

MEASUREMENT NEWS



May

1991

Issue #47



This scene is near the finish line for timed competitors at the 1991 Crescent City Classic (10 km) in New Orleans. The path leading to the timed area closed at 43 minutes - the balance of the 32000 runners pass to another area (they can be seen in the distant background). Here we see seven of the stopped watch timers led by Coach Danny Thiel (center with hand to face), shown reporting to Sally Nicoll, Recorder, following the competitive race. This is a key step in the records capturing process.

MEASUREMENT NEWS

#47 - May 1991

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JONES COUNTER PRICE INCREASE

The price of Jones Counters has increased by \$5.00, according to the manufacturer, the New York Road Runners Club. New prices are:

US Orders (first class or UPS).....\$45.00
Foreign Orders (air mail).....\$50.00

Counters are still obtained by writing to:

NYRRC - Att: Jones Device
9 East 89th Street
New York, NY 10128-0602

HOW WE DID IN 1990

The 1990 courses are all in, except for some strays and backlog victims. Accordingly, here is a breakdown of how things went last year:

Most active certifier: Wayne Nicoll - 135 courses certified (114 last year)

Most active measurer: A. C. Linnerud - 50 courses measured (43 last year)

Measurers active in 1990: 333 (314 last year)

State with most active measurers: California, with 35 (31 last year)

Courses certified in 1990: 1181 (1050 last year)

33 people measured 10 or more courses last year, accounting for half (562) of the courses certified last year.

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Of 1990's 1020 race courses (eliminating calibration courses and tracks):

929 (91 percent) are record-quality standard courses

53 (5 percent) have excess drop and are not record quality

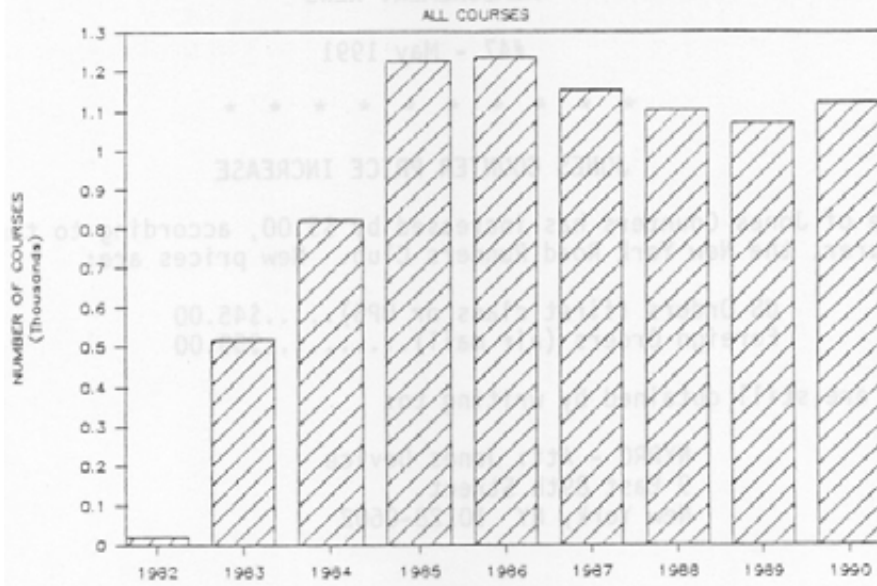
38 (4 percent) have OK drop, but excess separation. Records may be set on these if no net tailwind is measured.

Thus 95 percent of 1990 courses are eligible for records.

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Trend-watchers will note that the 5 km distance continues to increase its lead against the 10 km. Marathon and half-marathon have been steady for a decade. The 8 km/5 mile duo have been fighting a seesaw battle, with no clear trend-setter yet in sight.

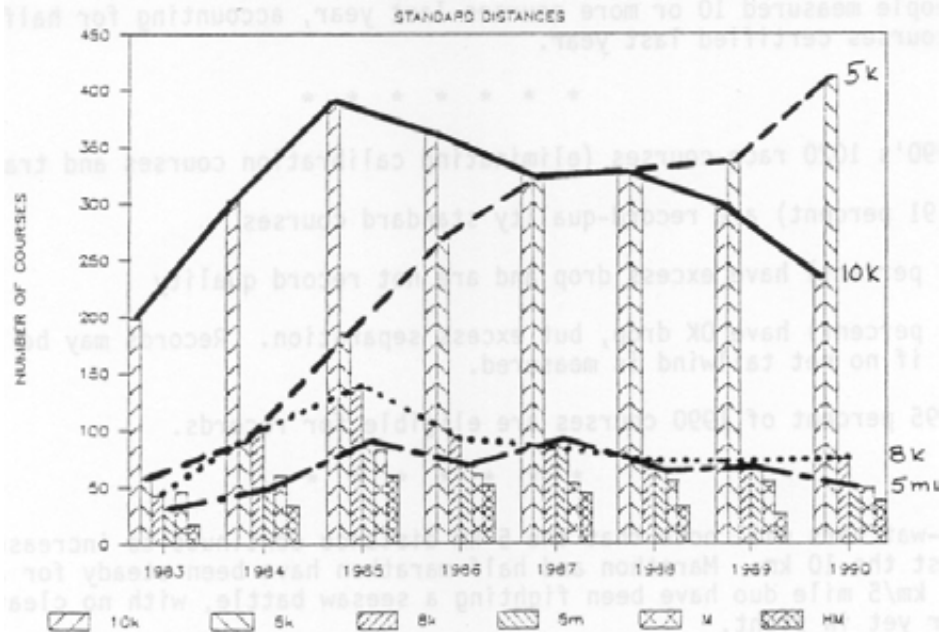
TAC CERTIFIED COURSES BY YEAR



STANDARD DISTANCE TAC CERTIFIED COURSES

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
10km	198	303	392	363	327	325	299	240
5km	59	91	185	270	324	330	338	425
8km	42	101	137	95	83	72	70	74
5mi	31	48	89	68	91	65	66	57
Mar	47	61	82	61	53	55	54	49
HMar	17	34	60	51	44	32	26	41
All	518	823	1223	1234	1151	1103	1069	1121

TAC CERTIFIED COURSES



HOW SOME 1990 COURSES WERE DISTRIBUTED

01mi	20	10mi	19	50km	1
05km	412	12km	4	50mi	5
05mi	49	15km	23	60km	2
08km	74	20km	8	Ca1	59
100km	3	25km	4	HMar	37
100mi	1	2.5km	6	Mar	48
10km	237	30km	3	Trck	6

The Chinese Invented the Odometer

In 1027 Lu Taolung presented the Emperor Jen Chung with a cart that could measure the distances it spanned by means of a mechanism with eight wheels and two moving arms. One arm struck a drum each li (about a third of a mile) was covered. Another rang a bell every 10 li.

from *Fascinating Facts: More than 1,200 intriguing facts on just about everything* by David Louis, Ridge Press, Crown Publishers, Inc., New York, 1977.

Submitted by Alan Jones

IN THE BLEACHERS



"Wait, wait!! We might have a problem here ... blast this metric system!"
 No problem. It has a TAC certification -- see, here is Pete's signature.

9 April 1991

Pete,

If you have not seen this cartoon, I thought it might be of interest to you.

Tom

Thomas J. Ferguson
 4191 Halupa St.
 Honolulu, HI 96818

FACE OF THE MONTH

Sally Nicoll

Joan Riegel is a difficult act to follow as "cover girl", but when Pete asked me if I would "cover" this issue I agreed. Many readers of Measurement News have known me for a long time. Our contact usually centers around the urgent assignments of the moment. I will use this space to share how I arrived where I am today.

Wayne and I grew up together in New Hampshire. The run related activities didn't enter our lives until Wayne entered West Point in 1953 after three years of college and decided he would try cross country. In a short time I became a holder of the watch, following the Army team faithfully through cross country, indoor and outdoor track seasons and ultimately race walking. As Wayne's participation increased so did my duties as statistician. At one exciting point in his Army career we helped form an American youth team to represent the US in German youth competition. So great was our success I found myself scoring at the meets while alternately playing team mother and/or assistant coach. Living in Berlin opened the door to viewing a variety of international meets and I was hooked. Wherever we went I found myself involved as the sport was blossoming onto the road.

At the time Wayne retired from the Army we were living in Augusta, Georgia where I was the Assistant Director of a 500 pupil private elementary school. We decided to open a runners store - it was 1977 and things were really happening fast in the sport. Having placed shoes on the local runners' feet we moved to meet the demand for local events in which to compete. We started a track club which grew within a year to over 500 members. We staged events nearly every weekend year round. Within two years the business aspects were so demanding I left my position with the school to work full time with Wayne. By the early 80's we were travelling all over the Southeast timing and measuring. Wayne became the GA certifier and - well, that's his story, not mine.

My frequent submissions of results from races caused NRDC to seek me out as a record keeper. I developed and promoted a State Records Program for GA and then spurred on the development of similar systems for the surrounding states. In 1986 when Ken Young elected to retire as RRTC Validations Chairman he recommended I become his replacement, a role I have happily been filling ever since.

In 1989, following my battle with cancer, we decided to close our business and move back to our native New Hampshire. We bought a small cottage on the side of Ragged Mountain and settled in to enjoy the beauty of the world about us. Since that time we've been venturing off the mountain on a regular basis to assist events in the race day details necessary to capture records. Notable among the races served in 1991 are the Red Lobster 10K, Crescent City Classic, and Friehofer's Run For Women. Back in 1956 while earning my MS in Group Work and Community Organization at Columbia University I never dreamed the direction I would take in applying that knowledge!

The personal side of my life has been full and blessed. Wayne and I have been married for 34 years and have a son, Gregory (33), and a daughter Jemi (31) who has presented us with three beautiful grandchildren, Daniel (4), Eleanor (2), and Elizabeth (9mos). When they are not keeping me busy I am the curator of the Andover (NH) Historical Society Museum, First Vice President of the Andover Service League, a Board Member of the Ragged Mountain Club, a Meals on Wheels volunteer, and chairperson of several committees performing community projects.

