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# FOOTPRINTS



**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER  
2020**

## **LANE DISTANCING**



- KEVIN CASSIDY - MASTER OF MANY SPORTS**
- ZOLA BUDD - AFTER THE FALL**
- CHRIS MCARDLE 1989 WORLD CHAMPION**
- VALE MIKE MCAVOY**
- VALE JANINE JAMES**



I've been having these dreams. I'm being chased down dimly lit alleys by all these medical people wielding 1.5 metre long cotton buds. I think I'm as scared of having one of these pushed up my nose as I am of the virus itself. Ok, Ok. Big target, how could they miss.

Lots of us think we are good endurance athletes but can you hold a candle to Kevin Cassidy? After a career of Ultra running, he goes and swims the English Channel. There's two articles. One by Tim Erickson and one by Kevin himself.

Now, Zola Budd. This was a huge controversy back in the day. The article says it was written in 2018 but it must have been around 2009. I know Zola ran the Cross Country at the World Masters in Sacramento in 2011. Came second. Still you've got to be pretty good to come second at the Worlds. Oh that's right, I came second at Sacramento. Have I told you that?

It's not easy trying to guess the future for competition. We were nearly out but it dragged us back in again. It looks like the Browne Shield is cooked. Maybe AV will still get to hold the Half Marathon in September but I doubt it. Unless we could hold 3 Browne Shield events, it's better to cancel. Especially seeing the Half is the event a lot of our people drop.

Sadly, we have to farewell two members Geelong's Mike McAvoy and Doncasters' Janine James. It's one of the unfortunate facts about a club with an older demographic. At Croydon, we lost Ron Boynes' wife Barbara and John Yeates' wife Margaret. We wish all the friends and family well.

I don't really want to say "we're all in this together" or "keep safe" but remember while Victoria may be getting hammered right now, just think how lucky you are to be a "Vic" and more so an Australian.

*Thank a front line worker and wear a bloody mask.*

*Russ Dickenson*

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## A VERY SPECIAL BIRTHDAY

Margaret Prowse celebrated her 100th birthday a couple of weeks ago. Margaret has maintained her VMA membership, although not actively involved anymore.

**Congratulations Margaret  
and  
Many Happy Returns**

# MASTERPIECES

## Important Things While we're in Recess

1.

We will be having our Annual General Meeting on Sunday 20th September. This may have to be held by ZOOM video-conferencing. We will let you know the details closer to the event.

2.

You can nominate for the Committee if you are a member. We are always looking for new people, and of course, women are very welcome and generally under-represented. *No glass ceilings in this club.* If you can't nominate but you know of someone who you think would be ideal, give them a big push. We are currently holding our monthly meetings by video-

3.

Keep in contact ! Are you still in contact with your friends from your Venue ? I know a lot of people are still talking but is there someone that may be out of the loop. How about checking in on some of our newer members ? Can you ring someone ?

### What's On

Any queries on Browne Shield races can be directed to Peter Thorne on 0427 880 143 or peterthorne@gmail.com - **Browne Shield Event #**

#### 2020

April 19	2020 VMA 3000m Championship - <i>D.McKinnon Reserve</i> - followed by AGM - <b>POSTPONED</b>
May 12	VMA 10k Track Championship - <i>Collingwood</i> - <b>POSTPONED #</b>
May 24	AMA Half Marathon - <i>POSTAL</i> - <b>CANCELLED</b>
June 21	VMA 6/8k Cross Country Championship - <i>Collingwood</i> - <b>POSTPONED #</b>
July 5	AMA Marathon Championship - <i>Gold Coast</i> - <b>CANCELLED</b>
July 19	VMA 10k Road Championship - <i>Braeside Park</i> - <b>POSTPONED #</b>
July 20-Aug 1	World Masters Athletics T&F Championships - <i>Toronto</i> - <b>CANCELLED</b>
August 16	VMA Winter Throws Pentathlon - <i>Duncan McKinnon Reserve</i> - <b>POSTPONED</b>
August 16	VMA 10 Mile Road Championship - <i>Knox Venue</i> - <b>POSTPONED #</b>
August 30	2020 AMA 20k Walk Championship - <i>Adelaide</i> - <b>Now becomes Postal event.</b>
Sept 6	Burnley Half Marathon - <i>Enter through AV website</i> - <b>TBC #</b>
Oct 3-5	2019 AMA Winter Throws Championships - <i>Wollongong</i> - <b>TBC</b>
Oct 10-17	Alice Springs Masters Games - <b>CANCELLED</b>

#### 2021

Jan 17-23	2021 Oceania Masters T&F Champs - <i>Norfolk Island</i> - <b>RE-SCHEDULED TO 2022 (SEE BELOW)</b>
March 5-8	2021 AMA Championships - <i>ACT</i>
March 20	IAAF World Cross Country Champs - <i>Bathurst</i> - <b>POSTPONED</b>
July TBA	World Masters Athletics T&F Championships - <i>Tampere, Finland 9 October</i> - <b>Saturday 16</b>
Oct 9-16	Australian Masters Games - <i>Perth</i> - <a href="http://www.australianmastersgames.com/">www.australianmastersgames.com/</a>

#### 2022

Jan 10-14	2021 Oceania Masters T&F Champs - <i>Norfolk Island</i> - <a href="http://www.oceaniamastersathletics.org">www.oceaniamastersathletics.org</a>
Date TBA	WMA Indoor Championships - <i>Edmonton, Canada</i>

#### 2023

Date TBA	World Masters Athletics T&F Championships - <i>Gothenburg, Sweden</i>
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# MASTERPIECES

The man with the perpetual smile on his face, George Dyer, along with his two daughters, Ashley and Taylor, participated in numerous fundraising events throughout June.

The girls pledged to go pink for the entire month, while George has run hundreds of kilometres through two separate events.

George said his family often participated in breast cancer fundraising events after his mother passed away from the disease 27 years ago, aged 60.

George said the early passing of his mother prevented her from having a relationship with his daughters.

"The girls were young, they don't have any recollection of their grandmother," he said.

But that didn't mean they weren't impacted by their grandmother's death. In fact, it was Ashley and Taylor's idea to begin the fundraising.

About 10 weeks ago the pair made a pledge that they would dye their hair pink for the month of June.

George, feeling very proud of his daughters' pledge, then decided that he too would fundraise by running. His first fundraiser took place on 7 June at the Knox Athletics Track where he ran 100kms and donated \$1 for every kilometre both he and others ran.

During the fundraiser, 879.5km were walked or run - including George's 100km - and about \$2500 was raised.

"It was just an amazing feeling to get to the finish line for such a worthy cause," George said.

"I can't thank my daughters Ashley and Taylor enough for all their organising and love and support throughout the day.

"It was an amazing and emotional day with so many family and friends coming along to run laps and support me on this 100km journey."

George, who works for Metro Trains, took on another fundraiser called The Great Train Run.

**He ran the entire metropolitan train network from 10-19 June.**

"Part of the campaign is trying to eliminate any deaths by the year 2030," George said. "From our experience with my mother, if she had gone to the doctors early she might still be here today.

"Awareness is one thing but you need funds for hopefully a cure in the end.

"Unfortunately there are too many cancers and too many people dying at a young age from cancer...If we can save one life that's a bonus."

George said his mum had been a huge inspiration for him throughout life and she will be in his thoughts "all the way along this journey."

"Mum used to go to all our sporting events and was on numerous committees," he said.

"She was always there and she has been a big inspiration.

"If she had been here she would have been at the track, she would have been following me every step of the way."

You can still donate at : <https://fundraise.nbcf.org.au/fundraiser/ashleyandtaylorayer>.



Here are a couple of related links :

<https://www.facebook.com/10NewsMelb/videos/275074703945105/>

<https://rangestrader.mailcommunity.com.au/news/2020-06-29/georges-crazy-adventure/>

## MASTERPIECES

**A COUPLE OF OLD STAYERS**

When the restrictions eased a little Phil Urquhart and I had a run at Caulfield Racetrack. I'd been wanting to run there for ages as it was, and may still be, a place where a lot of our legendary runners have trained. It didn't disappoint. Great place to run. We ran on the grass track and also did a lap of an inner circuit which is paved. The track is open to the public for most of the day. It is closed early morning for horse training.

**BROWNE SHIELD**

THINGS ARE NOT LOOKING GOOD FOR THIS YEAR'S BROWNE SHIELD. WE HAVE LOOKED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF STAGING A CROSS COUNTRY AND THE ERIC GREAVES 10K LATER IN THE YEAR. WE CAN ONLY WAIT AND SEE. WE WILL PUBLICISE ANY EVENTS THAT WE CAN HOLD.

**WORLD ATHLETICS CROSS COUNTRY**

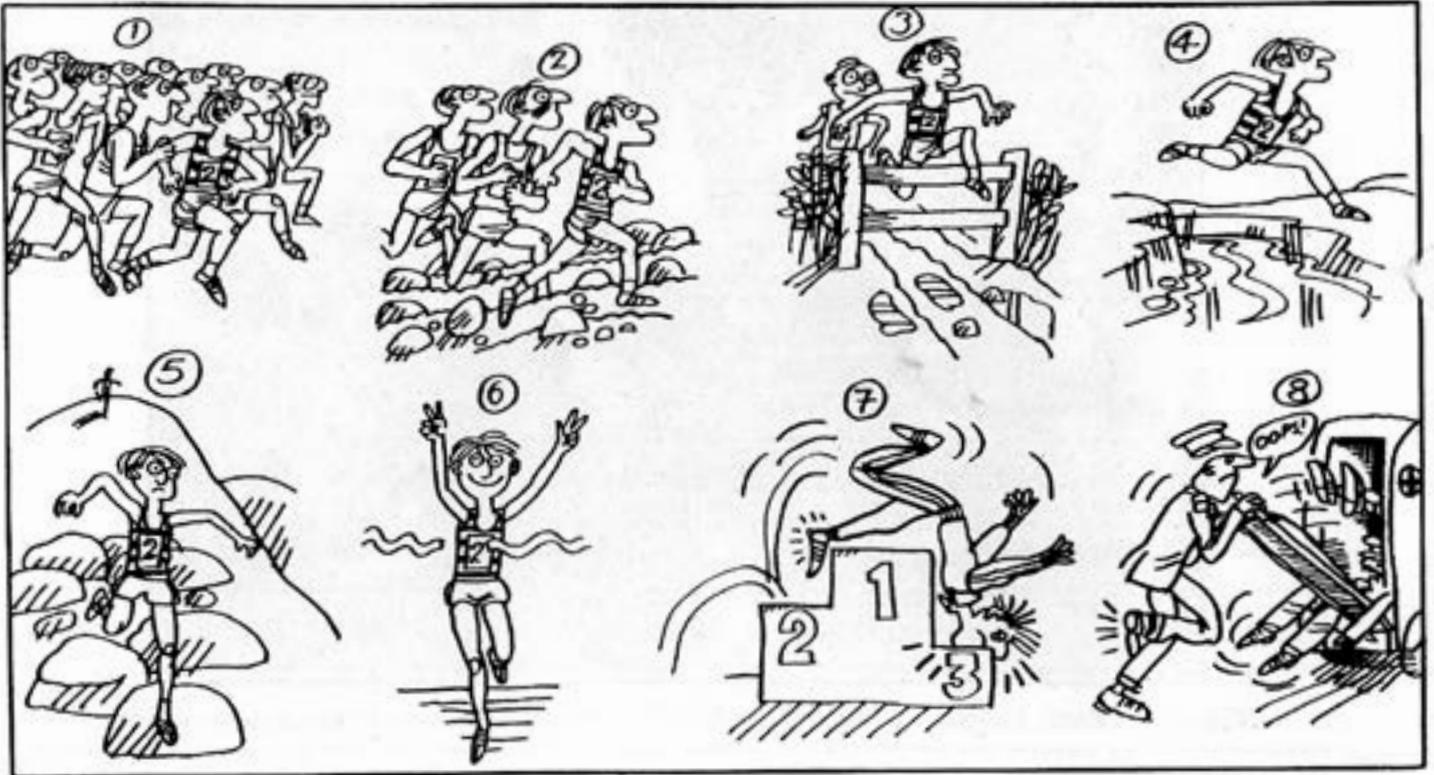
THIS OPEN EVENT IS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN MARCH NEXT YEAR. WE HAVE HEARD THAT THERE WILL BE MASTERS EVENTS HELD AS WELL. ALTHOUGH DETAILS ARE HARD TO FIND, WE WOULD LIKE TO HOLD A CROSS COUNTRY THAT POTENTIALLY COULD BE USED TO QUALIFY SOME OF OUR RUNNERS.

STAY TUNED ON THIS ONE.

**NOW POSTPONED**

# MASTERPIECES

This is an old cartoon I found in the Jan 1995 edition of News & Results, the forerunner to Footprints. It's pretty good. I don't know if it's original or stolen (my forte) from somewhere else.



Page 2

Vic Vets News and Results January 1995

This is a design I have been playing around with to augment our *Run Safely Tonight* campaign.

We have been thinking of having a tee shirt that we can sell at a bargain basement price that our members can wear at parkrun, Melbourne Marathon, Fun Runs etc.

The fact remains that it can be dangerous to run alone especially for women, and at night in particular. To run at one of our Venues with like minded people and under lights remains a good idea.

Several people have used the lettering (numbering) but it fits our campaign nicely



## MASTERPIECES

CASEY FIELDS TO GET FITNESS TRAIL  
Will be “their own Tan”

Informal recreational opportunities such as walking and jogging are extremely popular and Casey Fields is an ideal location for these activities. The creation of a *five kilometre Fitness Trail* will become a regional drawcard, through its design appeal to runners and walkers offering a soft surface, wide path, flat topography, safe and attractive setting with public surveillance away from cars.

To add to its appeal, drinking fountains, distance markers and exercise equipment will be provided along the trail. The looped circuit will start and end at the Central Node, which will be the gathering point for runners, joggers and walkers. The Fitness Trail is a short-term priority and is to be developed in stages, particularly the southern and eastern sections which are to be installed by Council or developers of abutting estates



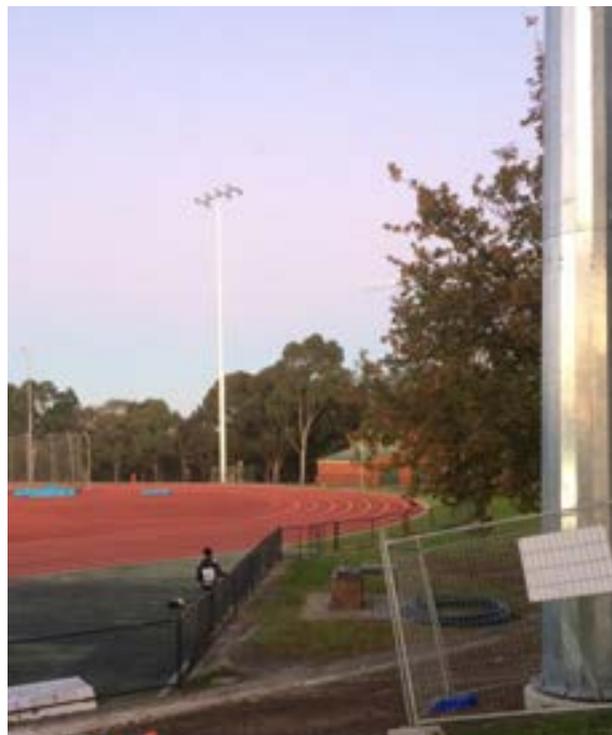
# MASTERPIECES

## While we've been in hibernation.....

**East Burwood** Whitehorse Council has been hard at it and has installed new light towers. Needless to say the track has been closed. Thanks to Gerald Burke for the photos. Gerald says they are twice as high as the last towers.

