



HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club
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20 December 2011



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TIM'S WALKER OF THE WEEK

Last week's Walker of the Week went to NSW Olympic A qualifying walker **Beki Lee** by a clear margin. Beki emailed me during the week to say

Just a quick email to say Thank You for nominating me for Walker of the Week :) but I would like to ask you if I do end up winning (fingers crossed) that you could please make it a tie between me and Peter because what Peter did is amazing and he deserves just as much credit if not more than me for his efforts.

Now I can't do that but I can do the next best thing because I also thought that Peter's performance in the Coast to Kosci was pretty extraordinary. I have reviewed this week's results and decided to award this week's Walker of the Week to **Peter Bennett**. That way we recognize both great performances. And to top it off, I asked Peter for a writeup and some photos and he has obliged. It is an inspirational read – see later in the newsletter.



Left: Beki Lee in the 2011 World University Games in August – last week's Walker of the Week
Right: Peter Bennett traverses the Monaro High Plains on the way to Kosciusko – this week's Walker of the Week

FAWKNER PARK REVISITED

Peter Vysma has kindly put together a 30+ minute video from our recent Australian Championship races at Fawkner Park – you can check it out at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7sRnwm9v9U>. Thanks Peter!

AV SHIELD COMPETITION, SATURDAY 17 DECEMBER

5 of our 6 regions were in action on Saturday and conditions were hot, hot, hot!

AV Shield South East Region Round 9, Casey Fields, Cranbourne East, Saturday 17 December

First to Casey Fields for the South East region of the Athletics Victoria Shield competition. Conditions were very tough due to the heat but I did spot a few PBs in the results – Lauren Stadius a great 15:51.1 in the 3000m and Reese Walmsley 7:25.2 and Kyle Bird 7:31.2 in the 1500m. Sorry if I missed anyone else! Rhydian Cowley 12:32.6 and Nathan Brill 6:09.1 led from the front in the 2 events. In fact, Rhydian won the walk, then won the open 3,000m run (by a huge margin) and finally opened the 4x400 relay for Glenhuntly – not a bad day's work. Clyde Riddoch dropped down in distance and contested the 1500m with our U14 and U16 walkers and was rewarded with an impressive 7:36.1. But it still only got him 8th place in what was a very high quality event.

3000m Walk Mixed

1.	Rhydian Cowley	MOP	GHY	12:32.6	
2.	Chris Lockwood	M40+	VMA	15:19.1	
3.	Aaron Tam	MU18	KNA	15:46.4	
4.	Lauren Stadius	WU16	KNA	15:52.1	PB 0:17
5.	Ralph Bennett	M40+	VMA	17:25.6	
6.	Bianca Attard	WU18	KNA	18:03.6	
7.	Kym Osmand	MOP	OAK	18:44.2	
8.	Jessie Eastwood	WU16	KNA	19:34.0	
9.	Michaela Attard	WU10	KNA	20:23.7	
10.	Gwen Steed	W40+	VMA	20:44.3	
11.	Celia Johnson	W40+	VMA	21:29.2	
12.	John Morrison	MOP	SAN	21:37.4	
13.	John Zeleznikow	MOP	GHY	29:56.4	
14.	Eva Zeleznikow	WU18	GHY	32:17.9	

1500m Walk Mixed

1.	Nathan Brill	MU16	BOH	6:09.1	
2.	Lucas Taylor	MU16	KNA	7:03.9	
3.	Stephanie George	WU16	KNA	7:08.9	
4.	Kyle Swan	MU14	KNA	7:21.5	
5.	Reese Walmsley	MU14	KNA	7:25.2	PB 0:16
6.	Kyle Bird	MU16	MPA	7:31.2	PB
7.	Jade Sanders	WU16	CCA	7:35.3	
8.	Clyde Riddoch	M40+	AWA	7:36.1	
9.	Emily Hamilton	WU14	KNA	7:55.9	
10.	Hayley George	WU14	UNA	7:58.0	
11.	Rachael Guy	WU14	CCA	8:19.9	
12.	Taylor, Lee	WU14	INV	9:39.3	
	Shelby Kay	WU14	KNA	DQ	

AV Shield North West Region Round 9, Newport Park Athletics Facility, Williamstown, Saturday 17 December

At Williamstown, I can vouch for the heat as I had to tough out the 3000m walk. The big news is that I finally beat Duncan Knox – all right, he did ride his bike from Essendon to Williamstown to compete but a win's a win in my book! Paul Kennedy turned the tables on Mark Donahoo with a very good 14:21.8 while Caitlin Campbell won the women's 3000m with 16:31.0. Connor McShanag 7:35.8 and Georgia Bertrand 9:29.6 were the winners of the 1500m walks. Once again, this was our largest walks venue with 40 competitors.

