



Athletics Victoria has now completed the unveiling of its top 50 competition wreaths for the 2013/2014 year and, as expected, Jared Tallent took out the highly sought after Number 1 wreath. He joins Regan Lamble (4), Nathan Deakes (7) and Chris Erickson (9) in the top 10 and is one of 6 walkers who have been honoured with top 50 wreaths - see <http://www.athsvic.org.au/news/detail/Unveiling-of-the-top-50-athletes-bib-numbers-for-season-2013-14> for the full listing.

**1 - Jared Tallent (Ballarat YCW Harriers)**

Boasting three Olympic medals, as well as medals at both the Commonwealth Games and World Championships, Tallent is one of Australia's most decorated current athletes. Hailing from the Ballarat YCW Harriers club, Tallent is looking for another solid year, already booking his place for the 2013 IAAF World Championships after a fantastic performance at the Australia and Oceania Race Walking Championships in Hobart last month.

**4 - Regan Lamble (Athletics Nunawading)**

At just 20 years of age and competing in her first Olympic Games, Lamble showed experience beyond her years in recording a personal best time and finishing in 17th place in the women's 20km walk. Lamble booked her London spot when she came second to Rachel Tallent in the 2012 Australia and Oceania 20km Race-walking Championships. At such a young age and already boasting Olympic and World Championship experience, Lamble will be hoping for some big results in the next few years.

**7 - Nathan Deakes (Bellarine)**

Deakes recent retirement from international competition brought a very decorated career to an end. His career highlights include: winner of a world championship gold medal (2007 – 50km walk), an Olympic bronze medal (2004 – 20km walk), four Commonwealth Games gold medals and 10 national titles. He also set a world record for the 50km walk back in 2006 in his hometown of Geelong. After several frustrating years with injury setbacks, Deakes had his final competition at the London Games, finishing a respectable 22<sup>nd</sup> in the 50km event.

**9 - Chris Erickson (Athletics Essendon)**

2012 saw Erickson selected for his second Olympic team for the 20km walk. He came a respectable 38<sup>th</sup> in the event, coming in behind Jared Tallent as the second Australian to cross the line. A Commonwealth Games bronze medallist over the 50km walk (Melbourne 2006), Erickson was 4<sup>th</sup> at the recent Australia and Oceania 20km Race-walking Championships as he continues his push for selection for this years IAAF World Championships.

**36 - Rhydian Cowley (Glenhuntly)**

**35 - Rachel Tallent (Ballarat YCW Harriers)**

I have been trying to find a definitive list of former Victorian number one wreath holders but haven't been successful as yet. But I can confirm that walkers have done well, taking wreath number one in 4 of the last 8 years:

2012/13	Jared Tallent
2009/10	Jared Tallent
2007/08	Nathan Deakes
2005/06	Chris Erickson

Nathan was awarded the number one wreath for the 2007/2008 season after his 50km world record (done when winning the Victorian and Australian 50km championship in Geelong in December 2006) but not in the 2008/2009 season even

though he won the 50km event in the IAAF World Champs in Osaka. At that stage, the previous protocol existed where you had to win a State championship to wear a laurel wreath and unfortunately he didn't race a state championship in the 07/08 season and therefore was only given a four digit number - not exactly due recognition for a world championship win! The criteria have now been changed to give emphasis to Victorians who compete with distinction on the international stage.

Chris was awarded his number 1 wreath in 2005/06 under the old criteria after winning all but one of the Victorian championships of the previous year (he won gold in the track 5000m, road 10km, 15km, 20km and 30km and won silver in the road 50km) as well as silvers in the Australian 30km and 50km championships.

The new criteria for Full Laurel Wreaths (numbers 1 to 99) which have been in effect for the past 4 years read as follows:

- Priority 1: Registered Victorian athletes who represent Australia at the Olympic Games, Paralympics, Commonwealth Games, World Athletic Championships or IPC World Championships in the previous year. Athletics Victoria will determine the order of merit.
- Priority 2: Registered Victorian open age athletes who represent Australia at the IAAF World Cross Country, IAAF World Walking Championship or IAAF World Mountain Running Championship in that order in the previous year.
- Priority 3: Registered Victorian athletes who win an Open Age Australian Track & Field, Cross Country, Road Championship, Walking Championship or Mountain Running Championship in the previous year.
- Priority 4: Registered Victorian athletes who win an Open Age Victorian Track & Field, Cross Country, Road Championship, Walking Championship or Mountain Running Championship in the previous year.

Tim Erickson  
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