



# HEEL & TOE Online

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The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club,  
Inc.

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## CLUB NEWS and RESULTS

Welcome, VRWC members and friends, to 2024. I hope everyone enjoyed their festive season with family and good cheer. Walking competition now heads towards the 'pointy' end, with State and National championships scheduled for February-March at Open, Masters, Junior and Little Athletics levels ... as well as the culmination of AVSL club racing.

It's going to be another big year at Middle Park. Following feedback from members, we are reverting (almost) to weekly winter racing, with a couple of weekends off following busy championship meetings.

On behalf of Race Walking Australia, the VRWC will also be conducting the Australian Winter Walks championships in August, as we did in 2021. We are glad to be able to host this event at the effective conclusion of the road season, bringing together walkers from all states after four months of their own winter competition.

### **\*\* RIP MAUREEN SMYTH \*\***

This week we received news of the passing of David Smyth's mother, Maureen, after a lengthy battle with illness.

The VRWC offers its sincere condolences to David, the Smyth family and their friends and associates at this sad time.

*Stu Cooper*

Another exciting initiative this year will be the introduction of a Little Athletics road walk championship, at this stage to be conducted alongside the AV 15km championship in June. Other states have held Little A's walks titles in the winter for years, so it's time Victoria joined the party. Liaison with LAVic and planning are in progress and we look forward to providing this championship to young walkers whose racing opportunities usually cease between March and October.

We have our final Summer road races this coming Sunday at Middle Park. The 20, 15 and 10km races will provide a good opportunity for a hit-out on the road prior to the AA & Oceania championships in Adelaide, as well as the AA T&F 10,000m championships.

At this stage I'm unaware of any restrictions to our 2km course ... let's hope we can use it as planned.

### **Sunday 14 January - Middle Park**

**8:30am** 20km, 15km, 10km  
**9:15am** 5km, 3km  
**9:40am** 2km, 1km

To pre-enter, go to  
<https://www.revolutionise.com.au/vrwc/>  
then select this fixture in 'Upcoming Events'  
Entries close Friday 12 January, 12.00 noon

# VICTORIA - METRO & REGIONAL

AVSL competition resumes this Saturday with Round 8 providing 1500m and 3000m walks at Tom Kelly track, Doncaster. Note that the Ballarat and Bendigo meetings are night events, with varied walk distances scheduled.

<b>*AVSL Round 8 – Saturday 13 January</b>		
<b>Metro – Doncaster</b>	1.00pm	1500m, 3000m walk (all ages)
<b>Ballarat region</b>	6.30pm	2000m, 5000m walk (all ages)
<b>Bendigo region</b>	6.30pm	1500m walk (all ages)

**ENTRIES**

Metro – enter via Members Portal at <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/athleticsvic/events/>

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# AROUND THE COUNTRY

## \*RECORD ATTENDANCE AT PERISHER TRAINING CAMP

Once again, Australia’s elite walkers have joined many from overseas to assemble in the high altitude at Perisher, NSW, for this year’s Supernova study and training camp.

Still recovering from hip surgery, Tim Erickson was unable to attend this year and, therefore, unable to provide his usual on-site report and photos of the camp’s activities. Fortunately, **Rhydian Cowley** and **Marcus Wakim** have stepped into the breach with a summary of their own. Thanks, lads!

There are over 40 walkers attending this camp, which makes it the biggest walks camp in AA history! The athletes comprise our elite junior and senior athletes, as well as several international stars: **Liu Hong** (China), **Clemence Beretta** (France), **Antigoni Ndrisbioti** (Greece), **Lorena Arenas** (Colombia), **Priyanka Goswami** (India), **Marius Zuikas**, **Artur Mastianica**, **Brigita Virbylate & Austeja Kavaliauskaite** (Lithuania).

We are occupying three lodges with the Perisher Huette housing the juniors and a small amount of senior athletes. The RAN lodge is housing all international athletes and most of the senior athletes and the Cowra lodge is housing staff and a small amount of senior athletes.

The two major focuses of the camp are developing junior athletes for the upcoming World Walking Teams Championships and the World Junior championships, with about 15 junior athletes attending the camp which represents the strong depth in this age group. The second and main focus is progressing our elite senior athletes so that they are ready for the Paris Olympics.

The training has been progressing well with most of it occurring at Spencer’s Creek, which offers a 4km loop which is mostly flat and quiet from cars. Those of us who are lucky to be in the NIN (National Institute Network i.e. VIS) system have also been allowed access to the newly redeveloped National Snow Sports Training Centre which allows for a professional gym environment.



