

## AUSTRALIA'S SUB 4 HOUR 50KM WALKERS

As part of the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown, I asked 5 questions each week for Heel & Toe readers to consider. Question 63 was the following:

**63. Who was the first Australian to break 4 hours for the 50km walk. And as a related question, which Australian walker has broken 4 hours for the 50km on the most occasions?**

Let's start with a look at the progression in the Australian 50km Record, from Jack Coffey's inaugural record in 1930 right through to Nathan Deakes who set the current record (it was a World Record at the time!) in 2006. The table shows that it was Willi Sawall who, in 1979, recorded a time of 3:56:07 to become the first Australian under 4 hours.

4:59:40	Jack Coffey	1930 Alexander Cup 50km	Sydney	Sep 1930	1
4:55:36	Jack Cummins	1934 Alexander Cup 50km	Melbourne	Oct 1934	1
4:51:05	Leslie Hellyer	1955 Alexander Cup 50km	Sydney	Sep 1955	1
4:40:25	Ray Smith	1956 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Sep 1956	2
4:24:24	Ted Allsopp	1956 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Sep 1956	1
4:23:38	Ted Allsopp	1957 Alexander Cup 50km	Melbourne	Sep 1957	1
4:22:41.8*	Ted Allsopp	1958 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Aug 1958	1
4:20:23.8*	Ted Allsopp	1959 VAWC 50km Track Walk	Melbourne	Aug 1959	1
4:22:37	Ted Allsopp	1959 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Sep 1959	1
4:17:07	Bob Gardiner	1964 Olympic 50km Walk	Tokyo, JAP	Oct 1964	5
4:14:17.0*	Bob Gardiner	1968 VAWC Track 50km Championship	Melbourne	Aug 1968	1
4:12:20	Willi Sawall	1976 VAWC 50km Championship	Melbourne	Jul 1976	1
4:06:39.0*	Willi Sawall	1976 VAWC 50km Track Race	Melbourne	Aug 1976	1
3:56:07	Willi Sawall	1979 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 1979	1
3:54:07	Willi Sawall	1979 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Jul 1979	1
3:51:08	Willi Sawall	1979 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Eschborn, GER	Sep 1979	10
3:46:34	Willi Sawall	1980 50km Olympic Trial	Adelaide	Apr 1980	1
3:44:07	Simon Baker	1988 Olympic Games 50km	Seoul, KOR	Aug 1988	6
3:43:13	Simon Baker	1989 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Barcelone, ESP	May 1989	1
3:43:50.0*	Simon Baker	1989 Victorian 50km Track Championship	Melbourne	Sept 1989	1 Comm R
3:39:43	Nathan Deakes	2003 Australian 50km Championship	Albert Park, Melb	Dec 2003	1
3:35:47	Nathan Deakes	2006 Australian 50km Championship	Geelong, VIC	Dec 2006	1 World R

\* Track

Since that first time in 1979, 17 further Australians have bettered 4 hours, taking the grand total to 18. The following table shows the PB for each of these walkers.

Rank	Time	Name	State	DOB	Place	Location	Date	Age
1	3:35:47	Nathan Deakes	VIC	17/08/1977	1	Geelong	02/12/2006	29
2	3:36:53	Jared Tallent	VIC	17/01/1984	2	London, GBR	11/07/2012	28
3	3:43:13	Simon Baker	VIC	06/02/1958	1	L'Hospitalet, ESP	28/05/1989	31
4	3:43:39	Luke Adams	NSW	22/10/1976	6	Berlin, GER	21/08/2009	32
5	3:46:34	Willi Sawall	VIC	07/11/1941	1	Adelaide	06/04/1980	38
6	3:47:34	Dion Russell	VIC	08/05/1975	1	Melbourne	13/12/1998	23
7	3:48:40	Chris Erickson	VIC	01/12/1981	10	Rio de Janiero, BRA	19-08-2016	34
8	3:52:49	Adam Rutter	NSW	24/12/1986	2	Melbourne	16/12/2007	20
9	3:52:58	Rhydian Cowley	VIC	04/01/1991	1	Melbourne	01/12/2019	28
10	3:53:19	Duane Cousins	VIC	13/07/1973	2	Geelong	02/12/2006	23
11	3:53:23	Andrew Jachno	VIC	13/04/1962	19	Seoul, KOR	30/09/1988	31
12	3:54:37	Liam Murphy	SA	05/06/1979	1	Melbourne	13/05/2001	21
13	3:55:03	Brendon Reading	ACT	26-01-1989	4	Melbourne	13-12-2015	26
14	3:55:05	Darren Bown	SA	03/06/1974	2	Melbourne	13/05/2001	26
15	3:55:17	Ian Rayson	NSW	04/02/1988	4	Melbourne	13-12-2015	27
16	3:57:20	Michael Harvey	VIC	05/12/1962	1	Hawkesbury	10/07/1993	30
17	3:57:51	Dominic McGrath	VIC	04/06/1972	2	Leamington, GBR	23/04/2000	27
18	3:58:30	Dariusz Wojcik	VIC	24/09/1959	1	Melbourne	26/01/1992	32

