

## AUSTRALIAN RACEWALKING CHAMPIONSHPS MEN: 2001 - 2004

This follows on from my previous articles which detail the early Australasian and Australian Racewalking Championships (along with other particularly significant races), up to and including 2000.

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Our story continues from 2001.

Fallout continued from the racewalk judging controversies of the 2000 Olympics. The following article was published in the Australian Newspaper in early December 2000 and mirrored a corresponding IAAF news release. The media release understandably provoked a lot of fiery discussion.

*Lausanne Switzerland: The introduction of an intelligent shoe to resolve walking race disqualification disputes is to be considered by the International Athletic Federation. "It would avoid the kind of dispute we saw at the Sydney Olympics" IAAF spokesman Giorgio Reineri said. At Sydney, the Mexican Bernardo Segura was disqualified 15 minutes after he had conducted a lap of honour in celebration of his victory in the 20 km walk. Australian Jane Saville was disqualified just before entering the stadium while comfortably leading the women's race. According to the Council report, the footwear, invented by Canadian Dennis Furlong, would have a 90 gram capsule attached to each shoe that would immediately detect loss of contact with the ground. The shoe, due to be presented to the commission in February, would emit a beep and trigger a red light after a certain number of faults. But opposition is expected from race walking judges.*

Of course, the shoe never passed the testing phase and it was quietly shelved. But it would not be the last time that this sort of electronic device would be touted, always unsuccessfully.

### 2001 IAAF World Championships Qualifying Trials

Athletics Australia seem intent on sending the smallest team ever to the 2001 World Championships in Canada. Not content with the published IAAF A and B standards, A.A. imposed an "AA" standard which was set at such a high level as to exclude most of those trying for spots. For the 20km and 50km walks, these standards were as follows

20 Km for Men	B	1:25:30	A	1:23:00	AA	1:21:30
20 Km for Women	B	1:40:00	A	1:36:00	AA	1:33:00
50 Km for Men	B	4:04:00	A	4:00:00	AA	3:56:00

To be certain of selection, you had to win or come second in the trial and you had to better the "AA" standard in the trial or else have done so in the qualifying period. The walk trials are discussed below

### Australian 20km Championships and World Championships Selection Trials Davies Park, Brisbane, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2001

The 2001 20km roadwalk championships were started at 7:30AM to optimise weather conditions, and the course used was the same one that was to be used for the World Veterans Championship races in July 2001. Although the 2km lap was well shaded, the humidity was high and the times generally slower than expected.

**Nathan Deakes** was in a class of his own, winning the men's 20km race by over 5 minutes, with a time of 1:21:02. This confirmed his World Championships spot, but all other walkers were well outside the required standard.

<b>Australian Men 20km Champ, Brisbane, Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2001</b>			
1.	Nathan Deakes	VIC	1:21:02
2.	Luke Adams	NSW	1:26:31
3.	Duane Cousins	VIC	1:31:17
4.	Dominic McGrath	VIC	1:32:06
5.	John Morison	NSW	1:34:30
6.	Andrew Jamieson	VIC	1:40:31
7.	Andrew Ludwig	QLD	1:44:49
8.	Warren Russell	NSW	1:48:27
9.	Ignacio Jimenez	QLD	1:49:15
10.	Peter Bennett	QLD	1:50:36
11.	Nigel Amyes	NZL	1:51:35
12.	Kurt Rose	QLD	1:52:54
13.	Robert Osborne	NSW	1:57:54
14.	Daniel Lowe	WA	2:00:55
-	Robert Coleman	QLD	DQ
-	Troy Sundstrom	NSW	DQ
-	Liam Murphy	SA	DQ

The women's Championship certainly made the headlines with **Jane Saville** DQ'd again. But this did not detract from the performance of 40 year old **Kerry Saxby-Junna** who won by over 6 minutes with 1:34:58.

<b>Australian Women 20km, Brisbane, Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2001</b>			
1.	Kerry Saxby-Junna	NSW	1:34:58
2.	Simone Wolowiec	VIC	1:41:51
3.	Natalie Saville	NSW	1:44:36
4.	Wendy Muldoon	VIC	1:47:14
5.	Tracy Rosengrave	VIC	1:50:16
6.	Roisin Gleich	VIC	2:03:56
7.	Judy Moller	QLD	2:06:45
-	Carma Watson	NZL	DNF
-	Jane Saville	NSW	DQ

Nathan Deakes headed off to Europe after his dominant win in Brisbane, with his sights set on the 50km event in Naumburg on 8<sup>th</sup> April. His win there in 3:43:43 was only 30 seconds outside Simon Baker's national record and a big PB for Deakes. It confirmed his current status not only as our top walker but as one of the top walkers in the world. Jane Saville also made amends for her disqualification in Brisbane, ticking off a World Championship qualifying time with 1:32:10 in the same meet.

#### **Australian 50km Championship Men and World Championships Selection Trial Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2001**

With his 3:43:43, Nathan Deakes was not required to walk in the World Championship 50km trial, held in conjunction with the Australian 50km Championship in Melbourne on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May.

South Australians **Liam Murphy** and **Darren Bown** justified their decision to relocate to Canberra to train under Ron Weigel at the Australian Institute of Sport by taking the first two places. Perhaps more importantly, both recorded personal bests, under the World Championships "AA" qualifying time of 3:56.00, meeting the criteria for automatic selection. Murphy, a former Australian junior representative, made the decision to step up from 20km to the sport's longest event earlier in the year, and, despite the limited preparation for 50km, was most impressive in recording 3:54.37, overtaking his tiring teammate and training partner, Bown in the final 2.5km lap. Bown held on valiantly to record an equally encouraging 3:55.05. Olympian **Duane Cousins** was third in 3:59.25, ahead of Victorian compatriot, **Dominic McGrath** who recorded 4:01.53, all four athletes making the most of the excellent weather conditions.

Throw in Nathan Deakes and Australia looked set to have a very competitive 50km team for the World Walking Cup teams event in Turin in October 2002.

**Australian Men 50km, Melbourne, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2001**

1.	Liam Murphy	SA	3:54:37
2.	Darren Bown	SA	3:55:05
3.	Duane Cousins	VIC	3:59:25
4.	Dominic McGrath	VIC	4:01:53
-	Craig Barrett	NZ	DQ

**35<sup>th</sup> Lake Burley Griffin Carnival**

**Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2001**

AIS coach Ron Weigel did not see the LBG 20 mile event as an important race for his charges and the AIS walkers were notable absentees from the 2001 edition.

**Luke Adams** broke through for his first win after three previous attempts but he had to work hard to hold out 20 year old **Troy Sundstrom** by only 8 seconds. Sundstrom had dominated the underage ranks throughout his career, earning an impressive 3 World Junior berths. This fine second place indicated that he was ready to move into the senior ranks and start to challenge his older competitors. Although Adams and Sundstrom took first and second place, REGAL lacked a third walker and this let VRWC take the teams event in an unlikely result.

**LBG 20 Mile Walk, Canberra, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2001**

1.	Luke Adams	REGAL	2:30:56
2.	Troy Sundstrom	REGAL	2:31:04
3.	Marcus Dwyer	VRWC	2:40:48
4.	Michael Harvey	VRWC	2:46:15
5.	Frank Bertei	VRWC	2:48:15
6.	Andrew Ludwig	QRWC	2:55:36
7.	Peter Bennett	QRWC	2:57:18
8.	Ignacio Jiminez	QRWC	2:57:18
9.	Duncan Knox	VRWC	3:14:57
10.	Robin Whyte	ACTRW	3:19:36
11.	Andrew Blood	VRWC	3:28:04
12.	Keith Knox	NSWRW	3:28:34
13.	Daryl Biggin	VRWC	3:32:51
14.	Lachlan Wilkinson	ACTRW	3:34:38
15.	Bob Chapman	ACTRW	3:35:44
16.	Bill Starr	SAAWC	3:48:58
-	John Leydon	SAAWC	DNF

**Teams**

1.	VIC1	34 pts	M Dwyer, M Harvey, F Bertei
2.	QLD	24 pts	A Ludwig, P Bennett, I Jiminez
3.	VIC2	13 pts	D Knox, A Blood, D Biggins

While the LBG Carnival was taking attention locally, **Nathan Deakes** was making his presence felt in Europe. First, on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June, he came 4<sup>th</sup> in an elite 10km race in Krakow, Poland, with an Australian record of 38:10. Then a week later, on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June, in the Dublin Grand Prix of Race Walking, he won the 20km race with an Australian record time of 1:18:14.

**8<sup>th</sup> World Championships in Athletics  
Edmonton, Canada, 3-12 August 2001**

This was the first time the IAAF World Athletics Championships had been staged in North America and it saw 1677 athletes from 189 countries. A small but strong group of walkers had been selected as part of the Australian team, but the championships proved to be a disaster for the Australians, with Nathan Deakes the only one to record a finish.

First to the men's 20km, where **Nathan Deakes** was our only representative. In an exciting and high quality race, a tight pack of 20 walkers had hung together through the first 10km before breaking up, eventually reduced to 3 Russians, Deakes and Ecuador's **Jefferson Perez**. The Russians put in a withering last 5km, in just over 19 minutes, to take the medals, while Deakes finished fourth and Perez faded to eighth. All the Russians were Chegin athletes and it would be some years before WADA finally started to catch them out.

