

2009 SWOT ANALYSIS – RACE WALK COMMITTEE

Race walking is both a technique event and an endurance event, and thus it takes time to develop world class competitors. This makes it unique in all of track and field. To help focus our development efforts our executive committee analyzed our performance and position within USATF in regard to four broad areas: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The information in this document has been provided to the Board of Directors of USATF.

1. STRENGTHS

- a. Talented group of young men currently competing at the Junior Level establishes 4 American Junior Records in 2009.
- b. A small but strong feeder group in NAIA Racewalking, albeit at distances much shorter than the Olympic distances.
- c. The leadership of the race walk committee is tied to the entire sport of track and field not just race walking.
- d. USATF and its Race Walk Committee is responsible for cradle-to-grave development of race walking in the USA.

2. WEAKNESSES

- a. Severe lack of funding for development activities for race walking by USATF and the High Performance Committee.
- b. NCAA ruling declaring the Race Walk to be a professional “sport” distinct from track & field.
- c. Race Walk not in NCAA competitive schedule of events.
- d. Loss of a generation of race walkers resulting in a majority of national team over 35 years of age.
- e. Lack of group training opportunities.
- f. Loss of our sole elite group training center at Chula Vista.
- g. Lack of knowledgeable coaches.
- h. Shortage of Race Walk judges and officials nationwide

3. OPPORTUNITIES

- a. With 9 medals in the Olympic Games Race Walking is USATF's best chance for increased medal counts for 2012 and beyond.
- b. When given proper coaching and group training opportunities quality performers competitive at the world level: (Colo. Spgs. Leading up to '84 Games; La Grange leading up to '96 ; Chula Vista from '97 – 2004).
- c. Potential exists for major sponsorship for Grand Prix Circuit and 50K Olympic Trials.
- d. International teams can be relatively easy to make at the current time, which can serve as incentive for new comers to the event area.
- e. Hundreds of youth clubs in our own organization that have coaches and programs where the event can be introduced, and where the right kids for the event may already exist.
- f. Fitness and health programs emphasizing activity for youth to combat disease and obesity offer way to introduce both fitness and competitive walking into schools and communities.

4. THREATS

- a. National Office and High Performance Committee not taking seriously and acknowledging the necessity of USATF to fund development efforts in race walking.
- b. Poor support/instruction of race walking by the USATF Coaching Education program.
- c. Ill informed coaches and administrators could continue to remove opportunities that exist for competition.