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VICTORIA - METRO & REGIONAL



Last Friday, a small group of Australian Centurions (who are also present or former VRWC members) gathered for lunch at their favourite watering hole, the Glasshouse Bistro at Caulfield Racecourse. It was a special occasion in that they were farewelling **Mark Wall**, who was flying back to the UK that evening. As many readers will know, Mark was a longtime VRWC member who also competed for Box Hill AC.

Moving to Tasmania in 1990 and now resident in Northampton in midlands England, Mark raced extensively for Leicester WC and competed in several ultra-distance races. As well as qualifying as Australian Centurion C59 in 2011, Mark is also an English Centurion (no 1071), a judge, coach and administrator of race walking in the UK. Recently, he completed a Masters degree at Northampton University on the basis of a study he undertook on the effects of elite-level training and racing on the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of female race walkers. Possessed of a rascally, immovable grin and a veritable font of funny (and detailed) race walking anecdotes, Mark is always cheery company and it was wonderful to enjoy lunch in his company once again.

A extensive and fascinating article on Mark's walking career can be read at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-mark-wall.pdf>. We hope it won't be too long before we see him back on home shores again.



100 mile mates meet again: Bill Dyer C15, Ian Jack C17, Clarrie Jack C4, Terry O'Neill C18, Mark Wall C59, Stu Cooper C5 and Tim Erickson C13.

- VRWC members certainly get around! On this occasion it was **Corey Dickson** who slipped out of the country last weekend, teaming up with **Hannah Bolton (NSW)** to contest a Mixed Walking relay event in Osaka, Japan. Also in the race was another Aussie pairing of **Carl Gibbons** and **Hannah Mison** (both NSW). Going on the times (see the report in *O Marchador* in 'International News'), both squads acquitted themselves well against tough competition.
- As you read this, **Tim Erickson** will be preparing to go into theatre for a hip replacement. He'll be out of action for a while but back home in three days. We wish Tim all the best for a successful op and a speedy recovery ... *and not too much physical attention from the grandkids!*

Meanwhile, **Bob Gardiner** had his own date with the knife last week and is being treated like a king, post-surgery ... who deserves it more? Bob was active right up until theatre time, it seems ... his daughter Kelly posted the following tribute to her Dad on Facebook:

This guy. Honestly.

70 years ago, a teenager called Bobby Gardiner had a go at competitive race walking. At the weekend he marked the 70 years of pretty much consecutive competition with a 1500 metres at the Frankston track. He thought his time was a bit slow.

(The 70 years includes three Olympic teams, a Commonwealth Games silver, decades of volunteering on top of competing, and legend status.)

Go, Daddy!



Bob, in his ever-beloved Collingwood singlet, strides out ahead of Marilyn Thompson at Frankston. (Photo: Kelly Gardiner)

- Meanwhile, **Paul Moritz** has supplied his own fond recollection of the part the late **Arthur Jones** played in his athletic life:

Sad news in H&T about Arthur Jones.

Arthur was my coach when I took up walking in about 1979. Certainly, by 1980 a small group of us would meet at Arthur's place for a 10 km session on a Tuesday evening, around the hills of Adelaide's eastern suburbs, and I continued well into the 1980's when I returned from Melbourne. The group included John Leydon and Liz Morgan (who competed at some LBG carnivals in the 1970's). We were all members of United Collegians, whose uniform featured a red singlet. Arthur lived in Harrow Ave, so he dubbed our group the Red 'Arrows, dropping the H with his English accent.

Bob Gardiner wrote of the Mexico Olympics "when the team went up to a higher altitude to train Arthur bowed out and did an easier session at the village track." Arthur was very pleased to note that he was the first finisher in the Mexico City 20 km who had not trained at altitude. He also claimed to have secured 11th place with a lunge finish ahead of Pasquale Busca of Italy. The photo accompanying the article perhaps contradicts that.¹

Also little known about Arthur is that he is the father-in-law of Ian Fay, a SA walker who represented Australia in the 1980's. Ian married Nicola, Arthur's and Carol's elder daughter.

Paul.