3000m Walk Men

1.	Paul Kennedy	OP	MUU	14:21.8	
2.	Mark Donahoo	OP	ATE	14:50.3	
3.	Tim Erickson	40+	COB	16:26.1	
4.	Duncan Knox	40+	ATE	16:32.6	
5.	John Kondogonis	40+	KSB	17:47.5	
6.	Phillip Dunstone	40+	WES	24:58.5	
7.	Ian Rickard	OP	BWK	27:02.1	
	Ash Millane	U18	KSB	DQ	

3000m Walk Women

1.	Caitlin Campbell	U18	ATE	16:31.0	
2.	Elise Aplin	OP	KSB	17:26.3	
3.	Simone Mcinnes	OP	GHY	17:39.0	
4.	Donna-Marie Elms	OP	ATE	18:14.8	
5.	Robyn Shaw	OP	WES	18:27.4	
6.	Jade Atkins	U18	WCA	20:42.0	
7.	Julia Irons	U14	KSB	22:22.0	
8.	Maria Abfalter	OP	KSB	22:42.3	
9.	Maeve Ryan	OP	WTN	23:26.1	
10.	Amanda Baric	OP	KSB	23:52.4	
11.	Roslyn Ireland	OP	BWK	24:09.3	
12.	Anne Stobaus	OP	KSB	26:06.0	
13.	Olive Ireland	OP	BWK	26:06.4	

1500m Men

1.	Connor McShanag	U16	ATE	7:35.8	
2.	Izaak Long	U14	PTN	10:13.9	
3.	Harrison Leo	U14	ATE	12:10.3	

1500m Women

1.	Georgia Bertrand	U14	KSB	9:29.6	
2.	Stacey McLaren	U16	ATE	10:36.2	

3.	Brooklyn Utber	U14	WES	10:45.3
4.	Courtney Utber	U16	WES	11:03.6
5.	Caitlyn Musgrave	U14	PTN	11:28.2
6.	Elaine Irons	U14	KSB	12:04.2
7.	Jessica Magree	U16	KSB	12:06.5
8.	Jamie Tonelli	U14	KSB	12:38.3
9.	Jacqueline Roberts	U14	KSB	12:46.0
10.	Tess Magree	U14	KSB	13:30.9
11.	Madeline Alderuccio	U14	KSB	14:00.4
12.	Olivia Magree	U14	KSB	14:03.1
13.	Larissa Cullen	U14	WCA	14:33.8
14.	Jessica Anderson	U16	WCA	14:34.7
15.	Michelle Rose	U14	WCA	14:34.9
	Ashley Tonelly	OP	INV	DQ

AV Shield East Region Round 9, Proclamation Park, Ringwood, Saturday 17 December

The East Zone competition at Ringwood saw Jason Kozica an easy winner with 14:48.1 (he has obviously pulled up well from his 20km at Fawkner Park) while Sandra Geisler was the fastest of the women with 17:21.3. Emmet Brasier was in top form in the 1500m to take line honours with a PB time of 6:53.2 ahead of Adam Garganis and Cooper Owen who also walked well. Chelsea Owen-Smith was the fastest of the girls in the 1500m with 8:58.0.

Mixed 3000m Walk

1.	Kozica, Jason	M24	STK	14:48.1
2.	Simpson, Bradley	M18	KNX	15:43.6
3.	Beaton-Wells, Michael	M43	OSC	16:01.8
4.	Reid, Ross	M57	COL	16:44.0
5.	Dyer, William	M50	BXH	16:58.8
6.	Geisler, Sandra	W34	RWD	17:21.3
7.	Vernal, Stephen	M53	ANW	18:38.6
8.	Carre, Simone	W29	BXH	18:56.9
9.	Gardiner, Robert	M75	COL	19:13.9
10.	Facey, Stuart	M61	OSC	19:18.2
11.	Patti, Adrian	M31	DAC	19:23.2
12.	Walsh, Robert	M18	ANW	19:56.9
13.	Worsnop, Chris	M54	OLX	21:22.3
	Pocklington, Colin	M52	BXH	DQ
	Iacono, Thomas	M25	COL	DQ
	Ackland, Kate	W29	BXH	DQ
	Chong, Kait	M39	BXH	DQ
	Baker, Cameron	M34	BXH	DQ

