



HEEL & TOE Online

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

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*H&T Notice Board – Page 10

Race Walking Coaches Practical course (Mark Donahoo)
Saturday 1 March – Mentone

****Welcome back, readers!** I hope everyone had an enjoyable, safe and restful Christmas and New year season, and that you're anticipating another exciting year of race walking action. It's unlikely to be lacking in interest.

2024 was a year of exemplary walking performances, leavened with surprises, delights, disappointments and comebacks, against an international backdrop of wonder at what decisions made at the highest level would mean for race walkers and their ambitions. How would the new Marathon Walk Relay play out? Would it be the crowd-pulling success the IOC assured us it would be? Or would it be an embarrassing joke, one designed (as many feared) to hasten the end of the sport at top international level? Most of us know only what we saw on our screens and must draw our conclusions from that. Many who were on the ground at the base of the Eiffel Tower or in Antalya have differing views, which they have shared with others back home. We all have an opinion. One thing is certain: in both top competitions in which the Relay appeared – the World Teams championships in Turkiye and the Olympics in Paris – the pairs of walkers who contested it, whatever their feelings, spared no effort to make it work. Their racing was fully committed and added to the drama of the occasion in each case. All credit to them, no matter their results.

Tokyo's decision to revert to the 35km in place of the Relay will be greeted with relief by many, with disappointment by some, and with perplexity by others. World Athletics plan of extending the 35km to the full marathon distance in 2026 adds another level of wonder and uncertainty in a sport already in turmoil. It appears such decisions are out of our hands ...maybe all we can do is hope choices agreeable to all (or to most) are made and, once chosen, are left alone.

Australia's race walkers were once again to the fore in doing the national colours proud in 2024. Our walkers maintained their record of being the only athletics event in which Australia won a medal or had a top-10 finish in every Olympics since 1996. Beyond the Olympics, of course, there were other international and domestic competitions in which the Aussies excelled.

There being no Walker Of The Week candidates over the Christmas-New Year break, we open Issue #1 2025 of 'Heel & Toe Online' with a celebration of the achievements of our top walkers in the year just passed:

** 2024 WALKER OF THE YEAR **



1. JEMIMA MONTAG (VIC)

An outstanding year for Jemima, in which her steady climb through the top 10 rankings culminated in 2024 Olympic podium honours and confirmed her status as one of the world's premier walkers. Following on from her silver medal in 2023's World Championships in Budapest, that status is indisputable and, barring anything untoward, should endure for some years yet. Congratulations, Jemima!

Best performances

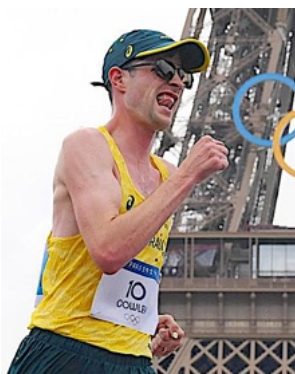
- Dual Olympic bronze medallist – 20km, 1:26:25 (Aust. All comers, Oceania, Commonwealth records; Marathon Walk Relay: 10.8km 45:51 (changed 1st place), 10km 42:27 (finished 3rd)
- 2nd, Korzienowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup 20km, 1:27.56
- Aust & Oceania 20km champion, 1:27:09 (Aust., Oceania & Commonwealth records)

2. ISAAC BEACROFT (NSW)

In May, the 17yo arrived on the world stage like a hammer blow, winning the World Teams U20 10km in Antalya (TUR) with a paralysing burst of speed we in Australia have come to expect of him but for which his Antalya opposition were completely unprepared – least of all his Chinese co-medallists. Isaac backed up this performance with a solid 4th place in the World U20 titles in Lima, in a time 20secs faster than his Antalya result. Sneaking through between these was a 15km clocking on Mt Stromlo Park’s undulating bike circuit that would have equated to an 88:00 20km – at age 17. What a future beckons!

Best performances

- Gold medallist, WA Race walking Teams c’ship U20 10km, 39:56 (Aust U20, U18 records)
- 4th WA World U20 10,000m c’ship, 39:36 (Aust U20, U18 records)
- 1st NSW Youth 5000m c’ship, 19:23 (Aust U20, U18 records)



3. RHYDIAN COWLEY (VIC)

Rhydian did everything right in 2024. Four 1st places in domestic championships and 12 top 10 finishes out of 13 starts (only the Paris 20km saw him place beyond 10th, and that was by a mere two spots) included Rhyd earning his first Olympic medal in tandem with Jemima Montag, in the Marathon Walk relay. Delighted as we were for them, it’s clear that Rhydian’s forte is the longer distances, a point underscored by his national 35km record at Mt Stromlo Park in June. Having stepped up a notch in speed, and with his eyes firmly set on this year’s World championships 35km in Tokyo, Rhyd could be set for his best result ever. At least we know he will, as ever, leave it all out there.

