

The Waratah



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December 2015



Clockwise from top left, Anatoly Kirievsky (Phil Frkovic), Raminder Singh (A Walker), Ian Guthrie (A Bohdan), Jamie Muscat (A Thompson).

When I was nine, I came second in the 100m at the Zone Carnival. This defining moment in my athletics career initiated a string of pleasant daydreams about running the same race at the Munich Olympics. I believed they would accept nine year olds and was ready to jump on the plane as soon as the call came. So when I heard that NSW athletes Gianna Mogentale and Julie Forster, along with Victorian middle distance runner Allan Cook, had been selected for one of the two inaugural Masters races at the IAAF World Championships in Beijing, it was an acknowledgment of that dream I'd had all those years ago that ordinary people can do extraordinary things.

AMA President Wilma Perkins writes that 'the concept for including

several exhibition races of Masters at the IAAF World Championships originated from the IAAF Masters Commission', one of the tasks of which 'is the promotion of athletics for all ages.' It 'consists of four appointed representatives from the IAAF ... and four appointed representatives from World Masters Athletics'.

'The brief to World Masters Athletics from the Beijing World Championship organizers and officials and the IAAF was that the athletes were not to be younger than 50 years of age and that there was to be one men's and one women's race.'

The choice of the men's 800m and women's 400m reflected WMA's goal which 'was to select races that would be competitive and result in a reasonably close finish from athletes coming from around the world.'

Will it happen again, I asked Wilma, and perhaps feature different events?

'Yes, this will continue,' Wilma replied. 'In fact, the next such event will be at the IAAF Indoor Championships in Portland USA, scheduled for March 2016. Once again there will be a Master's event for men and for the women. It is my understanding that this time the age group will be 60 plus. The actual distance for these two races is still being finalised by those involved with the organising of the Championships.'



But what was the reality for the athletes chosen? This month read about Julie's experience on page 16.

On Australia Day this year Masters legend, Fred O'Connor,

was awarded an OAM for services to athletics. Meet the man behind the myth from those of us at Epping Athletics who know him, page 12.

And just when you thought athletics was only about sport, Robert Hanbury-Brown admires the View from the Castle in the heart of the French Beaujolais district, page 8, and Adriana van Bockel recommends the Cook Islands as a holiday destination on page 19.

Congratulations to those athletes featured on the following pages who received awards at the NSWMA Awards 2015 afternoon.

We have also a page of wonderful memories from Lyon taken by Western Australian photographer, Graeme Dahl, and our first reminder from South Australia that the registrations for the AMA National Championships 2016 in 16-19 April Adelaide are now open.

Editor

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The Presidential Address

The president has moved to another white house. Not quite Pennsylvania Avenue but it will do. Now to matters athletic. Since the last issue we had our belated annual presentation at new venue, Bankstown Sport Club. Numbers were a bit down, given the change of date and other things going on but a successful lunch was had by all

and it was a good chance to recognise some great efforts by our members. Next year we will be back to the usual timeslot and we have already pencilled in Sunday 29 May 2016.

A number of members took the opportunity to visit The Cook Islands for the Oceania Championships and there were many good performances. You can find results and photos elsewhere in this newsletter. A hardy band of throwers also kept the annual Springwood Day alive, venturing up to the mountains for a good



day's throwing. At the recent ANSW State Relays we were not able to field any men's teams but the women carried our standard with some handy results.

Just this week I met with the new CEO of ANSW, Duncan Tweed, and had a productive discussion aimed at closer ties with the open body. More details of

initiatives will appear in future issues of The Waratah.

After some complaints from members concerning difficulties in renewing their membership on-line, we have revamped that portion of the website, I hope it's easier now and just a reminder to those who haven't yet renewed, next year is a biggie with World Titles in Oz and Nationals in S.A.

Mark

NSWMA Awards 2015

Photos from the Awards afternoon were taken by Gavin Murray.

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

John Lamb



Mary Thomas



BEST AT STATE TITLES

Melissa Holahan (and Newcomer of the Year)



Michael Laws



BEST AT COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

June Lowe

Alan Provenzano



SPRINTS

Julie Forster W50

Records - NSWMA W50 4x100m Relay

NSWMA - 1st 200m, 400m

AMA - 1st 60m, 100m, 200m, 400m, 170+ 4x400m Relay; 2nd 100m CofC, 170+ 4x100m Relay

