

# Race Walking, What You Need To Know!

By someone who should know!

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Disqualified (DQ) Sydney Olympics  
Olympic Bronze Medallist 20km walk, Athens 2004



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

- Basically race walkers must maintain contact with the ground at all times (Referred to as the "Contact" part of the rule) and the walkers knee must straighten ("Knee" part of the rule) when the foot hits the ground and stay straightened until the leg passes under the body.
- **ONLY JUDGED BY NAKED EYE.**
- **VIDEO Replays** or slow motion are not used to judge.

**COURSE:** All major championships on are on a course 1-2km long.

- There are 8 judges from 8 different countries spread along the course.
- The Chief Judge supervises all the judges and holds the Red Paddle; he/she does not allocate red cards but is merely the "Messenger of DQ's".

## YELLOW PADDLES:

Shown to athletes when the judge is not completely satisfied the athlete is walking within the rules, they're borderline.

Basically, the judge is saying to the athlete "I'm looking at you carefully and you need to improve."

These **do not contribute to an athlete's disqualification**. Can receive only one yellow paddle from each judge for each of the two infractions (contact & knees).

The yellow paddles have the symbols on them for each of the different infractions:

and  
"~" for contact.

## DQ DOESN'T MEAN YOU WERE RUNNING!

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

**Red cards:** given by a judge if he/she believes athlete is breaking the rules, only once during race by judge for either knees or contact. Never shown to athlete directly; so athletes do not know which judge has written the card.

## 3 RED CARDS

from different judges = Disqualification (DQ)

**Red paddle** is only shown to an athlete when they are DQed and is only used by the Chief Judge and Chief Judge Assistants (2) at Olympics.

In the last 100m the Chief Judge has the power to show the red paddle to DQ an athlete, regardless of number of red cards, if he/she believes the athlete is obviously breaking the rules.

This is to prevent athletes blatantly cheating in last part of race if they don't have any red cards.



## DQ/Posting board



## Chief Judge with red paddle



### POSTING BOARD or commonly referred to as

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

"<" for Knees

"~" for Contact



Three races at Olympic Games and World Championships

**MEN'S 20KM WOMEN'S 20KM MEN'S 50KM**

### How fast are they walking?

**WORLD RECORD FOR MEN'S 20KM IS 1.17.16 VLADIMIR KANAYKIN (RUS)**

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

**WORLD RECORD FOR WOMEN'S 20KM IS 1.25.02 ELENA LASHMANOVA (RUS)**

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

**WORLD RECORD FOR MEN'S 50KM (31.17MILES) IS 3.34.14 DENIS NIZHEGORODOV (RUS)**

- Equates to 4min17sec per Km and just over 14 km per hour
- Men will go through marathon distance in around 3 hours!

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