Best performances

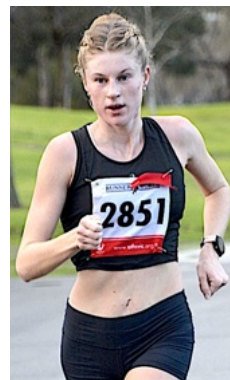
- Olympic bronze medallist – Marathon Walk Relay: 11.4km 43:55 (changed 9th place), 10km 39:25 (changed 4th place)
- 12th Olympic 20km, 1:20:04
- 4th Korzienowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup 20km, 1:19:46
- 1st LBG 35km, 2:26:25 (Aust & Oceania records)

4. ELIZABETH MCMILLEN (NSW)

The term ‘breakout year’ is used and re-used to the point of cliché. However, it is aptly said of Lizzy’s progress in 2024. Her season was highlighted by three performances of which we had little notion were around the corner: a win the Victorian 20km title that took her to within reach of sub-1:30, a huge PB win in the NSW 10,000m track title and a national record-breaking 2nd place in the AA 35km championship – on debut over the distance! Free at last of illness that required surgery early in the year, Lizzy made that freedom count – and now must surely have a plane ticket to Tokyo in her pocket!

Best performances

- 2nd Aust 35km c’ship, 2:47:26
- 1st AV 20km c’ship, 1:30:47
- 1st NSW 10,000m Open c’ship, 43:00
- 2nd Aust 10,000m Open c’ship, 44:33



5. OLIVIA SANDERY (SA)

Olivia came to the nation’s notice in a way she would not have wanted in Paris, reduced to a stager by dehydration and heat stress and a subsequent DNF. She returned with a vengeance in December, saving the best for last with a huge 10,000m PB in the NSW track title, followed by the result of her career so far – a new national and Oceania record in her first attempt at the 35km. That this last was achieved after an enforced 3½ minutes in the Penalty zone, with a ‘sword of Damocles’ fourth red card hanging over her, is testament to her grit and preparedness to crash through or crash. This time, fortune favoured the brave.

- 1st Aust 35km c’ship, 2:45:32 (Aust & Oceania recs)
- 2nd NSW 10,000m Open c’ship, 43:11
- 7th Korzienowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup 20km, 1:32:35
- 5th Aust & Oceania 20km c’ship, 1:30:52

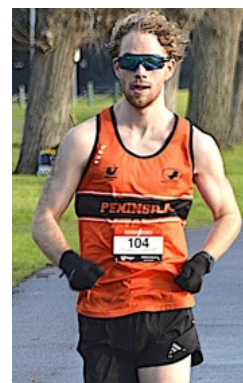
6. WILL THOMPSON (VIC)

This really was Will's breakout year, one which saw him step up to the 35km distance as if he'd been doing it all his life. A brace of 35's in quick succession – in Japan and at home – indicated that Will is at least competitive and at best a danger, something of which Rhydian Cowley is well aware. Will has now qualified for Tokyo and, possessed of strong 20km speed, will provide stern opposition in the World championships.

In August, Will joined Tim Fraser (ACT) and Allannah Pitcher (NSW) as an emergency selection for the Paris Olympics. A fine accolade for all the hard work and progress in 2024.

Best performances

- 7th All-Japan Racewalking c'ships 35km, 2:29:58
- 5th Aust 10,000m Open c'ship, 40:00
- 2nd Aust 35km c'ship, 2:34:15
- 1st AV 20km c'ship, 1:21:46



****Honourable mentions**

REBECCA HENDERSON (VIC)

Bec's return to form following a long recuperation from injury saw her set a new national 35km record in Canberra in June, coming off a fast 20km in China three months earlier. Sadly, the cards didn't fall Bec's way in Paris, although she did manage a quick 45:23 in her second 10km leg of the Relay. Risk of injury also prevented a clash with Olivia and Lizzy in the December 35km. She has, however, qualified already for Tokyo.

