



Long Term Development of Junior Race Walkers

Planning and Preparing for Future Success

Tim Erickson
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VICTORIAN RACE WALKING CLUB



Case Study: Chris Erickson



1994



1997



2008

The Ultimate Aim

Personal Bests are an accepted measure of improvement. The chart shows Chris's yearly improvement in the various distances over which he has raced.

Year	Age	1500 m	3000 m	5000 m	10km	15 km	20 km	30 km	50 km
1996	14	6:47 *	14:49 *						
1997	14	6:38 *	13:32 *	23:52 *					
1998	16	6:16 *	13:29 *	23:09 *	48:36 *	1:19:01			
1999	17	6:14 *	13:18 *	22:20 *	47:32 *	1:15:04	1:40:58		
2000	18				47:03 *	1:11:17			
2001	19		13:06 *						
2002	20		12:55 *	22:12 *	46:27	1:10:32	1:34:31	2:38:36	
2003	21		12:27 *	21:30 *	45:02 *			2:27:04	4:19:48
2004	22					1:08:34	1:31:33	2:23:54	4:14:16
2005	23	5:50 *	11:55 *	20:00 *	43:46	1:06:09	1:28:22	2:15:04	4:03:42
2006	24				42:37 *	1:04:39	1:26:34	2:15:00	3:58:22
2007	25		11:39 *	19:40.27 *	42:22	1:03:36	1:24:58	2:13:52	
2008	26	5:45 *	11.36.6 *	19:32.64 *	41:14	1:01:55	1:22:55		3:55:25
2009	27	5:36 *	11:32.98 *	19:25.98 *	41:09		1:22:53	2:12:34	

* indicates track performance

Good Junior but not a Champion

- **VLAA Under Age** **1 Gold, 1 Silver**
- **AV Under Age** **13 Gold, 4 Silver**
- **AA Under Age** **5 Silver, 2 Bronze**
- **AFRWC Under Age** **1 Gold, 3 Silver, 1 Bronze**

Compare with Dion Russell

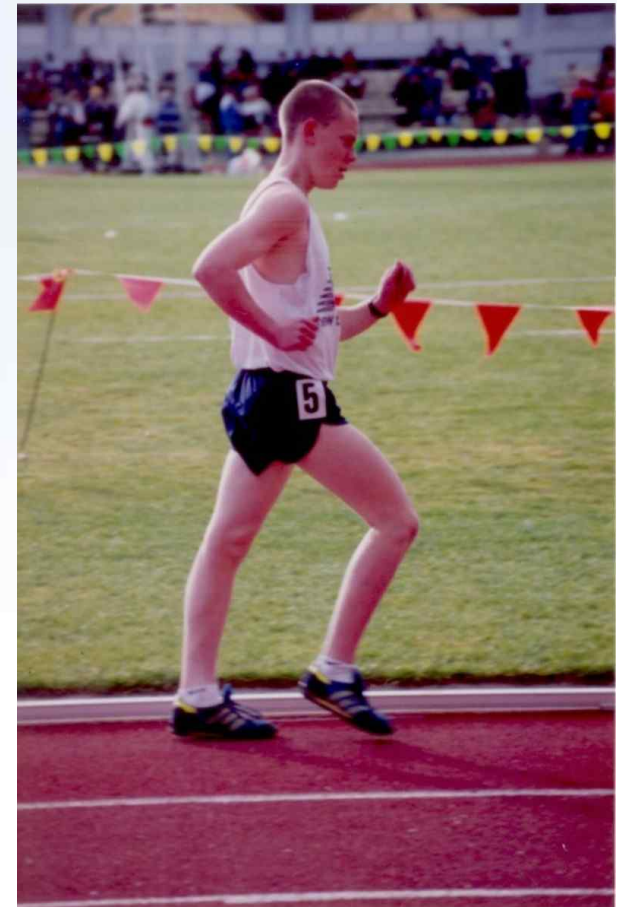
- **37 Victorian Underage Records**
 - **21 Underage Vic Titles**
 - **17 Underage Australian titles**

from U16-U20 in an era of high quality and intensive competition

(More about Dion later)

Training Progression – Detailed Analysis

The following sample sessions indicate a progressive workload increase over a long period of time.



1966 (age 14)

Chris's first year of training as a 14 year old in 1966 saw him mixing racewalking with football umpiring (mainly running based). The following training week, in August 1996, was typical of training load at that time.