*Mitch, Owen, Kyle and Tim stride out at Perisher. (Photo: Marcus Wakim)*



Weather has been very cloudy and wet with only one or two clear days, but this is expected to improve over the coming days. Across each week we're planning two long walks (up to 30km), two speed/interval sessions & two gym sessions as our key training sessions, with easy walks and runs filling up the rest of the week.

An example of a training session would be 3x1km, 10x400m, 3x1km repetitions on the track in Jindabyne, which will have a large group pushing each other which is a major benefit of concentrating all our athletes in one spot. Overall the camp has started well and all athletes are bonding well.

The camp will wrap up on January 25th, when we will head down to Canberra to race the Supernova 10k over the long weekend, as part of our preparation for the National Championship/Olympic Trials in Adelaide on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>.

*Rhydian Cowley  
Marcus Wakim*



**Australian (and Oceania) 20km Race Walking Championships**  
**World Walking Tour Silver Level**  
 including the Australian Under 14, Under 16, Under 18 and Under 20  
 Road Walk Championships  
**Sunday 11 February, Adelaide**

Entries are now open for these championships. The deadline is Sunday 28 January at 11.59pm.  
 Athletes wishing to enter can access the entry portal at:  
<https://meets.rosterathletics.com/public/competitions/details/about?id=24430>

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA** ASA Interclub results, 6 January – Mile End stadium

The SA walkers had their first race of '24 on Saturday. However, it was with 75% humidity and 12mm of rain in the 3 hours before (and during), so no super fast times.

<b>Open 3000m</b>	
Kim Mottrom	13:33.06
Cooper Rech	15:07.56
Angelina Legrand	16:01.83
Rhiannon Lovegrove	17:10.84
Katie De Ruvo	17:21.06
Peter Crump	18:10.95
Matilda Rech	19:08.14
Jordan McKenna	19:38.50
Jasmine Crabb	19:38.81
Marie Maxted	20:16.46
Alex McEwan	24:20.76

**TASMANIA** Athletics South Albert Johnson Memorial 1500m, 23 December – Domain AC, Hobart

David Moore reports that a good field turned up for 2023's final Tasmanian race, possibly drawn by impending Christmas cheer.

The last race for 2023 was the **Albert Johnson Memorial 1500m Walk** with a good field in fine conditions.

Line honours for men (plus a PB) went to **Will Bottle**, whilst **Macy Devine** was the first of our women walkers across the line. PB'S were also achieved by **Isla Direen** and **Adele Woodward**, with Adele also winning the Women's sealed handicap part of race and **Sam Lindsay** winning the Men's sealed handicap.

Nice walks also from the **Wass Family** and **Eugene Gerlach**. Eugene hadn't raced on the track since 2008.

1. Will Bottle	Sth Aust	5:38.06	PB
2. Sam Lindsay	Newstead	6:05.63	
3. Oliver Morgan	SB	6:48.39	
4. Nathan Wass	ES	8:35.74	
5. Macy Devine	ES	8:58.10	
6. Adele Woodward	OVA	9:40.37	PB
7. Eugene Gerlach	TMA	9:57.72	
8. Elizabeth Leitch	TMA	10:09.63	
9. Mya Wass	ES	10:51.08	
10. Isla Direen	HLA	11:07.22	PB
11. A Wass	ES	13:43.96	
12. Dave Moore	TMA	13:53.50	

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA Aths West interclub results, 6 January – WAAS, Perth

WA Interclub has also resumed after the festive break. **Terry Jones** reports:

Last night Aths West conducted the first events for this year, with a low turnout of both athletes and officials. I guess many are still on holidays.

Aths West walks results for Sat 6<sup>th</sup> 2024 are now attached. Conditions were warm with a little head wind down the back straight.

<b>Women 5000 M</b>		
1 Kaytee Bogaers	Mandurah Rockingham	28:26.15
<b>Women 3000 M</b>		
1 Darcy Bramwell-Keys	Canning Districts	19:31.29
<b>Men 3000 M</b>		
1 Nathaniel Khaira	Cockburn Athletics	18:06.11

\*\*\*\*\*



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Over recent weeks, the Portuguese walking blog *O Marchador* has published a series of articles on the renaissance of race walking in that country, following the end of the military junta in 1974 and its replacement by democracy. The latest installment describes Portugal's entry into international competition, fittingly in a match with teams from neighbouring Spain who would themselves soon emerge from decades of fascist dictatorship.