Mixed 1500m Walk

1.	Brasier, Emmet	M13	DIV	6:53.2	PB 0:03
2.	Garganis, Adam	M14	COL	7:14.6	
3.	Owen, Cooper	M13	DIV	7:19.4	
4.	Owen-Smith, Chelsea	W11	DIV	8:58.0	
5.	Walburg, Kirsten	W13	DAC	9:00.7	
6.	Boylen, Adele	W12	COL	11:13.6	

AV Shield Geelong Region Round 8, Landy Field, Geelong, Saturday 17 December

AV Shield Ballarat Region Round 9, Llanberris Reserve, Ballarat, Saturday 17 December

Alas, although we had Shield competitions at Geelong and Ballarat, results have not yet been posted but I do have one Geelong result from the previous weekend when 1500m walks were contested in the Geelong Cup competition.

Geelong Cup, Landy Field, Geelong, Saturday 10 December 2011

1500m Walk

1.	Josh Dillon	COR	7:28.98
2.	Megan Walker	COR	8:10.81
3.	Nicholas Mirarchi	INV	9:25.35
4.	Alan Jenkins	CHI	10:20.03
5.	Jmara Hockley-Samon	CHI	12:13.34
6.	Jade Lockwood	COR	13:25.52
7.	Jill Lockwood	COR	14:52.23

VRWC TRACK WALKS, GEORGE KNOTT RESERVE, CLIFTON HILL, WED 14 DECEMBER

Our VRWC track races last Wednesday evening at Clifton Hill saw a small group of walkers take the opportunity for an extra race in the leadup to Christmas (or two extra races in the case of Pam Tindal). Our three winners were Mark Donahoo (24:57 for 5000m), Kyle Swan (14:55 for 3000m) and Michelle Laufer (7:21.7 for 1500m). Special mentions to Kyle Swan whose time was a big PB and

a new U13 club record, Lee Taylor whose 1500m time of 9:24.2 was a 14 sec PB, Josephine Laufer who walked a 20 sec PB with 9:10.3 and to Beatrice Laufer who walked her first ever 3000m in fine style. Thanks to Terry Swan for his usual fine collection of great photos – see <http://www.vrwc.org.au/coppermine>.

5000m Walk

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-------|
| 1. | Donahoo, Mark | 24:57 |
| 2. | Kennedy, Paul | 25:27 |
| 3. | Tindal, Pam | 25:38 |
| 4. | McShanag, Connor | 29:25 |
| 5. | Elms, Donna | 30:33 |
| 6. | Shaw, Robyn | 31:09 |
| 7. | Shaw, Kirstin | 33:39 |

3000m Walk

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|-------|-----------|
| 1. | Swan, Kyle | 14:55 | PB 0:14 |
| 2. | Gardiner, Bob | 19:29 | |
| 3. | Laufer, Beatrice | 23:34 | First one |

1500m Walk

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---------|---------|
| 1. | Laufer, Michelle | 7:21.7 | |
| 2. | Tindal, Pam | 7:31.3 | |
| 3. | Collis, Lauren | 7:48.8 | |
| 4. | Burgess, Liam | 7:55.5 | |
| 5. | Collis, Hugh | 8:42.3 | |
| 6. | Laufer, Josephine | 9:10.3 | PB 0:20 |
| 7. | Taylor, Lee | 9:24.2 | PB 0:14 |
| 8. | Collis, Frances | 11:01.2 | |
| 9. | Collis, Bede | 11:07.2 | |
| 10. | Kennedy, Tom | 14:11.5 | |



Paul Kennedy, Mark Donahoo, Lee Taylor, Tom Kennedy, Kyle Swan and Pam Tindal



Family affairs - Bede, Frances, Hugh and Lauren Collis, Josephine and Beatrice Laufer



Liam Burgess, Damien Elms and Judy Mason judging, Jason Elms and Tim Erickson timekeeping

Thanks to our officials and judges – sorry if I missed anyone.

Officials: Tim Erickson, Jason Elms, Susan Taylor
Judges: Peter Vysma (chief), Judy Mason, Damien Elms, Michael Bodey
Photos: Terry Swan
Water Table: Pauline McShanag

QA PB MEET, GOLD COAST CITY ATHLETICS TRACK, SOUTHPORT, SATURDAY 17 DECEMBER

And a final pre-Christmas walk from the Gold Coast in Queensland where Brad Aiton was in hot form, walking the 1500m in a PB tim of 5:41.88. Wow, that's fast. Jessica Pickles was just a couple of secs outside her PB with 6:36.15 to take second. Great walking!