John Lamb M65

Records - NSWMA 100mH (x2), 300mH, M60 4x400m Relay

NSWMA - 1st 100m, 200m, 400m, 100mH, 300mH

AMA - 1st 100m, 400m, 300mH, 240+ 4x400m Relay; 2nd 60m



MIDDLE DISTANCE

Paula Moorhouse

W65

Records - NSWMA 800m, 1500m

NSWMA - 1st 800m, 1500m

AMA - 1st 800m, 1500m



Don Mathewson

M70

Records - NSWMA 800m, 1500m, 3000m X7

NSWMA - 1st 800m, 1500m, 3000m

AMA - 1st 800m, 1500m



LONG DISTANCE

Jose Cavalho

M55

1st State Long Course X C'try Champs 2014

1st 8km Cross Country Nationals 2015



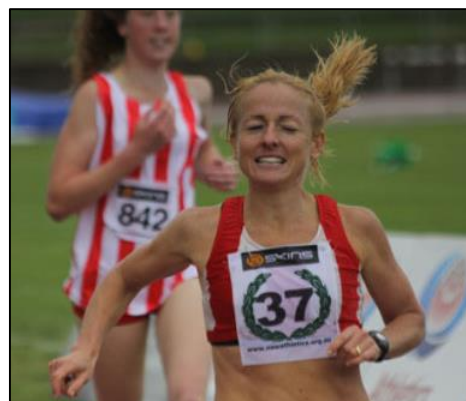
Belinda Martin

W40

1st State Long Course X Champs 2014

1st Short Course X C'try Champs 2014

1st 8km X C'try Nationals 2015 by 7m14s



WALKS

Suzanne Brown

W45

NSWMA 1st 5000m Walk

AMA 1st 1500m Walk, 10km Road Walk;
2nd 5000m



Jim Seymon

M75

Records – NSWMA 10km Road Walk, 1500m walk
NSWMA 1st 5000m Walk

AMA 1st 10km Road Walk (won by 18min 31sec)
1500m Walk (won by 3min)
5000m Walk (won by 9min 1sec)



JUMPS



Christine Shaw

W55

Records - NSWMA High Jump, Long Jump (x2)
NSWMA 1st High Jump, Long Jump, Triple Jump
AMA 1st High Jump, Long Jump, Triple Jump

Andrew Cassin

M40

NSWMA 1st
High Jump, Long
Jump, Triple
Jump, AMA 1st
High Jump,
Long Jump,
Triple Jump



THROWS

Mary Thomas

W70

Records - AMA Javelin (x2); NSWMA Discus (x2),
Hammer (x3), Javelin (x2), Shot (x2), Weights (x5)
NSWMA – 1st Discus, Hammer, Javelin, Shot, Weight
AMA - 1st Discus, Javelin, Shot, CofC Discus;

Stuart Gyngell

W50

Records - AMA Discus; NSWMA Discus
NSWMA – 1st Discus, Hammer, Shot, Weight
2nd Hammer, Weight
AMA – 1st Hammer, Shot, Weight, 2nd Discus

MULTI-EVENTS

Mary Thomas W70

Records – AMA Pentathlon Throws (x2);
NSWMA Pentathlon Heavy Weight
NSWMA - 1st Pentathlon Throws
AMA - 1st Pentathlon Throws
AMA Winter Championships - 1st Pentathlon Throws,
Pentathlon Heavy Weight

Stuart Gyngell M50

Records - AMA Pentathlon Throws
NSWMA - 1st Pentathlon Throws
NAMA – 1st Pentathlon Throws

MARCUS TOOLEY AWARD

30-39 Warren Jones
40-49 Alice Bohdan
50-59 Todd Devery
60-69 Alan Carey
70-79 Greg Nicol
80+ John Sturzaker

Warren Jones



Alice Bohdan

NSWMA SUMMER AWARD

Peter Murray

JAMES & JOHNSTON TROPHY

Best point score at state throws pentathlon.

Mary Thomas



PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Jill Taylor

COUER DE LYON

Robere Camembert-Brun plans a crusade to the Worlds

I decided to take the world champs seriously.

This meant a thorough training and preparation regime building up to the event in August in Lyon France.

The best tactic appeared to be an assault from across the channel. The idea was to think big like the knights of old. To do this, I needed a solid base, so I decided to start in the 12th century.

Landmark trust has a fabulous collection of restored historic buildings that one can rent all around the UK. The GGG and I chose Wilmington Priory near Eastbourne. The building dates back to William the Conqueror's time and comes with massive stone walls, a four poster bed and a vast 13th century ping pong room for sharpening one's reflexes. From the bedroom you can see the huge chalk figure of the Long Man of Wilmington carved into the hillside. For fitness, one could walk up to the top of the South Downs way and gain spectacular views towards the coast. The old churchyard next door boasted a gnarly 1000-year-old yew tree reputed to be the oldest in England. I quickly settled into a routine of morning walks and roast lunches washed down with London Pride at the local Giants Rest.

After five days, I decided to step up the preparations and move unto the 14th century. We moved into a castle! Woodsford castle near Dorchester is a genuine thatched roof castle fortified in the 14th century against a possible French invasion. Again we had the massive stone walls, a huge fireplace and loads of hidden rooms up spiral staircases. Thomas Hardy worked there and even wrote a rather creepy poem about it. I discovered that the polished stone courtyard outside the main entrance was ideal to use as a throwing circle. I could practise my hammer throw and javelin with a 500-year-old staff that I had borrowed from a Royal forest. It was only a two mile ride into the local inn the Frampton Arms which served excellent food and ale and even had 21st century wi fi! This was a far nicer place to plot a rebellion or put down a coup than the cold corridors of Canberra! I felt sorry for the 19th century Tolpuddle martyrs who had been ruthlessly suppressed by their masters.

However, when the barmaid asked where we were staying, I couldn't resist answering in a loud voice, "Oh, we live in the castle."



