

# A History of the Steeplechase

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## A History of the Steeplechase (1849-2004)

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### **The Beginnings**

"Because it's fun. . . . It is fun to run as fast as one can until you are dead tired". This comment from Filbert Bayi regarding his racing style came after his winning a gold medal in the 3000-meter steeplechase in 1980. One of the greatest distance runners of all time, Kip Keino, said, "The steeplechase is a race for animals". Another runner claimed, "The hurdles are only three feet high to start with, but by the last lap they're at least four". Although a less glorified event than the 100 meters or mile run, this grueling track event has an intriguing past. There are different stories of steeplechase evolution from horse-racing across a countryside full of natural and challenging barriers such as fences, hedges and streams to a foot race held on a man-made course. One tale comes from the mid 1800's when English villages were separated by about two miles of farm or wild land and the only guide from place to place was the church steeple rising above trees and rolling hills. These steeples made an obvious guide for travelers and target for sportsmen on horseback. It is easy to imagine a competitive villager – or one with a fast horse to show off - daring another to race to the next village along a route containing fences, a stream and a bog. This type of race was popular for years, but at some point, a confident

(or horseless) fellow claimed he could beat the riders on horseback. Sadly, we don't know if he was the victor in this event, although we do know that bets were made on both sides. Soon it became typical for men to leave the horse in the barn and complete against one another on foot.

Another story of early steeplechase days tells of students at Exeter College, Oxford, discussing a tough steeplechase race on horses they had just contested. One of the students, Halifax Wyatt, had been thrown from his saddle and claimed, "Rather than climb back onto that damned 'camel' I should prefer to run those two miles on foot!" These words, said in pique, sparked the idea of a race, on foot, over a course designed to place barriers in the path of the competitors and lead to the first men's steeplechase event held in Binsey, Oxfordshire in 1850. The winner of the two-mile course with twenty four jumps happened to be Halifax Wyatt who was as good as his word and gave up on trying the race upon his horse. As with jockeys, some of the first men's steeplechase races used weights to handicap the stronger athletes. When Cambridge and Oxford Universities began their athletic rivalry in 1864, a steeplechase event was included in the program. Around 1920, the popularity of steeple chasing surged, after having waned for a few years.

The International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF), the National Collegiate Athletic Association

(NCAA), and the United States of America Track and Field (USATF) all have the same standards for the 3000-meter men's steeplechase course. The athletes cross 28 barriers, each three feet (91.7 cm) high as well as seven water jumps. The water jumps have a barrier, also three feet high, leading into the jump and a pit twelve feet (3.66 m) in length and width. The pit slopes down towards the barrier to a maximum depth of two feet three and a half inches (69.9 cm) (USATF Rules, 1997).

Many runners today have the strength and endurance to lead the race from start to finish; however, there have also been many very successful athletes who would hold back until coming on in the last laps. Running skill is secondary as the key to success is efficient form over the barriers and as it has been estimated that athletes lose about 19.6 seconds during the event as each barrier costs up to 0.4 to 0.7 seconds to clear. Athletes must also be able to quickly recover their running stride between obstacles. The seven water jumps add even more need for perfecting technique, and further separate the steeplechaser's strategy from the runner's. In later years, as competitors have honed their skill, the finishes became tighter. For example, in the 1996 Olympic finals, less than 17 seconds separated first and eighth place.

Of the first six modern-day Olympic Games, four of them contested a men's steeplechase. The event was still in

formation and a distance wasn't standardized until 1920 by the IAAF. The results and distances of these races can be found in Table 1.

### **Olympic Summaries**

1900 Paris. These games were the first to include steeplechasing. Four-thousand meter and 2500-meter events were contested. In the 4000-meter event, only six of the eight competitors completed the race.