**Croydon** track has been open right throughout with big numbers of people using it. Maroondah Council has had the track pressure hosed which has gotten rid of the moss and grass that nearly needed mowing.

**Collingwood** The Collingwood track - at George Knott Reserve - has been open during the entire period of coronavirus as Yarra City Council regards it as a public facility. As required by law, the clubrooms were of course closed during the lockdown. A small group of dedicated runners from the Masters group was meeting at the track during recent months on Tuesday nights and doing some informal training (with social distancing). Apart from routine maintenance, no changes to the track or surrounds have been made during



**Doncaster** track was locked up during the first lockdown but at the time of writing is open. Could be closed again.

**Aberfeldie** track is still open for public training only.

The club rooms have been closed for about three months. The clubhouse is undergoing stage 1 of a 3 Stage refurbishment. Stage 1 involves a complete update of all toilet facilities and work is well underway.

**Coburg's** track was closed pretty promptly when the first round of lockdowns commenced. We did get back on the track between lockdowns for training and had a handful of participants for that six weeks. The Coburg Harriers have been granted funding from Moreland Council for facilities upgrades. I think the funding is significant, but it is yet to be verified. I am pretty sure that the track does not get upgraded though.

**Frankston** track was completely closed for a period of time, but then reopened for training purposes only. We took a conservative approach, and waited to see what was happening Covid wise. By the time we decided to get officially back to the track for some training, things were starting to escalate, and were shutdown again before we could get a second night at the track. Clubrooms were strictly off limits, but we were able to use the track lights. Not sorry we took the conservative approach, it's all about keeping ourselves and each other safe. There were only 4 members who trained on the one night we were back, lots of us playing it safe still.

Was told that a track surface company will be coming to assess the surface of the track in the near future, as it is disappointingly showing signs of excessive wear after just a short 6 and a bit years since it was re-surfaced. So fingers crossed this will be attended to unfortunately in the past the wheels have turned very slowly time will tell.

**Geelong** Landy Field track is open and some Masters using the track for our virtual competition. Geelong has been running a virtual competition with excellent numbers of participants. We believe the amenities are closed.

# MASTERPIECES

While we've been in hibernation..... cont.

**Knox** The Knox Track was locked up and when the restrictions eased it did re-open for training only, AV started some training there and than LAV kids also, although no pavilions, grandstand or equipment could be used. Knox Masters didn't get back into the track as only training was allowed and we were unable to use any lights. Then just as we thought it might be getting better, the Track has been locked up again. No known improvements are being made to The Knox

**Springvale** track has been open to the public right throughout but Clubrooms etc are locked. They are getting a proposed track upgrade and new Pavillion one day, but this has been coming for five years !!

**Mentone** Track has been open throughout. No improvements are scheduled.

**Glen Eira** Duncan McKinnon is open. The rooms were reopened briefly but of course are shut again now. There have been no changes to the track because it was recently resurfaced. There have been some works to the surrounding parks with new paths and some work on resurfacing the infield. Glen Eira has been running some good virtual events.

**Casey** has been open and we have been able to use the lights, improvements at the track have been the installation of a Telco tower replacing one of the light towers. Casey Venue did hold some events between the lockdowns.



*From our cousins at ACT Masters. Let's get over this pandemic and they will welcome us with open arms at next year's Nationals.*

Dear Masters Colleagues,

At this stage, despite travel restrictions, catering to vulnerable participants and a bleak outlook in terms of sponsorship, ACT Masters Athletics remains confident of conducting a successful national Masters championships for track and field at the AIS in 2021.

We were all geared up to start promotions in Brisbane, and then COVID-19 came to town. Having hunkered down through the bleak, cold, Canberra winter of COVID-19, it is time to raise our hands and signal to all that we continue preparations.

First up - we have a logo and an enticing banner picture signalling that the national championships coincide with the Balloon Festival in Canberra on the ACT March long-weekend (5-8 March 2021).

Next up, we need help - we are calling for expressions of interest for volunteers and officials. I would be most grateful, if you could circulate the following words and 'Expressions of Interest' form attached far and wide through your networks.

### **National Champs - calling for Volunteers and Officials**

The ACT Masters Athletics Club (ACTMA) is hosting the Australian Masters Athletics Track and Field Championships in Canberra on the ACT long weekend in March 2021, coinciding with the annual Canberra Balloon Festival (Friday 5 March - Monday 8 March, inclusive).

Technical Officials and Volunteers are needed for range of duties over the four (4) days of competition. ACTMA invites your Expression of Interest to be either a Technical Official or a Volunteer by completing the attached form, indicating your availability and preferred position/s based on the duties/tasks listed over.

Technical Officials will be provided with two official uniform shirts and a hat, refreshments and a per diem. Volunteers will receive a distinguishing shirt and light sustenance. Please email you expressions of interest to [Canberra2021@actmastersathletics.org.au](mailto:Canberra2021@actmastersathletics.org.au).

Many thanks in anticipation,

Suzie Gaynor

(ACTMA Secretary and LOC Publicity)

*Please send your expressions of interest to show that the Vics are right behind this event. This gesture will put wind in their sails. (or their balloons)  
Russ.*



Springvale Venue has been involved with Healthy Sports Clubs & Monash Health regarding Healthy Eating for sports clubs. They received a \$2,000 grant from Monash Health to implement a healthy eating program in our club & to introduce our members to resources and information available via Monash Health.

*Russ : Anyone who has had a supper at Springy after one of their events would be hoping things don't change too much.*

## CASE STUDY

# Springvale Masters Athletics



**Springvale Masters Athletics have been working with Healthy Sports Clubs on Healthy Food & Beverages in 2019 and now into 2020.**

**Why did you get involved?**

For the wellbeing of the club community, recognition for being part of the Healthy Sports Clubs initiative and support/opportunity to focus on a health area of concern.

**How has it changed your club community?**

The club members have changed their attitudes and behaviour to the types of foods they've been bringing into the club, with members swapping out chocolate biscuits for vegetable sticks and dip.

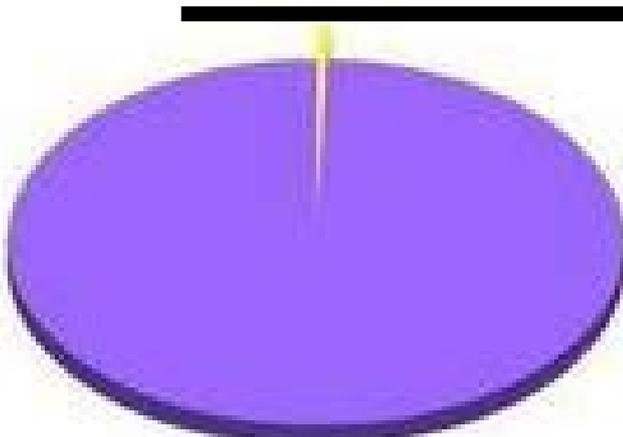
**What are the benefits of being involved with Healthy Sports Clubs?**

Access to valuable resources & programs available to you free of charge, such as nutritional advice, healthy eating services, fact sheets & programs such as Sun Smart plus many more.

**Advice for clubs who want to register?**



**HEALTHY SPORTS CLUBS**



- The number of running books I have bought
- Those that I have actually read

## VALE MIKE MCAVOY

Mike McAvoy was born in London in 1934. He ran in the trials for the British team for the 1956 Olympics but didn't qualify. With two mates, he decided to come to watch the Games anyway. Unfortunately, the Suez Canal was blockaded resulting in ships being delayed. Mike was stranded in Colombo and whilst there scored a job as an extra on the film 'The Bridge on the River Kwai' which won seven Oscars including Best Picture. The delay meant Mike landed in Perth three weeks after the Games had finished. Mike stayed in Australia, married and worked as a school teacher, mainly in the Geelong region. Not long after arriving, Mike was a co-founder of the Victorian branch of Amnesty International.

In 1986, Mike joined the Geelong Cross Country Club aged 51 and soon showed his talent leading him to also join the Victorian Vets with immediate success. This meant high hopes were held for Mike in the 1987 World Veterans Championships held in Melbourne. Unfortunately, a severe bout of the flu leading in and a hard run in a 20 km fun run a week before the games when he hadn't fully recovered, destroyed his chances with his form only returning in the marathon on the final day of the championships.

Mike won over 80 State titles and 28 National titles. At the World Masters Games in Brisbane in 1994 Mike won four gold, one silver and one bronze. He won individual silver and bronze at the World Veterans Athletics Games at Gateshead in 1999 and silver in Buffalo in 1995. He won World Veterans team gold medals in Melbourne and Turku.

1989 was one of Mike's best years. He won every Victorian Championship from 400 metres to the Marathon. At the Australian Masters Games in Adelaide at the age of fifty-five, he won the 8k Cross Country in 27m 52s, the mile in 4m 49s, the 10k Road in 34m30s, the 1500m in 4m 33s, the Half Marathon in 78m 10s, the 800m in 2m 19s and the 5 000m in 17m 12s. The last three were all run on the final day of competition. What a herculean effort!



As a Geelong Cross Country member, Mike won seven handicap races as well as being a member of the winning relay team three times. His service to the club was rewarded with the granting of life membership in 2006. Mike was the club Masters champion in the years 1993, 1995, 1996 and 1997.

At the Geelong Masters, Mike held the position of venue manager for over 10 years. He provided a varied program at Landy Field each Wednesday night. Mike sometimes had to hurry away

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## VALE MIKE MCAVOY

to one of his other interests- Scrabble where he has also represented the state. Mike holds 84 Geelong Masters records and I'm sure most of them will survive the onslaught of the new generation of masters. He once held the M50-54 Australian record for the one hour run.

Turning 80 was eventful for Mike. The cross country club members sang Happy Birthday on the Sunday prior to his birthday which was on the Tuesday. He came to Masters on the Wednesday and as expected set two records. The following Sunday, Mike became the first octogenarian to run with the club. On return to his daughter's, he fell down some stairs, breaking his shoulder blade. This delayed his charge to 500 club runs which he finally reached the following year. In his last years with the club, Mike travelled from Glenthompson regularly to compete with the club, a strenuous journey itself.

Mike also competed successfully for Lara in Geelong Athletics interclub on Saturday afternoons and still holds two records set 30 years ago. Colin Silcock-Delaney recalls Mike speeding off at the start of the 3000 m steeplechase one afternoon. When Col approached the water jump next time round, there was Mike on his hands and knees in the murky water searching for his set of brand new false teeth. No-one can verify if he put them straight back in.

Mike tackled his running head-on. He was known for his demanding training schedule. Even his warm ups were close to flat out. Mike's toughness and determination was evident in one of the Geelong Cross Country Club handicap events at Geelong Grammar School. Warming up, Mike tripped on a speed hump but ran the race despite the discomfort of a sore arm and duly saluted. It wasn't till the arm was X-rayed later that day that it became known he had broken his wrist. At times, Mike was criticised by some for entering too many events at major championships.

A bout of atrial fibrillation in 2008, which didn't respond to treatment, slowed Mike drastically and he ceased attending state and national Masters events. His move to Glenthompson not long after necessitated much more travel, just to run in Geelong. This was further exacerbated when he suffered a minor stroke in 2016, rendering him unable to drive.

Mike passed away in June this year. He was an inspiration and a great role model for all athletes in the Geelong running community and will be sadly missed. Well run, Mike!

**Written by Jeff Walker - Geelong Venue.**



## AMA 20KM WALK POSTAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Sunday 30th August or agreed date**

**Entry Fee \$20**

**Entries Close Friday 28th August**

**Contact: George White**     [gwhite@adam.com.au](mailto:gwhite@adam.com.au) Mob 0419 348 888

Pay by Electronic Funds Transfer. Pay funds to SA Masters Athletics, BSB 015 259, Account 458951668. Include your full name in the reference field and forward a completed entry form by email to George White [gwhite@adam.com.au](mailto:gwhite@adam.com.au)

**Please also forward a copy of your entry to your State/Territory organiser.**

**Receipt Number if paying by EFT.....**

You may also enter by completing this paper form and sending with a cheque made out to SA Masters Athletics, to G White, 12A Gulfview Road, Blackwood, SA 5051.

Surname: ..... First Name: .....

Date of Competition.....

Male..... Female.....

Address: .....

.....Postcode.....

Telephone ..... Email:.....

Date of Birth: ..... Age on day of competition (to determine age group).....

Emergency contact – name and phone .....

**MEDICAL (SA Entrants only)** Do you suffer from any medical condition that could result in unconsciousness (e.g. diabetes)? Are you on any **medication** or have **allergies** that medical staff should be aware of in the event that you become unconscious? If Yes, please write this information on a piece of paper and seal in an envelope with your name on the outside and **give to race organisers. It will be held in case of emergency.**

Venue for SA Entrants: South Parklands, Adelaide Harriers Clubrooms, corner of South Terrace and Peacock Road – see next page - 10 laps of 2km.

### WAIVER

In entering this event I acknowledge and agree that I am fully aware of the risks and hazards inherent in participating in this event. I declare that I am in good health and that I will be properly conditioned for the event. I agree to assume all risks of loss, damage, and injury including death that I may sustain as a consequence of my participation. I release AMA and SAMA and its officers from any claims, actions, suits or demands of whatever nature, arising out of or related in any way to my participation in this event.

## PRIVACY STATEMENT

We respect the confidentiality and security of your personal information and we are committed to protecting it at all times. By completing this entry form you consent to our use and disclosure of your personal information as outlined in our Privacy Policy. You can get more information on our Privacy Policy by contacting George H White - 0419348888 or [gwhite@adam.com.au](mailto:gwhite@adam.com.au)

Important Information

### Eligibility to Compete

To compete in AMA Championships, an athlete must be registered as a member of a State or Territory Club.

### Age Groups

The Championship is conducted in five year age groups starting at 30 years, and medals are awarded in each age group. Your age group is determined by your **age on the day of competition**.

### Confirmation of entries

Confirmation of accepted entries will be provided by email to entrants or the State Secretary if no email address is given.

**Signature**

**Date**

Due to the restrictions on interstate travel, this event is now being held as a Postal event. Entrants will be able to compete in their own State and results will be forwarded to the organisers.

In the case of Victorians, we will endeavour to hold an event in conjunction with the VRWC at a date to be arranged - hopefully in September.

We will keep you informed.

### **EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

To assist us in planning the event, please contact *Russ Dickenson* [dicko@inet.net.au](mailto:dicko@inet.net.au) or 0418 333 569 if you think you may be a starter. **Men and Women both welcomed !!**

**DO NOT ENTER YET. LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED. IF WE ARE ABLE TO SET A DATE WE WILL CONTACT YOU IMMEDIATELY**



## Oceania Masters Athletics Championships Norfolk Island 2021 - Postponed

Having considered the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and the continuing uncertainty in relation to international travel restrictions, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the 2021 Oceania Masters Athletics Championships regret to advise that the Championships have been postponed from January 2021 until the week of the 10th to 14th January 2022.

The Chair of the LOC and member of the Oceania Masters Athletics Council, Tim Rogers, advised that the LOC had left the decision on postponement as late as it could in the hope that there would be greater certainty around travel and the ability for as many Member Federations from across the Oceania region to participate as possible.

The LOC is grateful for the support from all local suppliers and stakeholders and looks forward to working closely with them over the next 18 months to ensure the Championships are a success.