1500m Walk

1.	Aiton, Brad	17	GCV	5:41.88	PB 0:13
2.	Pickles, Jessica	17	FTA	6:36.15	
3.	Benzenati, Kenza	14	GCV	7:23.53	
4.	Benzenati, Yanis	11	QRWC	7:30.98	

RWCWA ROADWALKS, WILSON, PERTH, SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER 2011

And thanks to Rick Cattermole for the latest results from the Race Walking Club of Western Australia. Rick commented:

As was expected today, being our last walk for 2011, the numbers were well down. Hopefully our walkers will be back after a few weeks rest and merriment for this time of year as there are LA States/AWA WA Championships all coming up in the next few months. Anyway, there were a couple of good times for our members down at Wilson today.

10k Open Mixed

1.	David Smyth	58.56	
2.	Daniel Lowe	59.32	
3.	Michelle Butler	65.17	
4.	Janine Butler	73.19	PB

5k Open Women

1.	Sara Cattermole	32.22	SB
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3k Open Women

1.	Ashley Granado	17.41	
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OVERSEAS RESULTS

GETAFE (ESP, Dec 11): Veteran Jesus Angela Garcia was third in the 10 km walk (43:12) in the meet at Getafe in Spain on Sunday Dec 11th. Jose Diaz was the fastest man with 42:47 and Maria Jose Poves was the fastest of the women with 45:07.

OLYMPIC, WORLD JUNIOR AND WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

An amendment to the 2012 Olympic qualification listing I published in last week's newsletter. The first draft of the AA document indicated that the 20km qualification period would start on 1st May 2011 and my listing was based on that information. What I did not know was that AA had released a further version of the document, extending the 20km qualification period from 1st January 2011. As such, Claire Tallent also has an Olympic qualifying performance and Jared Tallent, Luke Adams and Adam Rutter also have qualifiers at 20km. Here is what the amended list now looks like – pretty healthy for this early in proceedings!

Olympic Qualifying Performances (from 1 Jan 2011)

20km Men (1:22:30)	Jared Tallent	1:19:57, Taicang, China, 22/04/2011
		1:20:19, Hobart, 19/02/2011
	Luke Adams	1:21:00, Hobart, 19/02/2011
	Adam Rutter	1:22:25, Hobart, 19/02/2011
20km Women (1:33:30)	Regan Lamble	1:32:06, Melbourne, 11/12/2011
	Claire Tallent	1:32:39, Taicang, China, 22/04/2011
	Beki Lee	1:33:09, Melbourne, 11/12/2011
50km Men (3:59:00)	Jared Tallent	3:43:36, Daegu, 03/09/2011
		3:49:33, Melbourne, 11/12/2011
	Luke Adams	3:45:31, Daegu, 03/09/2011
	Nathan Deakes	3:48:02, Slovakia, 26/03/2011
		3:50:34, Melbourne, 11/12/2011
	Chris Erickson	3:54:53, Slovakia, 26/03/2011
		3:51:57, Melbourne, 11/12/2011
	Ian Rayson	3:57:55, Melbourne, 11/12/2011

CLUB RECORDS UPDATE

Kyle Swan has been in fine form lately with more VRWC club records.

Kyle Swan	U13 2000m Walk	9:44.2	AV Shield, Mentone	Thurs 08/12/2011
Kyle Swan	U13 3000m Walk	14:55.0	VRWC Track Races, Clifton Hill	Wed 14/12/2011

PETER BENNETT'S COAST TO KOSCI WALK

Thanks to Peter Bennett for writing a report on his amazing walk a week ago.

Coast to Kosciuszko Ultra Marathon 2011 By Peter Bennett

The concept of walking the 240km Coast to Kosciuszko Ultra Marathon race was very appealing me; the course, the scenery, the distance, the elevation and the iconic status of the race. I wondered "Could a race walker make it to the finish line inside the cut-off time?" This is the most iconic ultra marathon in Australia that takes you on a physical and emotional journey from Boydtown Beach in Eden to Charlotte Pass onto the summit of Mt Kosciuszko (2,228 metres) and back to the finishing line at Charlotte Pass.

I first raised the question of entering during on the second night of the 2010 Caboolture 48 hour race. My crew member thought that I was possibly delirious at that stage so just said "Why not". When the nominations were called for this year, I started thinking about it again. When I arrived home from finishing the Bribie Island 46km Beach Bash at the beginning of October I lodged an entry application with about 5 minutes to spare before the entries closed. When I received an offer by the Race Director of a place in the starting line I thought "now what do I do?" I had been prepared to have my application rejected. But as the Race Director explained to everyone at the post race presentation, he was aware that I was a race walker. He spent some time looking into my background and talking to some ultra runners and concluded that I had met the race entry criteria, was capable of finishing the race and that I deserved a start on merit. I am forever grateful to Paul Every for his display of faith in giving me the opportunity to participate in this race.