1904 St. Louis. In an exciting finish, James Lightbody came back from behind to claim the gold by one second.

1908 London. The steeplechase began with some problems during the heats. The US team, contrary to Amateur Athletics Association rules, showed up wearing white shorts and were only allowed to compete after being supplied with some dark shorts. The exciting finish of the final had Arthur Russell and Arthur Robertson, both from Great Britain, clearing the last barrier together, finishing only six tenths of a second apart.

1912 Stockholm and 1916 Berlin. The steeplechase was not contested in these games.

1920 Antwerp. This was the year of the British athlete, Percy Hodge. During the AAA championships earlier this year, he had been spiked during the second lap causing the heel of his shoe to come off. He stopped, took his shoe off, retied it, and came back to win the race by 60 yards. He

won the Antwerp Olympics by 100 yards setting an Olympic record.

1924 Paris. Finland showed the beginning of its domination of distance events in these Olympics taking the first, second, and fifth places in the steeplechase. Although Paul Bontemps of France ran a 9:33.4 a month before the Olympics, he could not repeat that performance, finishing over 100 yards behind the leader, Vilho "Ville" Ritola, who ran 9:33.6.



**Figure 1-Vilho "Ville" Ritola**

1928 Amsterdam. Paavo Nurmi, one of Finland's all-time best distance runners, looked more like a gymnast than a steeplechaser on the first water jump. He executed an unintentional flip into the water pit, was helped out by Lucien Duquesne, and still managed to finish in second place behind a world record of 9:21.8 set by fellow countryman Tolvo Loukola. Loukola began running five years earlier to bring back his health after being rejected by the Finnish military due to his having tuberculosis.

1932 Los Angeles. Volmari Iso-Hollo of Finland came to what he thought was the finish line forty yards ahead of second place when he saw that the lap counter still showed that he had another lap to go. His count was correct, but as he was unsure, he ran another lap, this time winning by 75 yards. The silver and bronze placers switched positions in the "extra lap". Joseph McCluskey of the USA finished in third place after the ninth lap and the problem of medal placement was put to rest when he declined to protest saying that he was quite happy with his bronze medal in the one-of-its-kind 3460 meter steeplechase.



**Figure 2-Volmari Iso-Hollo**

1936 Berlin. Once again Volmari Iso-Hollo claimed the gold, this time setting a world record.

1940 Tokyo/Helsinki and 1944 London. World War II prevented the Olympics from being held.

1948 London. The Swedes dominated the steeplechase and earned gold, silver and bronze. The only other contender, European champion, Raphael Pujazon of France, had to withdraw about half way through the race due to a stomach cramp.

1952 Helsinki. An underdog, FBI Agent Horace Ashenfelter, who had trained by hurdling park benches late

at night, established a world record of 8:45.4. During the heats Ashenfelter shook up the competition by running an 8:51.0, beating his previous best by over a minute. During the final lap of the medal run Vladimir Kazantsev of the USSR took the lead, but fell at the water jump. Ashenfelter then took the lead and won by thirty yards. He became known as the only FBI agent to allow himself to be followed by a Russian.



**Figure 3-Horace Ashenfelter and Vladimir Kazantsev**

1956 Melbourne. Christopher Brasher earned the first gold medal for Great Britain in twenty years at these games. He made his way between two other athletes during the last lap to win the race by fifteen yards. Shortly after the race, an

announcement was made telling that Brasher was disqualified. Ernst Larsen, the bronze medalist, told the Jury of Appeal that although there had been contact during the race, it did not warrant a disqualification. The Jury of Appeal reversed their initial decision and declared Brasher the winner.

1960 Rome. In an unsuccessful attempt to wear down Zdzislaw Kryszkowiak of Poland, three Soviet runners ran a strategic team race, but Kryszkowiak set an Olympic record of 8:34.2 to win the event. The Soviets finished second, third, and eighth.