After a week of beer and skittles, we drove up to the UK champs at Birmingham. As usual, the weather was appalling. I ran into Viddy from Queensland in between sheltering from the 14 degree temp, the 30 mph wind and the driving rain. I abandoned the shot put and retired to my trusty thermos and BBC radio in the car. I took all my four layers of wet clothes off, turned the heater to full blast for two hours and recovered for the weight throw and another soaking. The following week I had intended to refine my throwing technique by trying some road bowling in Ireland. However, the weather was so bad that I spent the time in pubs downing whisky and Guinness and added another couple of kilos.

When we arrived in Lyon, it was just like San Francisco to Sacramento again! The temperature went from 14 to 40. Luckily, the GGG had secured a brilliant flat close to Part Dieu railway station with air-conditioning, which I'm sure was powered by something green, if not uranium! After adjusting to our new diet of cheese and croissants, Andrew, Lynette and myself dragged Janet out to watch the heptathlon. Armed with our *parapluies* against the sun, we tackled the public transport system in 40 degree heat to one of the four far flung stadia. Although efficient, the city struggled to function in these temperatures. Maybe what saved us was the fact that *elle etait vide!* *Toute la monde* had *disparu* to somewhere nicer like Nice! Needless to say, Marie Kay was magnificent in the heptathlon in smashing the world record by many hundreds of points.

After some hearty cheers, Janet announced that that would be her one and only appearance as a spectator and headed for the public baths on the Saone. In an effort to keep our rapidly melting theme of conquering knights alive, Andrew and I headed for the English style Elephant and Castle pub where cold refreshments were the order of the day. I ran into Greg Hepburn, and to our delight they were showing the first rugby game in which the Aussies actually beat the Kiwis! Surely this was a sign that we were getting closer to the Holy Grail!

The next week seemed to pass in a blur. The intense heat combined with refreshments at the Elephant and Castle and the number of separate venues made it hard to focus on athletics. The ancient city of Lyon had many distractions. The excellent bike hire system meant that one could explore such places as the Confluence or the *parc Tete D'or*. Andrew had great fun taking photos of the *Tromphe D'oeil* murals.



The old town reminded me of San Sebastian with the cobbled streets and massive stone walls and of course the secret tunnels or Traboules. The Beaux Arts museum and the Gallo-Roman museum were exceptional.

The good Janet Nylon and Stuart Patterson were most helpful in helping us maintain our dazed state in that they organised a wine tasting with a charming French/Aussie who educated us in French wine whilst surrounded by thousands of bottles of plonk. The GGG organised a trip to Annecy which is a drop dead gorgeous town on a lake. After scoffing a crepe in the old town, we drove home on the right side of the road for well over 90 per cent of the time. The next day we caught a *chemin de fer* to the walled medieval town of Perouges which was just as it was centuries ago, with circuitous cobbled streets and solid defences. However, we couldn't order a coffee out of lunch hours. Andrew told the patron that his mother was a hamster and his father smelt of elderberries!

Towards the end of competition, the weather relented and I mentally re-engaged for the throws pentathlon. This was always going to be tough, with the usual parade of giant Russians and Germans to contend with. Andrew slipped between Holy Grail rhetoric and Ministry of Silly Walks demonstrations during his usual education of foreign javelin throw judges. We saw an excellent rivalry between Jan Banens and Mary Thomas in the women's throws with exceptional performances. Medals in my age group seemed an impossible quest with the giant Viking Tom Jensen conquering all other mere mortals. I was happy to finish eighth and cover over the top of kiwi rival Mark Flaus.

As we celebrated a fabulous French fortnight over a bottle of vintage champagne I couldn't help thinking of Margaret River and Little Creatures at Fremantle and of course my next training strategy that was only 400 odd sleeps away!



"I am not bad at any kind of manly sport. Of all the others now alive and eating their bread on the face of the earth, I claim to be by far the best, though I should not care to compete with the men of the past, Hercules, for instance. As for the javelin, I can throw it further than anyone else can shoot an arrow. It is only in running that I am afraid some of you might outstrip me. I was too badly knocked about by the rough seas, for in my raft my stores gave out, and as a result my legs have lost their power." The Odyssey. Book 8: 214, 221-224, 228-233.



Perth begins countdown for 2016 World Masters Athletics Championships

The countdown to the Perth 2016 World Masters Athletics Championships is underway with 26 October 2015 marking 'One Year to Go' until the competition commences.

The world-class championships, supported by the State government, are set to be the biggest event on WA's 2016 calendar with more than 4,000 athletes and 3,000 supporters expected to attend.

Athletes aged 35 and over from around 80 countries will compete at the WA Athletics Stadium in Mount Claremont, Ern Clark Athletic Centre in Cannington and other Perth locations, from 26 October to 6 November 2016.



Stan Perkins, WMA President, and Gwyn Dolphin, Tourism WA Executive Director, enjoy Perth 2016 cupcakes.

Event Director David Budge said that plans are on track to deliver a great event.

"365 days from now we look forward to what will be a fantastic spectacle, beginning with the opening ceremony at the exciting Elizabeth Quay development," he said.



John Gilmour, Lyn Ventris and David Carr celebrate One Year to Go until Perth 2016.

"We're expecting to see an impressive mix of former Olympians, world record holders as well as a handful of participants who are over one hundred years old, all vying for the coveted title of world champion.