### **1978, the first international contact**

(reprinted from *O Marchador*, Sunday 31 December 2023. Translation: *deepl.com*)

If the years 1974 to 1977 represented a period of national affirmation for Portuguese athletics, which would continue in the following years, 1978 was the year of the first international contact between Portuguese walkers. On May 21, **Luís Dias** and **José Dias**<sup>1</sup> were part of the Lisbon team taking part in the VI Barcelona-Madrid-Lisbon Triangular Tournament, joined by athletes from the Swiss canton of Geneva. The events take place at the Joan Serrahima Track in Barcelona and involve athletes from different athletics specialties, which in itself is a novelty: it was the first time that Portuguese walkers had been included in an athletics team for an international competition.

<sup>1</sup> Jose and Luis are co-founders of the *O Marchador* weblog and Facebook page.



Admittedly, it wasn't a national team, but a regional representation - in this case, a team from Lisbon. But the inclusion of walkers in the delegation was already the result of the work that had been carried out in the capital by athletes, coaches and club leaders and where the support of the Lisbon Athletics Association played a decisive role, where the openness shown by its president, Mário Paiva, had facilitated the creation of a regional walking commission, where leaders such as Aires Denis and athletes such as those who were now part of that selection.

The experience of the two Benfica walkers taking part in the Barcelona meeting would prove to be remarkable, due to the learning it provided. The difference in competitive value between the participants was such that the Portuguese athletes felt at the end that they were simply walking, while the best Spaniards were marching. And they marched at a much higher pace and with a much more refined technique than the Portuguese beginners.

With each team allowed to field two athletes per race, the Barcelona team included two specialists of the highest caliber: **José Marín** and **Jordi Llopart**. In the months and years that followed, one and the other would go on to be the protagonists of great performances at European and world level. Llopart would become European champion in the 50 km race three months later in Prague and win the silver medal in the same distance at the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow; Marín would win the gold medal in the 20 km and the silver medal in the 50 km at the 1982 European Championships in Athens, the silver medal in the 20 km at the 1983 World Championships in Helsinki and the bronze medal in the 20 km at the 1987 World Championships in Rome. In other words, the young people from Lisbon, with less than three years' experience of walking and in a context of little technical development in the specialty, had their first international competition with two of the world's greatest walking exponents.

In any case, as they later recounted, the Dias brothers received words of encouragement from their experienced Spanish colleagues that struck a chord and represented not only an important boost to their motivation to practice walking, but also an impetus for realizing that energies should also be channeled into training coaches and judges as a condition and immediate step towards the development of athletic walking in Portugal.

The results went down in history, with Luís Dias being the best Portuguese, setting a new national record for the 10,000 meter march, with 53.22.1 m.

Meanwhile, on a national level, the year had begun with a new Walking Commission from the Lisbon Athletics Association (AAL), which took office in January, following the Athletic Walking Meeting on December 12, 1977. The new AAL commission was made up of Aires Denis, José Domingues, Albino Silva, Luís Dias and Paulo Alves, joined by José Dias as an observer.

The walk was becoming more and more well-known and appreciated, as witnessed by an unusual initiative promoted by the Recreation Department of the General Directorate of Sports (DGD) and held on June 4, 1978, a Sunday that was the eve of World Environment Day. It was precisely this anniversary that the event was intended to mark, through a race (The Great Walk// World Environment Day) over a distance of 7200 meters, corresponding to the route between Terreiro do Paço and the Belém Tower. It was an action by the DGD as part of a program to raise public awareness of the practice of sport.

What few would have expected was the extraordinary number of participants, no less than 3,500, a record number of participants in events exclusively dedicated to walking that has never been broken since. The competition itself was very heated in the fight for the top spots, with Luís Dias (SL Benfica) imposing himself on all the competition and confirming himself as one of the great national dominators of the discipline. He completed the distance in 40 minutes and was joined on the podium by Avelino Ferreira (2nd) and Américo Silva.



(Photo montage: O Marchador)



# 2023 Review: Race Walks

by Mike Rowbotham – reprinted from World Athletics News

As the year draws to a close, we look back at the key moments of 2023 in each area of the sport. The series continues with a review of the race walks and will conclude tomorrow with a review of the relays.

