

Extract from SAMA By-Laws (June 2023)

## **24. WALKING AS AN ATHLETIC EVENT**

The following summarises the principles to be applied by SAMA when walking is conducted as an athletic event in its competitions.

SAMA introduced Club Walking into its program to encourage current walkers who struggle with bent knees, previous walkers who no longer compete for fear of disqualification and runners who might like to try walking without the pressure of full Race-Walking rules.

In Club Walking the only rule is that there should be no running; which for our purposes will be defined by the requirement to always have one foot on the ground (bent knees will not be an issue). Walkers in this category can still be disqualified if they break the contact rule!

Race Walking will be conducted under WA rules with the "No advantage" concept applied for older walkers.

Those athletes choosing to compete as a Race-Walker should not expect the 'No Advantage' concept to permit carte blanche disregard for the basic rules. It is there to allow for **slight** bending of the knee particularly in older walkers where a perfectly straight leg cannot be achieved, but where these walkers are seriously trying to Race Walk correctly. It is not there to condone a distinct bent leg creep (which invariably occurs when trying to go too fast. While still open to interpretation as-for all walk judging, it is expected that judges will show leniency towards older walkers (65 and older). Older walkers should still look like race-walkers with a largely straight leg and high toe on contact.

Both types of walking will have their own Club Championship events but there will only be records for Race Walking and only Race Walkers will be eligible for the SAMA Walks Award.