



# RACE WALKING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Race walking is a long-distance athletic event. Held on the road it is different from running in that one foot must, according to the human eye, appear to be in contact with the ground at all times. The stride length is less than that of a runner but in order to achieve competitive speeds, race walkers must attain cadence rates comparable to those achieved by Olympic 800m runners – and they must do so for hours at a time since the Olympic events are the 20 km (12.4 miles) for men and women and 50 km (31 miles) for men only.

## COURSE AND JUDGES

All major championships are on a course 1–2 km long. There are 6 to 8 judges and all are from different countries spread along the course. Any judge can issue a red card against an athlete, the Chief Judge however does not allocate any red cards but instead supervises all the other judges and holds the Red Disqualification Paddle.

## How fast are they walking?

### WORLD AND EUROPEAN RECORDS

#### MEN'S 20KM: 1:17:16

**VLADIMIR KANAYKIN (RUS)**

Equates to 3 min 51secs per km and 15.53 km per hour

#### WOMEN'S 20KM: 1:25:02

**ELENA LASHMANOVA (RUS)**

Equates to 4 min 15sec per km and 14.1 km per hour

#### MEN'S 50KM: 3:34:14

**DENIS NIZHEGORODOV (RUS)**

Equates to 4 min 17 sec per km and just over 14 km per hour. Men will go through marathon distance in around 3 hours!



# DQ

DQ DOESN'T MEAN YOU WERE RUNNING! JUST MEANS YOU WEREN'T RACE WALKING ACCORDING TO THE RULES. 99.9% OF ATHLETES WHO ARE DQED DO NOT INTENTIONALLY BREAK THE RULES BUT SOMETIMES THE PRESSURE OF THE COMPETITION OR FATIGUE BRINGS ON TECHNICAL FAULTS.

#### Actual Rule has 2 parts both equally important:

- Basically race walkers must maintain contact with the ground at all times (Referred to as the "Contact" part of the rule).
- The walkers advanced leg must be straightened ("Knee" part of the rule) when the foot hits the ground and stay straightened until the leg passes under the body.

**ONLY JUDGED BY NAKED EYE.** VIDEO Replays, slow motion or pictures are not used to judge.

#### YELLOW PADDLES

Shown to athletes when the judge is not completely satisfied the athlete is walking within the rules, they're borderline. Basically, the judge is saying to the athlete "I'm looking at you carefully and you need to improve." These do not contribute to an athlete's disqualification. Can receive only one yellow paddle from each judge for each of the two infractions (contact & knees). The yellow paddles have the symbols on them for each of the different infractions:

"<" for knees

"~" for contact

#### 3 RED CARDS

##### from different judges = Disqualification (DQ)

Red cards: given by a judge if he/she believes athlete is breaking the rules, only once during race by judge for either knees or contact.

Never shown to athlete directly; so athletes do not know which judge has written the card.

#### DQ/Posting board

POSTING BOARD or commonly referred to as DISQUALIFICATION BOARD (DQ Board): is an electronic scoreboard where red cards and the symbol relating to the offence are displayed for athletes to see. That is, if an athlete receives a red card then beside his/her bib number on the DQ Board will be shown either of the symbols referring to the offence incurred: "<" for knees, "~" for Contact.

#### RED PADDLE

Red paddle is only shown to an athlete when he is DQed and is only used by the Chief Judge and/or Chief Judge Assistants (maximum 2) at European Championships. In the last 100m the Chief Judge has the power to show the red paddle to DQ an athlete, regardless of number of previous Red Cards the Chief Judge has received on that athlete, if he/she believes the athlete is obviously breaking the rules. This is to prevent athletes blatantly cheating in last part of race if they don't have any red cards.