



HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club
2020/2021 Number 40
Monday 5 July 2021



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TIM'S WALKERS OF THE WEEK

It's official. The Australian Olympic Committee has announced the final team selections for the Australian Olympic Team for Tokyo: see <https://www.athletics.com.au/news/biggest-australian-athletics-team-for-tokyo/>.

As expected, there are 7 walkers in the mix, with 4 of the 7 being VRWC members. Huge congrats to VRWC members **Jemima Montag, Bec Henderson, Kyle Swan** and **Rhydian Cowley**. They are naturally my Walkers of the Week.



Jemima, Bec, Kyle and Rhydian in action in recent VRWC club races at Middle Park

Let's zoom in a bit:

Walker	Event	Age	10km PB	20km PB	50km PB	Coach
Jemima Montag	20km Women	23	42:35	1:28:50		Brent Vallance
Bec Henderson	20km Women	20	45:13	1:31:53		Simon Baker
Kyle Swan	20km Men	22	40:06	1:23:53		Brent Vallance
Rhydian Cowley	50km Men	30	39:14	1:20:19	3:53:58	Brent Vallance

Well done also to coaches **Brent Vallance** (I chat with Brent later in the newsletter) and **Simon Baker**. They are 2 of our most knowledgeable and successful coaches and are wonderful assets for us here in Victoria.

It's been a few years since I have updated my profiles on Jemima, Kyle and Rhydian, so check them out for a bit of background on each. As yet, the articles do not as yet discuss the huge improvement of the last few years, but I must remedy that soon!

Jemima: <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-jemima%20montag.pdf>
Kyle: <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-kyle-swam.pdf>
Rhydian: <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-rhydian-cowley.pdf>

Bec's rise has been so meteoric that I don't even have a full profile article on her as yet. That has to be my next task!

For completeness, here are details of the full walks team, with 7 of the 9 possible spots filled. Congrats also to Katie Hayward, Declan Tingay and Dane Birde-Smith. This is fantastic news for Australian racewalking.

20km Women:	Jemima Montag (VIC)	Katie Hayward (QLD)	Rebecca Henderson (VIC)
20km Men:	Dane Bird-Smith (QLD)	Kyle Swan (VIC)	Declan Tingay (WA)
50km Men:	Rhydian Cowley (VIC)		

WHAT'S COMING UP

- Next Saturday sees us back at Middle Park for the Victorian Masters 10km Roadwalk Championships, along with our annual Racewalking Australia Inerstate Challenge.

Saturday 10th July 2021, Middle Park

Racewalking Australia Postal Challenge event

VMA, RWA & VRWC Events, If entering online, entries close Wednesday 11.59pm

If entering in person, entries close for all events at 1.40pm sharp

2.15pm	10km	VMA Championship	Masters Men
2.15pm	10km	VMA Championship	Masters Women
2.15pm	10km	RWA Challenge	Open Men/Women
2.15pm	10km	RWA Challenge	Masters Men/Women
2.15pm	10km	RWA Challenge	Under 20 Men/Women
2.15pm	8km	RWA Challenge	Under 18 Men/Women
2.30pm	5km	RWA Challenge	Under 16 Boys/Girls
2.30pm	5km	Non championship event	Open
2.30pm	3km	RWA Challenge	Under 14 Boys/Girls
2.50pm	2km	RWA Challenge	Under 12 Boys/Girls
2.50pm	2km	Non championship event	Open
3.05pm	1.5km	RWA Challenge	Under 10 Boys/Girls
4.30pm	Twilight Trivia		

The **Racewalking Australia Challenge** is a RWA club versus club postal competition. The points from the fastest competitor from each club in each race will be added and the club with the lowest points declared the winner. If a club fails to have a competitor finish in any category, that club will be awarded the same points as the highest scoring competitor. Master athletes will not be scored on their time but their age grading so all Master athletes must submit their age at entry time.

We need everyone on deck to ensure we perform at our best. **Note that RWA Challenge age is "age on the day"**.

Each RWA club will be hosting their own RWA Challenge carnival in the coming weeks. Coordinator Mark Donahoo tells me that clubs have until Monday 2nd August to get their results to him. That means that they have up till the weekend of 1-2 August to complete their Challenge. Interstate clubs – note you must do it completely on one day – you can't do some events on one week and then complete it on another. The rules do not allow this.

This is also our Twilight Trivia night, starting at 4:30PM at the Middle Park Bowling Club. The last one, which I attended in 2019 (we were in lockdown last year) was a fun evening and very competitive! Read the advertisement on the next page and email club president Stu Cooper (stuwalks@yahoo.com.au) to confirm your attendance. Registration closes Wednesday evening so get to it!

- Mark Donahoo has asked me to get walkers thinking about our annual **VRWC Relay Day** on Saturday 14th August.

Saturday 14th August 2021, Middle Park

VRWC Relay event: entries close on line or in person Sunday 1st August.