1964 Tokyo. Gaston Roelants of Belgium won the steeplechase with an Olympic record of 8:30.8. In the mid-1960's he held three world records and won four world cross-country titles. In one epic day, he earned two world records in the space of an hour; after breaking the 20,000-meter run world record in a time of 58:06.2, he continued on for another 664 meters to break Ron Clark's one hour run world record. Roelants also broke the 3000-meter steeplechase world record twice. Between 1961 and 1966, he won forty-five consecutive steeplechase races and at the age of forty, he was still able to run the race in 8:41.5.

1968 Mexico City. A relatively unknown athlete was victorious with an unorthodox style in the 1968 Mexico City Games. Amos Biwott of Kenya pleased the crowd with his unique jumping style. He would hop off of the water jump barrier, clear the whole pit, and land on his take off leg. Over the barriers, he would jump with his feet together. His form may not have been efficient, but he ran well enough to obtain the lead in the final homestretch, winning by three yards.



**Figure 4-Amos Biwott**

1972 Munich. With five years of Olympic familiarity, but lacking in steeplechase experience, Kip Keino of Kenya, won the gold medal and set an Olympic record. In a post-

race interview, he was quoted saying, "I had a lot of fun jumping the hurdles, like an animal. My style is not good".

1976 Montreal. An incredible finish occurred at these games. Going into the final barrier, Anders Garderud was leading, followed closely by Frank Baumgartl and Bronislaw Malinowski. Garderud cleared perfectly and was able to see that Baumgartl's knee hit the barrier. Malinowski, in third position, had to hurdle not only the barrier, but also the fallen Baumgartl. Garderud went on to win the event setting a new world record of 8:08.2. Malinowski followed, only one second behind. After regaining his feet Baumgartl was able to gain back some of his lost time and finish third, less than two seconds behind Malinowski.

1980 Moscow. Bronislaw Malinowski of Poland and Filbert Bayi of Tanzania met all expectations of a close race. A fast pace was set during the first half, with Malinowski about twenty meters behind the leader Bayi. Malinowski was able to gradually close the gap. At the final water jump, Malinowski passed Bayi, who struggled out of the pit. Bayi was able to hold on to the silver medal although Eshetu Tura of Ethiopia finished with a strong final lap.



1984 Los Angeles. During the final lap, Henry Marsh the highest ranked of the competitors, came from behind to challenge the leader, Julius Korir. But Korir was able to hold Marsh off and win the gold. Marsh fell back to fourth place collapsing over the finish line after giving everything his body would allow. This was the closest finish ever, with less than three and a half seconds separating first and fourth place. Jokingly, Marsh was quoted the day after the race as saying, "Fourth place, the worst possible position. You don't get a medal, but you still have to go through doping control".

1988 Seoul. Runners from Kenya, determined to run at their own pace, held back at the beginning of the race. At the 2000-meter mark, Julius Kariuki motioned to his teammate, Peter Koech to take the lead. But the Kenyan hope for a sweep of the medals was lost when Azzedine Brahmī of Algeria spiked Patrick Sang. Although Mark Rowland of Great Britain held a strong pace during the last two laps, Kariuki and Koech held on for the gold and silver medals.

1992 Barcelona. In every Olympic Games which Kenya had participated in, a Kenyan had won the steeplechase. In these games the Kenyans swept the medals. During the third lap, Azzedine Brahmī clipped the heel of Matthew

Birir's shoe. Birir fell to his knee and slipped back to ninth place before a remarkable comeback, only partially shod, to win the race in 8:08.84.

1996 Atlanta. As expected, the Kenyans dominated the steeplechase. Alessandro Lambruschini from Italy was able to break up a Kenyan medal sweep, by running an 8:11.28.

2000 Sydney. The race started slowly after German, Damian Kallabis, fell at the first hurdle. The pace increased dramatically after 1000m, when world record holder, Bernard Barmasai (KEN), took the lead. While the lead changed a few times, three Kenyans led into the final water jump for a very close finish. Wilson Kipketer gained a slight advantage down the homestretch, but a little contact with Reuben Kosgei broke his stride. As Kipketer fell back to second Ali Ezzine of Morocco edged out the third Kenyan, world record holder, Bernard Barmasai, for the bronze medal.

