High school track and field athletes in general, and high school race walkers in-particular, need to be made aware that there is a shortage of race walkers in the USA. There are currently more colleges seeking race walkers for their Track & Field teams then there are HS walkers in the USA. However, since there are so few experienced high school race walkers in the USA, most of the available scholarships dollars are not awarded. This magnifies the point that high school race walkers are an important commodity to many colleges.

**Athletic scholarships are available for Race Walking!**

What does it take to be a collegiate walker? The current qualifying times for the collegiate track & field nationals in the race walk are illustrated in the table below. Looks easy? Well only about a dozen men and a dozen women make the qualifying time – on average – each year. So, it is challenging. That is why HS athletes who already know how to walk and can walk the times listed below are in high demand:

| RW Qualifying Standards for the 2017 Indoor & Outdoor Collegiate T&F Nationals |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|                            | **Race Distance**   | **Men**             | **Women**           |
|                            | Automatic           | Provisional         | Automatic           | Provisional         |
| INDOORS: 3,000 meters for men & women | 14:15.00 | 15:15.00 | 16:30.00 | 17:30.00 |
| OUTDOORS: 5,000m for men & women | 24:00.00 | 25:45.00 | 27:45.00 | 28:15.00 |

*Standards will be updated to the current year’s marks as they are released by the NAIA’s coaches Association.*

But what colleges have the race walk? It isn’t easy for a high school athlete to find out. But look at it from a college coach’s point of view. Many media outlets don’t print results of any HS competitions anymore; much less the results of a race walk competition. Here are a few ideas…

**Searching the Internet:**

When a high school student-athlete starts the search for their future college, the first thing that young man or woman should do is to create a list of colleges and universities that offer the programs he, or she, wants to study. This is the most important thing to do. After all, you go to college to get a good education. Athletics, including race walking, should be secondary.

There are many web sites on the internet that can help search the 3,500 or so colleges and universities in the USA for the ones that have the course of study desired. They can be found by going to any of the popular search engines like yahoo.com and google.com and typing in “College Search” and clicking on the SEARCH button.

The “big future” site by The College Board is one of these:

- [https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search)

Unfortunately, no site currently allows you to specifically search for the 200, or so, colleges and universities that include race walking as an event in the conference and national collegiate T&F championships. Helping you, the athlete, your parents and your coaches and counselors find these colleges & universities is the purpose of this paper.
Realistic Expectations - How Good Are You?

The High School Race Walk web site and its new app for your phone is a good place for college coaches, athletes, and parents of athletes to peruse. It recognizes the top HS Race Walkers in the USA, as well as a ranking of the top performers in the indoor and outdoor seasons. The rankings, along with various records are located at this web site:

http://www.hsrw.net/

Some background information on scholarships:

Every athlete is interested in getting a scholarship to college. So it may come as a shock, but in today’s collegiate environment rarely does any student-athlete receive a "Full Ride" or scholarship to college. "Quarter" and "Third" scholarships are more the norm in athletics. These are often divided along the lines of separate awards for tuition, board, and books. An athlete may receive one, or two, but rarely all three. Financial need and academic standing are also determining factors.

Complicating the recruiting situation is the window afforded individual colleges for making contact with potential student athletes. The rules vary between each of the three divisions within the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) also has its own.

Generally, college coaches can't talk about recruiting and scholarship commitments until the summer after athlete’s junior year in high school. But throughout the junior year, a high school student can initiate communication with a college by filling out one of the on-line forms that most college & university athletic departments offer on their web sites. High school athletes who race walk should also email the coach directly using the listings in this document and request information about their college and track and cross country programs.

One last, very important consideration when seeking that athletics scholarship – there is more money available via academic scholarships for good grades and test scores than for athletic prowess. So while you are focusing on that set of 20 fast 400 meter repeats in practice, remember it is even more important to be getting top notch marks in the class room and on the ACT and/or SAT assessments!

