

Alexander Cup and Australian 50km Championships

1930 - 1970

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Friday 12 July 2019**

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INTRODUCTION

Controversies in the 1924 Olympic Games had spelt an end to Olympic track walking and indeed nearly spelt the end of walking, with the sport ruled out of the 1928 Amsterdam Games. Fortunately, there followed a change in walking fashion with road walking overtaking track walking in popularity, and British officials worked together and bid for a long distance road event to be introduced into the Olympics. It was accepted and the first Olympic road walk, over 50 kilometres, was announced for the Los Angeles Games in 1932.

The first NSW 50km Championship had been contested in 1926, with Victoria following suite in 1929, hosting its own inaugural 50km championship in that year.

In 1930, the NSW and Victorian racewalking clubs decided to institute a biennial *50km Championship of the Race Walking Clubs of Australia*, to be held in conjunction with one or other of the State championships in even years. This championship was named *The W. B. Alexander Cup*.

The Alexander Cup 50km Championship was held on 15 occasions, from 1930 to 1966.

1930 Alexander Cup 50km, Bankstown (in conjunction with NSW 50km), 6th September
1934 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 27th October
1936 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney (in conjunction with NSW 50km), 5th September
1938 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 1st October
1946 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 28th September
1948 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney (in conjunction with NSW 50km), 18th September
1950 Alexander Cup 50km, Adelaide (in conjunction with SA 50km), 16th September
1952 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 27th September
1953 Alexander Cup 50km, Adelaide (in conjunction with SA 50km), 3rd October
1955 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney (in conjunction with NSW 50km), 17th September
1957 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 28th September
1959 Alexander Cup 50km, Brisbane (in conjunction with QLD 50km), 9th May
1961 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney (in conjunction with NSW 50km), 16th September
1963 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with VIC 50km), 28th September
1966 Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne (in conjunction with AUS/VIC 50km), 24th September
1968 Alexander Cup 50km, Toowoomba (in conjunction with AUS 50km), 25th May

After the 1968 carnival, the Alexander Cup distance was changed to 20km and continued to be contested biennially over this new distance until it was finally decommissioned after the 1989 Federation Carnival.

An official Australian 50km championship was first held in 1952, and was then scheduled every second year, initially during even years (1952-1970) and then in odd years (1971-1983). Since 1983, it has been scheduled annually.

1952 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 2 February
1954 Australian 50km Championship, Sydney, Saturday 18 September
1956 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 9 September
1958 Australian 50km Championship, Sydney, Saturday 6 September
1960 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 5 June
1962 Australian 50km Championship, Sydney, Saturday 8 September
1964 Australian 50km Championship, Adelaide, Saturday 6 June
1966 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 24 September
1968 Australian 50km Championship, Toowoomba, Saturday 25 May
1970 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 26 September

The placegetters in these championships were as follows

Alexander Cup 50km

1930	Jack Coffey	VIC	4:59:40	Jack Cummins	VIC	5:11:05	William Clark	NSW	5:14:03
1934	Jack Cummins	VIC	4:55:36	Sydney Sheedy	NSW	5:01:00	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:01:32
1936	Joe O'Farrell	VIC	5:07:34	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:11:52	Mervyn Ray	NSW	5:18:04
1938	Jim Gaylor	VIC	4:56:38	Sydney Sheedy	NSW	4:59:24	Keith McCluskey	VIC	5:14:2
1946	Alan Reid	VIC	5:08:39	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:18:42	Alex Philpotts	VIC	5:21:00
1948	William Behan	NSW	5:03:44	William Metcalf	VIC	5:21:40	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:23:18
1950	Leonard Chadwick	VIC	5:22:00	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:23:46	Robert French	VIC	5:37:50
1952	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:18:58	James Short	VIC	5:20:25	Clive Mackay	VIC	5:34:12

1953	Leonard Chadwick	VIC	5:11:36	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	5:14:02	James Short	VIC	5:21:48
1955	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	4:51:05	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:53:33	James Short	VIC	4:54:52
1957	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:23:38	Cliff Barling	VIC	5:01:23	Tom Daintry	VIC	5:04:07
1959	Ron Crawford	NSW	5:12:09	James Gleeson	VIC	5:12:57	William Kirby	NSW	5:25:10
1961	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:28:56	James Gleeson	VIC	4:54:08	Norman Marr	VIC	4:59:33
1963	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:52:57	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:57:46	Gavan Breen	VIC	5:02:23

Australian 50km Open Men

1952	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:10:58	William Metcalf	NSW	5:44:22	Gordon Doak	VIC	5:50:14
1954	Les Hellyer	VIC	4:59:57	Jim Short	VIC	5:04:31	Ralph Field	VIC	5:05:47
1956	Norm Reid	NZ	4:30:16						
	Ray Smith	VIC	4:40:24	Ron Crawford	NSW	4:45:19	Ken Keogh	NSW	4:45:35
1958	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:24:26	Noel Freeman	VIC	4:31:15	William Kirby	NSW	4:48:49
1960	Noel Freeman	VIC	4:32:28	Ron Crawford	NSW	4:38:51	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:47:50
1962	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:35:06	Peter McCullagh	VIC	4:44:31	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:45:14
1964	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:24:19	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:30:56	Frank Clark	NSW	4:31:21
1966	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:18:21	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:20:00	Frank Clark	NSW	4:28:06
1968	Bob Gardiner	VIC	2:22:33	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:27:40	Frank Clark	NSW	4:30:34
1970	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:21:05	Peter Fullager	SA	4:29:05	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:36:53

The improvement in the 50km in Australia can be traced through the record progression. For so many years, the standard had hovered around the 5 hour mark. With the impetus provided by the home Olympics in 1956, the record quickly tumbled, due mainly to Ted Allsopp and Bob Gardiner.

1930	Jack Coffey	VIC	4:59:40	Sydney	
1934	Jack Cummins	VIC	4:55:36	Melbourne	
1955	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	4:51:05	Sydney	
1956	Norm Read	NZL	4:30:16.2	Melbourne	Australian Open Record
	Ray Smith	VIC	4:40:24.6	Melbourne	Australian Residential Record
1956	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:24:24	Melbourne	
1957	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:23:38	Melbourne	
1958	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:22:41.8	Melbourne	Australian Track Record
1959	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:20:23.8	Melbourne	Australian Track Record
1959	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:22:37	Melbourne	
1964	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:17:06.8	Tokyo	
1968	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:14:17	Melbourne	Australian Track Record

The following pages discuss each of these championships, and the context in which each occurred.

1930 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, SYDNEY, 6 SEPTEMBER 1930

The inaugural Alexander Cup was held in conjunction with the 1930 NSW 50km Championship, which was contested in Bankstown, western Sydney, on 6th September 1930. The inaugural championship was well supported, with 9 Victorians and 10 NSW walkers attending.

1929 Victorian 50km champion **Jack Cummins** was soundly beaten by his team mate **Jack Coffey**, with Coffey's time of 4:59:40 marking him as the first Australian to better 5 hours. This was officially recognised as an Australian Record and Cummins was awarded the *T. H. Terrill Cup* by way of recognition.

Little separated the first two NSW walkers, with **William Clark** bettering the great **Gordon Smith**¹ by just under 4 minutes. Sadly, after a stellar career throughout the 1930s, Smith would die as a Japanese prisoner of war in 1945.

Victorian walkers **Alf Robinson**² and **Rupert Blackley**³, who finished 8th and 9th, were to return the following year for the 1931 NSW 50km Championship, which was a prelude to their historic walk back from Sydney to Melbourne. This is a wonderful story.⁴



*Jack Coffey is shown second from the right in this 1931 VAWC picture at Albert Park
From left to right: Jim Gaylor, Harry Roache, Alf Robinson, ?, Jack Coffey and Joe O'Farrell*

1930 Alexander Cup 50km, Bankstown, Sydney

1.	Jack Coffey	VIC	4:59:40	Australian Record
2.	Jack Cummins	VIC	5:11:05	
3.	William Clark	NSW	5:14:03	
4.	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:17:50	
5.	Raymond Latham	NSW	5:35:56	
6.	Frank Scully	VIC	5:36:25	
7.	W. White	NSW	5:38:41	
8.	Alfred Robinson	VIC	5:40:16	
9.	Rupert Blackley	VIC	5:44:40	
10.	Thomas Nelan	NSW	5:48:05	
11.	H. Hampson	NSW	5:53:30	
12.	Joe O'Farrell	VIC	6:00:29	
13.	Harry Barrett	NSW	6:06:37	

1 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wa-gordon-smith.pdf>

2 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwcclifearobinson.shtml>

3 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwccliferblackley.shtml>

4 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-alf-robinson-sydmelb-31.pdf>

14.	W. Groves	NSW	6:14:15
15.	Thomas Byrne	QLD	6:22:21
	John Richmond	NSW	DNF
	Donald Walker	VIC	DNF
	George Isbister	VIC	DNF
	Leslie Wright	VIC	DNF

Victoria won the Teams Race, 9 pts to 12.

Teams

1.	VIC	9 pts	(1,2,6)
2.	NSW	12 pts	(3,4,5)

1934 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 27 OCTOBER 1934

The Alexander Cup was not held in 1932. With the Great Depression in full swing, there was little likelihood that an interstate walking carnival would attract a field of walkers.

Consequently, the second Alexander Cup 50km was not scheduled until 1934 and was allocated to Victoria, to be held in conjunction with the Victorian 50km Championship at the Royal Showgrounds in Ascot Vale.

The Showgrounds would be used by VAWC for most of their 50km championships for many years to come. The race would start on the dirt track, do a lap or two and then head off out the main gate towards Ballarat Road. Walkers would then progress to Rockbank for the half way point turn. There would be a refreshment table at that point. Then they would walk back from Rockbank to Melbourne, finishing once again on the Showgrounds track.

The 1934 Alexander Cup championship attracted a good field of walkers, with 14 Victorians and 5 NSW walkers in attendance.

