

REGAN LAMBLE

2008	Racewalking World Cup	Cheboksary (RUS)	U20 10km	26 th	49:38
2010	Racewalking World Cup	Chihuahua (MEX)	U20 10km	15 th	51:16
2010	World Junior Champs	Moncton (CAN)	10,000m	7 th	47:55
2011	IAAF World Champs	Daegu (KOR)	20km	14 th	1:33:38
2012	Racewalking World Cup	Saransk (RUS)	20km	23 rd	1:34:34
2012	Olympics	London (UK)	20km	16 th	1:30:08
2013	IAAF World Champs	Moscow	20km	DNS	
2016	Racewalking World Cup	Rome (ITA)	20km	11 th	1:29:33
2016	Olympics	Rio de Janeiro (BRA)	20km	9 th	1:30:28
2017	IAAF World Champs	London	20km	TBA	

Regan Lamble is one of three young Victorian walkers who started their International career in 2008. Born 14 October 1991, she joined fellow VRWC club members Jess Rothwell and Rhydian Cowley in the Australian Team at the World Racewalking Cup in Russia in May of that year.

Regan started racewalking at the Nunawading Little Athletics venue during the 2002/2003 Summer season and was coached during her early developmental years by Dave Blackwood. She was immediately successful, taking the gold medal in the Victorian Little Athletics Under 11 1500m walk championship in **8:01.58** in March 2003. Interestingly, in those same championships, Rhydian Cowley won the Under 12 Boys 1500m in 7:41.22 and Jess Rothwell won the Under 14 Girls 1500m in 6:45.92.

Regan had her first race with the Victorian Race Walking Club in April 2003, coming 2nd to Natalie Laurie in the Under 12 1.5km walk with **8:30**. Within a couple of weeks, she had recorded **11:07** for the 2 km walk, again a close second to Natalie. She experienced her first Canberra Carnival that year, coming 6th in the Under 12 2 km walk with a PB time of **10:47**.

If 2003 was a tentative first year in the sport, 2004 was outstanding. In May, she reduced her 2 km time to **10:09**, tested herself over the longer distances with a 4 km time of **20:48** and then further reduced her 2 km time to **9:52**. She went into the Canberra Carnival in June as a real chance and did not disappoint, winning out over S.A. walker Paige Hooper in a memorable final sprint in the Under 14 Girls 2000m. Regan trailed with 100m to go but managed to produce a fantastic final sprint to win by the shortest of margins. Her style under pressure was impeccable and, even with such a desperate final sprint, she incurred no cautions or warnings and looked safe. She finished off what had been a great winter season with a win in the Victorian Under 14 3 km roadwalk with **15:38**.



Left – 12 year old Regan walks 9:52 for the 2 km walk at Albert Park in June 2004

Right - Regan about to take the lead in the 2004 Racewalking Australia Under 14 2 km event in Canberra

The 2004/2005 summer season saw her take third in the Australian Schools Under 14 1500m track championship in Sydney in December in a PB time of **7:15.59** and culminated in her representing Victoria in the Australian Little Athletics Championships in Hobart in April where she came 2nd in the 1500m walk.

The 2005 winter season saw her take all before her with wins in the Victorian Schools Under 16 3 km roadwalk (**14:48**) and the Australian Under 16 5 km roadwalk (**25:40**) in Adelaide in August. She finished the season with a 3 km best time of **14:35**, an excellent time for a 13 year old girl.

The highlight of her career thus far was her representation in the Girls 3000m walk (13-14 years) in the Pacific School Games in Melbourne in late November 2005. There she finished third to Paige Hooper of South Australia and Zang Yu of China in a time of **15:14.51**. The time was not of great consequence but the performance was. An indication of her form was shown a week before when, at the Eastern Region competition at Proclamation Park, she set a new Little Athletics venue record of **7:09** for 1500m in the morning and then backed up with a very fast **9:42** for the 2000m walk in A.V. Shield competition in the afternoon.