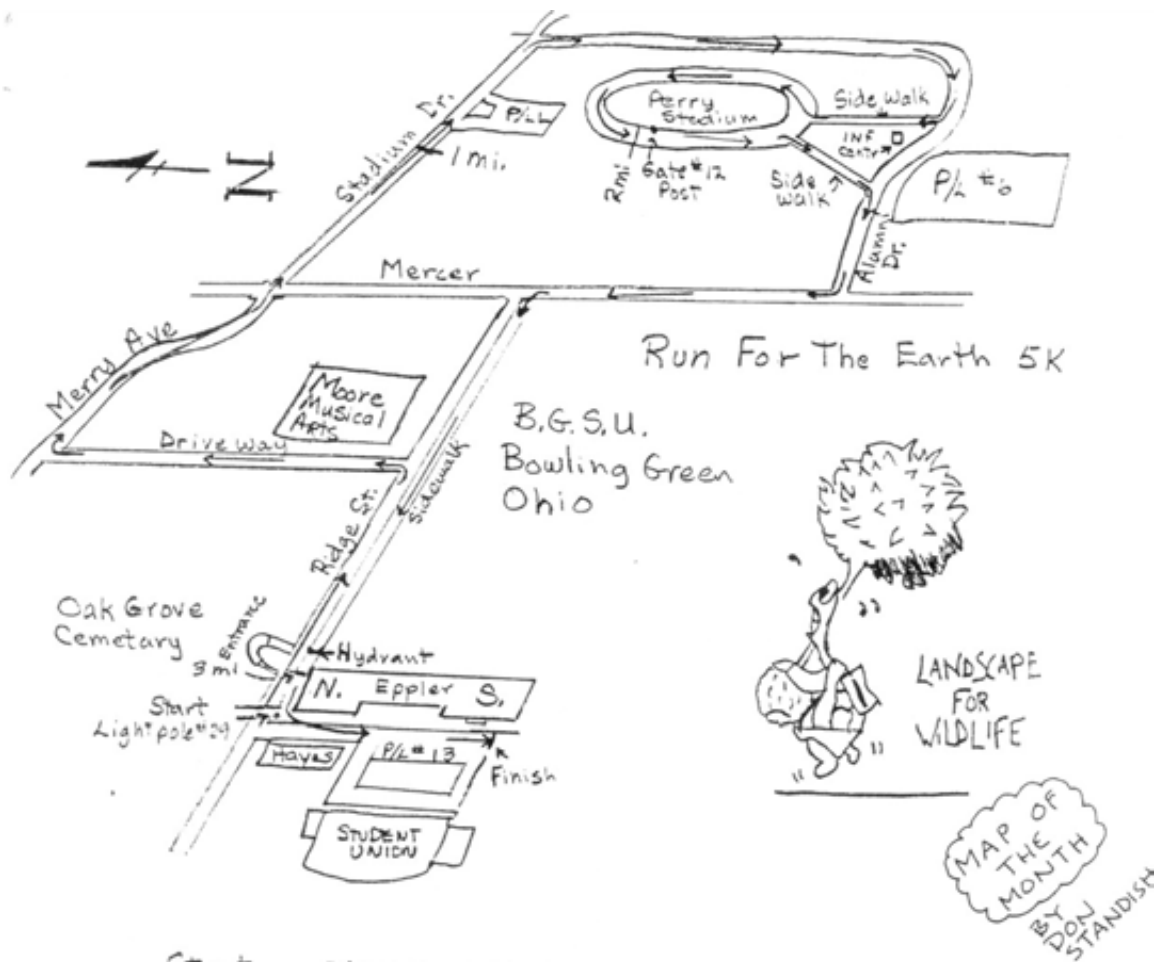
Though I have run barely a step myself except to keep up with my many friends and associates in the sport, running and walking have had a profound influence in my life. They have been something Wayne and I have shared together and it has made us closer, they have been a source of satisfaction as I've seen their positive influence on the lives of so many others, they have introduced me to scores of friends I would not have otherwise known, and have been a source of strength in personal goal setting. There have been exciting moments like holding an official watch on two World Bests for Liz McColgan and one for Ingrid Christensen, four American Records for Lynn Jennings and one for Judi St. Hilaire, Bob Schlau's first National Single Age mark, and countless Age Group and Masters marks. There have been satisfying times like leading the Women's Team for the measurement of the '88 Olympic Trials Course at Pittsburgh, and being recognized as a Master Level TAC Official. But the most satisfying work is bringing about the recognition of records by being a catalyst in the validations process where I can share in the successful experience of both sponsor and athlete. I am grateful to the hard working RRTC members who share their talents so willingly for the sport and without whom I could not accomplish my role. Thanks, team. I'm proud to be one of you!

MAP OF THE MONTH

Each issue I pore over the certificates, trying to find a map that exemplifies something good about map-drawing. Each time I do it I am not satisfied that I've really gotten the absolute best, since there are so many. Fred Shields' work would qualify almost every month. His work, in my judgment, is, year in and year out, the best example. But I can't use him every month. I recognize that readers may know of a map they've seen or submitted that may be better than the one I've picked.

Please help. If you think you have a really good map, and want it to be considered, say so. I will try to pick the map of the month from those actually nominated.

This month's map, by Don Standish, was picked because I liked the engaging way he used perspective to produce an interesting map, while retaining those basic things that are needed.



- Start - 2'3" E. of L/P #29 on Ridge St. near Eppler North
- 1 Mile - 60'10" W. of W. drive into P/L L.
- 2 Mile - 16'10" N. of Gate #12 (sign post) entrance to Perry Stadium.
- 3 Mile - 44'9" W. of Hydrant at Ridge St. & Oak Grove Cemetery Entrance (on sidewalk)
- Finish - 4'3" S. of S. edge of stairway into Eppler South in Driveway of P/L #13

All Points are located with painted nails

Not to Scale



**The
Athletics Congress
of the USA**

*The Governing Body for Athletics in the United States
including Track and Field, Long Distance
Running and Race Walking for
men and women and boys and girls
at all age levels.*

WAYNE B. NICOLL
Ragged Mountain Club
Potter Place, New Hampshire 03265
(603) 735-5721

Peter S. Riegel
3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

20 April 1991

Dear Pete,

Here is an account of my experience with observing the wind at the Crescent City Classic 10K Road Race in New Orleans on April 6. As the measurer/certifier, you are well aware the course is a point-to-point with over 80% separation but with no drop in elevation. The course starts in the French Quarter and proceeds generally west for five miles along urban/suburban streets until it enters Audubon Park, a large community park similar to Central Park in NYC. It proceeds the rest of the way in a counterclockwise direction on a park road and finishes facing southeast.

When TAC Rule 185.5 allowed for records eligibility for courses with a start/finish separation of over 30%, I looked for courses in the South that might be good possibilities for collecting wind information. The Crescent City Classic seemed like a perfect prospect. I had mentioned the possibility of collecting wind data there in my column in Running Journal, but I never had any reaction from any reader. Recently Neil McDonald of End Management Co., a finish line services company from Sarasota, FL, asked Sally and me if we would assist him at the event. I suggested to Neil that we make wind observations. He proposed it to the race management and they agreed. However, in the interim, it was announced there would be no elite athlete prize money. Since it was unlikely any open or All Comers records would be set, plans to conduct a pre-validation measurement were scrapped but we went ahead with a plan to make wind observations. I packed a small automatic camera and brought along red engineer tape. The evening before the race we mounted streamers on utility poles that were close to the mile markers. Arrangements were made so I could ride on the press truck.

On the morning of the race I checked the weather report from a local TV channel. The temperature was in the low 70's and rising, the humidity was approaching 80%, and the wind was blowing from the southeast at 10-15 MPH. At the start I observed numerous flags on the Jackson Brewery building blowing straight out from the southeast. The race used the course described as the alternate course (LA85014PR). The photo labeled "0" confirms the location of the start line as shown on the certificate. The photo labeled "1" is taken immediately after the start and shows the flags blowing from the SE. Photo "2" is taken early in the race and one can observe a US flag blowing lightly but not in any particular direction. "3" is taken on Julia St., proceeding northwest. The flags are nearly limp. Photo "4" at the turn from Julia to Camp shows the streamer mounted under the

street sign is blowing lightly from the south. I had some difficulty spotting most of my streamers for the rest of the trip. Some had either been pulled down or had blown off. The mile points were marked with overhead banners that were too high up to fasten the streamers to them so I tried to mount them on poles near the banners. Photo "5" is taken on Camp before the I-90 overpass. A US flag is blowing lightly.

Photo "6" shows some advertising banners hung over the road at about the 2 mile mark but from the angle I took the shot I am not sure which way the banners are blowing! In this photo you can see the trees hang low over the streets, which was a serious hazard to anyone sitting on the platform near the cab of the truck. I spent as much time watching for tree hazards as I did looking for the streamers. I was belted by a low branch only one time. Photo "7" is at about halfway and a US flag indicates a slight tailwind. Photo "8" at about 4 miles shows a US flag with little movement. Photo "9" at the intersection of Soniat Ave (about 4.5 miles) shows the streamer hanging limp from the street sign. Photo "10" at 5 miles reflects a streamer on a utility pole also hanging straight down. There was little evidence of wind in the park. Photo "11" showing a limp streamer was taken at the finish line.

Several thoughts on how to improve the wind information collection process:

1. Call the US Weather information station a short time before the race and obtain an official version of the conditions.
2. The material used in engineer tape varies greatly. Be sure to retain a sample of the type tape used and forward it with the report and photos so it can be tested if necessary.
3. Plan the location of your streamers very carefully. I would recommend placing them at key intersections rather than at mile marks. Following the course map you would have a better feel where the next streamer will be.
4. A press truck is a noisy uncomfortable place to work. I would prefer to be on a bike or in a separate open vehicle.
5. A camera with a telescopic zoom lens would be preferable to enlarge the image enough so it would later be visible on copy machine copies of the photos.
6. Take advantage of other indicators such as banners and flags to present the wind conditions.
7. Try to attach the streamer so it hangs free and has little likelihood of becoming entangled. Mount it high enough and securely so it cannot be easily pulled down.

In my opinion the runners had only a few moments on N. Peters and again on Prytania when the wind favored them. Otherwise, there was negligible wind or a slight head wind. If there had been a significant National or All Comers record set at this event, I believe the photos would be adequate proof the wind was not an assisting factor. I am satisfied that a member of a race staff could follow these relatively simple procedures and open the door for records eligibility to his race.

Sincerely,


Wayne B. Nicoll
Vt East, RRTC

Copies: Neil McDonald, Chuck George, Bob Baumel, TACSTATS

Editor's note: Wayne sent along color photos of the streamers. All that he says is substantiated by the photos. Unfortunately, when reproduced they show little detail. Therefore I have not published them in this MN.

This is the first attempt I know of to obtain wind data. In case anyone may have set an age record at the 1991 Crescent City Classic, information now exists to show no tailwind at that event.



Thomas J. Ferguson
4191 Halupa Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818

15 March 1991

Mr. Peter Riegel
Chairman TAC Road Running Technical Committee
3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Dear Pete,

In the March 1991 issue of Road Race Management News, page 6, Don Kardong has a article, "TAC Rules Quiz." What is of interest to those involved in course certification is his question No. 12:

Q-12: You complete all measurements, necessary adjustments, and paperwork for certifying your course a week ahead of time, but the final signatory is enjoying a vacation in the Bahamas (income derived from certifying other courses) and doesn't get around to reviewing your submissions until a week after the race. He approves the certification, but was your race certified on race day, or wasn't it.

His answer:

A-12: It was. Certification is effective as of the date of submission.

I believe his answer is well understood by all involved in course certification; but, I find his parenthetical remark somewhat offensive (income derived from certifying other courses). While I do not know Don, I understand he is a person given to forms of satiric humor, and the comment appears to suit his personality.

Perhaps I am too sensitive in relating money to the role we play in course certification as I understand our duties are largely ones volunteered (after approval by the TAC RRTC) in the interests of the running community. It has long been my belief that we do not expect to be financially rewarded for our time spent in course certification. Without trying to read too much into Don's comment, I suspect he has had some experience with TAC RRTC course certifiers who also perform course measurements for remuneration, and considers as I do that this is a conflict of interest when the course measurer then goes on to certify his own work.

My question to you is obvious. Do we have Regional Certifiers who measure courses for monetary gain that are in turn

certified by them for national acceptance? Reviews of the updated TAC/RRTC Certified Course Lists published in the Measurement News suggests this may be a practice in some areas.