It did not take long to get a support crew together. I only had to ask the question and the reply was "you bet" and "I'm in". Not only did I have the honour of being the first race walker to be accepted to take part in the event but the QRWC can claim to have the first all race walking crew in the race. My wife Julianne, Iggy Jimenez and Sarah Vardenega provided all the support I needed plus plenty of humour (but the slave drivers would not let me stop or rest for the entire 38 hours let alone allow me to get anywhere near the back seat of the car). Having crew members who know you better than yourself is invaluable. They knew what I wanted and how I was feeling without me having to tell them. I could not have asked for a better crew who were 100% focused on the goal from start to finish and they earned high praise from the Race Director for the way they carried out their task I had set myself a goal of completing the race in 40 hours but to finish in 38:06:38 is entirely down to the crew.

We flew to Canberra on the Thursday morning. Once there we picked up a hire 4-wheel drive and drove into the city to borrow from friends some gear we were unable to carry on the plane - esky, gas bottle and cooker, folding chair, table etc. Then it was off to the supermarket to get all our food supplies for the race. Soon we were heading out along the Monaro Highway on the way to Eden on the NSW South Coast. After such an early start we stopped at the little town of Nimmitabel and had lunch at the town bakery. We all voted that they made the best pies ever.

After arriving at Eden we checked into our cabin right on the beach at the holiday park. This was time to relax, have a sandwich and a cuppa before preparing all our gear and food for the race start next morning. We did a short drive to Boydtown Beach to familiarise ourselves with where the race started (this proved to be a wise move) before going into town to attend the pre-race briefing and pasta party. The function room at the Eden Fisherman's club was overflowing with race participants and crews. It was reassuring to see a few familiar faces from races at Caboolture. It had been a long day so after an excellent pasta buffet and a race briefing we re-fuelled the car and headed back to the holiday park to get some sleep.

It was a privilege to be on the starting line on race day with such a strong field of Australia's best ultra runners and a contingent of overseas athletes. The beach looked beautiful at dawn. We had made it to the start line with 10 minutes to spare. I had changed my watch to NSW daylight saving time but not my alarm clock. I flew out of bed got dressed and we drove straight to the starting areas being grateful we knew exactly where to go. There was no time for pre-race nerves just enough time to pin the race number on, take a photo and we were off.

From the beach the course led across the Princess Highway and onto a fire trail and immediately into the hills. There was no rest or working your way easy in the race. Most of the runners were soon out of sight as I concentrated on relaxing and getting into a comfortable rhythm. During the first seven hours I was able to chat to David Billett (C.50) who at various intervals was alternating his run with periods of walking. He provided some insights on what lay ahead but also commented that we were "just taking rubbish" after we discussed the amount of household goods that had been illegally dumped in the forest.

It would be over three hours from the start until we would be able to link up with our crews so they had plenty of time to get back to the cabin to have breakfast and pack up. After about 24 km I reached the point on Towamba Road where the crews and athletes met up. It was here that I felt the warm up stage was over and the real race was beginning. My talented crew applied my sunscreen as I was still walking and made sure I had plenty of fluids and something to eat. From then on the crew started a routine of driving 3-5km ahead depending on road conditions; the temperature and the terrain. They were more on their toes and alert after encountering a big red bellied black snake on the road.



Left: contemplating the job ahead at the start



Right: on the road

I reached the first mandatory check point at Rocky Hall (approx 50km) in 6 hours 31 minutes and was still at the back end of the field. This checkpoint was a boost as I felt good and it really felt like I was part of the race as there were a number of other crew cars in sight. Soon after we crossed the Towamba River and enjoyed one of the highlights of the race (for us anyway) when I was joined by Iggy to walk up Big Jack Mountain. By the time we reached the top 7km later we had picked up about 10 places. I enjoyed the uphill but the downhill sections were very tough on the knees especially on the rocky unsealed sections of road. It was a perfect sunny day but as the temperature rose to about 26C. I draped a towel that had been soaked in ice water over my head and shoulders. This not only kept me cool and protected from the sun but helped with the dust and the flies as well.

The second checkpoint at Cathcart (70km) was memorable for the icy pole that my crew had bought for me from the little general store. From there we were on mostly unsealed roads and undulating terrain with numerous cattle grids to negotiate. Sarah & Iggy had started a routine of walking with me at various intervals. Now that we were not at the back of the field our support car was regularly leapfrogging with some of the other support crews. This interaction with the other athletes and their crews is part of what makes this race so special. The camaraderie and offers of support we received by everyone was humbling. No big egos or a dog eat dog world, just people who were genuinely happy for how we were progressing in the race.