Lyn Ventris, 2011 and 2012 IAAF Female Masters Athlete of the Year winner and world record holder, said that she is excited to compete in her home city. "I'm looking forward to competing in a new age group and producing my best times at a world class athletics event with a hometown advantage and a beautiful city and state to showcase."

With no entry standards to compete, Perth 2016 is a great opportunity to wear the green and gold and represent your country. Registrations open online in January 2016!

For more information visit www.perth2016.com or follow the event Facebook page www.facebook.com/perth2016 for regular updates.



Photos courtesy of Fred O'Connor

Fred O'Connor OAM first became involved in athletics in 1933 when, at the age of nine, he competed in the NSW Railways and Tramways Annual Picnic Race at Clifton Gardens in Sydney.

'Did you win?' I asked him.

'Of course,' replied Fred. 'I don't compete to lose.'

This laudable attitude has sustained Fred through eighty-two years of athletics until, on Australia Day this year, he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for Services to Athletics.

A Level 4 coach in sprints, hurdles and relays and an IAAF trained jumps coach, Fred is a life member of Athletics NSW, the Australian Track and Field Coaches Association and numerous other groups. His vast contribution to the sport has taken three forms: competing, coaching and as an official. In 2015 alone he has worked in all of these capacities.

As a competitor, Fred's name appears in eight Masters Athletics All-time World rankings: M65, **200m**, M70, M75, M80 **Triple jump**, M75, M80 **300m hurdles** and M65, M75 **Decathlon**. He still holds nine Australian records in long jump, triple jump, pole vault, javelin, long hurdles and multi events. 'Best single athletics performance, 1989' from the Confederation of Australian Sport and 'Best male athlete of the year 1999' from the Australian Association of Veteran Athletes have featured among his many awards.

Whilst his career as a Masters athlete commenced in 1986, many of his times as an



Open athlete remain impressive even today with the advantages of tartan tracks and sports medicine. Between 1944 and 1946, his personal best for 100 yards was 10 seconds flat and 21.5 seconds for 220 yards, 6.7 metres for long jump and 15.2 metres in the triple jump, which at the time ranked number two in the world.

As first a Veteran and then a Masters athlete Fred has cheerfully spent his superannuation pursuing an international athletics career and has been rewarded by a treasure chest of individual gold, silver and bronze medals: twenty-one, seven and four respectively.

'But I never trained as much as I should have,' I have heard him remark.

My feeling, instead, is that he achieved success through a mixture of talent, an unashamedly competitive nature and most particularly, a passion for biomechanics and an emphasis on the technical perfection which is its goal. That

he took his own advice is clear from his mastery of the decathlon and its ten events into his eighties without injury.

Anyone who has spent time with Fred may quickly discover themselves participating in an impromptu lesson on biomechanics. I would advise them, should this fortunate occurrence take place, to make careful notes, because the ability to turn one's body into a bio-machine that will perform perfectly at the touch of a button is one of Fred's most impressive achievements. His gift to athletics is passing on that knowledge to the next generation so that it will not be lost.

Over the course of his long sporting career Fred has played and coached cricket, rugby, basketball and soccer as well as athletics and is still, at ninety-one, very much involved with young athletes. Athletes regularly travel to our club at Epping from as far afield as Melbourne for specialized coaching. He coaches several times per week at SOPAC and has been employed as the Jumps Coach at Westfields Sports High School since 1992, notably as the coach of Fabrice Lapierre among other elite athletes.

I first met Fred in 2007 when, like many Masters athletes, I was returning to the sport after a long break. I had grown up in Epping and found his name recommended somewhere on the internet as a Masters coach. My chest had been getting progressively worse for several years and, vaguely hoping that running might help, I had nevertheless caught myself accepting that chronic illness was just another part of getting older.

Fred soon sorted that nonsense out.

My bronchitis improved, but my first 100m crippled me. Later on, when I was braver, I also trained on Sundays, when we ran hill runs of 700m followed by 300m repeats. Protests that I had never run further than 400m in my life would be followed by Fred's cheerful advice of,

'Try to keep going normally, Margaret,' when it was time to limp home.

Fred never let us indulge in self-pity.

Nor he did he allow it in himself. The one time I have known him approach it – and it was nostalgia, not self-pity – was in 2009 when Sydney was host to the World Masters Games.

With a wistful gaze at the track he said, 'I wish I was down there, too.'



But his hip had been giving him trouble and a year or so later he had the faulty joint replaced with a prosthesis. He was given an anaesthetic suitable for his age which allowed him some awareness of the procedure. He took a great interest in the surgery, including the amount of blood he lost when they sawed through the bone, and related it all to us as we tramped into Royal Ryde rehab to visit him.



But, in any case, Fred's retirement from competitive athletics has been an on-and-off affair. You can't put a good athlete down, as they say, or out to pasture either. In 2012, following the hip replacement, he decided to compete in the 60m and throws at the AMA National Championships in Melbourne. The prosthesis performed admirably but he strained a medial ligament in his knee and was unhappy with his run. We thought that was curtains for Fred, but he reappeared at NSW Police Games this year at Wollongong where it was, as always, difficult to tell his age because of his superb biomechanics.