Details of the new dates and further information will be updated on the Athletics Norfolk Island website: [athleticsnorfolkisland.com](http://athleticsnorfolkisland.com)

## CLYDE' S NEW RECORDS REPORT

### Pending World Records:

None

### Australian Records:

W60	100lb Weight	Jill Taylor	NSW	1.66m	-	20-3-20	Wollongong
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### Victorian Records:

W75	Throws Pent	Rhonda Dundas		3432pts	-	22-3-20	Murrumbeena
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### Clyde Riddoch

#### VMA Records Officer

40 Beauchamp Street, Preston Vic 3072

Telephone 022-2-203 9470 1490 (H), Mobile 0439 902 907, Email: [clydeR@outlook.com.au](mailto:clydeR@outlook.com.au)

## SOCIALY DISCUSING



*Some of our throwers all spaced out between lockdowns 1 & 2  
That's Roger Glass on the left, then Narelle Messerle, Didimo  
Tonelli, George Christodoulou - in the cage - and Graeme Rose.  
Narelle & Judy Pfanner have been helping us out on Committee  
when Graeme hasn't been available.*

For years I refused to shop at a Good Guys store because I was so angry that they murdered one of the greatest recordings of all time in their advertisements - "Good Vibrations" by the Beach Boys.

Now I am hating a TV ad that butchers one of my other favorite records - "Gloria" by Laura Branigan. Mainly, it's a pretty faithful reproduction until the very last note where some genius has decided to insert a little vocal run that just doesn't go.

**STOP IT !!!**

There are other examples where some "ad person" has decided to just drop a couple of bars from a classic piece of music so that it fits into their 30 second timeframe.

**GRRRR !!**



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## OTHER EMERGENCIES I HAVE KNOWN

To many younger people the current state of emergency is probably the first they have experienced in our peaceful country, apart from bushfires and floods. Many people of my vintage would have some memories of previous ones, although not quite as far back as the Spanish flu of 1918/19 !

A couple of epidemics vaguely remembered are pre and post WWII infantile paralysis (polio) which involved some school and social shutdowns, and memories of kids you knew left wearing calipers, or even bed-ridden in iron lungs. Fortunately, polio was soon overcome by the Salk vaccine and is now non-threatening. In between the polio epidemics we were placed on a wartime footing in the early stages of WWII which involved ration books for food, clothing & petrol, blackouts, air-raid trenches and school & family evacuations to country locations. Fortunately here in Melbourne we escaped the Japanese bombing which caused devastation in the far north of the country.

My own family's particular experience of an emergency was in May 1969 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. I was working there for a subsidiary company of ACI (Good Things Come in Glass), and it was election time when Malay extremists decided it was time to rise up against the Chinese and Indians, in order to have a larger say in the country's political and business life. A number of people (many more than disclosed) were killed and injured, we were placed under immediate 24 hour curfew and the Prime Minister and founder of the country, Tunku Abdul Rahman, appeared on television in tears.

I was still able to go to and from work but schools were closed and armed military personnel guarded every corner and district. We had friends visiting from Melbourne and fortunately we were able to get them on an early flight out of the country. Later when the curfew eased it was possible to send our elder daughter home to school in Melbourne. We had three younger children at home, including a four-month old baby whom, Mary remembers, couldn't be taken to the baby health centre but the nurse from the Nestle company was able to come to the house to check on him. Now, so many years later, he's the one giving us all instructions about dealing with the present emergency !

Peace was restored in a few weeks and by stages the curfew was lifted, although not entirely for about 12 months. One particular memory is that when the shops re-opened customers swarmed in for panic-buying such as we have recently seen here and the shelves were rapidly emptied. So, it's all happened before.

**Peter Le Get**

## Lake Wendouree Lights

I've been following the campaign for installing lighting on the path around Ballarat's iconic Lake Wendouree for a few years now.

Both political parties committed to going ahead with the project in the lead up to the State Election and although money has been allocated, the \$1.7 million project is bouncing around in the design stage and then has to go through Town Planning. We all know Town Planning has never held anything up !!!!

The "Steve Moneghetti Track" as it is known is about 6k and a beautiful place to run. Of course it's where Steve did so much of his training for his magnificent marathon career, as have so many of Ballarat's top athletes. Athletics Victoria holds one of its road races around the lake although it is on the road not this actual path that needs lighting.

I know there is never enough money for all the worthy projects that get put up but let's hope this one gets a kick along.



*Steve Moneghetti lighting the way*



*We continue Keith Howden's excellent series of articles on Sprinting.*

## On your marks...

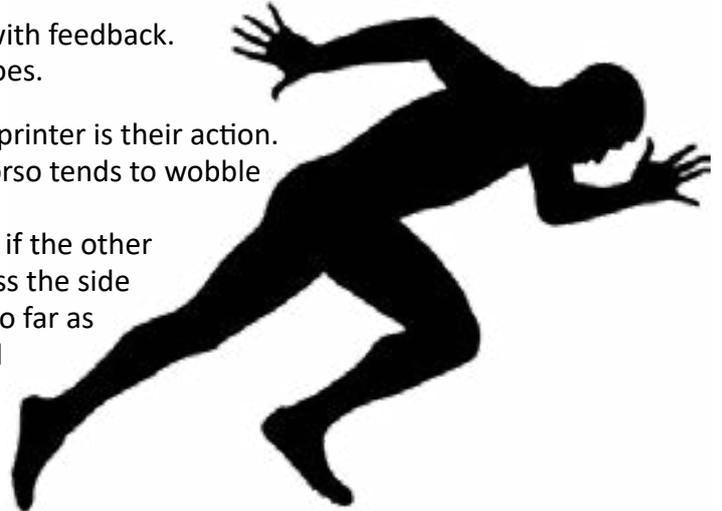
*A weekly column about Sprinting for Collingwood Masters Athletics.*

The third in a series...

Thanks to those who responded to our second column with feedback. We said we would tackle **technique this week** so here goes.

I'm not sure if I'm right but the first thing I look for in a sprinter is their action. Looking from behind I can see if the head is still, if the torso tends to wobble and if the ankle kicks back to the butt or not.

Ooops, if there is sideways movement of the body, good if the other two are as stated. And the arms - does each elbow caress the side of the body on the way through...the elbow going back so far as to allow the hand to be by one's side and then that hand reaching up to be adjacent to the eyes with the fist unclenched ? A lot to look for !!!



One more thing – the feet. Sprinters run faster on the ball of their feet (almost on the toes) and keep good balance. Initially new sprinters may arrive with a web-footed style... i.e. with their toes pointing out. If you were to measure a straight foot with the big toe pointing straight ahead as against to the left (i.e. the left to the left and the right to the right) you would get a longer distance for the straight measurement. Sixty foot strikes with that one or two cm extra distance can mean a lot in a 100m event.

If we get our running technique right, we are more likely to expend energy where needed and not waste any energy on body parts which do not need to shimmy during the running.

I well remember Cathy Freeman's coach telling a group I was in how important body mechanics are and how drills can help correct one's faults and improve dynamics. It's a pain for someone new to sprinting to be told they have to work at it over time because improvements can take quite a while !

The weird thing for me was that although I had always disliked being told what to do in life, when I started sprinting, I was eager to find out all the techniques which would help me to run faster. Mastering the 'A skip', doing 'grapevines', tackling 'heel flicks'; all these things were about entering a new world of which I had previously known little. It took me nine years (after starting sprints at the age of 50) to run my p.b. (personal best) for the 400 metres !

There are probably four things a coach looks for in a sprinters technique – a tall action, a relaxed action, a smooth action and a good 'drive'. It's nigh impossible to fit the description of what each means into this column. Suffice to say a coach like our own **Scott Lovell** could help you develop each area.

Scott is also good at teaching the art of **starting in blocks** and we might tackle that area **next week**.

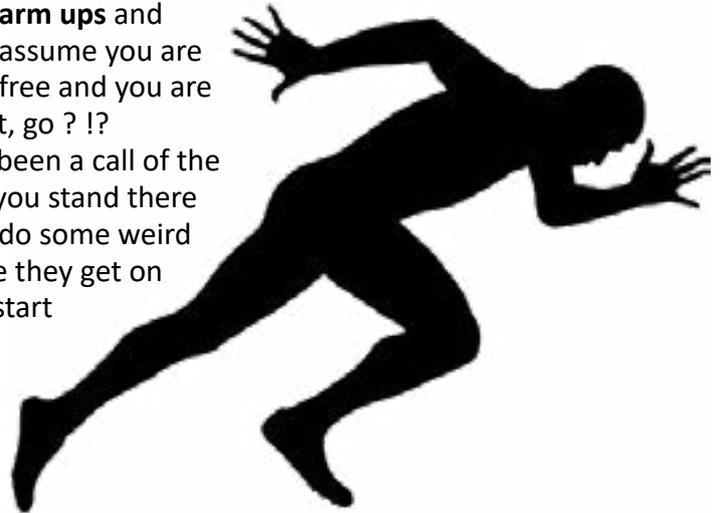
*Article by Keith Howden...one of the sprint team at Collingwood Masters Athletics.*

## On your marks...

### *A weekly column about Sprinting for Collingwood Masters Athletics.*

The fourth in a series...

In the past three weeks we've considered **motivation, warm ups** and **technique**. This week it's ***the start of a sprint race***. We assume you are wearing some appropriate attire, are warmed up, injury free and you are 'ready to go'. So, is it just 'feet on the line' and ready, set, go ? !? If you have a good starter (***like our Rocket***) it's probably been a call of the field, choosing or being informed of your lane and then you stand there waiting for "On your marks, set and go" Some sprinters do some weird jumping around manoeuvres and take big breaths before they get on to their marks. The wise ones will have done a practise start before the race and accelerated to top speed over 20 to 30 metres. Sometimes you will have so much time waiting for your race to start and sometimes, especially at Collingwood, you run from the car park stripping some excess clothing as you run to the line. The latter approach is not the recommended 'way to go'.



Many years ago I was talking with my musculoskeletal physiotherapist, a brilliant man (Geoff Fisher – now retired to Norfolk Island) and he recognised the part nerves play when you prepare to sprint. Geoff recommended I recite a mantra as part of the preparation and I use it in important races. It goes something like this: ***I have done the training, I am ready to run I look forward to the race. I am glad to be here, my legs are finely tuned, my arms are like pistons, I will be able to do my best and be glad I competed despite any minor distress!!!*** (Suspecting not many members are up to reading this fourth column in the series I will watch with interest how many mantras are underway in future sprints at Collingwood!).

So, eventually it's the call "On your marks" and you either get ready for a standing start, a crouched three point start or a start from blocks. At this point one knee is on the ground for the block start and that knee is lifted for the set position. When the gun goes (*or our unique starting mechanism makes its ear shattering splutter*) you obviously take off in a forward motion as fast as you can. Equally obvious is the fact that a good start can make the difference in a race of 100 metres.

Yes, I know that the way you 'set and use the blocks' is key in all this but you need hands on coaching for this.. it would take pages of waffle to put what you need to know in print.

**Scott Lovell** is the man to see to learn the art of using blocks. And, as **Michael Kyriakakis** (*our most improved sprinter in the last 12 months*) will attest, never practise multiple block starts when you are also doing a time trial to follow. It takes too much energy out of you!

*Article by Keith Howden...one of the sprint team at Collingwood Masters Athletics.*

## Ink splats and Woody.

In our last edition, I made a joke about Rorschach tests - those ink splash images. I said “Quite often my Psychiatrist shows me these ink splats, and asks me what I see. Both of these images are obviously a naked, blonde woman with big breasts”.

Now if anything, the joke was on me. I’m saying that I am a twisted soul who sees naked women in anything. I did receive an aggressive email from a non-member telling me that the joke was offensive to *all* women and that my sense of humor is “out of date”. I’m happy to be criticised but please cough up a membership fee before you do it.

I discussed it with the perpetually sensible Phil Urquhart who at first clucked his tongue, and then told me I had mucked up the original Woody Allen joke which was -

*My psychiatrist showed me an ink splat and asked what I saw. I said it was a couple making love. He showed me three more ink splats and I said that each of them was a couple making love. He said you are obsessed with sex and I replied “Well you’re the one showing me all the dirty pictures!”*

This was what hurt me most. Mucking up a Woody Allen joke ! You see Woody is a friend of mine and although we fell out when he married his daughter, we did catch up last time I was in New York.



## Sub 3 @61 - Quixotic Chaotic Quest Continues

Given the large number of parkruns in and close to Melbourne, finding runs beginning with the letters A to P had not been a difficult task. But the letter Q was another matter entirely. For the first time, it would be necessary to travel interstate. Queanbeyan in New South Wales or Queens Domain in Hobart, Tasmania? That was the question. I was left in something of a quandary, but not for long.

The interstate trip came at a good time. Friday 7 February was the last day of my chemotherapy treatment. The same day, Candice and I boarded a Qantas flight to Hobart, where we were staying in a quaint AirBnB house in a quiet Sandy Bay street. We happily quaffed a liberal quantity of champagne with dinner to celebrate the end of my chemo ordeal, even though some side effects would not quit (and still haven't).

Hobart qualifies as a truly beautiful city. Nobody would quibble with that proposition. Queens Domain is, to quote Wikipedia: "a small hilly area of bushland just north-east of the CBD". It contains a range of quality sporting facilities, including a two kilometre circuit called "Max's Infinity Loop", named after local running coach, the late Max Cherry OAM.

Over 200 runners and walkers queued at the start. We began quite slowly on an uphill section. The course had a trail section through the bush, but otherwise followed the quirky dual surface loop (half bitumen, half cinders) out and back, with a quick downhill finish. The hills and trails gave my quads a good workout as I clocked 26:47.

Post-run we quenched our thirsts at a Sandy Bay cafe with local runner and friend Andy Allison. Later we drove past Macca's and I quipped: "The thought of eating a quarter-pounder makes me feel queasy, but I wouldn't mind some quiche." Candice, who is used to my alphabetical word-plays, rolled her eyes and said: "You will run out of words this time, even though you will be typing on a qwerty keyboard." "Good one," I said, "Now how about a Queen quiz?" Candice quelled my enthusiasm with a prompt: "No, thanks". Ignoring the rebuff, I posed this query: "Brian May is the quintessential guitarist. Who made his guitar, the 'Red Special'?" Answer next blog.

This post's Q count: 32. The next post will be brought to you by the letter R.

*You will be familiar with Mark Purvis' blog. The title "Sub 3 @61" refers to Mark's quest to run a sub 3 hour marathon in his sixties. Something he achieved. He is now going through the alphabet of parkruns while fighting cancer and the effects of chemotherapy.*

*My comment: I think I would have invited Andy Allison over to Albert parkrun instead. and I know who made Brian May's guitar.*

To read Mark's blog in full go to <https://hutz224.tumblr.com/>



# VALE JANINE JAMES

(26 August 1947 – 28 June 2020 )

(by Kath Gawthorn)

It was 2014 when Janine commenced with Doncaster Masters Athletics. Prior to joining, jogging around Ruffey Lake Park and 5km fun runs had been valuable time-out from caring for her husband. His eventual death left a huge hole in her life; the social and competitive aspects of Masters Athletics were a big help. The ever-wise Don McLean took her under his wing as coach, and Janine almost never missed 3 training sessions and Monday night racing every week. Advised to go gently, Janine was always determined to push along faster. She commenced with a focus on the 800m, doing so admirably. However, many at the venue noticed her musculature and leg speed. Sprints then called. Janine had been a sprint talent at school, despite her Mother's insistence that her legs were "too short". After leaving school – life took over, and sprints waited until Janine was retired and in her sixties (2014).

Training gave structure to Janine's week. The discipline and focus gave her a new purpose. Friendships were formed with like-minded fellow athletes; another new and accepting "family". A conservative approach to training, or yelling "Slow Down!" were of no use! Ever independent, this pocket-rocket only knew full pace!