Although I do not know any of the Regional Certifiers, I do believe I know them through their activities as reported in the Measurement News, and cannot imagine that their personal integrity is such that they would compromise the position of trust related to our responsibilities. Thus, I believe, the remark of Don, accidental humor or not about using certifying fees for personal use, appears inappropriate.

I suspect there are some who will accuse me of "picky picky" oversensitivity, and to a certain extent they may be correct. But, a few recent experiences related to a personal challenge regarding my integrity (unrelated to course certification) leads me to believe there are those who will seize on any suggestion of possible impropriety to create trouble. Pete, I think this is an issue that we should open up to gain an appreciation of how the other Regional Certifiers think, and perhaps consider policies which will make it clear to race organizers and runners that all our activities are open to inspection or review by anyone, at anytime.

There is another matter related to our certifying process. This is how much do we charge the race organizers for our efforts? Here in Hawaii where we have so few courses to certify the charge is \$10.00, of which half goes for the expenses related to forwarding the certificates back through the Vice Chairman to you. The remainder is maintained as a reserve for any administrative expenses, and to pay for courses certified for use by any of the current Road Runners Clubs of America here in the state. I suspect in other states where there is a large number of certificates processed each month, the certification fee includes some remuneration for the time spent in handling the paper work.

Pete, this is a longer letter than I had intended regarding what may have been Don Kardong's good natured jibe at our certifying community, but the remark may be revealing hidden feelings from the runners side of long distance running. In any event, a few thoughts for your consideration.

We send our Warmest Alohas to all,


Tom Ferguson

THE ATHLETICS CONGRESS
OF THE USA

3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Road Running Technical Committee
Peter S. Riegel, Chairman

614-451-5617 (home)
614-424-4009 (office)
FAX 614-424-5263

March 19, 1991

Thomas J. Ferguson - 4191 Halupa St - Honolulu, HI 96818

Dear Tom,

I also saw Don Kardong's question and answer in Road Race Management and, like you, took a small amount of offense. I quickly forgot it. I put my own foot in my mouth too often to get outraged when others do it.

There's a grain of truth in Don's parenthetical shot, and maybe we are a little defensive about it. Many RRTC certifiers, including me, do make money on the side measuring courses for others. There's the potential for an ethical dilemma here, and I'll shoot my thoughts at you for what they are worth. In addition, I'll put this correspondence in next Measurement News to see whether readers have any opinions to contribute.

First, a history lesson: In the 1970's and early 1980's only Ted Corbitt could certify a course. When he became overloaded with paperwork he identified several people around the US who had done good work, and he appointed them certifiers. They would receive measurement data from people, and pre-review the data, sending the reviewed material, with a certificate ready to sign, to Ted. If all was OK, Ted would sign and return the certificate. Later, when Ted gained confidence in the certifiers, he appointed them "final signatories," empowering them to issue certificates directly. This has grown into the system we have today, in which almost all of our RRTC certifiers may sign certificates, including those for courses they measure themselves.

The job of final signatory carries with it the responsibility to act as though you were still subject to review. People must receive prompt service, with their paperwork being checked in a timely manner with no delay. In the case of one's own courses, the finished certificate ought to be in the mail to the Vice Chairman by race day. There will be occasional exceptions, of course, but first-class work from final signatories is to be expected.

When Allan Steinfeld was RRTC Chairman, a \$25 maximum review fee was instituted, and it continues. This fee is big enough to cover all costs associated with a course review, and leaves a bit left over to cover other expenses. Several certifiers use it to help get them to the TAC convention, since many of them have no funding from other sources.

Certifiers feel differently about money, and not all charge the full \$25. A few years ago I was about to appoint a new person as a state certifier, and he told me he felt I should know that the money was important to him. Since I knew he was a competent person, I appointed him anyway. I was indifferent to his motives, so long as he did the job in a competent manner. I appreciated his honesty in stating his motives. He does a good job.

When one measures for hire, and is also an RRTC certifier, one must wear those two hats carefully. A certifier's first job is to encourage and help others to measure their own courses, and not to force them to employ him.

As RRTC Chairman I have to set the standard. Often someone will call me in the belief that they must have me measure their course, because they do not know it is a do-it-yourself process. I quickly set them straight, telling them about Course Measurement Procedures and outlining the process. I explain to them that there are people who will measure for a fee, and I am one of them, but I urge them to investigate doing it themselves first, since this will give them a useful skill they won't acquire if they hire the work done. I tell them it is not hard to do, and encourage them to give it a try.

However, time is money, and some of these people want to hire it done. If they are not close to Columbus, I recommend a measurer I know is good, and suggest they get in touch with him. I ask them to report any problems they encounter to me. If they are close to me, I'll quote them a price for me to do the work.

How much do I charge? That depends. My own club gets my services for nothing, since I feel an obligation there. Others will get a price that depends on all sorts of things, including how busy or burned-out I'm feeling, the distance from home, and my assessment of the market. I have no set price. As long as they have the option to do it themselves, I feel no obligation to provide cheap service. I figure that if I could learn to do it myself, so can they.

If they elect to do it themselves, that's great. I'll help them all I can by phone or mail. The bicycle seat is the dividing line. If their bottom is the one on that seat, they get my free and enthusiastic help all along the line. If my physical presence is involved, they'll pay whatever I can get them to agree to.

I've never made a secret of this, and I'm not ashamed of it at all. I do a good job as OH and KY certifier. I turn any submission around within three days (vacations excepted), and have been successful in developing many new measurers. Anybody who's needed help by mail or phone has gotten it, and gotten it quickly. I can remember waiting long periods in the old days, wondering what had happened to my submission, and I will not permit that to happen to people in my area. These are anxious people we serve, and we should not add to their worries by sitting on their paperwork.

By extension, as RRTC Chairman, I believe we have a collective pride in our work, and that most certifiers feel as I do about our obligations to measurers. By accepting the job of certifier, we take on the responsibility to do the job right. Timely and competent service to measurers is our first and foremost job as certifiers.

It's my responsibility to see that the certification system works as it is supposed to. I want to know of any problem areas. If anybody in RRTC is abusing his office, the situation will be corrected as fast as I can get it done. We have had cases where people have developed severe backlogs. Some of these have eliminated their backlogs. One has been fired for chronic nonperformance. Another was fired because of many complaints from people in

the area he served. These firings did not happen fast, since I gave those involved many second chances, which they did not take. Finally, with reluctance, these people had their RRTC credentials removed. There's no formal humiliating drumming-out process, no notice in MN, just a letter informing them that they are no longer RRTC certifiers, and any measurement work they do in the future must be routed through their state certifier.

I'm proud of RRTC, and I intend to do what I have to do to keep it running right. We are all volunteers in our RRTC work, so there must be allowances made for individual styles of operation. We will never operate in lockstep, since we all bring different talents to the game. Nonetheless, I believe we operate under the following guidelines:

- 1) Provide accurate and timely response to all inquiries.
- 2) Provide fast turnaround on all submitted material.
- 3) Submit finished certificates promptly to the Vice Chairmen.
- 4) Do not develop a backlog. This was not possible to do when others had to review our work, and we're honor-bound to behave the same way when nobody's looking. That's part of the obligation a final signatory carries.
- 5) Do not use the office to force people to do what they may not wish to do. Certification relates only to the accuracy of a course, and has no connection with other TAC activities. Anyone who submits acceptable measurement and map work is entitled to fast response, with no additional requirements.
- 6) Charge what you wish as your review fee, as long as it does not exceed \$25, and use it as you wish.
- 7) There is no obligation on any RRTC member to measure any course for anybody, aside from an occasional validation measurement which is considered a part of the job, and for which a standard honorarium of \$100 is provided, plus expenses. We operate a certification system, not a measurement service.

With regard to engaging in racing-related commercial enterprises, there are so many different things involved here I can say only that we should do the right thing. As certifiers it is inevitable that measuring jobs will find their way to us. However, use of the certifier office to force people to use our commercial services is inappropriate.

People who are new to the use of the certification process are vulnerable. They should be quickly educated to the idea that measurement is not hard to learn, and that we operate under a do-it-yourself philosophy. They should be encouraged in this, not scared or bullied into hiring somebody to do it for them. If they wish to hire it done, that's fine, just so they have been clearly told of, and understand, their options.

I'm RRTC's complaint department. I want to know of any areas where things deviate significantly from these guidelines. I believe they reflect the right way to run the certification system.

Thanks for your letter. I hope readers will provide additional views.

Best regards, Pete

THE ATHLETICS CONGRESS
OF THE USA

3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Road Running Technical Committee
Peter S. Riegel, Chairman

614-451-5617 (home)
614-424-4009 (office)
FAX 614-424-5263

March 11, 1991

Dear Mr. xxxxxxx,

This proposal will address the work we discussed last night. Before I begin, as I mentioned before, I must remind you that you can get your courses certified by having a local person do the work, and sending me the data. You do not need to hire me to do the work for you. The enclosed material discusses the procedure. (Ed. note: Material discusses certification procedures and tells how to get Course Measurement Procedures and Jones Counter)

Should you wish me to do the work, I will be happy to do it under the following terms:

- 1) The fee for the work will be \$xxx, assuming two courses are to be measured, a 10 kilometer and a 5 kilometer course, one located in xxxxxxx and one in zzzzzzz. If a third course is to be measured (the xxxxxxxxxxxxxx 10k) an additional \$xxx will be added to the fee.
- 2) You will pay all my travel expenses, including mileage at \$.275 per mile, hotel, and food.
- 3) An initial payment of \$xxx will be due upon my arrival. The balance will be due upon your receipt of the certification papers for the courses measured
- 4) You will provide city maps showing the courses you intend to have measured. These should be sent to me as far in advance of the measurement as possible, so that I may study them and plan the measurement. Also, if I see anything undesirable about the course, it will give me a chance to let you know, and to suggest alternates.
- 5) I will need to have accurate information concerning the elevation above sea level of the start and finish point of each race. If you can obtain USGS quadrangles for the areas covered by the race courses this would be most desirable. Your state department of natural resources is a good place to start to obtain these.
- 6) You should provide a bike rider who can ride a steady line. I will bring a Jones Counter to affix to his/her bike. In this way we can obtain all required measurement information in one ride of the course.
- 7) You should be prepared to make a quick, on-the-spot decision at the conclusion of each measurement regarding any adjustments to start, finish or turnaround, since the courses may not turn out to be as you would like them to. It is common for these adjustments to be required.

8) I will provide measurement documentation and a certification quality course map, showing locations of all splits and critical portions of each course, to conform to current TAC certification requirements. This will not be done on site, but will be done after I arrive back home. You will receive this documentation within ten days of the conclusion of the work.

9) Because the measurement line uses the entire road, some illegal and dangerous riding may be required. You should arrange for police escort on dangerous stretches of road. If this is not possible, you must at least arrange it so that I am not subject to arrest while doing the work. I have learned how not to get killed, but would prefer not to have to explain to the police why I am riding like a madman.

As we discussed, the work will be done on the weekend of May 18-19. I will drive to xxxxxxxx Friday after work, probably arriving between 9 and 11 PM. You should arrange for reservations at a hotel that I can easily find from the interstate. The next morning we will get out bright and early and begin the work.