But which of them walked under 4 hours on the most occasions? That honour goes to Jared Tallent, with 15 sub-4's. The full list of all 18 walkers follows.

**Jared Tallent - 15**

1.	3:55:08	2006 Australian 50km Championship	Geelong, VIC	Dec 2006	3
2.	3:44:45	2007 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	Dec 2007	1
3.	3:39:27	2008 Olympic 50km Walk	Beijing, CHN	Aug 2008	2
4.	3:44:50	2009 IAAF World Championships	Berlin, GER	Aug 2009	6
5.	3:38:56	2009 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Nov 2009	1
6.	3:54:55	2010 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Chihuahua, MEX	May 2009	3
7.	3:43:36	2011 IAAF World Championships	Daegu, KOR	Aug 2011	2
8.	3:49:33	2011 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2011	1
9.	3:40:32	2012 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Saransk, RUS	May 2012	1
10.	3:36:53	2012 Olympic 50km Walk	London, GBR	Aug 2012	1
11.	3:40:03	2013 IAAF World Championships	Moscow, RUS	Aug 2013	2
12.	3:42:48	2014 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Taicang, CHN	May 2014	2
13.	3:42:17	2015 IAAF World Championships	Beijing, CHN	Aug 2015	2
14.	3:42:46	2016 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Rome, ITA	May 2016	1
15.	3:41:16	2016 Olympic 50km Walk	Rio de Janiero, BRA	Aug 2016	2

**Chris Erickson - 13**

1.	3:58:22	2006 Commonwealth Games 50km	Melbourne	Mar 2006	3
2.	3:59:20	2006 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	La Coruna, ESP	May 2006	26
3.	3:59:02	2008 Australian Olympic 50km Trial	Melbourne	16/12/2007	5
4.	3:55:30	2008 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2008	1
5.	3:54:53	2011 Dudince 50km	Dudince, SLV	Mar 2011	11
6.	3:51:57	2011 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2011	3
7.	3:55:24	2013 Chinese 50km Championship	Beijing, CNH	Mar 2013	1
8.	3:49:41	2013 IAAF World Championships	Moscow	Aug 2013	16
9.	3:49:33	2014 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Taicang, CHN	May 2014	8
10.	3:56:38	2014 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2014	1
11.	3:51:26	2015 IAAF World Championships	Beijing, CHN	Aug 2015	13
12.	3:54:10	2015 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2015	2
13.	3:48:40	2016 Olympic Games 50km	Rio de Janiero, BRA	Aug 2016	10

**Nathan Deakes - 12**

1.	3:52:33	1999 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1999	E1
2.	3:47:29	2000 Olympic Games 50km	Sydney	Set 2000	6
3.	3:43:43	2000 Naumburg International 50km Race	Naumburg, GER	Apr 2001	1
4.	3:52:40	2002 Commonwealth Game 50km	Manchester, GBR	Aug 2002	1
5.	3:39:43	2003 Australian 50km Championship	Albert Park, Melb	Dec 2003	1
6.	3:47:51	2005 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2005	1
7.	3:42:53	2006 Commonwealth Games 50km	Melbourne	Mar 2006	1
8.	3:35:47	2006 Australian 50km Championship	Geelong, VIC	Dec 2006	1 World Record
9.	3:43:53	2007 IAAF World Championships	Osaka, JAP	Sep 2007	1
10.	3:48:02	2011 Dudince 50km	Dudince, SLV	Mar 2011	6
11.	3:50:34	2011 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2011	2
12.	3:48:45	2012 Olympic Games	London, GBR	Aug 2012	19

**Duane Cousins - 9**

1.	3:54:38	VRWC 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1995	1
2.	3:56:17	1996 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 1996	1
3.	3:57:40	1997 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1997	2
4.	3:59:34	1999 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1999	3
5.	3:59:29	2001 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2001	3
6.	3:59:27	2002 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2002	2
7.	3:59:33	2003 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2003	2
8.	3:53:19	2006 Australian 50km Championship	Geelong, VIC	02/12/2006	2
9.	3:55:57	2008 Australian Olympic 50km Trial	Melbourne	16/12/2007	4