¹ Here it is in black and white, Paul (and a few other colours) <https://olympics.com/en/olympic-games/mexico-city-1968/results/athletics/20km-walk-men>

**Next AVSL round ...*

Note that AVSL Round 6 is a twilight meeting, with very different scheduling and race provisions.

*AVSL Round 6 – Friday 1 December (Twilight)		
Metro – Doncaster, Murrumbeena	6.00pm	2000m walk (all ages)
*AVSL Round 6 – Thursday 30 November (Twilight)		
Ballarat region	6.30pm	2000m walk (all ages M&F) 5000m walk (Open, U20, U18, 40+, 50+, 60+, 70+ M&F)
Bendigo region	6:45pm	2000m walk (all ages M&F) 5000m walk (Open, U20, U18, 40+, 50+, 60+, 70+ M&F)
ENTRIES		
Metro – enter via Members Portal at https://www.revolutionise.com.au/athleticsvic/events/		



**** WALKER OF THE WEEK ****

Two extraordinary performances – by **Isaac Beacroft (16, NSW)** and **Bailey Housden (16, QLD)** - at the ANSW 10,000m track walk championships last weekend locked in this issue's WOTW for both boys. Racing in the championship as part of the Treloar Shield interclub program, Isaac and Bailey gave those fortunate enough to witness it a memorable display of speed and endurance that shattered the national U18 record and placed them at 1 and 2 on the World Athletics U18 top list for 2023 (pushing Victoria's Marcus Wakim down into 3rd place and making it an Aussie trifecta on the world walk ranking stage!)

Isaac, whose record-breaking time of **41:48.76**, incredibly, came in his first attempt at the distance, did not have things all his own way, especially early on. A powerful lead pack comprising Beacroft, Housden, Owen Toyne (ACT), Sam McCure (QLD) and Kodi Clarkson (ACT) made this a gripping contest until only Housden remained to continue the challenge. The Queenslander would lose contact only gradually, taking 2nd in **41:57.38**, a PB of 3:23. Both times were U20 World Junior qualifiers.



(Photo: ANSW Facebook)

While we speak of top seniors in terms of 'world class', it's the juniors who catch our eye as potential future stars, ones we hope will remain in the sport to realize that potential. Our current 16-19yo cohort exemplifies that hope – with Isaac and Bailey its latest torchbearers.

Congratulations, lads ... may you continue to improve and inspire younger walkers to follow in your footsteps.

**Honourable mentions*

- **Myles Ashby (NSW)** – a 30sec PB in the ANSW 10,000m Walk c'ship, recording **49:55.40** in his first sub-50min result.
- **Sienna Pitcher (NSW)** – a class above in the U20 10,000m c'ship, recording **50:58.27**, a 17sec PB.
- **Mitchell Baker (ACT)** – smashed his 5000m PB by 48secs in SA Interclub, clocking **19:29.99** behind Tim Fraser.

Damp conditions aside, there were fireworks at the Sydney Olympic Athletics Centre as the 10,000m walkers took to the track for the State championships on Saturday night. Some interstate talent joined the NSW contenders and lifted the standard accordingly, although in the Men's race in particular, it didn't require lifting far. **David Tarbotton** reports on an exceptional night for Australian race walking:

NSW 10km Walk: Isaac Beacroft smashes Australian record

by **David Tarbotton** (reprinted from nswathletics.org.au/news)

On a gloomy night at Homebush, the athletes really shone, led by 16-year-old **Isaac Beacroft** setting an Australian Under-18 10,000m walk record, his third in less than a year, and astonishingly on debut at the distance. In the women's, sisters **Allannah** and **Sienna Pitcher**, claimed the open and under-20 10000m walk titles.



U20 10,000m: Isaac draws away from Owen



Open: Another PB for Jack in a productive year. (Photos: ANSW Facebook)

Isaac Beacroft Men Open and U20 10,000m walk

From the gun, Isaac was in a three-way battle for the under-20 and open NSW 10,000m walk titles, up against a regular rival, Canberra's **Owen Toyne**, and rising Queensland talent, **Bailey Housden**. They went stride for stride for 20 laps – 8km. Owen was the first to crack, eventually not finishing. Housden was unshakable until a mile to go.