Victorian **Jack Cummins** went one better than in 1930, winning in an Australian best time of 4:55:36. NSW filled the next two positions with **Sydney Sheedy** second and **Gordon Smith** improving from fourth to third. Victorian **Jack Lewis**⁵, the first of the really world class Australian long distance walkers, then in the twilight of his career, finished 8th.

1934 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Jack Cummins	VIC	4:55:36	Australian Record
2.	Sydney Sheedy	NSW	5:01:00	
3.	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:01:32	
4.	Joseph O'Farrell	VIC	5:04:35	
5.	Francis Scully	VIC	5:08:59	
6.	Roy Grierson	VIC	5:16:46	
7.	Harry Roche	VIC	5:24:30	
8.	Jack Lewis	VIC	5:26:23	
9.	Stanley Leeson	VIC	5:27:36	
10.	William Tunaley	VIC	5:29:02	
11.	Lindsay Guy	VIC	5:29:16	
12.	Frederick Gore	VIC	5:38:24	
13.	Austin Gore	VIC	5:44:44	
14.	Albert O'Farrell	VIC	6:04:24	
15.	Sydney Rudman	NSW	6:12:52	
	James Gaylor	VIC	DNF	
	Leslie Wright	VIC	DNF	
	Colin Blumson	NSW	DNF	
	William Clark	NSW	DNF	

Victoria won the Teams Race, 10 pts to 20 pts.

Teams

1.	VIC	10 pts	(1,4,5)
2.	NSW	20 pts	(2,3,15)

5 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-jack-lewis.pdf>

1936 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, SYDNEY, 5 SEPTEMBER 1936

The third Alexander Cup was allocated to NSW and scheduled in Sydney two years later, on 5th September 1936, with a large Victorian team making the interstate trip and competing.

12th in 1930 and 4th in 1934, Victorian **Joe O'Farrell** finally won the Alexander Cup on his third attempt with a time of 5:07:34. NSW filled the next two positions with 32 year old **Gordon Smith** (4th in 1930 and 3rd in 1934) taking second place and **Mervyn Ray** third. 1934 winner **Jack Cummins** was relegated to fourth place. This was perhaps a surprise as Cummins had won the 1936 Victorian 50km championship with a fast 4:57:34, ahead of O'Farrell who was second with 4:58:19.

Further down in the results listing were a number of Victorian walkers who would go on to have excellent careers: **Gus Theobald**⁶, **Alex Philpotts**⁷, **George Knott**⁸ and **Norm Goble**⁹.

Frank McGuire discussed Joe O'Farrell in a 1992 letter.

Joe O'Farrell was an outstanding athlete. Up till about 1933, he competed in the winter walking season and specialised in the 50 kilos, etc, but in the summer ran sprints to middle distance, hurdles and javelin for his St. Josephs Club. In the summer he did no walking at all. The VAWC used to have a decathlon championship and Joe was a regular winner.

The VAWC Annual Report for that year discussed the race as follows

The Manager of the team stated that, although successful, few of the Victorians showed their best form, and this might be attributed to the changed from the wintry racing conditions experienced by the team before their departure to the warm sunny day on which the race was held. It was noteworthy, however, that all our selected team succeeded in completing the course. It might be mentioned that although six months have elapsed since the race, no official result has yet been received from the N.S.W. Walkers' Club. If our opposite numbers in Sydney have been lacking in this respect, the members of our team could find no possible fault in the kindness and hospitality with which they were received and entertained in Sydney.



The Victorian team that contested the 1936 Alexander Cup in Sydney – Bill Tunaley, James Purtell, Ian MacDougall, Albert Stafford, Alex Philpotts, J. J. Cummins (Captain), George Knott, Norm Goble, Harry Roche, Gus Theobald, Joe O'Farrell

6 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-gus-theobald.pdf>

7 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-alex-philpott.pdf>

8 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-george-knott.pdf>

9 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwcclifengoble.shtml>

1936 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney

1.	Joe O'Farrell	VIC	5:07:34
2.	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:11:52
3.	Mervyn Ray	NSW	5:18:04
4.	Jack Cummins	VIC	5:19:07
5.	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:27:14
6.	William Tunaley	VIC	5:31:04
7.	Harry Roche	VIC	5:31:43
8.	Clifford Smith	NSW	5:33:57
9.	Albert Stafford	VIC	5:35:42
10.	James Purtell	VIC	5:39:06
11.	Alex Philpotts	VIC	5:40:39
12.	Ian McDougall	VIC	5:47:30
13.	George Knott	VIC	6:08:09
	Norm Goble	VIC INV	DNF
	W. White	NSW	DNF
	Athol Scanlon	NSW	DNF
	Sydney Rudman	NSW	DNF

Victoria won the Teams Race, 10 pts to 13 pts.

Teams

1.	VIC	10 pts	(1,4,5)
2.	NSW	13 pts	(2,3,8)

1938 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 1 OCTOBER 1938

The 1938 Alexander Cup 50km was held on the Royal Showgrounds course in Ascot Vale, Melbourne, on 1st October of that year, as part of the Royal Melbourne Agricultural Show.

Only 3 NSW walkers made the trip down, namely **Gordon Smith** (Captain), **Sydney Sheedy** and **Mervyn Ray**. Unfortunately an exceptionally hot day for the time of year made conditions unpleasant and caused Ray's withdrawal after covering 26 miles, this depriving NSW of a finish in the Teams Event.

Jim Gaylor had won the 1937 Victorian 50km championship with an excellent time of 4:57:32. Now a year later he retained his title with an even faster 4:56:38. This win was generally regarded as one of the best performances of Jim's career, not only as his time of 4:56:38 was exceptionally good considering the conditions, but because at one time he appeared to have lost the race to Sheedy of NSW.



Jim Gaylor (second from left) shown on the Showgrounds track at the start of the 1939 Victorian 50km Championship

1938 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Jim Gaylor	VIC	4:56:38
2.	Sydney Sheedy	NSW	4:59:24
3.	Keith McCluskey	VIC	5:14:24
4.	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:15:18
5.	Jack Cummins	VIC	5:22:25
6.	Alex Philpotts	VIC	5:24:12
7.	Gordon Smith	NSW	5:30:08
8.	Clem Marshall	VIC	5:30:41
9.	Arch Skewes	VIC	5:32:15
10.	James Purcell	VIC	5:35:29
11.	James Palmer	VIC	5:42:35
12.	Benjamin Blakey	VIC	5:56:41
	Mervyn Ray	NSW	DNF
	Leslie Woods	VIC	DNF
	William Tunelay	VIC	DNF
	Norm Goble	VIC	DNF
	Roy Grierson	VIC	DNF
	Ian McDougall	VIC	DNF

Victoria won the Teams Race with the minimum 10 points, while NSW failed to finish its team

1946 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 28 SEPTEMBER 1946

The first Alexander Cup after WWII was scheduled for Melbourne on 28th September 1946 and was held at the Royal Showgrounds in Ascot Vale, in conjunction with the Victorian 50km Roadwalk Championship.

Only 3 NSW walkers made the trip down, enough to constitute a team but not enough to be any real challenge for the Victorians. The generally slow times were indicative of the fact that the walking clubs and their members were trying to rebuild the sport, after many years of more important matters.

1946 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Alan Reid	VIC	5:08:39
2.	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:18:42
3.	Alex Philpotts	VIC	5:21:00
4.	George McCabe	NSW	5:22:59
5.	Reginald Tarte	NSW	5:23:34
6.	James Gaylor	VIC	5:36:40
7.	George Stevens	VIC	5:39:28
8.	Norm Goble	VIC	5:41:10
9.	Harry Barrett	NSW	5:50:04
10.	Thomas Tunaley	VIC	5:59:18
11.	Bill Tunaley	VIC	6:12:30
	James Ralston	VIC	DNF
	James Purtell	VIC	DNF
	Arch Skewes	VIC	DNF
	Benjamin Blakey	VIC	DNF
	Noel Bamford	VIC	DNF
	Walter Knott	VIC	DNF

Victoria easily won the Teams Race.

Teams

1.	VIC	6 pts	(1,2,3)
2.	NSW	18 pts	(4,5,9)



1946 Alexander Cup medallists Alan Reid, Alex Philpotts and Gus Theobald pose for the camera after the race

1948 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, SYDNEY, 18 SEPTEMBER 1948

I came across some correspondence from the late Frank McGuire concerning that 1948 championship.

*I had my first 50km in the 1948 Alexander Cup in Sydney. It rained like hell all day and some of our stars pulled out. I was the third Vic. To finish and we won the teams race by a point. **Bill Behan** won from **Gus Theobald**. Gus used to have a limp and a bent knee and he asked the judges to let him bend one knee, but was told that Behan had a war injury to his kneed and he had to straighten! It was a marvelous thing that Gus lost his limp as he got old. We uwsed to call Gus "the man on the scooter". He was a great athlete all the same, particularly as a Vet. He came into walking later than me, about 1934.*

1948 Alexander Cup 50km, Sydney

1.	William Behan	NSW	5:03:44
2.	William Metcalf	VIC	5:21:40
3.	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:23:18
4.	Bruce Brew	NSW	5:33:47
5.	Frank McGuire	VIC	5:39:40
6.	George McCabe	NSW	5:43:40
7.	Norm Goble	VIC	5:49:51
8.	James Purtell	VIC	5:50:17
9.	Vic Sharp	VIC	6:01:07
10.	Thomas Kelly	VIC	6:15:24

Victoria had a narrow win over NSW in the Teams Championships.

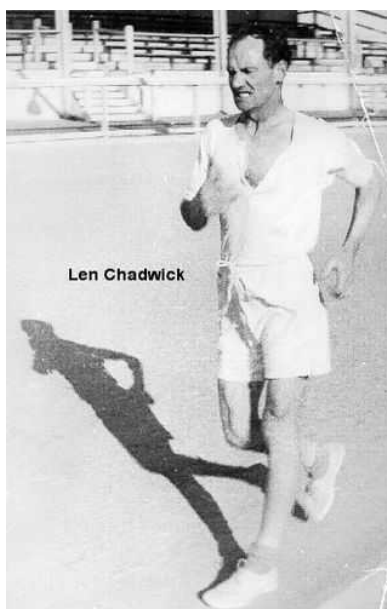
Teams

1.	VIC	10 pts	(2,3,5)
2.	NSW	11 pts	(1,4,6)

1950 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, ADELAIDE, 16 SEPTEMBER 1950

In 1949, South Australia had hosted an inaugural 50km race, in an endeavour to re-establish a walking club in that State. This was followed in January 1950 by a contingent of walkers who travelled to South Australia for the Australian Championships, and who were present at a preliminary meeting of the new club. The new club was duly confirmed and indicated that it hoped for participate in the Glover Shield and the Alexander Cup competitions.