VRWC non relay events, If entering online, entries close Wednesday 11th August 11.59pm

If entering the non-relay races in person, entries close for all events at 1.40pm sharp on the Sat.

2.15pm	Relay event (teams of 4 walkers)	Open
2.30pm	4km	Open
2.30pm	1km	Open
3.30pm	VRWC Winter Season presentations	

Walkers enter for one of 3km (all age groups), 1km (all age groups), 2km (junior walkers) or 4km (open and masters walkers). The relay race is over 10km (3km, followed by 1km, followed by 2km and finishing with 4km). Mark picks the

teams from the entries to try to ensure a close competition. It is an exciting day so start thinking. Our online entry panel for this race should be opening this week.

Victorian Race Walking Club

Twilight Trivia

Saturday 10 July, after the VMA Masters and Interstate Challenge races
4.30 (heads down by 5.00) to 7.00pm

**** Pre-booking extended to Wednesday 7 July.**
We need final numbers by this date!


\$15 per head, \$30 per family. BYO snacks and nibbles.
Drinks available at the Bowling Club bar. Tea and coffee provided.

**** Maximum numbers: 40** (owing to COVID restrictions, unless otherwise advised)

Tickets can be pre-booked:

- at the check-in table on **Saturday 3rd July**, or
- by contacting Stu Cooper at the club or at stuwalks@yahoo.com.au to confirm your attendance.
(If you choose this method, you can pay at the Club or by direct transfer at any Commonwealth bank -
BSB: 063-143
Acc: 008 00455
Reference: **(Your surname)Trivia** (Remember that bit so that we can identify you.)

See you there!!



VRWC ROADWALKS, MIDDLE PARK, SATURDAY 3 JULY 2021

Our VRWC winter season continued on Saturday afternoon with another round of roadwalks at Middle Park. I think most of the 45 walkers in attendance approached raceday with some trepidation, given the forecast for very cold and wet weather. The temperature was certainly low, with a cold win, but the rain stayed away and a weak sun even came out to tempt us.

The longer distance walks were first off at 2:15PM, with 2021 Olympian **Kyle Swan** leading the field from the gun. He stormed through to 43:34 for the 10km, barely raising a puff in what was an impressive workout. 15 year old **Emily Smith** was attempting her first 10km and she did it in style, finishing with 58:51. Well done to **Julian Boland** who upped his distance and also completed his first 10km. On the 12km front, **Mark Blackwood** (59:49) and **Madeleine Feain** (1:06:29) took line honours.

12km Walk				H'Cap Place	
1.	Madeleine Feain	Open	1:06:29	1	PB 0:50
1.	Mark Blackwood	M40	59:49	2	
2.	Terry O'Neill	M60	1:15:23	1	
10km Walk				H'Cap Place	
1.	Emily Smith	U16	58:51	1	PB 0:28 (14 years old)
2.	Alison Thompson	W60	1:06:23	2	
1.	Kyle Swan	Open	43:34	3	
2.	Heath Beveridge	U20	50:33	2	
3.	Julian Boland	M40	1:07:28	1	First time over this distance

The 5km race saw PBs by 14 year old **Ariana Pashutina** (25:20), 10 year old **Ela Uzun** (25:22), 16 year old **Jade Chitty** (28:33) and 9 year old **Havana Ali** (29:23). Overall, **Marcus Wakim** (23:27) and **Char Hay** (25:16) took fastest time honours. I do have to draw additional attention to **Ela Uzun**. Consider her 1km splits 4:50, 5:06, 5:08, 5:12 and 5:06. Her final time of 25:22 set new U11 and U12 club records and, in addition, her 3km split time of 15:04 shattered her own U11 and U12 3km club record time of 15:15. She has already broken lots of our longstanding club records and looks set to create new standards that will be very hard to match.

5km Walk				H'Cap Place	
1.	Char Hay	U18	25:16	4	
2.	Ariana Pashutina	U16	25:20	7	PB 0:15
3.	Ela Uzun	U10	25:22	3	PB 3:06, VRWC U11/U12 3km/5km Records
4.	Maddison Nash	U16	28:22	10	
5.	Jade Chitty	U18	28:33	2	PB 0:17
6.	Havana Ali	U10	29:23	5	PB 1:33
7.	Grace Louey	U18	29:33	6	
8.	Carolyn Rosenbrock	W40	30:07	1	
9.	Kate Sanford	Open	31:09	9	
10.	Kaylah Heikkila-Dubowik	U16	32:13	11	
11.	Karyn O'Neill	W60	35:59	8	
1.	Marcus Wakim	U16	23:27	1	
2.	Jason Kozica	Open	24:26	4	
3.	Kevin Cassidy	M60	25:37	3	
4.	David Smyth	M40	30:03	2	

The 3km and 1.5km races followed at 2:30PM, and once again we saw big fields and very competitive walking. The 3km races were won by **Mietta Morgan** (17:57) and **Riley Coughlan** (another great walk and a PB 14:03), while the 1.5km walks were won by **Violet Froom** (10:30) and **Damian Baldy** (10:30). Again, we saw lots of Pbs and quite a few first time VRWC attendees -welcome to **Julia Baldy**, **Lilah Stevens** and **Jackson Hartley**. And for quite a few of our 1.5km walkers, they were walking further than ever before – great work all round.