"About 1500m to go I put a bit of a surge in," said Beacroft. It was decisive as he opened up a gap of about 20 metres. He pushed on to claim the title in a stunning time of **41:48.76**. The time was a world under-18 leading time for 2023, broke the NSW under-18 record and he now sits number six Australian under-20 all-time behind five Olympians. It was also his third Australian record in less than a year, following his under-16 3000m record and under-18 5000m walk.

"I'm stocked, I couldn't be any happier. First ever race at that distance and I don't think I could have asked for a better outcome," said Beacroft.

"Training leading into the race had been a bit choppy. Two weeks ago, I walked 20:13.27 and had COVID pretty hard in the leadup to that race."

He also had been suffering from a knee injury for over a month, which maybe have been a blessing in disguise, as it forced him to forgo a large part of his training, jogging, and concentrate on race walk training only.

The time was also a World U20 Championships qualifier. "It is a big goal – I have it marked on the calendar," said Beacroft, but he knows there is tremendous depth chasing those two Australian team places and some of them were on show today.

"Those guys (today) are extraordinary walkers. We are so lucky to have, in my age group and the one above, a group walking real quick times. Everyone is coming through. It is so good for the sport."

1 Isaac Beacroft	U20	HIL	41:48.76 NR
2 Bailey Housden <i>inv.</i>	U20	QLD	41:57.48
3 Jack McGinniskin	Op	MIN	43:59.83
4 Kodi Clarkson <i>inv.</i>	U20	ACT	45:31.00
5 Myles Ashby	U20	MIN	49:55.40
6 Joel Byatt	U20	GIR	50:52.34
7 Raven Pyda	U20	WES	54:55.28
8 Brendan Pospischil	U20	WIN	54:58.59

-- Sam McCure <i>inv.</i>	U20	QLD	DNF
-- Owen Toyne <i>inv.</i>	U20	ACT	DNF
-- Elie Miman	60+	RBH	DQ

Allanah Pitcher Open women 10,000m walk

After a busy year, which was capped off with competing at the 2023 World Championships, Central Coast's **Allanah Pitcher** (SYU) was uncertain how the race would go.

"At this point in the season, you don't really know where you are sitting," said Pitcher. "Training has been going well so I knew we'd be on for something quick, but I was not really sure if quick would mean sub-46 minutes or 47 or 48." Pitcher gave us an insight into her race plan.

"The first 10 laps I like to keep it comfortable, see how the pace is going and what the race is doing, and let them take care of themselves. Then from 15 laps I started going for it. Today I was excited approaching those last 15 laps as I knew I had a lot left in me."

Pitcher received good competition early from former NSW junior star, a two-time World Junior competitor and now based in Queensland - **Tayla Billington**. But Pitcher pulled away to win in **46:02.81**, from Billington with **46:54.49**. It was an excellent time for Pitcher, the second fastest of her career. Her pathway to National team representative in 2024 is different than her 2023 campaign at the world championships which was over 35km. For Paris Olympics, and the World Race Walking Teams Championship in April, it will be a more speed focused approach - dropping down to the only Olympic events on the program - the 20km walk and 10km teams race.

1 Allanah Pitcher	Op	SYU	46:02.81
2 Tayla Billington <i>inv.</i>	Op	QLD	46:54.49
3 Bridget Bell	Op	MIN	52:36.44
4 Antoinette Woodward	60+	UTS	1:15:11.49



Open 10,000m: Tayla led Allanah early before the Budapest rep stepped on the gas.



U20: Sienna with her eyes on the big time.

(Photos ANSW Facebook)

Sienna Pitcher U20 women 10,000m walk

Matching the achievement of the Saville sisters, Jane and Natalie in the '90s, Allanah's younger sister, **Sienna Pitcher** claimed the under-20 10,000m walk title by three minutes in a solid time of **50:58.27**.

"I started here not expecting too much, but I've done better than I ever expected," said Sienna. "It was a bit daunting with all the older kids. Time was okay - I broke the 51-minute barrier and I feel now I should be able to go under 50 minutes."

Although only 15, her goal is a World U20 Championships qualifying time of 49:30, which she feels should be achievable this summer. She will be young enough for not just the 2024 World U20s, but also the 2026 championships.