The 1950 Alexander Cup 50km was quickly allocated to Adelaide and scheduled for Saturday 16th September 1950. Teams from Victoria, NSW and SA contested the championship, with Victorian **Len Chadwick**¹⁰ leading home an all Victorian trifecta with a time of 5:22:00. **Gus Theobald** improved from 3rd in 1948 to second in this race with 5:23:46, while **Robert French** took third with 5:37:50.



Len Chadwick in action on the Melbourne Showgrounds in the early 1950s

1950 Alexander Cup 50km, Adelaide

1.	Leonard Chadwick	VIC	5:22:00
2.	Gus Theobald	VIC	5:23:46
3.	Robert French	VIC	5:37:50
4.	John Busst	VIC	5:37:59
5.	Sydney Rudman	NSW	5:45:00
6.	Norm Goble	VIC	5:48:31
7.	Sydney Sheedy	NSW	5:50:30
8.	Francis Morrison	VIC	5:56:05
9.	Peter King	VIC	5:56:05
10.	Frederick O'Grady	VIC	5:57:40
11.	George Wilson	SA	6:01:13
12.	William Sutcliffe	SA	6:07:55
13.	Harry Barrett	NSW	6:08:43
14.	Thomas Kelly	VIC	6:14:15
	Patrick Callery	SA	DNF
	John Smyth	SA	DNF
	F. Bertram	SA	DNF
	William London	NSW	DNF

Victoria won the Teams Race comfortably ahead of NSW, while SA, with only 2 finishers, failed to finish a team.

1.	VIC	6 pts	(1,2,3)
2.	NSW	15 pts	(4,5,6)

¹⁰ Len Chadwick was indeed an interesting walker. See my article on him in the VRWC archive at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-len-chadwick.pdf>.

1952 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, MELBOURNE, 2 FEBRUARY 1952

Before I talk about the 1952 Alexander Cup, I need to discuss a couple of preceding 50km walks.

With the 1952 Olympics in the offing and with walkers in need of qualifying opportunities, the Victorian Amateur Walkers' Club decided to conduct its own pre-Olympic opportunities, scheduling a 50km road walk on Saturday 15th December 1951 at Albert Park. The event, sanctioned by the Victorian Amateur Athletic Association, started at 7:30AM and fingers were crossed that it would not be a torrid summer day. Luck was with the Victorians, with fine cool conditions greeting the walkers at the start line and rain falling for nearly 2 hours from the 6 miles to the 16 miles marks. Final results read as follows

VAWC Pre-Olympic 50km Trial, Albert Park, Saturday 15 December 1951

1.	Len Chadwick	VAWC	5:03:21
2.	Gordon Doak	St Marks A.A.C	5:07:10
	Walter Knott	Sth Melbourne A.A.C.	DNF
	John Busst	Collingwood A.A.C.	DNF
	Les Hellyer	Brunswick A.A.C	DNF

Len Chadwick, the current Victorian champion and 1950 Alexander Cup champion, won with a huge PB time of 5:03:21, a good time but one some 8 minutes outside the Olympic standard of 4:55:00 that had been set by the Australian Amateur Athletic Assn. 20 year old Melbourne walker **Gordon Doak**¹¹ put in an excellent performance in finishing 2nd, only 600yds behind Chadwick, and marked himself as a potential Olympic candidate.

The official 50km Olympic trial was held on Saturday 2nd February 1952 in Melbourne, starting just after 11AM at Olympic Park. This was designated as the first ever Australian 50km Championship and from then on, an Australian 50km championship would be scheduled every even year. The course saw walkers complete 2 laps of the track before proceeding along Batman Ave, Sturt St and Moray St to Albert Park, where they completed 7 laps of the lake before returning the same way to Olympic Park and completing a final 3 laps on the track. The weather was fine and sunny at the start and remained that way throughout the day, the temperature increasing as the race progressed and the torrid conditions taking an obvious toll on the field, only 3 of the 11 starters actually finishing.

Chadwick walked heroically, finishing over 30 minutes ahead of second placed **Bill Medcalf** of NSW, but again well outside the required 4:55:00. Gordon Doak put in another creditable performance in gaining third place but was badly effected in the heat. Sadly, Doak effectively retired from serious racewalking at that stage and turned to his other love of weight lifting. It was a case of waiting another 4 years for the next Olympics or getting on with his life.

1952 Australian 50km Championship and Olympic Trial, Melbourne, 2 February 1952

1.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:10:58
2.	William Metcalf	NSW	5:44:22
3.	Gordon Doak	VIC	5:50:14
	Don Waters	WA	DNF
	Walter Knott	VIC	DNF
	Cliff Barling	VIC	DNF
	William Behan	NSW	DNF
	George Kenyonq	NSW	DNF
	Reg Targe	NSW	DNF
	Tom Daintry	QLD	DNF
	Les Hellyer	VIC	DNF

The 1952 Olympics came and went, with only 1 Australian walker in attendance, namely Western Australian **Don Keane**¹², in the 10,000m walk. No walkers reached the required 50km standard of 4:55:00 and none were selected.

11 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-gordon-doak.pdf>

12 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-don-keane.pdf>

1952 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 27 SEPTEMBER 1952

The 1952 Alexander Cup was held in Melbourne one month after the Olympic Games, so it was very much an anti-climax.

Teams from Victoria and SA contested the meet, held in conjunction with the Victorian 50km Championship at the Royal Showgrounds in Ascot Vale, Melbourne. The V.A.W.C. Annual Report for that year commented:

*Teams from SA and Victoria competed. Notable absentees from this event were our NSW friends who failed to send a team but who were represented in the race by that old evergreen among walkers **Harry Barrett** who has made more farewells than Madama Melba during her long career. Included in the South Australian team were **Vic Sharp**, former Secretary and Treasurer of the V.A.W.C, and **Jack Webber**, South Aust. 50 kilo champ, also former Victorian **George Wilson** who at 63 years is a remarkable example of how long distance runners can keep fit.*

It saw a repeat win, and perhaps a bittersweet one, for Len Chadwick in 5:18:58, with fellow Victorians **Jim Short** and **Clive Mackay** taking the minor medals. **Les Hellyer**, in fourth place, would soon be amongst Australia's best 50km walkers. **Jack Webber**¹³ of SA was back in 5th place. He would go on to have an illustrious career on the South Australian front. But post Olympics, the standard was poor.

1952 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:18:58
2.	James Short	VIC	5:20:25
3.	Clive Mackay	VIC	5:34:12
4.	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	5:36:21
5.	Jack Webber	SA	5:47:01
6.	Vic Sharp	SA	5:49:23
7.	Lindsay McGregor	VIC	5:54:35
8.	Frederick O'Grady	VIC	5:56:20
9.	George Wilson	SA	5:56:54
10.	Harry Barrett	NSW	6:14:16
	Walter Knott	VIC	DNF
	Ernest Ryall	VIC	DNF
	Norm Goble	VIC	DNF

Victoria won the Teams Race ahead of SA, but unfortunately NSW, with only 1 walker, failed to finish a team.

Teams

1.	VIC	6 pts	(1,2,3)
2.	SA	15 pts	(4,5,6)

13 See <http://centurions.org.au/centprofiles/02%20jack%20webber.pdf>

1953 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, ADELAIDE, 3 OCTOBER 1953

A number of Victorians had travelled to Sydney in August 1953 to compete in the NSW 50km Roadwalk Championship, a custom that had been in effect for a number of years. The race proved to be a triumph for the young **Les Hellyer** who won with a NSW State Record time of **4:58:41**. Fellow Victorian **Len Chadwick**, the current Victorian and Alexander Cup champion, had been the next to finish, with 5:09:02.2.

The 1953 Alexander Cup had been allocated to South Australia and was to be held in conjunction with the 1953 South Australian 50km Roadwalk Championship on Saturday 3rd October. The race was conducted on a lap of the roads in the South Parklands of Adelaide city and consisted of 9 laps of 3 miles and 462 yards with a finishing section of 3002 yards.



The start of the 1953 50km in Adelaide

The race started at 10.17AM. in weather that was described as fine, but with gusty winds up to 30mph until the first 3 competitors had finished, then heavy rain.

After their efforts in Sydney, Hellyer and Chadwick went in as favourites and they did not disappoint. But it was Chadwick who won on this occasion, some 2+ minutes ahead of Hellyer. It was his third Alexander Cup win in a row. Times were generally slow in the trying conditions.

1953 Alexander Cup 50km, South Adelaide Parklands, Adelaide, 3 October

1.	Leonard Chadwick	VIC	5:11:36
2.	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	5:14:02
3.	James Short	VIC	5:21:48
4.	Jack Webber	SA	5:36:30
5.	Edward Edwards	NSW	5:43:44
6.	Frederick O'Grady	VIC	5:44:20
7.	William Kirby	NSW	5:48:08
8.	Garry Adair	SA	5:54:43
9.	Lindsay MacGregor	SA	5:56:52
10.	Thomas Kelly	VIC	5:59:56
11.	Victor Sharp	SA	6:09:45
12.	Harry Barrett	NSW	6:20:33

Ron Flint	VIC	Retired at 22m. 1474y.
G Williams	VIC	Retired at 19m. 1012y.
Norm Goble	VIC	Retired at 19m. 1012y.
John Smyth	SA	Retired at 16m. 550y.

The event attracted teams from Victoria, NSW and SA, with Victoria winning the Teams Race from SA and NSW.

Teams

1.	VIC	6 pts	(1,2,3)
2.	SA	19 pts	(4,7,8)
3.	NSW	20 pts	(5,6,9)

In the associated sealed handicap, O'Grady won from Kirby and Kelly.