3km Walk				H'Cap Place	
1.	Mietta Morgan	U12	17:57	2	
2.	Donna-Marie Elms	M40	18:38	4	
3.	Dee Holohan	W45	18:39	5	
4.	Heather Carr	W60	18:47	6	
5.	Lula Parrott	U12	20:28	1	PB 0:04
6.	Christal Xie	Open	20:40	3	PB 0:35
7.	Gwen Steed	W60	21:36	7	
1.	Riley Coughlan	U16	14:03	3	PB 0:15
2.	Pramesh Prasad	M40	15:47	5	
3.	Daniel Pashutin	U14	15:55	2	
4.	Eden Morgan	U16	16:13	1	PB 0:47
5.	Lewis McLennan	U12	20:29		First 3km walk
6.	Geoff Barrow	M60	21:38	4	
1.5km Walk				H'Cap Place	
1.	Violet Froom	U10	10:30	1	PB 0:17
2.	Julia Baldy	U10	10:56		First walk with us, longest walk yet

3.	Lilah Stevens	U10	11:01		First walk with us, longest walk yet
1.	Damian Baldy	U12	8:31	2	First time over this distance
2.	Jackson Hartley	U10	9:59		First walk with us, longest walk yet
3.	Hamish McLennan	U12	10:12		Eq. PB
4.	Albin Hess	M60	10:49	4	
5.	Haris Ali	U10	11:00	3	PB 0:17
6.	Aydin Uzun	U10	11:02	1	PB 0:22

I must draw attention to one set of young walkers who all did PBs today. 10 year old **Ela Uzun** (25:22 VRWC U11/U12 Club Record) and her 8 year old brother **Aydin Uzun** (11:02), along with their cousins 9 year old **Havana Ali** (29:23) and her 8 year old brother **Haris Ali** (11:00) are on deck every week and always give it their all! The photo below shows them all after their respective races today.



Thanks to our many officials, judges and helpers who keep the show on the road every week.

- Officials:** Mark Donahoo, Bill Carr, Tim Erickson, Darlene Swan, Donna Dickson, Cheryl Beveridge, Terry Swan
Judges: Peter Vysma (Chief), Di Lowden, Michael Bodey, Peter Price, David Cash, Shane Dickson, Gordan Loughnan
Set up & Pack up: Stu Cooper, Madeleine Feain, Donna-Marie Elms, Tim Erickson, Terry Swan
Referee: Stu Cooper
Photos: Terry Swan (see <https://www.vrwc.org.au/piwigo/index.php?%2Fcategory%2F584>)



Emily Smith, Jade Chitty, Kyle Swan and Julian Boland



Lewis McLennan, Violet Froom, Mietta Morgan, Damian Baldy, Mark Blackwood and Marcus Wakim



Lilah Stevens, Riley Coughlan, Jackson Harley and Julia Baldy (all photos Terry Swan)

Finally, check out <https://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwcpointscomps.shtml> for the latest updates to the Style Award, Actual Times and Handicap Points competitions.

SARWC KING OF THE MOUNTAIN CHAMPS, BELAIR NATIONAL PARK, ADELAIDE, SATURDAY 3 JULY 2021

Alas, no results this week from Sydney or Brisbane, as they remain in covid lockdown. But other clubs were able to race.

First to Adelaide, thanks to Kim Mottrom. He reported: Cold and wet again in Adelaide again today for our mountain championships in Belair National park. I've attached a map showing the elevation via google maps. Open walkers do 5.1km twice, U18's just do 5.1km, U16's do 3.5km and U14 do 2.1km- we've been doing this course since 2012.

I asked Kim how the 10.2km walk worked, given the climb was only 5.1km. He explained that as soon as Greg Metha was finished, they were driven straight back down to start their second climb.

Open Men 10.2km

1. Kim Mottrom	53:37	PB 2:32
2. Mathew Bruniges	1:07:44	PB 0:54
3. Greg Metha	1:11:49	

U18 Men 5.1km

1. Zayden Kamish	34:14	
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U18 Women 5.1km

1. Nellie Langford	34:56	
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U16 Boys 3.5km

1. Sebastian Richards	19:26	PB 3:55
2. Cooper Rech	23:04	

U16 Girls 3.5km

1. Daisy Braithwaite	22:39	
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U14 Boys 2.1km

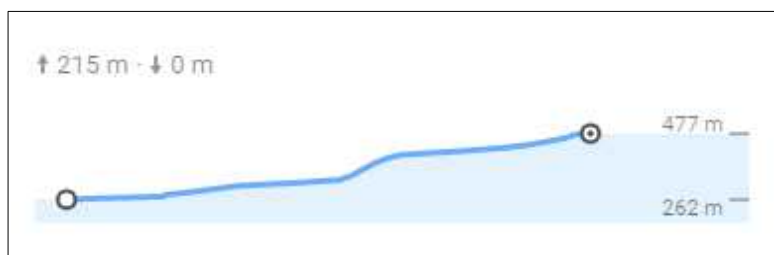
1. Orlando Grantham	12:58	
2. Tarique Kamish	15:31	PB 2:17
3. Alexander Richards	16:35	PB 1:24
4. Maverick Grantham	18:34	