Janine's sprinting progressed, and she started setting new age group records for Doncaster Venue in events from 60m to 300m. After some convincing in 2016, she entered the Victorian Masters' Track and Field Championships for the first time and won 3 medals, two gold. She repeated this feat again in 2017 (3 silver medals). She was feisty and competitive, and sprinting in spikes – she was like a 'duck in water'. Janine also contributed to the venue as a Duty Manager, and with experience as a successful business-woman, provided feedback on processes - this keeping us on our toes! Events needed to start on time! You definitely knew where you stood with Janine – she didn't hold back, and many a time, she was 100% correct!

In August 2017 was the diagnosis that none of us saw coming. After that initial operation, to all of our amazement, Janine was back training as normal within 6 or 7 days! She said she "felt fine" and it was "business as usual". A terminal illness, 2 brain surgeries, radiotherapy and chemotherapy were not going to stop Janine from achieving in the sport she now loved. On her visits to the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre, the many flights of stairs were part of the sprint training. Doctors marveled at her athleticism, this part of the portrayal; "I am different, I am an athlete". They thought she could be the exception to the 'norm', and could still be with us 5-10 years after the diagnosis. This gave her hope, enabling her to live as normally as possible, and keep training. Although stoic, she understood it would get her in the end.

Despite the chemo, training went along as usual, with hardly a session or rep missed. The 2018 Victorian Championships saw her take out the sprint treble (60m, 100m and 200m). This included posting a 60m time of World Class standard, and all race times faster than pre-diagnosis! Janine was then quoted as saying "Athletics, sprinting in particular, has been a pick-me-up, on par with anything from a hospital pharmacy. It is exhilarating!" A further year of relatively uninterrupted training allowed her to again take out sprint treble at the 2019 Victorian Championships. Her pinnacle came that same year - 2019 – at the Australian Championships (Melbourne), where she won 2 gold (60m, 100m) and 1 silver (200m) medal. The 60m time saw her ranked third in the world for her age group! Such remarkable feats for one determined lady who wasn't going to let her diagnosis and treatment stop her! In 2018, Janine appeared in the local Manningham Leader newspaper; was the "Sports Star of the Week", and had a comprehensive article about her achievements. Unfortunately, Janine didn't ever get to attend a World Championship.



## VALE JANINE JAMES

Janine has also represented the Doncaster Venue at Inter-Venue competition – The Winter Track Challenge and Neighbor’s Night events. Whether it be Monday night Venue competition, inter-venue events, or major Championships, Janine was a fierce competitor who ran every race like it was her last. On each occasion, the relief that competition was over gave her a buzz lasting the rest of the week.

Janine was an intelligent and street-smart lady who had many interests outside athletics. These included her beloved family; 2 children and 3 Grandchildren . There was her garden filled with ferns, mosses and Japanese-inspired areas. When life posed its’ challenges there was always another rock to rearrange in the garden. Her ‘pet’ wild bird friends were frequent visitors, getting treated to fresh mince.

Painting, literature, and fine food and wine were also on the menu. After training, iced chocolates could not simply be made with chocolate topping; they needed to be made with traditional Italian chocolate powder, and topped with Connoisseur ice-cream! It was an education for the rest of us! Tea was made with just-off-the boil water (no cooler than 100 degrees) and consumed from a bone china cup 4mm or less thick. To her, anything less and she would retort “I feel like I am in prison”, and so these errors were only made once! Janine enjoyed countless lunches, dinners, post-run coffees, and birthday celebrations together with her running family.

Driving was also a passion, and yes, fast like her running! Just don’t get in her way! The cancer denied her of driving pleasure, but many of these other pleasures were retained until the last months of her life. Again a lady of independence, Janine would walk the 30 minutes each way to Macedon Plaza for her groceries. She also said that “if I want to climb a ladder to fix (her 2-story high) roof, I will!”

On 28th June 2020, Janine lost her 3-year battle with brain cancer, will leave a lasting legacy at Doncaster Masters, and will be greatly missed.



## You don't want Plantar Fasciitis

You can buy special orthotics, you can buy compression running socks, you can buy a special “night sock” (to be worn while you sleep)

There are a many ways to tape it, there are exercises galore.

*Or, as AFL star Robert Harvey famously did, you can jump off a table to snap it. (not recommended)*

### It's Plantar Fasciitis.

Plantar fasciitis is an inflammation of the plantar fascia, a piece of strong, thick tissue that runs along the bottom of the foot. It connects the heel bone to the toes, creating the arch of the foot. There is a definite link to the Achilles tendon as well. So stretches of the achilles are beneficial.

Plantar fasciitis is a common cause of heel pain and can develop as a result of overstretching, overuse or a medical condition. When we say “heel pain” it is more likely to be towards the arch end of the heel. Or it can be pain in the “ball” or “arch” of the foot. Plantar fasciitis can be associated with a heel spur, a spike of bone poking out from the heel bone, although many people have heel spurs without any pain. The pain is likely to be very severe first thing in the morning or after you have been inactive for a period of time. These exercises will help the morning pain.

### Exercises

1. Bending the toes back stretches the Plantar Fascia (this is what the “night sock” does)
2. Rolling your arch on a ball or “spiked” ball.
3. Standing on a step (facing up) on the ball of your feet and lowering your heels for 30 sec.



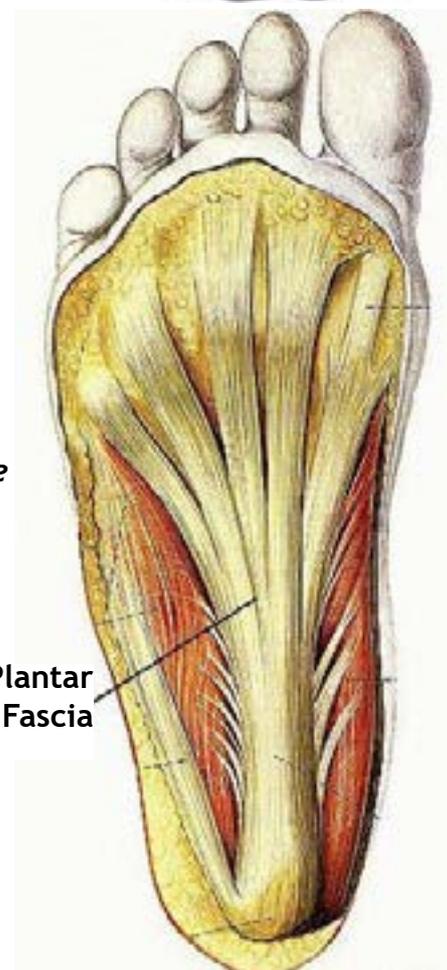
### Prevention

1. Run on soft surfaces where possible.
2. Wearing the right shoes. Do you wear neutral or pronation shoes? Do you wear your shoes too long?
3. Be cautious in suddenly upping your distances.

### Taping

There a lots of variations and you can either see your physio or look on line to find what works for you but, most recommendations are for a tape along the sole from the base of the toes right up to the bottom of the calf. Then one or more tapes around the foot or up the ankle.

**Note :** *This information is taken from what appear to be reliable sources but you should seek advice from your GP or Physio*



**2020  
AMA Winter  
Throws  
Championships**



**Sat 3rd – Mon 5th October**

*Kerryn McCann Athletics Track  
Beaton Park Leisure Complex, Foley Street, Gwynneville*

**Entries will be open from Aug 1 to Sep 16  
(No late entries accepted)**

**Join our facebook group for details:  
"AMA Winter Throws Championships 2020"**

**Still going ahead at last report**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

**SATURDAY 3rd OCTOBER, 9.30am:**

Throws Pentathlon  
56lb and 100lb throws  
Group Dinner

**SUNDAY 4th OCTOBER, 9.30am:**

Individual Events: Hammer, Shot Put, Discus,  
Javelin, Weight Throw  
Weight for Distance

**MONDAY 5th OCTOBER, 9.30am:**

Heavy Weight Pentathlon



**2019 Athletes of the Meet –  
Mary Thomas and Jamie Muscat**

Event Co-ordinator: Jill Taylor  
Email: [amawinterthrows@gmail.com](mailto:amawinterthrows@gmail.com)  
Phone: 0409607384

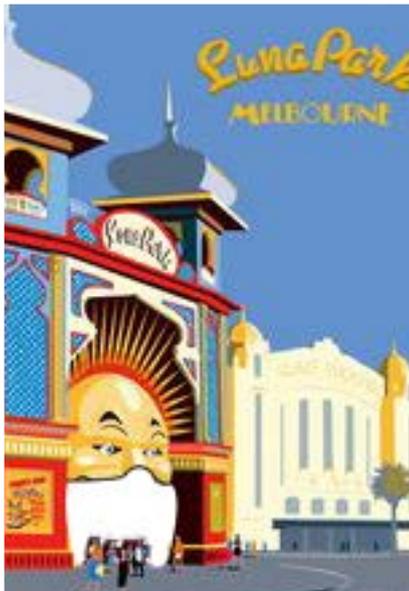
Organising Committee:  
*Adriana van Bockel, Anatoly Kirievsky, Gabi Watts*



# COVID STUFF



*"Prince Andrew wants you to call him."*



*Covid suntan.  
Not applicable to Victorians*



# ASK THE COACH

## RUNNING DURING COVID 19



This virus really is a life and death situation so it's got to be "No more Mr. Nice Guy". On your run you want all other people behind you. Running right behind someone is said to be the most dangerous place as you can pick up the droplets that they exhale. I find a tee shirt with writing something like :

- "Awaiting test results"
- "Housing Commission Towers Rock" or "Virus R Us"

works pretty well in keeping people at a distance.

In the photo, I have just removed a potential threat from a guy that was running in front of me. The air horn from one metre away generally renders them incapable of running.

Some of those people running behind me may try and pass. I have a frantic coughing and sneezing tape recorded on loop and I play it very loud every now and then, especially when I am approaching people coming the other way.

Now I did write this before we were directed to wear masks. I think the exemption on masks for runners may be challenged before we are done. I know my local track is bedlam at times.

## THE COACH



**RACE DAY  
ROCKET.**



**BUT DON'T WEAR THEM  
AT STAWELL**

## KEVIN CASSIDY - A MASTER OF MANY SPORTS

An article by Tim Erickson from the Victorian Race Walking Club - July 2019

You might think you know Kevin Cassidy from meeting him or from racing against him at our VRWC races at Middle Park or at the various Masters meets around the traps. This article will let everyone know that there is a lot more to Kevin than you might have thought possible.

Let's start with the basics. Kevin was born on 13th August 1960, so is about to celebrate his 59th birthday. (*Kevin will be 60 this month - Russ*) He has been racing with us at VRWC since January 2018 and has progressed steadily over that short timeframe. Now, as an M55 walker, he has PBs of 7:09 (1500m), 15:20 (3000m), 25:27 (5km), 52:37 (10km) and 1:47:34 (20km). He is also the current Victorian (1500m, 3000m and 10km) and Australian (10km and 20km) Masters M55 walks champion.

As an aside here, Kevin had been intending to compete in his first World Masters Championships in Malaga, Spain, in September 2018 but had to pull the plug at the last minute after contracting a severe case of shingles. He was waylaid for some months and was not able to return to competition until his eyesight had returned sufficiently to to expose himself to the full sunshine of a bright Melbourne day. Luckily, he has now fully recovered, although his eyesight is still not 100%.

But what did Kevin do in the many years leading up to 2018. Did he come from a background of former sports?

The answer a definite YES, in capital letters!

A student of Coburg High School, Kevin was a proud northern suburbs boy. In fact, my mother was Vice Principal of Coburg HS when Kevin was there and he remembers her with fondness. How's that for a connection!

He won the Combined Schools Sports track run for Coburg HS and decided to join Coburg Harriers in 1976, aged 16, focusing on 800m and 1500m. He spent the next 10 years honing his running skills. He also umpired (Australian Rules Football) from 1980 onwards and actually did two reserve games on the MCG.

He also reminds me that he even did a summer season of walking (1978/1979) when he was 18 years old, walking in Interclub and competing on a few occasions in the mid-week VAWC club races at our old clubrooms at the northern end of Albert Park Lake.

In 1983, the ultra running scene exploded into the Australian media spotlight, compliments of the Sydney to Melbourne Westfield classic <sup>1</sup> and its inaugural winner Cliff Young. <sup>2</sup> One of the 1984 Westfield qualifying runs was held at the Coburg Shopping Centre and Kevin volunteered as one of the lapscorers. He was intrigued by this new discipline and keen to have a go himself.

After some months preparing with long training runs, his first ultra was in the 1985 100km Track Classic, put on by the Coburg Harriers at their track. Naturally, he completed the full distance. Thus began what was a long term love affair with one of the toughest sports of all.

1 See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney\\_to\\_Melbourne\\_Ultramarathon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_to_Melbourne_Ultramarathon)

2 See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cliff\\_Young\\_\(athlete\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cliff_Young_(athlete))

“ I spent 30 years of my life as a runner, 20 of them involved tackling Ultramarathon races both here and overseas before age and injury wore my body down.”

Kevin's real love was the trail ultra and he competed with distinction in many tough overseas trail runs, mainly in America. He was also a pretty slick ultra track runner, with a 24 Hour track PB of 187km and with good times in the shorter track ultra distances of 50 Miles and 100km.

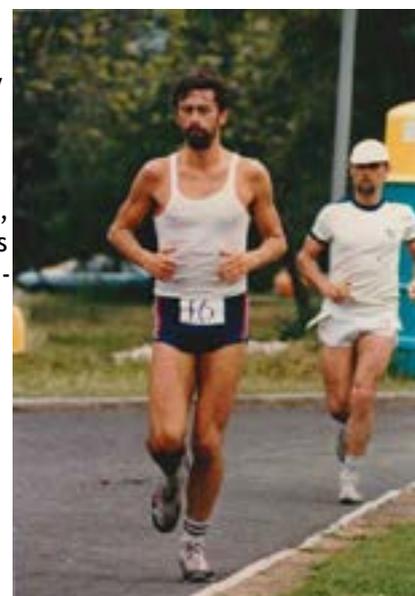
Perhaps the one tick missing from his ultra list might have been a finish in the Sydney to Melbourne Westfield classic.

Although the course sometimes varied, it was always around 1000km and participation required big money sponsorship, with support vans and staff sufficient to cover the 6-8 day event duration. Kevin gives a fascinating insight into this in the following article : <http://www.coolrunning.com.au/ultra/1991001.shtml>.

He tried unsuccessfully in 1989 and was building up for another attempt in 1992 when the event was abruptly cancelled. Kevin was a foundation member of AURA when it formed in 1985 and he quickly immersed himself in the new organisation, being one of its most enthusiastic contributors for many years. He was eventually awarded with AURA Life Membership in 2006, a fitting recognition for one of their hardest workers.

In 2000, Kevin took over as the race director of the Percy Cerutti Frankston to Portsea 55km race, Australia's oldest and quirkiest ultra. First held in 1973, it retraces the footsteps of the many famous athletes from the 50's and 60's who pounded the road to Portsea under Percy Cerutti's coaching.

Kevin leads fellow ultra runner Klaus Schnibbe in the 1986 Sri Shinmoy 24 Hour Run in Adelaide



## KEVIN CASSIDY - A MASTER OF MANY SPORTS



Kevin competing in the 1997 US 100 Miler in the Sierra Mountains in California

The award for finishing is a block of chocolate, yet the race manages to attract a strong field every year and has now been held 46 times. Check out Kevin's race advertisement for the 2009 edition to get a feel for the race : <http://www.coolrunning.com.au/forums/index.php?showtopic=13909>. 19 years later, he is still going strong as race director.

Kevin was also the editor of the quarterly AURA magazine Ultramag from 2000 to 2009. Under his editorship, this grew into a large and widely circulated magazine which I have always enjoyed reading. He was also a regular contributor to running mags such as Run For Your Life, reporting on the ultra running scene. Kevin was known as a walking encyclopaedia on all things ultrarunning and was, whenever possible, our guest presenter at the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival. His knowledge of the runners and their feats never ceased to amaze.