In the evening, the South Australian Amateur Walkers club entertained the visitors at a dance in the Rechabite Hall, where the presentations of trophies were made by the President of the club, MR. P.S.McCavanagh.

50km Olympic Course Trial, Saturday 17 October 1953

One further 50km event of note was contested in late 1953, namely a trial walk over the newly unveiled 1956 Olympic 50km circuit. The V.A.W.C. Annual Report commented as follows:

This event proved to be most disappointing, both from the competitors' point of view and the officials' point of view. It was felt that it was held too late in the season or that most competitors had had a far too strenuous season to be able to do the event justice. However, it was proved that the course is a most difficult onw, and would prove quite an obstacle for overseas walkers. But with more training ove the course, we are sure our competitors will be able to handle it far more successfully than at their first attempt.

1.	Les Hellyer	VIC	5:21:16
2.	Jim Short	VIC	5:37:11
3.	R. King	VIC	6:12:16

Only 3 men finished

The timing of the 50km events in Victoria that year illustrates very poor timing in general in the V.A.W.C. Winter Season Fixture:

Sept 26	50km Victorian Championship, Showgrounds, 10AM
Oct 03	Alexander Cup 50km Championship, Adelaide, 10:30AM
Oct 17	50km Olympic Course Trial, Melbourne
Oct 31	VAWC 50 Miles Club Championship, Albert Park, 7AM

1954 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, SYDNEY, 18 SEPTEMBER 1954

The second Australian 50km Roadwalk Championship was held in Sydney on 18th September 1954, at the end of what had been a busy winter season for both NSW and Victorian walkers.

This proved a breakthrough for young Victorian walker **Les Hellyer**. He had won that year's Victorian 50km Championship (5:00:00) the previous month, just ahead of **Ralph Field** (5:00:55), and built on that with an even faster winning time in the Australian 50km Championship (4:59:37).

The race also introduced two new walkers to the Australian 50km landscape, namely fellow Victorians **Jim Short** and **Ralph Field**¹⁴. Both had fine careers nationally and long careers with the VAWC. In fact, I remember Jim and Ralph at the back of the VAWC roadwalk fields in the 1970s, always strolling side by side and chatting as the race progressed.



The start of the 1954 Australian 50km in Sydney



*The Victorian team: Front: Ron Flint, Bernie Claughton
Back: Les Hellyer, Frank McGuire, Alf Robinson (Manager), Len Chadwick, Jim Short and Ralph Field*

14 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-ralph-field.pdf>

1954 Australian 50km Championship, Sydney, Saturday 18 September 1954

1.	Les Hellyer	VIC	4:59:57
2.	Jim Short	VIC	5:04:31
3.	Ralph Field	VIC	5:05:47
4.	Bill Metcalf	NSW	5:15:54
5.	Eric Kirby	NSW	5:16:38
6.	Gary Adair	SA	5:22:58
7.	Harry Tetlow	NZL	5:23:34
8.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:37:13
9.	Ronald Flint	VIC	5:41:03
10.	Frank McGuire	VIC	5:41:11
11.	Bernie Cloughton	VIC	5:52:32
12.	George Kenyon	NSW	5:59:26
13.	Edward Edwards	NSW	5:59:26
	Logan Irwin	NSW	DNF
	William Kirby	NSW	DNF
	Sydney Rudman	NSW	DNF
	Keith Guyot	VIC	DNF

Victoria comfortably won the teams race, ahead of NSW

1.	VIC	6 Pts	(1,2,3)
2.	NSW	15 Pts	(4,5,6)

1955 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, SYDNEY, 17 SEPTEMBER 1955

Victorian **Les Hellyer** had finally forced his way to the top 50km position in 1954, winning that year's Victorian 50km Championship (5:00:00), as well as the Australian 50km Championship in Sydney (4:59:37). But he did not go into the Alexander Cup as favourite, given a race that had taken place in Melbourne just 3 weeks before that Championship.

This additional event was the 1955 VAWC 50km club championship, held on 27th August on the 1956 Olympic Course, from Olympic Park to Springvale and return. The race had been included on the club winter season program for two reasons; one to enable competitors to experience walking on the course which had been chosen for the 1956 Olympics, and more particularly to exercise officials in the conduct of this event.

The race was sponsored by Bonds Industries and called the *Chesty Bond Walking Race*. A magnificent rose bowl and three replicas were presented to the winner and place getters. These trophies were kindly donated by Mr. McDermott, General Manager of Bonds Industries, Melbourne.

The race saw fellow Victorian **Jim Short** win with 4:57:57, well ahead of Hellyer.

1955 VAWC 50km Championship. Olympic Course, Melbourne, 27th August

1.	James Short	VIC	4:57:57
2.	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	5:06:27
3.	Keith Short	VIC	5:14:57

Now fast forward 3 weeks to the 1955 Alexander Cup 50km which was to be held in Centennial Park, Sydney, on 17th September 1955.

A large contingent of Victorians made the trip – a team of 5 walkers, along with 6 other officials and supporters. And it was lucky that such a strong team came, as the event provided one of the closest contests that had been held between these two dominant clubs, with Victoria narrowly winning the Teams race from NSW by a margin of 1 point.

Hellyer turned the tables on Short this time, winning in a new Australian record of 4:51.05. **Peter Waddell**¹⁵ of NSW, second with 5:53:33, also broke the record. Jim Short did a 3 minute PB to take third with 4:54:52, while **Eric Kirby** of NSW took fourth place with 4:56:25. With **Jim Short** and **Eric Kirby** also under the 5 hour mark, it was the highest quality 50km seen thus far in Australia. In fact, it was the first time that more than one walker had finished under the 5 hour barrier in any race on Australian soil.

1955 Alexander Cup 50km, Centennial Park, Sydney

1.	Leslie Hellyer	VIC	4:51:05	Australian Record
2.	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:53:33	
3.	James Short	VIC	4:54:52	
4.	Eric Kirby	NSW	4:56:25	
5.	Logan Irwin	NSW	5:10:43	
6.	Ralph Field	VIC	5:15:31	
7.	Edward Edwards	NSW	5:22:56	
8.	Stanley Rudman	NSW	5:29:27	
9.	John Busst	VIC	5:34:06	
10.	John Ferguson	NSW	5:34:14	
11.	Harry Barrett	NSW	6:11:18	
12.	Frederick O'Grady	VIC	6:24:21	
	Kenneth Keogh	NSW	DNF	
	Tom Daintry	QLD	DNF	
	William Anderson	QLD	DNF	
	John McDougall	NSW	DNF	

Victoria won the Teams Race, 10 pts to 20 pts.

Teams

1.	VIC	10 pts	(1,3,6)
2.	NSW	11 pts	(2,4,5)

By way of addendum, Jim Short won the Victorian 50km Championship 2 weeks later at the Royal Showgrounds in

15 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/VALE%20Peter%20Waddell%202002.pdf>

Ascot Vale with 5.06.21, ahead of **Ray Smith** (5.08.34) and Les Hellyer (5.26.14). And the VAWC winter season had still more distance on offer, with the VAWC 50 Mile Club Championship Walk at Albert Park on Saturday 15th October.



A number of the Victorian 50km walkers at Albert Park in 1955 - Len Chadwick, Norm Goble, Jim Gaylor, Tom Kelly, Fred O'Grady and John Busst

1956 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, MELBOURNE, 9 SEPTEMBER 1956

The 1956 Australian 50km Championship was held on the Olympic Games course in Melbourne on 9th September 1956. A strong field of 17 walkers had lined up on a very wet day with a cold breeze blowing. None could withstand the effort of New Zealand walker **Norm Read**¹⁶, whose winning time of 4:30:16.8 was a new Australian Open record. Second placed **Ray Smith**¹⁷ of Victoria, in only his second 50km race, set a new Australian Residential record with his time of 4:40:24.6. Third placed **Ron Crawford**¹⁸ of NSW (4:45:19.2) and fourth placed **Kevin Keogh** of NSW (4:45:35.6) were also under the old record.

With the first 6 finishers all bettering 5 hours, it was the highest quality 50km seen thus far in Australia. Teams from Victoria and NSW contested the teams races and, with 3 New Zealand walkers present, it could perhaps be viewed as an informal Australasian championship. The teams event was very close, with NSW bettering Victoria, 10 points to 11.

1956 Australian 50km Championship, Olympic Course, Melbourne, 9th September

1.	Norm Read	NZL	4:30:16.2	Australian Open Record
2.	Ray Smith	VIC	4:40:24.6	Australian Residential Record
3.	Ron Crawford	NSW	4:45:19.2	
4.	Kevin Keogh	NSW	4:45:35	
5.	David Melzer	QLD	4:53:03	
6.	Jim Short	VIC	5:54:43	
7.	Harry Tetlow	NZL	4:59:54	
8.	Colin Walker	NSW	5:00:43	
9.	Bill Kirby	NSW	5:05:30	
10.	Tom Daintry	QLD	5:06:07	
11.	John Busst	VIC	5:08:36	
12.	Eric Waite	NZL	5:10:17	
13.	Peter Waddell	NSW	5:11:00	
14.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:16:28	
	Les Hellyer	VIC	DNF	
	Harry Summers	VIC	DNF	
	John Smyth	VIC	DNF	
	Edward Edwards	NSW	DQ	

Teams

1.	NSW	10 Pts	(2,3,5)
2.	VIC	11 Pts	(1,4,6)

Fast forward 3 weeks to the 1956 Victorian 50km Championship, contested at the Royal Showgrounds on 29th September. Norm Read, fresh from his victory in the Australian Championship, looked a sure winner at the 20 Mile post, but Victorian **Ted Allsopp**¹⁹, contesting his very first 50km, took the lead in the dying stages and won in a new Australian record of 4:24:24. Read had perhaps paid the price of trying to walk two high quality 50km races in such a short timeframe.