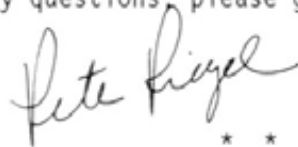
Near the race courses we will need a straight piece of road at least 1000 feet in length, to use for a calibration course. With your help I will lay down 1000 feet to use in calibrating the bicycles. With this, and the bicycle calibration, done we will then measure the courses.

If these terms are agreeable, please let me know as soon as you can, and send me the maps of the proposed routes. I expect there will be some phone calls before the work begins to clarify unaddressed things.

This is an opportunity for you to recruit someone to learn the measurement procedure. I look forward to teaching them as we work together.

If you have any questions, please get in touch.

Best regards,



* * * * *

Above is a typical quotation which I send to people who wish me to measure a course for them. If they provide the things I have asked for, the job is usually easy. If they do not, it's tougher. Typically the courses they have are off-distance, and need adjustment, and they have not thought ahead as to what they must do. Generally I suggest something and they go along with it. Sometimes it gets complicated when, because of uncertainties about permission to use certain streets, it can be a real mess. This is where a local measurer is a benefit, since he can pack it in for the day and come back later after people have had a chance to decide what they want to do.

I'm hoping their rider can ride nice and tight. If he can't I may be in for extra riding if measurements don't agree.

Since this job is 300 miles from home, it's not convenient for me. So I hope for the best. If it happens it will be a long weekend, and lots of paperwork when I return home.

March 22, 1991

Mr. Pete Riegel
Editor
Measurement News
3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Dear Pete,

I respect the Road Race Technical Committee more than any other TAC Committee. Yours is a no-nonsense, straight forward approach (much like the act of running itself) that I wish could be emulated through out TAC. Therefore, I am delighted to be an Athlete Representative to the Road Race Technical Committee and appreciate your extra time and expense to include me on your mailing list; however, my mail carrier informed me he has had difficulty delivering your newsletter due to an incorrect address label. My correct address is:

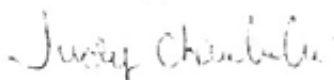
Judy Chamberlin
2364 West 23rd Circle
Golden, CO 80401

Though I have not provided input to the Road Race Technical Committee, I do remain supportive, informed and current—even to the degree of riding with course certifiers to learn first hand details.

As I had in past conventions, I planned to attend some of your committee meetings at the Seattle Convention; however, my personal budget precluded the trip and the Athletes Advisory Committee denied me travel expenses.

Please keep me on your mailing list and Thank You for your honest, no-nonsense approach to problem solving and the advancement of our sport.

Sincerely,



Judy Chamberlin

TAC STANDARDS NOT MET
(Don Standish)

FROM TOLEDO RRC
NEWSLETTER

The report of Vic Tanny's Indoor Marathon containing 14 laps per mile was not the figure TAC standards required. The certification (see form on page 11) stipulated 15.45 laps per mile. The discrepancy resulted in a race containing 367 laps to be 13.75445 certified miles long.

The performances in that event then must be evaluated from the perspective that this is 2.46715 miles short of other certified performances. The full marathon should have 406 laps as the Measurement Certificate shows. (OH 90067 PR)

I was responsible for measuring and filing the appropriate forms, not in the administration of that information. I am writing this to allow the athletes to properly access their performances, and to disclaim any responsibility in the misinterpretation of the certification data.

TAC has been notified of this situation and it has resulted in voiding the certification of this year's event.

TAC STANDARDS NOT MET - A RESPONSE
(Dave Payette)

The Measurement Certificate was received the week of the race and was not used for the following reasons.

(1) An official marathon is 26 miles, 385 yards, or 138,435 feet. Per the Certificate it states each lap is 341.78 feet and 406 laps for complete marathon. The track is three lanes and the measurement was done on the inside (wall) lane. Multiplying 406 times 341.78 feet equates to 138,763 feet, or 328 feet more than is required. The marathon could have been made exactly 138,435 feet had the start and finish been made at different positions in the designated lane.

(2) Although the track was measured per TAC stated formula and done mechanically correct, the measurement is not practical for a group event. The Vic Tanny track has three lanes (wall, middle, outer) and according to that facility's measurement, a mile is based upon 14 revolutions done in the center of the middle lane (15 wall, 13 outer). In this event, the faster runners always use the outer lane (13 per mile) and likely run more than a marathon. The TAC formula was likely meant for a quarter mile track, as below, "How To Tape A Track".

The certification should be voided in lieu of mentioned discrepancies. Should the Vic Tanny marathon committee decide to recertify, we will suggest the wall lane be eliminated for running and a thorough review made with appropriate TAC certification personnel.

FROM MIKE TOMLINS

PRECISION INSTRUMENT

Race organisers and runners – does the road race you organise or are thinking of competing in have the authority to display the logo shown right? In other words, has the event been measured in the approved manner by an AAA accredited course measurer?

There is only *one* method of course measurement recognised by the IAAF – and therefore acceptable to the AAA – for measuring road race courses, and that is the Calibrated Cycle (or Jones Counter) method, utilising the consistently accurate Jones counter measuring device fitted to the hub of a cycle. The surveyors wheel and other methods of measurement simply do not produce the necessary level of accuracy.

Since the AAA Course Measurement Scheme was introduced

'There is only one method of course measurement recognised by the IAAF and that is the Calibrated Cycle (or Jones Counter) method.'

in 1985, some 130 measurers have been trained, tested and added to the panel of AAA accredited course measurers. In this time, well in excess of 1,000 road race courses for which AAA permits are issued, have received the benefit of a proper measurement, and as such hold AAA Certificates of Course Accuracy. These events are the only ones allowed to display the above "AAA/RRC Certified Accurate" logo, which indicates to all prospective race entrants that they can be entirely confident about the accuracy of the advertised distance.

The AAA Road Running Com-

mittee has decreed that all road races run under AAA Permit regulations, which advertise a specific distance, should, with effect from 1st January 1990, arrange for their courses to be measured in the approved manner by an AAA accredited measurer and obtain a Certificate of Course Accuracy. Area/District Permit Secretaries now have discretion to refuse permits when this condition is not satisfied.

The measuring service is provided free of charge under AAA Permit arrangements (other than the organisers reimbursing the



How do you know that the race you have entered is accurate? MIKE TOMLINS, AAA Course Measurement Secretary, has some suggestions for competitor and organiser alike.



measurer concerned with his/her out of pocket travelling expenses), so any race organiser whose road race does not have an AAA Certificate of Course Accuracy should contact the appropriate Area Measurement Secretary (listed below) for details of the nearest AAA accredited measurer in their locality who will undertake the task.



AREA MEASUREMENT SECRETARIES

Midland Counties AA: Stuart Holdsworth, 3 Mailing Avenue, Broughton Astley, Nr. Leicester LE9 6GS.

Northern Counties AA: Paul Hodgson, 29 Rookhope, Rickellon, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE38 9HW.

Southern Counties AA: Roger Gibbons, "Zeando", Swannington, Norfolk NR9 5NW.

AA of Wales: Dave Dodwell, 10A, Pencodre Road, Cadoxton, Barry, South Glamorgan CF9 7SD.

What the SCPF Does and Doesn't Do

The SCPF (Short Course Prevention Factor) is intended to minimize the number of cases where the cumulative errors involved in measuring a course by the calibrated bicycle wheel method lead to a course shorter than the intended distance when verified by an independent validation measurement. The usual reason for such a validation measurement is to check whether a record time run over the course is indeed to be allowed as a record. It is clear from a number of studies that have appeared in MN that the SCPF is indeed succeeding rather well in this function, with a rather small percentage of cases where the validation measurement has come up short since the introduction of the factor several years ago. Unfortunately, there is another goal that is implicitly being striven for in our course measurements which is not addressed by the SCPF. This is the attempt to establish relative accuracy and meaningfulness between records set on different courses. Because the SCPF has reduced dramatically the number of short courses, I believe it has deflected attention from the "problem" of long courses.

It may not be immediately apparent to everyone that there *is* a problem with having some courses that are marginally too long. The cause for concern is perhaps most clearly illustrated by a pair of hypothetical examples. Let us first consider a 1995 marathon which has just been won by the conservative British competitor Vic Tory in the outstanding time of 2:05:00, setting a new world record. Mr. Tory, the organizers of the event, and the original certifier and measurer all breathe a deep sigh of relief a few weeks later when the validation team comes in and determines that although the original measurement was a little bit short, the SCPF pushed the actual course length up to two meters over a marathon distance, and the record stands. Two months later Yan Ki, a second-generation American, runs a time of 2:05:02 in a highly publicized event with some big bonuses for setting new world, American, or course records. Again there is much agony in the next couple of weeks until the validation measurement is made, but this time there is no problem at all—the original measurement was actually about .001 times too long even before the SCPF was applied, so the new American record is easily allowed. Mr. Ki can receive his \$3,000 and new Chevy, the race gets good publicity, and everyone is happy. Right? Wrong!! Mr. Ki is an aggressive young engineer quite capable of doing his arithmetic, and realizes that if he had run over a course the same length as that on which Mr. Tory had set his record, he would have required .2% less time (15 seconds). Instead of having an American record, \$3,000, and a Chevy, he could have had a world record (by 13 seconds), \$10,000, and a Porsche. He is understandably annoyed. By the time that the running magazines have picked up on the story and have widely publicized the fact that the relevant race course is too long, thoroughly discouraging attendance by top name competitors for next year's event, the race organizers are no longer quite so content. And Mr. Tory, being culturally endowed with that British sense of fair play, is also feeling depressed about the whole situation.

Fortunately, a race promoter sees a way to resolve the issue (there's always someone out there who can see how to make a quick buck). He invites the two runners to a head-to-head confrontation with all expenses paid, good television coverage, and a few other good competitors from around the world. Eight months later the big event takes place, and there is indeed a spectacular battle between Mr. Ki and Mr. Tory, and as predicted by the

actual winning speeds on the previous two races Mr. Ki comes out narrowly in front with a new personal best time of 2:04:30, actually a little faster than the previous race. It's not a new provisional world record, however, because Mr. Don Under, the incredibly talented young Australian, managed to win the race rather cleanly with an almost unbelievable 2:03:00 performance. This time, sadly, the SCPF doesn't quite come through. Through a statistical fluke, the perfectly competent measurement of the course was just a hair more than .001 short, so even with the SCPF the validation measurement shows that the course is 5 meters short. Although at the torrid pace set by these fine athletes, this distance represents well less than 1 second of additional time, the course is too short, the new record attempt is not upheld, and Mr. Tory retains (much to his personal shame and embarrassment) his world champion status.

These hypothetical scenarios have been picked to illustrate almost-but-not-quite worst case situations. The marathon is the longest road race for which there is substantial comparison of results from different courses, and the fifteen second variation between the two courses involves one course being a bit over one standard deviation shorter than an average measurement, while the other is a corresponding amount longer. Although this is only twice the relative error that is represented by, say, .01 second in a 100 meter dash, the highest precision with which records are kept for this distance, it is much more perceptible to people in absolute terms. It would seem that since at the present time we don't measure our road race courses to an accuracy better than $\pm 0.1\%$, it would really make sense to keep track of record times on a marathon course only to the nearest 15 seconds, and for purposes of establishing world, national, club, agegroup, etc. records, consider equivalent any two times within 15 seconds of one another. This is, of course, likely to seem unreasonable to many people, particularly in cases where two people have a closely contested finish in the same race. Nonetheless, particularly in view of the even more substantial and less-well-controlled other variables affecting performance, such as wind, elevation changes, and course steepness, to mention a few of the conditions most extensively discussed in recent issues of MN, it would probably be the most honest approach to take with the current level of sophistication in measurement. Naturally, the effects are much smaller on shorter courses such as a 5K or 10K race, where errors might get down to the one second level with just a bit of refinement of the reproducibility of the current methods—a level which might be hoped for from course validators, for example, if not from average measurers.