## ***\*Women's 20km race walk***

### **Full season top list**

<https://worldathletics.org/records/toplists/race-walks/20-kilometres-race-walk/all/women/senior/2023>

### **World Athletics rankings**

<https://worldathletics.org/world-rankings/race-walking/women?rankDate=2023-12-19>

### **World medallists**

☐	Maria Perez (ESP)	1:26:51
☐	Jemima Montag (AUS)	1:27:16 AR
☐	Antonella Palmisano (ITA)	1:27:26 SB
<b>Full results</b>		

<https://worldathletics.org/en/competitions/world-athletics-championships/world-athletics-championships-budapest-2023-7138987/results/women/20-kilometres-race-walk/final/result>

### ***Major winners***

**World Championships:** Maria Perez (ESP) 1:26:51

**Asian Championships:** Yang Liuqing (CHN) 1:32:37

**South American Championships:** Mary Luz Andia (PER) 1:29:07.5

**Pan-American Games:** Kimberly Garcia (PER) NT (*times annulled due to short course*)

**Asian Games:** Yang Jiayu (CHN) 1:30:03

### **Season at a glance**

Maria Perez completed a golden Spanish double in the 20km race walk as she won the women's event at the start of day two at the World Athletics Championships Budapest 23.

For the second time in less than 24 hours, Heroes' Square belonged to Spain as Perez followed in the footsteps of Alvaro Martin in the lightning-delayed men's 20km race walk the day before.

The prevailing conditions for the women's race were markedly different, bright sunshine glinting off the sandstone structures lining the one-kilometre city centre course, but the tactics were just the same. Tellingly so.

Just as Martin had, Perez proceeded conservatively before putting the hammer down in the final 5km. The 27-year-old crossed the line in 1:26:51 – 25 seconds clear of her closest pursuer, the inspired two-time Commonwealth champion Jemima Montag, who upheld Australia's fine race walk tradition with a silver medal in 1:27:16, an Oceanian record.

Ten seconds farther back, Antonella Palmisano, the Olympic champion from Italy, returned from injury to claim bronze in 1:27:26 – despite a potentially damaging mid-race fall.

For Perez, it was sweet redemption following the disqualification she suffered at last year's World Championships in Oregon – and continuation of the golden streak of form that took her to the 35km world record in May.

"I cannot put into the words how important it is to me to win this first global gold, especially at the 20km," the Andalusian said. "Victory at this distance was my main goal for Budapest."

Montag became her country's first world medallist in the women's 20km since the bronze won by Kerry Saxby-Junna in the inaugural women's 20km in Seville in 1999.

Kimberly Garcia, the Peruvian who had made history in Oregon as the first women's double race walk winner, was in medal contention for most of the race, but eventually had to settle for fourth place in 1:27:32.

With six women finishing inside 1:28 and 10 women finishing inside 1:29, it was the highest quality 20km at any World Championships.

A record 65 sub-1:30 performances were achieved in 2023, 19 more than in 2022.

## ***\*Men's 20km race walk***

### **Full season top list**

<https://worldathletics.org/records/toplists/race-walks/20-kilometres-race-walk/all/men/senior/2023>

### World Athletics rankings

<https://worldathletics.org/world-rankings/20km-race-walking/men?Date=2023-12-19>

### World medallists

<input type="checkbox"/>	Alvaro Martin (ESP)	1:17:32 WL
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perseus Karlstrom (SWE)	1:17:39 NR
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caio Bonfim (BRA)	1:17:47 NR
<a href="#">Full results</a>		

<https://worldathletics.org/en/competitions/world-athletics-championships/world-athletics-championships-budapest-2023-7138987/results/men/20-kilometres-race-walk/final/result>

### Major winners

**World Championships:** Alvaro Martin (ESP) 1:17:32

**Asian Championships:** Yutaro Murayama (JPN) 1:24:40

**South American Championships:** Luis Campos (PER) 1:21:25.6

**Pan-American Games:** David Hurtado (ECU) 1:19:20

**Asian Games:** Zhang Jun (CHN) 1:23:00

### Season at a glance

Alvaro Martin became the first gold medallist at the World Athletics Championships as he won a storm-delayed 20km race walk.

The Spaniard took over from the bold long-time leader Koki Ikeda, Japan's Olympic silver medallist, with five kilometres remaining before the finish in Heroes Square.

The 29-year-old, who had missed an Olympic medal in this event by one place in Tokyo in 2021, claimed his first global title in rain-swept conditions with a perfectly judged race that saw him come home in a world-leading 1:17:32.

