

MASSIMO STANO			
1	Olympic Games	2021	Tokyo
1	World Championships	2022	Eugene
3	World Cup	2018	Taicang

Question:

1) Race walking is undergoing a transformation compared to traditional race distances. What do you think of this standardization of running and walking distances with the introduction of the marathon and half-marathon race walking?

I believe there are two points of view. On the one hand, I was born when the Olympic distances were 20 and 50 km. I grew up with these distances, and for me, race

walking should have these distances to bring respect and honor to past years. I'm a great supporter of these distances. I won the Olympics in the 20 km, while my dream will remain just that in the 50 km, because I will no longer have the chance to try to win an Olympic medal at this distance. On the other hand, the more media-focused and visibility-focused perspective, I think the idea of a half marathon and a marathon might make some sense, but the constant changes in distances don't reassure me about the future of race walking in the Olympic program.

2) You're currently experiencing the current era of world walking: what would you like to convey about this world to young people and enthusiasts?

The current period is certainly the richest in emotion and competitive performances, certainly the best time to communicate with the new boys and girls who are approaching race walking, the message that should be communicated through words and especially actions, is that everything is possible if we can dream it and if we are willing to choose to be guided by the passion for our discipline.

3) Race walking is performance, but also, and above all, technical identity. What do you think should be done to improve understanding and identification of the discipline, and to ensure fairness of judgment?

First and foremost, the jury must be constantly updated and judge consistently, so that coaches, athletes, and spectators can understand the intended walking model. That said, streaming platforms should explain not only to journalists but also with clear and intuitive graphics, which is also necessary to give visibility to our discipline, which in my opinion is more useful than changing the distance every few years.

4) Do you think that current race courses, mostly reduced to 1,000-meter laps, enhance the spectacle and understanding of the race, or would slightly longer courses help spectators better understand the event?

The 1000m course certainly helps the judges to have more control over the athletes, but a marathon-style lap would certainly bring more spectacle, because the spectator would be in third person on a tour of the city together with the athlete, and many cities offer truly unique architectural spectacles.

5) You are a symbol of the history of the discipline, a legend of race walking. How would you describe your love and passion for this discipline?

For me, walking is life. I dedicate many hours a day to my sport, and I'm often away from my family chasing my dream. What walking gives me is something indescribable and, at the same time, an unparalleled life teacher.

6) Do you think the current judging system is understandable and reflects the values of the discipline?

I believe there should be more moments of sharing with athletes and coaches and moments of constant updating, I believe it should become a full-time job and not just volunteering, only in this way can we obtain a level of judgment more suited to various levels of competition.