<b>20km Walk Men, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2001</b>			
1.	Rasskazov, Roman	RUS	1:20:31
2.	Markov, Ilya	RUS	1:20:33
3.	Burayev, Viktor	RUS	1:20:36
4.	<b>Deakes, Nathan</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:20:55</b>

In retrospect, the women's 20km was another sad result for racewalking, with Russian Olimpiada Ivanova winning in a new Games Record of 1:27:48. Ivanova had been stripped of her silver medal in the 10km walk at the 1997 World Championships in Athletics after she had tested positive for stanozolol, and she was banned for two years. Unfortunately for walking, she returned to competition and won further medals and set world records, starting with these world championships in Edmonton. Coached by Viktor Chegin, she was one of many Russians who ruined our sport over the next 15 years until that country was justifiably and belatedly banned.

And it was a sad result for Australia as well, with **Jane Saville** and **Kerry Saxby-Junna** both disqualified. Saville was under great media scrutiny from an Australian perspective, but she took it well and vowed to work on her technique.

<b>20km Walk Women, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2001</b>			
1.	Ivanova, Olimpiada	RUS	1:27:48 (CR)
2.	Tsybulskaya, Valentina	BLR	1:28:49 (PB)
3.	Perrone, Elisabetta	ITA	1:28:56
-	<b>Saville, Jane</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>
-	<b>Saxby-Junna, Kerry</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>

The men's 50km saw the three time Olympic champion **Robert Korzenioski** win, ahead of **Jesús Angel Garcia** of Spain. All 3 Australian walkers were disqualified.

<b>50km Walk Men, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2001</b>			
1.	Korzeniowski, Robert	POL	3:42:08 (WL)
2.	García, Jesús Angel	ESP	3:43:07 (SB)
3.	Hernandez, Edgar	MEX	3:46:12 (PB)
-	<b>Murphy, Liam</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>
-	<b>Bown, Darren</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>
-	<b>Deakes, Nathan</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>

### **21<sup>st</sup> World Student Games Beijing, China, 22 August - 1 September**

The 21st Summer Universiade, held in Beijing in late August, saw a small Australian team, which included only 1 walker, **Luke Adams**. Adams came 10<sup>th</sup> in the 20km walk with 1:28:02.

### **Australian Road Walking Championships Hobart, Tasmania, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2001**

Coming so soon after the World Championships, the 2001 Australian 30km Championship was a chance for the up and comers to shine, and 20 year old **Troy Sundstrom** make the most of the opportunity, winning with an impressive 2:17:17.

<b>Australian 30km Championship, Hobart, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2001</b>			
1.	Troy Sundstrom	NSW	2:17:17
2.	Duane Cousins	VIC	2:25:15

3.	Richard Everson	SA	2:26:56
4.	Frank Bertei	VIC	2:30:41
5.	Ronald Foster	TAS	3:18:57
6.	Robert Osborne	NSW	3:25:53
-	Douglas Connolly	NSW	DNF

### 5<sup>th</sup> Goodwill Games

#### QEII Track, Brisbane, Australia, 29 August - 9 September 2001

The fifth and final Goodwill Games were held in Brisbane in late 2001. It was an unfortunate demise and reflected the continuing disintegration in relations between the USA and Russia in the post Cold War period. Around 1300 athletes competed in 14 sporting competitions, athletics being the main attraction. The last ever Games ended just two days before the 9-11 attacks.

A small team of 9 Australian T&F athletes were selected and two walkers were included, **Nathan Deakes** and **Kerry Saxby-Junna**. Both performed excellently in their respective 20,000m track walks. Deakes was in untouchable form, and what a field he beat, with Robert Korzeniowski in second place and the 3 Russians who outlasted him at the World Championships the previous month relegated to positions 3-5. To cap it off, his time of 1:19:48.1 was a new Goodwill Games Record. For Saxby-Junna, this was her last international walk. Now aged 40, it was time to retire, after what had been a wonderful career.

20,000m Walk Men, 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2001				
1.	<b>Nathan Deakes</b>	AUS	<b>1:19:48.1</b>	<b>GR</b>
2.	Robert Korzeniowski	POL	1:19:52.0	
3.	Roman Rasskazov	RUS	1:21:09.0	
4.	Viktor Burayev	RUS	1:21:29.2	
5.	Ilya Markov	RUS	1:22:09.8	
6.	Juan Molina	RUS	1:22:31.8	

20,000m Walk Women, 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2001				
1.	Olimpiada Ivanova	RUS	1:26:52.3	WR
2.	Yelena Nikolayeva	RUS	1:27:49.3	
3.	Eva Pérez	ESP	1:32:22.4	
4.	Valentina Tsybulskaya	BLR	1:33:25.5	
5.	<b>Kerry Saxby-Junna</b>	AUS	<b>1:33:40.2</b>	

### Federation Carnival, including Glover Shield

#### Murdoch University, Perth, WA, Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2001

The awarding of the annual Federation Carnival to Western Australia meant that few walkers from the eastern states were expected to make the trip. In fact, at the close of the entry period, no interstate competitors had entered for any walk which, given the unexpected Ansett Airlines collapse a week before the carnival, was fortuitous for potential flyers. The events went ahead according to the timetable, with very good numbers of competitors by WA standards. 17 year old **Scott Hollaway** was an easy winner in the Glover Shield 20km, with a time of 1:36:30.

Glover Shield 20km, Perth, Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2001				
1	Scott Hollaway	WARWC	1:36.30	
2	Daniel Lowe	RWCWA	1:52.42	
3	John Mison	WARWC	1:59.04	
4	John Back	WARWC	2:26.39	
5	Jim Turnbull	WARWC	DO	
Teams				
1	WARWC	7	Scott Hollaway, John Mison, John Back	

## 2002

It came as a surprise when AIS Walks Coach Ron Weigel announced his resignation in early 2002, to return to Germany to take over from his previous trainer, Hans-Joachim Pathus, as the German national racewalks coach. He remains in that position as I write.

After Weigel left, there was a significant period without a senior walks coach until eventually Canadian John Fitzgerald was appointed as the new AIS walks coach and took up residency in Canberra in May 2003. Former AIS scholarship holder and Australian international walker Brent Vallance also came on board as an AIS scholarship coach in June 2003.

Alas, Fitzgerald only filled his role for just over 12 months before suffering a life threatening health scare on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2004. He was in the weight room working with Jared Tallent when his aorta ruptured and he collapsed. He woke up in hospital 14 days later. His coaching days at an end, he returned home. Sadly and unexpectedly, John passed away at his home in Canada on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018, only a few weeks after being inducted into the Athletics Canada Hall of Fame.

### Australian Roadwalking Championships Davies Park, Brisbane, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2002

The 2002 Australian 20km Roadwalking Championships doubled as trials for the 2002 IAAF Race Walking World Cup and the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

The 20km road events started at 7AM on the Sunday morning to avoid the heat of the day, but the Davies Park course was not a fast one and this was reflected in the times. The AIS walkers led early as a group until eventually **Nathan Deakes** increased the tempo and the group broke up. Behind them, **Daniel Thorne** and **Troy Sundstrom** walked well for the first half but then started to fade. Sundstrom eventually pulled out while Thorne was DQ'd near the finish. **Duane Cousins** started slowly but worked his way up past Thorne, Sundstrom and **Liam Murphy**, finishing strongly to take 4<sup>th</sup> and split the AIS walkers. Deakes and **Luke Adams** were rewarded with Commonwealth Games selections and presumably there was the potential for a third Commonwealth Games selection if any of the other walkers could impress the selectors with a good time in the near future. Victoria won the teams race with Deakes, Cousins, **Frank Bertei** and **Chris Erickson** all in the top 8.

1.	Deakes, Nathan	AIS	1:23.36
2.	Adams, Luke	AIS	1:23.56
3.	Bown, Darren	AIS	1:27.34
4.	Cousins, Duane	VIS	1:28.44
5.	Murphy, Liam	AIS	1:30.24
6.	Bertei, Frank	VIC	1:34.43
7.	Vallance, Brent	NSW	1:34.43
8.	Erickson, Chris,	VIC	1:41.59
9.	Pearson, Shane	QLD	1:42.39
10.	Jimenez, Ignacio	QLD	1:44.31
11.	Beaton-Wells, Michael	VIC	1:45.48
12.	Bennett, Peter	QLD	1:46.47
13.	Lowe, Daniel	WA	1:56.30
14.	Osborne, Robert	NSW	1:58.51
-	Malcolm, Brad	VIC	DNF
-	Sundstrom, Troy	NSWI	DNF
-	Thorne, Daniel	VIC	DQ

**Jane Saville**, **Natalie Saville** and **Simone Wolowiec** led the women's 20km championship for the first 5km before Jane Saville broke away and Wolowiec slowed. At the same time, **Cheryl Webb** was working her way up through the field, passing Wolowiec and Natalie Saville and finishing strongly, only about 20 secs behind Jane Saville. But it was not to be when it was announced that Webb had been disqualified. That moved Natalie Saville up to 2<sup>nd</sup> place and Wolowiec into 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The 3 placegetters were then all rewarded with Commonwealth Games selection – a bitter blow for Webb.