U14 Girls 2.1km

1. Zahra Kamish	16:28	PB 1:30
2. Liliana Templer	16:42	
3. Shadya Kamish	18:22	
4. Maliha Kamish	18:39	

Non Championship 5.1km

1. Di Camilleri	43:46	
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The King of the Mountains uphill climb at Belair – a steady and demanding climb (graphic Kim Mottrom)

TRWC ROADWALKS, MONTROSE BAY, HOBART, SATURDAY 3 JULY 2021

Thanks to Dave Moore for this week's results from Tasmania. He reports: Fine conditions for our walk at Montrose Bay today. Excellent walks from youngsters **Lily Carr** (a PB in the 2km) and **Lani Broad** (in her first time over 3km). **Ron Foster** also delivered the goods with his fastest 5km on the Road since 2019.

5km Walk

1. Ron Foster	TMA	36:21
2. Wayne Fletcher	NS	41:15

2km Walk

1. Lily Carr	LA	13:21
2. Teresa Hatten	TMA	13:47

3km Walk

1. Lani Broad	LA	21:14
2. Dave Moore	TMA	31:34



13 year olds Lily Carr and Lani Broad in action at Montrose Bay (photo Rosie Coleman)

SAMA ROADWALKS, LEFEVRE TCE, ADELAIDE, SATURDAY 3 JULY 2021

The South Australian Masters walkers were also in action in Adelaide on Saturday.

8km Club Walk

1.	GIL MCINTOSH	56:51	M70	68.69%
2.	DAVID ROBERTSON	1:15:05	M87	64.70%
3.	MARGARET MCINTOSH	1:09:16	W68	62.58%

4km Club Walk

1.	CATHIE HORE	38:12	W70	56.36%
2.	EDNA BATES	38:42	W68	54.34%
3.	GRAHAM HARRISON	33:53	M77	61.20%
4.	COLIN HAINSWORTH	44:26	M91	57.38%
5.	BRIAN WITTY	34:24	M70	55.46%
6.	ROGER LOWE	39:30	M78	53.18%

2km Club Walk

1.	HELEN BOWEN	18:08	W69	58.38%
2.	LINDA WHITELAW	21:28	W67	48.31%
4.	JEFFREY KENNETT	21:31	M71	43.19%

WARWC ROADWALKS, SHELLEY, PERTH, SUNDAY 4 JULY 2021

Thanks to Terry Jones for this week's results from Western Australia: very wet and unpleasant conditions.

14km Handicap

1.	Brad Mann	1:18:56
2.	Wendy Farrow	1:36:09
3.	Melissa Lewis	1:23:37

6km Handicap

1.	John Ronan	29.29
2.	Marcela Ruiz	43.36
3.	Karyn Tolardo	38.24
4.	Victor Munoz	38.50
5.	Ben Reid	33.42
6.	Andrew Duncan	34.46

4km Handicap

1.	John McDonagh	28.16
2.	Gleys Duncan	35.21
3.	Ashlyn Spence	23.32
4.	Luke Lawrence	26.31
5.	Kaytee Bogaers	24.42
6.	Xavier Bernard	23.31
7.	Lataya Lawrence	26.32

1.5km Handicap

1.	Sylvia Byers	14.23
2.	Emily Bogaers	12.21
3.	Keaton Bailey	8.21
4.	Linkin Lawrence	14.39

OUT AND ABOUT

- Serbian rower Miloš Vasic has tested positive for COVID-19 on arrival in Tokyo. He will now be quarantined for the next seven days under protocols introduced by Tokyo 2020 and the Japanese Government. The rower would then be required to produce two negative tests to be released from quarantine to resume preparations for the Olympic Games. I suspect this is the first of many! See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1109768/serbian-rower-positive-tokyo-2020>.
- A sudden rebound in Covid-19 cases in Tokyo has raised Olympic related safety concerns. Covid-19 cases have been rising since a state of emergency was lifted last month and replaced with softer restrictions, which currently allow up to 5000 spectators at sporting events. Those measures are set to expire on July 11, but the government is expected to extend them, meaning they could still be in place when the Olympic Games commence on July 23 (less than 3 weeks time). See <https://www.news.com.au/sport/olympics/how-will-covid19-affect-the-tokyo-olympics/news-story/679b172af21fe45c1839515317e21b52>.