Mon 12/08/96	Warmup, 2x200, 2x400 (1:45, 1:46), 2x200, 2x400 (1:45, 1:52), warm-down	4 km walk	
Tue 13/08/96	Football umpire training	5 km run	
Wed 14/08/96	Easy road-walk	5 km walk	
Thu 15/08/96	Football umpire training	5 km run	
Fri 16/08/96	Rest	-	
Sat 17/07/96	Football umpiring	5 km run	
Sun 18/08/96	Victorian U16 4km Champ, 1 st , 20:36	5 km walk	29 km

1998 (age 16)

Over the next two years, Chris continued to mix football umpiring and walking. The following week is typical of a non-umpiring week, when he could concentrate on his walking. Note that during an umpiring week the emphasis was on running rather than walking

Mon 01/06/98	7km road walk at a steady pace	7 km walk	
Tue 02/06/98	7km road walk with surges	7 km walk	
Wed 03/06/98	Easy 6km run	6 km run	
Thu 04/06/98	7km road walk over hilly course	7 km walk	
Fri 05/06/98	Rest day	-	
Sat 06/06/98	Easy 4km stroll	4 km walk	
Sun 07/06/98	Canberra Carnival – U17 5km - 1 st 23:21	6 km walk	35 km

1999 (age 17)

By 1999, Chris had stopped his football umpiring and had moved into to a full walking regime, albeit with a weekly run. However he still trained only 4-5 days per week due to school commitments (it was his Y12 year). A typical weekly schedule building up to a major race is shown below.

Mon 09/08/99	Rest day	-	
Tue 10/08/99	7km road walk steady pace	7 km walk	
Wed 11/08/99	8km run	8 km run	
Thu 12/08/99	16km road walk	16 km walk	
Fri 13/08/99	Rest day	-	
Sat 14/08/99	Rest day	-	
Sun 15/08/99	AV U20 20km championship - 1 st 1:40:57	21 km walk	52 km

2000 and 2001 saw Chris at university with a restricted training load of 4-5 days per week and an approximate weekly total that continued in the 50-60km range.

It was not until **2002** at (**age 20**) that he started to include the occasional longer walk in his weekly regime (but definitely not every week). His first Canberra 20M (2:44) and his PB of 1:34 for 20km were done in a weekly training level of 60km and 4-5 days training. This was definitely a case of under-training.

In **August 2003 (age 21)**, Chris started to prepare for his first 50km walk and embarked on a much more rigorous 7 day a week training regime, averaging 100km for the next 13 weeks.

Mon 03/11/03	10km run	10 km run	
Tues 04/11/03	8x1km walks at Aberfeldie Track (4:36, 30, 25, 24, 23, 22, 22, 22)	12 km walk	
Wed 05/11/03	14 km tempo walking	14 km walk	
Thur 06/11/03	State League 3km (12:35) & 2 laps of Tan	14 km walk	
Fri 07/11/03	15km steady walking	15 km walk	
Sat 08/11/03	Easy 7km walking	7km walk	
Sun 09/11/03	VRWC 30km – 2:31	30 km walk	104 km

The following table shows that Chris, even now, is not a particularly large-mileage walker compared to many international 50 km walkers. He started from a base of 100 km per week and has progressed to a current base of 150-160 km per week. Note the gradual increase in both average weekly mileage and biggest weekly load. His biggest weekly load is normally only slightly bigger than his average weekly load – this is a pattern of consistent training with very little difference between big weeks and easy weeks. Even now, easy weeks are the exception to the rule rather than the norm.

Date	Age	Event	Actual Time	Target Time	Av. km/week over previous 3 months	Biggest week	Smallest week
Dec 2003	22	AA 50 km	4:19:48	< 4:20:00	100 km	107 km	90 km
May 2004	22	World Cup 50 km	4:14:16	< 4:15:00	110	117	74
Oct 2004	22	AA 50 km	4:39:46	< 4:10:00	120	133	87
May 2005	23	AA 50 km	4:03:42	< 4:05:00	130	140	95
Sept 2005	23	VRWC 50 km	DNF		120	140	97
Mar 2006	24	Comm Games 50 km	3:58:22	< 4:00:00	140	158	87
Dec 2006	25	AA 50 km	DNF		150	170	85
Mar 2007	26	Dudince 50km	4:04:00	<3:58:00	140	162	84
Dec 2007	26	AA 50km	3:59:02	<3:58:00	140	174	98
Dec 2008	27	AA 50km	3:55:30	<3:56:00	140	173	73

Life as an Elite Walker

- The following 2 week block was done while in the AIS altitude house (14 hours spent at altitude per day) in **June 2008 (age 26)** with the altitude set to 3000m. It was a very hard block in the buildup to the 2008 Olympics!

Mon 16/06/08	AM – 20km walk around Lake Ginninderra – 1:38:41 PM – 10km run around AIS	20 walk 10 run	
Tue 17/06/08	AM – 19km on Mt Stromlo course (hills) – 1:34:47 (19:28 for final 4km climb) PM – easy 30 min run	19 walk 7 run	
Wed 18/06/08	AM – walk around city loop – 25km in 2:08:20 PM – Easy 30min run	25 walk 7 run	
Thu 19/06/08	AM – 10km run from home	10 run	
Fri 20/06/08	AM – fartlek 1500m/500m float x 7: 6:34/31/26/23/22/14/16 PM – 10km walk	18 walk 10 walk	
Sat 21/06/08	Long walk around LBG/City – 35km in 2:50:24	25 walk	
Sun 22/06/08	Easy 10km run	10 run	172

Life as an Elite Walker - continued

- The following 2 week block was done while in the AIS altitude house (14 hours spent at altitude per day) in **June 2008 (age 26)** with the altitude set to 3000m. It was a very hard block in the buildup to the 2008 Olympics!