1.	Saville, Jane	AIS	1:34.18
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2.	Saville, Natalie	NSW	1:36.22
3.	Wolowiec, Simone	VIC	1:38.21
4.	Gorst, Gabrielle	NZL	1:40.45
5.	Woods, Claire	AIS	1:43.56
6.	Foan, Karen	CAN	1:45.06
7.	Muldoon, Wendy	VIC	1:45.53
8.	Rosengrave, Tracy	VIC	1:49.02
9.	Gleich, Roisin	VIC	1:49.42
10.	Bock, Claire	QLD	1:56.58
11.	Moller, Judy	QLD	2:07.10
-	Ventris, Lyn	WA	DNF
-	Peters, Megan	VIC	DNF
-	Webb, Cheryl	AIS	DQ

**Australian 50km Championship**  
**Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2002**

The 2002 Australian 50km Championship doubled as the 50km trial for the 2002 IAAF Race Walking World Cup and the 2002 Commonwealth Games. With the Commonwealth Games standard set at 4:00:00 and with the World Cup standard set at 4:20, there were a number of spots up for grabs and the race produced the goods, with the first 2 walkers, **Liam Murphy** and **Duane Cousins**, gaining Commonwealth and the first 5 walkers gaining World Cup selection. 36 year old **Frank Bertei** got a huge round of applause from the Victorian crowd when he crossed the finish line just under the 4:20 mark, a PB of some 11 minutes. The final finisher was **Michael Harvey** who had been hoping to make his 11<sup>th</sup> straight World Cup team – time finally caught up with Harvey but he was determined to finish and help Victoria to the Team Gold Medal.

<b>Australian 50km Championship, Albert Park, Sun 5<sup>th</sup> May 2002</b>			
1.	Liam Murphy	SA	3:55:20
2.	Duane Cousins	VIC	3:59:27
3.	Luke Adams	NSW	4:04:03
4.	Darren Bown	SA	4:12:53
5.	Frank Bertei	VIC	4:19:28
6.	Michael Harvey	VIC	4:42:10
-	Richard Everson	SA	DNF

**36<sup>th</sup> Lake Burley Griffin Carnival**  
**Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2002**

**Luke Adams** retained his LBG 20 Mile title with another good walk but, like last year, Regal could not put a third walker on the line so VRWC took the teams event. **Darren Bown**, now an AIS walker, scored a good second place ahead of **Troy Sundstrom** whose walk was a little down on his 2001 effort.

<b>LBG 20 Mile Walk, Canberra, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2001</b>			
1.	Luke Adams	REGAL	2:31:37
2.	Darren Bown	SAAWC	2:32:05
3.	Troy Sundstrom	REGAL	2:36:52
4.	Frank Bertei	VRWC	2:42:54
5.	Chris Erickson	VRWC	2:44:37
6.	Andrew Jamieson	VRWC	2:47:48
7.	Peter Bennett	QRWC	2:58:32
8.	Mark Donahoo	VRWC	3:03:58
9.	Duncan Knox	VRWC	3:10:02
10.	Robin Whyte	ACTRW	3:19:43
11.	Robert Osborne	NSWRW	3:22:01
12.	Peter Blood	VRWC	3:23:22
13.	Andrew Blood	VRWC	3:26:53
14.	Daryl Biggin	VRWC	3:31:42

15.	Bill Starr	SAAWC	3:40:34
16.	Brendan Hyde	NSWRW	3:57:26
-	Liam Murphy	SAAWC	DNF
-	Claire Woods	SAAWC	DNF
Teams			
1.	VRWC1	21	F Bertei, C Erickson, A Jamieson
2.	VRWC2	12	M Donahoo, D Knox, P Blood
3.	SAAWC	11	D Bown, B Starr

## 2002 Commonwealth Games

Manchester, England, 25<sup>th</sup> July - 4<sup>th</sup> August 2002

The XVII Commonwealth Games in Manchester was the largest in the history of the Commonwealth Games, with participating athletes from 72 nations competing in 14 individual sports and three team sports.

The women's 20 km event was the first of the walks to be held, starting in the late afternoon on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July at the stunning Salford Quays walk course outside Manchester city centre. The men's 20 km event started 20 minutes later. **Jane Saville**, the hot favourite, retained her Commonwealth Games title with a dominant display. She admitted she was relieved just to finish the race without being disqualified. She had seriously considered retiring after being disqualified at the Sydney Olympics and the 2001 World Athletics Championships at Edmonton: "*I was delighted to finish today,*" she said and then added: "*I was keen to prove myself today and I'm really pleased to have won here.*" England's **Lisa Kehler**, who took bronze in the walk at New Zealand 1990 and Kuala Lumpur 1998, finished 11 seconds behind Saville to take silver. Malaysia's **Yu Fang Yuan** took bronze with a time of 1:40:00. **Natalie Saville** finished fourth and the two sisters were planning to celebrate that night with their family. The third Australian, **Simone Wolowiec**, had lost a lot of valuable time with a hamstring injury and had to be content with her fifth place.

20km Walk Women, Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2002			
1.	<b>Jane Saville</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>1:36.34</b>
2.	Lisa Kehler	England	1:36.45
3.	Yu Fang Yuan	Malaysia	1:40.00
4.	<b>Natalie Saville</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>1:42:38</b>
5.	<b>Simone Wolowiec</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>1:43:10</b>
6.	Gabrielle Gorst	New Zealand	1:44:48
7.	Niobe Menendez	England	1:46:16
8.	Sharon Tonks	England	1:49:21
9.	Sara Cattermole	Scotland	1:50:29
-	Carolyn Partington	Isle of Man	DNF

It was no surprise when **Nathan Deakes** won his third straight Australian 20 km title in mid February in Brisbane. His subsequent selection in both the Commonwealth Games and Racewalking World Cup teams was a formality. But his burst of intensive racing had come at a cost – a hamstring injury refused to heal and valuable months of training were lost. It was not until June that he could resume decent training and there was some speculation about whether he could handle the double at Manchester given the closeness of the events.

People need not have worried. Deakes was in a class of his own with regard to the walks. In the 20km event which was held on the hottest day of the Games, he flew from the gun with an amazing 7:42 for the first 2 km and had what already looked like an insurmountable lead by the end of the first lap. The judges obviously thought otherwise and he was red-carded twice in the first 30 minutes of the race. Changing his race plan, he settled down to what was for him a pedestrian pace and ambled to the finish to win in 1:25:35. **Luke Adams** was a clear second in what had been a very good walks competition for the Australians. Deakes admitted he had been worried by the two early red cards. "*But in a way, they helped: I wanted to slow down towards the end*", he said, explaining that he would contest the 50km walk over the same Salford Quays later the same week.

20km Walk Men, Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2002			
1.	<b>Nathan Deakes</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>1:25.35</b>
2.	<b>Luke Adams</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>1:26.03</b>



3.	David Rotich	Kenya	1:28.20
4.	Andy Penn	England	1:29:15
5.	Don Bearman	England	1:37:29
-	Dominic King	England	DQ
-	Steve Partington	Isle of Man	DQ

After a recovery time of only 36 hours, **Nathan Deakes** fronted for the 50km event. This time, he did not have things his own way as New Zealander **Craig Barrett**, also a top 50km walker, forced the pace and held him over the first half of the race. But soon after the 25km mark, Deakes made a decisive break and looked once again to have things well in hand. It was a great surprise to everyone when the TV coverage returned to the walk a few minutes later to show him clearly in trouble and stretching his troublesome hamstring.

With Barrett now on his heels, he slowly started again and tried to get back into the race. To his credit, he was successful and actually increased his pace to break the Kiwi walker. His final time of 3:52:40 was a new Commonwealth Games record and another world class performance. He finished over four minutes ahead of silver medal winner Barrett (3:56:42) who had collapsed within sight of the finish while leading the 50km event four years earlier in Kuala Lumpur. Canada's **Tim Berrett** took third place, over a lap down, with a time of 4:04:25. **Duane Cousins** was fourth in 4:09:59 but the third Australian walker, **Liam Murphy**, was disqualified before the half way mark.

Deakes' double captured the public imagination and was generally recognised as one of the top performances of the Games. Korzenowski had won the double at the 2000 Olympics but had a 5 day break between the 2 events. Deakes had only 36 hours between the two events for his double.

His triumph was particularly sweet because he ruined the effort of the hosts to limit him to one event. The Australians were horrified when they learned that the 20km walk would be conducted late on the Sunday afternoon and the 50km would start at 10AM on the Tuesday. They requested more time be inserted between the events, as is the case in Olympics and World Championships. The organisers were unyielding – and so too was Deakes who defiantly decided to do the double, recovery time or not.

The drug watchdogs wanted to make sure Deakes did not use anything illegal in his recuperation. After the initial urine test on the Sunday for the winner, he was summoned back to the athletes' village for an unannounced sample session comprising one urine and two blood samples on the Monday, and then went through the formality of another post-competition test on the Tuesday. That makes 5 tests in 2 days!

