

FYI - ~~for~~

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

FROM MURRAY MCKINNON.

STOP PRESS.

The chances of matching Filbert Bayi and John Walker over 1500m and 1 mile ~~and~~ in New Zealand next month have been lost with Walker entering hospital on Thursday Feb 9<sup>th</sup> to undertake surgery on the leg that has been causing him trouble in training. The same doctor that carried out a successful operation on Dick Quax's legs will undertake the operation. Walker will then have his work cut out to be in top form for the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton in August.

Jon the enclosed Newspaper article may be of interest

World  
Mid-dist

Regards.

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It is interesting to note that Peter Snell in NZ from USA for the NZ Superstars competition is also in hospital. In the cycle race Snell fell dislocating his shoulder.

Hope you received the results of the international circuit in N.Z.

# DECISION SOON ON SURGERY SAYS WALKER

John Walker is to make a decision soon whether to undergo surgery for the muscular complaint that has so severely restricted his training during the past year.

The type of operation he will have is now being done more and more overseas. The New Zealand surgeon who first performed it here, Dr G. Campbell, of Hamil-

ton, has now carried it out on dozens of athletes. The procedure was described to the Herald last night by Dr Lloyd Drake, of Auckland, a member of the

New Zealand Sports Medicine Federation, as a most simple operation, requiring a short time to perform, and after which Walker could be running again within a week to 10 days.

There was a fascia membrane encircling muscles like a sausage skin.

"At some point damage has been done to this membrane in Walker's leg," Dr Drake said. "Because of this damage, the muscle is now rather like being encased in a metal cylinder which does not expand when the muscle expands upon warming up with exercise.

"Because of this there is reduced circulation within the muscle. The damage which has occurred to the membrane has formed a thickened scar, preventing expansion of the membrane at that place.

"The operation involves slitting the encircling mem-

brane, thus allowing free expansion of the muscle at exercise."

Dr Drake said that Dick Quax, whose problem was at the shins, was the first operated upon with this procedure by Dr Campbell.

"Dr Campbell has become so skilled in the operation now that he makes only a small incision in the skin, about two and a half inches long, in order to operate upon the muscle membrane.

"That is why it takes only a few minutes to perform and why the athlete is soon running again.

"Lasse Viren had this operation done for a hamstring problem," Dr Drake said. "There are three muscles to the hamstring and in Viren's case these had become adhered, thus forming a strong adhesion which meant freeing up the muscles."

Once the operation had been performed on an athlete, Dr Drake said, the problem would not reoccur.

Meanwhile Walker, who has been selected to run for Auckland in the annual inter-provincial fixture against Waikato at Mt Smart Stadium on Saturday, will make a decision today whether to run in the event.

He turned down an invitation to race in the Los Angeles Times indoor mile on Saturday.

# Record 1,500 confirms it New Zealand's Walker is back

1/14/79

LONG BEACH (UPI) — New Zealand's John Walker hit the finish line at the end of 1,500 meters gasping for breath, but through the pain and lack of oxygen, for one brief moment, a smile came through.

That smile said it all — John Walker is back.

Walker captured the 1,500 Jan. 6 in the Muhammad Ali Invitational and set an unofficial world record in the process (3:37.4). That bested the existing mark of 3:37.8 set in 1971 by Harold Norpoth of West Germany.

Walker, 27, is the world record holder in the mile and was the 1976 Olympic gold medalist in the 1,500. But one year after his victory in Montreal, many said the shaggy-haired Walker would never run again.

A circulatory problem developed in his right calf and two operations were performed last February and April to relieve pressure on an artery. The leg showed little improvement for several months and everyone — except Walker — figured he was finished.

"I kept thinking, 'What the hell am I doing here in this kind of company?'" Walker said after the Ali meet. "I was scared I wouldn't run the race right, but I ran it perfectly.

"I had my own pressure for the race. Many people, including Track and Field magazine, said I'd never run again. The leg is still not 100 percent and I've only been running 50 miles a week. But if I can run like this against guys doing twice that much training, then I know I'm back.

"I had no problems with my legs during the race at all. The surface of the track was bouncy and my legs felt heavy, but I'm sure the other runners would say the same thing."

With the 1980 Moscow Olympics on the horizon, Walker said now, with his confidence back, he may be there.

Walker returned to New Zealand after the Ali meet, but will be back in California for the Los Angeles Times Indoor Games Feb. 2.