2004 Athens. While the front group changed a few times early in the race, with four laps to go Paul Koech (KEN) took the lead bringing two other Kenyans with him. Coming into the final turn, Ezekiel Kemboi (KEN) took over the lead as Koech began to fade. Koech was able to

hold on for the bronze medal, while the other Kenyan, Brimin Kipruto, a teenager, moved in for the silver. During the Kenyan's victory lap, Kip Keino came out to congratulate them.

### **Other Notable Athletes**

Many athletes have incredible stories, yet never received Olympic medals. Some of these athletes even held national and world records.

- Jerzy Chromik of Poland broke the world record twice. On August 31, 1955, he ran 8:41.2. Then less than two weeks later, he ran 8:40.2. He had the potential to medal at the 1956 Olympics, but had to withdraw due to stomach pains.
- In 1961, Grigoriy Taran of the Soviet Union, ran a time of 8:31.2 in a quadrangular meet with Ukraine, RSFSR, Leningrad, and Moscow. Taran's record only lasted until Poland's Zdzislaw Kryszkowiak, the 1960 gold Olympic medalist, ran an 8:30.4
- Another world record holding Finnish runner was Jouko Kuha. Although Kuha never won an Olympic title, he did break four national records and set one world steeplechase record.
- In 1969, three Soviet steeplechasers ran faster than Jouko Kuha's world record in the same race at Kiev. Vladimir Dudin won the race in 8:22.2, with

Aleksandr Morozov and Yuriy Ribanchenko close behind. Morozov had the best Olympic place of the three with a fifth place finish in Mexico City, 1968. Later in 1969 Mikhail Chelev of Bulgaria beat all three of these athletes at the European Championships.

- The only Australian world record came on July 4, 1970. Kerry O'Brien was named "World Runner of the Year" at the end of the 1970 season. Within 48-hours, O'Brien ran the two fastest races of his life - an 8:29.0 on July 2, then an 8:22.0 two days later, breaking the world record by two tenths of a second.
- Henry Marsh of the USA was one of very few athletes who made four Olympic teams, although he was only able to compete in three due to the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games by the United States. His best Olympic finish came in the Los Angeles Games of 1984. Going into the race, he was ranked second in the world behind Patriz Ilg of West Germany, who was unable to compete in these Olympics due to tonsillitis. Marsh used his weapon, a crushing final 300-meter kick, and pulled into the

front, running stride for stride with Julius Korir of Kenya. After the final barrier, Marsh's legs wouldn't keep up with his desire, perhaps due to a recent illness. He fell back and finished in fourth, nineteen hundredths of a second behind teammate, Brian Diemer.

- Mark Crogan began competing in the steeplechase while attending Ohio State University, where he ran an 8:25.99 and won the NCAA Championships. In 1992, Crogan finished one place from making the Olympic final heat. In 1996, he made the finals, finishing less than a second behind Matthew Birir of Kenya for fifth place. Crogan's best time is only 0.59 off Henry Marsh's American record of 8:09.17.

Women have only recently begun competing in the steeplechase, with discussion among the IAAF beginning in 1989. Russia included a 2000-meter steeplechase in their national championships in 1990, using 30 inch barriers and a 9 foot 10 inch water jump. Most countries are now including a women's steeplechase in their national championships. Starting in 1996, the women's 3000-meter steeplechase was run at the USA Track and Field Championships and the Olympic Trials, although it is not

yet an Olympic event. There were also at least four other 3000-meter steeplechase events competed in the US in 1996. In 1996, the American Record was held by four different women. National and international times are rapidly falling (Table 2). Using proportions of current world records, an estimate of 8:45-8:55 can be predicted in the 3000-meter steeplechase time for women once the event becomes more competitive.