Fred has, for many years, volunteered as a technical official. One of my favourite 'Fred' stories highlights the rewards of being in the right place at the right time. During the Sydney Olympics, Fred was volunteering as a National Technical Official at the long jump pit when Cathy Freeman swung into the straight in the final of the 400m. In a perfectly executed race, Cathy had nevertheless not been ahead during the first three hundred metres and some doubt had been expressed as to her eventual placing.

But, 'She knew she'd won,' Fred told me. 'I could see it in her face as she came into the straight.'

I wish I'd been that close. I had to stay home and watch it on television.

Epping Athletics track is the only athletics track in the Hornsby Shire that operates all year round and Fred has been actively involved in its use and maintenance since it was established in 1966. It is still not unusual to arrive at training to find him hard at it with his shovel clearing the drains. The drainage work the Council completed a couple of years ago, including the installation of two huge water tanks, keeps the raised, doughnut-shaped track useable even after rain, making it a true community track, widely used throughout the year.

Where the safety of his athletes is concerned, Fred is uncompromising and totally fearless when confronting perpetrators. Footballs, Frisbees, cricket balls, bikes and dogs that interrupt training – not forgetting that memorable episode of the remote controlled plane - are advised without reservation to 'Get off the track!' Signs provided by the Council have helped but a small army of toddlers still regularly arrive armed with buckets and spades to play in the sandpit kindly maintained by the club. Protests that it is for long jump have so far proved unsuccessful.

Innumerable are the athletes I have seen Fred help over the years, whether they are a member of the club or not – wandering in for a one-off session is not unusual – such is his interest in assisting athletes of all ages. He has a very accurate technical eye and many have been the occasions when he has encapsulated a problem with a glance and expressed its solution (with effect) in only three or four words. It is my hope that I can pass on what he has taught me.

A couple of years ago at his ninetieth birthday barbeque, Fred told us he had the next ten years planned. We at Epping District Athletics Club send our best wishes and wish him every success.
Editor

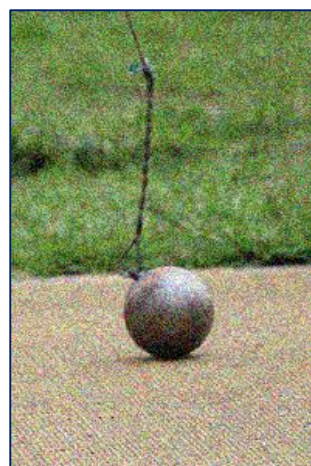
NSWMA Winter Throws Pentathlon #3

Tom Hunter Park, Faulconbridge

September 13th, 2015



Congratulations to Lajos Joni,
who broke the M60 Weight
Throw record with his last throw.



Age	Name	Hammer	Shot Put	Discus	Javelin	Weight	Points
		3kg	3kg	1kg	500g	7.26kg	
W50	Glenys Whitehead	37.65m	9.21m	26.48m	22.69m	11.84m	3295
		3kg	3kg	1kg	500g	5.45kg	
W60	Jill Taylor	30.32m	8.59kg	23.45m	15.45m	11.46m	3289
	Adriana van Bockel	23.83m	6.10m	16.29m	13.74m	9.26m	2395
	Karen Jones	18.10m	5.05m	12.42m	7.93m	6.22m	1592
W65	Judy Brown	14.72m	5.70m	14.35m	12.33m	5.76m	1947
W70	Mary Thomas	27.60m	8.14m	23.16m	20.84m	10.88m	4268
		7.26kg	7.26kg	2kg	800g	15.88kg	
M30	Malik Amardeep	21.83m	9.30m	22.96m	36.60m	8.12m	1734
M35	Anatoly Kirievsky	28.74m	8.84m	30.29m	29.80m	9.05m	1970
	Warren Jones	33.73m	8.62m	23.96m	23.44m	9.37m	1842
		6kg	6kg	1.5kg	700g	11.34kg	
M50	Stuart Gyngell	47.66m	16.52m	45.63m	34.61m	16.87m	4013
	Rob Clarke	31.81m	9.24m	29.36m	0	11.20m	2025
M55	Rob Hanbury-Brown	38.70m	10.29m	34.39m	36.82m	14.06m	3349
		5kg	5kg	1kg	600g	9.08kg	
M60	Lajos Joni	41.57m	10.78m	35.50m	21.26m	17.39m	3278
	John West	17.81m	7.29m	25.25m	25.68m	8.81m	1874
	Mark Johnston	41.10m	0	36.71m	0	0	1384
M65	Bob Jones	15.60m	5.48m	15.08m	12.24m	5.91m	1211

Beijing – 29th August 2015

by Julie Forster

Photos by David Tarbotton and Ludwin Jungmann



My journey to Beijing was convoluted. In trying to run the qualifying time late in the season, there were a few ups and downs. If you were standing near the end of the 400m at Nationals, you may have heard me utter a few choice words when I realised I had run in the low 63s, exactly what the WMA had asked me to do but by now it was after the closing date for applications!

