

## 1983 AUSTRALIAN ROADWALK CHAMPIONSHIPS, CANNING VALE, WA, 27-28 AUGUST 1983

The 1983 Australian Roadwalk Championships, which were held in Canning Vale, WA, on 27-28 August of that year, consisted of the following events

- Senior Men 50km Roadwalk
- Senior Women 20km Roadwalk
- U20 Men 20km Roadwalk
- U20 Women 10km Roadwalk

The Senior Championships were seen as fairly open as the meet was held only 2 weeks after the IAAF World Championships and only a month before the 1983 Lugano Cup, to which we sent a large team. Consequently, many of our top walkers were missing from Perth.

The first championship to be contested was the 50km, being held on the Saturday. Terry Jones has forwarded to me a great shot of the 50km start:



*David Cash (VIC), Jim Turnbull (WA), Colin Donald (VIC), Harry Summers (VIC), Mark Wall (VIC), Richard Pestell (WA), Tim Thompson (SA), Ian Fay (SA), Greg Rowe (NSW), John Harris (QLD), Keith Knox (NSW), Frank Overton (NSW), Peter Vysma (VIC), Robin Whyte (ACT), Duncan Faux (WA), Terry Jones (WA)*

The photo shows 15 starters, a big field but one that would have been even bigger, except for the Lugano Cup/World Championships clash.

### **Australian 50km Men Roadwalk Championship, 27 August 1983**

1.	Keith Knox	NSW	4:28:20
2.	Ian Fay	SA	4:29:16
3.	Colin Donald	VIC	4:39:35
4.	David Cash	VIC	4:41:06
5.	John Harris	QLD	4:42:16
6.	Richard Pestell	WA	4:43:50
7.	Robin Whyte	ACT	4:44:14
8.	Tim Thompson	SA	4:50:23
9.	Terry Jones	WA	4:55:16
10.	Frank Overton	NSW	4:57:21
11.	Harry Summers	VIC	4:59:13
12.	Peter Vysma	VIC	5:30:58
13.	Jim Turnbull	WA	5:33:11

Teams: VIC (8 pts), WA (14 pts)

The remaining championships were contested on the Sunday.

### Australian 20km U20 Men Roadwalk Championship, 28 August 1983

1.	Alan Muir	NSW	1:34:30
2.	A. Duncan	VIC	1:37:20
3.	Richard Everson	SA	1:37:44
4.	J. Grimanes	NSW	1:43:58
5.	C. Barnett	NSW	1:46:34
6.	R. Crockett	WA	1:52:09
7.	Peter Back	WA	2:01:40
8.	S. Brophy	WA	2:08:22

Teams: NSW (6 pts), WA (15 pts).

### Australian 20km Women Roadwalk Championship, 28 August 1983

1.	Sally Pierson	VIC	1:39:35
2.	Lilliam Harpur	SA	1:47:10
3.	Lisa Harrison	NSW	1:53:17
4.	S. Narbey	WA	1:56:14
5.	B. Jenner	S.A.	2:00:22
6.	N. Stanway	VIC	2:01:11
7.	K. Schultz	SA	2:05:21
8.	N. Hathaway	WA	2:12:41
9.	J. Jobse	WA	2:16:57

Teams: SA (8 pts), WA (13 pts)

### Australian 10km U20 Women Roadwalk Championship, 28 August 1983 (result incomplete)

1.	Lisa Harrison	NSW	51:34
2.	Roseanne Smith	VIC	51:38
3.	Frances Toohey	VIC	52:29

VRWC life member **Alan Minter** emailed me recently to reminisce about the trip. It's a great read but it sounds like it was indeed a challenge!

I read your item in H & T about the 1983 50Km held in Perth. I was the Vic team manager, and recall that I had several disagreements with the WA organisers and officials before and during the events.

We received a map of the proposed course some time before the event, showing that the competitors would have to walk through a shopping centre. On checking with a work colleague who had lived in the area I learned that that the centre was extremely busy on Saturday mornings, so not ideal for conducting a championship walking event.

I spoke to someone at the WA Association, but they were reluctant to change the course, saying that they wanted to show off the sport and thought that having it go through the centre would help. Ray Smith and I spoke to (I think) Rick Pannell at the AAU and he suggested to WA that they change the course. It was then held on an industrial estate development in Canning Vale. On the day of the event, Don Keane was there and told me that he had told the organisers that the original course was unsuitable, but had been told they didn't want his input and, as he put it, "to keep his nose out of things."

Needless to say this didn't endear me to the people in Perth, who I learnt had mostly progressed from LA's. At the managers' meeting a number of them made caustic comments to me and to Trevor Huxley from NSW who also supported moving the course.

I was also confronted by a woman who said she had paid a certain Victorian official for 10 IAAF Handbooks, and had been told by that official that I would bring them over to her. When I said I knew nothing about them she virtually accused me and the official of stealing their money.

Early on the morning of the event there was a thunderstorm and I expected the course to be under water. However it was dry and actually a good course on roads on the estate which had only a few buildings, so it was possible to see the competitors for most of the time.

I think the judges on the 50Km were all WA judges. On the womens' event (10Km I think) some of the competitors from the 50Km judged too. I think Mark Wall may have judged. Most of the judges didn't have much idea. I learned from Don Keane that they had all been LA's judges and had been pushed through as WAAAA judges especially for the event. They had even refused to have Don as a judge. The chief was riding around the course on a bicycle, trying to judge while he was riding. At one time he was riding beside a Victorian walker (I think it was David Cash) about a metre from him, and was going to report him for contact. I pointed out to him that from his position on the bike he couldn't tell whether any walker was infringing so he didn't report him.

During the womens' event one of the female judges was standing at the start/finish line talking to the timekeepers when Sally Pierson went past. The judge heard the lap time and said "No woman can walk that fast, she's got to be running." and put in a report on Sally.

The feeding station also became a contentious point. You may recall that a few years earlier the IAAF rule had changed to allow officials to hand drinks etc to competitors. During the event a WA official wearing an AAU blazer turned up and said that he had been appointed the AAU representative for the event. He threatened to disqualify all the Vic and NSW competitors because we were handing the drinks to them. He maintained that they had to be picked up by the competitors from the table. Even when we showed him the rule in the IAAF handbook he didn't change his mind.

Not the most pleasant of events I've attended. Even the trip home was better forgotten. We were on the midnight flight which arrived in Melbourne at 5:00am. I tried to sleep as I had to go to work. There was a women in the row behind me with 3 young kids who were restless all night, and one of the female members of the team talked to another member for the whole flight. When we arrived, I drove to Robinson Hall, had about 2 hours sleep on the first aid stretcher, then showered and went to work. Don't think I got much work done that day.