Also judging his race superbly was Perseus Karlstrom, who had earned world bronze at 20km and 35km in Oregon the previous year and who earned a place one step higher on the podium with a Swedish record of 1:17:39, with bronze going to Brazil's Caio Bonfim, who also set a national record of 1:17:47.

Canada's 32-year-old Evan Dunfee, who earned bronze at the last 50km race walk events to be held at the Olympics and World Championships, demonstrated how effectively he has switched his racing focus by finishing strongly to place fourth in a national record of 1:18:03.

After the field flowed past Ikeda in the closing stages, he held on gamely to finish 15th in 1:19:44. Compatriot Toshikazu Yamanishi, seeking a third consecutive world title having beaten Ikeda to gold in Oregon the previous year, had no success on the day as he dropped out of contention before the halfway point and finished 24th in 1:21:39. It meant that Yuta Koga was surprisingly the top Japanese finisher, placing 12th in 1:19:02.

There was disappointment for Italy's Olympic champion Massimo Stano, who never figured in the leading contenders and failed to finish the race.

National records were also set by the fifth and sixth-place finishers Christopher Linke of Germany, who clocked 1:18:12, and Veli-Matti Partanan of Finland, who recorded 1:18:22.

The next two finishers – Brian Pintado of Ecuador and Australia's Declan Tingay – set personal bests of 1:18:26 and 1:18:30 respectively.

Portugal's 47-year-old Joao Vieira, making his 13th World Athletics Championship appearance – equalling the record held by Spanish race walker Jesus Angel Garcia – finished an honourable 33rd of the 47 finishers in 1:23:37.

It was one of the deepest races in history – and the best ever at a major championships – as a record 18 men finished inside 1:20. For the first time ever at a global championships, three men finished inside 1:18 and 10 men finished inside 1:19.

The depth in Budapest was reflected on the 2023 world lists, as a record 40 men clocked sub-1:20 times this year.

All of the Gold level 20km races on the World Race Walking Tour (Dudince, Taicang, Warsaw, Rio Maior, Podebrady and La Coruna) were all won in sub-1:20 performances.

Bonfim's consistency across the series – and his victories in Warsaw and La Coruna – contributed to him winning the World Race Walking Tour ahead of Karlstrom.

### ***\*Women's 35km race walk***

#### Full season top list

<https://worldathletics.org/records/toplists/race-walks/35-kilometres-race-walk/all/women/senior/2023>

#### World Athletics rankings

<https://worldathletics.org/world-rankings/35km-race-walking/women?rankDate=2023-12-19>

## World medallists

☐	Maria Perez (ESP)	2:38:40 CR
☐	Kimberly Garcia (PER)	2:40:52
☐	Antigoni Ntrismpioti (GRE)	2:43:22 SB
<a href="#">Full results</a>		

<https://worldathletics.org/en/competitions/world-athletics-championships/world-athletics-championships-budapest-2023-7138987/results/women/35-kilometres-race-walk/final/result>

## Major winners

**World Championships:** Maria Perez (ESP) 2:38:40

## Season at a glance

Spain's Maria Perez completed a golden double here as she added the 35km race walk title to the 20km gold she had won earlier at the World Championships in Budapest.

In an event that had been introduced to the World Championships the previous year, Perez won in a championship record of 2:38:40 as she finished more than two minutes clear of Peru's defending champion Kimberly Garcia, whose world double in Oregon last year Perez has now matched.

The achievement of the world record-holder completed a 'double double' for Spain shortly after compatriot Alvaro Martin had done the same in the men's competition.

Garcia clocked 2:40:52, with Greece's Antigoni Ntrismpioti claiming bronze in 2:43:22, one place ahead of Viviane Lyra, who set a Brazilian record of 2:44:40.

Peru's defending champion had finished fourth in the 20km race walk, but her prospects were stronger over the longer distance. Having set a South American record of 2:39:16 in Oregon, she improved on that with a world record of 2:37:44 in March this year.

Two months later, however, Perez took 29 seconds off that mark with her 2:37:15 victory in Podebrady, and in their only pre-championships meeting this year, over 20km, Garcia had come out on top.

But Perez arrived in Budapest undefeated at 35km in all four of her career races – and there was never a moment when a fifth victory looked seriously under threat.

Poland's Katarzyna Zdziebło, a double silver medallist at last year's World Championships, was in contact with the lead over the opening 20 kilometres, but she slipped back and was eventually disqualified.