<b>50 Km Walk for Men, Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2002</b>			
1.	<b>Nathan Deakes</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>3:52.40</b>
2.	Craig Barrett	New Zealand	3:56.42
3.	Timothy Berrett	Canada	4:04.25
4.	<b>Duane Cousins</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>4:09:59</b>
5.	Tony Sargisson	New Zealand	4:13:19
6.	Steven Hollier	England	4:16:46
7.	Gareth Brown	England	4:40:07
-	Mark Easton	England	DQ
-	<b>Liam Murphy</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>DQ</b>

August 2002 saw the position of AIS Walks Coach being advertised. German coach Ron Weigel had terminated his contract and returned to his home country. Our top walkers were currently without guidance, Craig Hilliard having to temporarily return to his old role as AIS Walks Coach.

### **Australian Roadwalking Championships Nowra, NSW, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2002**

As expected, due to the difficulties of getting to Nowra, few walkers made the effort, resulting in the smallest Australian Roadwalk Championships in years. Only 3 walkers contested the Open 30km, a sad state of affairs. **Darren Bown** was a worthy winner with 2:15:59.

**Australian 30km Championship, Nowra, Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2002**

1.	Darren Bown	SA	2:15.59
2.	Frank Bertei	VIC	2:32.50
3.	Robert Osborne	NSW	3:16.55

**Federation Carnival, including Glover Shield 20km  
Victoria Park, Ballarat, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2002**

Since few walkers had gone to Nowra for the National Roadwalk Championships, the annual Federation Carnival in Ballarat 2 weeks later saw bigger fields than usual. The Glover Shield 20km was won by **Troy Sundstrom**, ahead of a swag of Victorians. Although the weather was good, the rough road surface in Victoria Park, Ballarat, made for slower times than expected.

**Glover Shield 20km Walk, Ballarat, Sunday 1st September 2002**

1.	Troy Sundstrom	Regal	1:30:40
2.	Frank Bertei	VRWC	1:34:06
3.	Chris Erickson	VRWC	1:38:13
4.	Mark Donahoo	VRWC	1:38:47
5.	Travis Middlemiss	VRWC	1:49:23
6.	John Bunker	VRWC	1:49:56
7.	Robin Whyte	ACT	1:56:40
8.	Michael Smith	NSW	2:06:40
9.	Andrew Blood	VRWC	2:08:03
10.	Robin Wood	VRWC	2:13:38
11.	Ken Smith	NSW	2:15:52

## Teams

1	VRWC	6	F Bertei, C Erickson, M Donahoo
2	VRWC	15	T Middlemiss, J Bunker, A Blood

**IAAF Race Walking World Cup  
Turin, Italy, 12-13 October 2002**

The 2002 IAAF Race Walking World Cup was held on the weekend of 12-13 October 2002 in the streets of Turin, Italy. It was the usual huge affair, with 110 starters in the men's 20km, 95 starters in the women's 20km and 94 starters in the men's 50km.

In July, Athletics Australia had confirmed the Australian Team which was the smallest ever sent to a World Cup.

50km Walk Men: Luke Adams (NSW), Liam Murphy and Darren Bown (SA)  
Duane Cousins and Frank Bertei (VIC)

20km Walk Women: Nathan Deakes (VIC)

20km Walk Men: Jane Saville (NSW)

It was a disappointing decision. The selection criteria had been changed by Athletics Australia that year to include both individual and team selection criteria. This sounded good at the time but it now come back to haunt us and meant that 20km walkers Natalie Saville, Simone Wolowiec, Cheryl Webb and Claire Woods all missed out even though they had acceptable times on the board. We could have fielded a team of four women but instead we had only one. Instead of the World Cup grooming our next generation of walkers, AA seemed to be going out of their way to dismantle it from an Australian perspective.

**20km Walk Men, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002**

Nathan Deakes, Australia's sole selection for this event, was forced to withdraw after aggravating his hamstring in the Commonwealth Games double 2 months before. As he had beaten all the main protagonists at one time or another that year, he may well have won – alas, we will never know! The course couldn't have been more central if it ran through Torino's town hall, even if some of the paved surfaces raised questions.

In his absence, the win went to **Jefferson Perez**, who landed his first major title for five years. The 1996 Olympic champion cashed in on the late disqualification of Roman Rassakov on a day where temperatures soared to an unseasonable 25°C.

It was an exciting race. At the bell, barely a metre covered the leading five as they upped the gears for the final 2km. In less than 400 metres it was three spearheading the charge. Russian Vladimir Andreyev was hanging on by the skin of his teeth, while team mate Rasskazov had taken the lead for the first time. The 2001 World champion was flying, but unfortunately for him it soon became literal as he forged a five metre gap on Perez. The Russian must have thought his second great victory was only a kilometre away, but his third DQ card stopped him dead in his tracks and left the Ecuadorean Perez a grateful winner. Andreyev picked up his second major silver medal of the year following his runner-up spot to Francisco Fernandez in the European championships. But the joy of Alejandro Cambil was short-lived. The Spaniard only qualified for his team a month ago, but no sooner had he thrown up his arms in triumph than a judge told him he had shared the same fate as Rassakov..

#### 20km Walk Men, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002

1.	Jefferson Pérez	ECU	1:21:26
2.	Vladimir Andreyev	RUS	1:21:50
3.	Alejandro López	MEX	1:22:01

#### 20km Walk Women, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002

Italian **Erica Alfridi** shed her bridesmaid's image to win the women's 20km after one of the most exciting races in World Cup history. After nearly 12 years, the Italian swapped her near but no win record for first place in front of an excited home crowd. Alfridi had led the customary stampede up the course as a group of 20 came through the first lap in 8:49. By lap three, the eventual winner had been joined by **Elizabetta Perrone**, the entire Russian team and 15 others. Their 5km split was a pushy 22:17, given the heat which had already made holes in the field elsewhere.

The casualties soon mounted and at 15km the spearhead was down to six. Alfridi had already picked up two red cards as early as 8km, but, after settling down, looked to be in little danger of getting a third.

It was to herald one of the most exciting last kilometres ever. At the final turn the race was clearly going to be between just three. World and European champion Olimpiada Ivanova had been biding her time tucked in the middle of the leading group, but now finally decided to make her bid for home. Alfridi refused to give an inch as did Natalya Fedoskina. The two Russians briefly held sway before the Italian drew level. Then it was her turn to forge a winning lead, but Ivanova quickly checked the surge as Fedoskina wilted. Ivanova started to stretch the elastic and it appeared as if the home crowd would have to settle for second. Barely 50 metres from the line Alfridi, her face contorted with effort, emptied the tank to charge over the line to be bowled over while locked in her excited mother's arms. Ivanova nearly joined the human heap as both she and Fedoskina filled the first three places four seconds apart.

**Jane Saville**, the sole Australian rep, walked honestly to finish 24<sup>th</sup> with a time of 1:35:35. After a significant number of disqualifications over the previous 2 years, she was probably relieved to have finished the Commonwealth Games and World Cup races unscathed.

#### 20km Walk Women, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002

1.	Erica Alfridi	ITA	1:28:55
2.	Olimpiada Ivanova	RUS	1:28:57
3.	Natalya Fedoskina	RUS	1:28:59
...			
24.	<b>Jane Saville</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:35:35</b>

#### 50km Walk Men, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2002

In retrospect, it is disappointing to see the first two places in this event awarded to Russian drug cheats (Voyevodin was eventually caught in 2008, while Skurygin had just come back from a 2 year ban that expired in 2001). They were both Chegin men, part of the drugs soaked Russian machine. And third placed Polish walker Tomasz Lipiec had his own drug related issues in 1993. Great!

This was the only Australian team, with a full five walkers. To their credit, they came fourth in the Teams Race, all five finishing in the top half of the field and spearheaded by **Liam Murphy** in 15<sup>th</sup> place with 3:56:45. It was a good comeback for Murphy after his disqualification in the Commonwealth Games 50km race.

<b>50km Walk Men, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2002</b>			
1.	Aleksey Voyevodin	RUS	3:40:59
2.	German Skurygin	RUS	3:42:08
3.	Tomasz Lipiec	POL	3:45:37
	....		
<b>15.</b>	<b>Liam Murphy</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>3:56:45</b>
<b>29.</b>	<b>Luke Adams</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>4:07:08</b>
<b>37.</b>	<b>Duane Cousins</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>4:12:19</b>
<b>38.</b>	<b>Darren Bown</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>4:12:21</b>
<b>47.</b>	<b>Frank Bertei</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>4:20:26</b>

## 2003

Eealy in 2003, The IAAF announced the introduction of a Race Walking Series, culminating at the World Athletics championships in Paris in August. The Series, featuring men's and women's races, would be staged in Tijuana (Mexico), Rio Major (Portugal), Sesto San Giovanni (Italy), Shanghai (China), La Coruna (Spain) and Paris. Walking had came under an unwelcome spotlight at the 2000 Sydney Olympics so it was good to see that the IAAF was still supporting the sport and helping it to grow in stature. Now known as the Race Walking Challenge, the yearly series is still going in 2020.

### **Australian 20km Roadwalk Championships Brisbane, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2003**

The Australian 20km roadwalking championships, held in conjunction with the 2003 Australian T&F Championships in Brisbane, were contested on the road outside the stadium, with the mens starting at 7AM and the women starting at 7:05AM. **Luke Adams** and **Jane Saville** confirmed their places at the top of Australian walking (in the continuing absence of Nathan Deakes).