In 2006, she swapped coaches to Simon Baker. Under Simon's watchful eye (Simon also coached Jess Rothwell), she continued to improve, as evidenced by her 1500m time of **6:56**, done in Nunawading Little Athletics Centre competition in late February. She had to lower her colours to Paige Hooper on a couple of occasions that year but the competition was good for her and spurred her onto greater efforts. She finished second to Paige in the Under 16 3 km walk in the Canberra Carnival in June with a PB time of **14:27** and then came third to Paige and Melissa Hayes (NSW – 2008 World Junior rep) in the Australian Under 16 5 km roadwalking championship in August with **25:31**. She also tested the waters with some longer walks that winter, doing a number of 8 km roadwalks at Albert Park – and recording a best time of **41:43**. The one black spot in an otherwise great year occurred when she broke her toe playing soccer just before the Australian All schools Championships in early December.

2007 saw her race more frequently over longer distances. In early June she recorded **24:32** for the 5 km roadwalk at Albert Park and then surprised everyone by choosing to walk the Open Women's 10 Mile event in Canberra. There, walking with coach Simon Baker, she came 7th with a great first up time of **1:30:51**. That winter she also won the Victorian Schools Under 18 5 km roadwalk (**24:50**) and the Victorian Under 18 8 km roadwalk (**40:25**). In August, she also reduced her 8 km roadwalk PB down to a very respectable **40:02**. It was no surprise when she was named in the Australian Under 17 National Developmental Squad, an indication of the potential that was there for all to see.



Regan walks her first Canberra 10 Mile in June 2007 with Australian racewalking legends Andrew Jachno and Simon Baker

The 2007/2008 summer saw more great walks. In October (still only aged 15), she won the Victorian Under 17 5000m track walk in a new Victorian Record time of **24:31**. Then in December in Sydney, she won the Australian Schools Under 17 5000m track walk championship with **25:02.33**.

In January 2008, she led from the front to win a Melbourne Shield competition 2000m walk in **9:13**, yet another PB. A month later, she took second place in the Victorian Open Women's 5000m with **24:35** behind Kellie Wapshott.

Simon had targeted her to walk her first 10 km event in the Australian Under 20 10,000m track championship at the Gold Coast in Queensland in March and it was the scene of yet another high quality walk. Her fourth place in **51:06.7** looked like this

1.	Jessica Rothwell	VIC	46:15.17
2.	Melissa Hayes	NSW	48:04.62
3.	Nicole Fagan	NSW	50:44.01
4.	Regan Lamble	VIC	51:06.17

Regan came home thinking she had done well but not really considering anything further. It was to her astonishment when, a short while later, she found that she had been selected as the third walker in the Australian Under 20 team for the World Walking Cup behind Jess Rothwell and Nicole Fagan. Melissa Hayes had been selected along with Jess in the World Juniors but the selectors had decided she should only do the one event. This opened the door for Regan who accepted it with open arms.



*Left: Paige Hooper (U18) leads Melissa Hayes (U18) and Reagan Lamble (U17) in the 2007 Australian All Schools Champs
Right: Regan at full stretch in February 2008 when recording 24:35 in the Victorian Open 5000m track championship*

Her first international appearance on Saturday 10th May 2008 in Cheboksary was an eye popping PB by nearly 80 seconds and saw her take 26th place in **49:38**. Returning to Melbourne, she took a welcome break before returning to competition in June. Her first race was the Open Women's 10 Mile event at the annual Racewalking Australia carnival in Canberra. This year, she came third overall with a huge PB time of **1:24:11** over the tough hilly course. Then in quick succession, she knocked out times of **24:15** (5 km) and **39:37** (8 km) at Albert Park before winning the Victorian U18 5km roadwalking championship in **24:18**. She was forced to miss the 2008 Australian roadwalking championships in August due to illness but she had already done enough for the year to sit back and savour the feeling.

She was back in action in November, winning the Victorian Schools U18 5000m walk in **25:08.43**. She followed up with another win in the prestigious Pacific Schools U18 5000m with **25:06:40** in Canberra. Finally, she finished the year with a solid hitout over 10 km (**51:15**) in Melbourne in December.

She spent January in Canberra on an AIS training camp and the results were immediate. Her winning time in the Victorian Under 20 5000m walk in Melbourne in February was a big PB time of **23:15.73** (PB).

2009 saw Regan completing her final year of school and no further races were forthcoming as she seemed content to train with Simon Baker's squad in Melbourne and keep her nose to the study grindstone. The sacrifice was obviously worth it as she scored a huge HSC result.