MARCIADALMONDO AND OMARCHADOR ROUNDUP

Marcialmondo has 6 press releases this week

- Sat 3 Jul - British 50km record-holder Dominic King has asked BOA to over-rule UKA decision http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4131
- Fri 2 Jul - Eugene (USA): The National School Championships (U18) of the USA http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4130

- Fri 2 Jul - Angers (FRA): Gabriel Bordier and Clémence Beretta win the French Track Walk Championships http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4129
- Wed 30 Jun - The 2022 World Race Walking Team Championships will not be held in Minsk (BLR) http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4127
- Tue 29 Jun - Minsk (BLR): Mikita Kolyada and Anna Terlyukevich win National Championships of Belarus http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4126
- Mon 28 Jun - Banska Bistrica (SVK): International Race Walking Meeting http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4125

while Omarchador has 14 press releases from around the world.

- Mon 5 Jul - Walk results from Plasencia, Spain <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/a-marcha-no-xxxiii-encuentro-diputacion.html>
- Sun 4 Jul - Spanish walker José Ignacio Díaz announces his retirement <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/ponto-final-na-carreira-de-jose-ignacio.html>
- Sun 4 Jul - Jerome Caprice and Kate Veale, Irish Champions (Santry 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/jerome-caprice-e-kate-veale-campeoes-da.html>
- Sat 3 Jul - Narcis Mihaila and Ana Rodean, champions of Romania (Pitesti 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/narcis-mihaila-e-ana-rodean-campeoes-da.html>
- Sat 3 Jul - Hyunmyeong Joo and Jeong-Eun Lee, South Korean Champions (Jeongseon 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/hyunmyeong-joo-e-jeong-eun-lee-campeoes.html>
- Fri 2 Jul - Ruslans Smolonskis and Modra Ignate, champions of Latvia (Jelgava 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/ruslans-smolonskis-e-modra-ignate.html>
- Thu 1 Jul - Nick Christie and Robyn Stevens win 20km march at US Olympic Trials in Springfield, Oregon <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/nick-christie-e-robyn-stevens-vencem-20.html>
- Thu 1 Jul - Results of the Central American Championship walks in Costa Rica <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/costa-rica-recebeu-os-centro-americanos.html>
- Thu 1 Jul - Portugal names 2 walkers for the European U23 Championships in Tallinn <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/07/portugal-com-duas-marchadoras-nos.html>
- Wed 30 Jun - Gabriel Bordier and Clémence Beretta, champions of France (Angers 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/06/gabriel-bordier-e-clemence-beretta.html>
- Wed 30 Jun - Miklós Domonkos Srp and Viktória Madarász, Hungarian champions (Debrecen (2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/06/miklos-domonkos-srp-e-viktoria-madarasz.html>
- Wed 30 Jun - 2022 World Team Championships to be moved from Minsk, Belarus <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/06/mundial-de-selecoes-de-marcha-ja-nao.html>
- Tue 29 Jun - María Pérez and Álvaro Martín, champions of Spain (Getafe 2021) <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/06/maria-perez-e-alvaro-martin-campeoes-de.html>
- Tue 29 Jun - Lebogang Shange (South Africa) and Magaly Bonilla (Ecuador) feature in Slovakia <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/06/lebogang-shange-africa-do-sul-e-magaly.html>

TIM TALKS WITH AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL WALKS COACH BRENT VALLANCE

I am very pleased to include an interview with Australian National Walks Coach **Brent Vallance**. Brent has coached many of our top walkers over the years (Nathan Deakes, Jared Tallent, Chris Erickson, Regan Lambie to name a few) and he is currently coaching 3 of our 7 Australian Tokyo Olympic walkers (Jemima Montag, Kyle Swan and Rhydian Cowley).

Brent was an Australian representative walker in the 1990s, one of our most promising in an era of abundance. Alas, he was eventually forced to retire due to recurrent hamstring issues, with his best still to come. Luckily for us, Brent was not lost to the sport and, when the opportunity was presented, he applied for and took up a position as AIS Scholarship Coach - Racewalking. In 2006 he became the AIS Chief Coach - Racewalking, and held that position until the AIS program was shut down in early 2013.

He has an abundance of coaching knowledge, built up over the last 20 years, and I have been lucky enough to work alongside him in many of the annual racewalking camps over the years. I have asked him a few questions below. Enjoy the read.



Brent Vallance chats with athlete Rhydian Cowley at Middle Park recently

I was very distressed when the AIS shut down its scholarship program after the 2012 Olympics. Can you just remind our readers what the AIS program once was.

There are certainly many today who wouldn't understand what was once in place for our emerging and pathway athletes pre 2012, so I'll summarise as best I can to what our system once had to familiarise your readers with what was lost.

The National Centre for Walks which was a residential Scholarship program based at the AIS In Canberra was, along with the WAIS Pole Vault Centre, one of two centres that shared the highest level of priority within Athletics Australia's high performance plan, in preparation of the London Olympics.