But all things come to an end, especially after nearly 20 years in such a demanding sport as ultra running. Finally, somewhere around 2005, Kevin realised that his running days were finished.

Looking for a new challenge post running, Kevin decided to explore another side of ultra distance sport. He had always been a bit of a swimmer so took the first tentative steps out of the pool. He had competed in the 1998 Point Lonsdale Swim (1.8km) and had finished it. It was now time to build on that tentative start. Always at the back of his mind was the English Channel!

“ My initial knowledge of the English Channel goes back to my teenage years when we would get oodles of media coverage about the great Des Renford's battles with the channel in the 70's. February 2003 was when I got to meet an English Channel swimmer in person (Paul McGuire) and peruse all his photos and memorabilia. Given that my running days seemed to be rapidly grinding to a halt and I was dabbling in the summer bay swims around Melbourne, it struck me instantly as a challenge I should undertake at some stage. ”

By sheer chance, he linked up with the Black Rock Icebergers (who boast five channel swimmers amongst them) and the metamorphosis was under way. Having only ever swum in heated pools (27C) and Port Phillip Bay during summer (21C) wrapped up in a wetsuit, his first challenge was to adapt to cold water. The pursuit of long swimming events then took him all over Australia. Harbour Bridge to Manly, Perth to Rottnest, Townsville to Magnetic Island and the Lake Burley Griffin 9km all became regular favourites but the one thing they had in common was the warm water....much warmer than the English Channel. On and on piled the body fat as he came to terms with the fact that he needed much more body insulation if he was to swim the English Channel.

“ The fattening up process has been interesting to say the least. My best running was done at 65 kilograms and I was around 70 when the channel became a serious prospect. The best advice was that I would essentially need to get up to at least 84!! Make no bones about it, all the eating was fun until I stagnated at 81 kilograms some six weeks prior to my channel swim. This was where the fun stopped. Cramming in family sized pizzas followed by two litres of ice cream is not a pleasant feeling at all. Bloating is barely half a description. Regardless, I hit my 84 kilogram target with two weeks to go. Sadly, my favourite running shirts no longer fit and a pair of “fat jeans” that I bought a while back knowing I would grow into them have promptly been grown out of!! ”

It was at this time that he was interviewed about his English Channel preparation - it makes for an interesting read see <https://albysswimmersprofile.blogspot.com/2008/07/swimmers-profile-no-9-kevin-cassidy.html>.

And how did his 2009 Channel attempt go?

The drama of his swim must be read to be fully appreciated. The days of waiting in Dover for favourable conditions, the wind that whipped up after 6 hours of swimming and turned the flat water into a big swell and finally being nearly to France when the tide turned, pushing him away from the coast and extending his crossing time to an exhausting 16 hours. But finish it he did. Rather than say any more, I urge you to read his wonderful race report at <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wv-kevin-cassidy-2009-channel-report.pdf>. ( It follows this article - Russ)

He was the 59th Australian to complete this most iconic of long distance swims.

Over the following years, Kevin has completed many more of the ultra swim classics.

## KEVIN CASSIDY - A MASTER OF MANY SPORTS

In 2017, with his Manhattan Swim, he completed The Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming <sup>4</sup>, a marathon swimming challenge which consists of the following three historically important swims:

- English Channel - 21 miles between England and France.
- Catalina Channel - 20 miles between Santa Catalina Island and the California mainland.
- Swim Around Manhattan - 28.5 mile circumnavigation of Manhattan Island, New York City

He became the 16th and oldest Australian to complete this feat.

Of all his swims, he regards his 2017 Cook Strait Swim <sup>5</sup>, which crosses the Cook Strait from New Zealand's South Island to the North Island, as his toughest.



“ Cook Strait is 26km in a straight line...although I covered a lot more distance thanks to the strong tide. The main challenge at Cook Strait is that it's such a volatile body of water and the tides only offer a very short window of opportunity to reach the finish. ”

Here is his profile from the LongSwimsDB website <sup>6</sup>

DATE	SWIM	ROUTE	KM	AGE	TIME/PLACE
2008 Feb 16	Rottnest Channel Swim	Cottlesoe Beach to Rottnest Island	19.7	47	08:14.15 (108/140)
2009 Feb 21	Rottnest Channel Swim	Cottlesoe Beach to Rottnest Island	19.7	48	09:09.06 (124/156)
2009 Aug 18	English Channel	England to France	33.2	49	16:00.00
2011 Jul 31	Magnetic Island to Townsville	Picnic Bay to Strand Beach	8	50	02:42.52 (35/60)
2012 Jul 29	Magnetic Island to Townsville	Picnic Bay to Strand Beach	8	51	02:34.18 (42/64)
2013 May 19	South Head Roughwater	Bondi Beach to Watsons Bay	10	52	03:10.00 (24/49)
2015 Aug 29	BLDSA Windermere	Fellfoot to Waterhead	16.9	55	06:54.59 (9/17)
2016 Jul 31	Magnetic Island to Townsville	Picnic Bay to Strand Beach	8	55	02:43.22 (19/38)
2016 Aug 29	Catalina Channel	Catalina Island to Mainland	32.3	56	13:59.45
2017 Feb 20	Cook Strait	South Island to North Island	23	56	09:07.34
2017 Aug 19	20 Bridges Manhattan Swim	Manhattan circumnavigation (ccw)	45.9	57	07:43.25 (6/11)

He eventually retired from the LongSwim scene after his Manhattan swim in August 2017. Maintaining the required additional body weight was pushing up his cholesterol count and Kevin realised the possible long term health implications.

When you see the new lean and mean Kevin racewalking at Middle Park or on the track, it is hard to believe that only 2 years ago he was a much heavier ultra distance swimmer. What a difference a couple of years can make! During this last 30 years of ultra distance running and swimming, Kevin has held down a full time job with the Melbourne Fire Brigade. He joined MFB in September 1988 and retired only last year, after finally earning his 30 Year Service Medal. During his time on the job, he spent time in just about every metropolitan fire station and fought some of Melbourne's biggest fires. In this context, he remembers battling the big 1990's fire at the Visyboard recycling plant in Coolaroo, an inferno which took 9 days to put out. <sup>7</sup>



**KEVIN CASSIDY - A MASTER OF MANY SPORTS**

<sup>4</sup> See <https://db.marathonswimmers.org/triple-crown/>

<sup>5</sup> See <http://cookstraitswim.org.nz/>

<sup>6</sup> See Kevin's long distance swim profile at <https://db.marathonswimmers.org/p/kevin-cassidy/>

<sup>7</sup> In recent years, we have seen more fires like that one, including a major 2010 incident at the same plant and more recent recycling depot fires in suburban Melbourne in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Add in the current issue with flammable building cladding, and being a fireman is becoming an ever more dangerous job.

During his time with MFB, he was a regular competitor in the Police and Emergency Services Games. Every 5 years, he would embark on a brief training regime, whip himself into walking shape, and contest the track walk. And of course, he would normally win!

So what is next for this man of action? Now freed of the burden of full time work, perhaps it is time for another ultra challenge? All I will say is that, when I suggested the 50km racewalk or the 100 Mile ultra walk, he didn't say no immediately. Time will tell!

It's been great fun to put his brief profile together. Well done Kevin on feats that have the rest of us in awe.

Tim Erickson

Wednesday 24th July 2019

I hope you find this as fascinating as I do. I have decided to go straight to Kevin's own story on the English Channel swim. Next time you're struggling on the 10th lap of a 5k, think of Kevin.



## KEVIN CASSIDY'S 2009 ENGLISH CHANNEL SWIM

To be absolutely honest, I had no idea that my own personal challenge of swimming the English Channel would be a magnet for so much attention, particularly when it has utterly nothing to do with running. In the four days since I landed on the French coast, I have been literally bombarded with messages of support/congratulations. I think I had over 300 messages via SMS, several messageboards [some of which I was not even aware of!!], facebook [however that works!] and even a "twitter" site. Exactly how twitter works or what it is has me perplexed but thanks to Carmen in Sydney for doing whatever it is she did with it!!

Responding to everyone would be close to impossible, so I hope I have avoided offending anyone.

Just to wind back the clock a smidgeon, my initial knowledge of the English Channel goes back to my teenage years when we would get oodles of media coverage about the great Des Renford's battles with the channel in the 70's.

February 2003 was when I got to meet an English Channel swimmer in person [Paul McGuire] and peruse all his photos and memorabilia. Given that my running days seemed to be rapidly grinding to a halt and I was dabbling in the summer bay swims around Melbourne, it struck me instantly as a challenge I should undertake at some stage.

Looking at Paul at that time, he was quite a lean individual. However, in his channel photos from eight months prior, he was "portly" to say the least.....well, to get to the point, he was quite fat. This puzzled me somewhat until he explained the need for body fat as insulation against the cold water. The notion of getting fat repulsed me and I immediately dispatched any channel swimming aspirations to the very distant back-blocks of my brain. 2004 was a semi respectable year of running for me and the channel never crossed my thoughts all that time.

2005 dished up a vast decline in my running and by 2006, I was virtually a crippled wreck. And so began the rekindling of my inclinations towards an English Channel swim.

By sheer chance, I linked up with the Black Rock Icebergers [who boast five channel swimmers amongst them] and the metamorphosis was under way. Go to [www.black-ice.com.au](http://www.black-ice.com.au) to learn more about our eclectic gang of swimmers.

Having only ever swum in heated pools [27 degrees] and Port Phillip Bay during summer [21 degrees] wrapped up in a wetsuit, my initial lesson was to adapt to cold water. I'll never forget suffering in the 14 degree water at Parkdale beach on November 2nd 2006. I stood knee deep and froze as the others dived in around me. With no desire to look like a complete wimp, I finally hit the water in a moment that shocked my body beyond description. At the completion of the swim, I had lost all feeling in my hands and feet, had turned blue and shook uncontrollably while the others sat and enjoyed breakfast!!!

But here is the thing, the human body is so very adaptable. As one who suffered in the cold more than anyone else during all those long winter runs around the Yarra Ranges, I never thought I could cope with cold water. I had seen the Brighton Icebergers from afar on my regular runs and thought they were absolutely crazy....which they are!!....but never dreamt I would become one of them.

As my 30 odd years of running faded away, my plans of an English Channel swim had begun. As the winter of 2007 set in, I just kept getting in the water each day and swimming. By July, the water temperature at Brighton Sea Baths had dropped to 6.2 degrees, the coldest recorded there for many, many years as a sprinkling of snow fell in the Dandenongs. I can happily report that my first Melbourne winter of swimming was nothing short of horrendous. I'd arrive in the early morning darkness with the car heater blaring and coat around my shoulders. Then I'd pause in the carpark with the heater still running and tell myself that I could easily go back to bed and no one would notice!! Regardless, I persevered and it soon became habit to leap out of the car, don the budgie smugglers and go charging into the water. Something Paul McGuire said stuck with me. "You're going to find that you fall in love with cold water swimming and you'll be quite comfortable out there with all the extra weight". I initially looked at him sideways wondering how anyone could enjoy the cold but three years later, he has proven to be right on the money.

The pursuit of long swimming events then took me all over Australia. It seemed odd to travel to Sydney on the same weekend as the Six Foot Track [a race I looked forward to in the early 90s] and not go anywhere near it, preferring instead to swim the Harbour Bridge to Manly race!!

Perth to Rottnest, Townsville to Magnetic Island and the Lake Burley Griffin 9km all became regular favourites but the one thing they had in common was the warm water.....much warmer than the English Channel.

On and on piled the body fat as I came to terms with the fact that running was going to have to cease. The August night in 2007 when I wiped out my ankle was certainly not what I had designed but I reflect upon it as a blessing in disguise.



## KEVIN CASSIDY'S 2009 ENGLISH CHANNEL SWIM

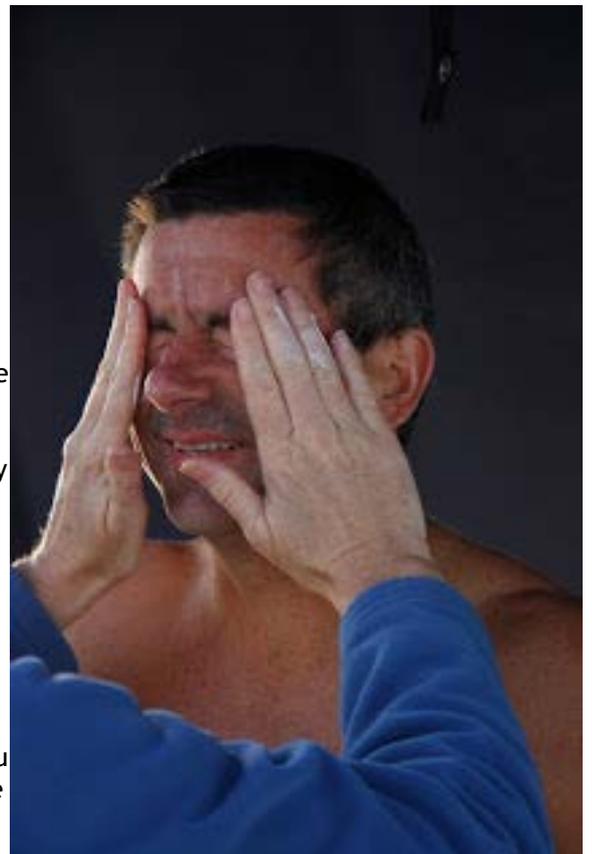
The fattening up process has been interesting to say the least. My best running was done at 65 kilograms and I was around 70 when the channel became a serious prospect. The best advice was that I would essentially need to get up to at least 84!! Make no bones about it, all the eating was fun until I stagnated at 81 kilograms some six weeks prior to my channel swim. This was where the fun stopped. Cramming in family sized pizzas followed by two litres of ice cream is not a pleasant feeling at all. Bloating is barely half a description. Regardless, I hit my 84 kilogram target with two weeks to go. Sadly, my favourite running shirts no longer fit and a pair of "fat jeans" that I bought a while back knowing I would grow into them have promptly been grown out of!!

Adapting to the cold was the biggest learning curve. The short swim in 14 degree water three years ago almost killed me. This year, with the water at 15 degrees on Anzac Day, I swam for eight hours around Black Rock feeling comfortably warm.

Paul McGuire was correct, you do fall in love with the cold. The Brighton Marina soon became a favourite training venue and most swims occurred at 6am, several at 5am and a couple of them at 4am!! These swims were not without incident, of course. Swimming straight into a moored boat was one of my better tricks and god knows what the fisherman thought when they shone their torches off the pier to see what the splashing was all about...only to see a swimmer go past!!

The sight of winter swimmers around Brighton is nothing new but my decision to swim Lysterfield Lake each Tuesday morning this winter attracted some seriously bizarre looks from the occasional dog walker and/or runner. However, nothing...I REPEAT NOTHING....could equal the reaction I got recently when a crew of warmly clad tree loppers were working in the car park area as I stripped down and hit the water. The lake seems to have an extra sting of cold than Port Phillip Bay and it's somewhat of a spiritual feeling to swim slowly up the misty lake with only the occasional eel for company.

Swimming the English Channel is an undertaking that requires much planning. As a relatively narrow strip of water between two large seas, the tides are incredibly strong and change rapidly. The shortest distance as the crow flies between Dover in England and Cap Gris Nez on the French coast is 34 kilometres. Regardless, any hopes of finishing on the cape are slim indeed. With the tide changing direction at approximately six hour intervals, you are guaranteed a large "S" bend as you swim. As you get closer to France, the tides actually get much stronger and you can find yourself swimming side on to the coast for many hours without getting any closer!! Because of all the varying factors, an excellent and knowledgeable boat pilot is essential and I had the best in the business in Mike Oram. Other considerations are whether to go on a shallow or deep tide. The deep tides usually provide calmer water but will push you further east and west. The shallow tides occur in the first and third quarters of the lunar cycle. The actual time of the summer in which you swim can also have a degree of influence with the need to weigh up the pros and cons of the longer daylight hours in July or an extra degree in water temperature in August.