Best performances

- 1st LBG 35km, 2:47:34 (Aust & Oceania records)
- 8th Chinese Race walking Grand Prix 20km, 1:29:54
- 1st AV 5000m c'ship, 21:42
- 4th Aust & Oceania 20km c'ship, 1:30:40

DECLAN TINGAY (WA)

The start of the year saw Declan pretty much in injury recovery as he rebuilt for the Olympics. Encouraging returns in Taicang and the national 10,000m titles showed he was on the right path. Racing only twice more before the Olympics, Dec produced all he had in the Paris 20km and just missed a top 10 placing. He later teamed with Bec Henderson for 21st place in the Marathon Walk relay.

Best performances

- 11th Paris Olympic 20km, 1:19:56
- 6th Korzienowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup 20km, 1:21:01
- 8th Chinese Race walking Grand Prix, 1:20:00
- 1st Aust. 10,000m c'ship, 38:07

KYLE SWAN (VIC)

The year started well for Kyle with a string of fast results on both track and road. His last races before Paris were the LBG 15km and 5km, the former showing him to be in good shape for Paris with what would have equated to 1:21:30 for 20km. Kyle hasn't raced since the Olympics, although he is training again after what was no doubt some much-needed rest.

Best performances

- 2nd AV 5000m c'ship, 18:33
- 2nd Supernova 10,000m WA Tour Bronze, 38:46
- 7th Chinese Race walking Grand Prix 20km, 1:18:59
- 2nd Aust & Oceania 20km c'ship, 1:19:52

TIM FRASER (ACT)

Following several strong domestic results, Tim's year was highlighted by selection for the Olympics as an emergency in the 20km and Marathon Relay. While his services were not required, his attendance in Paris would have kindled the desire to wear the green and gold 'for real' in 2025.

Best performances

- 1st LBG Open 15km, 1:00:53
- 12th Chinese Race walking Grand Prix 20km, 1:21:01
- 4th Aust & Oceania 20km c'ship, 1:22:03

MITCHELL BAKER (ACT)

One of Australia's most consistent top-level walkers for several years, Mitch raced three times over 35km with his best result coming in Takahara, Japan.

Best performances

- 10th All-Japan Racewalking c'ships 35km, 2:31:07
- 3rd Aust 35km c'ship, 2:35:06
- 6th Supernova 10,000m WA Tour Bronze, 40:53

ALLANAH PITCHER (NSW)

Despite a season dogged by illness and injury, Allana stuck to her goals, earning selection for the World Walks Teams championships as well as being chosen as an emergency for the Paris Olympics. By year's end she was showing glimpses of her old form with a sub-3 hour 35km at Middle Park.

Best performances

- 3rd Aust 35km c'ship, 2:57:51
- 3rd Supernova 10,000m WA Tour Bronze, 45:30
- 27th WA Race walking Teams c'ship 20km, 1:35:04

CARL GIBBONS (NSW)

A hard working athlete with good natural speed yet ambitious to succeed at the longer distances, Carl earned selection for the WA Walks Teams championships in Antalya.

Best performances

- 8th Supernova 10,000m WA Tour Bronze, 41:19
- 4th Aust 35km c'ship, 2:36:58
- 13th Chinese Race walking Grand Prix 20km, 1:23:20

**** NEXT ISSUE ... 2024 U20 & Australian Ultra-Distance Walkers Of the Year**



CLUB NEWS and RESULTS

****Next VRWC races ...**

Time to flick off the thongs and pull on the racing shoes again! Make sure you register before Friday's deadline. See you there on Sunday!

Sunday 12 January - Middle Park

8:30am	20km, 15km
8:45am	10km
9:10am	5km, 3km
9:50am	2km, 1km

To pre-enter, go to <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/vrwc/>
then select this fixture in 'Upcoming Events'
Entries close Friday 10 January, 6.00pm



VICTORIA - METRO & REGIONAL



AVSL UPDATE

Following the weather cancellation of Round 6 of AVSL, the next Round (7) will be held on **Saturday 11 January 2025**, with the Walks taking place at the **Meadowglen International Stadium** in MacDonalDs Rd, Epping. (Yes, we know it'll tax your GPS's capacities, but you can always dig your dog-eared Melways out of the boot ...)

