

OFFICIATING THE HIGH SCHOOL RACE WALK (Rev. 1/2005)

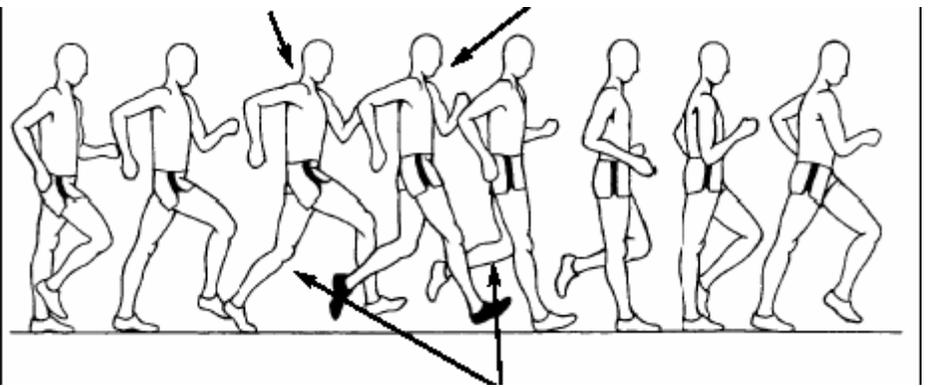
(Sources: 2004 USATF Competition Rules & USATF 2004 Race Walk Officiating Handbook)

Art. 1...Definition of Race Walking.

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 must be straightened (i.e. not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until in the vertical position.

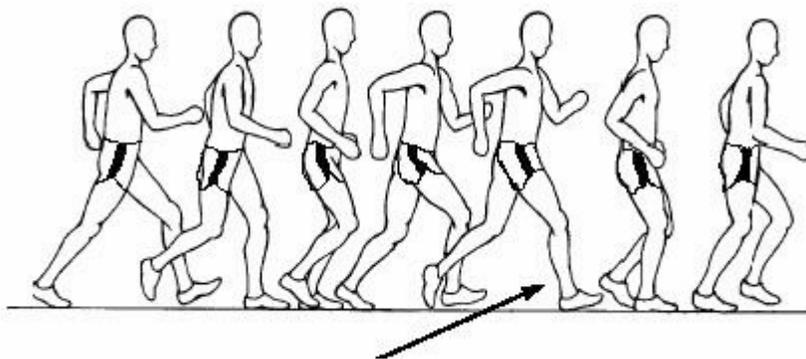
Art. 2...Race Walking Infractions.

a.) **Loss of contact** occurs when the competitor visibly appears to have both feet off of the ground at the same time. One foot should always appear to be in contact. Accordingly there must be a moment when



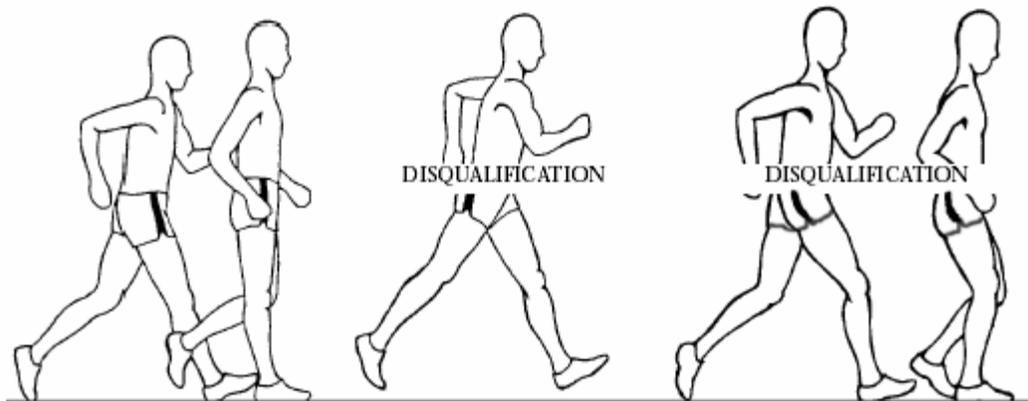
both feet appear to be in contact (i.e., before rear toe-off, the front foot must make contact.)

b.) **Bent knee** occurs when the competitor visibly fails to straighten the forward supporting leg upon



contact, and or, fails to keep the supporting leg straightened until in the vertical upright position. Flexion at the knee from first contact until mid-stance is not allowed in race walking. (The supporting leg may be flexed at

the knee after it has passed under the body.) Athletes who land with straightened legs after the vertical position are in violation as well, because the definition requires the leg to be straightened before the vertical.