1956 Victorian 50km Championship, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne, 29th September

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:24:24	Australian Record
2.	Norm Read	NZ	4:45:40	
3.	Tom Daintry	QLD	4:54:30	
4.	Harry Tetlow	NZ	4:58:33	
5.	David Melzer	QLD	4:59:56	
6.	Les Hellyer	VIC	5:04:23	

Ted's astonishing 50km debut performance was not really a shock to those who had watched his winter season. He had won the 1956 Olympic 20km walk trial in July (1:34:26) and, in early September, he set an official world record of 16 miles 403 yards in a special 2 Hour Track Walk put on by the VAWC at Olympic Park in Melbourne.

The 1956 Olympic 50km saw 3 Australians (Ray Smith, Ted Allsopp and Ron Crawford) and one New Zealander (Norm Read) in action.

16 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wo-norm-read.pdf>

17 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-ray-smith.pdf>

18 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wa-ron-crawford.pdf>

19 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-ted-allsopp.pdf>

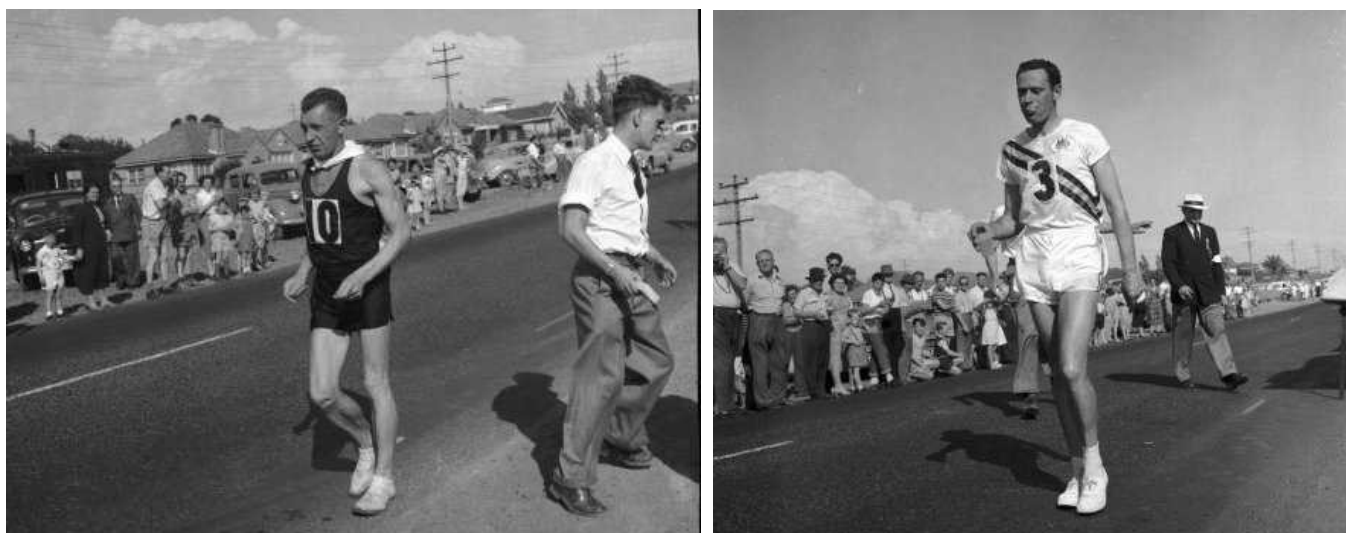
Although Ted went into the Olympic 50km as favourite, things did not work out as planned.

The particulars of Ted's Olympic participation make for interesting reading. When he fulfilled the live-in requirement and moved into the Olympic Village with the other athletes, he was forced to leave his wife Ann who was soon to give berth. On the evening before the 50km walk, he went to bed early, having no idea that Ann was about to go into labour. About 11PM, an Australian team official took a telephone call saying that Ann had given birth but the official decided to let Ted get a good night's sleep and did not tell him of the berth.

The next morning, Ted picked up the Argus newspaper and was surprised to learn that he was a father. The bus duly took the competitors to the MCG and the crowd of 100,000 cheered him as the walkers did their first two laps of the ground before setting off to walk to Springvale and back. At the 12 mile mark, Ted was disqualified, being reported by the two Russian judges and the chief judge, Libotte of Switzerland.

Three days later he walked in the 20 km event and no one challenged his technique and he finished 10th in 1:35:43. But it was none the less a disappointing Olympics for Ted.

For the record, Ray Smith finished the best of the Australians with 6th place (4:56.08.0), in horrendously hot conditions. However, it was Norm Read who upset the apple cart, walking to a strong victory with 4:30:42.8.



*Norm Read and Ray Smith in Dandenong Rd in the 1956 Olympic 50km walk
(photos National Library of Australia archives)*

1957 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 28 SEPTEMBER 1957

After the excitement of an Olympic year, 1957 was relatively quiet, but one performance stood out.

The 1957 Alexander Cup was held in conjunction with the Victorian 50km Roadwalk Championship at the Royal Showgrounds in Ascot Vale on 28th September of that year. The field of 13 featured 10 Victorians and 3 SA walkers but no NSW representatives.

Ted Allsopp proved in a class of his own, winning as he liked and bettering his own Australian record with 4:23:38. The gap to second was huge, with Cliff Barling 38 minutes in arrears! Victoria was the only State to finish a team. Although SA had 3 walkers, only **Col Bailey**²⁰ finished. The VAWC Annual Report of that year wrote of its disappointment at the lack of support for this event. It would stagger on for 3 further stagings before the inevitable.

Interest in the Alexander Cup competition was effected by the absence of a team from NSW, for the first time since the inception of the concept. However, a team from SA took part but their efforts were nullified by the withdrawal of two of their team members from the race, leaving Victoria as the only State to finish a complete team. We sincerely trust that more interest will be taken by all States in future competitions.

1957 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:23:38	Australian Record
2.	Cliff Barling	VIC	5:01:23	
3.	Tom Daintry	VIC	5:04:07	
4.	Jim Short	VIC	5:07:25	
5.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:13:35	
6.	Peter Bethell	VIC	5:23:51	
7.	John Busst	VIC	5:27:12	
8.	Colin Bailey	SA	5:33:03	
9.	Ronald Davies	VIC	5:51:52	
	Lindsay MacGregor	SA	DNF	
	Edward Folland	SA	DNF	
	Rex Chugg	VIC	DNF	
	Basil Thomson	VIC	DNF	

Teams

- | | | | |
|----|-----|-------|---------|
| 1. | VIC | 6 pts | (1,2,3) |
|----|-----|-------|---------|



Ted Allsopp leads Ray Smith in a race at the Royal Showgrounds in Melbourne in 1955

²⁰ Colin Bailey would go on to have an illustrious walking career on the local SA front, setting a new Australian 50 Mile walk record of 8:37:40 in 1962. Now retired and living in Tasmania, he is a world expert on the Thylacine or Tasmanian Tiger and has written a number of books on the subject.

1958 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, SYDNEY, 6 SEPTEMBER 1958

Ted Allsopp continued to dominate the local Australian landscape in 1958, winning the Victorian 50,000m Track Championship in Melbourne on 23rd August in a new Australian record of 4:22:41.8 in late August. The story goes like this.

The 1958 Victorian 50m road championship had been changed to a 50,000m track championship for the purposes of creating new track records. The set date was Saturday 23rd August and the venue was the Melbourne University track in inner Melbourne. Of the 9 starters, 3 were first time novices, but that did not stop 8 of the 9 from completing the event. Ted Allsopp established or broke records for 30,000m, 20 Miles, 30 Miles and 50,000m and was an easy winner. 19 year old **Noel Freeman**²¹ walked a wonderful debut 4:25:09.5 in taking second. Further down, new comers **Jim Gleeson**²² and **Irwin Saunders** both finished in just over 5 hours.

1958 Victorian 50km Championship, Melbourne University Track, 23rd August

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:22:41.8	Australian Record
2.	Noel Freeman	VIC	4:25:09.5	
3.	Cliff Barling	VIC	4:55:41.6	
4.	Harry Summers	VIC	5:01:05.7	
5.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	5:01:40.0	
6.	Irwin Saunders	VIC	5:04:46.7	

The 1958 Australian 50km Championship, which was held two weeks later in Sydney, saw another wonderful duel between Ted Allsopp and Noel Freeman, Ted winning out with 4:24:46.2, just over 1 minute outside his Australian road record and a little over 6 minutes ahead of Noel. Victoria easily won the Teams Race ahead of NSW, 6 pts to 14 pts.



The start of the 1958 Australian 50km in Sydney. Noel Freeman is second from left. Ted Allsopp is seventh from left.

1958 Australian 50km Championship, Centennial Park, Sydney, 6th September.

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:24:46.2	
2.	Noel Freeman	VIC	4:31:15.2	
3.	William Kirby	NSW	4:48:49.6	
4.	Cliff Barling	VIC	4:58:32	
5.	Leslie Ryman	NSW	5:00:43	
6.	Harry Summers	VIC	5:03:47	
7.	Jim Short	VIC	5:07:34	
8.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	5:08:19	
9.	Sydney Bray	QLD	5:28:11	
10.	Leslie Woods	NSW	5:30:15	
11.	John Ferguson	NSW	5:31:17	

21 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-noel-freeman.pdf>

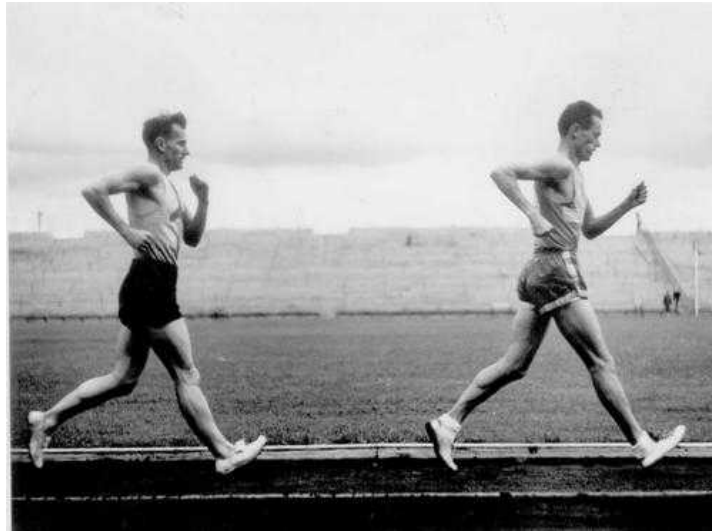
22 See <http://centurions.org.au/centprofiles/03%20jim%20gleeson.pdf>

Ralph Field	VIC	DNF
Kenneth Keogh	NSW	DNF
Irwin Saunders	VIC	DNF
Sydney Rudman	NSW	DNF
Edward Edwards	NSW	DQ
Gavan Breen	TAS	DQ

Teams

- | | | | |
|----|-----|--------|---------|
| 1. | VIC | 7 Pts | (1,2,4) |
| 2. | NSW | 14 Pts | (3,5,6) |

Three weeks later, on Saturday 27th September, Ted Allsopp won the Victorian 50km Championship with another excellent time of 4:26;14.