My apologies for printing the wrong race distances for the Metro fixture in the last issue. The distances listed below are correct:

***AVSL Round 7 – Saturday 11 January**

All races open to Male and Female competitors

Metro – Epping	1.00pm	2000m walk (all ages)
Meadowglen Int. Stadium	1.00pm	5000m walk (U18 and older)

Ballarat region – Llanberris Stadium	No walks scheduled
Bendigo region – Lar Birpa Athletics Complex <i>(formerly Latrobe Uni Athletics Complex)</i>	6.15pm 1500m walk (all ages) 3000m walk (all ages)

ENTRIES
Entries close at 12.00 noon on Wednesday 8 January



***AIS WALKS COACHING LEGEND CRAIG HILLIARD RETIRES**

*Last November it was announced that esteemed coach **Craig Hilliard** had retired after over four decades of teaching, guiding and mentoring Australia’s emerging athletes. AA’s Sascha Ryner examines Hilliard’s philosophy on coaching and on life in general.*

A Legacy Built On People - Hilliard Takes His Final Bow

(by Sascha Ryner - reprinted from Athletics Australia news, 8 November 2024)

For 42 years, Craig Hilliard has been a steady force in Australian athletics, guiding athletes and coaches alike with an instinctive understanding of people and a devotion to their success. Now, as he retires from a life spent on the track, his impact resonates across generations. The philosophy that has defined his career is simple, with success measured not only by medals but the lives he has helped shape:

“Coaching is all about understanding what makes athletes tick. You’ve got to know what buttons to push and when not to push those same buttons,” Hilliard says. “If you don’t understand people, you can’t coach.”

Hilliard’s journey from a young physical education teacher in Melbourne to a mentor of champions began in 1982, when he committed to join the newly formed Australian Institute of Sport.



(Photo: Daily Telegraph)

His once-daunting move to Canberra to take an initial role as an apprentice coach became the next chapter of his storied coaching career, taking him from the sidelines of high school spots to the grand stages of eight Olympic Games, 18 World Championships and seven Commonwealth Games.

“It was a leap of faith because I was coming out of my comfort zone in Melbourne, where I had everything at my fingertips. I thought let’s give it a year, I’ll probably end up back in Melbourne in the fitness industry or something. It would have been very easy to stay where I was and do what I was already doing.”

Throughout those years at the AIS, Hilliard’s approach combined both art and science, as he applied the precision of physiology and biomechanics with an unyielding focus on understanding his athletes and mentees as individuals. Guiding the likes of Australian greats not limited to Olympic, world and Commonwealth medallists including Jai Taurima, Kerry Saxby-Junna, Jana Pittman, Jane Flemming, Nathan Deakes and Rohan Robinson - yet he’s quick to point out that each athlete has required something different.

“You learn very quickly that it’s not a one-size-fits-all approach.”

For Hilliard, the thrill of coaching lay not just in public victories but in the quieter, personal triumphs that often happen away from crowds.

“It’s hard in the coaching world because you’re always governed by results but there’s a euphoria seeing an athlete realise their potential, knowing that a small cue or training breakthrough turned things around.”

It is those moments, he believes, that define a coach’s impact – the flashes of joy, and the connection and the knowledge of how to perform on the world stage when it counts has made a difference.

It wasn't just athletes who benefited from Hilliard's wisdom over the years. As Athletics Australia's Head Coach and later as a mentor, he became a guiding light for the next generation of Australian coaches including the likes of medal-winning Mike Barber, Matt Beckenham, Matt Horsnell, Russell Stratton, Alex Stewart and Paul Burgess.

"Seeing coaches grow and develop their craft – that's satisfying. I may have had a 1 or 2% impact," he says humbly, "but it's incredibly satisfying to see them get results, to be a sounding board and to help them through both coaching challenges on and off the track.

"There are moments when you feel on top of the world, like coaching is easy, and then there are times when everything goes wrong. As long as you can reset, prioritise and make sensible decisions and learn from any mistakes you made, will make all the difference."

As he steps away, he finds comfort in the strength of Australia's coaching group, whose development he considers essential to the sport's long-term success.

"The level of performance now is exciting and it's been a slow burn. With many of these athletes having come through junior programs, they've put in the work and now they're showing the world what they can do."

Retirement, he admits, is bittersweet. "You miss it, but in a funny way, you don't," he says with a laugh. "Thanks for the memories," he says simply, a farewell to the community that has been his life's work.

As he moves on to this next chapter, his impact remains a testament to what coaching can be – a journey measured in lives touched, in knowledge shared and in a quiet yet unwavering dedication.