<b>20km Walk Men, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2003</b>			
1.	Adams, Luke	AIS	1:23.22
2.	Bown, Darren	AIS	1:27.18
3.	Tallent, Jared	VIS	1:33.01
4.	Bertei, Frank	VIC	1:33.57
5.	Sundstrom, Troy	NSW	1:37.32
6.	Erickson, Chris	VIC	1:37.49
7.	Pearson, Shane	QLD	1:40.00
8.	Bennett, Peter	QLD	1:47.28
9.	Rose, Kurt	QLD	1:58.43
-	Lowe, Daniel	WA	DNF
-	Thorne, Daniel	VIC	DQ
-	Murphy, Liam	AIS	DQ
-	Cousins, Duane	VIC	DQ

<b>20km Walk Women, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2003</b>			
1.	Saville, Jane	NSWIS	1:31.47
2.	Saville, Natalie	NSW	1:35.55
3.	Webb, Cheryl	AIS	1:37.41
4.	Woods, Claire	AIS	1:43.10
5.	Wolowiec, Simone	VIS	1:43.58
6.	Bock, Claire	QLD	1:47.07
7.	Loone, Rachael	VIC	1:50.13
8.	McKinven, Noela	QLD	2:23.42
-	Cattermole, Sara-Jane	GBR	DNF
-	Peters, Megan	VIC	DNF
-	Woodward, Lynda	QLD	DQ

### **Australian 50km Championship Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2003**

John Fitzgerald of Canada had now arrived in Australia to take up the role as AIS walks coach, replacing German Ron Weigel who had returned to Europe in September 2002. It had been a long wait of nearly 8 months for a new coach. The general public got a chance to meet him at Albert Park on 18<sup>th</sup> May on the occasion of the Australian 50km championship.

In cold and drizzly conditions, with temperature ranging from 10 to 15 degrees, **Luke Adams** led the field to the 35km mark, before calling it a day, saying he was "*satisfied with his performance at this stage of his training program*". Following Adams' withdrawal, it was **Darren Bown** heading the field. Bown's lead looked unassailable until **Duane Cousins**, determined to improve on his 2002 silver medal, overhauled him in the dying stages to win with 3:59:33. Cousins also won the Victorian 50 km title, held concurrently. **Liam Murphy** chased Cousins all the way, determined to maintain his two year 50km National Championship winning streak, but couldn't bridge the gap, finishing second in 4:04:56. Bown, although suffering badly, struggled home to take the bronze, recording 4:18:43.

A notable omission from the starting line up was Australia's number one, Nathan Deakes. The 2002 Commonwealth Games champion had withdrawn his name from nomination and consideration for both 20km and 50km events at the 2003 World Championships, as he turned his focus to the rehabilitation of his left hamstring and sciatic nerve.

#### **Aust 50km Championship, Melbourne, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2003**

1.	Duane Cousins	VIC	3:59:33
2.	Liam Murphy	SA	4:04:56
3.	Darren Bown	SA	4:18:43
-	Luke Adams	NSW	DNF
-	Mark Donahoo	VIC	DNF
-	Andrew Jamieson	VIC	DNF
-	Duncan Knox	VIC	DNF

### **37<sup>th</sup> Lake Burley Griffin Carnival Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, Sunday 8<sup>h</sup> June 2003**

**Darren Bown** finally broke through for a win in the LBG 20 Miler, after several years of trying, and SAAWC took the teams event after fellow AIS walker **Liam Murphy** and race stalwart **Bill Starr** provided the necessary finish points. **Frank Bertei**, at 37 years of age, showed that he could still match it with his younger rivals and improved by one place on his 2002 finish to finally take a medal in this prestigious event. It was the smallest field for many years and was indicative of a worrying trend in the Open Men division – the overall numbers and depth were both in decline.

#### **LBG 20 Mile Walk, Canberra, Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2003**

1.	Darren Bown	SAAWC	2:31:46
2.	Liam Murphy	SAAWC	2:32:09
3.	Frank Bertei	VRWC	2:42:12
4.	Chris Erickson	VRWC	2:43:58
5.	Mark Donahoo	VRQC	3:03:33
6.	Peter Bennett	QRWC	3:04:15
7.	Duncan Knox	VRWC	3:13:19
8.	Robin Whyte	ACTRW	3:29:11
9.	Bill Starr	SAAWC	3:35:00

#### **Teams**

1.	SAAWC1	13	D Bown, L Murphy, B Starr
2.	VRWC1	9	F Bertei, C Erickson, M Donahoo

### **Federation Carnival, including Glover Shield 20km Chipping Norton, Sydney, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2003**

The annual Second Federation Carnival, normally held in the second half of the winter, was proving a worry for Racewalking Australia, with field sizes shrinking annually. 2003 was no exception, as the small mainly NSW based

attendance list was supplemented by 4 Victorians, along with a sprinkling of QLD and ACT walkers - a total turnout of only 77 walkers.

While AIS walker **Darren Bown** was untroubled to win with 1:26:49, the big news for Victorians was the team win for **Frank Bertei, Chris Erickson and Tim Erickson** (having his first walk in many a year).

<b>Glover Shield 20km, Sydney, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2003</b>			
1.	Darren Bown	AIS	1:26.39
2.	Frank Bertel	VIC	1:34.41
3.	Chris Erickson	VIC	1:36.56
4.	Kurt Ross	QLD	1:53.35
5.	Tim Erickson	VIC	1:55.24
6.	Robyn White	ACT	1:56.29
7.	Lachlan Wilkinson	ACT	1:59.39
8.	Mark Worrall	ACT	2:15.02
Teams			
1.	VIC	F Bertei, C Erickson, T Erickson	
2.	ACT	Whyte, L Wilkinson, M Worrall	

### **Australian Roadwalking Championships Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2003**

While the Second Federation carnival was struggling, the Australian Roadwalking Championships were thriving, as long as an accessible venue was chosen. With Melbourne the host city for 2003, the entry list of 122 walkers made this the biggest Nationals for some years, with walkers from Tasmania, Queensland, ACT, NSW, Victoria, SA and WA contesting the various events on offer.

AIS walker **Darren Bown** led the men's 30km championship early but was disqualified around the 12km mark. That handed the lead to **Frank Bertei** with a pack not far behind. Just as **Paul Van Kopplen** had broken clear from the chasers and looked to be closing the gap, he too was disqualified. Then **Troy Sundstrom** made a move, but a couple of forced breaks enabled Bertei to maintain the gap and win in the cold windy conditions. Sundstrom, who won this event in 2001, took silver while 21 year old **Chris Erickson** faded but had enough to hold out a fast finishing **Andrew Jamieson**.

<b>Australian 30km Championship, Melbourne, Sun 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2003</b>			
1.	Frank Bertei	VIC	2:27:21
2.	Troy Sundstrom	NSW	2:30:11
3.	Chris Erickson	VIC	2:35:22
4.	Andrew Jamieson	VIC	2:35:31
-	Darren Bown	AIS	DQ
-	Paul Van Kopplen	VIC	DQ
-	Mark Donahoo	VIC	DNF

### **2003 IAAF World Athletics Championships Paris, France, 23-31 August**

With Nathan Deakes still out with injury, only 2 walkers were selected as part of the Australian team to contest the 2003 IAAF World Championships, and they both performed well, **Luke Adams** finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in the men's 20km in a PB 1:19:35 and **Jane Saville** finishing 11<sup>th</sup> in the women's 20km with 1:30:51.

<b>20km Walk Men, Paris, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2003</b>			
1.	Jefferson Pérez	ECU	1:17:21
2.	Paquillo Fernández	ESP	1:18:00
3.	Roman Rasskazov	RUS	1:18:07
	...		
5.	Luke Adams	AUS	1:19:35

<b>20km Walk Women, Paris, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2003</b>			
1.	Yelena Nikolayeva	RUS	1:26:52
2.	Gillian O'Sullivan	IRL	1:27:34
3.	Valentina Tsybul'skaya	BLR	1:28:10
	...		
11	Jane Saville	AUS	1:30:51

## **World Student Games**

### **Daegu, Korea, 21-31 August 2003**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Summer Universiade was held in Daegu in Korea but no walkers attended as part of the small Australian team.

The 2004 Racewalking World Cup was to be held in Naumburg, Germany, on 1-2 May 2004. As of 2004, U20 10km events would be included. This was a welcome move that would provide yet another opportunity (adding to the World Youth and World Junior Championships) for junior walkers. But the difference between this event and other international events is that it was a TEAMS event and hence the emphasis was on sending a team rather than just the one or two most highly ranked individuals.

Given the debacle of 2001, when draconian Athletics Australia standards decimated the potential team, the 2004 standards were based on the IAAF recommendations as follows

20km Men	Individual (1:24.00)	Team (1:28.30)
50km Men	Individual (4:03.00)	Team (4:20.00)
20km Women	Individual (1:36.30)	Team (1:38.30)

The first selection trial would be the 50km men, for which a time of 4:20:00 was the target.

But first, to Albert Park on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November when **Nathan Deakes** returned to competition after more than 12 months away from the sport. Competing in the VRWC Summer Roadwalk Championships, he stormed through 10km in 40:12, He was back!