Ted Allsopp leads Don Keane in a track race in the late 1950s. Both were consummate stylists, as the photo shows.

Australian Open 30,000m	Noel Freeman	2:30:54.4
Australian 2 Miles	Noel Freeman	2:42:23.4
Australian 30Miles	Ted Allsopp	4:11:10.6
Australian 50km	Ted Allsopp	4:20:23.8

VAWC 50km Track Walk, University Track, Melbourne, Saturday 22 August 1959

1. Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:20:23.8	Australian Record
2. Noel Freeman	VIC	4:28:29.4	
3. Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:53:30	
4. Jim Short	VIC	5:17:40	

The Victorian 50km Championship was held 3 weeks later, on Saturday 26th September, on its usual Royal Showgrounds course to Rockbank and Return. Both Allsopp and Freeman were in attendance again and Ted chipped away at his own Australian 50km record with his winning time of 4:22:37.

1959 Victorian 50km Championship, Royal Showgrounds, Saturday 26 September

1. Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:22:37	Australian Record
2. Noel Freeman	VIC	4:30:06	
3. Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:51:17	
4. Jim Short	VIC	5:15:27	
5. Len Chadwick	VIC	5:21:04	
6. Ken Saunders	VIC	5:29:13	



Ted Allsopp and Noel Freeman fight out the 1959 Australian T&F Championship walk ahead of fellow Victorian Harry Summers

Allsopp and Freeman had dominated the Australian 50km scene throughout 1958 and 1959. The same could also be said for the shorter distance scene.

1960 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, MELBOURNE, SATURDAY 5 JUNE 1960

1960 was an Olympic year and the 20km and 50km trials were expected to bring out the best walkers.

First to the Olympic 20 km trial which was held on 7 May 1960 in Centennial Park in Sydney. **Noel Freeman** stormed through the first 10 km in 41:39 before slowing to win in 1:32:12.4. **Ted Allsopp** chased him early but paid the penalty and faded to third behind **Ron Crawford** of NSW. Ron's time of 1:34:22 gained him Olympic selection. Ted's time of 1:34:33 was not deemed to be adequate for selection.

The Olympic 50 km trial was held on 5 June 1960 in Mentone (Melbourne), as part of the 1960 Australian 50km Championship. Ted Allsopp, Ron Crawford and Noel Freeman shadowed each other early after a slow start. When Noel applied the pressure at the 20 km mark, neither Ron nor Ted could respond and Ted eventually retired at the 32 km mark. He had missed out on another Olympics.

Gavan Breen²³, who finished in fourth place, would go on to a completely different field after his time as a walker, eventually being honoured in 2016 with an O.A.M. for "distinguished service to the Indigenous community through the preservation of languages, to the development of orthographies, and to education".

1960 Australian 50km Championship, Mentone, Melbourne, Saturday 5 June

1.	Noel Freeman	VIC	4:32:28
2.	Ron Crawford	NSW	4:38:51
3.	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:47:58
4.	Gavan Breen	VIC	4:54:41
5.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:58:14
6.	Alan Hancock	VIC	5:04:20
7.	Peter Waddell	NSW	5:13:46
8.	Kenneth Saunders	VIC	5:22:22
9.	Leslie Ryman	NSW	5:34:21
10.	John Ferguson	NSW	5:35:22
11.	John Smyth	VIC	6:02:44
	Enzio Franceschi	NSW	DNF
	Ted Allsopp	VIC	DNF
	Sydney Bray	QLD	DNF
	Kenneth Cambell	QLD	DNF

Teams

1.	VIC	10 Pts	(1,4,5)
2.	NSW	11 Pts	(2,3,6)

The thought of another 4 years must have been a daunting one for Ted who was now in his mid thirties. To make matters worse, youngsters Bob Gardiner, Frank Clark and Peter McCullagh would soon join Noel Freeman as additional rivals and push the standard even higher.

For the record, both Noel Freeman and Ron Crawford were selected for the Olympic 20km/50km double. They did brilliantly in the 20km, Noel taking the silver medal (1:34:16.2) and Ron finishing 11th (1:39:16.2) but the story in the 50km was a far different one as, controversially, they were both disqualified before the 2 km mark while still leading. Given Noel's clean judging sheet in the 20km event, his disqualification in the 50 km remains a discussion point. In the bitter aftermath (he felt he could have won the 50 km), the future direction of his career was perhaps set to be one dogged by controversy.

Ted Allsopp bounced back in early October with a win in the Victorian 50km Championship, his time of 4:36:14.0 a good one, but the timing had been wrong!

1960 Victorian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 1 October

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:36:14.0
2.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:44:35.0
3.	Rod Bambury	VIC	4:56:26.0

23 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-gavan-breen.pdf>



Noel Freeman, Ron Crawford and Norm Read lead the field as they leave the stadium in the Rome Olympic 50km

1961 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, SYDNEY, 16 SEPTEMBER 1961

The 1961 Alexander Cup 50km was very much an anticlimax after the previous year's Olympics, in which Noel Freeman and Ron Crawford had represented Australia. With neither of them in attendance, it was left to the evergreen **Ted Allsopp** to provide his own one man show. While his winning time of 4:28:56 was a good one, the lack of depth (**Jim Gleeson** was second in 4:54:08) and numerical strength (only 8 starters) showed that the Alexander Cup might perhaps be losing its relevance.

A certain amount of interest was taken out of the race when two NSW competitors were disqualified, leaving insufficient competitors for them to finish a team.

1961 Alexander Cup 50km, Centennial Park, Sydney, Saturday 16 September

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:28:56
2.	James Gleeson	VIC	4:54:08
3.	Norman Marr	VIC	4:59:33
4.	Gavan Breen	VIC	5:16:32
5.	John Ferguson	NSW	5:17:03
6.	Tom Daintry	VIC	5:26:00
7.	Lief Wernblad	NSW	5:56:31
	Harry Barrett	NSW	DQ
	George Pagonis	NSW	DQ

Victoria was the only State to finish in the Teams Race.

Teams

1.	VIC	6 pts	(1,2,3)
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It was a sparse year for the 50km rankings, with only 5 walkers under 5 hours

1961 Australian 50km Ranking (those under 5 Hours)

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:28:56	16/09/1961, Sydney
2.	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:45:55	02/09/1961, Sydney
3.	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:53:35	19/06/1961, Sydney
4.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:54:08	16/09/1961, Sydney
5.	Norm Marr	VIC	4:59:33	16/09/1961, Sydney

1962 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, SYDNEY, SATURDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 1962

For the first time, the name of **Bob Gardiner**²⁴ featured in an Australian level 50km race. He would go on to win the next 3 Australian 50km titles and would dominate the Australian 50km scene up till his retirement from international walking in 1972.

It was yet another easy win for **Ted Allsopp**, ahead of **Peter McCullagh** and **Logan Irwin**.

1962 Australian 50km Championship, Sydney, Saturday 8 September

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:35:06
2.	Peter McCullagh	VIC	4:44:30
3.	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:45:14
4.	Robert Gardiner	VIC	5:08:36
5.	George Buck	NSW	5:55:22
	Ralph Field	VIC	DNF
	Peter Waddell	NSW	DNF
	Leslie Wade	VIC	DNF
	Jim Gleeson	VIC	DNF
	Gavan Breen	VIC	DQ

Victoria was the only State to finish the required 3 competitors, thus winning the Teams Race by default.

Teams

1.	VIC	6 Pts	(1,2,3)
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Again, the 50km standard was poor overall. Tedd Allsopp headed the Australian 50km rankings for 1962, with his time of 4:29:06, done in the Victorian 50km Championship on 8th September. The next fastest walker was Logan Irwin with his time of 4:42:47, done in winning the NSW 50km Championship on 18th August.

24 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-bob-gardiner.pdf>

1963 ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, 28 SEPTEMBER 1963

The final Alexander Cup 50km, held on the Royal Showgrounds course in Melbourne on 28th September, 1963, saw a resurgence in numbers, with 16 competitors (10 Victorians and 6 from NSW) in attendance.

Once again, none of the big guns were in attendance and it was left to Victorian **Jim Gleeson** to win with 4:52:57. Jim was in career best form at that time and this win was a fitting reward for his many long distance races over the last few years.

This race saw two names of interest. **Varel Newmark**²⁵, better known as a track / short distance specialist, had upped the ante and tested himself over the 50km, coming 4th with 5:13:31. Further down the list, **Fred Redman**²⁶ finished 7th with 5:37:36. Fred had set a 10 mile Junior road walk world record of 1.14.30.6 in 1934 in his native England. He had emigrated to Australia in 1961, aged 50, and quickly involved himself in the local walking scene. He would go on to co-found the Australian Centurions in 1971.

1963 Alexander Cup 50km, Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne

1.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:52:57
2.	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:57:46
3.	Gavan Breen	VIC	5:02:23
4.	Varel Newmark	VIC	5:13:31
5.	Len Chadwick	VIC	5:17:18
6.	Irwin Saunders	VIC	5:22:29
7.	Frederick Redman	VIC	5:37:36
8.	Leslie Woods	NSW	5:58:40
9.	Lief Wernblad	NSW	6:01:26
10.	Jack Connelly	NSW	6:09:38
	Bruce Thorne	VIC	DNF
	Cliff Barling	VIC	DNF
	Ron Miller	VIC	DNF
	Leslie Wade	NSW	DNF
	Herbert Jones	NSW	DNF

Victoria took the first two placings in the Teams Championships, relegating NSW to third spot.

