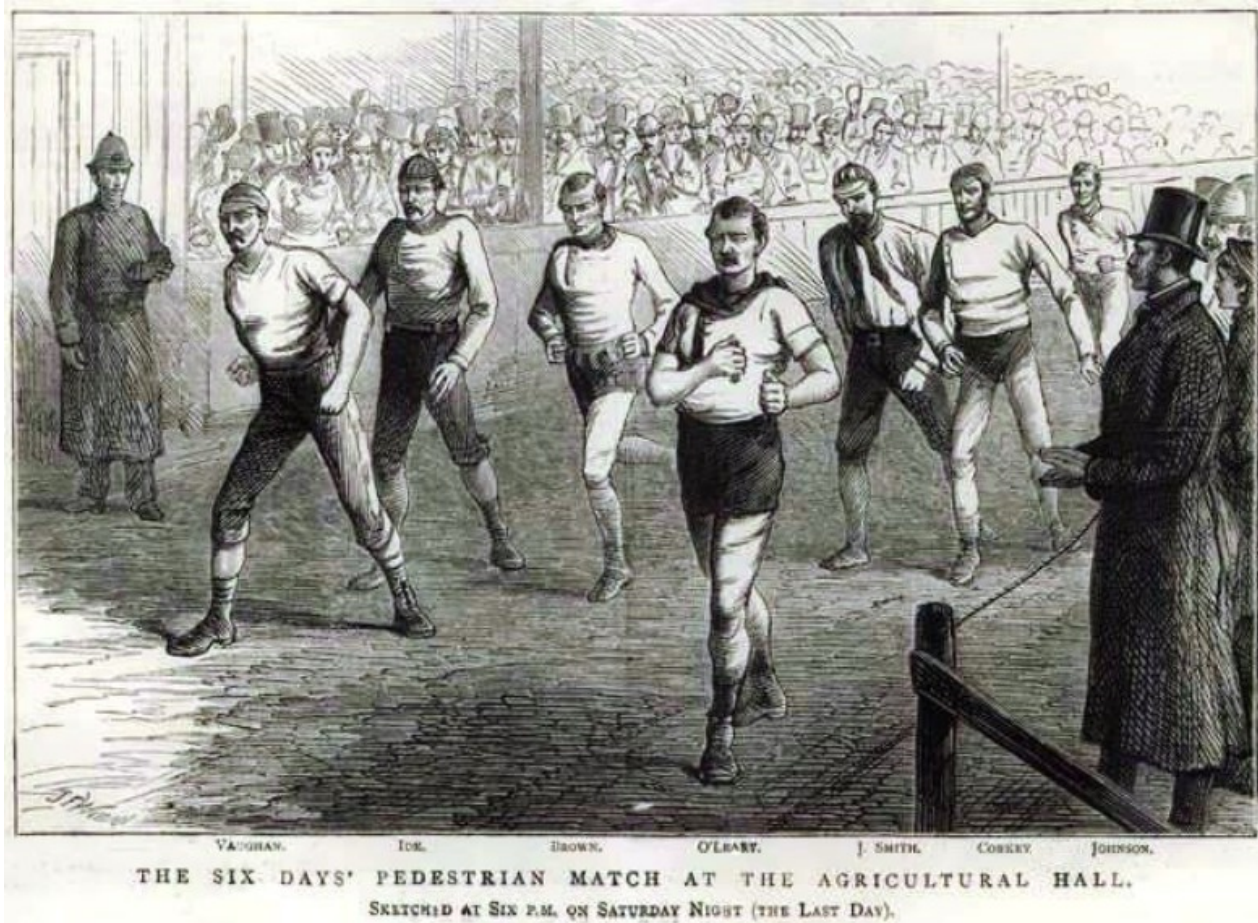


# Pedestrianism

*Pedestrian* - a person travelling on foot; walker.

*Pedestrianism* - The act, art, or practice of a pedestrian; walking or running; travelling or racing on foot.



Pedestrianism was a unique sport which is said to have come from aristocrats in the late 17th century pitting their carriage footmen, constrained to walk by the speed of their masters' carriages, against one another.

This became a firm fixture at country fairs much like horse racing, where pedestrians with support from trainers would grind out gruelling distances of up to a 100 miles per day and night for 6 days. This was over indoor sawdust tracks, getting just a few hours rest per day in makeshift huts beside the track, literally eating on the trot and undergoing tremendous hardships.

In its heyday in the 19th Century where big prize purses, a share of the gate receipts and dazzling ornamental gold belts lured men to put themselves through rigorous training all in the name of sport.

Often referred to as 'walking matches' or 'go as you please' races these events took place in the big cities of America, the UK and Australasia. Madison Square Garden in NY and the Agricultural Hall in London were just two of the many venues which attracted the best contestants; but to be at the top of their chosen career a competitor had to be tough, very tough!



Source: <https://www.mamnick.com/blogs/journal/pedestrianism>