As soon as her final exams were completed, she was off to Canberra, the recipient of an AIS scholarship. After a couple of months spent training in the competitive Institute environment, she faced the starter's gun for the first time in 12 months, the venue Hobart and the occasion the Australian Selection Trial for the 2010 World Racewalking Cup. She won in flying colours in a new 10km PB of **48:12**.

Third place in the 2010 Sydney Track classic two weeks later (an equal PB of **23:15** for 5000m) and a win in the Australian U20 10,000m championship in Sydney in March (**48:21**) and she looked ready for a big walk in the World Cup in Mexico in May. Strangely, her subsequent performance in the tough Chihuahua conditions was slightly disappointing – 15th in **51:16**. But it was a learning experience for Regan and the next 12 months would show just how much improvement was to be had.

Her next appointment was a big double in the annual Racewalking Australia carnival in Canberra in June 2010 – 1st in the 10 mile on the Sunday morning with **1:19:04** and 2nd in the 5km in the afternoon with **23:14**. Then it was back into one last solid training block to prepare for the World Junior Championships in Moncton, Canada, for which she has also been selected. In the leadup to the big race in early July, PBs of **13:12** (3000m) and **22:55** (5000m) showed that she was in great shape and her Moncton finish of 8th in a PB time of **47:55** was a revelation.

She further improved her 10km time to **47:03** in October at a VRWC club race in Melbourne before targeting a 20km debut in the A.A. Invitational 20km Open event held in December at Fawkner Park in Melbourne. And what a superb debut it was – 2nd to Claire Tallent in **1:36:40**.



Regan racing in 2010 – looking every inch the polished athlete

After another summer spent training in Canberra with the full squad, she returned to Hobart in February 2011, this time to attack the 20km distance – once again finishing 2nd to Claire with an improved **1:35:08**.

The next 2 months saw her racing blossom. In March, she finished 2nd (to Claire of course!) in the Australian Athletics Tour Meet 5000m Walk in Sydney with **22:19**. Then in early April, she won the MKR Hong Kong International 10km event with **46:30**. Two weeks later the big one came – 12th in the IAAF Race Walking Challenge Meet in Taicang in China with an IAAF A qualifying time of **1:31:39**.



Left: Regan wins in Hong Kong in April

That 20km performance has seen her added to the Australian team for the 2011 IAAF World Championships - not too bad for a 19 year old!

A big double at the annual LBG Carnival (1st in the 10 Miles walk with **1:14:26** and 2nd to Tanya Holliday in the 5km (**22:39**)) continued her strong racing form. She then left for a training camp in St Moritz with the rest of the Australian team.

Her race in the 2011 World Champs in Daegu was a good one, finishing as the first Australian in 15th place (subsequently upgraded to 14th due to a Russian drugs failure) . She had maintained her position within the lead pack for

the first 7km but, as the humidity and temperature and race tempo increased, she was amongst the many who dropped off the pace. 19-year-old Regan crossed the half-way point in 46:39 and in 22nd position but she came home strongly to finish in 15th place in a time of **1:33.38**.

Her form in the 2011/2012 summer continued to be good. She won the Fawkner Park 20km in Melbourne in December in **1:32:06**, recorded **22:06** in the Sydney Track Classic 5000m in February and finished 2nd to Claire Tallent a few weeks later in the Australian Summer 20km roadwalk championships in Hobart. Her time of **1:36:52** may look slow but considering the temperature of 39°C at the start and you have some idea of the horrendous conditions.

She walked well at the 2012 World Racewalking Cup in May, although conditions once again precluded a fast time - her race started at 1:20PM in bright sunshine and a temperature around 30°C. Australia had high expectations with a strong team of four but, one by one, they dropped off. Regan was the first and only Australian to finish, coming home strongly to take 24th with **1:34:34** (subsequently upgraded to 23rd due to a Russian drugs failure). Overall, conditions took their toll with only 88 finishers from the 109 starters.

Back to Australia and back to training .