It was around this stage that The Race Director jogged beside me for a couple of minutes to see how I was feeling. He was really pleased that I was still going so well and that I had not stopped at all. He asked me long did I intend to keep race walking. "Until I finish" was the only answer I could think of. From the moment I had entered the race there was never a thought about not finishing, there was no plan "B".

By early evening we were bemused by a gathering of crew vehicles on the road around a big dead tree in the middle of nowhere. Due to the fact that there were big dead trees everywhere we could not work out why this dead tree was significant. We speculated that it might have a sinister history like the picnic at Hanging Rock. I think we were all a little weary by this stage as Sarah had begun talking to the sheep. This was when we were not telling each other lame jokes. Anyway we later found out the tree was the closest land mark to the 100km mark.

Once we turned onto the Snowy River Way we had the luxury of a long flat bitumen road. As night fell I changed into some warmer clothes, put on a reflective vest and headlamp and was handed a cup of hot fettuccine as I headed off into the night. The hot food and a cup of tea gave me a real boost but I could have eaten another 6 cups of fettuccine. Iggy promised that I could have another cup in about 20km.

We enjoyed the company of other crews and athletes on the road at night. We would leapfrog each other sometimes seeing a runner we had not seen before. Some of the runners were going through rough patches and looked in bad shape. It is a testament to the toughness and determination of these runners that they made it all the way to the finish line. It was fortunate that there was moonlight as we could not see a single house light in any direction. The only lights we saw were car tail lights in the distance. Distances can be very deceptive at night on the high plains. It could sometime take us half an hour or more to reach a vehicle that looked to be only a few hundred metres away. Some of the other crews were driving 10 or more kilometres ahead at this stage to allow themselves to get some much needed rest before their runner caught up. At one stage two runners went past Iggy & I and asked did we see the brown snake on the road. Apparently it was curled up on the road and we must have just missed standing on it. We were certainly more alert and kept a sharp look out at any dark object on the road with our headlamps after that.

Just before 2am I arrived in Dalgety (147.2km). The crew had gone ahead to the check in point at the local community hall that was set up to provide crews with a chance to get a hot meal and a rest. While they were enjoying a well earned break (and toilets) I crossed the Snowy River Bridge and followed the road signs pointing towards Jindabyne. I could see the reflective vests of a runner and support crew a hundred metres ahead so I was confident I was on the right road. Still, it was a relief to have the crew car come along side soon after. We ticked off another milestone when the crew called out that I had just going through 100 miles and recorded it in the trip diary at the 22 hours 42 minutes mark.

Soon after I was joined by Iggy for the climb up the Beloka Range. This is steeper than but not as long as Big Jack Mountain but we still found it another enjoyable part of the course. It really broke up the routine having these steep climbs. By the time we reached the top it was nearly dawn and there was thick fog everywhere. There was a long downhill section before what seemed a very long climb up to the Barry Way that leads into Jindabyne. Some people told us there was only one more hill until Jindabyne and a few undulations. We never want to hear the word “undulating” again as after every corner we turned there was yet another hill.



Left: At the 33 hour mark – Perisher



Right: Approaching Charlotte Pass

Arriving in Jindabyne (182.8km) after nearly 27 hours on the road was a significant milestone and a huge physiological boost to me and the crew. We finally felt we were getting to the business end of the race. I changed out my night gear as it was already warming up and headed out of town along the bike path. Soon after I reverted to having a damp towel over my head to keep out the heat. The euphoria of reaching Jindabyne was tempered after we crossed the Thredbo River (189.4km) and began the long and steep 38km ascent to Charlotte Pass. Because of the heat, elevation and the fact I was going so slow the crew reverted to only getting 1.5 - 2km ahead at a time. Iggy & Sarah intensified their efforts to make sure I was adequately hydrated and keeping up my energy levels up. They renewed taking turns at walking with me but they could tell I was getting extremely tired as I could no longer make any lame jokes or even answer simple questions. Still we continued onwards and upwards, putting one foot in front of the other with AC/DC “It’s Long Way to the Top” playing in my brain.

At some point the crew called out that we had reached the 200 km mark but still the road wound relentless upwards. By the time we reached Smiggins Holes I was having a real battle to stay awake and no matter what I ate or drank seemed to have any effect. A can of Pepsi Max picked me up for an hour before I started nodding off again. By then we had gone through the checkpoint at Perisher (212.4km) and were near Guthrie’s Creek. A big mug of the best tasting pea & ham soup I have ever had gave me the boost I desperately needed and the sight of snow on the mountains ahead had me quickening my pace.