More information on Obtaining College Financial Aid:

Now Faster & Easier: The typical first step in getting financial aid is completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students should initiate this in September/October of their senior years. The document provides guidelines to how much financial aid the student-athlete is eligible for outside of any (athletic or academic) merit based scholarships. This is obtained at:

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Most colleges require this before awarding any merit based scholarships or need-based grants and loans. This includes the Pell grants and the Perkins and Stafford loan programs. You should also check into the special interest and regional scholarships that are available at the colleges you have narrowed your choices down too. And don’t forget there is also a Federal Department of Education searchable database. The data base can provide additional places to apply for scholarships:

https://www.studentaid.ed.gov/

Finally, don’t forget to consult with the counselors at your high school and the admissions advisors at the colleges you are considering. They have additional resources available to them for assisting you. One of these will be:

http://www.smartscholar.com/
WHAT COLLEGES ARE LOOKING FOR RACE WALKERS?

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has been conducting the race walk as a scored event at its National Track & Field Championships for over 40 years. Since 1980 nearly 75% of all race walkers on the USA Olympic Team have graduated from NAIA member colleges and universities.

The NAIA has always been the forward thinking, driving force for the inclusion, not exclusion, of all Olympic Events at the collegiate level. Not only are the race walks a scoring event at both the indoor and outdoor National T&F Championships but the NAIA also includes the marathon with its outdoor T&F championships. The more familiar NCAA (National Collegiate Athletics Association) does none of this.

There are also many advantages to competing in the NAIA as a race walker. Besides the benefit of the close-knit communities and small class sizes typically found on a NAIA member school campus, NAIA athletics offer:

1) A maximum opportunity to participate in regular season competitions and National Championships
2) The focus is on education and character development of the student athlete
3) Fewer recruiting restrictions and greater opportunities to transfer without losing a season of eligibility
4) And, starting in 2015 – NAIA athletes can turn Pro, stay in college and keep their scholarships!

The NAIA broadened its rules on amateurism to allow race walkers to earn prize money at the USATF Outdoor Champs & all other races when the athlete is out of school (i.e. summer vacation) and not representing their college or university. Athletes cannot accept prize money at the USATF indoor nationals or other races during the school year and retain their eligibility. However, NAIA member schools, unlike the NCAA, can pay all expenses for athletes participating in these competitions.

The NAIA is comprised of almost 300 member institutions, each dedicated to the ideals of excellence in character and respect in both athletics and academics. Approximately 200 of these schools have T&F programs. And of particularly good news to aspiring race walkers is the fact that only about two dozen of those schools currently have race walkers. The rest are looking for that one walker that will lead their program. This paper identifies those NAIA member schools and the coaches most interested in having race walkers as members of their teams. But to obtain a complete listing of all NAIA member colleges click on over to the NAIA’s revamped website and click on “SCHOOLS”:

http://www.naia.org/

The NAIA recruitment process is less cumbersome, with fewer restrictions on the contact between a student-athlete and a coach. More frequent communication aids in assuring that the student-athlete is comfortable with the choice of an institution. Athletes can get qualified for receiving athletic aid at any NAIA college or university by visiting the NAIA Eligibility Center at:

http://www.playnaia.org/

What about National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) schools? Regretfully, there isn’t much positive that can be said about race walking in the NCAA. The NCAA does not recognize the race walk as a track & field event at any level. Current NCAA rules prohibit student athletes who are race walkers from receiving financial assistance from the athletic departments at their colleges. Therefore, there are NO athletic scholarships for race walking within the NCAA ranks. That said, there still exists some opportunities for race walking at certain NCAA universities because of extremely supportive coaches at those institutions. These schools are mainly on the east coast where race walking is historical strong at the HS level:

NCAA Division I:
- Currently there are no coaches actively coaching race walking at the NCAA Division I level. In fact the NCAA & the USOC has allowed many DI member institutions to drop the sport of track & field.
NCAA Division II:

- Mansfield University in Mansfield, Pennsylvania, is a good location for track & field athletes who race walk. Three-time Olympian in the race walk - Michelle Rohl – assists her husband; head coach Mike Rohl, in coaching at Mansfield University. Contact Coach Rohl at: <mrohl@mnsfld.edu> (570) 662-4645
- University of Illinois @ Springfield in Springfield, Illinois, initiated its first ever track & field and cross country programs in 2015. The head coach is Mike DeWitt, formerly in charge of the powerhouse race walk program at University of Wisconsin - Parkside for nearly 30 years. Contact coach DeWitt at: <mdewi4@uis.edu> (262) 496-2212

NCAA Division III:

- Division III coaches are NOT allowed to give scholarships based upon athletic (race walking/running) abilities. But if you are a top notch academic student a couple NCAA schools on the east coast do have coaches that will try to assist their track & field athletes who also race walk. Marist University in New York is one of those.

Many of the NCAA limitations are also determined by the athlete’s gender. The combined scholarship limits for an entire program at the NCAA Division I level for Track & Field/Cross Country athletes are 18 for the women and 12.6 for the men. Race walkers have been ruled ineligible by the NCAA’s Compliance Office to receive any of these athletic scholarships.

Junior Colleges in California

There is currently one junior college in California where a high school athlete can get the cross country, track & field and race walking opportunities that should be afforded him or her nationwide. In 2010, two-time Olympian Tim Seaman was hired as a head track and cross country coach at Cuyamaca College near San Diego, California. Many of America’s top post collegiate race walkers now live and train near Cuyamaca College.

Starting in 2017 the California Junior College system will include race walking as an exhibition event. You can contact Coach Seaman at: <Tim.Seaman@Olympian.org> for more information on any of the junior college opportunities in California.

NAIA Success Stories

While based in the geographical center of the USA there are over 300 NAIA colleges and universities scattered across the country. But few are in the northeast (go figure) where race walking is popular among HS students in New York and Maine. Therefore student-athletes will often need to look out-of-state to continue their education. Luckily, most will find that cost of education will be lower at the NAIA member institution than at an in-state school in New England and New York.

Competitively, the race walk is conducted as a scoring event at the NAIA indoor and outdoor collegiate national T&F championships. Further, the NAIA encourages its member conferences to include the walks at invitational meets as well as individual Conference Championships. The most recent conference to add the race walk as a scoring event at both their indoor and outdoor championships is the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference (CCAC) composed of 15 colleges and universities located in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin.

On the next page is a list of colleges whose college coaches have historically recruited race walkers for their T&F teams. Those colleges prefixed with an asterisk (*) currently have race walkers on their T&F team. Please contact the coaches directly for more information about their program and availability of scholarships:
1. (*) Baker University (Kansas) Tim Byers <tbyers@bakeru.edu>  (785) 594-4581
2. (*) Benedictine College (Kansas) Rex Lane <rlane@benedictine.edu>  (913) 360-7606
3. Biola University (California) Sean Henning <s henning@biola.edu>  (562) 944-0351 x5929
4. (*) Campbellsville University (Kentucky) Hilary Lakes <halakes@campbellsville.edu>  (270) 789-5298
5. (*) Cardinal Stritch (Milwaukee, Wis) Joel Pearson <jpearson@stritch.edu>  (414) 410-4877
6. (*) Central Methodist U (Fayette, Missouri) Mark Nelson <mnelson@centralmethodist.edu>  (660)-248-6312
7. (*) Concordia University (Ann Arbor, Michigan) Jamie Labrosse <jamietrack10@gmail.com>  (517) 672-8684
8. (*) Cornerstone University (Grand Rapids, Michigan) Nate Van Holten <doctor_nate@hotmail.com>  (616) 222-1425
9. Culver-Stockton Univ. (Canton, Missouri) Alan King <aking@culver.edu>  (573) 288-6426
10. (*) Dakota Wesleyan University (Mitchell, South Dakota) Derik Fossum <defossum@dwc.edu>  (605) 995-2954
11. Davenport University (Grand Rapids, Michigan) Scott Cook <scook@davenport.edu>  (616) 871-6190
12. Dickinson State University (Dickinson, North Dakota) Ben Shroyer <ben.shroyer@dickinsonstate.edu>  (701) 483-1918
13. Eastern Oregon University (Oregon) Ben Welch <ben.welch@eou.edu>  (541) 962-3851
14. (*) Evangel College (Missouri) Lynn Bowen <bownel@evangel.edu>  (417) 865-2815 ext. 7359
15. Friends University (Wichita, Kansas) Damian Smithhiser <dami ans_smithhiser@friends.edu>  (316) 295-5624
16. (*) Goshen College (Goshen, IN) Justin Herbert <jherbert@goshen.edu>
17. (*) Grace College (Fort Wayne, IN) Jamie Longsworth <alongsworth@sf.edu>  (260) 399-7700 ext 6224
18. University of Saint Mary (Leavenworth, Kansas) Alston Benton <alst in.benton@stmary.edu>  (913) 702-5115
19. (*) University of the Cumberlands (Kentucky) Randy Greer <rand al.greer@ucumberlands.edu>  606-271-2810
20. Viterbo University (La Crosse, Wisconsin) John Metelko <jmetelko@viterbo.edu>  (608) 796-3840
21. Westmont College (Santa Barbara, California) Russell Smelley <smelley@westmont.edu>  (805) 565-6108
22. (*) West Virginia Tech (Montgomery, WV) Bruce Cox <bcucox@mail.wvu.edu>  (304) 442-3149
23. William Penn University (Iowa) Allen Friesen <friesena@wmpenn.edu>  (641) 673-1706
Recruiting Questions to ask:

Once you have settled on a college (or three) to visit, have a set of questions to ask the coach and any members of the team you get to meet. Some sample questions are: Who actually coaches the race walkers? What competitions will the team be going to that include race walking? Will there an opportunity to go to race walk only competitions? Are there study tables for academic assistance?

Additional questions to other athletes at the college include: Do you like the coach? Does the team do activities together away from practices and meets? How are injured athletes treated by the coach and medical staff?

NAIA Colleges that signed high school race walkers for the 2016-2017 college year:

- Spring Arbor University (Spring Arbor, Michigan): AJ Gruttadauro (Brockport, NY)
- Goshen College (Goshen, Indiana): Siana Emery (Greely HS, Cumberland, Maine)
- Cardinal Stritch (Milwaukee, Wis): Amberly Melendez (South Texas Turtles Walking Club)
- Judson University (Elgin, Illinois): Anali Cisneros (Elgin HS/Sharks, Illinois)
- St. Ambrose University (Davenport, Iowa): Katharine Newhoff (Islip Terrace, NY) & Emilo Mancha (Elgin, IL)
- Concordia University (Ann Arbor, Mich): Liz Larsen (Messalonskee HS, Sidney, Me)

CONTACT PEOPLE IN RACE WALKING

Hopefully you have found this article useful in identifying the colleges that are race walk friendly. The following individuals can assist you with questions you have about race walking locally, or at the high school, collegiate & national levels as well as other opportunities for race walking in the USA.

- Anthony Garcia – Chair of RW Development <Anthonymdgarcia@gmail.com>
- Miranda Mellville - Women’s RW Athlete Representative <Ranna320@gmail.com>
- Dave McGovern – Men’s RW Athlete Representative <rayZwocker@aol.com>
- Katie Burnett – NAIA All-American Race Walker – RW Executive Committee <racewalkerkt@yahoo.com>

WEB SITES WITH INFORMATION

All national championships as well as additional information on race walking is available thru the national website:


Locations for the latest in information on HS race walking:

- http://www.hsrw.net
- www.facebook.com/groups/hsracewalk/

Four great web sites with information on race walking including technique, books, etc., are:

- http://www.racewalk.com/
- http://www.eracewalk.com/
- http://www.racewalking.org/

Web Sit containing information on the Al Heppner Scholarship for collegiate race walkers:

- http://www.narionline.org/nari/Programs/AlHeppner.asp

For corrections and questions about this document contact: Vince Peters @ <mv_tc@sbcglobal.net>