A more satisfactory situation might arise if one had a truly accurate method for course validation. As major records arise only rather rarely, it would not be unreasonable to go to considerably greater effort and expense to validate accurately the length of a course on which a world or national record had been set at a standard distance. Of course, since there would presumably still be a spread of distances of up to $\pm 0.1\%$ in these courses being measured prior to validation, something *additional* would have to be done to make a really useful intercomparison of times from different courses. The solution which seems most reasonable to me would be to simply adjust the time run by a linear correction to the correct distance—e.g. if the course were 1.0004 times the correct length, divide the time by 1.0004. In the hypothetical examples given, even more serious than the incorrect relative placements of Mr. Ki and Mr. Tory is the total disregarding of the

significantly better performance of Mr. Under because of an *insignificantly* small shortfall in the course measurement of the last course which we postulated. As the SCPF is not large enough to completely eliminate all cases of measurement error, it is possible with the present system to completely reject records which by most reasonable standards really should be recognized. If the permissible region of variation from the correct distance of the course were set to be about 3 standard deviations from the nominal distance of the course in order to have such a correction made, 99% of the time the corrections could be handled appropriately without having the athlete penalized for the uncertainties of a straightforward measurement technique. Even if the extreme political complications of modifying record-keeping methods to allow the post-race adjustments of times could be overcome, of course, it still might not be economically feasible to measure a racecourse with sufficient accuracy, even at the rate of two or three a year. If price were no object, the goal is clearly obtainable-- surveying closure was achieved to within about a millimeter on the 30km circumference of the LEP high-energy accelerator. In the case of LEP, of course the path to be measured was better defined. Nonetheless, particularly if the custom of painted guide lines for the defined best course were to become standard on all major races, it is probable that measurement accuracies of somewhat better than a part in 10,000 could be achieved for budgets much more modest than the multi-million dollar accelerator scale.

In summary, my feeling is that a major failing of the SCPF is that it really does nothing to address the issue that there is an uncertainty on the order of a tenth of a percent in the length of each and every course which we measure with the usual bicycle wheel method. Occasionally this results in the complete dismissal of a performance from consideration for a record, even though from the validation measurement it is clear that a record *pace* was run for *essentially* the correct distance. For every too-short course which is boosted up to the proper length, a correct length course is made too long, to the detriment of the apparent performances of runners on it. Better than the SCPF, which effectively just redefines the meter to be a bit longer than it is when used for measuring anything but a road running course, would be simply to put error bars on records. A still better approach (if technically and economically feasible) would be to adopt a higher accuracy validation technique to use on the occasions when major records are challenged, and to correct the *times* to reflect any small error in the initial course measurement.

Yours sincerely,



Eric Smith

275 Main Street Ext.
Freeville, N.Y. 13068
home-(607) 347-4844
office-(607) 255-7649

March 14, 1991

THE ATHLETICS CONGRESS
OF THE USA

3354 Kirkham Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Road Running Technical Committee
Peter S. Riegel, Chairman

614-451-5617 (home)
614-424-4009 (office)
FAX 614-424-5263

March 20, 1991

Eric Smith - 275 Main Street Ext. - Freeville, NY 13068

Dear Eric,

I enjoyed your "What the SCPF Does and Doesn't Do" (especially the names of the competitors), and I'll put it in next MN.

I couldn't help but think of the 1981 Salazar run at New York as I read it. We had there a perfect example of a fine run that clearly was, in essence, the fastest marathon ever run, yet it did not meet the requirements for a record, since the course was a small amount short.

Another example that came to mind was Steve Jones' Chicago run, at which he missed the world best run by Carlos Lopes by one second. Remeasurements of both courses indicated that while both courses were OK, the Chicago course measured out 30 meters or so longer than did the Rotterdam course. This left Jones with the faster run, but Lopes retaining "world best" status. This presumes, of course, that the remeasurements were absolutely accurate, which is not the case. I doubt there was a statistical difference between them.

A record is thought of as the fastest time ever run on a standard course, a standard course being one that is equal or greater in length than the nominal distance, and not aided by wind or slope. Although we know that all courses are not equal in length, we must make that assumption for record purposes, in order to keep the process reasonably simple. We go on to assume absolute accuracy in the timing as well, after employing the "rounding up" procedure (which, considering measurement error, does not contribute materially to accuracy).

The above philosophy has been used for a long time in keeping track records. Tracks are not all the same length, although they do cluster very closely to a length of 400 meters.

Adjustments of times to account for variations in course length is not a new idea, but you have addressed it well. There's nothing basically wrong with the idea, but if it was to be used in the real world some adjustment in our thinking would be required. It does have a few drawbacks. If used, nobody would have a clear idea, as the competitors toe the line, of the time they must run on the course if it's a record they seek, since any time they run will be adjusted according to how the course remeasures. The concept of adjustment is not nearly as simple as the present one, and would not be easily understood by the fans, or even by the athletes.

The idea of seeking a more accurate method for validating course length does not address the problem of defining the course itself. We presently use the judgment of the measurer on his bike as to what the shortest path is. If we

went to higher-order measurement techniques, we'd find that even a simple corner with a broken curb would pose problems of defining exactly where the measured line should be.

With our present method of measuring, we are already at an accuracy level that I doubt can be materially improved. Whatever inaccuracies remain, we must live with, and find a way to use the resulting measurements to create as fair a records structure as possible. What we have today may not be perfect, but it is very good, and it follows a philosophy that has been in use for many decades, and which has been found to be generally satisfactory.

It's the exceptions that point out the flaws, often obscuring the general acceptability of the present concept. The Salazar run was clearly a world-record caliber effort, except that the course fell outside the limits by an amount felt by many to be inconsequential. How could a records system be set up to account for such exceptions? If we were prepared to accept a record set on a course that was 150 meters short, would we next be prepared to accept one that was 300 meters short? It's a tough question, and we have answered it with the record concept in use today. There's no doubt that it's tough luck for the athlete who runs his heart out on a short course.

The Boston controversy is another example of the conflict between fair standards and undeniable excellence. The general excellence of the field at Boston has produced times of high quality, in spite of the course being a downhill one.

For a records system to be manageable, it has to have some reasonably simple rules, and hold to them. Several excellent track marks have been disallowed on what could be called technicalities, yet no uproar has been heard, because the track fans have come to accept that the rules protect the overall integrity of the sport. Many road runners have not yet reached that acceptance.

It would be very hard to operate a records system on an individual case-by-case basis. If it was done that way, the 1981 Salazar NYC run would almost certainly have been accepted as the record, since it was so clearly excellent. However, this would leave the determination of what was a record in an ill-defined limbo, amounting to little more than taking a popularity poll.

A record is the fastest time run on a standard course, no more, no less. It is not necessarily the fastest run ever, nor the best. However, over the long haul, records do reflect as accurate a picture of excellence as we know how to produce.

Getting back to the SCPF, I don't believe that it "fails" to address the issues you discussed. It was never intended to address those issues. In its selected purpose it has succeeded very well. We now have very few short courses, and that was the sole intent of the SCPF. Using the same standard, we could just as well say that you and I have "failed" to solve the problem of establishing world peace.

Best regards,





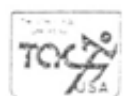
COLUMBUS MARATHON



THE 1990 U.S. MEN'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

185.5

11TH ANNUAL, NOV. 11, 1990



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DO NOT PIN



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43221

TEAM OF AFFILIATION

PLACE

TIME

No 185.5

RAINBOW RACE GROUP
AGE GROUP
COLOR
CODE

185.5

This "honorary" race number was a framed gift from the Columbus Marathon. Note the decimal point.

On the back, Donny Roush, former Editor of Ohio Runner, wrote:

"May the wind never be at your back!"

3717 Wildwood Drive
Endwell, NY 13760
April 7, 1991

Dear Pete,

Well, I finally figured out the contest in the March Measurement News to find which certifier initials are not unique but it wasn't easy. I have the course list on my computer so I thought if I sorted by certifier initial and year, I'd see an initial used in the early days (circa 1983) and see it used again in recent times. Nothing popped out at me. So I requested the up-to-date list from you to get the 1990 and 1991 certifications. It didn't help. However, I thought that my list of certifications by certifier by year would be interesting to put in MN so I filled in as many names as I could using a current MN. Then I went back to an old MN and filled in more names. It was then that the answer popped out at me. I saw Basil Honikman and Benjamin Hablutzel on the same list (May 1987). I went back to the computerized course list and found all certifications with code "BH" were for Florida except for one and it was in Alaska. I thought that Basil might have certified a course in Alaska but I then noticed that Benjamin was the Alaska certifier at the time so this must be the non-unique code.

Following is the list with the names I could fill in. I guessed at some names by looking for a measurer who had the same initials as the certifier and assumed they were the same person. Unfortunately, I have discarded all my old newsletters from the National Running Data Center. Maybe you'd like to fill in the blanks and the first names of those for which I have only initials.

ED. NOTE: BOB BAUMEL WAS FIRST WITH THE ANSWER, BUT ALAN PRODUCED THIS, SO I DECLARE HIM THE WINNER. SEND PROTESTS TO ME. *Pete*