Garcia's season ended with her being confirmed as overall women's winner in the 2022-2023 World Athletics Race Walking Tour.

The scoring system combines each athlete's three best world ranking performances from the series.

A month after recording her world record in the 35km event in Dudince, she was victorious over 20km in Warsaw and then finished just off of the podium in Rio Maior a couple of weeks later.

## \*Men's 35km race walk

### Full season top list

<https://worldathletics.org/records/toplists/race-walks/35-kilometres-race-walk/all/men/senior/2023>

### World Athletics rankings

<https://worldathletics.org/world-rankings/35km-race-walking/men?Date=2023-12-19>

## World medallists

☐	Alvaro Martin (ESP)	2:24:30 NR
☐	Brian Pintado (ECU)	2:24:34 AR
☐	Masatora Kawano (JPN)	2:25:12 SB
<a href="#">Full results</a>		

<https://worldathletics.org/en/competitions/world-athletics-championships/world-athletics-championships-budapest-2023-7138987/results/men/35-kilometres-race-walk/final/result>

## Major winners

**World Championships:** Alvaro Martin (ESP) 2:24:30



### Season at a glance

Spain's Alvaro Martin, winner of the 20km race walk on the opening day of the World Championships in Budapest, completed a golden double as he proved to be a hero again in Heroes Square by claiming the men's 35km title.

The 29-year-old, whose victory in the shorter race was his first global success following European 20km wins in 2018 and 2022, waited until the final kilometre before moving past Ecuador's Brian Pintado to establish a swift and decisive lead, finishing in a national record of 2:24:30.

It was the first part of a Spanish "double double" as, shortly afterwards, his teammate Maria Perez, winner of the women's 20km event, also added a second gold over 35km, the women having set off with the men at 7am, a time selected to mitigate the effects of the heatwave.

Pintado, despite clearly struggling with the intense conditions, took silver in a South American record of 2:24:34.

Bronze went to Masatora Kawano of Japan, silver medallist in this event at the previous year's World Championships, who finished in 2:25:12 after managing to keep at bay the challenge of Canada's Evan Dunfee, who placed fourth – just as he had in the 20km race – in 2:25:28.

Germany's Christopher Linke, always involved in the leading group, was fifth in a national record of 2:25:35, with Japan's Tomohiro Noda sixth in 2:25:50 and Italy's defending champion Massimo Stano, who faded during the closing stages, seventh in 2:25:59.

Perseus Karlstrom of Sweden, seeking to add to the 20km silver he won on Saturday, figured only briefly in the lead group before finishing eighth in 2:27:03.

China's He Xianghong, fifth in Oregon last year in a national record of 2:24:45, and an Asian record breaker with 2:22:55 earlier this year, also slipped from the lead group in the final kilometres, finishing 23rd in 2:37:21.

Brazil's Caio Bonfim, who had taken bronze over 20km, was 10th in this race in 2:27:45.

Spain's 35-year-old European champion – and 2015 world champion over 20km – Miguel Angel Lopez had led the men through 5km but eventually finished 12th in 2:29:32.

Martin's time in the blazing conditions put him fourth on the 2023 world list, which was topped by He's 2:22:55 in Huangshan in March.

Japan's Tomohiro Noda was second on the list with 2:23:13, and Russia's Sergey Kozhevnikov third with 2:24:19.

Outside of the World Championships, the most competitive 35km races were held in Dudince and Podebrady. Mexico's Jose Luis Doctor won in Dudince in 2:26:37, but he focused on the 20km for the rest of the season. Three months before his World Championships double, Martin won the 35km at the European Team Championships in Podebrady, finishing 90 seconds clear of Linke.

### Mike Rowbottom for World Athletics

## FRANCE: 55<sup>th</sup> Corrida Jean Ritzenhaler, 31 December - Kientzheim

The cold of a north-eastern French winter did not deter **Emmanuel Tardi** from pulling on the shoes for this 48 year-old annual race in the historic border region of Alsace.

For the end of the year, I decided to enter in a small competition in a small city in Alsace (500km to the east of Paris) The city of Kientzheim have organised this race on the last Sunday of each December since 1975.

The race took place in the historical center of the city. There were running and walking events. There were 4 laps (around 1.1km each). 80% of the road was cobblestone streets, so not easy for racewalkers. 17 starters at 10am.