Finally Charlotte Pass came into view. We could see all the crew vehicles parked in the distance and this spurred us on to make the last climb. Arriving at Charlotte Pass I quickly changed into warmer clothes and put on a poncho as there was light rain falling. A quick photo and with renewed vigour accompanied by Iggy & Sarah I began the 9km ascent to the summit. On the way up we played tourist and took lots of photos but we were aware of the dark clouds rolling in and the rain approaching. It was really uplifting to run into many competitors on their way down from the summit and the warm encouragement they gave us. By the time we reached the summit thick clouds had obscured all the mountain and we were buffeted by light but icy rain. I managed to climb on top of the cairn at the summit and stand up in the strong winds for mandatory photos before we decided to get out and get off the mountain. On the

return journey I was on a mission and Sarah & Iggy tried to ensure I did not fall over the edge. Once in the valley it was full steam ahead for the finish line (or at least it felt like it) and 7.36pm I finally crossed the finish line after 38 hours and six minutes to a feeling of great relief and immense satisfaction. I was also a little sad that such a great race had come to an end but I kept that to myself just in case someone was tempted to carry me off in a straightjacket. In finishing 19th (13th male) I finished ahead of more than half the runners. I had wanted to finish the race as soon as possible not only for the time but also I did not want to keep my crew out on the course any longer than absolutely necessary. They were all as shattered as I was. The last runner finished in 45 hours 42 minutes just inside the 46 hour cut-off. After recovering we still had the long 38 km drive back down the mountain to Jindabyne. This seemed to take forever and I could not believe I had just spent hours fighting my way up the same stretch of road.



Left: At the top of Kosciusko with Iggy



Right: Finished at last – Sarah, Iggy, Peter and race director Paul Every

The overall race winner was Ewan Horsburgh in 27 hours 27 minutes with Julia Fatton from Switzerland the women's winner and 5th overall. Julia took over 2 hours off the race record to finish in 30 hours 11 minutes. Of the 42 athletes who started on the beach in Eden six were unable to make it to the finish line.

We found this is an awesome race and an ultimate test of fitness and mental strength. We were absolutely knocked over by the friendliness and support we received from the other crews and competitors. The Race Director and his wife are absolute gems and could not do enough for everyone in the race. At the presentation ceremony on Sunday morning in Jindabyne the Race Director joked to the crowd that he was a bit annoyed with me. He said because of me he will get inundated with walkers all thinking they can walk Coast to Kosci in 38 hours.

I had people tell me before the race that walking 240km non stop was impossible. Nothing is impossible if you set yourself a goal and put your mind to it. Never underestimate yourself and what is humanly possible. It is races like this when your friends really shine through and it makes you dig deep and push through the boundaries to beyond levels of what you thought you were capable of.

Would I encourage other race walkers to have a go at this race? You bet. You and your crew will have to time of your life. This is more than just a race, it is an adventure and for some it can be a life changing experience. It is very unique and quite different from all other races I've ever done (that even includes the Paris -Colmar stages races). It is an experience my crew and I will never forget. It is hard but it is a lot of fun.

To summarise my experience on how to walk this race I would start by saying not to get intimidated by the length of the race or by the hills. Try not thinking too far ahead just break the race down into little milestone stages. You need to have a lot of patience.

The most important advice I could give is to stay on your feet and keep moving forward no matter how slowly you may be travelling. Ultra walkers are generally one paced and cannot compete with the runners on the flat and on downhill sections. The hills are where we were able to make up ground on a number of runners.

It is a regulation that you cannot start this race without a crew. Select a crew who are able to anticipate all your needs and requirements. You can then concentrate solely on walking as they do all the thinking make all the decisions and point you in the right direction. Pay attention to your hydration & nutritional requirements. This is crucial especially late in the race when extreme fatigue, the unrelenting climbs and the altitude play a part.

Thank you to my superb crew of Julianne, Sarah & Iggy. It would not have been possible to achieve this result without your efforts. Thank you also to Race Directors Paul Every & Diane Weaver for putting so much effort into the planning and running of this race, making everyone feel welcome and their concern for the welfare of every competitor. Thank you to all the other competitors, volunteers, support crew members for your friendship and support and for your contagious passion for this race.