Sincerely,



Alan Jones

Certifier	CODE	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
=====	====	===	===	===	===	===	===	===	===	===	===
A. C. Linnerud	ACL	1	22	40	87	72	75	54	54	64	1
Amy Morss	AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	31	1
Al Phillips	AP	0	16	23	47	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allan Steinfeld	AS	0	4	47	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
Bob Baumel	BB	0	34	71	81	73	66	60	55	52	8
Bill Callanan	BC	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1
Bill Glauz	BG	0	0	0	14	37	20	31	28	28	0
Basil Honikman	BH	0	0	3	27	40	44	39	54	22	0
Benjamin Hablutzel	BH	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Bill Noel	BN	0	0	0	14	7	3	7	3	1	0
Brian Smith	BS	0	0	0	0	19	43	34	31	49	1
Bob Teschek	BT	0	0	0	0	25	48	15	6	4	0
Ben Buckner	BU	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Certifier	CODE	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
Charles George	CEG	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carl Jeansonne	CJ	0	2	1	23	7	0	0	0	0	0
Carl Wisser	CW	1	21	41	38	62	23	51	53	29	6
Dan Brannen	DB	0	0	0	0	6	50	71	38	3	0
David Katz	DK	0	1	10	7	2	3	0	2	0	0
Doug Loeffler	DL	0	0	0	0	0	22	18	16	39	5
Don Potter	DLP	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	12	0
Dan Millet	DM	0	5	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dave Poppers	DP	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	23	27	0
David Reik	DR	0	1	9	13	17	18	17	22	15	1
Elizabeth Longton	EL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E.T. McBrayer	ETM	0	0	0	10	26	36	64	71	87	10
Felix Cichocki	FC	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	20	13	0
Finn Hansen	FH	0	0	0	6	6	14	11	6	15	0
Frederic Wilson	FW	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	5	6	0
George Delaney	GD	2	28	28	64	54	0	0	0	0	0
Gordon Dugan	GLD	0	2	6	8	3	0	0	0	0	0
Gregory Nelson	GN	0	1	1	24	15	6	10	12	10	0
George Tuthill	GT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Hal Canfield	HWC	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
John DeHaye	JD	0	0	0	0	6	11	6	23	25	3
Jim Lewis	JL	0	2	24	32	29	33	7	13	0	0
John McGrath	JMC	0	0	13	43	36	0	0	0	0	0
John Sissala	JS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	14	1
Jay Wight	JW	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	50	66	0
Kevin Lucas	KL	0	1	5	22	71	68	32	1	0	0
Karl Ungurean	KU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0
Ken Young	KY	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	6	1
Lee Barrett	LB	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	13	15	0
Len Evens	LE	0	3	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Michael Franke	MF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	7	0
Michael Renner	MR	0	0	0	0	1	19	20	25	18	0
Mike Wickiser	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	21	23	0
Paul Christensen	PC	0	15	35	45	30	1	0	0	0	0
Pete Riegel	PR	1	68	110	153	143	96	85	58	66	8
Patricia Thornton	PT	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robert Edwards	RE	0	0	0	0	0	13	51	56	47	0
Bob Harrison	RH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Robert Letson	RL	4	48	37	61	6	0	0	0	0	0
Rick Recker	RR	0	2	9	27	46	34	12	18	23	0
Ron Scardera	RS	0	2	24	47	50	55	76	68	43	0
Robert Thurston	RT	0	9	41	66	55	61	51	23	18	2
Scott Hubbard	SH	0	0	0	0	22	36	31	18	33	0
Steve Vaitones	SV	0	0	0	0	0	10	6	0	0	0
Tom Benjamin	TB	0	4	22	17	14	2	0	0	1	0
Ted Corbitt	TC	10	185	96	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tom Duranti	TD	1	24	36	52	42	0	0	0	0	0
Thomas Ferguson	TF	0	0	0	1	5	6	6	1	3	0
Tom Knight	TK	0	12	33	32	43	37	29	8	7	1
Bill Grass	WG	0	0	0	0	42	70	20	4	15	0
Bill Hughes	WH	0	0	0	11	0	1	0	0	0	0
Wayne Nicoll	WN	0	4	32	121	122	112	105	115	135	11
Wade Stockman	WS	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0

A Course is a Course (of course)

by Michael Hughes

"Two paths diverged in a yellow wood... I took the road less traveled, and that made all the difference." Robert Frost

Well, there's hardly any doubt that ole Rob was in need of a course monitor or, at least, an arrow pointing the way. The real question is, did he need a certified course? Perhaps, but on the road of life there are no certified courses. So, don't try to get seeded in the Peachtree Road Race based on "Road Of Life" performances. The Peachtree Committee frowns on that sort of levity.

How many times have you asked yourself, "Just what the heck is a Certified Course?" If you're like most folks, probably never, but, for the sake of this article, let's assume that you have. A Certified Course is a course that has been approved as "... at least the advertised distance" by The Athletics Congress (TAC) of the USA. In other words, it's ok if it's too long but not if it's too short. Now that's not usually a problem if you have ethical, conscientious, people doing the work. Luckily, logic is on your side. The type of person who would spend the time and effort to do this type of work would most likely get it right... eventually. So, the likelihood of it winding up too long is fairly slim.

The Regional Certifier for TAC is a very patient man, however, once you submit a course for certification, he will hound you until you get it right. After he sends his initial letters of explanation as to the errors in your calculations, he will start to assume a more caustic tone indicating doubts as to your ancestry as well as asking about childhood head injuries. I speak from experience.

He will see to it that you get it right or that everyone else in the running community knows that you didn't. I managed to get off the hook after 48 letters of explanation by faking a lobotomy.

The rather lengthy and involved process of measuring a course for certification purposes should always begin with a thorough study of TAC Course Measurement Procedures. As absurd as it may seem, this is the part most beginners skip, or, more likely, skim. This will then be followed by an early morning trip to an established TAC Certified Calibration Course.

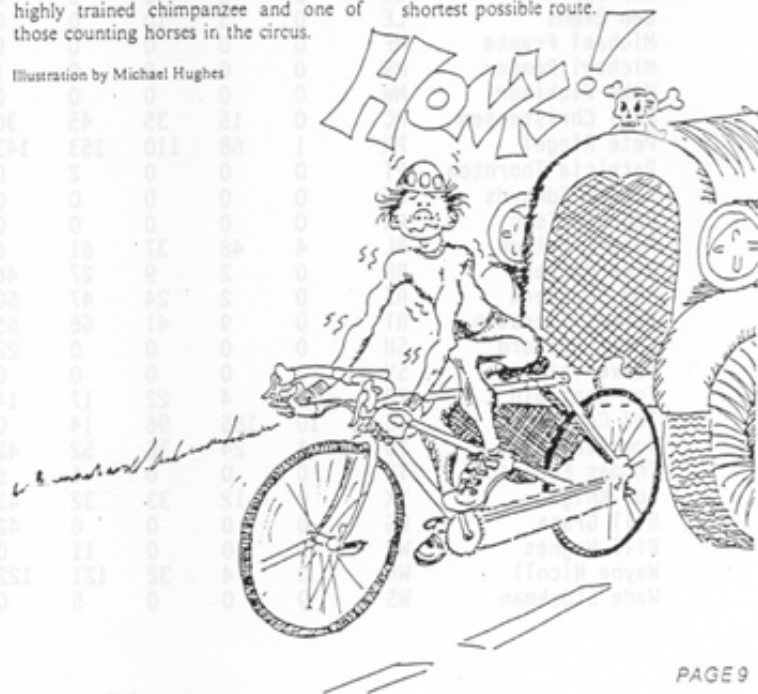
"Just what the heck is a Certified Calibration Course?" you may ask. Well, coincidentally, I anticipated that you would ask that question. A Certified Calibration Course is a straight, paved, level, and preferably, lightly traveled stretch of road at

least 300 meters in length measured with a steel tape to the exacting standards of TAC.

If there is not a calibration course readily available to you, you will have to add that little chore to the road certification process. Should you find this necessary, try to find a location that will be safe and convenient for calibrating a bicycle. Just remember, every time you measure a race course, you'll need to ride the calibration course at least eight times (four before and four after), and you'll want to ride it in both directions. Calibration courses are measured along the edge of a straight road, the same distance from the edge as you would ride your bike. (If there's a chance vehicles may be parked there, you might want to stay far enough away to avoid becoming a hood ornament.)

Your calibration course will be most resistant to obliteration when, inevitably, the road is resurfaced if both endpoints are permanent objects, such as sewers or manholes (Person Access Chambers for those of you from California), etc. In this case, you'll have an odd distance calibration course such as 632.6840321567 meters, which is perfectly acceptable. The choice is yours; however, you may want to reconsider this plan if, like me, your mathematical skills fall somewhere between those of a highly trained chimpanzee and one of those counting horses in the circus.

Illustration by Michael Hughes



Once you've gotten past (or around) the ordeal of using steel tapes to measure things, you will need a device called a Jones Counter. This machine was originally invented to calculate the number of Joneses in a given neighborhood so that incoming families would know how difficult it would be to keep up. It later became obsolete as the number of Joneses became too large to calculate in a human lifetime.

These machines may be obtained from the New York Road Runners at a cost of about thirty bucks.

When you have obtained and installed said device on your soon to be worthless bike, you are now ready for the adventure of your life. Other forms of amusement will pale by comparison as you whisk across several lanes of traffic, with horns blaring and fingers waving, or explain to the police officer why you feel compelled to apply graffiti to public property.

Your measurement of the proposed course must take the shortest possible route a runner could take. That means that unless you are sure that runners can't go that way during the event, you must measure the course accordingly. The placement of cones, monitors, buildings, attack dogs, and swat teams will have to be documented in your application for certification as reasons for not following the shortest possible route.

Following the shortest possible route will require that you ride the course tangentially. That means cutting across the lanes to the inside of the curves, a tactic sure to delight motorists and insurance adjusters. Because you will be taking what will seem to others to be a somewhat illogical path, you may be forced to explain yourself. Simply say that you are doing an official measurement of a course for certification purposes. Judges are usually compassionate people especially if you've been seriously injured for your indiscretions, and you'll probably only have to pay a small fine.

Ideally, you should have someone "shadow" you in a vehicle. Although they are unlikely to be willing to ride the course following the tangent, there will, at least, be someone available to notify next of kin and remove your unsightly remains.

Once you are assured that you have measured the course according to TAC rules of procedure, you will then be obliged to begin transcribing all the data you have accrued from your measurements. You will need to provide practically every detail of information you can imagine connected with the process.

Weather conditions, time of day for each occurrence, topographic info, bicycle info, distances in feet and inches of mile marks from permanent landmarks, number of clicks on the counter at each interval, percentage of error, and the exact date, time, and place you last lusted in your heart are all things to be documented. You may, however, wish to keep that last bit of information in a safe place...like, maybe, an underground vault.

The course map is the most important piece of documentation of the course. Its purpose is to provide, ideally on a single piece of paper, all the information a race director needs to administer the race using the course as certified. This documentation is of great value in case a record is set on the course and a "validation" measurement is needed.

Your map must include descriptions of the exact locations of the start, finish, and any turn-around points. This is done by giving precise, tape measured, distances from nearby permanent landmarks. If you have a philosophical bent, you may argue that nothing is permanent, so you may wish to evaluate permanence in relation to your lifespan. If it will last longer than you, it's permanent. If you're over 40 you are allowed to consider all objects on the course permanent.

When asked to identify the type of course on your filing for certification, you will need to place it within the following categories:

1.) A loop course follows a path that eventually closes on itself with the runner headed in the same direction as he/she was at the start of the loop.

2.) An out and back course follows a path out to a turn-around point where the runner is required to reverse direction and come back on the same roadway. The runner will finish in the opposite direction of the start.

3.) A point to point course is defined as any course whose straight line distance between start and finish is greater than 30% of the overall race distance or any course whose net decline averages more than one meter per kilometer.

For creative marketing, you may wish to expand the possibilities with some additional course types of your own.

4.) A back to back course starts as a loop, becomes an out and back, and finishes as a point to point. Although extremely difficult to measure, it will most certainly produce many record performances.

5.) A back to front course is a point to point course which starts at the finish line and runs in reverse. Negative splits are given and the runner's time is calculated using the formula $E = Mc(2x4)$.

If you are a competitive runner or a race director, you may want to consider measuring a course for the purpose of certification. At the very least, it will give you a deeper appreciation for those who work so hard to provide us with accurate courses, thus assuring accurate times. We tend to take these things for granted when we don't have to involve ourselves in the tedium of ensuring their existence, though we all benefit from the legitimacy they give to our sport.

I always feel better about entering a race when the application states that the course is certified. I figure that if they care enough to certify the course, they will care enough to cover all the other details that make a race great. That way I can look forward to an event without expecting to take "The Road Less Traveled" because, in a race, that just means you went the wrong way.