1 Sienna Pitcher	U20	MIN	50:58.27
2 Aiva Pinches	U20	ANL	53:56.29
3 Chelsea Roberts	U20	RIV	54:01.69
4 Mia Bergh <i>inv.</i>	U20	QLD	55:55.26
5 Laelia Byatt	U20	GIR	1:03:02.76
6 Lilah Norden	U20	KEM	1:07:31.80

(*Editor's note:* Queenslander **Mia Bergh**, delaying her 'schoolies' celebrations in preference of a good 10,000m time, was rewarded with a 40sec PB at SOPAC. Your priorities look fine to us, Mia!)

Jack McGinniskin Men Open 10,000m walk

First Open NSW athlete across the line was Central Coast's **Jack McGinniskin** (MIN) clocking a PB of **43:59.83**. It continued his best season yet, which has yielded PBs over 5000m walk, 20km walk and now his third consecutive in the 10,000m walk.

QUEENSLAND QA Shield Series: Alana Boyd Shield, 25 November – QSAC, Brisbane

Thanks to **Robyn Wales** for these results. Robyn reports that in her absence (she was in Sydney with Bailey, Tayla, Sam and Mia), **Isabella Welch** and **Ella Cosgrave** smashed their PBs with strong 3000m results. Well done, girls.

Women 3000m Open Race walk

1 Isabella Welch	IGN	15:45.21
2 Ella Cosgrave	BOR	15:47.57
3 Phoebe Chadwick	QRW	16:56.01
4 Kiara Waterman	QRW	17:54.30
5 Lily Housden	QRW	18:07.26
-- Mikaela McDonald	QRW	DQ

Men 3000m Open Race walk

1 Noah Cooke	QRW	16:03.86
2 Eli Melinz	NAC	19:47.06

Women 5000m Open Race walk

1 Olivia Boulton	GCA	28:16.28
2 Brenda Gannon	QMA	29:23.97
3 Katie Bray	ASR	30:50.86
4 Taylah Morris	GCV	32:19.41

Men 5000m Open Race walk

1 Alex Bradley	QRW	24:52.48
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No quarter given ... Isabella and Ella pushed each other to big PBs in the Open 3000m. (Photo: Lisa Welch)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA ASA Interclub results, 25 November – Mile End Stadium

Kim Mottrom reports that, in addition to NSW, spectators at SA interclub also had some elite class race walking to feast upon, with Jared Tallent bringing his squad to Mile End for the 5000m race. **Mitchell Baker** smashed his PB to go under 20mins for the first time with **19:29.99**, while **Angela Legrand** also posted a big new best time of **27:19.11**. Good also to see **Olivia Sandery** back among the results and coming back into form.

Open 5000m

Tim Fraser	19:22.17	
Mitchell Baker	19:29.99	PB 0:48
Fraser Saunder	22:00.89	
Olivia Sandery	22:11.98	
Kim Mottrom	22:15.55	
Nellie Langford	24:27.37	
Cooper Rech	26:22.24	
Daisy Braithwaite	27:15.14	
Angelina Legrand	27:19.11	PB 0:36

Katie De Ruvo	30:31.33
Peter Crump	32:19.92
Jordan McKenna	32:30.20
Tristan Camilleri	DNF

Open 1500m		
Alexis Thiele	7:47.63	
Liam Freundt	8:06.74	PB 0:06
Matilda Rech	9:10.04	
Orlando Grantham	9:24.09	
Alex McEwan	10:36.04	

TASMANIA Aths South Interclub results, 26 November – Domain AC, Hobart

David Moore reports on both the Athletics South and Tas Masters meetings from last week:

The Athletics South competition was held on a soggy Sunday afternoon. A solid walk from **Oliver Morgan** who keeps getting faster as we go deeper into the track season and a very nice effort from **Aaliyah Wass** in her first ever race walk.

Results 1500m Walk			
1. Oliver Morgan	SB	6:49.66	
2. Macy Devine	ES	8:27.91	
3. Adele Woodward	OVA	9:44.67	
4. Elizabeth Leitch	TMA	10:06.75	
5. Aaliyah Wass	ES	13:24.16	First one
6. Dave Moore	TMA	13:26.50	

**** Tas Masters T&F, 22 November – Domain AC, Hobart**

Taking the opportunity to compete at mid-week Masters brought out the best in **Macy Devine** and **Adele Woodward** both achieving personal best's, Macy over 3000m and Adele over 1000m.