The current men's world record is held by former Kenyan, Said Shaheen of Qatar (7:53.63). Since 1984, the Kenyans have dominated the steeplechase, taking all but three bronze medals in the Olympic Games since then. The men's records have dropped in a similar fashion to other track events over the years. Table 3 shows this progression.

## Appendix

**Table 1-Olympic Games Results**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1896 No Steeplechase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1900 Paris (2500 Meters)<br>1. George Orton CAN/USA 7:34.4<br>2. Sidney Robinson GBR 7:38.0<br>3. Jacques Chastanie FRA --<br>4. Arthur Newton USA --<br>5. Hermann Wraschtil AUT --<br>6. Franz Duhne GER --                                             |
| 1904 St. Louis (2590 Meters)<br>1. James Lightbody USA 7:39.6<br>2. John Daly IRL 7:40.6<br>3. Arthur Newton USA --<br>4. W. Frank Verner USA --                                                                                                                                     | 1908 London (3200 Meters)<br>1. Arthur Russell GBR 10:47.8<br>2. Arthur Robertson GBR 10:48.4<br>3. John Eisele USA --<br>4. C. Guy Holdaway GBR --<br>5. H. Sewell GBR --<br>6. William Galbraith CAN --                                                 |
| 1912 No Steeplechase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1916 No Steeplechase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1920 Antwerp (Standardized to 3000 Meters)<br>1. Percy Hodge GBR 10:00.4 OR<br>2. Patrick Flynn USA --<br>3. Ernesto Ambrosini ITA --<br>4. Gustaf Mattsson SWE --<br>5. Michael Devaney USA --<br>6. Albert Hulsebosch USA --<br>7. Lars Hedvall SWE --<br>8. Raymond Watson USA -- | 1924 Paris<br>1. Vilho "Ville" Ritola FIN 9:33.6<br>2. Elias Katz FIN 9:44.0<br>3. Paul Bontemps FRA 9:45.2<br>4. E. Marvin Rick USA 9:56.4<br>5. Karl Ebb FIN 9:57.6<br>6. Evelyn Montague GBR --<br>7. Michael Devaney USA --<br>8. A.Isola FRA 10:14.9 |

