



2015 NSWMA Annual General Meeting

President's Report – Stuart Gyngell

What an exhausting but fulfilling year this has been for NSWMA!

It has, of course, been dominated by our hosting of the AMA National Championships at Easter time at Bankstown Athletics Centre. Planning and organisation for the event began in 2013, moved into top gear in the middle of last year and we managed to find an even higher gear at the beginning of this year.

Due to the wonderful organisational effort of **Jill Taylor** who selflessly took on the role of LOC Co-ordinator I believe that we delivered an exceptional championships in spite of some very ordinary weather and last minute throwing venue changes. The event saw the largest ever number of participating athletes and almost everyone with whom I talked was most appreciative of the work that had gone into the championships. It would be difficult to calculate the number of hours that Jill contributed to the planning and organisation of the event. Her drive, determination and attention to detail was amazing to watch and I sincerely thank her for all that she did.

However, Jill was not on her own and I would like to thank all the members of NSWMA who raised their hand and volunteered to be a part of organising and / or conducting the championships. Three members of our club do deserve special mention. In my opinion, **Janie Carter** developed the best AMA Champs website ever. It stood head and shoulders above any other previous website and received unanimous commendation. **Adriana van Bockel** and her merchandise team also raised the bar significantly with the standard of merchandise that they were able to make available. The AMA Awards Night at Bankstown Sports and Recreation Club was organised largely by **George Jankowski** and he is to be congratulated for such a spectacular event.

It would be remiss of me not to mention and thank our major partners in conducting the event. Firstly, **Bankstown Sports Athletics Club** were our hosts for the weekend as we used their track, facilities and implements. However, their participation was much more than that. Through the tireless efforts of the father and son combination, **Colin** and **Matthew Whitbread**, they worked behind the scenes for months beforehand to ensure the success of the championships, including the setting of the walks and cross country courses. During the meet, they and their army of volunteers worked hard to keep us fed and solve our last minute on-site problems. Secondly, **Athletics NSW** provided the technical know-how and the officials to conduct the meet. **Brent Hayward** and his team provided admirable and professional service throughout the 4 days of the championships and, even when tensions rose as inevitable mistakes were made due to the complexity of the meet, they solved the problems with patience and a smile.

However, NSWMA was more than just one meet this year. There were many occasions that saw NSWMA athletes excel. Indeed, just in 2015 so far, there have been an amazing 78 NSWMA records broken – something that I am betting that **Peter Murray**, our new Records Officer for this season, would never have dreamed of when he took the job and I am very grateful to him for all the effort he has put into maintaining our records.

As far as different meets were concerned, the Treloar Shield prior to Christmas saw large numbers of NSWMA athletes competing in Open and Masters events with some impressive results. The Pan Pacific Masters Games on the Gold Coast in November saw probably the largest ever contingent of NSWMA athletes competing and we were dominant both on the track and the field. The ANSW Masters Athletics Championships, which are open to all ANSW athletes of Masters age, were conducted at SOPAC for the first time in a while and they were well attended by NSWMA athletes and also gave us a chance to showcase and promote the AMA Championships and merchandise. The NSWMA Throws Pentathlon and Heavy Weight Throws Pentathlon were also well attended.

The NSW State Relays was probably the only problem blip on the radar as NSWMA was still only able to field a few teams. In conjunction with NSW, we have been tinkering with the meet rules trying to find a way to avoid the creation of Masters 'super-teams' at the expense of the regular clubs but we still do not seem to have it right. This will need to be addressed by the new committee in the lead-up to the next summer season.

On a more positive note, we have only recently received official notification from AMA that NSWMA, in conjunction with Athletics Wollongong (of whom I am also Vice President), has received the rights to conduct the AMA Winter Throws Championships from 2016 to 2018. This has been something that I have personally been working towards and it was very satisfying to receive the nod from AMA. I will be heading up the LOC for the meet and we will start our planning in earnest in August of this year.

At the NSWMA AGM last year, the Memoranda of Understanding signed between the IAAF and WMA and between AA and AMA were brought to our attention. Their primary goal is to bring the ties between the bodies that run Open and Masters Athletics closer together. I and the committee were tasked with the job of exploring a similar MoU with NSW. Some preliminary meetings were held with **Greg Meagher** of NSW in the latter part of 2014 but it was decided that this would be put on hold until after the AMA Championships were held in April and it will be the task of the new committee to press ahead with these discussions with NSW. Personally, I am in favour of developing much closer ties with NSW and it would seem that an MoU is a sensible option. However, a clear accountability structure needs to be developed and there need to be several safeguards put in place to ensure that Masters Athletics is not downgraded or overlooked in future years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those on the 2014-15 Committee who have also worked tirelessly in their roles. **Mark Johnson** brought his long experience and wisdom to the role of Secretary and kept the wheels turning when even heads were spinning. **Anatoly Kirievsky** made sure that we stayed in the black and even made a profit out of the AMA Nationals – something that Jill and I dared only to dream about but never thought would be a reality. **Audrey Muscat**, our newly married Registrar, had to deal with a record number of members this year as NSW athletes geared up for a 'home' Nationals. **Belinda Westcott** had a very difficult time keeping up with the demand for uniforms but still seemed to be able to conjure them out of nowhere as Nationals approached. **Margaret Walker** took on the role of Editor of the Waratah this year for the first time and did an admirable job throughout the year with the latest instalment arriving in our letterboxes only last week.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of NSWMA for your support this year. I would like to encourage you all to consider taking on a more active role in your club and committee. The women and men whom I have mentioned have served you well but as I have said several times - many hands make light work. We will always welcome new people who feel that they are able to serve the club in some way.

Personally, I have decided not to stand again for President. I took on the role reluctantly last year knowing that I was already overloaded with responsibilities associated with family, church and work – not to mention my own desire to train and compete. By the end of Nationals, I was physically, emotionally and spiritually spent. This was both surprising and disappointing to me but it is a reality that I have to contend with and it is something from which I am still trying to recover. In response, I have decided to cut back on my commitments in several areas of my life not just with respect to NSWMA. I still would like to be involved and to serve – at the very least as the AMA Winter Throws Championships LOC Chair – but not as your President. I hope that you will understand my reasons for only being a 'one-term' President.

I wish the incoming NSWMA Committee all the very best for the new season and may they continue the great tradition that is Masters Athletics in NSW.

NSWMA President,

Stuart Gyngell
June 13th, 2015