

Duncan Knox

1983	Racewalking World Cup	Bergen	50 km	39 th	4:35:12
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Duncan Knox, born 22nd May 1959, joined Essendon Athletics Club as a 13 year old runner. Club coach Bill Burke did not take long to realise that with his tall lean frame, he would make a good walker and he pointed him towards this event. From then on, Duncan mixed running and racewalking, as he still does today, some 36 years later.



Duncan shown here in the 50 km World Cup event at Bergen.

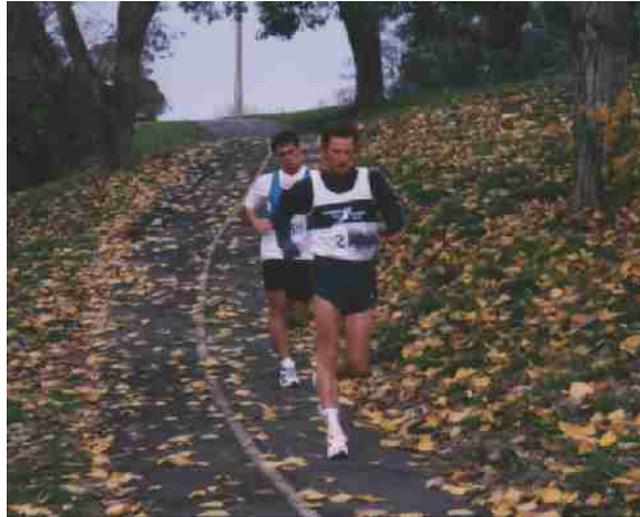
His first State titles were walked in the Sub Junior (Under 17) ranks and he moved up through the ranks to win the Victorian Junior track walk championship in 1978. He was duly selected to represent Victoria in the 1978 Australian 3000m Junior racewalk in Brisbane where he walked an inspired race. He led from the start and, as the pack gradually fell off, he found himself leading in the final lap with only NSW walker Rod Huxley still in contact. In a great battle to the line, Rod got up to win by a whisker. Both walkers were credited with the same time of **12:59**. It was the fastest time ever walked in a National Junior race – and Duncan had to be content with second place even though he had reduced his best time by some 20 seconds.

That winter he walked his first road season and started in but had to pull out of the Canberra 20 mile. It was the only time he has ever failed to finish that event. Since 1978, he has finished every single Canberra 20 mile event except for 1980, 28 so far – and he shows no signs of stopping yet.

After a few seasons on the road, he was ready for the next step. In 1982, he was placed 3rd (**1:35:17**) in the Australian 20 km championship behind Willi Sawall and Keith Knox. He continued this good form into 1983 when he set his sights on the Racewalking World Cup team. He was second to Dave Smith in the Canberra 20 miles in a fine time of **2:35:39**, beating Simon Baker, Mike Harvey and Bill Dyer. He then came 4th in the Lugano Cup trial in **4:27:15**. He had tried a few 50 km events previously but had not finished one – with the extra incentive of a team selection at stake, he made no mistakes this time and walked a very good first up time.

He followed this up with 39th place in Bergen in **4:35:12**.

But things did not go as planned from then on. His efforts to intensify the training and continue his improving National position were thwarted by a combination of factors – a physical job as a greens keeper, occasional bouts of illness at the wrong time and an upset stomach reaction in the longer races (Duncan could always be relied upon to ‘chuck’ at least once in most long races that he entered).



Duncan has been one of the great supporters of the Canberra 20 mile race, having completed over 20 of the events. Here he leads a NSW walker through the forests on a typically cold Canberra June

He came 4th in the 1984 Australian 50 km championship (**4:41:09**) and then took 5th in the Australian 5000m track title (**21:54**) in 1985 but gradually faded back into the pack after that.

His stomach complaints were not successfully diagnosed until the late eighties – a duodenal ulcer was finally identified and fixed – but by then the momentum had gone from his career.

In 1991, he was one of the walkers who went to the 8 Nations Meeting in Europe and this, along with his Lugano Cup, are probably his two highlights in his long career.

He is still going strong as he approaches 47 years of age and, in fact, won his first senior State title in 2001 when he won the Victorian 50 km title at Albert Park. He is a great clubman and still walks State League for Athletics Essendon.

His PBs show his versatility over the whole range of distances

1500m	5:56	1985
3000m	12:20	1991
5000m	21:28	1992
10000m	44:40	1992
20 km	1:31:30	1983
50 km	4:27:15	1983