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1928 Amsterdam</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tolvo Loukola FIN 9:21.8 WR</li> <li>2. Paavo Nurmi FIN 9:31.2</li> <li>3. Ove Andersen FIN 9:35.6</li> <li>4. Nils Eklof SWE 9:38.0</li> <li>5. Henri Dartigues FAA 9:40.0</li> <li>6. Lucien Duquesne FAA 9:40.6</li> <li>7. Melvin Dalton USA --</li> <li>8. W. O. Spencer USA --</li> </ol>                              | <p>1932 Los Angeles (3460 Meters-Lap Counter Mistake)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Volmari Iso-Hollo FIN 10:33.4</li> <li>2. Thomas Evenson GBR 10:46.0</li> <li>3. Joseph McCluskey USA 10:46.2</li> <li>4. Martti Matilainen FIN 10:52.4</li> <li>5. George Bailey GBR 10:53.2</li> <li>6. Glen Dawson USA --</li> <li>7. Giuseppe Lippi ITA --</li> <li>8. Walter Pritchard USA --</li> </ol> |
| <p>1936 Berlin</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Volmari Iso-Hollo FIN 9:03.8 WR</li> <li>2. Kaarlo Tuomlnen FIN 9:06.8</li> <li>3. Alfred Dompert GER 9:07.2</li> <li>4. Martti Matilainen FIN 9:09.0</li> <li>5. Harold Manning USA 9:11.2</li> <li>6. Lars Larsson SWE 9:16.6</li> <li>7. W. Wihtols LAT 9:18.8</li> <li>8. Glen Dawson USA 9:21.2</li> </ol>                 | <p>1948 London</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thore Sjostrand SWE 9:04.6</li> <li>2. Erik Elmsater SWE 9:08.2</li> <li>3. Gote Hagstrom SWE 9:11.8</li> <li>4. Alex Guyodo FRA 9:13.6</li> <li>5. Pentti Siltaloppi FIN 9:19.6</li> <li>6. Petar Segedin YUG 9:20.4</li> <li>7. H. Browning Ross USA 9:23.2</li> <li>8. C. Miranda Justo SPA 9:25.0</li> </ol>                                     |
| <p>1952 Helsinki</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Horace Ashenfelter USA 8:45.4 WR</li> <li>2. Vladimir Kazantsev SOV 8:51.6 OR</li> <li>3. John Disley GBR 8:51.8</li> <li>4. Olavi Rinteenpaa FIN 8:55.2</li> <li>5. Curt Soderberg SWE 8:55.6</li> <li>6. Gunther Hesselmann GER 8:55.8</li> <li>7. Mikhail Sitykov SOV 8:56.2</li> <li>8. Helmut Gude GER 9:01.4</li> </ol> | <p>1956 Melbourne</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christopher Brasher GBR 8:41.2 OR</li> <li>2. Sandor Rozsnyol HUN 8:43.6</li> <li>3. Ernst Larsen NOR 8:44.0</li> <li>4. Heinz Laufer GER 8:44.4</li> <li>5. Semyon Rzhischin SOV 8:44.6</li> <li>6. John Disley GBR 8:44.6</li> <li>7. Neil Robbins AUS 8:50.0</li> <li>8. Eric Shirley GBR 8:57.0</li> </ol>                                    |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1960 Rome</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Zdzislaw Kryszkowiak POL 8:34.2 OR</li> <li>2. Nikolai Sokolov SOV 8:36.4</li> <li>3. Semyon Rzhischin SOV 8:42.2</li> <li>4. Gaston Roelants BEL 8:47.6</li> <li>5. Gunnar Tjornebo SWE 8:58.6</li> <li>6. Ludwig Muller GER 9:01.6</li> <li>7. Charles "Deacon" Jones USA 9:18.2</li> <li>8. Aleksei Konov SOV 9:18.2</li> </ol> | <p>1964 Tokyo</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gaston Roelants BEL 8:30.8 OR</li> <li>2. Maurice Herriott GBR 8:32.4</li> <li>3. Yvan Belyayev SOV 8:33.8</li> <li>4. Manuel de Oliveira POR 8:36.2</li> <li>5. George Young USA 8:38.2</li> <li>6. Guy Texereau FRA 8:38.6</li> <li>7. Adolfas Alekseunas SOV 8:39.0</li> <li>8. Lars-Erik Gustafsson SWE 8:41.8</li> </ol> |
| <p>1968 Mexico City</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amos Biwott KEN 8:51.0</li> <li>2. Benjamin Kogo KEN 8:51.6 2.</li> <li>3. George Young USA 8:51.8</li> <li>4. Kerry O'Brien AUS 8:52.0</li> <li>5. Aleksandr Morozov SOV 8:55.8</li> <li>6. Mikhail Chelev BUL 8:58.4</li> <li>7. Gaston Roelants BEL 8:59.4</li> <li>8. Ame Risa NOR 9:09.0</li> </ol>                    | <p>1972 Munich</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. H. Kipchoge Keino KEN 8:23.6 OR</li> <li>2. Benjamin Jipcho KEN 8:24.6</li> <li>3. Tapio Kantanen FIN 8:24.8</li> <li>4. Bronislaw Malinowski POL 8:28.0</li> <li>5. Dusan Moravcik CZE 8:29.2</li> <li>6. Amos Biwott KEN 8:33.6</li> <li>7. Romauldas Bite SOV 8:34.6</li> <li>8. Pekka Paivarinta FIN 8:37.2</li> </ol>   |
| <p>1976 Montreal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anders Garderud SWE 8:08.2 WR</li> <li>2. Bronislaw Malinowski POL 8:09.2</li> <li>3. Frank Baumgartl GDR 8:10.4</li> <li>4. Tapio Kantanen FIN 8:12.6</li> <li>5. Michael Karst GER 8:20.1</li> <li>6. Evan Robertson NZE 8:21.1</li> <li>7. Dan Glans SWE 8:21.5</li> <li>8. Antonio Campos SPA 8:22.7</li> </ol>            | <p>1980 Moscow</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bronislaw Malinowski POL 8:09.7</li> <li>2. Filbert Bayi 8:12.5</li> <li>3. Eshetu Tura ETH 8:13.6</li> <li>4. Domnigo Ramon SPA 8:15.8</li> <li>5. Francisco Sanchez SPA 8:18.0</li> <li>6. Guiseppe Gerbi ITA 8:18.5</li> <li>7. Boguslaw Maminski POL 8:19.5</li> <li>8. Anatoly Dimov SOV 8:19.8</li> </ol>              |