Flying across the oceans on route to England, the realisation that a three year project was about to be put on the line was paramount in my mind. Clearly, I must have looked an odd sight on the plane dressed up in face mask and rubber gloves but the last thing I wanted was to have it all unravel at the hands of a coughing and sniffing germ bag seated behind me!!

Upon arrival in Dover, the sight of the impeccably flat water on the channel had my heart racing. My tide wasn't due for another three days, so I could only hope that the weather would hold. Of course, it didn't as "Murphy's Law" reared its ugly head and I was left to sit and stagnate as we waited for some calmer conditions.

During this period, I got to meet many channel aspirants at the beach on Dover Harbour. Several had travelled from overseas to spend months training there!! Many would ultimately fail to finish. It reinforced to me just how lucky I was to be able to train with several channel swimmers in my own backyard down at Brighton. It's a fact that more people have conquered Mount Everest than the English Channel.

My first two days of waiting were an absolute psychological torture test with nothing to do other than stare at the water and read "interesting" stories in the newspapers about nil all draws at the soccer or the all important darts results! Alternatively, you could while away the time dining at Dino's restaurant where the two waiters took the word "incompetent" to dizzy new heights. Honestly, it was a case of Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dumber!!! They even had a dessert called "spotted dick pudding" which left me wondering!! Basil Fawlty would have been enormously proud!!

I can't have been very good company, but I did settle over the next few days as the wind continued to blow and my potential start times kept getting postponed. It finally happened on the morning of August 17th. We gathered in the

Marina and loaded the boat with a variety of supplies then slowly motored around to the pebbles on Shakespeares Beach as I got lathered in grease and pinned my fluoro light onto my bathers. On board were Mike Oram as pilot with James assisting. Jane Murphy was also present as the official observer who would record everything that occurred in a large handwritten document as well as ensuring that no rules were broken. As for my own crew, I was privileged to have three remarkable individuals who made the trip from Australia purely for my benefit. I'll expand a little later on Jeremy, Kathy and Kerry.

It was 8am when I hit the water heading to my left on the shallow tide. Conditions were good, the crew were cheery and all was good in the world. Basically, this is how it stayed for the first six hours as I swam out through the large container ships in the North-West passage. I was feeding every 30 minutes on a carbohydrate mix known as Maxim heated to 40 degrees to help prevent hypothermia in the 17 degree water. This was working fine for a while but I was soon vomiting it back up. A reduction in the mixing rates soon sorted things and it was full steam ahead.

It was somewhere between the sixth and seventh hour that the day took on a whole new composition. The wind was picking up, producing a decent sized swell. As the wind grew, white caps starting hitting me from the right. Even with all his experience, it seemed to take Mike by surprise as he insisted it hadn't been forecast. Kerry told me quite pertinently that I should "just not look ahead"!! Mike wouldn't actually say so, but he gave a strong impression that we wouldn't have started if he had known what lay ahead.

Under normal circumstances, swimmers are permitted some company at certain times but Mike promptly said "NO" in such conditions, thinking that it was going to be hard enough to watch one swimmer, let alone two in a swell that was getting close to two metres.

Basically, the rough weather remained and my swim became a slugfest. I was dumped upon more times than I care to remember and was swallowing water constantly. The boat was bouncing around furiously and I feared it would tip onto me on several occasions. As for the crew, well seasickness was the order of the day and I had the "privilege" of witnessing several vomits being projected over the side, all of which matched my own spectacular vomiting efforts as I continued to expel all the water I was swallowing.

Passing half way, some Russian battle ships cruised through the South-West passage up ahead. The sight of my little Australian flag on board was clearly the catalyst that had them scuttling away in fear!

Trying to feed became about as difficult as getting Julia Gillard's hair to look trendy. One particularly memorable moment was when I tried to get down a cup of baked beans. Just as I tipped the cup, a wave broke on top of me from behind filling my stomach with water and smashing the baked beans all over my face. I had genuine fears of our journey taking on a resemblance to the S.S. Minnow's three hour tour! Kerry laughingly recalled the next day that it was a comical sight indeed, despite the fact that it almost drowned me!! The worst thing about the wind was that it stopped the tide taking me wide of the cape which would ordinarily have meant I would be pulled back into one of the coastal beaches. This, in turn, meant that at the impending the change of tide, I was going to be pushed a long way left and well and truly on my way to Calais Harbour some 20 kilometres east of Cap Griz Nez.

The forward slog continued as my throat and tongue became increasingly sorer. In order to stay positive, I allowed my mind to wander. I started singing Michael Jackson's "One Day in You Life" and "Burning Love" by Elvis.....two songs I absolutely detest!! I even started reminiscing about my childhood. In particular, my first birthday when I received a teddy bear, only to leave it out in the sand pit all night in the rain which had me bawling my eyes out!! I started looking forward to anything different, like hitting a piece of seaweed and, believe it or not, my next vomit!!!!!!

For several hours, the white cliffs of Cap Blanc Nez looked tantalisingly close as the sun started to set but then they just vanished, I knew immediately that the tide had turned. I didn't identify it at the time, but apparently I swam on the spot for almost 90 minutes! Darkness set in and I was barely three kilometres from the coast but the strong side-ways tide refused to allow me to get any closer. The waves kept breaking as the lights of Calais didn't get any nearer for over two hours. Mental torture is a mild description indeed. On the plus side, the cold wasn't bothering me at all. Testing me for lucidity, Kerry asked me to repeat the gate code for the Dover Marina. My immediate response elicited a round of applause!

Only when the water started to smooth out did I realise that I must be getting close. So strong was the tide that I actually went beyond Calais Harbour.

In pitch darkness and with no conception of where I was, Mike leant out of the boat yelling "follow this rock wall and the beach is 400 metres away"

I dug in hard for what seemed like a tortured eternity until something suddenly hit me on the bottom of my right hand!! It was sand!!! YIPPEE, I was in France, I stood in knee deep water and walked clear onto a small dry beach. A three year journey had finished in triumph. The time was spot on midnight. My crossing had taken 16 hours exactly. I stood alone in the darkness for no more than 30 seconds and sucked it all in before swimming back to the boat where I surprised all on board by hauling myself up the ladder unaided.

Kerry was thinking it a shame that no one could see the finish but to be quite succinct, I thought it was rather symbolic given that most of my training was done alone in the early morning darkness back home in Brighton.

Quickly getting into some warm clothing, it was no time for modesty. Off went the bathers quick smart and I was soon wrapped in several layers of thermal clothing. To quote Daryl Kerrigan, my bathers, cap and goggles will be going "straight to the pool room".

The three hour trip back to Dover had me wishing a helicopter could have picked us all up in Calais as I continued to

## KEVIN CASSIDY'S 2009 ENGLISH CHANNEL SWIM

vomit up the contents of my stomach so furiously that my nose started bleeding!! Arriving back at the hotel at 4am, I showered but found it impossible to sleep due to bad swelling and soreness of my tongue and throat and a very tender ribcage from all the vomiting. Meanwhile, the crew were all sporting a number of small bruises and sore spots from having been tossed around the boat like the proverbial rag dolls.

Badly dehydrated and unable to speak or get any food or fluid down, the next 24 hours proved horrendous but it didn't prevent me relishing in the traditional signing of the wall in the bar of Dover's White Horse pub, an establishment that is somewhat of a tourist attraction.

I haven't a clue how bad the irritation in my throat is, but four days later, I'm only just starting to get down solid food without pain. A special thanks here to my hotel for sympathising with me and dishing up exclusive serves of mashed potato and gravy. For the immediate two days after the swim, I sat high on the cliffs of Dover staring out at the flat calm water and wondering what might have been if the weather gods had smiled a little more kindly upon me. On the other hand, I glowed with the satisfaction of not only having conquered the channel, but having done so on one of its rougher days.

As I type, I'm sitting in a hotel room in Calais [having got here via the Chunnel this time!!!]. Today involved finding the small section of beach where I landed, a task made particularly difficult given that it was in front of the large dockland area. After two hours and almost getting arrested by border security [I don't speak a word of French], I sat alone on the sand. The enormity of it all suddenly hit me. I was overcome by an inner sense of accomplishment. Money can't buy it, governments can't legislate against it and company boards can't vote on it. I have run numerous ultras in the past, many of them much longer in time than what I spent in the channel, but this was far tougher than any running event I've tackled.

Although it was never my motivation, a few inquiries seem to suggest that no one else has completed an English Channel - Western States 100 mile double [albeit 12 years apart], however I'd be happy to be corrected.

I was asked what my next challenge might be. I'm not exactly sure but given that I have no desire to shove syringes into my forearm each day, it sure won't be the Tour de France! If it's OK with the organisers and as long as they don't object to a fat, slow, ageing old goat in their field, I wouldn't mind kick starting a bit of running again by lumbering my way through the Sri Chinmoy 5km fun run at Williamstown in December....Oh, and maybe eradicate those family pizzas and ice cream from my dietary lifestyle!!

Now for a few words on the crew who, in a brief moment of black humour, renamed my channel swim the "Poo and Spew Cruise" for reasons that require no further clarification.

**Jeremy Hornby** : Now living and working in Spain, Jeremy was a regular amongst the open water swims in Melbourne for many years and sacrificed his work and family time to travel to Dover at his own expense. One of the world's genuine nice guys.

**Kerry White** : One of Melbourne's best open water swimmers who wins a swag of age group prizes in a veritable procession. I didn't really know Kerry that well until discovering we were both doing Perth to Rottneest early in 2008. Seeing Kerry's attentive looks on the boat with every breath I took was a real comfort and she was so encouraging throughout. She really stepped up to the plate and had the feeding plan under control when others were dying with seasickness. Oh, and did I mention that she rescued me from my inadequate technological skills by manacling my wireless internet into some sort of working order when I didn't even know where the "on-off" switch was?

**Kathy Garnett** [AKA "PsychoChicken"]: All the way from Toodyay, 100 kilometres out of Perth!! Photographer extraordinaire, runner, high diver and gymnast, Kathy made the trip simply because it sounded like fun after I jokingly [but hopefully] suggested her skills would be good value on board. She had her camera constantly clicking everywhere and was the only one on board to avoid seasickness. As a result, she also became heavily involved in my feed breaks. Her special delivery of the "magic mouthwash" was a task and a half all on its own. Approximately 20 of her 250 plus photos can be seen at:

<http://kath-photography.blogspot.com/2009/08/changing-day.html>

For a wider overview of Kathy's excellent photographic talents, visit her blog site at: <http://kath-photography.blogspot.com/>



# KEVIN CASSIDY'S 2009 ENGLISH CHANNEL SWIM



Kevin having signed the wall in the bar of Dover's White Horse pub.



## CHRISTINE McARDLE - 1989 World Champion

By Mike Hall

Springvale/Noble Park Masters Athlete Chris McArdle joined the Springvale/Noble Park Athletics Club early in 1985 under the expert guidance of her late Coach Merv Edwards, who quickly recognised her obvious sprinting potential and guided her through those initial years, culminating in many "A" Grade awards at Interclub.

Initially, Chris was somewhat reluctant to join Masters Athletics, however at thirty-four years of age and with the lure of the upcoming National Championships in 1987 she made the decision to join and in a remarkable debut scored three medals in her sprint events i.e. 100m/13.04 (Gold); 200m/26.61 (Gold) and 400m/61.60 (Bronze). Having then advanced to the W35-39 age group the following year in Brisbane, Chris again executed her dominance with Gold medals in both the 200m/26.69; 400m/60.80 and silver in the 100m/12.60.

This once again proved just the necessary incentive she required to prepare for the 1989 World Masters (Veterans) Championships in Eugene, Oregon (USA) where twice she rose to the highest level in her career by becoming World Champion in the 400m/58.70; Silver medalist in the 200m/25.55 and also added to her success with Bronze medals in both the 4x100m and 4x400m relays.

She then continued her remarkable run of success in her favorite events in 1990 at the Nationals in Melbourne yet again with three Gold in the 200m/26.50; 400m/59.30 and 800m/2.22. Again, in Canberra the following year where she repeated her victories in the 400m/69.40 and 800m/ 2.21.5.

To add to her achievements over the years, Chris also had the distinction of becoming Victorian State Champion on no fewer than sixteen occasions.

However, her success over those five years sadly came to an abrupt end due to a series of injuries and, even worse, in 1995 when she was hospitalised with Crohns Disease.

Not to be outdone on her long recovery process Chris then took up Ballroom Dancing and above all Scuba Diving, before her inherent desire to get back to the track doing what she really loved, Masters Athletics !

In recent months her obvious natural ability and competitive nature are beginning to show signs of more future success.

Finally, Christine's many achievements at the highest level of our sport should not go without the appropriate recognition she so richly deserves.



*Christine winning the 400 metres at the World Championship in Eugene in 1989*



*Christine running at Duncan McKinnon in a State Championship*

*Speaking of the World Championships in Eugene, Oregon in 1989, this city is known as "Track Town, USA". It is a haven for runners and the crowds at this Championship were huge. Chris won her 400m in front of a crowd of at least 10,000 people, which is unheard of in Masters athletics. This meet is still regarded by many as the best Masters competition ever.*

*Russ*



VICTORIAN MASTERS ATHLETICS INC.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2020

Notice is hereby given that the 48th Annual General Meeting of Victorian Masters Athletics Inc. will be held at Duncan Mackinnon Reserve, Cnr. North Road and Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena, on Sunday 20 September 2020 commencing at 1:00 pm.

**Note that if Covid related restrictions limit the number who may physically meet, the meeting will be by videoconference using zoom. Details will be forwarded to members prior to the meeting.**

### AGENDA

- 1 Confirm minutes of last preceding AGM.
- 2 Presentation and receipt of the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statement.
- 3 Receive and consider the Certification of the Financial Statement by two Committee Members.
- 4 Certification by Committee Member that Financial Statements were presented to the AGM.
- 5 Minute incorporating Financial Statements into AGM minutes.
- 6 Ballot for the election of officers of the Association and the ordinary members of the Committee.
- 7 Declaration of the result of the election ballot for President.
- 8 Declaration of the result of the election ballot for other named positions.
- 9 Declaration of the result of the election for other positions.
- 10 Election of auditor.
- 11 Election of Life Members.
- 12 Presentations of special awards, trophies etc.
- 13 Other general business of which notice has been duly given.

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# NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

## VICTORIAN MASTERS ATHLETICS INC.

Clause 21 of the Constitution states that nominations of candidates for election as officers of the Association or as ordinary members of the Committee shall be made in writing, signed by two members of the Association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate and shall be delivered to the Secretary of the association not less than 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual general meeting.

To nominate a candidate please complete the details below and forward to the Secretary by post to:

Phil Urquhart 21 Holywood Grove Carnegie 3163  
or by email to [secretary@vicmastersaths.org.au](mailto:secretary@vicmastersaths.org.au)

**To be valid nominations must be mailed in time to arrive before 13 September 2020.**

Candidate Name.....

Office (please indicate)

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
- Club Captain
- Club Vice Captain
- Ordinary member of Committee

Any of the above

Proposer: Name.....

Signature.....Date.....

Seconder: Name.....

Signature.....Date.....

Consent of Candidate :        I consent to the above nomination

Name.....

Signature.....Date.....