**Simon Baker - 9**

1.	3:58:51	1987 VAWC Christmas Road Meet	Melbourne	Dec 1987	1
2.	3:44:07	1988 Olympic Games 50km	Seoul, KOR	Aug 1988	6
3.	3:43:13	1989 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Barcelone, ESP	May 1989	1
4.	3:57:36	1989 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Aug 1989	1
5.	3:43:50	1989 Victorian 50km Track Championship	Melbourne (Box Hill)	Sept 1990	1 Comm Record

6.	3:46:36	1991 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	San Jose, USA	May 1991	2
7.	3:58:36	1993 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Monterey, MEX	Apr 1993	7
8.	3:57:11	1993 IAAF World Championships	Stuttgart, GER	Aug 1993	14
9.	3:55:46	1996 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 1996	1
<b>Luke Adams - 7</b>					
1.	3:53:19	2007 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2007	3
2.	3:47:45	2008 Olympic Games 50km	Beijing, CHN	Aug 2008	10
3.	3:43:39	2009 IAAF World Championships	Berlin, GER	Aug 2009	5
4.	3:47:34	2010 Australia 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2010	1
5.	3:45:31	2011 IAAF World Championships	Daegu, KOR	Sep 2011	4
6.	3:53:41	2012 Olympic Games 50km	London, GBR	Aug 2012	23
7.	3:57:24	2012 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2012	1
<b>Willi Sawall - 6</b>					
1.	3:56:07	1979 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 1979	1
2.	3:54:07	1979 Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Jul 1979	1
3.	3:51:08	1979 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Eschborn, GER	Sep 1979	10
4.	3:46:34	1980 50km Olympic Trial	Adelaide	Apr 1980	1
5.	3:53:55	1981 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Aug 1981	1
6.	3:59:48	1986 Australian 50km Championship	Adelaide	Aug 1986	1 (at age 44)
<b>Dion Russell - 4</b>					
1.	3:48:12	1997 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1997	1
2.	3:47:34	1998 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1998	1
3.	3:59:23	1999 IAAF World Championships	Seville, ESP	Aug 1999	13
4.	3:52:33	1999 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1999	E1
<b>Liam Murphy - 3</b>					
1.	3:54:37	2001 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2001	1
2.	3:55:20	2002 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2002	1
3.	3:56:45	2002 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Turn, ITA	Oct 2002	15
<b>Ian Rayson - 3</b>					
1.	3:59:43	2010 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2010	2
2.	3:57:55	2011 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2011	4
3.	3:55:17	2015 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2015	3
<b>Dominic McGrath - 2</b>					
1.	3:59:15	1997 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 1997	3
2.	3:57:51	European Grand Prix	Leamington, GBR	Apr 2000	?
<b>Adam Rutter - 1</b>					
1.	3:52:49	2007 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2007	2
<b>Rhydian Cowley - 1</b>					
1.	3:52:38	2019 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2019	1
<b>Andrew Jachno - 1</b>					
1.	3:53:33	1988 Olympic Games 50km	Seoul, KOR	Aug 1988	19
<b>Brendon Reading - 1</b>					
1.	3:55:03	2015 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	Dec 2015	3
<b>Darren Bown - 1</b>					
1.	3:55:05	2001 Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne	May 2001	2
<b>Michael Harvey - 1</b>					
1.	3:57:02	1993 Australian 50km Championship	Richmond, NSW	July 1993	1
<b>Dariusz Wojcik - 1</b>					
1.	3:58:30	1992 Olympic 50km Trial	Melbourne	Jan 1992	1

And which Australian walker has completed the most 50km walks overall. That honour goes to Michael Harvey with 32 finishes. The list reads as follows