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1984 Los Angeles<br>1. Julius Korir KEN 8:11.80<br>2. Joseph Mahmoud FRA 8:13.31<br>3. Brian Diemer USA 8:14.06<br>4. Henry Marsh USA 8:14.25<br>5. Colin Reitz GBR 8:15.48<br>6. Domingo Romon ESP 8:17.27<br>7. Julius Kariuki KEN 8:17.47<br>8. Pascal Debacker FRA 8:21.51                     | 1988 Atlanta<br>1. Julius Kariuki KEN 8:05.51 OR<br>2. Peter Koech KEN 8:06.79<br>3. Mark Rowland GBR 8:07.96<br>4. Alessandro Lambruschini ITA 8:12.17<br>5. William Van Dijck BEL 8:13.99<br>6. Henry Marsh USA 8:14.39<br>7. Patrick Sang KEN 8:15.22<br>8. Boguslaw Maminski POL 8:15.97 |
| 1992 Seoul<br>1. Matthew Birir KEN 8:08.84<br>2. Patrick Sang KEN 8:09.55<br>3. William Mutwol KEN 8:10.74<br>4. Alessandro Lambrusch. ITA 8:15.52<br>5. Steffen Brand GER 8:16.60<br>6. Tom Hanlon GBR 8:18.14<br>7. Brian Diemer USA 8:18.77<br>8. Azzedine Brahmi ALG 8:20.71                   | 1996 Barcelona<br>1. Joseph Keter KEN 8:07.12<br>2. Moses Kiptanui KEN 8:08.33<br>3. Alessandro Lambruschini ITA 8:11.28<br>4. Matthew Birir KEN 8:17.18<br>5. Mark Crogan USA 8:17.84<br>6. Steffen Brand GER 8:18.52<br>7. Brahim Boulami MOR 8:23.13<br>8. Jim Svenoy NOR 8:23.39         |
| 2000 Sydney<br>1. Reuben Kosgei (KEN) 8:21.43<br>2. Wilson Kipketer (KEN) 8:21.77<br>3. Ali Ezzine (MOR) 8:22.15<br>4. Bernard Barmasai (KEN) 8:22.23<br>5. Luis Martin (ESP) 8:22.75<br>6. Eliseo Martin (ESP) 8:23.00<br>7. Brahim Boulami (MOR) 8:24.32<br>8. Guenther Weidlinger (AUT) 8:26.70 | 2004 Athens<br>1. Ezekiel KemBoi KEN 8:05.81<br>2. Brimin Kipruto KEN 8:06.11<br>3. Paul Koech KEN 8:06.64<br>4. Musa Amer QAT 8:07.18<br>5. Luis Martin ESP 8:11.64<br>6. Simon Vroemen NED 8:13.25<br>7. Bouabdallah Tahri FRA 8:14.26<br>8. Ali Ezzine MAR 8:15.58                        |