The top five finishers were 5 women! The first one was **Bianca Ditrlich\*** from Germany (29th in Budapest 35k). She finished with excellent time of **21'01"** (12,85 kmh).

(\* See also the report in *O Marchador* below.)

*Bianca Ditrlich, well ahead in the Kientzheim 4.8km*  
(Photo: Emmanuel Tardi)



1	DITTRICH Bianca Maria (Ger)	SEF/93	Us Pulversheim	21:01
2	DIDELOT Aurelie	ESF/02	Us Pulversheim	27:11
3	DIDELOT Marie-Odile	M3F/70	Us Pulversheim	27:38

4	SCHMITT Adele	M1F/09	Csl Neuf-brisach	28:12
5	MANN Marie-Sandrine	M0F/88	Cca Rouffach	28:17
6	HAGER Theo	BEM/11	Esr Colmar	29:21
7	RIEPL Frank	M4M/67	Lg Breisgau	29:23
8	MAISON Sylvie	M3F/73	Iba Lingolsheim S2a	30:41
9	LELOUP Gregory	M2M/77	Cca Rouffach	30:46
10	BEN EL KEBIR Hafid	M0M/87	Csl Neuf-brisach	32:55
11	ANXIONNAT Claudine	M7F/51	Avec Bruyeres	33:07
12	BROT Daniel (Sui)	M7M/53	Avec Bruyeres	34:28
13	DIDELOT Christophe	M4M/67	Us Pulversheim	35:04
14	SCHMITT Marie-Claude	M7F/52	Sg Wantzenau	36:08
15	TARDI Emmanuel	M4M/67	Lp Longjumeau	39:09
16	THIBAUT Genevieve	M6F/56	Sg Wantzenau	40:53
17	THIBAUT Regis	M8M/47	Asc Strasbourg	40:53

## 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.

- Wednesday, January 3, 2024 - Bianca Dittrich wins walk in Kientzheim, France <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/01/bianca-dittrich-vence-marcha-em.html>
- Tuesday, January 2, 2024 - Hayato Katsuki and Kumiko Okada triumph at Tokyo New Year Festival <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/01/hayato-katsuki-e-kumiko-okada-triunfam.html> I'm guessing that not too many of these guys stayed up to watch the New Year fireworks in Tokyo. Then again ...
- Saturday, December 30, 2023 - Ana Cabecinha, national figure of 2023 <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/ana-cabecinha-figura-nacional-de-2023.html> Tribute to Portugal's top woman walker of 2023.
- Friday, December 29, 2023 - Álvaro Martín and María Pérez highlighted in the newspaper "AS" <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/alvaro-martin-e-maria-perez-em-destaque.html> Race walkers – even those at the top – seldom get coverage in the mainstream sports press. Making the front cover is rarer still!
- Wednesday, December 27, 2023 - Hayrettin Yıldız sets new Turkish national record in men's U20 10,000m walk <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/hayrettin-yldz-estabelece-novo-recorde.html>
- Tuesday, December 26, 2023 - Aveiro Walking Championships 2023/2024, in Castelo de Paiva (results) <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/campeonatos-de-marcha-de-aveiro.html>
- Sunday, December 24, 2023 - 1977, walk with more track events and strong Benfica momentum <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/1977-marcha-com-mais-provas-em-pista-e.html> More on the rebirth of race walking in Portugal. This article deals with developments leading up to the first international meeting, detailed above.
- Saturday, December 23, 2023 - Daniel Chamosa and Carmen Escariz win AD Cerro Buenavista Trophy (Getafe 2023) <http://omarchador.blogspot.com/2023/12/daniel-chamosa-e-carmen-escariz-venchem.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.*

## \*OTHER NEWS

### **Olympic Qualifying System in the Mixed Race Walking Relay (42.195km)**

(reprinted from *O Marchador*, 28 December 2023. Translation: *Deepl.com*)

The Mixed Athletic Walking Relay events, which involve two athletes (a man and a woman) taking two stages each and alternating, starting with the male and ending with the female, each doing a minimum of 10 km in each series, are having their

first events in the official format, as happened in October in North America (Hauppauge, USA), in November in South America (Santiago, Chile) and in Asia (Osaka, Japan) and in Europe (Dublin, Ireland) this December.

Recalling the qualification system for this new athletics discipline, which will be included in the program for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, it is worth mentioning the fundamental importance of the **World Athletics Marching Team Championships** taking place in Antalya (Turkey) on April 21 in 2024.