New AIS walks coach John Fitzgerald was quick to make his mark as AIS coach. Within months of taking over the job, Darren Bown, Claire Woods and Cheryl Webb had all left the AIS scholarship program and Fitzgerald was looking to bring some more walkers on board to complement the remaining squad of Nathan Deakes, Luke Adams and Liam Murphy. The first cab off the rank was Victorian youngster Jared Tallent. He was offered a 1 year scholarship, commencing 1 Nov 2003 and extending to 31 Oct 2004, with a review in April 2004. Tallent moved to Canberra almost immediately and transferred from his Ballarat University course to a comparable one in Canberra. As they say "*The rest is history!*"

### **2003 Australian 50km Championship, incorporating the 2004 IAAF Race Walking World Cup Trial Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2003**

As Victoria had hosted the last few Australian 50km championships, Athletics Australia had invited South Australia to host the 2003 edition. However, as the course proposed by Athletics SA (the racecourse circuit in Adelaide) was felt by some to be too exposed and open, the decision was made to ask Victoria to host the event on the Albert Park course. The date was set for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December, with a start time of 7AM, based on the fact that December can be quite warm in Australia and an early start is more preferable to a late finish in potentially warm conditions.

Those of us who were lucky enough to witness the Australian World Cup 50km Trial saw the fastest 50km ever walked in Australia. A Melbourne scheduling in December is sometimes a risky procedure and the previous Sunday had been in the mid-thirties, with strong northerly winds. But a week of unseasonably cold weather had us keeping our fingers crossed. Would it last till Sunday? Our prayers were partly answered – a cool and partially overcast morning and a 7AM start time meant that at least the first half of the race was walked in perfect conditions. **Craig Barrett** and **Nathan Deakes** shot to the lead with a first 2km lap of 8:56, signalling that a fast time was on the cards. At 8km the two walkers

were still together but Deakes' relentless pressure told as the fifth lap progressed, and a vital 4 second break was in place by the 10km mark (44:48 to 44:52). From then on it was all Deakes, as he relentlessly increased his pace and extended his lead. His 10km splits tell the story: 44:48, 1:28:52 (44:04), 2:12:57 (44:05), 2:56:36 (43:39), 3:39:43 (43:07).

The sun broke through at around 9AM and the second half of the race was a war of attrition as, one by one, the other contenders dropped their pace and went into survival mode. The temperature peaked at 28°C early in the afternoon and it felt all of that by the time the event finished.

Barrett was the next to finish with 3:50:34, only 2 minutes outside his PB. Like Deakes, he had walked impressively and had been able to maintain his pace in the gradually worsening conditions. The next group of **Liam Murphy, Darren Bown, Duane Cousins** and **Tony Sargisson** started together and maintained contact as a group until Sargisson was dropped at the 12km mark. The other 3, all long time rivals, matched each other until Murphy eventually made his break at around the 32km mark. He looked fresh and was moving confidently towards a sub 4 hour result when he was informed that he had been disqualified. Then within a couple of kms, Bown was out with a recurring back condition and Cousins was all alone in third spot. He maintained his pace as best he could and was rewarded with third place in 4:09:43.

The final group consisted of the remaining 7 walkers. They grouped together early in the race with **Andrew Ludwig** making the pace. The pace was perfectly pitched for a sub 4:20, the qualifying time that all were after. It was not until the 28km mark that Ludwig finally started to wilt and **Chris Erickson** was left on his own out in front. From then on, Erickson was the only one of the group who had a chance to beat the 4:20 mark but only if he could maintain his pace – a tough ask for a first timer in hot conditions. But he was equal to the task and came home like a train to pass a tiring **Tony Sargisson** and record a great first up 50km time of 4:19:48.

Australian 50km Championship, Melbourne, Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2003			
1.	Deakes, Nathan	VIC	3.39.43
2.	Barrett, Craig	NZL	3.50.34
3.	Cousins, Duane	VIC	4.09.43
4.	Erickson, Chris	VIC	4.19.48
5.	Sargisson, Tony	NZL	4.27.48
6.	Bertei, Frank	VIC	4.27.52
7.	Jones, Graeme	NZL	4.29.54
8.	Ludwig, Andrew	QLD	4.36.02
-	Bown, Darren	SA	DNF
-	Jamieson, Andrew	VIC	DNF
-	Pearson, Shane	QLD	DNF
-	Murphy, Liam	SA	DQ

The news of Deakes' time spread quickly around the world and the following article (reproduced in part) was published on the IAAF website by the next day:

Gruelling 35km sessions on a treadmill primed Commonwealth 50km Walk champion Nathan Deakes for a dramatic comeback from career-threatening injury to stake his claim yesterday for a medal in the 50km Olympic Race Walk. Canberra-based Deakes, 26, became the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest in history at the punishing road event and smashed Simon Baker's 14-year-old Australian record by four minutes in an Olympic selection trial in Melbourne.

His phenomenal time of 3:39:42 is a huge boost for Deakes personally and for Australian athletics. Deakes, 2001 Goodwill Games 20,000m and 2002 Commonwealth 20km & 50km Race Walking champion, missed Paris while recuperating from an April 30 operation on the hamstring muscles of his left leg to clean up scarring around the sciatic nerve. While Sydney Olympic champion Robert Korzeniowski set the world best of 3:36:03 in Paris and led four others to go faster than Deakes, who was fourth over 20km at the 2001 World Championships in Edmonton, Deakes was training on a treadmill at the Australian Institute of Sport.

Coached by a former Sydney rival, Brent Valance, the Geelong-born Deakes logged up to 35km at a session on the treadmill. *"I had a couple of 200km weeks. I was determined to burn that machine out,"* Deakes told yesterday. *"That made me mentally tougher. It's been a long hard road back but I'm glad to do my bit for the sport at a time when there's been so many negatives."*

Five walkers had now beaten the Australian qualifying standard of 4:20:00 and were all in contention for Racewalking World Cup selection. As a team of up to 5 walkers may be selected, it was hoped they would all be in the team.



3:39:43	Nathan Deakes	VIC	Melbourne	07/12/03
3:59.33	Duane Cousins	VIC	Melbourne	18/05/03
4:04.56	Liam Murphy	SA	Melbourne	18/05/03
4:18.43	Darren Bown	SA	Melbourne	18/05/03
4:19:48	Chris Erickson	VI	Melbourne	07/12/03

## 2004

### **Australian 20km Championships Homebush, Sydney, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

The Australian 20km Championships, held in Sydney as part of the Australian T&F Championships, doubled as the World Cup and Olympic trials and **Nathan Deakes** was an unbackable favourite. Alas, all was not good with Deakes, who had pulled up with a stress fracture of the femur after winning the Australian 50km Championship the previous December. In fact, he only decided a few days before to contest the 20km race. "*It was a bit of a risk, but a risk I was willing to take,*" he said. He had kept his fitness up by cross-training, only returning to walking in the last two weeks. "*The first week was terrible,*" he said, "*and it only started to come together in the last six days.*"

He raced conservatively, winning in what for him was a slow 1:23:11, but still over 2 minutes clear of the field. His plan from there was to race the 20km event in the World Cup in May, get his Olympic 20km qualifier there and then race the 20km / 50km double at the Olympics. The first 4 walkers all bettered the World Cup Team standard of 1:28:30.

#### **Australian 20km Men, Sydney, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

1.	Deakes, Nathan	AIS	1:23:11
2.	Adams, Luke	AIS	1:25:31
3.	Murphy, Liam	AIS	1:26:50
4.	Tallent, Jared	AIS	1:27:34
5.	Bown, Darren	SA	1:29:29
6.	Barrett, Craig	NZL	1:30:41
7.	Cousins, Duane	VIC	1:31:54
8.	Bertei, Frank	VIC	1:35:44
9.	Barnes, Thomas	VIC	1:35:58
10.	Erickson, Chris	VIC	1:36:50
11.	Sundstrom, Troy	NSW	1:38:39
12.	Smith, Michael	NSW	1:39:40
13.	Beaton-Wells, Michael	VIC	1:42:23
14.	Rose, Kurt	QLD	2:00:16

**Jane Saville**, Australian record holder and defending title holder, made no mistakes in winning the women's 20km championship in convincing style. Overall, the first 5 finishers all bettered the World Cup Team standard of 1:38:30, so a good WC women's team looked assured.

#### **Australian 20km Women, Sydney, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

1.	Saville, Jane	NSW	1:32:06
2.	Webb, Cheryl	ACT	1:34:36
3.	Saville, Natalie	NSW	1:36:33
4.	Wolowiec, Simone	VIC	1:38:21
5.	Woods, Claire	SA	1:38:27
6.	Johnson, Laura	NSW	1:42:46
7.	Ventris, Lyn	WA	1:45:20
8.	Wilson, Lisa	ACT	1:56:01
-	Bock, Claire	QLD	DNF
-	Roseman, Justijana	VIC	DNF
-	Peters, Megan	VIC	DNF

The men's 20km trial produced the worst possible result for the 50km contenders. Liam Murphy and Darren Bown, who had qualified for both the 50km and the 20km, decided to now concentrate on the 20km and withdrew from the 50km

team. This meant that there were only 2 walkers left from the previously announced 50km team – Chris Erickson and Duane Cousins. The World Cup 50 km team was withdrawn and Erickson and Cousins found themselves out in the cold.