Hilliard and the rise of Australian walking

NSW commentator **David Tarbotton**, writing on Facebook, paid tribute the role Craig Hilliard played specifically in the elevation of Australia's race walking status on the world stage.

"Two features of Australian track and field in recent times have been: a) an ability for the leading athletes to perform up to their best when it counts, and b) Australia becoming a race-walking powerhouse with 41% (9 of our 22) Olympic medals in the last two decades won in race walking," writes Tarbotton. "Craig Hilliard has during his four-decade career been a significant contributor, if not pioneer, for Australian track and field in these two areas.

"For nearly two decades from the early 80s until the late 90s, Craig Hilliard coached Australia's leading race walkers as they laid the foundations of a future race-walking powerhouse. He coached: Kerry Saxby-Junna (6 global medals, 40+ world records & 2 CG gold), Simon Baker (2 global medals & 1 CG gold), Sue Cook (1 global medal), David Smith (1 global medal) and Nick A'Hern (2 CG gold, 2 global top-10s). Then largely in the '00s there was also Nathan Deakes (Olympic & World Champs medallist, 4 CG gold & a world record) & Luke Adams (8 x global top-10s & 3 CG silvers).

"Not only did Craig coach these pioneering athletes, but he also mentored the next generation of coaches including Brent Vallance and Simon Baker, who have built on Australia's incredible race-walking history.

"Craig may not have built the athletes from grassroots, but he had the exceptional skills to polish the athletes for international competition success. This role was more formal over the last decade where it is no surprise Australia's elite athletes performed significantly better in international competition.

Nor was it solely race walking that benefitted from Hilliard's coaching and mentoring. "Craig's success has been enormous with the above-mentioned athletes along with Jai Taurima, Jane Flemming, Nicole Boegman, Rohan Robinson and many many more," Tarbotton continues, "plus his extensive team management contribution, including 27 global teams. On one Olympic team he personally coached eight athletes.

"His legacy to Australian athletes after a four-decade contribution is immeasurable. Happy retirement 'Hill'."

Several of Hilliard's star walkers paid their own tributes to their former AIS coach.

From Jared Tallent:

"Craig Hilliard's experience and knowledge have profoundly impacted Australian race walking. He played a pivotal role in shaping the careers of numerous talented walkers, including Sue Cook, Kerry Saxby-Junna, Simon Baker, Nick A'Hern, Luke Adams, and Nathan Deakes. Under his guidance, these athletes achieved outstanding success, winning medals at World Championships and Commonwealth Games. Kerry Saxby-Junna, in particular, set multiple World Records, paving the way for future generations. Craig's dedication has left an enduring legacy in the sport."

From Simon Baker:

"Craig coached me from when I first moved to the AIS in 1985 through to 1996. This included wins at Commonwealth Games 30km in 1986 and the World Cup of Race Walking (now the World Walking Teams Championships) 50km, the first Australian (and first non-European or Mexican) to do so.

"Over this time I was able to train with many of Australia's best walkers, including Sue Cook, Kerry Saxby, Andrew and Lorraine Jachno, Nick A'Hern and Dave Smith.

"Craig's coaching was always simple and effective. I can safely say much of my success was due to his knowledgeable guidance. We developed a unique approach to prepare for 50km based on speed and strength that has not really been used since.

From Kerry Saxby-Junna:

"I first met Craig on my first Australian team in 1984. He introduced himself when I arrived. I said I hope I don't let the team down. Think he was a bit worried when he looked at my training program. I trained 3 days a week for walking and the rest running as I was a national level cross-country runner. I did a PB by over 2 mins in the World Criterium for

Women race and was first Aussie to finish. He wrote me a training program after that, then I joined the AIS squad in 1986 and was there until 2001. Craig was the only coach that allowed me to mix running with walk training. He had a great saying. When I said how could I possibly beat the Soviet girls they look so much trimmer and fitter than me. He then said is that a pig flying in the air. It must have worked as I beat them all at Goodwill Games 1986 and broke the WR in their stadium in Moscow.”

On behalf of the VRWC, we wish Craig a happy retirement and new life direction, and we congratulate him on the successes his work has inspired in so many athletes, and walkers in particular.



Craig Hilliard timing Andrew Jachno and Simon Baker during a track session at the AIS in the 1980s. (Photo: Estate of Peter Waddell)

****AUSTRALIAN WALK JUDGES JOIN WA GOLD AND BRONZE PANELS****



Congratulations to the members of the Australian race walking community who were successful in passing November’s **World Athletics Race Walking Judges** online examinations. The exams were open to candidates at Gold, Silver and Bronze levels, comprising both a practical video judging component and a written response test.