She surprised everyone with a start in the classic 20 Miler in the LBG Carnival in Canberra in mid June. The surprises continued as she powered through to finish 3rd overall (beating all but Jared Tallent and Chris Erickson) in a time of **2:32:17** (taking over 9 minutes off Kerry Saxby's course record). Her 30km split on the way through was an impressive **2:21:43**. Those who had been to AIS camps with her at Thredbo had seen similar longer distance walks from her but this was the first time she had toed the line in an official race of this length. In retrospect, one can only wonder what she might have done over the 50km distance at that time if she had given it a go.

After the usual St Moritz training camp in July, Regan headed to London for her next race - as a 2012 Olympian. And what a race it was! Regan went the 10km mark in PB time of **44:22** and held on from there to finish 17th in **1:30:08** (a PB of 1:31). This was subsequently upgraded to 16th due to a Russian drugs failure)



Regan in action in the 2012 Olympic Games in London

That should have heralded a huge next 4 years as she built on this momentum and worked her way up towards the podium. Alas, it was not to be. In a post-Olympic review, Athletics Australia decided to withdraw from the AIS Scholarship program and close it down completely in early 2013. This meant that Regan and the other athletes at the AIS would have to fend for themselves from now on. It was a shattering blow and one which would take Regan some years to come to terms with.

She did try to soldier on but the results were inconsistent. She was 2nd in the Fawkner Park 20km in December 2012 in a slow 1:38:10. She was a DNF in the Australian Summer 20km roadwalk championship in Hobart in February 2013 - she simply stepped off the road while leading with Tanya Holliday. She entered the LBG 20 Miler again in June but

retired early in the race. She refocused as best she could, walking 4th in the Dublin Grand Prix 20km a few weeks later in an improved 1:35:33.

From there it was to Moscow for the 2013 IAAF World Championships in August. Alas, Regan did not even make it to the start line, having been sick for several weeks and returning to Australia a few days before her race

She settled down to life in Melbourne, worked on her Fine Arts Degree, worked part time and got on with her life. It would be 2 years before she returned to racing.

But her former AIS coach Brent Vallance had other ideas. Now Melbourne based himself, he kept a watchful eye on her with a view to eventually coaxing her back into the sport. Thus it was that in October 2015, she travelled to Japan for an international 20km race in Takahata, coming second in **1:32:36**. She followed this up with a win in the Fawkner Park 20km race in Melbourne in December with an even better **1:30:45**. In fact this was her second best 20km time ever. Regan was back!

She suffered a setback when she was unable to finish the 2016 Australian Summer 20km Championship in Adelaide in February 2017. She was well in front and on the way to a comfortable victory when she was forced to stop due to a troublesome foot injury. As this was the official Olympic trial, her Rio spot was now in question and she would need to put further times on the board.

No one should have worried as the additional performances came thick and fast. She recorded **1:30:34** in Rio Maior, Portugal, in April. Then she produced the race of her life to finish 12th in the IAAF Race Walking Teams Championships in Rome in May in a career best **1:29:33** (subsequently upgraded to 11th due to a Russian drugs failure). Then 3 weeks later in late May, she recorded **1:30:58** in La Coruna, Spain.

She was duly named in the Olympic team.

Her walk in Rio was another quality performance, finishing 9th with a time of **1:30:28**. She was in the lead group for the first half of the race and held on well once the fireworks started, holding her position as others fell by the wayside. It was her fifth 20km walk under 1:31:00 in 8 months. She summed up her performance post-race

I was really happy with today. We were hoping for a top-10 performance so ninth, I'm pretty chuffed with ninth. Today was still definitely a learning experience. I think I've still got a few more years of improvement in me as well.



Regan in the 2016 Olympic 20km walk in Rio

She finished off her season with her first ever walk in the 4 Day Lake Taihi classic in China. With daily finishes of 2nd, 4th, 4th and 5th, she finished 3rd overall, beaten only by two of the top Chinese women, and taking a number of highly credentialed scalps along the way.

She was given an insight into what had been lost when she participated in a 6 week training camp at the AIS early in

2017. What had once been the norm for scholarship walkers was now a once off gift to be taken in both hands. Not surprisingly, she finished the camp, travelled to Adelaide and duly won the Australian Summer 10km championship in a very impressive **1:29:58**, her second best time ever and her best on Australian soil.

She has been selected for the 2017 IAAF World Championships in London later this year. She certainly has the potential to fight out the medals. It is all just a question of how she can prepare and whether she can build further on the momentum of the last 18 months.