WHAT'S COMING UP

That's it for this year as we all stop for a dose of R&R this Christmas. For us Victorians, the next 2 dates are the VRWC Road Races on Sunday 8th January and the Victorian Country Track and Field Championships in Bendigo on 13-15 January. Entries close on Tuesday 3rd January – see <http://www.athsvic.org.au/cache/MeetFile/152402012%20VCAC%20Bendigo%20Entry%20Form.pdf> for your Country Champs entry form. Remember that metropolitan athletes can enter and walk by invitation.

Lots of us will be heading off to Falls Creek on 30th December and will be there until 8th January. This is the third such camp that Simon Baker has run and it looks like being a beauty this year with just over 20 of us attending. I look forward to reporting on our activities via the newsletter.

In the meanwhile, I wish all our readers all the best for the Christmas season and hope that for everyone it will be a time of rest and rejuvenation and a time of family celebration.

Next week my Walkers of the Year! Stay tuned.

DATES...DATES...DATES

As usual, I finish with a list of upcoming events on the local, national and international fronts. Let me know of any errors/omissions.

2011/2012 Australian/Victorian Summer Season Key Dates

Sun 8 Jan 2012	VRWC Road Races, Middle Park
13-15 Jan 2012	Victorian Country T&F Championships, Bendigo
Sun 22 Jan 2012	VRWC Road Races, Middle Park
Wed 8 Feb 2012	VRWC Track Races and VMA 4x800m Relay Championships, COL Harriers Track, Clifton Hill
Sat 18 Feb 2012	Sydney Track Classic, Sydney (5000m walk)
Sat 25 Feb 2012	Australian 20km roadwalk Championships , Hobart, TAS (World Walking Cup trials for 10km and 20km) Incorporates Oceania Race Walking Trophy competition between Australia and New Zealand
24-26 Feb 2012	Victorian Junior T&F Championships, Melbourne
2-4 Mar 2012	IAAF World Challenge and Selection Trials, Victorian Athletics Centre, Albert Park
9-10 Mar 2012	Victorian Open T&F Championships, Melbourne
15-19 Mar 2012	Australian Junior Championships , Sydney Olympic Park
Sun 18 Mar 2012	VRWC Track Races and VMA 5000m Track Championships, Mentone (venue to be confirmed)
5-9 Apr 2012	Australian Masters T&F Championships , Melbourne
13-15 Apr 2012	Australian Open T&F Championships , Melbourne (5000m walks)

2012 International Fixture

Feb 5-12, 2012	Oceania Masters Championships, Tauranga, New Zealand
Apr 3-8, 2012	World Masters Athletics Indoor Championships, Jyvaskyla, Finland
May 12-13, 2012	25th IAAF World Race Walking Cup, Saransk, Russia
July 10-15, 2012	14th World Junior Championships, Barcelona, Spain
July 27-Aug 12, 2012	30th Olympic Games, London. See http://www.london2012.com/

2012 IAAF Race Walking Challenge Dates

Sat 3 Mar, 2012	Chihuahua, MEX
29-31 Mar, 2012	Taicang, CHN
Sat 14 Apr, 2012	Rio Major, POR
12-13 May, 2012	IAAF Race Walking Cup, Saransk, RUS
Sun 26 May, 2012	La Coruna, ESP
Sat 2 June, 2012	Sesto San Giovanni, ITA
3-12 Aug, 2012	Olympic Games, London, GBR
Sat 15 Sept, 2012	IAAF RW Challenge Final, Erdos, CHN

2013 International Fixture

Aug 10-18, 2013	14th IAAF World Championships in Athletics, Moscow, Russia
July 10-14, 2013	8th World Youth T&F Championships, Donetsk, Ukraine
July 24 - Aug 4, 2013	World Masters Athletic Championships, Port Alegre, Brazil

2014 International Fixture

2014	26th IAAF World Race Walking Cup, Taicang, China
Mar/Apr 2014	World Masters Indoor Championships, Budapest, HUN
July 22-27, 2014	15th World Junior T&F Championships, Eugene, Oregon, USA
July 23 – Aug 3, 2014	20th Commonwealth Games, Glasgow. See http://www.glasgow2014.com/

Looking even further forward

August 22-30, 2015	15th IAAF World Championships in Athletics, Beijing, China
July/Aug 2015	20th World Masters T&F Champs Stadia, Lyon, France
2016	21st World Masters T&F Champs Stadia, Perth, Australia. See http://www.perth2016.com/
Aug 2016	31st Olympic Games, Rio de Janeiro, BRAZIL. See http://www.rio2016.org.br/en/Default.aspx

July 2020

32nd Olympic Games City TBA: Durban, Hiroshima, Madrid, Palermo, Dubai

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Copies of recent newsletters are kept on the VRWC website (<http://www.vrwc.org.au>)