Regrettably, many able and experienced candidates (locally and globally) were unsuccessful, owing to being unable to access the video component for technical reasons. We hope this will be ironed out before the exams are presented again in 2025 and that the affected applicants will be back for another try.

The successful Australian candidates, now accredited World Athletics judges, are:

GOLD

Renee Cassell AUS OCE F

(Renee joins Zoe Eastwood-Bryson and Kirsten Crocker as one of Australia’s 3 Gold level judges.)

SILVER

No successful Silver candidates were listed by World Athletics, nor posted on the International Walk Judges Facebook page.

BRONZE

- Maxine Lindsay AUS OCE F
- Kim Mottrom AUS OCE M
- Lorraine Morgan AUS OCE F
- Stuart Cooper AUS OCE M
- Sue Sundstrom AUS OCE F
- Shane Bicknell AUS OCE M
- Cliff Bernard AUS OCE M
- Shane Pearson AUS OCE M
- Carmen Sims AUS OCE F
- David Moore AUS OCE M

TASMANIA Athletics South Interclub, 4 January – Domain AC, Hobart

Results courtesy of **David Moore**:

1. Oliver Morgan SB 15:36.38



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

AIGARS FADEJEVS 1975 - 2024

On December 18, the Latvian Athletic Union (*Latvijas Vieglatlētikas savienība*) issued the following statement:

At the age of 48, the outstanding walker **Aigars Fadejevs** passed away.

During his career, he has set several Latvian records in walking and participated in three Olympic Games – 1996, taking sixth place in the 20 km distance in Atlanta; 2000, in the year in Sydney he brought Latvia a silver medal in the 50 km and took 14th place in the 20 km walk. On the other hand, in 2004 in Athens he scored 11th place.

He was an athlete in 1997, in that year became European U23 champion and earned a silver medal in 1998 at the European championship of the year.

Deepest condolences to the family.



*Fadejevs celebrates his 50km silver in Sydney.
(Photo: European Athletics)*

There will be many among our readers who were lucky enough to be roadside at Sydney Olympic Park in 2000 to witness **Aigars Fadejevs** race his way to Olympic silver in the 50km walk, and more still who watched the race unfold on television. While the focus was naturally on the eventual winner, **Robert Korzienowski** (POL), and Aussie fans were dividing their attention between the Pole and our own **Nathan Deakes** in his quest to place high in the top 10, the question of who would prevail between Fadejevs and Mexico's **Joel Sanchez** for silver – as well as whether the fast-finishing Spaniard **Valenti Massana** would figure in the medals – added spice to what was a stirring exhibition of endurance walking by the world's best in the Harbour city.

See the finish of Fadejevs and the next five competitors at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FQ3POw6QfQ&t=61s>

Fadejevs retired from race walking in 2004 and took to marathon running, almost qualifying to run for Latvia at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Working as a sports therapist, his clients included Latvian and other international sports players, among whom was the late Kobie Bryant (US basketball star.)¹

The cause of death is unknown, but to be taken at so young an age is always a tragedy. We join with the Latvian Union in offering our condolences to Aigars' family, friends and associates.

The Latvian walker who became an Aussie

Most race walking fans may be unaware that Aigars Fadejevs was not the first Latvian to win an Olympic walks medal – not under his own country's flag, anyway. That honour goes to **Jānis Daliņš**, who, coincidentally, won 50km walk silver at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics – the first occasion on which an Olympic 50km was held. The gold medallist in that race was Tommy Green (GBR) with Italy's Ugo Frigerio taking bronze. Daliņš also competed in the 50 at the 1936 Berlin Games and was leading before injury forced him out at 30km.²

Through his walking exploits, Daliņš became a national hero. He had a stadium in his home town of Valmiera named after him, and he was even the subject of a popular song: "*Ak, kaut man Daliņa kājas būtu*" ("*Oh, if only I had Daliņš' legs*", originally the title of a 1930s song).

The outbreak of World War II saw Latvia occupied first by the Soviet Union, then by Nazi Germany before being swallowed again by the USSR. Presumably to escape the Russians, Jānis Daliņš moved his family first to Germany, where he remained until 1949. The Daliņš then joined a wave of Latvian families who emigrated to Australia during this time.³ Lodged initially at the Bonegilla Migrant Centre, Daliņš settled in the Benalla region to build his career as a carpenter, constructing many homes in post-war Victoria, before moving to Melbourne where he ran a sports club until 1964. He passed away in June 1978, aged 73.