Results 3000m Walk			
1. Oliver Morgan	SB	14:25	
2. Macy Devine	ES	17:31	PB

Results 1000m Walk			
1. Adele Woodward	OVA	6:02	PB

WESTERN AUSTRALIA WARWC results, 26 November – Perry Lakes

After being indisposed for a while, **Terry Jones** is back in harness with a report on the latest WARWC Summer races. Weather was fine & mild reaching the high 20s by the end of the walks.

10K	
John Ronan	48.48
Wendy Farrow	1.11.07
5K	
Andrew Duncan	28.11
Melissa Lewis	31.36
3K	
Steve Travell	26.40
Glenys Duncan	28.52
2K	
Dylan Sardelich	11.41
Nathaniel Khaira	12.03
Addison Roots	13.54
1K	
Hunter Sardelich	7.00
Mason Sardelich	8.53



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

JAPAN: Osaka Mixed Walking relay, 25 November - Osaka

China team wins Osaka Walking Mixed Relay

(reprinted from *O Marchador* – Monday 27 November)

For the first time in Japan, the Mixed Walking Relay (42.195 km) took place yesterday, in the heart of the city of Osaka, with 8 Walking Judges, some of them at the Gold level of the World Championship, taking part in compliance with the established rules.

The Chinese duo, **Haifeng Qian** and **Liuqing Yang**, victoriously completed the new athletics distance, an event that will be included in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games program, achieving a global time of **3:05:31**, the fourth best world mark at the time.

In second place was the Japanese team made up of **Tomohiro Noda** and **Kaori Kawazoe**, with **3:07:16**, with the Japanese duo **Yutaro Murayama** and **Yukiko Umeno** finishing the podium, with **3:10:32**.

There were 12 participating teams (9 arrivals and 2 disqualifications).

In the men's 10 km (Under-20) triumph came to **Yugo Nagata**, with a time of **42:43**, just 12 seconds off his personal record, set in February this year, in Kobe, followed by **Taizo Tamaharu**, with **44:03** (9 seconds away from his personal best), and **Kyogo Nishiwaki**, with **47:20**.

In the women's 5km, **Yoka Kondo**, with **23:42**, was the winner. **Sumika Tani**, with **23:46**, was second, and **Honami Kakajima**, with **24:26**, was third.

The next two international race walking competitions, to be held on Japanese soil, will be the 72nd edition of the New Year's Grand Prix, at the beginning of 2024, in Tokyo, and on February 18, 2024, the 107th edition of the Japan Championships of 20 and 35 km walk, in Kobe, knowing that the program of the next World Athletics Championships, in Tokyo, in 2025, will include the 20 and 35 km walk events.

1	Haifeng Qian Liuqing Yang	CHN	3:05.31	6	Haruki Manju Kana Koide	JPN	3:14.05
2	Tomohiro Noda Kaori Kawazoe	JPN	3:07.16	7	Kazuki Takahashi Mao Tatsumi	JPN	3:14.22
3	Yutaro Murayama Yukiko Umeno	JPN	3:10.32	8	Corey Dickson Hannah Bolton	AUS	3:14.59
4	Kento Yoshikawa Hitomi Shimoka	JPN	3:10.58	9	Rihito Ishida Satsuki Ishida	JPN	3:20.18
5	Carl Gibbons Hannah Mison	AUS	3:12.56				

MARCIADALMONDO & O MARCHADOR ROUNDUP

Marcia Dal Mondo is no longer presenting news items, but will continue to post local (Italian) and international results until December 31. These are regularly updated and can be perused at <http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/risultati.aspx?anno=2023> , along with many other items of interest.

The Portuguese race walking blog **O Marchador** continues to post news reports and results. The page has dozens of links to articles on race walking, featuring both domestic events and those from abroad.

