

## TIM'S TOP TEN MEN FOR 2019

It's that time of the year again so off we go with my Top Ten Men for 2019. These are very much my own individual picks based on a combination of absolute quality, consistency across the year and improvement relative to past years. Of course, your picks might differ. Anyway, read on. As always, it was a very tough ask.



### 1. Rhydian Cowley (VIC)

28 year old Rhydian Cowley had his best year ever in 2019, with PBs over 10km (39:48), 20km (1:20:19), 30km (2:10:33) and 50km (3:52:58). He started his year with a PB 40:07 in the Canberra Track Classic 10,000m in January, recorded his PB of 1:20:19 in the IAAF Challenge 20km in Kobi, Japan, in March, was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Australian 10,000m Track walk in April (40:44), won the Victorian 10km and 15km in May, recorded 1:21:02 in La Coruna, Portugal, in June, won the Oceania 10,000m walk in Townsville in June, cleaned up the Victorian 20km and 30km in June/July, won the Australian winter 20km roadwalk championship in September in Adelaide, finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the annual Lake Taihu 3 Day Classic in China in October and finished off the year in grand style with a win in the Australian 50km in Melbourne in early December in his first attempt at this distance. The only blip on the radar was his DNF in the World Champs in Doha in horrendously hot conditions, but this was a minor blip in what was a stellar year.



### 2. Dane Bird-Smith (QLD)

27 year old Dane Bird-Smith had a quiet 2019, with only 7 races, but all were of excellent quality. He started his year with second (first Australian) in the Australian 20km Summer Championship in Adelaide in February (1:20:52), won the Queensland Track Classic 3000m in March with a very quick 11:01, won the Australian 10,000m Track Championship in Sydney in April in a PB 38:30, then did a number of overseas races (Mexico 20km 1:15:01, Norway 3000m 10:59 and La Coruna 20km 1:21:40) in preparation for Doha. His Doha walk saw him walk honestly to finish 15<sup>th</sup> (1:32:11) in the tough conditions, not as high as might have been expected but in those conditions, just finishing was an effort. That finished his year of racing.



### 3. Kyle Swan (VIC)

After a quiet first half of the year, 20 year old Kyle Swan hit his straps in the second half of the year, starting with a win in the prestigious LBG Carnival 15km in Canberra in June (1:07:48). After silvers behind Rhydian Cowley in the Victorian 20km and 30km championships, he took silver (behind Rhydian again) in the Australian Winter 20km championship in Adelaide (a PB 1:31:42) in September. After racing in the Lake Taihu 3 Day Tour in China in October, he really raised the bar with a superb PB of 1:23:53 in the Fawkner Park 20km race in early December. He looks set for a great 2020.



#### 4. Gwyllym Young (ACT)

17 year old Gwyllym is one of a very talented bunch of junior male walkers and has proven himself hard to beat. He won the U18 5000m walk at the Australian T&F Championships in April (21:50), finished second (first Australian) in the Oceania U18 10,000m walk in Townsville in June (22:17), won the U18 10km walk in the Australian Winter Roadwalks in September (46:00), won the U20 10km walk at Fawkner Park in early December (43:25) and won the Australian All Schools U18 5000m a week later in Perth (21:56). Definitely our top U18 and arguably perhaps our top U20 male walker.



#### 5. Corey Dickson (VIC)

17 year old Corey Dickson has improved markedly this year, with PBs set for 5km (21:39), 10km (44:23), 15km (1:20:37) and 20km (1:36:06). A prolific racer, with 38 starts for the year, he started the year mixing it with the older walkers in Canberra as part of the Supernova camp. He made a big breakthrough, walking a huge PB of 44:53 in the U20 10km at the Australian Summer Roadwalk Championships in Adelaide in February. He followed this with second in the U20 10,000m walk at the Australian T&F Championships in Sydney in April (46:09), then walked a big double in the LBG Carnival in Canberra in June (2<sup>nd</sup> in the U20 10km with 46:34 and 1<sup>st</sup> in the U18 5km with 23:12). He was 3<sup>rd</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Australian) in the Oceania U18 5000m walk in Townsville 2 weeks later (22:39), was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the U18 10km in the Australian Winter Championships in September (46:18). He knocked out an impressive first up 1:36:06 in a VRWC 20km in November, improved his 10km PB to 44:23 at Fawkner Park in early December, followed a week later with silver in the Australian All Schools U18 5000m (22:00).