*Jānis Daliņš
(Photo: Wikipedia)*

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aigars_Fadejevs

² Daliņš' countryman, **Adalberts Bubenko**, won bronze in that race, making him the second Latvian to win an Olympic walks medal.

³ Among the Latvian families who ventured to Australia at this time in search of a better life were the Konrads, including children John and Ilsa, who would go on to swimming glory for their adopted country. John and Ilsa both set world records in the pool, with John winning 1500m gold at the 1960 Rome Olympics.



England Athletics 10,000m Walks Championship

Saturday April 12th, 2025

Northamptonshire (Venue to be confirmed)

World Athletics permit to be sought

Are you looking to race in Europe and the UK this coming year? Looking to get some more World Athletics qualifying points? If so, this race may be worth considering. 2024 saw competitors from not only the UK but also the Republic of Ireland, Spain and Latvia. We hope to attract larger fields this time around. The 2024 version was held under a WA permit.

The race will be held at one of the four suitable tracks in the county (currently negotiating the specific venue).

The program will include open events at, 1000m, 2000m, 5000m and 10,000m. Appropriate qualifying standards exist on the latter.

There may be some assistance available for accommodation, dependent on number and type of competitor.

If interested, please contact me (Mark Wall) at:

marnwal@hotmail.com

MARCIADALMONDO & O MARCHADOR ROUNDUP

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

- Monday, January 6, 2025 - **Meeting «António Monteiro» on the short track of Pombal (results)**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2025/01/meeting-antonio-monteiro-na-pista-curta.html>
- Sunday, January 5, 2025 - **FPA announces criteria for the European National Walking Championships – Poděbrady 2025**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2025/01/fpa-divulga-criterios-para-o-europeu-de.html>
- Saturday, January 4, 2025 - **Race walking in São Silvestre on a short track – Jablonec nad Nisou 2024**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2025/01/a-marcha-atletica-na-sao-silvestre-em.html>
- Friday, January 3, 2025 - **Daniel Morilla and Ainhoa Pinedo win «Criterium Navidad de Nerja» opening 2025**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2025/01/daniel-morilla-e-ainhoa-pinedo-vencem.html>
- Thursday, January 2, 2025 - **Hiroto Jusho and Sumika Tani triumph at Tokyo New Year's Festival**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2025/01/hiroto-jusho-e-sumika-tani-com-triunfos.html>
- Tuesday, December 31, 2024 - **Tiago Ramos has a good start to the season at the Faro track**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/tiago-ramos-com-bom-inicio-de-temporada.html>
- Saturday, December 28, 2024 - **EMA - Marie Astrid Monmessin and Edoardo Alfieri, the best European Masters athletes in 2024**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/ema-marie-astrid-monmessin-e-edoardo.html>
- Friday, December 27, 2024 - **25 new International Race Walking Judges on World Athletics' Golden Panel**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/24-novos-juizes-internacionais-de.html>

- Sunday, December 29, 2024 - **World Athletics ratifies Japanese Masatora Kawano's world record in the 35 km walk**
https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/world-athletics-ratifica-o-recorde.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawHeh5RleHRuA2F1bQIxMAABHABvch8uekjv-p8WqXndr4urGGKA1xHcLW7qhmJZNhbrI30UJaQEFcNipw_aem_HY911ZlhtYa0VnctEgctYw
- Thursday, December 26, 2024 - **José Ignacio Aledo breaks M45 world record for the 3,000 m march (Castellón 2024)**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/jose-ignacio-aledo-bate-recorde-mundial.html>
- Tuesday, December 24, 2024 - **Setúbal and Santarém Race Walking Championships, in Barreiro (results)**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/campeonatos-de-marcha-atletica-de.html>
- Monday, December 23, 2024 - **The march of the Porto and North Zone championships met in Felgueiras (results)**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/a-marcha-dos-campeonatos-do-porto-e-da.html>
- Sunday, December 22, 2024 - **The 2nd stage of the Mario Gatti Challenge on the short track in Rennes (results)**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/a-2-etapa-do-challenge-mario-gatti-na.html>
- Saturday, December 21, 2024 - **Caio Bonfim and Yang Jiayu the champions of the World Race Walking Circuit**
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/caio-bonfim-e-yang-jiayu-os-campeoes-do.html>
Brazilian Caio Bonfim and Chinese Yang Jiayu triumphed in this year's World Race Walking Circuit, the equivalent of the Diamond League, in a combination that brings together the three best events performed by the athletes, allowing them, in this case, to each win a monetary prize worth 25 thousand USD.