Mon 23/06/08	AM – 25km walk around Lake Ginnindeera PM – 10km run	25 walk 10 run
Tue 24/06/08	AM – a 60 min walk in heat tent – 11km (hot and humid) PM – 10km run	11 walk 10 run
Wed 25/06/08	AM - 28km walk around LBG and city – 1:19:21	28 walk
Thu 26/06/08	AM – Easy 10km run	10 run
Fri 27/06/08	AM – fartlek 1km/500m/2km/500m x 3 + 1km: 4:12/8:28/4:12/8:28/4:12/8:32/4:11 PM – 10km walk	17 walk 10 walk
Sat 28/06/08	AM – 34km walk around Lake Ginnindeera / city – 2:51:45	34 walk
Sun 29/06/08	Easy 40min walk	7 walk
		162

Dion Russell – Training at age 18

This training week, done in November 1993, was typical of the high volume and intensity training of Dion Russell in the year before he went to the AIS in Canberra (as an 18 year old). It is a good example of life at the other end of the junior spectrum – a highly talented walker with great ability and able to absorb a big training load at a relatively young age. This training program was supplemented by 2-3 weight sessions per week and 1-2 swimming sessions per week.

Mon 01/11/93	Track	8 x 1km reps @ 4:15 with 5 min recovery	12 walk	
Tue 02/11/93	W'folds	3 laps of steady/medium walking with sprints up hills Speed ~ 26:00 per 5.5km lap	16.5 walk	
Wed 03/11/93	Track	4 x (5x400 at 1:40). 100m recovery between each rep and 5 mins recovery between each set	12 walk	
Thu 04/11/93		Rest		
Fri 05/11/93	W'folds	Easy out and back walk	12 walk	
Sat 06/11/93	Birra	8 x (6 mins easy/medium/hard)	12 walk	
Sun 07/11/93		Long walk session	25 walk	89.5

General Principles

- Socialize young walkers to longer distances
- Gradually move from track to road based training
- **U13-U14**
 - occasional 5km race
 - 3 days/week walking plus cross training
- **U16**
 - occasional 10km
 - 4 days/week walking plus cross training
- **Prepare for upper teens**
 - U16-U17 Boys -> 10km
 - U17-U18 Girls -> 10km
- Find training group with longer weekly social walk
 - eg Gells Park 50min walk each Sunday

What Next?

- **What's on**
 - IAAF World Champs (elite seniors)
 - IAAF World Youth Champs
 - Nothing much on for U19-U23
- **December Camp at Falls Creek**
 - Either 14-24 Dec or 26 Dec - 5 Jan
 - Aimed at developing U17-U19 age group
 - Partially funded based on standard or else self funded
- **Plan out your summer**
 - Include the U20 10km event in Hobart on 19 Feb
- **International Tour in 2010**
 - Asian Tour - Hong Kong 10km, etc – April OR
 - European Tour - April/May

Racewalking – a Multi Faceted Sport

Few disciplines require a wide a skillset as racewalking

- **Technique and rhythm**
- **Flexibility and mobility**
- **Strength and strength endurance**
- **Aerobic and anaerobic capacity**
- **Speed and speed endurance**

General Rules for Longevity

- **Work within the walker's constraints – time availability, current studies, physical development, goals, commitment**
- **Identify the walker's strengths and weaknesses – eg lack of endurance, style issues, core strength issues**
- **Find your walker's zone – that critical mass of training beyond which the body enters a chronic fatigue zone and an overtrained state**
 - **Young athletes need ample rest periods**
 - **Style is just as important as mileage**
 - **Balanced diet**
 - **Good training and racing shoes**

Work With Your Walker – Good Practices

- **Map out the year with major/minor competition goals**
- **Periodize the year into training phases where certain areas can be emphasised and others maintained**
- **Vary the training load and intensity during the year**
- **Always schedule an easy day after a hard track session**
 - **Walker to keep a training diary**
 - **Walker to measure morning heart rate**
 - **Have post race review with your walker**

Longer Term Rules

- **Gradually increase mileage and intensity year by year**
 - **Train consistently**
- **Don't be paranoid about mileage or missing a session**
 - **Aim to improve each year**
- **Aim to still be walking well in 5 years time**

Strategies

- **Schedule rewards – interstate trips for RWA/AA/Schools meets**
- **Use weekly club races as part of the training plan**
- **Arrange training with others where possible**
 - **Get your coaching accreditation**

Overuse & repetition Lead to Staleness or Injury

- **Rotate or vary session makeup**
- **Vary training environment**
- **Offer options to your walkers**
- **Reward good performances**

Signs of Overtraining

- **Can't sleep**
- **Irritable**
- **Elevated resting heart beat**
- **Can't do quality intensive sessions**
- **Lack of rhythm or coordination**
 - **Poor appetite**
- **Boredom or lack of motivation**
 - **Night sweats**



The Beginning

Timetable

10:00-10:45

Simon Baker

10:45-11:30

Tim Erickson

11:30-11:45

Morning Tea

11:45-12:15

Panel: Simon, Mark & Tim

12:15-12:30

Michael Poulton