Teams

1.	VIC	8 pts	(1,3,4)
2.	VIC "B"	18 pts	(5,6,7)
3.	NSW	19 pts	(2,8,9)



Albert Park in the early 1960s - Sid Bray, Harry Summers, Jim Gleeson and Varel Newmark

25 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-varel-newmark.pdf>

26 See <http://centurions.org.au/centprofiles/founder%20fred%20redman.pdf>

Sadly, 50km walking seemed to have reached an all-time low in Australia, only 1 year out from an Olympics. Jim Gleeson (4:52:56) and Logan Irwin (4:52:35) were the only two walkers to better 5 hours that year.

All the other walkers had restricted their attentions to the shorter distances – the 20km rankings saw Peter McCullagh (1:34:09), Noel Freeman (1:36:37), Ron Crawford (1:37:46), Frank Clark (1:38:27) and Bob Gardiner (1:39:44) all in good shorter distance form, but would this translate to the 50km the following year?

1964 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, ADELAIDE, SATURDAY 6 JUNE 1964

A lot can sometimes change in two years and this was certainly the case here for **Bob Gardiner**. Fourth in the 1962 Australian 50km Championship, he had quickly developed into one of the top contenders for Olympic selection.

Bob trained hard and raced hard. In 1964 as part of his Olympic buildup, he regularly clocked up training weeks of 100 miles. In May of that year, he showed his true potential with a wonderful 40km time of 3:22:37 at Albert Park. His splits were 51:24, 50:28, 50:16 and 50:28.

It was no surprise when he won the Olympic 50 km trial on 6th June in Adelaide. Bob had broken clear at the 35km mark, going on to win comfortably with 4:24:19, a time that actually bettered the current Olympic 50km record. The chasing group of **Ted Allsopp**, **Frank Clark** and **Ron Crawford** soon fragmented, with Ted taking second with 4:30:55, just ahead of Frank (4:31:21), and a long way ahead of Ron who eventually faded to fifth place with 4:41:20.

1964 Australian 50km Championship, Adelaide, Saturday 6 June

1.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:24:19.4
2.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:30:56
3.	Frank Clark	NSW	4:31:22
4.	Noel Norris	QLD	4:33:28
5.	Ron Crawford	NSW	4:41:00
6.	Logan Irwin	NSW	4:41:20
7.	Alan Hancock	VIC	4:52:26
8.	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:54:15
9.	Gavan Breen	VIC	4:58:33
10.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:58:33
11.	Leslie Wade	NSW	5:01:54
12.	John Croft	NSW	5:05:47
13.	Ron Miller	VIC	5:06:11
14.	Graeme Free	QLD	5:11:11
15.	Irwin Saunders	VIC	5:15:44
16.	Adrian Jones	VIC	5:20:48
17.	Dean Knight	SA	5:39:08
18.	Jack Webber	SA	5:40:36
19.	Peter Whitham	SA	5:54:39
20.	John Corrie	SA	5:55:58
21.	William Starr	SA	5:57:46
22.	Martin Davey	SA	5:59:20
	Frank Leonard	SA	DNF
	Edward Pollard	SA	DNF

Teams

1.	VIC	9 Pts	(1,2,6)
2.	NSW	12 Pts	(3,4,5)
3.	SA	24 Pts	(7,8,9)

To complete the Olympic story, the 1964 Olympic 20km trial was held on 18th July 1964 in Centennial Park in Sydney. **Noel Freeman** won the race with 1:34:20, but it was done the hard way. He raced from the front as usual, passing the first 10 km in 42:30. But then he started to cramp and struggled home to just outlast a fast finishing **Ron Crawford** who crossed the line only 30 seconds in arrears. Ron had walked the entire race on his own in second place, and had made up over 2 minutes in the final 2 miles on a slowing Freeman.

1964 Australian 20km Olympic Trial, Sydney, Saturday 18 July

1.	Noel Freeman	VIC	1:34:20
2.	Ron Crawford	NSW	1:34:50
3.	Noel Norris	QLD	1:36:40
4.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	1:39:07
5.	Frank Clark	NSW	1:40:35
6.	Peter Waddell	NSW	1:43:35
7.	Robin Whyte	NSW	1:47:06
	Gavan Breen	VIC	DNF
	Eddie Dawkins	NSW	DNF

The trial placings had produced 6 different walkers, all with good times and all in contention. As the trial winners, Bob (50km) and Noel (20km) had to be selected. Ted (50km) and Ron (20km) had come second in the trials so would have to be the next picks. But how would the third spots in each event be decided? Both Frank Clark (20km) and Noel Norris (50km) had walked well, Frank in particular.

When the Tokyo team was about to be announced, only Noel and Bob were originally ratified by the Australian Olympic Committee, although other names were proposed by the athletics selectors. Then extra places were made available, and Ted and Ron were squeezed in. It was hard luck for Frank Clark and Noel Norris who had both probably done enough to be selected in an ideal world.

The Olympic team was duly named, with 4 walkers

Bob Gardiner	20km and 50km
Ron Crawford	20km and 50km
Noel Freeman	20km
Ted Allsopp	50km

Frank Clark's time would come, with representations in the 1966 Commonwealth Games and in the 1968 Olympics. For Noel Norris, he had missed his only chance.

The four man Australian walks team duly went to Tokyo for the 1964 Olympics and all performed creditably.

Noel Freeman	20km Walk	4 th	
Bob Gardiner	20km Walk	DNF	
	50km Walk	5 th	4:17:06.8 Australian Record
Ron Crawford	20km Walk	22 nd	1:38:47.0
	50km Walk	11 th	4:24:19.6
Ted Allsopp	50km Walk	17 th	4:31:07.8



Bob Gardiner, Ron Crawford and Ted Allsopp training in Tokyo in the final leadup to the Olympic 50km

1966 AUSTRALIAN/ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, MELBOURNE, SATURDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 1966

The 1966 Australian 50km Championship was something of an afterthought, after the excitement of the 1966 Commonwealth Games, the first such Games to include a racewalk. Let's talk about that first.

The Commonwealth Games trial was held in Campbelltown, NSW, on Saturday 7th May, and saw victory for NSW walker **Frank Clark**, ahead of **Ted Allsopp** and **Bob Gardiner**.

1966 Commonwealth Games Trial, Campbelltown, NSW, Saturday 7 May

1.	Frank Clark	NSW	2:36:17
2.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	2:39:59
3.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	2:46:17
4.	Peter Waddell	NSW	2:48:59
5.	Harry Summers	VIC	2:54:50
6.	John Croft	NSW	2:56:28
7.	Dean Knight	SA	2:59:10
8.	Leslie Manktelow	NSW	3:03:24
9.	Leslie Wade	NSW	3:04:40
10.	Bob Steadman	VIC	3:14:22
	Eddie Dawkins	NSW	DQ
	Logan Irwin	NSW	DNF
	Robin Whyte	NSW	DNF
	Clarrie Jack	VIC	DNF

Disappointedly, only Frank Clark was selected for the Games which were held in Kingston, Jamaica in mid August. Struggling in the tropical heat, he failed to finish the 20 Mile walk.

Fast forward to late September for the Australian 50km Championship in Melbourne, where the first 3 walkers from the Commonwealth Games trial also took the first 3 places. Only the finish order varied, **Bob Gardiner** winning with 4:18:20.4, **Ted Allsopp** second with a PB 4:20:00 and **Frank Clark** third with 4:28:06. The race attracted 25 competitors, including entrants from Queensland, SA, NSW and Victoria. Overall, it was the strongest 50km walk ever seen in Australia, with the first 9 walkers all bettering the 5 Hour standard, and with Bob Gardiner and Ted Allsopp both bettering the fastest time ever recorded in Australia (although Gardiner had done a faster time of 4:17:06.8 in Tokyo in 1964).

This event included the 1966 Alexander Cup 50km Championship. Placings were the same, with Victoria winning the Alexander Cup Teams Race ahead of NSW.

1966 Australian/Alexander Cup 50km, Melbourne, Saturday 24 September

1.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:18:20.4
2.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:20:00
3.	Frank Clark	NSW	4:28:06
4.	Harry Summers	VIC	4:48:55
5.	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:52:20
6.	Clarrie Jack	VIC	4:53:20
7.	Leslie Wade	NSW	4:57:55
8.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:58:32
9.	Leslie Manktelow	NSW	5:06:27
10.	Graeme Nicholls	VIC	5:09:18
11.	Victor Townsend	NSW	5:10:10
12.	Varel Newmark	VIC	5:18:46
13.	Robert Steadman	VIC	5:20:51
14.	David Black	VIC	5:22:37
15.	Tom Daintry	VIC	5:31:31
16.	Sydney Bray	QLD	5:32:54
17.	John Sheard	VIC	6:13:36
	Leonard Hart	SA	DNF
	John Smyth	SA	DNF
	Geoff Peters	SA	DNF
	Robin Whyte	NSW	DNF

Australian Championship Teams Race

- | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. VIC | 7 Pts | (1,2,4) |
| 2. NSW | 14 Pts | (3,5,6) |

Alexander Cup Teams Race

- | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. VIC | 7 Pts | (1,2,4) |
| 2. NSW | 14 Pts | (3,5,6) |

1968 AUSTRALIAN/ALEXANDER CUP 50KM, TOOWOOMBA, SATURDAY 25 MAY 1968

Bob Gardiner and **Noel Freeman** were dominant on the Victorian front in 1968 over all distances. Add in **Frank Clark**, who had won the 1967 NSW 50km in a State record of 4:22:50 and the 1967 NSW 20km in 1:32:59, and you had a top three Australians who were world class walkers.

Let's take the trials in order, starting with the 20km trial in early May.

Noel Freeman had set the standard in early April, walking a 1:29:12 to win a VAWC 20 km event. He walked with blistered heels from the 2 mile mark and was under 7 minute mile pace for the first 6 miles before slowing. It was the fastest 20 km time in the world for 1967-1968 and was superior to the winning times in both the 1960 and 1964 Olympics.