Before Nationals I had abandoned all hope of going to Beijing and had instead planned my World Masters campaign in Lyon followed by a relaxing holiday in Europe, visiting old friends. This wasn't to be. Two weeks before I was due to fly out to Europe, I received an email from the irrepressible Winston Thomas, the WMA secretary, inviting me to compete in Beijing after all! "What do I do?" I thought. I phoned Jackie B who pointedly told me that she would never speak to me again if I didn't seize this once in a lifetime opportunity. 24 hours after the email from Winston, I accepted, throwing my itinerary into complete disarray. Part of me couldn't believe this was actually going to happen. Bruce Green, coach and M70 Masters athlete in his own right, was unflappable as usual and set my head straight. "You need to run more races before you fly out." In the end, all I had time for was one lonesome time trial, the one scheduled for the week before wiped out due to a car accident on the way to North

Narrabeen. Were the Gods really on my side, I wondered?

Fast forward to 25 August, Paris CDG, Lyon competition behind me followed by a bit of R and R. I arrived at the airport in plenty of time for my flight to London – Hong Kong – Beijing. When I reached the counter, a British Airways staff member told me in no uncertain terms that I would not be boarding the plane. My visa wasn't in order for China! No, dear reader, in the rush I had not forgotten to get one; the Chinese authorities had made a mistake with the visa date. A lightning bolt went through my body piercing my brain, leaving me momentarily speechless. I explained, I pleaded, I cajoled but British Airways would have none of it. People who were lucky enough to have a valid visa to wherever swept past me and boarded their planes. I was desolate. The Beijing dream wasn't meant to happen after all! I called Bruce who said "Julie, I don't know what to say to you." Which was comforting because I didn't either.

I settled down enough to devise a strategy. Now was the time to pull out all the stops. I went upstairs where there was working Wi-Fi (British Airways is in the basement, it must be cheaper rent) and walked into the middle of a bomb scare. Well, an unclaimed item of baggage...I seem to have a knack of being at CDG airport when there's a bomb scare. Despite my frantic efforts over the next few hours, I was still stuck in Paris as the sun set over "Roissy", which is what the French call CDG airport.

I ate and drank which helped my mental processes to function although there was anchovy paste in the salad vinaigrette - urk !! When I looked at my watch it was 8.30 pm. Time was not my friend. Better find a hotel nearby I thought, and resolved to call the Beijing IAAF visa service at 9 am Beijing time. If this didn't work I would be calling Qantas to arrange a direct flight home, leaving one of the outside lanes in the Bird's Nest empty I supposed. I set the alarm and woke at three am and after three or four phone calls – thank God for hotel Wi-Fi, an Australian invention -

was able to email them. I was so wired I couldn't go back to sleep until 4 am, so by the time I was drifting off I saw the response from the visa service. They had sent me another invitation letter. This time I **would** board a Cathay Pacific plane! This would leave forty-eight hours before the race on arrival to recuperate before the only race in 2015 that really mattered.

When I was issued with my bib number reality started to bite "We are going to run in the monument to athletics that is the Birds nest!" Gianna and I were rooming together, rivals and firm friends, an unspoken understanding between us that we would definitely eat chocolate after the race.....

On the day, there was no official transport from the hotel to the warm up track so we resorted to a taxi driven by a Chinese man who, if the Mandarin had been translated, was surely shouting while gesticulating wildly, "These are fit people, why don't they walk to the Stadium, it's just over there!" Our hotel was indeed very close to the Stadium.

Despite this 'enervement', we arrived at the warm up track without a hitch. "Trust me Valmai, I know the way." The heat pulsated off the track and it was eerily calm. We warmed up deliberately and slowly, together but alone, our focus interrupted only by a photographic interlude with Yuki the Japanese runner and her coach, Moose. You don't need a common language to have fun; we have the photos to prove it.

Before we knew it we were making our way to the first call room – even now I get butterflies just typing it. Winston was there again issuing last minute instructions, which I promptly forgot. We would move to the tunnel in the bowels of the Bird nest and step into the space of the Birds nest which at once envelops and

dwarfs you. The lip at the top means that there is little or no wind – at least that was my own personal theory. Our glimpse above of the Australian blue sky had been engineered by shutting down factories as the Government had done in 2008. The Chinese know how to organise an event. Everything was done with a precision, including the race times.

While in the second call room, my heart jumped into my chest. This spike of adrenalin needed be controlled. I looked at the clock. Five minutes to go until show time.

We burst out of the underground and began jogging to the start line. Adjustment of my blocks proved difficult. It felt like they were pinned to the ground! Either that or I need to do some more bicep curls... We had been warned to sit well back in the blocks and not fidget. This would lead to disqualification under IAAF rules. My blocks would have to do, there was no more time. Jagged silence as we were on the blocks. The starter called "set" but it sounded like he was 100 miles away. We started but were called back. Had someone

broken? I didn't think I had, but was worried for the other girls. A green card was then waved in front of everyone. There would be time to find out later what that was all about!

Came the announcement "Relax, ladies". I'm pretty sure I didn't imagine that, but it felt like we were back at SOPAC. Too casual. Come on, this is an important race!



Off we ran. From lane one I knew I would have to work to catch the rest of the field. "Just stride out, relax." Bruce's words rang in my ears. Concentrating on running the narrow bend, I was unaware of our surroundings during the race, as I guess everyone was. I finished fourth in my season's best time. Now we uttered a collective sigh as we took off our shoes (we get why Cathy Freeman did that).