1.	05/09/1982	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	5 <sup>th</sup>	4:46:37
2.	09/07/1983	IAAF Racewalking WC Trial	Holdsworth, NSW	1 <sup>st</sup>	4:18:09
3.	18/03/1984	Australian 50km Championship	Adelaide, SA	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:05:42
4.	11/08/1984	Olympic 50km Championship	Los Angeles, USA	11 <sup>th</sup>	4:09:18
5.	07/07/1985	IAAF Racewalking WC 40km trial		4 <sup>th</sup>	4:31:18
6.	17/08/1986	Australian 50km Championship	Adelaide, SA	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:04:27
7.	08/03/1987	IAAF Racewalking WC Trial		2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:20:15
8.	02/05/1987	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	New York, USA	63 <sup>rd</sup>	4:28:00
9.	05/09/1987	IAAF World Championships	Rome, ITA	25 <sup>th</sup>	4:11:04
10.	08/05/1988	Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	1 <sup>st</sup>	4:09:16
11.	12/02/1989	IAAF Racewalking WC Trial		3 <sup>rd</sup>	4:20:54
12.	28/05/1989	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Barcelona, ESP	67 <sup>th</sup>	4:33:07
13.	14/07/1990	Australian 50km Championship	Sydney, NSW	1 <sup>st</sup>	4:14:56
14.	08/09/1991	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	1 <sup>st</sup>	4:11:33
15.	26/04/1992	Olympic 50km trial	Czech Republic	15 <sup>th</sup>	4:13:58
16.	15/05/1992	International track 50km	Bergen, NOR	8 <sup>th</sup>	4:14:31
17.	13/12/1992	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:09:24
18.	25/04/1993	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Monterey, MEX	27 <sup>th</sup>	4:10:53
19.	10/07/1993	Australian 50km Championship	Richmond, NSW	1 <sup>st</sup>	3:57:20
20.	21/08/1993	IAAF World Championships	Stuttgart, GER	33 <sup>rd</sup>	4:23:40
21.	10/07/1994	Australian 50km Championship		1 <sup>st</sup>	4:08:48
22.	18/12/1994	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	1 <sup>st</sup>	4:02:17
23.	30/04/1995	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Beijing, CHN	40 <sup>th</sup>	4:05:56
24.	10/08/1995	IAAF World Championships	Goteborg, SWE	26 <sup>th</sup>	4:16:41
25.	31/03/1996	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4:05:40
26.	01/09/1996	Australian 50km Championship		1 <sup>st</sup>	4:11:34
27.	03/12/1996	Victorian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:17:40
28.	20/04/1997	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Podebrady, CZE	63 <sup>rd</sup>	4:14:09
29.	13/11/1998	IAAF Racewalking WC Trial		3 <sup>rd</sup>	4:18:34
30.	02/05/1999	IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Mezidon, FRA	61 <sup>st</sup>	4:08:58
31.	12/12/1999	Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	9 <sup>th</sup>	4:27:05
32.	05/05/2002	Australian 50km Championship	Melbourne, VIC	6 <sup>th</sup>	4:42:10

In closing, I must add the 11 sub-4hr 50km performances by Melbourne based New Zealand walker Quentin Rew:

#### Quentin Rew (NZL) - 11

1.	3:58:48	2012 Dudince 50km Meet	Dudince (SLV)	24 Mar 2012	9 <sup>th</sup>
2.	3:55:03	2012 Olympic Games 50km	London (GBR)	11 Aug 2012	27 <sup>th</sup>
3.	3:50:27	2013 IAAF World Championships	Moscow (RUS)	14 Aug 2013	17 <sup>th</sup>
4.	3:50:22	2014 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Taichang (CHN)	03 May 2014	10 <sup>th</sup>
5.	3:52:18	2015 IAAF Challenge Series Meet	Chihuahua (MEX)	07 Mar 2015	4 <sup>th</sup>
6.	3:48:48	2015 IAAF World Championships	Beijing (CHN)	29 Aug 2015	10 <sup>th</sup>
7.	3:49:32	2016 Olympic Games 50km	Rio de Janeiro (BRA)	19 Aug 2016	12 <sup>th</sup>
8.	3:51:18	2017 IAAF Challenge Series Meet	Monterey (MEX)	19 Mar 2017	3 <sup>rd</sup>
9.	3:46:29	2017 IAAF World Championships	London (GBR)	13 Aug 2017	12 <sup>th</sup>
10.	3:48:58	2018 IAAF Racewalking World Cup	Taichang (CHN)	05 May 2018	9 <sup>th</sup>
11.	3:49:48	2019 Japanese 50km Championship	Wajima (JAP)	14 April 2019	8 <sup>th</sup>

It's a shame Quentin has only 11 50km walks in the above list at this stage, because 12 seems to be the magic number for him. His first big 50km time of 3:58:48 bettered the NZ 2012 Olympic qualifying standard of 3:59:00 by 12 secs and earned him his first Olympic berth. His 20km time of 1:22:18 at Fawkner Park in 2017 bettered the NZ 2018 Commonwealth Games qualifying standard by 12 secs and earned him his first Commonwealth Games berth. Then his time of 3:49:48 in Wajima last year bettered the NZ 2020 Olympic qualifying standard by 12 secs and earned him his third Olympics berth.

Tim Erickson  
Saturday 27 June 2020