Dear Pete,

9 March 1991

It's spring break and I finally have a little time. Enclosed is the revised certificate for AZ-91001-KY. The original course and finish were already certified as AZ-88003-KY and I figured you could just add this as a new course. In retrospect, this is better since it simply replaces AZ-88003-KY with a single certificate that covers both finishes. I apologize for the glitch in my thinking.

I read your article on your experience with the "downhill" effect. I suspect that no matter how much physical theory Bob Baumel puts into his analysis, non-scientists will still argue that it does not correctly model the "real" world. However, when we can show statistically that runners will run "x" minutes faster at Boston than at Columbus (for example), it is much more convincing.

When I did the St George vs Fiesta Bowl comparison, I considered factors of recovery time inbetween races (2 months), likelihood of finding enough runners who ran both races in the same year (80 some runners as I recollect), and no complicating weather factors such as tail winds or unusually hot temperatures. The weather out here is so reliable that we take nearly ideal running conditions for granted.

In the east, even finding a year in which both Boston and a standard course marathon to compare to would have comparable weather conditions is not easy. Perhaps one approach would be to look at a selection of standard course marathons and lump them together into a single category. In that way, one might find a half dozen or so runners from each of ten races in a given year and over three years, one would have 150 to 200 comparisons.

Then the Boston people will argue that the crowds make the runners run faster. I suppose one could compare New York vs Boston times. I suspect that no matter what we do, the Boston people will come up with some bogus reason why runners run faster times there.

During 1971-1977, I was at my "peak" condition for running flat marathons. I ran 20 "marathons" during this period as follows:

2:25:41	Boston	15 Apr 1974	downhill
2:27:32	Fiesta Bowl	11 Dec 1976	downhill
2:29:01	Fiesta Bowl	21 Dec 1974	downhill
2:29:04	North Central	1 Dec 1973	uncertified
2:29:28	Fiesta Bowl	23 Dec 1972	downhill
2:31:07	Fiesta Bowl	20 Dec 1975	downhill
2:31:08	White Rock	3 Dec 1977	cert- STANDARD
2:32:05	North Central	2 Dec 1972	uncertified
2:34:25	Admission's Day	9 Feb 1974	uncertified
2:35:11	Admission's Day	14 Feb 1976	uncertified
-10-			
2:35:41	Admission's Day	12 Feb 1977	uncertified
2:35:50	Boston	17 Apr 1972	downhill
2:35:52	Indoor Track	6 Feb 1972	track- STANDARD
2:36:24	Fiesta Bowl	27 Dec 1971	downhill
2:36:55	Boston	21 Apr 1975	downhill
2:37:20	North Central	4 Dec 1971	uncertified
2:37:44	Boston	19 Apr 1976	downhill (100°F at start)
2:40:51	Freedom	4 Jul 1971	cert- STANDARD
2:41:30	Indoor Track	28 Jan 1973	track- STANDARD
2:45:53	Motor City	17 Oct 1971	cert- STANDARD

-20-

Note my PR is at Boston and my six fastest times are either downhill courses or uncertified. Now delete the "marathons" on uncertified courses, leaving 14 marathons. The "standard" marathons are ranked #6, #8, #12, #13, and #14. The average rank is 10.6 whereas the expected average rank is 7.5 $\{ (N+1)/2 \}$, where $N = 14$. The standard deviation of the expected rank is $\text{SQRT}\{ (N+1)(N-n)/12n \} = 1.5$, where $n = 5$. The test statistic is 2.07 which for a two-tailed test gives a P-value of 3.8%. Even with my small sample, I can reject the (null) hypothesis that downhill courses (including Boston) do not convey a time advantage. Note that my "best" performance did come at Boston altho I should consider it more like a 2:27:15 than a 2:25:41 (altho 2:25 sure sounds better).

If we had a dozen or so series of times such as this, the P-value would probably drop well below 1%. With "anecdotal" evidence such as this, the layperson would be more easily convinced. Note that there was no "crowd effect" at Fiesta Bowl, helping me run fast times there! Imagine running solo between mile 10 and mile 20 on a straight road with an aid station at 15 miles and no other indication of human life besides the pavement and telephone poles.

Tomorrow (March 10th) is the Esperero Canyon race. That was the course I took you on many years back. We continue to scatter runners all over the wilderness. Last year I ran the course backwards (for the first time) and got lost for an hour.

Best wishes,



(KEN YOUNG)

International Courses on File with Pete Riegel

All courses on this list have been measured using IAAF, AIMS & TAC standards

Courses submitted through AIMS and IAAF:

Dist	Code Y M D	City	Race Name	m/km Drop	pct Sep	Measurer
Mar	ARG 861011	Buenos Aires	Buenos Aires Marathon	0.0	0	Eichler
Mar	AUS 851125	Melbourne	Melbourne Marathon	?	0	Schneider
Mar	AUS 880109	Brisbane	Brisbane - Sunny Queen	0.0	78	Cundy
14km	AUS 880306	Sydney	City to Surf	?	50	Paulin
Mar	AUT 890402	Vienna	Vienna Marathon	?	?	Ibert
Mar	BEL 880515	Brussels	Brussels Marathon	0.0	0	Wenz
Mar	BRA 860523	Sao Paulo	Sao Paulo Marathon	0.0	0	Riegel
Mar	BRA 870702	Rio deJaneiro	Maratona da Cidade	0.0	0	Galloway
15km	BRA 890129	Rio deJaneiro	IAAF Women's 15 km	0.0	0	Riegel
Mar	CUB 901117	Havana	Havana Marathon	0	0	Loeffler
HMar	CUB 901117	Havana	Havana Half Marathon	0	0	Loeffler
Mar	ESP 880206	Barcelona	Barcelona Marathon	0.1	1	Schneider
Mar	ESP 880729	Valencia	Valencia Marathon	0.1	1	Schneider
Mar	ESP 890312	Barcelona	Barcelona Marathon	0.0	0	Schneider
Mar	ESP 890812	Valencia	Valencia Marathon	0.0	1	Vancells
Mar	ESP 891216	Barcelona	Intl Ekiden for Women	-1.2	5	Schneider
Mar	ESP 900205	Seville	Seville Marathon	0.0	1	Vancells
Mar	ESP 900303	Barcelona	Marathon Catalunya	-0.9	83	Bleul
Mar	ESP 900616	Valencia	Valencia Marathon	0.0	0	Vancells
Mar	ESP 900825	La Santa	Lanzarote Mar & HMar	0.0	0	Hodgson
Mar	ESP 901202	Magaluf	Costa de Calvia	0.0	1	Schneider
Mar	ESP 910119	Seville	Seville Marathon	0.1	1	Hodgson
Mar	FIN 851102	Helsinki	Helsinki Marathon	?	1	Bresky
Mar	FRA 890225	Les Herbiers	Les Herbieres (UCLA) Mar	0.1	1	Vancells
Mar	FRA 890409	Paris	XIV Paris Marathon	-0.8	24	Vancells
25km	FRG 870426	Berlin	25 Km de Berlin	0.2	2	Ibert
Mar	FRG 871003	Berlin	Berlin Marathon	-0.0	7	Disley
Mar	FRG 880410	Munich	Munich Marathon	0.4	1	Pirrung
Mar	FRG 880424	Hamburg	Hamburg Marathon	?	0	Ibert
Mar	FRG 880918	Frankfurt	Frankfurt Marathon	0.0	1	Schneider
Mar	FRG 890319	Paderborn	Paderborner Osterlauf25k	-0.0	0	Wenz
Mar	FRG 890402	Munich	Munich Marathon	0.4	1	Damm
25km	FRG 900429	Berlin	25 Km de Berlin	?	2	Ibert
Mar	FRG 900604	Berlin	Berlin Marathon	0.0	0	Ibert
Mar	FRG 900923	Berlin	Berlin Marathon	0.0	3	Riegel
Mar	FRG 900930	Frankfurt	Frankfurt Marathon	0.0	2	Damm
HMar	GBR 880326	Glasgow	Glasgow 1/2 Marathon	0.0	1	Disley
Mar	GBR 870503	London	Mars London Marathon	0.8	24	Riegel
Mar	GBR 880410	London	Mars London Marathon	0.7	23	Riegel
Mar	GBR 890416	London	ADT London Marathon	0.7	23	Riegel
Mar	GBR 900415	London	ADT London Marathon	0.7	23	Riegel
Mar	GBR 910224	London	ADT/IAAF World Cup Mar	0.7	23	Riegel
HMar	GBR 900909	Newcastle	Great North Run	1.4	85	Hodgson
Mar	HOL 851013	Rotterdam	Rotterdam Marathon 1985	0.0	2	Julin
Mar	HOL 900218	Rotterdam	Rotterdam Marathon	?	?	Ibert

Mar	HUN	880415	Budapest	Budapest Marathon	?	?	Damm
15km	IRL	900920	Dublin	IAAF Women's 15 km	0.0	0	Hodgson
Mar	ISL	880000	Reykjavik	Reykjavik Marathon	?	?	?
Mar	ITA	880424	Rome	Romaraton	0.0	0	Vancells
Mar	ITA	890402	Milan	III IAAF World Mar Cup	0.0	0	Hodgson
Mar	ITA	900513	Rome	Romacapitale	0.1	4	Hodgson
Mar	ITA	900929	Carpi	Italian Intl Marathon	0.0	1	Hodgson
Mar	JPN	881120	Tokyo	Tokyo Mar	?	0	Disley
Mar	JPN	881204	Fukuoka	Fukuoka Mar	0.0	0	Disley
Mar	JPN	890129	Osaka	Osaka Women's Mar	?	0	Disley
Mar	JPN	890205	Beppu	Beppu - Oita Mar	?	?	Disley
Mar	JPN	890305	Nagoya	Nagoya Women's Mar	0.0	0	Galloway
Mar	JPN	890307		Lake Kawaguchiko Mar	?	?	Galloway
Mar	JPN	890312		Mainichi Biwako Mar	0.0	0	Galloway
Mar	MAC	900702	Macau	Macau Intl Marathon	0.0	1	Galloway
Mar	MAL	880414	Penang	Penang Marathon	0.0	2	Paulin
Mar	MEX	890924	Mexico City	Mexico City Marathon	0.0	0	Loeffler
Mar	OMN	900124	Muscat	Muscat Marathon	0.6	71	Hodgson
Mar	POL	900610	Debno	Debno Marathon	0.0	0	Ibert
Mar	POR	880611	Lisbon	Lisbon Marathon	0.0	0	Vancells
10mi	SUI	891112	Bern	Grand Prix von Bern	-0.0	2	Schneider
Mar	TCH	900908	Kosice	Kosice Peace Marathon	0.0	2	Damm
Mar	THA	891125	Bangkok	Bangkok Intl Marathon	?	0	Galloway
HMar	TUR	870425	Istanbul	Golden Horn 1/2 Marathon	0.0	9	Selby
Mar	URS	900727	Moscow	Moscow Intl Peace Mar	0.0	2	Bresky
Mar	USA	841208	Long Beach	Long Beach Marathon	0.0	1	Scardera
Mar	USA	850623	New York	New York City Marathon	0.1	47	Disley
Mar	USA	870912	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Marathon	0.6	1	Scardera
Mar	USA	871003	San Diego	San Diego Marathon	1.9	20	Letson
Mar	USA	880910	Chicago	Chicago Marathon	0.0	12	Riegel
Mar	YUG	900417	Belgrade	Belgrade Marathon	0.2	2	Bendy