Correct Technique

"Loss of Contact"

"Bent Knee"

Art. 3...Judging.

a.) The Judges of Race Walking shall have the sole authority to determine the fairness or unfairness of walking, and their rulings may not be appealed. Judging decisions are made as seen by the human eye. All judges shall act in an individual capacity.

b.) In championship events, there shall be five judges including a Chief Judge. The judges shall be numbered one (1) to five (5).

c.) A **Chief Walk Judge** will assign the other judges to their respective judging areas, explain the procedure to be used during the race and notify competitors of disqualification. A **Recorder** and a **Disqualification Notification Board Operator** may assist the Chief Judge.

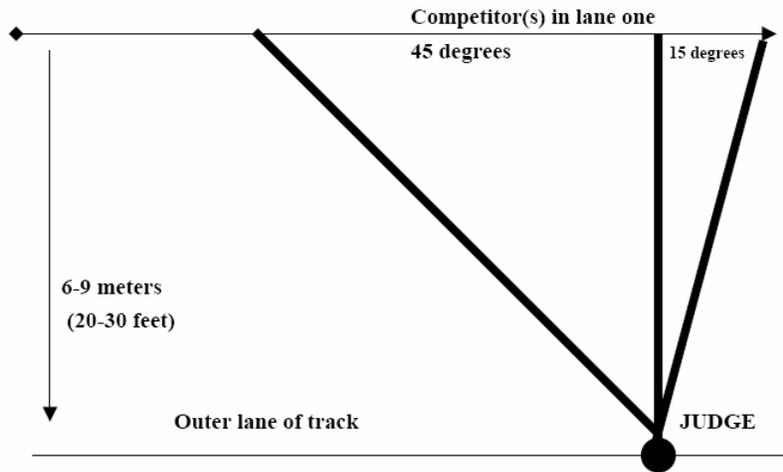
d.) Judges shall keep track of their decisions on **tally cards**, which are to be submitted to the Chief Judge or Recorder at the conclusion of the event. In championship events the Recorder should prepare a **summary sheet** of the judges' decisions.

e.) To make a judgment, look **first** for contact, and **then** for straightening of the leg at the knee. When the decision is made to make a call on the competitor, the call must be based on the definition of race walking and not the other indicators that brought attention to the competitor. If in doubt about making a call, give the benefit of doubt to the athlete and do not make a call.

f.) NOTE: Cautions and Red Cards for bent leg ought NOT to be given if the athlete hyper-extends the leg at the knee, is bowlegged, has large thighs, or has protruding knees. Do not look to see if the leg is “straight” but rather look to see if the leg is straightened at the knee. Failure to straighten the leg at the knee at contact or during stance before the vertical position is really a matter of the support leg not being locked upon contact, or failure to keep the knee locked until the body has passed the vertical position.

Art. 4...Judging Position.

a.) The walk judges should view the walkers from the side. Judging shall not be done from either the front or the back of the walkers. (The judges may officiate the walk from the infield, or from the track.)



b.) The Chief Walk Judge should be in a position to oversee the entire race (i.e., the Chief Judge should judge the start and then move to the finish straightaway).

Art. 5...Numbers. To facilitate judging, race walkers shall wear identical numbers on the front and back of their competition jerseys.

Art. 6...Cautioning Competitors.

a.) Any judge may caution competitors when, by their mode of progression, they are in danger of ceasing to comply with the definition of race walking.

b.) **Yellow paddles** with symbols representing possible loss of contact (~) or possible bent

e.) When three (3) different judges propose disqualification on the same competitor, that competitor is disqualified and shall be notified of this disqualification by the Chief Race Walk Judge. Disqualified competitors must leave the track.

f.) The Chief Judge shall notify athletes of their disqualification with a **red paddle**.

g.) An athlete may be disqualified (notified of their disqualification) after the race, in which case the competitor or coach should be notified as soon as possible.

Addendum:

1) Race Walk Judging Paddles are available for purchase at www.walk-usa.com.

a) Set includes are 5 yellow paddles and 1 red paddle.

2) Race Walk Officials Forms are available for download at www.usatfofficials.com.

a) Documents available are Race Walk Officials Handbook, Disqualification Cards, Judges Tally Sheets, and Judging Summary Sheets.