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.

** H&T Online - NOTICE BOARD **

To all present and aspiring Race Walking coaches

I am writing to you to inform you that Athletics Victoria have assigned a **Racewalking Practical Coaching course** as part of their coaching courses. It can be accessed through the AV members portal, search under Coaching courses. The heading about is also a link to the information page. The course will be conducted at Mentone athletic track on **Saturday 1st March from 1.00 – 4.30pm**.

The Racewalking course is designed to enhance your coaching expertise, focusing on both technical and practical aspects of the discipline. It covers key aspects of coaching, including mastering correct technique, implementing drills to refine mechanics, addressing common technical faults, understanding biomechanics to improve performance and prevent injuries, and planning training programs tailored to athletes' needs and goals. This course will equip you with the tools and knowledge to coach race walkers effectively, improving their technical proficiency and competitive performance.

This course is open to accredited coaches and contributes credits toward Level 3 Performance Coach accreditation. Eligibility for the course is anyone who has a Level 1 or Level 2 coaching qualification.

For those who would like to begin their coaching journey and be able to attend the racewalking practical course, there are a few courses being conducted by Athletics Victoria that are available on their coaching page as part of the members portal. I would recommend applying for one of these courses before applying for the racewalk coaching course.

My recommendation is:

- **Level 2 Development coaching course** – This is mostly online and has a practical component on Saturday 9th February.

However, the other course options are:

- **Level 1 Youth course**
- **Recreational Running Course Level 1**

I am looking forward to seeing coaches at the first racewalking practical course for many years.

Mark Donahoo
Level 5 Racewalking Coach
VRWC Club coach

Editor's Note:

Club coach **Mark Donahoo** has done an enormous amount of work to get a **practical** coaching course, specifically for race walking, up and operating under the auspices of Athletics Victoria and, by extension, Athletics Australia.

This is something of which aspiring and practicing coaches have been starved for well over a decade ... a development pathway for present race walking coaches and a means of introducing the basics of race walk coaching to novice coaches, so that they may start their own development journey.

There is no way to be sure of how many prospective walkers out there (especially at Little Athletics level) have withered on the vine for want of informed coaches and mentors. Some are noticed at their centres and are clearly 'naturals', or are at least good at it or just want to do more. LAVic centres with little or no race walk coaching expertise in their ranks are urged to avail themselves of this opportunity by advertising it around their clubs.

Nor are the youngsters the only ones in need. Adults of all ages, including those eligible for Masters competition, need proper coaching advice to help them get a foot in the door to our sport, especially if time, injury or circumstance have excluded them from whatever sports they played before. We have to reach these budding walkers and help them grow. Mark's course outline below will help you to embark upon that journey:



WHAT'S UP AHEAD?

Victorian & National Key Dates – 2024/2025

Sat 11 Jan 2025	AVSL Round #7 – Meadowglen International Athletics Stadium, Epping
Sun 12 Jan 2025	VRWC Summer program races #3 – Middle Park
Sat-Sun 25-26 Jan 2025	Supernova: World Athletics Race Walking Tour (Silver) – Canberra, ACT
Fri-Sun 14-16 Feb 2025	AV T&F championships Week 1 (U17-U20, 40+ & 60+) – Lakeside Stadium
Sun 16 Feb 2025	Australian 20km Road walk Championships – venue TBC
Fri-Sun 21-23 Feb 2025	AV T&F championships Week 2 (Open, U13-U16) – Lakeside Stadium
Fri-Sun 4-13 Apr 2025	Athletics Australia T&F c'ships – Perth, WA

International Dates

21-23 Mar 2025	WA World Indoor T&F Championships – Nanjing, CHN
4 May 2025	4th Korzeniowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup (WA Gold) – Warsaw, POL
18 May 2025	European Race Walking Team Championships – Podebrady, CZE
16-27 July 2025	World University Games – Bochum, GER
13-21 Sep 2025	20 th World Athletics Championships – Tokyo, JPN
30 Oct-15 Nov 2026	Youth Olympic Games – Dakar, SEN

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