

VWRC / AUSTRALIAN CENTURIONS 24 HOUR WALK, MIDDLE PARK, 4-5 OCTOBER 2014

The weekend of 4-5 October 2014 saw the annual Australian Centurions 24 Hour walk, hosted once again by the Victorian Race Walking Club at Middle Park in inner Melbourne. Alas, the fields were disappointingly small (3 in the 24 Hour, 1 in the 12 Hour and 4 in the 6 Hour) but those who did turn out were well prepared and ready to race!

The gun, which was fired at midday on Saturday, signalled the start for our 24 Hour entrants (Terry and Karyn O'Neill and Saul Richardson) and our sole 12 Hour entrant (Michelle Thompson). Unfortunately, they had to endure a long afternoon of very blustery and hot conditions, with the temperature peaking around 30°C, and it was not until early evening that the weather abated and the cooler night time hours offered some relief. The 6 Hour walkers (John Kilmartin, Clarrie Jack, Steve Jordan and Ken Carter) joined the fray at the 18 hour mark, walking the final 6 hours of the event on Sunday morning and finishing when the final gun was fired at midday on the Sunday.

It takes a lot of people to run such an event so special acknowledgement to the long list of VRWC helpers - Bill and Heather Carr, Damien Elms, David Armstrong, David Cash, David Smyth, Duncan and Christian Knox, Ian Laurie, Liz Feldman, Mark Donahoo, Marlaine Stanway (thanks for breakfast Marlaine!), Michael Bodey, Peter Vysma, Ralph Bennett, Sandra Geisler, Simon Baker, Stuart Cooper, Stuart Kollmorgen, Susan and Lucas Taylor, Terry and Kyle Swan and Tony Doran . It is a big list indeed!

24 Hour Walk

1.	Karyn O'Neill (C 45)	VIC	133.750 km
2.	Saul Richardson	NSW	100.000 km
3.	Terry O'Neill (C 18)	VIC	72.500 km

12 Hour Walk

1.	Michelle Thompson (C 58)	VIC	101.660 km
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6 Hour Walk

1.	Clarrie Jack (C 4)	VIC	50.952 km
2.	John Kilmartin	VIC	50.567 km
3.	Ken Carter	VIC	25.874 km
4.	Steve Jordan (C 64)	VIC	17.455 km

Racewalking Australia 100km Championships

1.	Michelle Thompson C 58)	VIC	11:48:14
2.	Karyn O'Neill (C 45)	VIC	15:55:30
1.	Saul Richardson	NSW	17:37:23

And now to a report from our Australian Centurions president Terry O'Neill (C 18)

As President of the Australian Centurion Walkers, I would like to thank Tim Erickson for his hard work in hosting this event. Although the numbers were small the event still went ahead, mainly due to Tim's dedication, but also a big thanks must go to the many VRWC members and helpers like Peter Vysma, Ralph Bennett, Stu Cooper, Terry Swan, Ian Laurie, Michael Bodey, Marlaine Stanway and Simon Baker. There were many others also who came along and helped out with the running of this event. My thanks to you all.

The conditions at the start did not favour the walkers what with the temperature rising and a very strong wind to contend with. The highlight for me was **Michelle Thompson** in the 12 Hour walk. She set a conservative pace at the start but when the temperature cooled she kept powering on to record a distance of 101.66km for the 12 hours - a fantastic achievement.

The 6 Hour walk saw a classic tussle between **John Kilmartin** and **Clarrie Jack**, nothing separating them for 4 hours until John had to have a pit stop. Clarrie saw his opportunity, put the pace on, built a handy lead and held it to the finish. He had everyone fooled - believing he had not done much training, we were all expecting him to slow down towards the finish but the seasoned campaigner was still increasing his lead at the end. Both Clarrie and John walking in excess of 50 km and it was a PB For John. **Ken Carter** was a finisher as usual and it was great to see **Steve Jordan** fronting up to support the event after very serious health issues.

The 24 Hour event saw only 3 competitors, all regular ultra walking supporters - **Terry O'Neill**, **Karyn O'Neill** and **Saul Richardson**. Terry built a handy lead early but conditions, combined with a very tight back and stomach problems, forced him to slow and he had to retire after 10 hours. Karyn and Saul continued to brave the strong winds, both going through their own difficult stages. Saul was content to complete 100km and then retired, just before the 16 hour mark. leaving Karyn from then on as the sole 24 Hour walker still on the track. She also had to have time off but gallantly returned to the track in the final hours to build a few more kms. In the finish it was Karyn who was the overall winner with 133.75km ahead of Saul with 100.00 km and Terry with 72.50km.

The event also saw the annual Racewalking Australia 100km walk championships which were won this time around by Michelle

Thompson and Saul Richardson.

Terry O'Neill (C18)
President Centurion Race walkers.

Thanks to Terry Swan for his photos (see <http://www.vrwc.org.au/coppermine/thumbnails.php?album=186>)



Michelle Thompson, Karyn O'Neill, Saul Richardson and Terry O'Neill (photos Terry Swan)



John Kilmartin and Clarrie Jack (photo Tim Erickson)