From very close to the glorious track, we were able to watch the brilliant men's 800 Masters featuring Alan Cook from Victoria. We found time for an interview and took some photos with Tarby (David Tarbotton). We didn't want to move, but had to eventually proceed to the next official task, presentation of our certificates, the group photos and speeches!

There was acknowledgement of the work done by all concerned: Cesar, the Perkins, Winston to name but a few, in organising this inaugural Masters event at the World Championships. As I was walking in the tunnel again with Gianna and Renee (Henderson – American



athlete), I ran forward and leapt up in the air. "Did that really happen?" I screamed to no-one in particular.



NSW donates gear to the Cook Islands athletes - Jill Taylor

I met some lovely Cook Islands athletes when I was in Tahiti for Oceania back in 2010. Meeting them and seeing them compete in throws in joggers and no gloves reiterated to me just how lucky we are in Australia, and how lucky I am personally to be able to earn the money to travel the world for my sport and to buy the gear that I need.

In the weeks leading up to the Oceania Championships in Rarotonga, we started a collection of athletics footwear to donate to the athletes in the Cook Islands. I got about a dozen pairs of shoes and some compression gear mailed to me, and the 2015 LOC decided to also donate the remaining merchandise from our National Championships in April.



So, laden with a large suitcase full of our donations (just on 23kg!), I was delighted during my time there last week to present these to the President of the Cook Islands Athletics Association, with the assurance that they would be distributed to their athletes, and their gratitude for our generosity. So many thanks to those who donated, your gear was gratefully accepted!

I'm hoping to make it an ongoing effort, and spread it Australia wide if possible, so hang onto your old gear before tossing it, and donate it to our Pacific neighbours who could really use the help.



Oceania Games Report - Adriana Van Bockel

Photos - Jill Taylor

It was with great excitement that I packed my summer clothes, including sports gear, into my bag. I'd even been doing some training in preparation and was injury free!

Accompanied by good friends Mary, Jill and Stuart we jetted off to the Cook Islands for The 18th Oceania Athletics Championships at Rarotonga. There were a total of 103 Australian competitors, with an awesome team from NSW Masters. The Tereora stadium at Rarotonga is surrounded by a beautiful backdrop of mountains and tropical rain forest. We were warmly welcomed by our Cook Island hosts on our check-in at the stadium.

Jill and Stuart kindly transported the Nationals Merchandise we had left over, as well as the shoes/spikes donated by some of our NSW members. These were donated to the Cook Island committee, and were greatly appreciated.

The Opening Ceremony was held at the Edgewater Resort. The Sports Minister, Albert Nichols, did the honors followed by a wonderful buffet dinner. It was great catching up with all the athletes and renewing friendships.

The common mode of transport in the Cook Islands is the scooter. A great number of athletes buzzed around the island finding places to visit, going to the track, shopping and visiting the markets. Most athletes managed to stay on without drama. Mary T. has managed to take some skin off again! Fortunately, not as much as the last time; nothing will stop our Mary!



The Athlete's dinner was on the Wednesday night. We were entertained by the local dance troupe; some of the little ones were really fantastic. There was heaps of food supplied by the local committee and enjoyed by the athletes. Unfortunately, the next day some athletes suffered from gastric problems, which probably affected performances.

There was some great competition between the athletes, with rivalry between the Kiwi's and Aussie's running strong. The

Cook Islander's cheer squad gave lots of encouragement to their athletes and kept us all entertained. The local school kids were very helpful with officiating and retrieving implements, etc.

Our awesome athletes performed exceedingly well. We had a strong throwing team with Stuart Gyngell, Mary Thomas and Jill Taylor, all throwing well. Jill managed to win a Triple Jump just to show she can! Caroline Layt, Selina Ellis and George Jankowski were multi-talented. Gianna Mogentale showed a clean pair of heels, winning all her events in great style. Andrew Rodda placed well in his events, John Walton and Greg Mather showing their talents in the long distance events. Adriana van Bockel and Jacqui Walton placed well in the throws.

The competition finished on Saturday the 10th with the Half Marathon. The Cook Islanders made us feel welcomed. They were generous, very helpful and it was a pleasure to have spent our time there.

I would recommend the Cook Islands to anyone for a visit.

RESULTS

Mary Thomas W70

Hammer 1st - 28.44m, Discus 1st - 22.03m, Javelin 1st - 21.51m, Weight 2nd -11.59m, Shot 2nd -7.78m, Throws Pent. 1st -4377.

Gianna Mogentale W50

60m 1st -8.89. 100m 1st -13.41. 200m 1st -28.28. 400m 1st - 65.02. Outdoor Pent. 1st - 3193

Jill Taylor W60

T.Jump 1st 6.96m. Shot 1st -9.13. Hammer 2nd - 34.02. Discus 2nd -23.28m. Weight 2nd 13.41m. Throws Pent 2nd -3644.



Caroline Layt W50

100m 2nd -16.41. Hammer 2nd -40.43. Discus 2nd -29.26m. Weight 2nd -13.09m. Throws Pent 3432.

Adriana van Bockel W60

Javelin 2nd -14.26m. Hammer 3rd -24.06m. Weight 3rd 9.47m. Discus 4th 16.97m. Shot 6th 5.83m. Throws Pent 4th 2290.