As it turned out, circumstances outside their control worked in their favour. Frank Bertei, who had been injured in December and who had missed out on a qualifying performance, was determined to force his way into the team and travelled to Mexico for an IAAF 50km event on 20<sup>th</sup> March. His time there was a PB 4:16:23 and now there were three 50km walkers – but a team selection required 4. However, the same event saw Liam Murphy disqualified. Murphy had been banking on achieving his Olympic 50km qualifier in Mexico and had swapped to the World Cup 20km based on this scenario. With this plan in tatters, Murphy advised the selectors that he now preferred to walk the 50km event in the World Cup. There was now a 50km team once again, and the walkers had 4 weeks to get their preparation back on track and prepare for the big event.

The Australian Racewalking World Cup team was eventually finalised in late March and saw teams in all 5 divisions.

MEN 20KM WALK	1:19.35	Luke Adams	NSW	Paris	23/08/03
	1:23:11	Nathan Deakes	VIC	Sydney	28/02/04
	1:26.39	Darren Bown	SA	Sydney	09/08/03
	1:27:34	Jared Tallent	VIC	Sydney	28/02/04
MEN 50KM WALK	3:59.33	Duane Cousins	VIC	Melbourne	18/05/03
	4:04.56	Liam Murphy	SA	Melbourne	18/05/03
	4:16:23	Frank Bertei	VIC	Tijuana	21/03/04
	4:19.48	Chris Erickson	VIC	Melbourne	07/12/03
MEN U20 10KM WALK	42:58	Adam Rutter	NSW	Canberra	31/01/04
	44:22	Michael McCagh	WA	Perth	15/06/03
	46:17	Ben Perske	QLD	Brisbane	07/02/04
WOMEN 20KM WALK	1:30.51	Jane Saville	NSW	Paris	24/08/03
	1:34.36	Cheryl Webb	NSW	Melbourne	07/12/03
	1:35.55	Natalie Saville	NSW	Sydney	28/02/04
	1:38.15	Simone Wolowiec	VIC	Melbourne	20/07/03
	1:38.27	Claire Woods	SA	Sydney	28/02/04
WOMEN U20 10KM WALK	48:58	Lisa Grant	NSW	Canberra	31/01/04
	49:34	Fiona Alldis	NSW	Canberra	31/01/04
	51:23	Jessica Hazelwood	NSW	Canberra	31/01/04

### 2004 IAAF Race Walking World Cup Naumburg, Germany, 1-2 May 2004

**Nathan Deakes** won his first medal in a major walks championship, claiming the bronze in the men's 20km. Deakes also clocked an all-important Olympic A qualifier with his time of 1:19.11. Ecuador's world record holder **Jefferson Pérez** claimed the gold (1:18:42), with reigning Olympic 20km and 50km champion **Robert Korzeniowski** in second place (1:19:02). Behind Deakes, **Luke Adams** recorded his second Olympic A-qualifier (1:21.24) in finishing 14<sup>th</sup>, while **Jared Tallent** crossed the line in 1:30:01 (75<sup>th</sup> place) and **Darren Bown** walked 1:31:01 for 78<sup>th</sup> place.

IAAF Race Walking World Cup 20km Men			
1.	Jefferson Perez	EQU	1:18:42
2.	Robert Korzeniowski	POL	1:19:02
3.	<b>Nathan Deakes</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:19:11</b>
	...		
14.	<b>Luke Adams</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:21:24</b>
75.	<b>Jared Tallent</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:30:01</b>
78.	<b>Darren Bown</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:31:01</b>

In the women's 20km, it was the 3 NSW walkers who dazzled with their form. **Jane Saville** set a new Australian record, finishing just outside the medals in fourth place with 1:27.44. Her sister **Natalie Saville** also smashed her own personal

best to finish 25<sup>th</sup> in 1:31.34 – easily beating the Olympic A qualifying standard of 1:33.00. **Cheryl Webb**, finishing just behind her in 26<sup>th</sup> place, also broke the Olympic A qualifier and a new PB of 1:31.43. On top of that, **Claire Woods** also clocked a new personal best of 1:35:25 for 42<sup>nd</sup> place. Victorian **Simone Wolowiec** was tragically disqualified at the 18km mark when just behind Saville and Webb and also heading for an Olympic A qualifier and a huge PB.

<b>IAAF Race Walking World Cup 20km Women</b>			
1.	Yelena Nikolayeva	RUS	1:27:24
	...		
4.	<b>Jane Saville</b>	AUS	<b>1:27:44</b>
25.	<b>Natalie Saville</b>	AUS	<b>1:31:34</b>
26.	<b>Cheryl Webb</b>	AUS	<b>1:31:43</b>
42.	<b>Claire Woods</b>	AUS	<b>1:35:25</b>
-	<b>Simone Wolowiec</b>	AUS	<b>DQ</b>

The men's 50 km was just about an all Victorian team. **Duane Cousins**, the reigning Australian champion, walked 4:09:14 to finish 26<sup>th</sup>, while **Chris Erickson** set a new PB of 4:14:16, crossing the line in 31<sup>st</sup> position. **Frank Bertei** came home in 40<sup>th</sup> place (4:21:22) only 6 weeks after walking a PB 50km in Mexico to force his way into the team. SA walker **Liam Murphy** was unfortunate to be disqualified at the 31km mark when well placed near the front of the field and well on the way to an Olympic A qualifier.

<b>IAAF Race Walking World Cup 50km Men</b>			
1.	Aleksey Voyevodin	RUS	3:42:44
26.	<b>Duane Cousins</b>	AUS	<b>4:09:14</b>
31.	<b>Chris Erickson</b>	AUS	<b>4:14:16</b>
40.	<b>Frank Bertei</b>	AUS	<b>4:21:22</b>
-	<b>Liam Murphy</b>	AUS	<b>DQ</b>

For the first time ever, U20 10km events were scheduled for men and women and we saw 2 top ten finishers, NSW walker **Lisa Grant** coming 8<sup>th</sup> with 49:25 and fellow NSW walker **Adam Rutter** finishing 9<sup>th</sup> with 42:07.

<b>IAAF Race Walking World Cup 10km Junior Men</b>			
1.	Chau Sun	CHN	40:38
	...		
9.	<b>Adam Rutter</b>	AUS	<b>42:07</b>
29.	<b>Michael McCagh</b>	AUS	<b>45:32</b>
46.	<b>Ben Perske</b>	AUS	<b>48:41</b>

<b>IAAF Race Walking World Cup 10km Junior Women</b>			
1.	Vera Sukolova	RUS	45:29
	...		
8.	<b>Lisa Grant</b>	AUS	<b>49:25</b>
16.	<b>Fiona Alldis</b>	AUS	<b>51:29</b>
33.	<b>Jessica Heazlewood</b>	AUS	<b>53:43</b>

This was the biggest international walking festival ever held, with over 400 walkers representing some 30 countries. The biggest event was the 20km for men with 116 starters. Overall, 37 walkers were disqualified out of the 424 starters, a rate of around 9%. This is around what we would expect in such a scenario when walkers are pushing themselves to the absolute limit and throwing caution to the wind in what is sometimes an all-or-none situation.

Australia was one of only 3 countries who scored top 10 places in all 5 Teams Competitions (8<sup>th</sup> in 50km, 4<sup>th</sup> in 10km women, 7<sup>th</sup> in 10km men, 8<sup>th</sup> in 20km men and 5<sup>th</sup> in 20km women). Assuming you might award 10 points for a Teams first place, 9 for a second place and so on down to 1 point for a tenth place, Australia was, on my reckoning, the fourth best performing country overall in the whole competition. This shows the benefit of sending full teams in each event, something that we normally had to fight hard to do, given the A.A. selection policies.

**38<sup>th</sup> Lake Burley Griffin Carnival**  
**Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2004**

**Craig Barrett** became one of the all time greats in this event with yet another win, making 4 gold and 2 silvers from 6 walks. Victorian youngster **Chris Erickson** also took gold as the first Australian to finish, something his father was never able to do. Yet again, a very small field contested the event and SAAWC was the only club to finish a team, thus winning the teams event for a second year running.

<b>LBG 20 Mile Walk, Canberra, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2004</b>			
1.	Craig Barrett	NZ	2:30:02
2.	Chris Erickson	VRWC	2:37:07
3.	Darren Bown	SAAWC	2:39:05
4.	Troy Sundstrom	REGAL	2:44:44
5.	Andrew Ludwig	QRWC	3:00:33
6.	Peter Bennett	QRWC	3:09:08
7.	John Leydon	SAAWC	3:22:29
8.	Duncan Knox	VRWC	3:23:21
9.	Robin Whyte	ACT	3:31:01
10.	Bill Starr	SAAWC	3:40:04
Teams			
1.	SARWC	D Bown, J Leydon, B Starr	
2.	VRWC	C Erickson, D Knox	
3.	QRWC	A Ludwig, P Bennett	

**Federation Carnival, including Glover Shield 20km**  
**Mudjima, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2004**

The annual Federation Carnival, which had been allocated to Mudjima on the Sunshine Coast, was a numerically small meet, with a predominant Queensland base. A sprinkling of walkers attended from NSW and ACT but only one Victorian made the trip. The carnival continued to lack relevance to the wider racewalking community.