#### 6. Tristan Camilleri (SA)

18 year old Tristan Camilleri also had an excellent 2019, with PBs for 3000m (12:36), 5000m (21:30) and 10km (43:28). He showed early good form with a string of PB 10km walks (47:29 and 46:35 in Canberra in January and 44:27 in Adelaide in February). He was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the U20 10,000m in April in Sydney (46:28), won the U20 10,000m walk at the Oceania Championships in Townsville in June (45:27), was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the U20 10km in the Australian Winter Roadwalk Championships in Adelaide in September (47:01) and 2<sup>nd</sup> again in the U20 10km walk at Fawkner Park in early December (43:28).



### 7. Tyler Jones (NSW)

22 year old Tyler Jones continued to improve this year, setting PBs for 1500m (5:44), 10km (41:39) and 20km (1:25:42). His year started with a PB walk in the Australian Summer 20km Championship in Adelaide in February (3<sup>rd</sup> Australian with 1:25:44). He finished once again as third Australian (and once again behind Dane and Rhydian) in the Australian 10,000m championship in Sydney in April (41:39). He travelled overseas during the middle part of the year and did not race seriously again until the Lake Taihu 3 Day Tour meet in China in October. With this under his belt, he returned to top form at Fawkner Park in December, improving his 20km PB to 1:25:42. So a quieter year than in the past but still enough quality to cement a spot in my Top Ten.



### 8. Dylan Richardson (NSW)

19 year old Dylan Richardson set himself for the longer walks right from the start of the year, finishing the Open 20km walk at the Australian Summer Roadwalk Championships in Adelaide in February (PB 1:37:55). He completed 30km walks in the LBG Carnival in June (2:36:30) and in the NSW 30km Championship in Sydney in July (2:36:04) before contesting the Open 20km once again, this time in the Australian Winter Roadwalk Championships (1:39:43). Along with a team of young Australian walkers, he competed in the Lake Taihu 3 Day Tour in China in October (doing a 20km PB of 1:36:43 on one of the days). Finally, he fronted for the Australian 50km at Fawkner Park in early December, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> with a very impressive first up 4:22:44.



### 9. Toby Wilks(SA)

14 year old Toby Wilks has proven pretty much unbeatable in his age group this year. He won the U15 3000m at the Australian T&F Championships in early April (13:16), followed by a win in the prestigious Australian Little Athletics 1500m walk 2 weeks later (6:24). He did a big double in the LBG Carnival in Canberra (1<sup>st</sup> in the U14 2km with 9:38 and 1<sup>st</sup> in the U16 3km with 14:03). The rest of the time, he was content to race on the local SARWC front in Adelaide. He hasn't raced since the end of the winter season but he has done enough to earn a place in my Top Ten.



### **E10. Andrew Jamieson (VIC)**

73 year old Andrew Jamieson continues to amaze us with his ongoing racing form. He has been setting World and Australian Masters records since he returned to racing in the M50 category in 1997. Now 22 years down the track, he is still at it. After a quiet couple of years, he really hit back in 2019, racing 24 times and getting his times back down to impressive levels. It goes without saying that he was undefeated in Victorian and Australian Masters races. He even fronted at the LBG Carnival in Canberra in June (his first time since 2013), coming 6<sup>th</sup> in the 15km with 1:28:57.



### **E10. Declan Tingay (WA)**

20 year old Declan Tingay started the year off impressively, finishing 8<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Australian) in the Canberra Track Classic 10,000m walk in Canberra in January (43:27) and finishing as 4<sup>th</sup> Australian in the Australian Summer 20km Championship in Adelaide in February (PB 1:26:22). He was 2<sup>nd</sup> to Rhydian Cowley in the Oceania Open 10,000m Walk in Townsville in June (42:42) and represented Australia in the World University Games 20km walk in Naples, Italy, in July. Unfortunately, he was disqualified there and has only raced a few low key local races in Perth since then. We will have to wait for 2020 to see what Declan has in store for us next. A hugely talented walker.