Jacqui Walton W60

Discus 3rd 19.02m. Hammer 4th 21.39m.

Selina Ellis W45

High Jump 1st -1.09m. Long Jump 3rd -3.31m. Triple Jump 3rd -6.36m. Hammer 4th -22.15m. Discus 4th 18.13m. Javelin 3rd -22.26m. Shot 4th 6.80m. Weight 4th -7.08m. Throws Pent 4th - 2000.

Stuart Gyngell M50

Hammer 1st -46.95m. Discus 1st - 47.95m. Shot 1st -16.87m. Javelin 1st -37.46m Weight 1st 17.89m. Throws Pent 1st 4192.



George Jankowski M50

Decathlon 1st -1736 Hurdles 100/short 1st - 20.13. Hurdles 2nd 1.36.71. High Jump 2nd - 1.00m. Triple Jump 2nd -5.76m. Hammer 2nd - 25.14m. Discus 5th 20.03m. Weight 3rd -8.99m.

John Walton M65

5000m 2nd -21.31.36. 8000m.1st -34.26/80. ½ Marathon 2nd - 1.39.52.00

Greg Mather M50

60m 6th -8.96. 100m 6th 14.62. 5000m 1st - 36.09.49

Andrew Rodda M45

60m 2nd - 7.70. 100m 2nd 13.02. 200m 2nd -26.65. 400m 1st 60.79.





Enter now!

South Australian Masters Athletics (SAMA) is hosting the 2016 AMA National Track & Field Championships in Adelaide, South Australia from 16-19 April 2016. The [Program](#) will include a complete range of masters' athletics disciplines, including non-stadia events.

The Championships are conducted in five year age groups starting at 30 years, and medals are awarded in each age group for every event.

Your age group is determined by your age on the first day of competition (16 April 2016) and you must be a financial member of a Masters Athletics Club.

Enter online now on the National Championships website at:
<http://www.samastersathletics.org.au/nationals2016/register.html>

Entry fees: \$50 admin fee and \$12.00 per event. Take part in as many events as you want.

Try something new, have fun and meet new friends. You don't have to be a superstar to take part.

Keep up to date - 'like' the Championships Facebook site



Reach for your Vision in 2016!

STATE RELAYS 2015 – Masters Results

Club	# teams	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Medal Total Masters	All teams
Sydney Pacific	25	10	5	2	17	23
UTSN	21	6	6	3	15	51
Hills	15	5	5	2	12	32
Athletics East	7	4	2	1	7	8
Sydney Uni	4	4		2	6	23
Mingara	23	3	8	3	14	15
Mounties	8	3	1	1	5	10
Illawong	3	1	2		3	21
Balmain	1	1	1		2	2
Camden	3	1			1	1
Ryde	2	1		1	2	11
Illawarra BS	7		3	2	5	5
Randwick Bot	2		2	1	3	5
Asics West	2			2	2	15
Cherrybrook	2			1	1	14
NSWMA	3			1	1	1
South Coast	1			1	1	1
Sutherland	4			1	1	9
Sydney Striders	1			1	1	8
Ath Wollongong	3			1	1	2
Girraween	4					
Nepean	1					3

Tallying results is a mind-numbing occupation in which mistakes are regrettable but inevitable. Please alert me to any and they will be corrected in our next issue – ed.

NSW Masters put together 4 X 100, 200m and 400m women's teams from Julie Forster, Ellena Cubban, Caroline Yarnell, Sue Gore, Margaret Walker, Kathleen Cook and Baerbel Koribalski who bravely battled illness, injury and wet weather to demonstrate the inclusivity of State Relays.

A look at the Masters medal tally compared with the total medal tally from teams of all ages is interesting and may show many things such as the focus on Masters teams, the size of the club, the age range the club is catering to or other demographic issues. Someone might like to comment on this and we will publish your views in the next issue.

How well do you know your club members?

NSWMA Annual Presentation Lunch

Trivia Quiz

Team Name: _____

All questions relate to the names of NSWMA members.

1. What units, used to measure power, share their name with the winner of the W45 throws pentathlon at the recent World Titles?
2. Which well-known thrower shares their name with the first person seen on Australian TV?
3. Which children's toy shares its name with the winner of the W70 throws pentathlon at the recent World Titles?
4. Which athlete, who represented Masters in the special Masters race at the recent IAAF World Titles, shares their name with a mid-northern NSW coastal town?
5. Which former president of NSWMA shares their name with the famous detective Sherlock Holmes address?
6. Which female sprinter's name is part of a common phrase meaning "take it or leave it"?
7. South Australia's major river shares its name with which M60 thrower?
8. Which grape variety shares its name with a recent former registrar and field rep on the committee?
9. 007 shares his name with which member who inaugurated the trophy for the best throws pentathlon score at State?
10. Which actor, famous for roles in horror films, died recently and shares their name with our oldest female walker?

LYON PHOTOS from GRAEME DAHL'S GALLERY

<https://picasaweb.google.com/106722477117641587070?feat=email>



Clockwise from top left: Vicki Townsend, Rosemary Roediger, Kathleen Cook, Ellena Cubban, opening ceremony, John Lamb, Peter Crombie.