Courses submitted through TAC:

05km	BAH	90001DL	Freeport	Grand Prix 5k	0	1	Loeffler
05km	BAH	89001DL	Freeport	Bahama Princess 5k	0	1	Loeffler
05km	BAH	89002DL	Freeport	Lucayan Beach 5k	0	2	Loeffler
01mi	BER	89036RT	Hamilton	Bank of Butterfield Mile	0.6	2	Thurston
10k	BER	89035RT	Hamilton	Bermuda 10k	-0.1	2	Thurston
Mar	BER	89034RT	Hamilton	Bermuda Marathon	0.2	1	Thurston
05km	CAN	87065PR	St Jacobs	ONT Patenaude's Choice	0	0	Conway
05km	CAN	83029BB	London	ONT Springbank	0	0	Conway
100km	CAN	87065PR	St Jacobs	ONT Patenaude's Choice	0	0	Conway
10km	CAN	90052PR	Chatham	ONT PGH Pacesetters	0	1	Conway
10km	CAN	90047PR	Guelph,	ONT Guelph Charity Challenge	0	0	Conway
12km	CAN	90051PR	St Thomas	ONT Calipso Days Road Race	4.4	90	Conway
41+km	CAN	85092PR	Nanisivik	NWT Midnight Sun (41900 m)	-6.8	48	Riegel
50km	CAN	87065PR	St Jacobs	ONT Patenaude's Choice	0	0	Conway
50mi	CAN	87065PR	St Jacobs	ONT Patenaude's Choice	0	0	Conway
Mar	CAN	86123PR	Montreal	QUE Montreal Int Marathon	-0.1	6	Duguay
HMar	GUA	89001DL	Coban	Medio Maraton Intn'l Coban	0	1	Noack
10km	INA	89021RT	Jakarta	Proklamaton 10k	0	2	Thurston
10km	INA	89028RT	Java	Palbapang-Borobudur	6	72	Thurston

10km	INA	89027RT	Java	Blondo-Borobudur	4.7	72	Thurston
10km	INA	89025RT	Yogyakarta	Yogya Kembali 10k	0	0	Thurston
10km	INA	89024RT	Yogyakarta	Ring Road 10	-3.2	80	Thurston
Mar	INA	86035RT	Djakarta	Proklamaton IX	0	0	Thurston
10km	MEX	87033KL	Monterrey	Correcaminos (Mexico)	0.1	2	Lucas
HMar	MEX	87004KL	Monterrey	Nova de Monterrey	3.6	57	Lucas
Mar	MEX	87003KL	Monterrey	Nova de Monterrey	0	0	Lucas
HMar	MEX	88002DL	Monterrey	Novo Half Marathon	0.5	80	Loeffler
Mar	MEX	88001DL	Monterrey	Novo Marathon	0	0	Loeffler
50+mi	PAN	86110PR	Colon	Ultramar Adidas de Panama	0	70	Steele

Note the difference in code. IAAF/AIMS courses are coded by date of measurement, while TAC courses have a code which includes year of measurement and initials of the certifier who reviewed the data.

AIMS Courses submitted through TAC as USA Domestic Courses

Mar	CA	88013	RS	Los Angeles	1988 City of LA Marathon	0.4	1	Scardera
Mar	CA	86005	RS	Los Angeles	City of Los Angeles			Letson
Mar	CA	87004	RS	Los Angeles	City of Los Angeles Mar	0.1	1	Scardera
Mar	IL	86001	WN	Chicago	America's Marathon			Bernhardt
Mar	IL	88073	PR	Chicago	The Old Style Marathon	0	12	Riegel
Mar	IL	89038	JW	Chicago	Old Style Marathon/Chicago	0	12	Wight
Mar	IL	90053	JW	Chicago	Old Style Chicago Marathon-0.1	0.1	4	Wight
Mar	MA	89002	WN	Boston	Boston Marathon	3.5	91	Nicoll

Tel No: 091 4153379 (Home)
091 4557911 ext 201 (Work)
091 4271880 (Fax)
091 4150796 (Fax)

29. Rookhope,
Rickleton,
Washington,
Tyne & Wear,
NE38 9HW
ENGLAND,
5th. April 1991

Dear Pete.

Just received your correspondence today regarding the Mizuno 5 Mile Classic (Dublin), and decided it warranted an urgent reply.

I was a little unhappy to read in the athletics press that the IAAF 15k had been measured using a surveyors wheel, while those in the road running fraternity who really matter know differently. It seems that the trials and tribulations of my trip to the "Emerald Isle" were a waste of time, but that does not surprise me.

Included are a letter I sent to John Disley, and a response he sent to "Athletics Weekly" which was claiming that a new world best had been set. I think you will find these self-explanatory.

Whilst I am certain the inaccuracy of the measuring wheel will have rendered the course short. The non adherence to the Shortest Possible Route is another source of error, but I will stick to my initial assessment that the course was probably 61m short.

There has been a great deal of debate locally, that course measurers are riding routes that if the runners were to follow them, they would put themselves in grave danger from road traffic. It is mainly the smaller road races that come into this category, where there is little or no traffic control and police presence is minimal.

Finally, I include some press cuttings from the Langbaugh Marathon. Max Coleby was the Course Director, and he and I measured the course simultaneously on a bitterly cold Sunday morning. We both used different calibration baselines, but the results were amazing, being only the diameter of a bicycle wheel at the finish.

I reckoned that we had been incredibly lucky, but Max has more faith in the system claiming that it's what to expect from two experienced measurers.

Kindest Regards,



Paul Hodgson
AIMS / IAAF Approved

Tel No: 091 4153379
Fax No: 091 4371880

29, Rookhope,
Rickleton,
Washington,
Tyne & Wear,
NE38 9HW

14th. March 1991

Dear John.

I have read with interest this last week, the claim that a new world best for five miles had been set by Eamonn Martin on the Walkinstown "5", Dublin. Various accounts I have read have expressed doubts about the accuracy of the course. However in "AW" it was stated :-

...."the authenticity was verified by Tom McCormack, who had marked out the course for the world 15k last October with the same wheel."

As you know I checked out the IAAF World Championship 15k Course, and the circuit of 4.200m measured by Mr McCormacks wheel was actually 4167.95m. This would equate to an error of -61m over a course of 5 miles, adding some 10 seconds to Martins time. There is no doubt that Eamonn Martin has had a scintillating run, but under the circumstances I feel that it should not be classed as a world best.

In fact if I were in his shoes I would feel as if I had been cheated. The organisers of what was obviously a prestigious event should have at least gone to the trouble of having the course measured to IAAF standards.

Yours sincerely



Paul A. Hodgson
AIMS / IAAF Course Measurer.

Copy:

Paul Hodgson

John I Disley CBF
Hampton House
Upper Sunbury Road
Hampton
Middlesex TW12 2DW

Tel: 081 979 1707
Fax: 081 941 1867

The Editor,
Athletics Weekly,

16th March 1991

Re: Eamonn Martin's 5 mile in the Walkinstown "5"

Can I as the IAAF Measurement of road courses co-ordinator point out that Eamonn's fine run cannot be illegible for any kind of record until the course is properly checked out.

Tom McCormack isn't an accredited IAAF Measurer and hasn't been on any measurement seminar held in Europe that I know about.

The Dublin 15k IAAF Course was, in fact, certificated by Paul Hodgson who is an IAAF Measurer. For your information he had to adjust McCormack's course by a considerable distance to make it the right length.

If McCormack had the same error factor in his 5 mile course it would mean that it was 61 metres short. Say 10 seconds at Eamonn's speed.

Until the course is certificated by an IAAF measurer this course remains suspect and cannot be accepted as a best performance or record. As far as I am aware the Irish race organisers have made no move to ask for an IAAF measurer to check the course.

Of course, I feel very sorry for Eamonn Martin - a man of that quality should expect to have any course he runs on certificated before he runs a fast time.

Yours sincerely,

John Disley

Paul Hodgson

The long and short of it

As I was responsible for measuring the Diet Coke Great London Run, I feel I must comment on the race report in the December issue of RUNNING Magazine.

I agree that the mile points were inaccurate - not surprising as they were never measured! I was asked for, and provided, kilometre points.

I can only assume that the mile positions were based on the speedometer of the van delivering the actual marker boards.

As to the course itself, I measured it twice with almost no variation. Given that the calibration standard I used was set out for the London Marathon by qualified surveyors using an electronic distance meter, I feel confident about the

accuracy of the length of the course itself.

However, it was measured on the understanding that the roads would be free of traffic and that the runners would be able to take the shortest possible line.

Unfortunately, there were cars on the road and at the sinuous S-bends, towards the end of the course, the runners I saw were keeping well to the left-hand side of the road rather than taking a straight line from apex to apex of the bends. If that happened all around the course then, yes, some runners ran a long course.

The process of course measuring is technically very simple, indeed the equipment is almost crude, but the results are amazingly accurate.

Jim Cockburn London

FROM
PAUL HODGSON

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Racing on wrong side of the street

FOR THE majority of road runners, the time taken for a particular course is of utmost importance. Few would be unable to quote their best times for most distances and many are quick to complain when a course is obviously short or long. They like a "10" to be just that - 10 miles.

Why is it then that every race I compete in now there are groups of runners who refuse to keep to the left-hand side of the road despite being instructed to do so in pre-race instructions sent out by organisers?

From my understanding, the course is "accurately measured" a metre in from the left-hand side. So when competitors cut the right-hand corners they are not running the full distance and, thereby, blatantly cheating.

However, it is not really their running a shorter course that bothers me, the days when I can hope to win a race would appear to be long gone! I can accept being beaten. What I do find very annoying is trying to race while being hampered by a series of cars heading towards me on the wrong side of a narrow country lane because the driver has veered to his right to avoid a cluster of "cheats" running illegally on the right.

In this year's Norton 9, I spent the last three miles shouting to runners ahead appealing to them to "keep to the left", but repeatedly the plea was ignored. At one point, some were cutting a blind right-hand corner with others following them when a car came around it.

At that point, some runners were on the right, some were on the white line and some of us where we were supposed to be, on the left.

I'm sure the first thing that particular driver did when he/she arrived home was to 'phone the police and complain about "bloody runners all over the road" - and who can blame him? If a few of the other drivers who spent their Sunday morning avoiding runners crossing from one side of the road to the other, called the police also then, of course, the future of the race is in jeopardy.

In this particular case it would be a great shame because the Norton 9 is an excellent early season race in terms of the course, the organisation, prizes and facilities. The selfish

action of the guilty runners shows no respect for the hard work put in by the race organisers.

Perhaps it is time to start tightening up and actually disqualifying people before there are more accidents or someone is killed. Those at the front of races must show a good example to those behind or risk being struck from the results.

Event organisers can also help by having someone stand in front of the assembled start and warn the leading runners of the danger, both to their fellow competition and to themselves in terms of disqualification!

See you on the road lads, on the left-hand side, of course.

Terry Lonergan
Ilkley, West Yorkshire

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