## Zola Budd: After The Fall

*Think you know the story of Zola Budd? Think again. Even if you remember how the barefoot prodigy broke world records, became a symbol of South Africa's oppression, and was blamed for Mary Decker's Olympic nightmare, her story has more heartbreak, more hard-fought redemption, and considerably more weirdness than the legend.*

*Article by Steve Friedman for Runners World - Jun 21, 2018*



Last autumn, at a pretty clearing nestled 3,333 feet above sea level in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, 194 female collegiate distance runners gathered to run a 5,000-meter cross-country race. Many were tall and slim, rangy and loose-limbed in the way of college-aged distance runners. They came from North Carolina State and Clemson and Davidson and Miami and other colleges and universities, and it's a safe bet that no matter what burdens any of them quietly carried—*anxiety about grades, boyfriend troubles, or less specific but no less real woes*—none had ever faced the combination of worldwide shame and personal loss that had battered the middle-aged woman in their midst.

She was neither tall nor slim nor rangy. She was 42, brown as a walnut, slightly thick in the middle. When the race started, she jumped in front. The young runners knew this was an open race, that oddballs could run if they wanted. But what was the runner in front thinking? Maybe she wanted to feel the sensation of leading a race. Maybe she would quit after a few hundred yards, then limp back to her grandkids and tell them about the day she led some real runners. Maybe she used to lead races, back in her day.

Some of the coaches looked at each other. She had a nice stride—there was power to it, and precision. She wasn't just a weekend jogger out for a laugh. The coaches could tell that, even if some of the young runners could not. She kept the lead even after a quarter mile. More coaches watched her, and for at least one of them, and maybe more, who beheld her curly hair, and her speed, and the way she had that little hitch in her style—*elbows slightly too high, a little too wide*—there was something familiar.

Her coach had told her to take it easy, that she didn't have to lead from the beginning. He had warned her against going out too fast. He had warned her that a gigantic hill sat in the middle of the course, and that if she went out too fast, the hill might swallow her. Now more coaches were looking at her, a curly haired, middle-aged woman, legs like pistons, elbows flying. What they saw didn't make sense. She was decimating their college athletes. She ran the first mile of the race in 5:18.

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No slightly thick, middle-aged jogger could maintain that kind of pace. She was slowing down. And now the giant hill in the middle of the course was looming. And the young athletes were tracking the sun-cured, curly-haired rabbit down. They were clear-eyed, long-limbed, remorseless. They were on the big hill now, and they had caught up to her and they were going to pass her. Her coach couldn't help it. She had ignored his advice. Still, he couldn't help it. So Jeff Jacobs yelled. "Go, Zola!"

"Zola?" another coach asked, and stared at the runner. Other coaches stared, too. Zola? It was impossible.

Mention the name Zola Budd to the casual track fan and you'll likely get one (or all) of three responses: Barefoot. South African. Tripped Mary Decker. Those were the boldest brush strokes of her narrative, and they continue to be. But the legend of Zola Budd is, like all legends, simple and moving and incomplete. It is made of half-truths, exaggerations, and outright lies. She did run barefoot—but so did everyone else where she grew up. She did refrain from speaking out against great and terrible injustice—but so did a lot of other people older and wiser. She did suffer stunning setbacks and tragic losses, but much of her misfortune was worse than people knew, the losses more complicated and painful than most imagined.

A lot of people thought she had disappeared and stopped running for good. But here she was.

"Go, Zola!" Jacobs yelled and another coach took up the cry, then another. Was it nostalgia, or a wish for their own faded youth, or a belated and overdue recognition of grit's enduring majesty? Here she was, doing what she had always done, even when no one was watching. Through all the fragile triumphs and shifting tribulations of Zola Budd's life—some well known, some known not at all—only one thing remained immutable: running. Once she ran to connect with someone she loved. Then she ran to be alone. Running brought her international fame and then worldwide scorn and then it brought her something few might suspect.

"Go, Zola, go!" The young runners closed again. Certainly they could hear the yells. What the hell was a Zola? It didn't matter. They had time, and nature and physics, on their side. They had young legs. They had grit themselves. They would show this middle-aged mom what racing was all about. They reeled her in, and she pumped harder, faster and they reeled her in again. There was a long way to go.

Running had been fun for the curly-haired athlete once, a long time ago, and then it had saved her when she needed saving most, and then it had almost destroyed her before she was even an adult. Why was she running now? What was she running from? Or toward?

"Go, Zola!" the coaches yelled. "Go, Zola, go."

Frank Budd and Hendrina Wilhelmina de Swardt, whom everyone called Tossie, had five children before Zola. Their third-born child, Frank Jr., died of a viral infection when he was just 11 months old. When Zola was born six years later, Tossie was in labor for three days and received 13 pints of blood.

"The nurses told me the kid's a stayer," Frank, always good for a quote, would tell reporters years later, before things got ugly.

When Zola was young, her father was busy working at the printing plant his father, an English immigrant, had founded—and Tossie was sickly. The oldest of the Budd children, Jenny, became the toddler's de facto caretaker. Jenny was 11 when her baby sister was born and she read to her often. Their favorite was "Jock of the Bushveld." It's the true tale of a Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the runt of the litter who is saved from drowning by his owner and repays the favor by developing into a courageous and noble champion. When Zola started talking, according to family stories, Jenny was the first person she called "mom."

Zola was skinny and short and terrible at swimming and team sports, but Jenny liked running, so when Zola got old enough, she ran, too. They ran over the hills surrounding Bloemfontein, the South African city of 500,000 where they lived. The city sits at 4,500 feet and when they ran in the morning, the air was chilly and clear. They ran barefoot, because all children in rural South Africa ran barefoot. They ran for fun. And they ran for something Zola would lose and not find again until decades later.

Then she got fast. And once the world discovered Zola and reporters started calling her things like "a prodigy among prodigies" and a "barefoot, waiflike child champion," running was no longer about fun. Once the skinny, under-sized adolescent became a champion, and then a symbol, and then a target of the world's righteous wrath—at an age when other kids are entering college—running would be about everything but fun. Things were so much simpler when Zola was just a little girl, running barefoot through the hills with the big sister she idolized.

Later, there would be tales that Zola developed her speed racing ostriches, that her greedy father pushed her until she broke. Like many of the stories that swirled around Budd, they were half-truths. There were ostriches on the family property, more a large menagerie than farm, but she never raced them. And perhaps her father did push her—he saw how fast she was and got her a coach—but no one pushed her as much as she pushed herself.

It was a happy childhood. In addition to the ostriches, there were cows and ducks and geese. There were snow-white chickens her father bred and sold, and a water-pumping windmill. There was a family Doberman named Dobie. There were mud fights in the summer and in the winter, bonfires when Zola and her brothers and sisters would build fires and stuff firecrackers in glass bottles, then light them and watch them explode in the air. But Frank and Tossie didn't get along, and the shadow of little Frank's death seemed to always hover over the family. There were photographs of the missing baby all over the house and every year during holidays and on little Frank's birthday, Tossie grew quieter, and sadder. It was a childhood filled with mysterious woe and delirious joy.

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It was a normal childhood.

Zola's coach got her running more and Jenny became a nurse and wasn't around as much. She worked the night shift and she would come home just as the family was having breakfast, and she would have a piece of cake or pie—Jenny always had a sweet tooth—and then she would go to sleep as Zola went off to school. When Zola needed to talk to someone, though, Jenny was always there.

Zola was fast, but not that fast. When she was 13, in a local 4K race, running as hard as she could, she came in second. By the time she crossed the finish line, the winner was in her track suit, warming down. Zola didn't like losing. But she had the rest of her life. Besides, it's not as if she was going to run for a living. There was school. There were her friends. And there was Jenny. All part of a normal childhood, which ended in 1980.

Jenny, then 25, had been in the hospital for a few weeks, being treated for melanoma. Zola was not allowed to visit. She was only 14, and Tossie knew how her youngest felt about Jenny. So Zola stayed home while doctors treated Jenny. Zola knew Jenny was sick, but she didn't know how sick.

Cara Budd, then 18, came into Zola's room at 4 a. m. on September 9. (Coincidentally, it was Tossie's birthday.) Cara woke her little sister and told her the news. Jenny was gone.

Zola didn't cry or scream. She had always been quiet, had always kept her grief, and her joy, to herself. The only person she had really shared her feelings with was Jenny.

After Jenny died, no one in the family talked about it. A family that had never talked about its losses didn't talk about this loss. Zola? Zola ran harder than she had run before. She would get up at 4:45 and run for 30 to 45 minutes. She attended school till 1:30, then went home and did her homework, then she would run some more from 5 till 7. Frank and Tossie and their children just tried to carry on. There were four kids now. Estelle, 23, the twins, Cara and Quintus, 18, and Zola. They had lost a baby and survived. And now they had lost Jenny. They would survive that, too. Zola? There was no one for Zola to talk to about Jenny's death, or her life, or how she was feeling. She ran harder. That winter, she entered the same local 4K she had lost the year before. This time she won.

She ran harder and still the pain of Jenny's loss stayed with her.

The next year, she won the South African junior championships at 800 meters, and the year after that, the South African national championships at 1500 and 3,000 meters. She was still in high school and her normal childhood was just a blurry story, one that would be embellished and twisted and disfigured the more it receded into the past. A few years after Jenny's death, she ran 5,000 meters in 15:01.83, faster than any woman had ever run it before and life would never be normal for Zola again. She didn't know it, though. She didn't know the terrible places running would take her.

When she set the mark in the 5,000 meters, she says, "That's when I realized, 'Hey, I'm not too bad.'" She wasn't the only one.

John Bryant was a runner, a writer, and the man in charge of the features department at London's Daily Mail. So when he pored over some race results "lurking in the small print of Runner's World" in 1983, his response was akin to that of a geologist eyeballing a ribbon of diamonds in a fetid swamp. Impossible, ridiculous, too good to be true, an invitation to a Fleet Street sportswriter's doomed-to-be-dashed dreams. Absurd—but worth checking out.

"If the results were to be believed," Bryant would write 25 years later, "there was a teenage girl, running

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without shoes, at altitude, up against domestic opposition, who was threatening to break world records.” (Budd’s 5,000-meter mark wasn’t ratified because it had been set in a race in South Africa, then banned from international competition due to its apartheid policies.)

What Bryant didn’t write: Budd was white. The racial angle, combined with the fact that Budd was South African, made the story irresistible. That the Olympics were coming up later that year and that South Africa was banned from participating, set in motion a chain of events that changed Budd forever. Bryant dispatched a reporter to Bloemfontein. Other reporters were there, too. They found the shy schoolgirl, watched her glide over the hills, elbows a little high and a little wide, saw pictures of British middle-distance superstars Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett next to her pillow and above her bed, a huge poster of America’s track sweetheart, Mary Decker (whose 5,000-meter record Budd had bested by nearly seven seconds).

She was only 5’2” and 92 pounds, but already she was larger than life. The reporters wrote about Budd’s parrot, who could swear in Sotho, a regional dialect. They wrote about Budd’s speed, about the impalas and springbok in the city’s game park who stared at the teen as she ran in the dawn’s chill. Reporters didn’t dig into Jenny’s death or Frank and Tossie’s rocky relationship. They didn’t examine the crucible of grief in which Budd’s speed had annealed.

At least one journalist, though, worried about the young runner. Kenny Moore, then with *Sports Illustrated*, described Budd’s failed 1984 attempt to break the world record in the 3,000 meters, at a race near Cape Town. After the setback, he wrote, “As photographers paced and growled outside, Zola sat hunched in a corner of the stadium offices, like a frightened fawn. If a true perfectionist is measured by how crushing even his or her perceived failure can be, Zola Budd is an esteemed member of the club. One wishes for her always to have loving, soothing people around.”

Bryant’s newspaper offered the Budd family £100,000 (then about \$142,000) in exchange for exclusive rights to Budd’s life story. The paper also promised to fast-track the teenager so that she would receive a British passport. That would allow her to run in the Olympics. (Budd could qualify because of her grandfather’s British birth. It also helped that her father’s business wasn’t doing so well, and, as Bryant later wrote, that one of Frank Budd’s two great life ambitions was to retire with £1 million in the bank. The other was to have tea with the queen of England.)

There were demonstrations when she arrived in England. People booed her. People shouted insults. She was a white South African, a privileged white teenager from a racist nation, using a technicality to pursue nakedly personal ambition. Few knew about Jenny, how running had once been Zola’s way of spending time with her sister, then had become Zola’s way of mourning her. Few knew of her father’s failing business. She had never told anyone that. She had never been good at explaining herself. And she wasn’t any good at it now.

“She was such a shy and introverted person,” says Cornelia Burki, a South African-born distance runner who had moved to Switzerland in 1973 and represented that country in the 1980, 1984, and 1988 Olympics. She had befriended Budd, 13 years her junior, at the race in South Africa where Budd set the world record at 5,000 meters. She knew how Budd reacted to attention, how she shrank into herself. “All she wanted was to run,” Burki says, “and to run fast.”

But the world wanted something else. At her first race in England, the *Daily Mail* held a press conference beforehand, and pumped in the sound track from *Chariots of Fire*. The BBC televised the 3,000-meter event, which Budd won in 9:02.06. That single effort was fast enough to qualify her for the Olympic Games. A columnist for the *Mail* called Budd the “hottest property in world athletics.” The *Daily Mail*’s chief competitor did not have access to the hot property. That newspaper ran a banner headline on its front page: “Zola, Go Home!”

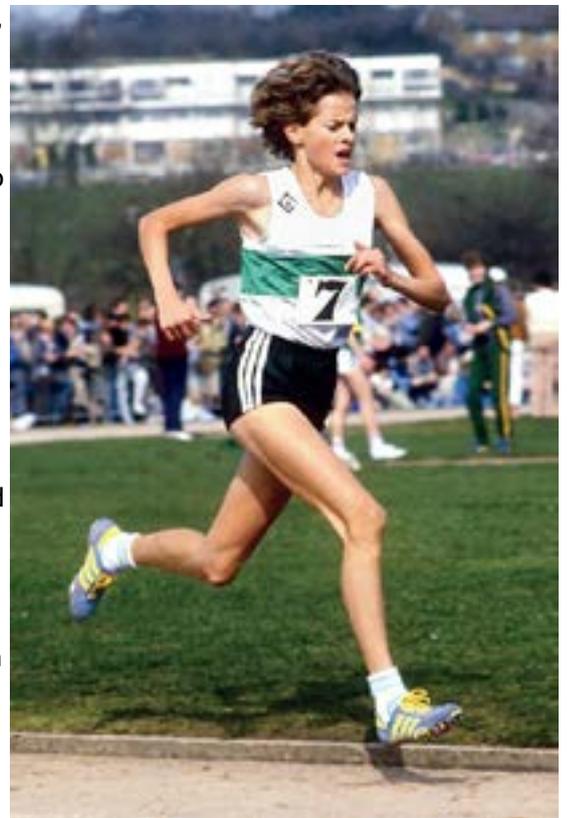
“To the world,” a *New York Times* reporter wrote last year, “Budd was a remorseless symbol of South Africa’s segregationist policies. To the *Daily Mail*, she was a circulation windfall.”

And to the girl? “Until I got to London in 1984, I never knew Nelson Mandela existed,” she told a reporter in 2002. “I was brought up ignorant of what was going on. All I knew was the white side expressed in South African newspapers—that if we had no apartheid, our whole economy would collapse. Only much later did I realize I’d been lied to by the state.”

She wasn’t a racist, any more than any 18-year-old citizen of apartheid nation is a racist. She wasn’t an opportunist, any more than any fiercely competitive champion is an opportunist. But was she a champion?

She captured the English national championships at 1500 meters. In July, in London, she set a world record of 5:33.15 in the 2,000 meters. It was an odd distance, rarely run. But it inspired a British journalist to articulate something a lot of other people were feeling.