The AIS (on behalf of Athletics Australia), delivered both the elite and sub-elite components of agreed targeted disciplines, which met the needs of both Athletics Australia and the AIS. This allowed the AIS to devise performance programs for the allocated disciplines as well as develop and recruit athletes for those agreed events on behalf of AA. The AIS was appointed by Athletics Australia as the "National Centre for Race Walking", which proved to be the most successful High Performance arm of Athletics Australia's able bodied team, as measured by Olympic medals won, and Points scored on the world athletics point scoring tables

Athletes were offered an AIS Scholarship and relocated to Canberra, in a "full time" training environment supported by financial living costs, domestic and international training camp and competition support, a DTE supported with full time coaching, training daily in a squad of 8-12 International level athletes, with sports Science and Sports Medicine facility and service support within a program supporting - 28 athletes, of which race-walking was a targeted event focus.

Many of our most successful walkers remained in Canberra on an AIS Scholarship throughout multiple Olympic Cycles including Jared Tallent, Nathan Deakes, Jane Saville, Simon Baker, Kerry Saxby, Nick A'Hern, Claire Tallent and Luke Adams.

With the AIS repositioning itself in 2013, and National Sporting Organisations assuming delivery, and responsibility of their entire High Performance programs, Athletics Australia's most successful program was "decentralised" with athletes and coaches relocating to different parts of the country. The basis of support was defined by a mathematical performance funnel, assuming that without a centralised pathway programs, athletes would still be able to bridge a rather large gulf from our junior team to senior teams.

We moved from the entire 2012 London Olympic games Squad of walkers being based in Canberra at the AIS, to 2016, where the athletes were based in Canberra n=2, Melbourne n=3, Brisbane n=1, and Adelaide n=2.

It's been a long road for you since then but you have kept your faith and your enthusiasm. Summarise your last 8 years.

2012 was a very busy year for me professionally and quite challenging personally. It was the 10th consecutive year of coaching at the AIS, that included travelling for extended periods domestically and Internationally, while the role itself seemed to be ever expanding, along with the size of training group in Canberra. After the London Olympic cycle, I decided to take some time out of

professional coaching. My involvement with Athletics was more in a volunteer capacity, and I was in Rio with my two Australian athletes Regan Lamble, and Chris Erickson who were both 9th and 10th respectively.

From 2013 to 2020, I working with emerging student-athletes within Victoria's only endorsed and funded High School based Sports Academy, The Maribyrnong Sports Academy (MSA) as the High performance Manager.

In 2017, I again began taking on younger athletes, and returned to a role with Athletics Australia as the National Junior coach and began running camps, and getting back to providing better opportunities for our pathway athletes, as well as trying to get a group training culture established again in Melbourne.

I have also been coaching other International athletes, including Brigita Virbalyte-Dimšiene and Perseus Karlström, and this has added an extra layer to the whole coaching equation.

What to you attribute the big improvement in our elite Australian racewalkers over the last 12 months.

There are a range of reasons, and each improving athlete may have a list of a few of those factors that are familiar, but the two key reasons I believe are:

1. Athletics Australia Supported National Training Camps

We've again returned to conducting large scale domestic training camps across our summer season, and thrown the net as wide as possible to include a large talent pool In the 2020/2021 Season. This included the following training camps:

- Nov/Dec 2020 – Thredbo, NSW LHTL Altitude Training Camp
- Jan 2021 – SN5 Dietary Intervention Training Camp (Albert Park Melbourne)
- April 2021 – Heat Training Camp (Cairns, QLD)

Not all, but many of the athletes on the camps this summer have been part of previous season camps starting in January 2018. We've been able to support and develop across almost the entire Olympic Cycle our best junior and transitioning (junior to senior) athletes including those athletes now in our Olympic Games team (Jemima Montag, Katie Hayward, Kyle Swan and Declan Tingay).

2. We have a very talented young u/23 and U/20 age group.

This is the youngest Olympic Team of walkers we've ever had represent Australia. The average age of our women's 20km team on the day they compete will be 21.5yrs, and the men's 20km team will be 24.65. See table below for the average age of our previous teams where we have filled an event with three athletes.

Of the athletes 24 or younger, we have a CG Champion in Montag, a WUG Champion in Hayward, and 3 athletes who placed 4th, 5th and 6th at the World U/20 Championships.

The youngest member of the team is Bec Henderson, who will also be the youngest competitor in the women's 20km walk at the OG. Bec was an athlete who missed her opportunity to compete in the World U/20 Championships in 2020 and was able to make her way into the team by walking 92' and 91' in her first two outings at 20km before her 20th Birthday.

Our current men's U/20 Champion Will Thompson is on target to do something similar next year, so we certainly have a talented group.

Our Olympic walkers are in great form. Who do you see as our top prospects?

Australia has a great record at the Olympic Games in Racewalking, and the **seven Olympic games medals**, by four athletes (Deakes, Saville, Tallent & Bird-Smith) won since the Athens Olympic Games makes us second only to China across the same time period, and ahead of Spain, Italy and Mexico combined.