In fact, it is expected that the world's best representatives in the discipline, who intend to run the two events in the specialty at the next Olympic Games, the 20 km - 1/8 and the Mixed Relay - 7/8, will bet everything on this last event, which will automatically qualify the first 22 of the 25 national teams for the Paris Games in Antalya, and may include another 5 from the same country.

The remaining 3 national teams will be selected in national events (with the obligatory participation of two international teams) that meet two fundamental requirements: the circuit certified by WA measurers and the presence of at least 3 WA International Judges during the qualification period from December 31, 2022 to June 30, 2023.



(Photo montage: O Marchador)

Still referring to this last paragraph, another important factor that must be taken into account is that the 3 additional teams to be selected cannot be from countries that have already qualified for the World Team Championships, and each athlete must compete a minimum of 20 km in the two series, which is the only way to ensure that the conditions required by World Athletics are met.

In the 20 km walk, in the Portuguese-speaking area, the Portuguese Ana Cabecinha and the Brazilians Caio Bonfim, Viviana Lyra and Erica Sena have qualified for Paris (48 men and 48 women), and the Portuguese Vitória Oliveira (32nd) and the Brazilians Matheus Correa (38th), Max Batista dos Santos (42nd) and Gabriela de Sousa (31st) are currently in the world ranking in eligible positions.

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## WHAT'S UP AHEAD?

### VRWC SUMMER FIXTURE 2023-24

#### Sun 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024, VRWC Road Races

#### Middle Park

8.30am	20km, 15km, 10km	Open
9.15am	5km, 3km	Open
9.40am	2km, 1km	Open

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### 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	<b>AVSL Rd #9</b> – walks at Werribee
Sat/Sun 27/28 Jan 2024	<b>Supernova: WA Race Walking Tour (Bronze)</b> – AIS, Canberra
Sat 3 Feb 2024	<b>AVSL Rd #10</b> – walks at Glenhuntly
Sat 10 Feb 2024	<b>AVSL Rd #11</b> – walks at Sandringham
Sun 11 Feb 2024	<b>2024 Australia &amp; Oceania Race Walk c'ships</b> – Adelaide SA
Sat 17 Feb 2024	<b>AVSL Rd #12</b> – walks at Doncaster
Fri 23-Sun 25 Feb 2024	<b>AV T&amp;F c'ships (Week 1)</b> – Lakeside Stadium
Fri 1-Sun 3 Mar 2024	<b>AV T&amp;F c'ships (Week 2)</b> – Lakeside Stadium
Sat 9-Sun 10 Mar 2024	<b>LAVic State T&amp;F c'ships</b> – venue TBC
Sat 16-Sun 17 Mar 2024	<b>Victorian Masters T&amp;F c'ships</b> – venue TBC
Fri 29 Mar-Mon 1 Apr 2024	<b>Aust. Masters T&amp;F c'ships</b> – Hobart TAS
Thu 11-Fri 19 Apr 2024	<b>AA Aust Athletics c'ahips</b> – Adelaide SA

### **International Dates**

Sun 18 Feb 2024	<b>Japanese Walking c'ships (20km &amp; 35km)</b> – Kobe JPN
Sun 21 Apr 2024	<b>WA Race walking Teams c'ship</b> – Antalya TUR
Sat 4 May 2024	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Korzienowski Warsaw Race walking Cup (WA Gold)</b> – Warsaw POL
Sat 11 May 2024	<b>31<sup>st</sup> Grande Premio Internacional de Rio Maior em Marcia Atletica (WA Gold)</b> – Rio Maior POR
Sat 18 May 2024	<b>XXXVII Gran Premio Cantones da A Coruna de Marcha (WA Gold)</b> – La Coruna ESP
Sun 26 May 2024	<b>III Gran Premio Internacional Finetwork Madrid Marcha (WA Gold)</b> – Madrid ESP
26 Jul- 11 Aug 2024	<b>XXXIII Summer Olympics</b> – Paris, FRA
13-25 Aug 2024	<b>24<sup>th</sup> World Masters T&amp;F Championships</b> – Gothenburg, SWE
20-24 Aug 2024	<b>WA World Junior T&amp;F Championships</b> – Lima, PER <i>(*Lima withdrew in April but has since been reinstated.)</i>
13-21 Sep 2025	<b>20<sup>th</sup> World Athletics Championships</b> – Tokyo, JPN
30 Oct-15 Nov 2026	<b>Youth Olympic Games</b> – Dakar SEN

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