<b>Glover Shield 20km, Mudjima, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2004</b>			
1.	Troy Sundstrom	REGAL	1:39.12
2.	Shane Pearson	QRWC	1:41.45
3.	Michael Smith	NSW	1:45.23
4.	Kurt Rose	QRWC	1:46.16
5.	Andrew Ludwig	QRWC	1:48.44
6.	Peter Bennett	QRWC	1:52.08
7.	Andrew Leggett	QRWC	1:55.41
8.	Peter Biggs	QRWC	2:07.01
9.	Lachlan Wilkinson	ACT	2:10.45
10.	Anthony Albanese	NSW	1:11.13
11.	Greg Rowe	NSW	2:14.26
12.	Ken Smith	NSW	2:21.59
-	Robin Whyte	ACT	DQ
Teams			
1.	QRWC	23	S Pearson, K Rose, A Ludwig
2.	QRWC	12	P Bennett, A Leggett, P Biggs
3.	NSWRWC	11	M Smith, A Albanese, G Rowe

**2004 Olympic Games**  
**Athens, Greece, 13-29 August 2004**

The XXVIII Olympiad was held in Athens, Greece, in August 2004. The Games saw 10,625 athletes compete, some 600 more than expected, accompanied by 5,501 team officials from 201 countries. There were 301 medal events in 28

different sports. Athens 2004 marked the first time since the 1996 Summer Olympics that all countries with a National Olympic Committee were in attendance, and also saw the return of the Olympic Games to the city where they began.

The first of the racewalks was the men's 20km, which was held in brutally hot conditions. **Ivano Brugnetti** of Italy, **Francisco Javier Fernandez** of Spain and **Nathan Deakes** of Australia had walked shoulder to shoulder up till just before the 18km mark, when the two Europeans had increased the pace even more, creating a three-second lead over Deakes going into the final lap. Brugnetti's devastating kick in the final stages of the race gave him the gold, his time of 1:19:40 a new PB. Fernandez clocked 1:19:45 for silver with Deakes another 17 seconds behind for bronze.

The heat of the Greek capital didn't seem to affect Brugnetti but, on the contrary, helped him perform at his best. *"I love the heat, I wish all races could be held in such hot cities. I was successful in Seville, which was even hotter, and Tijuana this winter so I believe the conditions were perfect for me today."*

Deakes admitted he was half delighted, half disappointed with bronze. *"I did come to win, but the others got away. I was a little apprehensive thinking I had two reports, but I tried to make a last-ditch bid to win with 3km to go. They got away again. I tried everything I had left with 1500m to go but they were too far ahead. Hopefully I haven't lost my one shot at gold. Next week I'll do the 50km and that should be good too. I rate my chances in the 50km very high after today. To finish with two medals is not unrealistic."*

**Luke Adams**, fifth in the 2003 World Championship, had struggled with a foot injury and was off the pace early. *"It was a tough day. I was just happy to get to the line in one piece and finish the race,"* Adams said after finishing 16<sup>th</sup>.

<b>Olympic 20km Walk Men, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2004</b>			
1.	Brugnetti Ivano	ITA	1:19:40
2.	Fernández Francisco Javier	ESP	1:19:45
3.	<b>Deakes Nathan</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:20:02</b>
..			
16.	<b>Adams Luke</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:23:52</b>

With a strong breeze around the Olympic Stadium, temperatures at the start of the women's 20km race were not as fierce as they had been over the weekend, a mere 26°C. It helped to keep a strong, good-sized bunch together, including all the anticipated favourites. With 14 walkers still in close contention at halfway (45:16), the pace then quickened noticeably. By the time the walkers entered the final 2km, it was a race of three, between **Athanasia Tsoumeleka** of Greece, Russia's **Olimpiada Ivanova** and **Jane Saville** of Australia. It was the Greek who won out with a long sprint for home, finishing four seconds ahead of the Russian, with Saville a further nine seconds back for bronze.

Saville now finally had her Olympic medal to add to her Commonwealth and World Junior ones. While this could not make up for the incredible turmoil and disappointment of Sydney 2000, it was nonetheless a wonderful reward for her determination.

<b>Olympic 20km Walk Women, Monday 23<sup>th</sup> August 2004</b>			
1.	Tsoumeléka Athanasía	GRE	1:29:12
2.	Ivanova Olimpiada	RUS	1:29:16
3.	<b>Saville Jane</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:29:25</b>
..			
36.	<b>Saville Natalie</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:36:54</b>
38.	<b>Webb Cheryl</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>1:37:40</b>

The legendary **Robert Korzenioski** added a wonderful fourth Olympic gold medal to his tally, which already included gold medals from the 20km in Atlanta 1996 and the historic 20km/50km double from Sydney 2000. But for the first 33km of the 50km race, the gold was uncertain. It was at that stage that **Nathan Deakes** was disqualified. Deakes and Korzenioski were clear of the rest of the field and looked set to fight out the gold and silver medals – and I thought that Deakes looked the fresher of the two, but perhaps I am biased! Deakes commented after the event: *"It's gut-wrenching, but that's race-walking, I've got to accept what the judges saw today. I can still walk away from the Athens Olympic Games with my head high. I've got a bronze medal. I would have liked to walk away with two medals, but I'll probably cherish the bronze a bit more now."*

With Deakes out of the way, Korzenioski was left to walk to the easiest of his 4 Olympic gold medals. Although 36 years of age, he must have been thinking – perhaps I should give it one more go in 2008 – that was easy! A true national

hero, he was congratulated by the President, Aleksander Kwasniewski, who was waiting for his most illustrious athlete by the finish line.

<b>Olympic 50km Walk Men, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2004</b>			
1.	Robert Korzeniowski	POL	3:38:46
2.	Denis Nizhegorodov	RUS	3:42:50
3.	Aleksey Voyerodin	RUS	3:43:34
	...		
-	<b>Nathan Deakes</b>	<b>AUS</b>	<b>DQ</b>

### **Australian Roadwalking Championships Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2004**

The 2004 Australian roadwalking championships were held on a fast section of bike track alongside Lake Burley Griffin. The men's 30km Championship was a particularly interesting race. Young Victorian guns **Jared Tallent, Chris Erickson** and **Tom Barnes** soon cleared away from the rest of the field and the medals looked certain to be shared amongst them. The race complexion changed when Tallent clearly increased his pace at the 16km mark. Barnes dropped behind first and eventually Erickson also found the pace too hard as Tallent opened a winning break at the 20km mark. The sunny conditions took their toll as Barnes was forced to retire just after 24km. Tallent slowed towards the end and Erickson partly bridged the gap but the win never really in doubt. For Tallent, it was his first 30km walk and his first Australian senior title. Erickson was also rewarded with a big PB and took the silver.

<b>Australian 30km Championship, Canberra, Sun 28<sup>th</sup> Aug 2004</b>			
1.	Jared Tallent	VIC	2:23:22
2.	Chris Erickson	VIC	2:23:54
3.	Aaron Mellor	NSW	2:31:30
4.	Troy Sundstrom	NSW	2:34:28
5.	Andrew Jamieson	VIC	2:36:01
6.	Shane Pearson	QLD	2:37:48
-	Tom Barnes	VIC	DNF

### **Australian 50km Championship Albert Park, Melbourne, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2004**

This prestigious event saw a disappointing entry list of only 4 Victorians – sad but not too hard to understand given the very late notification of this event - the date was only confirmed in early August. By that stage, of course, everyone had completed their season and it is not possible to just drop everything, train for a couple of months and expect to walk a competitive 50km. This illustrated the need for AA to set championship dates at least 12 months in advance, something that has still not been addressed, even as I write in 2020.

With defending champion Duane Cousins a late scratching, only 3 walkers started – **Chris Erickson, Daniel Walters** and **Andrew Jamieson**. Erickson and Walters walked together for the first 10km (49:23) before Walters increased the tempo to pass 20km in 1:38:01, some 40 secs in front of Erickson. Jamieson was walking his own race further back, passing 20km in a very conservative 1:50:01. Walters started to suffer from a hip problem soon after and was forced to retire around the 24km mark. That left Erickson well in front and he powered on to pass the 30km mark in 2:28:35. But soon after this, he started to suffer back spasms (perhaps from the cold wind) and hit the proverbial wall! With a big lead, all he had to do was keep on his feet to ensure a win and that's what he did, to finally cross the line a very tired but relieved winner in 4:39:46. At only 22 years of age, Erickson became one of the youngest ever Australian 50km champions while, at 58 years of age, Jamieson became the oldest ever medallist in this event. This was Jamieson's second 50km event - his only other one was in 1971 when he finished in just over 5 hours.

<b>Australian 50km, Melbourne, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2004</b>			
1.	Chris ERICKSON	VIC	4.39.46
2.	Andrew JAMIESON	VIC	4.46.44
-	Daniel WALTERS	VIC	DNF

The year finished with the announcement by the IAAF of the qualifying standards for the 2005 World Championships, to be held in Helsinki in August.

Men	20km	A	1:23:00	B	1:24:30
Women	20km	A	1:33:30	B	1:38:00
Men	50km	A	4:00:00	B	4:07:00