But the win came at a cost – his blistered feet were slow to recover and it was only four weeks until the Olympic trial on May 4 at Centennial Park in Sydney. He could not race at all till April 29 when he got through a painful 5 mile VAWC club championship which he won in 35:05.

The unthinkable then happened in the trial a week later – Noel was disqualified after only 3 laps by the all NSW panel of judges. He refused to leave the track and finished about 1 minute ahead of **Frank Clark** whose winning time was a course record 1:31:39. With second placed **Peter McCullagh** some 5 minutes behind, Frank was the only one considered for Olympic selection.

1968 Australian 20km Trial, Sydney, Saturday 4 May

1.	Frank Clark	NSW	1:31:44
2.	Peter McCullagh	VIC	1:36:59
3.	Harry Summers	VIC	1:40:10
4.	Ross Hayward	VIC	1:42:18
5.	Robin Whyte	NSW	1:43:30
6.	Bob Steadman	VIC	1:43:40
7.	Ron Crawford	NSW	1:46:18
8.	Logan Irwin	NSW	1:46:24
9.	Peter Waddell	NSW	1:47:29
10.	Ray Smith	VIC	1:49:22
11.	Leslie Wade	NSW	1:50:59
12.	Frak Overton	NSW	1:52:19
13.	Victor Townsend	NSW	1:55:42
14.	John Tormey	NSW	1:57:43
15.	Geoff Francis	ACT	2:11:26
	Noel Freeman	VIC	DQ
	Andrew Layland	ACT	DQ
	Dudley Crews	ACT	DNF
	Terence Lansdowne	ACT	DNF

Noel's finish was a token on his part – Olympic selection was awarded to Clark only. There ensued one of the ugliest media frenzies we have ever seen in Australia. Noel was adamant he had been 'robbed' and many highly placed people like Herb Elliot backed him. Even the A.A.U. of Australia backed him and they appealed his exclusion from the team.

He had one last chance for selection – a verbal assurance that if he won the Victorian Title at Albert Park on Saturday 30 June, wasn't disqualified for 'lifting' and recorded a world class time, he would be considered for inclusion in the team.

Four weeks later he was ready for his 20km 'trial'. He led the field from the start and, in icy winds and bitter conditions, recorded a world class time of 1:31:34, 5 seconds faster than Frank Clark had recorded in his Sydney trial win. He received only one caution and chief judge Jack Larkin confirmed that his style was up to international standard and would not cause disqualification at international contests. The race was watched by a surprise spectator, the secretary of the Australian Olympic Federation, Sir Edgar Tanner. One of the first to congratulate Noel after the race, Sir Edgar pointed to the 1964 Tokyo Olympic tracksuit he was holding and said: "*It looks as though you'll be getting another one of those.*"

Yet amazingly, at a closed AOF meeting later in July, Noel's case was dismissed. He was left at home while the great Golubnichy recorded his third straight Olympic 20 km win – we can never know if Noel would have finally won his 'Gold' but a review of his form indicates he would have been in there with a good show.

It must be said at this stage that Frank Clark was a worthy Australian representative and it is unfortunate that his justifiable selection was perhaps undervalued a little in the aftermath of this unfortunate affair.

Now to the 50km trial, an event which was held without controversy, 3 weeks after the 20km trial. **Bob Gardiner** and **Ted Allsopp** had bypassed the 20km trial, realising that they needed to put all their eggs into one basket and vie for the 50km spots. Bob went in as favourite and duly won the Australian 50 km championship and Olympic trial by more than 5 minutes. The course in Toowoomba in Queensland was a tough hilly one and the race was held in bleak conditions. His time of 4:22:23 was impressive in the circumstances. Ted also walked superbly on the tough course, to finish second with 4:27:40.4. **Frank Clark**, backing up from his win in the 20km trial, was third with 4:30:40.

The 1968 Australian 50km included the Alexander Cup 50km Championship, with Victorian winning the Teams race ahead of NSW and SA.

1968 Australian/Alexander Cup 50km, Toowoomba, Qld, Saturday 25 May

1.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:22:23.6
2.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:27:40.4
3.	Frank Clark	NSW	4:30:34
4.	Harry Summers	VIC	4:43:43
5.	Jim Gleeson	VIC	4:50:04
6.	Robert Steadman	VIC	4:54:09
7.	Peter Waddell	NSW	4:57:12
8.	Ron Crawford	NSW	5:07:53
9.	Robin Whyte	NSW	5:08:04
10.	Sydney Bray	QLD	5:12:51
11.	Lyle Smith	QLD	5:25:34
12.	Peter Whitham	SA	5:32:14
13.	Leonard Hart	SA	5:34:33
14.	Noel Barron	QLD	5:38:33
15.	Brian Horton	SA	5:47:50
	Leslie Wade	NSW	DNF
	Noel Norris	QLD	DNF
	John Corrie	SA	DNF
	Peter McCullagh	NSW	DQ
	Gavan Breen	VIC	DQ
	Andrew Layland	NSW	DQ

Australian Championship Teams Race

1.	VIC	7 Pts	(1,2,4)
2.	NSW	14 Pts	(3,5,6)
3.	QLD	26 Pts	(7,8,11)
4.	SA	31 Pts	(9,10,12)

Alexander Cup Teams Race

1.	VIC	7 Pts	(1,2,4)
2.	NSW	14 Pts	(3,5,6)
3.	QLD	26 Pts	(7,8,11)
4.	SA	31 Pts	(9,10,12)

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, Bob Gardiner and Frank Clark were selected for the Mexico Olympic but Ted Allsopp was overlooked once again. Ted had made 2 Olympic teams but it could just as easily been 5 teams. In 1952, 1960 and 1968, he went into the trials as one of the firm favourites but on each occasion he was the unlucky one who missed out even though his performances seemed sufficient for selection

As the Olympics drew near, Bob intensified his training and racing and his final hitouts were impressive. In particular, on August 24th in a VAWC Track 50 km event at Melbourne University, Bob won in 4:14:17, setting new Commonwealth, Australian and Victorian records and showing that he was a dangerous dark horse for the forthcoming Olympic 50 km event. I was fortunate enough to witness that walk and I still remember the constant pace with which he ate up the 125 laps.

VAWC Track 50km Track Championship, Melbourne University Track, 24 August

1.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:14:17	New Australian Record
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Bob and Frank left for Mexico with high expectations but, like most of us, they had little idea of the toll that the high

altitude and heat would exact from their bodies. In the Olympic 50km, after a good start, Bob gradually lost ground and faded back through the field. His last 10km was walked in the semi darkness with people wandering across the course. His 19th place in 4:52:29 was a disappointment but still a gutsy effort. Frank held together a little better, finishing 12th with 4:40:14.

Both walkers had been selected for the 20km / 50km double. Bob chose not to start in the 20km, deciding to put all his efforts into the 50km. Frank did the double, coming 16th in the 20km with 1:40:06.

Frank Clark	20 km Walk	16 th	1:40:06
	50 km Walk	12 th	4:40:14
Bob Gardiner	20km Walk	DNS	
	50km Walk	19 th	4:52:59



1970 AUSTRALIAN 50KM CHAMPIONSHIP, MELBOURNE, SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 1970

Before discussing the 1970 Australian 50km Championship, I need to briefly mention the 1970 Commonwealth Games, for which the 20 Miles Walk trial was held in Melbourne in August 1969. In that trial, **Bob Gardiner** won with 2:31:37, **Noel Freeman** was second with 2:34:17 and **Frank Clark** was third with 2:39:24.

Frank's time was considered too slow for selection, so only Bob and Noel make the trip to Edinburgh in July 1970. There, Noel won the 20 Mile walk with 2:33:33 and Bob was second with 2:35:55.



1970 Commonwealth Games medallists Bill Sutherland, Noel Freeman and Bob Gardiner

While Noel and Bob were away in Scotland, the Victorian 50km Championship was held at Albert Park, and it was **Ted Allsopp** who cleaned up, winning comfortably in 4:27:28. He may have been 44 years of age, but he continued to shine, with a brilliance that showed no signs of diminishing.

The 1970 Australian 50km Championship was held 2 months later in Melbourne, with Bob Gardiner and Ted Allsopp in attendance but Noel Freeman and Frank Clark absentees. Ted won by over 8 minutes, and may well have won anyway, even if Noel and Frank had been in attendance. His time of 4:21:05 only 1 minute outside his PB. On his day, he was still unbeatable.

Second place went to former British international **Peter Fullager**²⁷ who had arrived in Australia only a month previously. Peter came with great credentials, having raced with distinction in England and Europe, with a string of victories and top performances. Third place went to the irrepressible **Bob Gardiner**, a slow 4:36:53 but a team performance by the ultimate team man.

1970 Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Saturday 26 September

1.	Ted Allsopp	VIC	4:21:05
2.	Peter Fullager	SA	4:29:15
3.	Bob Gardiner	VIC	4:36:53
4.	Steven Hausfeld	NSW	4:41:05
5.	Robin Whyte	NSW	4:41:55
6.	Graeme Nicholls	VIC	4:55:55
7.	Robin Wood	VIC	5:04:58
8.	Victor Townsend	NSW	5:08:36
9.	Andrew Jamieson	VIC	5:15:10
10.	Brendan Hyde	NSW	5:24:46
11.	Peter Whitham	SA	5:27:25
12.	John Webber	SA	5:32:25
13.	Graeme Anderson	VIC	5:21:53
	Sydney Bray	QLD	DNF
	Brian Carman	SA	DNF
	David Black	VIC	DNF

27 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wa-peter-fullager.pdf>

Paul Cronin	VIC	DNF
Geoff Laycock	VIC	DNF
Claude Martin	VIC	DNF
Gordon Mills	VIC	DNF
Varel Newmark	VIC	DNF

Teams

1.	VIC	10 Pts	(1,3,6)
2.	NSW	16 Pts	(4,5,7)
3.	SA	19 Pts	(2,8,9)



Peter Fullager in action in the early 1970s