

*Lorraine Jachno (Young)*

1979	Racewalking World Cup	Eschborn	5 km	15 <sup>th</sup>	24:35
1981	Racewalking World Cup	Valencia	5 km	DNF	
1982	IWF World Champs	Bergen	5 km	8 <sup>th</sup>	24:28
1984	IWF World Champs	Lomello	10 km	10 <sup>th</sup>	48:24
1985	World Student Games	Kobe	5 km	6 <sup>th</sup>	23:35
1985	Racewalking World Cup	Isle of Man	10 km	26 <sup>th</sup>	50:06
1987	Racewalking World Cup	New York	10 km	32 <sup>nd</sup>	48:21
1987	IAAF World Champs	Rome	10 km	DNF	
1989	Racewalking World Cup	Barcelona	10 km	31 <sup>st</sup>	47:18
1990	Commonwealth Games	Auckland	10 km	4 <sup>th</sup>	47:35
1991	Racewalking World Cup	San Jose	10 km	33 <sup>rd</sup>	48:01

Lorraine Young, born in 1959, started Little Athletics as an 8 year old and was second in the State U9 400m walk in her first year. But she did not progress with her walking, favouring a fun approach that kept her in athletics but saw no further placings in under age championships.

It was not until she was 18 that Ken Walters approached her and invited her to start training for racewalking. He recognised the potential of the strongly built 1.67m athlete. With a proper training program, she was immediately successful, gaining bronze in the 1978 Australian 5 km road title. She was then selected along with Sue Orr and Sally Pierson to represent Australia in the 1979 Eschborn Cup in Eschborn and finished a creditable 15<sup>th</sup> in **24:35**.

In 1981, she was selected for her second Eschborn Cup but the hot conditions in Valencia took their toll and Lorraine collapsed, unable to finish.

She was selected the following year for the IWF World Womens Racewalking championship 5 km in Bergen and came a great 8<sup>th</sup> in **24:28**. She followed this up with her first National Championship win in the 1983 Australian 5000m track walk (**23:58**).

She maintained her form into 1984 and was selected in the 1984 IWF Womens Racewalking 10 km championship in Lomello, Italy. There she recorded another top 10 placing (10<sup>th</sup> in **48:24**).

1985 was a big year. She married Andrew Jachno, came 6<sup>th</sup> in the World Student Games 5000m track walk in Kobe in Japan (beating Sally Pierson who was 7<sup>th</sup>) and competed in her second Eschborn Cup where she came 26<sup>th</sup> in the 10 km roadwalk in **50:06**.

In 1986, Australia was invited to send a team to the World Race Walking Criterium being held at Lomello in Italy. Lorraine, Sue Cook, Kerry Saxby and Rachael Thompson were selected. On June 15, Lorraine placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 10 km roadwalk in **47:52**, then followed up with 16<sup>th</sup> in the 5 km walk the next day in **24:27**. In the overall results, she finished 10<sup>th</sup>, a wonderful international performance.

In 1987, after an excellent result in the Eschborn Cup in New York (32<sup>nd</sup> in **48:21** for the 10 km walk), she was selected for the IAAF World Championship 10 km walk. But in the very hot Rome conditions she collapsed just 70m before the finish. It seemed that the heat was Lorraine's one achilles heel.

In 1988 she moved to Canberra with her husband Andrew when he was awarded an AIS scholarship. This enabled her to train with the AIS walkers. With the extra stimulus and support, her times immediately improved.

After another solid Racewalking World Cup performance in Barcelona 1989 (37<sup>th</sup> in **47:18**), Lorraine came 2<sup>nd</sup> to Kerry Saxby in the Commonwealth Games womens 10 km trial in Melbourne (around the MCG and Olympic Park roads) in **46:30**. This cemented her position as the number two woman walker in Australia and gained her selection in the inaugural Commonwealth Games for womens walking. I remember watching her valiant performance in the 10 km roadwalk in Auckland where she finished 4<sup>th</sup> in **47:35**, only 10 seconds behind English walker Lisa Langford.

In 1991, she came second to Kerry once again in the Seiko Games in Sydney in January in **13:19**, a time that qualified her for the World Indoors. Unfortunately she was not selected for the meet.

On May 19, 1991, she recorded a magnificent 10 km road time of **45:25** in Melbourne on her way through to 15 km. This was a big PB, breaking the World Championship and Olympic Qualifying standards by 1 minute and 35 seconds and bettering her previous PB of 46:02, set in May 1989. She then decided to postpone her family plans and try for one final big competition – the 1992 Olympics in which the womens walk was included for the first time.



**Lorraine in action in the 1991 World Cup in San Jose**

It was not easy for Australian women to be selected for this Olympic walk. Although the IOC had set a B standard of 48:00 and an A standard of 46:30, Australia had set its own standard of 45:30. The womens walk was the only event that warranted such special treatment. She recorded **12:48** (3000m) in the NEC meeting in Melbourne in February 1992 and then came 2<sup>nd</sup> to Kerry Saxby in the 10 km trial in March. Her time there was **46:56**, outside the qualifying standard, but as she already had a qualifier under her belt, selection seemed assured.

Surprisingly, Lorraine was only given a B grade selection, meaning that she had to confirm her place with other qualifying performances. She did this twice, firstly in Melbourne on the road (**45:24**) and then in Bergen in Norway on May 16 on the track (**45:26**). Her Bergen time was a new Victorian record and she beat the Chinese girl who went on to win the 1992 Olympic walk. Surely this was enough to satisfy the selectors?

The situation changed radically while Lorraine was in Europe. Fellow Victorian Gabrielle Blythe, who had been convincingly beaten by Lorraine in the trial, won the Australian 20 km title in Melbourne on May 24 in 1:40:02. In this race, her first 10 km split had been 44:21. She then backed this up with 44:27 in La Caruna in Europe.

The selectors were faced with the choice – which one of Lorraine and Gabrielle to select. The answer seemed obvious to walkers – both girls had repeatedly beaten the tough Australian standard and both deserved selection. There was consternation when Lorraine was left out of the team in favour of Gabrielle. Was the decision political (Gabrielle was at the AIS and Lorraine was not) or did they choose a younger walker instead of an older walker (Lorraine was 32). In any case, much discussion occurred behind closed doors. Lorraine had been led to believe that a time under 45:30 would gain her selection and she had met this criteria

In the 1991/92 period, Lorraine had finally reached her peak. She set all her best times during this period (**45:26** for 10,000m track, **45:24** for 10 km road, **22:17** for 5000m track and **12:48** for the 3000m track). She had eclipsed many of the times achieved by Sue Orr and Sally Pierson and had withstood all but Kerry Saxby as a newer generation of walkers came along.

Lorraine quit racewalking at that stage and she has not returned. For some 13 years, she had maintained a position in the top three in Australian womens walking and was a proven big time performer. But her career ended in undeserved disappointment, like so many of our walkers.

She now lives in Canberra with her husband Andrew and two sons Matthew and Nicholas. She continues to support the local racewalking scene but feels no desire to rekindle the competitive flame.