Australia's position geographically in the southern Hemisphere, with our multi peak season and proximity to key events in Asia, has always dictated the events available to our younger athletes. Few ever get the chance to race consistently on the International circuit, which historically means that when scrolling down World Ranking lists, even our previous stars don't appear at the top of those lists going into a championship.

We've sat back in Australia over the last 12-18 months with a relatively uninterrupted and extended period of training while other parts of the world have been impacted greatly by the COVID19 pandemic. The benefits of isolation and being able to quickly close our borders for international travel, and at times domestic travel has led to the increasing frustration we have by the lack of international competition to measure and gauge ourselves with the international trends in the event.

This has impacted on our younger athletes, who have yet to be exposed to fast races, in good weather, with large fields. We've instead been time trialling Olympic Distance events, and our athletes have been racing solo, so comparing Declan Tingay and Kyle Swan to Jared Tallent and Adam Rutter is very difficult, as Kyle and Declan haven't raced a 20km in Taicang, or Nomi, and have also missed a World Walking Cup.

So, when looking at our athletes, I expect they'll all be higher placed at the Games than their times, or world Ranking would suggest, and I certainly believe there are still chances in our current Olympic team at this Olympics or the next to continue our medal winning tradition.

Jemima Montag's form across the Australian 2021 summer season included a 5km of 20:51, 42:35 for 10,000m and a PB of 1:28:50 for 20km. Her improvement in all training and Physiological markers since her 10th place in the 2019 Doha World Championships, and indeed since the Australian summer season means she'll be amongst the leaders late in the women's 20km.

Jemima Montag competition in 2021:

Event	Date	Competition	Cnt.	Pl.	Result
10,000m W	10-Jan-21	SuperNova 5ish, George Knott Track, Collingwood, Melbourne	AUS	1	43:45.0
10,000m W	31-Jan-21	Athletics Australia Elite 10,000m Track Walk, George Knott Track,	AUS	1	42:35.2
5000m W	27-Feb-21	Victorian Ch. (W/end #2), Lakeside Stadium, Melbourne	AUS	1	20:51.0
20km Walk	27-Mar-21	Oceania Race Walking Championships, Fawkner Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:28:50
20km Walk	2-May-21	Australian 20km Race Walk, Fawkner Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:31:51
10km Walk	23-May-21	VRWC Roadwalk, Middle Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	43:25.0
15km Walk	28-Jun-21	VRWC Roadwalk, Middle Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:05:30

Australia has a great history in turning established 20km walkers into world class 50km walkers, such as Simon Baker, Nathan Deakes, Luke Adams and Jared Tallent. Our development philosophy at the AIS was to develop a wider talent pool of 20km athletes at the A qualification level, and then transition them into 50km athletes. Our Ranking Lists have Deakes, Tallent and Adams at the top of both 20km and 50km All Time ranking.

Rhydian Cowley has been selected as a 50km walker based on his debut performance in December 2019 with 3:52:58, and will follow this pattern of development. This is a long way short of what will be required to threaten for a top 8 position, but Rhydian is not a 3:52:58 athlete and has the capacity to be a 3:40:00 athlete.

Rhydian Cowley competition in 2021

Event	Date	Competition	Cnt.	Pl.	Result
10,000m W	10-Jan-21	SuperNova 5ish, George Knott Track, Collingwood, Melbourne	AUS	1	39:58.1
10,000m W	31-Jan-21	Athletics Australia Elite 10,000m Track Walk, George Knott Track,	AUS	1	39:14.6
5000m W	27-Feb-21	Victorian Ch. (W/end #2), Lakeside Stadium, Melbourne	AUS	2	19:09.5
20km W	27-Mar-21	Oceania Race Walking Championships, Fawkner Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:22:28
10,000m W	16-Apr-21	Australian Ch., SOPAC, Sydney	AUS	1	39:29.6
20km W	2-May-21	Australian 20km Race Walk, Fawkner Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:21:49
10km W	23-May-21	VRWC Roadwalk, Middle Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	40:00.0
15km W	28-Jun-21	VRWC Roadwalk, Middle Park, Melbourne	AUS	1	1:00:16

Rhydian has certainly matured as an athlete in competition and also in training. I believe he is the type of athlete carrying in strong form and momentum into a championship, and the early pace of 50km walking will be very comfortable for him in his current form.

In years past, our Olympic walkers have done their final prep in places like St Moritz. With covid restrictions, what is the plan for 2021.

Despite being in the middle of winter in the south eastern corner of Australia, we're very lucky to have suitable acclimatisation options and our walkers will prepare in Cairns, Qld, 12th-30th July, before flying directly to Sapporo.

Our winter climate in June/July also means our altitude venues are unavailable for training during those months, so we have decided to forgo a pre Championship altitude preparation in 2021, and instead favour more heat acclimatisation camps.