**Table 2-Women's World Leading and World Record Progression**

|          |                        |       |          |
|----------|------------------------|-------|----------|
| 10:23.47 | Courtney Meldrum       | (USA) | 06/23/96 |
| 10:19.6  | Karen Harvey           | (CAN) | 04/18/98 |
| 9:55.28  | Daniela Petrescu       | (ROM) | 06/21/98 |
| 9:48.88  | Yelena Motalova        | (RUS) | 07/31/99 |
| 9:43.64  | Cristina Iloc-Casandra | (ROM) | 08/07/00 |
| 9:40.20  | Cristina Iloc-Casandra | (ROM) | 08/30/00 |
| 9:25.31  | Justyna Bak            | (POL) | 07/09/01 |
| 9:22.29  | Justyna Bak            | (POL) | 06/05/02 |
| 9:21.72  | Alesya Turova          | (BEL) | 06/12/02 |
| 9:16.51  | Alesya Turova          | (BEL) | 07/27/02 |
| 9:08.33  | Gulnara Samitova       | (RUS) | 08/10/03 |
| 9:01.59  | Gulnara Samitova       | (RUS) | 04/07/04 |

**Table 3-Men's World Record Progression**

|        |                 |       |          |
|--------|-----------------|-------|----------|
| 8:49.6 | Sandor Rozsnyol | (HUN) | 08/28/54 |
| 8:47.8 | Pentti Karvonen | (FIN) | 07/01/55 |
| 8:45.4 | Pentti Karvonen | (FIN) | 07/15/55 |
| 8:45.4 | Vasili Vlasenko | (SOV) | 08/18/55 |
| 8:41.2 | Jerzy Chromik   | (POL) | 08/31/55 |
| 8:40.2 | Jerzy Chromik   | (POL) | 09/11/55 |
| 8:39.8 | Semjon Rzistsin | (SOV) | 08/14/56 |
| 8:35.6 | Sandor Rozsnyol | (HUN) | 09/16/56 |
| 8:35.6 | Semjon Rzistsin | (SOV) | 08/02/58 |
| 8:32.0 | Jerzy Chromik   | (POL) | 08/02/58 |

|         |                            |          |
|---------|----------------------------|----------|
| 8:31.4  | Zdzislaw Kryszkowiak (POL) | 06/26/60 |
| 8:31.2  | Grigori Taran (SOV)        | 05/28/61 |
| 8:30.4  | Zdzislaw Kryszkowiak (POL) | 06/26/61 |
| 8:29.6  | Gaston Roelants (BEL)      | 09/07/63 |
| 8:26.4  | Gaston Roelants (BEL)      | 08/07/65 |
| 8:24.2  | Jouko Kuha (FIN)           | 07/17/68 |
| 8:22.2  | Vladimir Dudin (SOV)       | 08/19/69 |
| 8:22.0  | Kerry O'Brien (AUS)        | 07/04/70 |
| 8:20.8  | Anders Garderud (SWE)      | 09/14/72 |
| 8:20.8  | Ben Jipcho (KEN)           | 01/15/73 |
| 8:13.91 | Ben Jipcho (KEN)           | 06/19/73 |
| 8:10.4  | Anders Garderud (SWE)      | 06/25/75 |
| 8:09.8  | Anders Garderud (SWE)      | 07/01/75 |
| 8:08.02 | Anders Garderud (SWE)      | 07/28/76 |
| 8:05.4  | Henry Rono (KEN)           | 05/13/78 |
| 8:05.35 | Peter Koech (KEN)          | 07/03/89 |
| 8:02.08 | Moses Kiptanui (KEN)       | 08/19/92 |
| 7:59.18 | Moses Kiptanui (KEN)       | 08/16/95 |
| 7:59.08 | Wilson Kipketer (KEN)      | 08/24/97 |
| 7:55.28 | Brahim Boulami (MOR)       | 08/24/01 |
| 7:53.63 | Saif Shaheen (QAT)         | 03/09/04 |

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