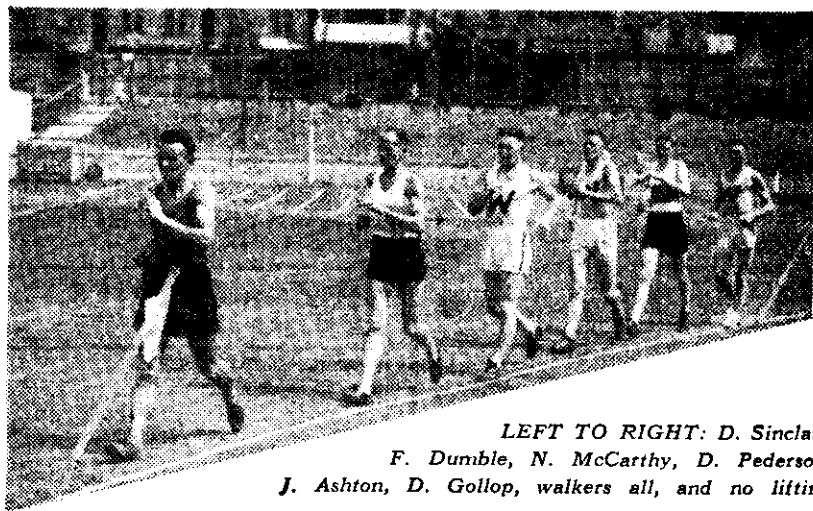
Almost as Fast

If you're in a hurry and don't want to run, then walk, for walking's almost as fast. Comparing the actual times, Mr. Pederson says that walking speed may be judged from the fact that a walker can cover 100 yards in 17 seconds against a sprinter's good average of 10 seconds, and that a mile can be covered in 6 minutes 18½ seconds (World Record held by Jack Stubbs, Australia) against the runner's four minutes six point six seconds. But this does not fully illustrate the comparison. The longer the distance the less the disparity between the times, although walking never quite equals running speed. The ratios quoted by Mr. Pederson are:

100 yards -	- 10 to 6
440 yards -	- 7 to 4
1 mile -	- 3 to 2
20 miles to	
100 miles -	- 4 to 3
200 miles -	- 5 to 4

Judging Criticised

Judges are to blame for the recent "doldrums" suffered by the sport in New Zealand, believes Mr. Pederson.



LEFT TO RIGHT: D. Sinclair, F. Dumble, N. McCarthy, D. Pederson, J. Ashton, D. Gollop, walkers all, and no lifting

Too often competitors were disqualified on the many possible technicalities. Too often this discouraged them. The greatest "foot-fault," lifting, had been indiscriminately penalised by judges who had never properly co-related a system of criticism. In lifting, the vigorous drive from the rear leg threw the body upward in such a manner that it was carried beyond its true orbit and the rear foot left the ground before the forward foot dropped.

A Comparison

Even so, he puts runners at a disadvantage in comparing New Zealand walking records with world records. Ian Driscoll (Hawke's Bay-Poverty Bay) at Napier in 1938 set the present New Zealand mile record of 6 minutes 26½ seconds, only six seconds outside Jack Stubbs' world record. This made a better comparison than our mile record with Wooderson's. Over three miles New Zealand's D. Wilson (1909) had timed 20.58½ compared with 21.2½ set by Norway's Edgar Brunn in 1937 over 5,000 metres (3 miles, 150 yards).

To set out the records we use Mr. Pederson's figures:

NEW ZEALAND

Half-mile: I. Driscoll, 3.1½.

Mile: I. Driscoll, 6.26½.

Two miles: I. Driscoll, 13.57½.

Three miles: H. E. Kerr, 21.36½.

THE WORLD

Mile: J. Stubbs (Aust.), 6.18½.

Two miles: G. E. Larnar (G.B.), 13.11½.

Seven miles: J. F. Mikaelson (Swdn.), 50.19 2-10.

Ten miles: Larnar, 1.15.57½.

20 miles: A. E. Plumb (G.B.), 2.43.38.

3,000 metres: Brunn, 12.23½.

5,000 metres: Brunn, 21.2½.

10,000 metres: Brunn, 43.25½.

20,000 metres: J. Dalinsh (Latv.), 94.26.

30,000 metres: Dalinsh, 2.37.37½.

One hour: A. H. G. Pope (G.B.), 8 miles 474 yards (13,308 metres).

Two hours: Dalinsh, 15 miles 768 yards (24,843 metres).

Still not bettered are three times quoted by Mr. Pederson. They were set about 1882, by Joe Scott, of Dunedin. Scott was Australian professional champion. They were:

72½ miles in 12 hours.

100 miles in 17¼ hours.

133 miles in 24 hours.

Road racing, he tells us, was very popular in those old days, and is now in process of revival.

Stiffest Trial

"In my opinion, the Hutt Road race is the stiffest trial athletes can face up to. I say this with due regard for the Marathon."

To the winner goes the Harold Brown Cup, presented in 1924 to foster the sport. The donor had in mind such world-famous road racing contests as the 51½ mile London-Brighton event. After two years the race lapsed, but was revived in 1938 when D. Gollop was first in over the course from the centre of the City to Petone Oval. When Mr. Pederson won last year the fastest time was put up by N. McCarthy, National Mile Champion. This year the course arranged was from Lower Hutt Post Office to Wellington.

With his own fine athletic record kept to the last for prising out, Mr. Pederson admitted, under pressure, that he walked for New Zealand in the Australian Championships in 1927, was Wellington provincial mile champion in 1938, won the Hutt Road race in 1939, was second in 1925, had fastest time in 1939, second fastest time in 1925 and 1939; that he has been running for 15 years and in that period competed in 14 consecutive provincial cross country championships; represented Wellington in the National cross country championships six times, and has about 40 medals for running.

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