It is certainly our experience for the established senior athletes, that they have over long careers developed the maturity and fortitude required to be away from home for extended periods for the benefit of their athletics. In 2021, with the travel restrictions in place, Australia's quarantine processes, combined with our younger and inexperienced team, a domestic heat camp, followed by a short competition trip is something that they have all experienced by racing in Taicang CHN, or Nomi JPN, previously.

We'll certainly plan to return to St Moritz for 2023 and 2024 for Paris. With the World Championships next year being in the USA, we'll likely do final altitude preparations in Flagstaff or Mammoth Lakes in the USA.

You are a busy man, with your coaching, your work with Athletics Australia, your Ph.D. research and with a new baby to boot (congrats to you and Amelia). How do you do it!

Well at the moment, it's been very easy to go to training. Nothing perks up a coach more than having talented athletes to coach, and I've been working with a very talented group this cycle.

With Roy arriving in June, and a PhD ahead of me, I have no doubt there will be some very busy and certainly challenging times ahead. Right now, I'm focussed on this Olympics, and will share some of that experience by having my family in the pre camp in Cairns.

Many of our future training camps will be linked to PhD data collection, so we will be able to manage aspects of coaching, and my PhD. Certainly at the moment, Amelia and I are just learning the daily cycles of having a newborn baby interrupting all of our daily plans and routines, which has certainly been a lot of fun.

VRWC CLUB RECORD UPDATE

I have been kept busy with a steady stream of VRWC club records of late. Here are the ones that I have captured so far this winter. Check out the full list at <https://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwc-records.shtml>.

Ela Uzun	W	U10 and U11 1.5km Road Walk	7:21	VRWC Races, Middle Park	17/04/2021
Ela Uzun	W	U11 and U12 3km Road Walk	15:15	VRWC Races, Middle Park	15/05/2021
Ela Uzun	W	U11 and U12 1km Road Walk	4:43	VRWC Races, Middle Park	23/05/2021
Alanna Peart	W	U18 and U20 5km Road Walk	22:35	LBG Carnival, Canberra	12/06/2021
Ela Uzun	W	U11 2km Road Walk	9:45	VRWC Races, Middle Park	19/06/2021
Jemima Montag	W	Open 15km Road Walk	1:05:29	AV 15km Champs, Middle Park	27/06/2021
Rebecca Henderson	W	U20 15km Road Walk	1:09:56	AV 15km Champs, Middle Park	27/06/2021
Will Thompson	M	U10 15km Road Walk	1:02:51	AV 15km Champs, Middle Park	27/06/2021
Ela Uzun	W	U11 and U12 3km Road Walk	15:04	VRWC Races, Middle Park	03/07/2021
Ela Uzun	W	U11 and U12 5km Road Walk	25:22	VRWC Races, Middle Park	03/07/2021

DATES...DATES...DATES

As usual, I finish with a list of upcoming events on the local, national and international fronts. Let me know of any errors/omissions. It continues to change quickly as a result of COVID-19 issues.

Victorian Key Dates –2021

Jul 10 (Sat), 2021 Next round of VRWC Roadwalks, including RWA Interstate Challenge Middle Park, VIC
 Sep 12 (Sun), 2021 Australian Roadwalk Championships Middle Park, VIC

2021 World Athletics Race Walk Challenge

July 23 – Aug 8, 2021 32nd Olympic Games - Walks at Sapporo, JAP
 Oct 9 (Sat), 2021 RW Challenge Meet, Mexico City, MEX
 Oct 16 (Sat), 2021 Invitational Race Walking Meeting, Coatzacoalcos, MEX

Other International Dates

July 23 – Aug 8, 2021 **32nd Olympic Games, Tokyo and Sapporo**
 Aug 8-19, 2021 **World University Summer Games, Chengdu, China (POSTPONED TILL 2022)**
 Aug 20-21, 2021 **18th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships, Nairobi, Kenya (POSTPONED FROM 2020)**
 Nov 5-14, 2021 **Pan Pacific Masters Games, Gold Coast, QLD (<https://mastersgames.com.au/ppmg/>)**

Jan 2022 **Oceania Masters Championships, Norfolk Island (CANCELLED)**
 TBA, 2022 **9th World Masters Indoor T&F Championships, Edmonton, Canada**
 Jun 29 – Jul 10, 2022 **23rd World Masters T&F Championships, Tampere, Finland**
 Apr 23-24, 2022 **29th World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships, venue TBA**
 July 15-24, 2022 **18th World Athletics Championships, Eugene, USA**
 July 27 - Aug 7, 2022 **XXII Commonwealth Games, Birmingham, GBR**
 Aug 11-21, 2022 **European Athletics Championships, Munich, GER**
 TBA, 2022 **19th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships, Cali, Colombia**

TBA, 2023 **24th World Masters T&F Championships, Gothenburg Sweden**
 Aug 2023 (TBC) **19th World Athletics Championships, Budapest, Hungary**

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Copies of recent newsletters are kept on the VRWC website (<http://www.vrwc.org.au>)