- Sunday, November 26, 2023 - Lorena Arenas and César Herrera win inaugural 35 km march at the National Games of Colombia (2023) <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/11/lorena-arenas-e-cesar-herrera-vencem-35.html>
It was a busy week for Jemima's training partner, scoring back-to-back national titles.
- Saturday, November 25, 2023 - South American Athletics Masters - Lima 2023: 5,000 m men's walk. and fem. (results) http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/11/sul-americano-de-atletismo-master-lima_25.html
- Thursday, November 23, 2023 - South American Athletics Masters - Lima 2023: 10 km men's walk. and fem. (results) <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/11/sul-americano-de-atletismo-master-lima.html>
- Wednesday, November 22, 2023 - Lorena Arenas and Mateo Romero triumph in the 20 km march of the National Games of Colombia 2023 <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/11/lorena-arenas-e-mateo-romero-triunfam.html>

Note: The O Marchador blog is written in Portuguese. To access an English version, open the page in Google Chrome – if you haven't already – at <https://omarchador.blogspot.com>, then right click on any empty space (not on text) on the page. A window will appear with the option to translate the page. Click on it, and the page should reload in English.



WHAT'S UP AHEAD?

VRWC SUMMER FIXTURE 2023-24

Sun 14 th January 2024, VRWC Road Races		Middle Park
8.30am	20km, 15km, 10km	Open
9.15am	5km, 3km	Open
9.40am	2km, 1km	Open

Victorian & National Key Dates – 2023

Fri 1 Dec 2023	AVSL Rd #6 (twilight) – walks at Doncaster & Glenhuntly
Fri 8-Sun 10 Dec 2023	Aust All Schools T&F c'ships – Perth WA

Victorian & National Key Dates – 2024

Sat 13 Jan 2024	AVSL Rd #8 – walks at Doncaster
Sun 14 Jan 2024	VRWC Summer races #3 – Middle Park
Sat 20 Jan 2024	AVSL Rd #9 – walks at Werribee
Sat 3 Feb 2024	AVSL Rd #10 – walks at Glenhuntly
Sat 10 Feb 2024	AVSL Rd #11 – walks at Sandringham
Sun 11 Feb 2024	2024 Australia & Oceania Race Walk c'ships – Adelaide SA
Sat 17 Feb 2024	AVSL Rd #12 – walks at Doncaster
Fri 23-Sun 25 Feb 2024	AV T&F c'ships (Week 1) – Lakeside Stadium
Fri 1-Sun 3 Mar 2024	AV T&F c'ships (Week 2) – Lakeside Stadium
Sat 9-Sun 10 Mar 2024	LAVic State T&F c'ships – venue TBC
Sat 16-Sun 17 Mar 2024	Victorian Masters T&F c'ships – venue TBC
Fri 29 Mar-Mon 1 Apr 2024	Aust. Masters T&F c'ships – Hobart TAS
Thu 11-Fri 19 Apr 2024	AA Aust Athletics c'ahips – Adelaide SA

International Dates

Mon 1 Jan 2024	72 nd New Year Grand Prix of Walking – Tokyo JPN
Sun 18 Feb 2024	Japanese Walking c'ships (20km & 35km) – Kobe JPN

Sun 21 Apr 2024	WA Race walking Teams c'ship – Antalya TUR
Sat 4 May 2024	3rd Korzienowski Warsaw Race walking Cup (WA Gold) – Warsaw POL
Sat 11 May 2024	31st Grande Premio Internacional de Rio Maior em Marcia Atletica (WA Gold) – Rio Maior POR
Sat 18 May 2024	XXXVII Gran Premio Cantones da A Coruna de Marcha (WA Gold) – La Coruna ESP
Sun 26 May 2024	III Gran Premio Internacional Finetwork Madrid Marcha (WA Gold) – Madrid ESP
26 Jul- 11 Aug 2024	XXXIII Summer Olympics – Paris, FRA
13-25 Aug 2024	24th World Masters T&F Championships – Gothenburg, SWE
20-24 Aug 2024	WA World Junior T&F Championships – Lima, PER (<i>*Lima withdrew in April but has since been reinstated.</i>)
13-21 Sep 2025	20th World Athletics Championships – Tokyo, JPN
30 Oct-15 Nov 2026	Youth Olympic Games – Dakar SEN

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