“The message will now be flashed around the world,” exclaimed a BBC reporter after the race. “Zola Budd is no myth.” No myth, perhaps. but what a story! “The legs of an antelope,” one reporter wrote later, with the enthusi-



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asm and penchant for empurpled prose Budd seemed to inspire among the ink-stained, “the face of an angel and the luck of a leper.”

She was a barefoot teenager, an international villain, the poor little swift girl. The best part? She would be competing in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics against her idol, a former phenom herself, another runner who drove writers to breathless, pulpy heights.

Pig-tailed and weighing 89 pounds, Mary Teresa Decker, aka “Little Mary Decker,” burst onto the international track scene when she was just 14, when she won a U.S.-Soviet race in Minsk, in 1973. Over the next decade, she’d set world records at every distance between 800 meters and 10,000 meters. She was pretty. She was white. And she was American. But she had never run in the Olympics. An injury had kept her from the 1976 Games. The U. S. boycott prevented her from running in 1980.

A made-to-order arch-rivalry. Mop-topped schoolgirl vs. America’s sweetheart. One-time wunderkind’s last chance at Olympic gold, and the only thing standing in her way was a skinny kid who had once slept beneath her poster. Another irresistible tale, and like all the fictions surrounding Zola Budd, it left out a lot.

For one thing, Budd was wary about Romania’s Maricica Puica, the reigning world cross-country champion. For another, Budd had strained her hamstring training four days earlier, during a speed workout, and knew she wasn’t at full strength. Finally, there was the ever-quotable, ever-ambitious Frank.

Zola was making lots of money now—from the newspaper deal, from fees for showing up at races, from pending endorsement deals—and Frank was taking a huge chunk and wanted more. Zola told her father to knock it off, to let her be. Frank loved England, loved the high life. He was also harboring a secret that would later provide more tabloid headlines. Tossie, who had been incapable of comforting her youngest daughter when Jenny died, was doing her best now—she cared not a bit how fast Zola ran, nor whether she ran at all—but she longed for the quiet of Bloemfontein. Frank and Tossie’s relationship, never placid, grew more turbulent. And two weeks before the Olympics, Zola told her dad he couldn’t come to Los Angeles to watch her run. She was sick of his money-grubbing, tired of his meddling, weary of the drama. So Frank stayed in England, stewing, and Zola and her mom flew to Los Angeles. And shortly after, Frank stopped talking to either his daughter or his wife.

The Olympic narrative was Decker vs. Budd. The reality was a lonely, miserable teenager who knew too much. “Emotionally,” Budd says, “I was upset, away from home, missed my family, by myself, it wasn’t the greatest time of my life, to be honest. I thought, Just get in this Olympics and get it over with.”

In the highly awaited 3,000-meter final, Decker set the pace, followed closely by Puica, Budd, and England’s Wendy Sly. When the pace slowed slightly about 1600 meters into the race, Budd picked it up, running wide of Decker, then, as she passed her, cut back toward the inside and the lead. Decker bumped Budd’s left foot with her right thigh, knocking her off balance. Budd kept running, and Decker stayed close, clipping Budd’s calf with her right shoe. There was a contact a third time and Decker fell, ripping the number right off Budd’s back. Budd kept running.

Boos rained down from the stands. Later, people would suggest Budd had pulled a dirty move, trying to cut off competitors, especially Decker. Others would say the maneuver showed the teenager’s relative inexperience in world events.

It wasn’t a dirty move. In fact, when a runner moves in front, it is incumbent on trailing racers to avoid contact. (Ironically, Budd says she made the move to get out of harm’s way. “If you’re running barefoot,” she says, “it’s best to be last or in front.”)

The L.A. Coliseum echoed with more boos.

“I saw what happened,” says Burki, who finished fifth in the race. “I saw Mary pushed Zola from the back. Zola overtook Mary and Mary didn’t want to give that position in front. Mary ran into Zola from the back...As she fell down, she pushed Zola.”

Budd pumped her elbows, kept running. She still didn’t think she’d win—she says that she suspected Puica would soon pass her. But the full impact of the situation didn’t hit her until she’d completed another lap and saw Decker stretched out on the ground, wailing. Puica and Sly passed Budd, but she passed them back. Then, she says, she started hearing the jeers and boos. The runners passed Budd again. Then another runner passed her. Then another. And another. Budd finished seventh, looking miserable. “The main concern was if I win a medal,” Budd says. “I’d have to stand on the winner’s podium and I didn’t want to do that.”

In the tunnel, right after the event ended, Budd saw Decker sitting down and approached her. She was so sorry the way things had turned out. She apologized to her idol.

“Get out of here!” Decker spat. “I won’t talk to you.”

Burki saw that, too. “Mary was sitting there crying. Zola was walking in front of me, apologizing. Mary was screaming at her, I’ll never forget that. Zola being such a shy person, her shoulders dropped. It could have happened in any race, and it wasn’t Zola’s fault, but the blame was on her. For any young girl to cope with that, that was very difficult.”

Later, at a press conference, Decker blamed Budd.

Officials disqualified her from the race (and an hour later, after reviewing the videotape, rescinded the disqualification). She skipped the press conference, boarded the bus carrying British Olympic athletes. In one seat was a young woman, weeping. Budd had always been polite. “Why are you crying?” she asked the woman.

“Because of what they did to you,” the young athlete told the runner.

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A quarter century later, Budd still recalls the moment. “That was one of the nicest things anyone has ever done for me.”

Budd’s coach picked her up and took her to meet her mother. Budd had taken down America’s Sweetheart. She had sidestepped sanctions against her native country—that amounted to cheating, said some. So many rich, false narratives about the young girl, and the only one who cared nothing about any of them was the person who cared most about her.

“It didn’t matter to her that I didn’t win a medal,” Budd remembers. “She was just glad and happy that I was with her again, that we could be together.” They stayed in her coach’s suite at a local hotel. It was there that they received a telephone call from the manager of the British women’s Olympic track team. She was calling to pass on the news that there had been threats that Budd was going to be shot. Two police cars were on their way. When they showed up, the officers had submachine guns.

“They picked me up at the hotel and drove me and Mom to the airport, right onto the tarmac, and watched as we got onto the plane. It was like a movie.”

“I have wanted to write you for a long time,” Decker wrote to Budd in December 1984. “...I simply want to apologize to you for hurting your feelings at the Olympics...It was a very hard moment for me emotionally and I reacted in an emotional manner. The next time we meet I would like to shake your hand and let everything that has happened be put behind us. Who knows? Sometimes even the fiercest competitors become friends.”

Publicly, though, Decker was not quite so soft. “I don’t feel that I have any reason to apologize,” Decker told a reporter in January 1985. “I was wronged, like anyone else in that situation.”

When she was a child, and endured her greatest loss, Budd ran harder. She did the same thing now, in the wake of Olympic infamy. Budd won world cross-country championships in 1985 and 1986, set world records in the 5,000 and indoor 3,000. But her parents divorced in 1986, and then she had absolutely no contact with her father. He had another life now. She ran harder. But what had once, a long time ago, provided Budd a refuge from grief now provided her detractors an opportunity to attack.

Well-meaning people asked her to speak out against apartheid. Movement leaders demanded she speak out. Why didn’t she renounce her country’s racist policies? She was naive, that was indisputable. She was also stubborn.

“My attitude is that, as a sportswoman, I should have the right to pursue my chosen discipline in peace,” she wrote in her autobiography, published in 1989. “...Seb Coe does not get asked to denounce Soviet expansionism; and Carl Lewis is not required to express his view on the Contra arms scandal. But I was not afforded that courtesy and it became a matter of principle for me not to give those who were intent on discrediting me the satisfaction of hearing me say what they most wanted to hear.”

But now, on her terms, she would speak her piece. She wrote in the same book: “The Bible says men are born equal before God. I can’t reconcile segregation along racial lines with the words of the Bible. As a Christian, I find apartheid intolerable.”

That was a nice sentiment, but for many, too little, too late. In April 1988, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) told the British Amateur Athletic Board (BAAB) that it should ban Budd from competition because she had appeared at—but not competed in—a road race in South Africa.

She had suffered insults and accusations for years. Why does a runner, plagued for miles and years by a creaky knee, or a pebble in her shoe, or an aching tendon, finally quit? Is it a new pain, or just too much of the same?

A doctor examined her in London and declared her “a pitiful sight, prone to bouts of crying and deep depressions...[with] all the clinical signs of anxiety.” She decided to fly back to South Africa, to Bloemfontein. She told the press back home, “I have been made to feel like a criminal. I have been continuously hounded, and I can’t take it anymore.”

Back in Bloemfontein, away from the angry eyes of the world, she met a man, Michael Pieterse, the son of a wealthy businessman and co-owner of a local liquor store. They married on April 15, 1989. Zola invited her estranged



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father to the wedding (she had reached out to him once before, but he had maintained his silence). She asked her brother, Quintus, to give her away at the ceremony. When Frank heard that, he told his son that if he accompanied Zola, Quintus would be written out of his father's will. Zola promptly disinvited her father to her wedding, which prompted him to tell a reporter, "I no longer have a daughter called Zola." (Pieterse's father walked Zola down the aisle.)

In his will, Frank Budd stated that neither Tossie nor Zola and her sisters should be allowed to attend his funeral, if he died before them.

Five months later, in September, Quintus discovered Frank Budd's bloody body at his house. He had been shot twice, by his own shotgun, and his pick-up truck and checkbook had been stolen. The next day, a 24-year-old man was arrested. He claimed that Budd had made a sexual advance, and that it had triggered the killing. (The killer was later convicted of theft and murder, but given only 12 years due to "extenuating circumstances.")

A murdered father who apparently had been leading a secret life. Worldwide enmity. She ran. In 1991, in her native country, she ran the second fastest time in the world over 3,000 meters. With repeal of apartheid and South Africa's welcome back to the Olympics, Budd raced in the 3,000 meters at the 1992 Games in Barcelona. She didn't qualify for the final. In 1993, she finished fourth at the World Cross-Country Championships. And then, as far as the world was concerned, she disappeared. As far as the world was concerned, she stopped running.

All the teenagers were chasing her. She had grown up too fast, and now she was being chased by runners half her age. The course wound over hills, at altitude. It must have seemed high to the girls who had been training at sea level. To a runner who remembered the chilly dawn of the African veld, it must have felt like home.

"Go Zola, go!"

Once reviled, once booed, the anti-heroine of all sorts of compelling and not-quite-complete stories kept going. No one was booing now. People were cheering, yelling her name. She kept going and the young runners fell behind and she won the race in 17:58. Afterward, the coaches from the teams surrounded her. They wanted to meet the legend.

"They had heard about her," Jacobs said. "But who had ever met the real Zola Budd?"

The legend comes to the door of her Myrtle Beach, South Carolina house barefoot, of course, in shorts and a T-shirt that says "Does Not Play Well With Others" and a picture of Stewie, the cartoon baby from Family Guy. She turned 43 in May. She walks a little bit bowlegged. She has agreed to meet because she has always been agreeable, even when she didn't understand what she was agreeing to. She says she's working on that.

She is finishing her dissertation to obtain her master's degree in counseling. She's also working as an assistant coach for Coastal Carolina University's women's track team, which allows her to travel with the team and compete in open events. The men's head track coach, Jeff Jacobs, coaches her. She says that people who have gone through pain can help others understand and endure pain. She says that long-distance runners are privy to a special relationship with pain and solitude and grace, and "I doubt that sprinters have that."

She ran her first marathon in London in 2003, but dropped out at 23 miles, depleted. She ran a marathon in Bloemfontein in 2008, and logged 3:10. Last year, she entered the New York City Marathon and ran 2:59:51. She's planning on racing a half marathon by year's end, and a marathon next year. In the meantime, she wants to compete on the Master's circuit, "in as many local cross-country races and local 10K and 5K races as possible." But that's not the focus of her life. She had a baby girl in 1995 and twins, a boy and girl, in 1998 and she's just a mother, she says now, just a wife. Yes, she knows it's 25 years since she was blamed for destroying the dreams of America's Sweetheart. No, it wasn't her fault. Yes, she knows people are still curious about it. She is pleasant without being effusive, charming without being gushy.



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Over three days in the early summer, she says that her accomplishments mean little, that her disappointments even less. She smiles. It's a shy smile, almost an apologetic one. She doesn't want to push her kids. She knows what it's like to be pushed. She treasures the moments of her childhood when no one was pushing her, before she had discovered her gifts, before the world had discovered them and adored them and twisted them to its own purposes.

No, she says, she never quit running, just competing. She can't imagine not running. The time she loved it best was before anyone—even she—knew how fast she was.

"I never strived to be the best in the world," she says, softly, still smiling, remembering those happy days. "I just ran every day, I just ran."

Her mother died four years ago and that was hard, and sad, but it was good, too, because all of Tossie's children and grandchildren got to see her, got to say goodbye, to show her that she was beloved. Budd got to tell her mom how much she had always loved her, how much her support had meant, how when the world cared so much about how fast Zola ran and what country's colors she wore and who she was competing against—about all the stories...it meant so much to have a mother who didn't care at all, who ignored the stories, who just cared about who Zola was.

It was so unlike Frank's death in 1989. Tossie and Zola had to comply with his will, so they couldn't attend the funeral. Plus, there were the ugly stories in the papers. That was hard, too, and sad, and there was nothing good about it.

Fatherless, motherless, Budd has run through it all, elbows a little too high, a little too wide, and most of the world didn't know, or care, and that made the running something better, something closer to what she had when she was young. Running helped her deal with her father's death, as it had helped her deal with all the people calling her names and telling her she was things she was not. It helped when she discovered that her husband was having an affair four years ago. The story of Zola Budd was resurrected. New banner headlines, at least in South Africa. New sordid details—the other woman had been a socialite and beauty pageant contestant, nicknamed Pinkie. Michael had bought a house for her. She had called and threatened Zola. Zola says that Pinkie poisoned and killed one of her dogs.

She filed for divorce, and she told a reporter, when Michael denied that he had done anything wrong, "Why do all husbands deny it? I have no idea. But I have more than enough evidence that he is having an affair. More than enough."

But she had been through worse, and when Michael got rid of Pinkie, Zola and her husband reconciled.

Not that she has forgotten. "Marriage is like cycling," she says. (She has recently taken up mountain biking.) "There are only two types of cyclists, those who have fallen or those who are going to fall. Same with marriage, those who have had problems and those who are going to have problems."

For someone whose mere name serves as shorthand for international drama, she could not seem more placid, more zen. "Running and other stuff passes away," she says. "It's old news. The legacy you leave for your kids, that lasts."

She still holds British and South African records, at junior and senior levels. Her name is in the lyrics of a song once popular in her homeland. The reliable, long-distance jitneys in her hometown are called "Zola Budds" or just "Zolas."

She doesn't display any of her old medals. "They're in a box somewhere in South Africa, I think."

She says the happiest moments of her life occurred when her children were born. Where do her running victories rank in her spectrum of life's happy moments? She barks a heavy laugh, as if that's the most ridiculous question she has ever entertained, in a lifetime of entertaining ridiculous questions. "They don't."

She wants her children to grow up doing whatever they want to do. Anything at all, as long as it makes them happy. "Well, artists are never happy, are they? But fulfilled, I want them to be fulfilled."

How does she think she'll be remembered? She laughs again, but this time it's an easy, light sound. "I have no idea. I never thought about that."

She doesn't mention her victory in the cross-country race. She doesn't talk a lot about running. Yes, she thinks she was treated unfairly, but it was a strange time and her country was doing terrible things. No, she's not a racist, and no one who knows her would ever think she was. No, she never became friends with Mary Decker, but they did make peace.

"Both of us have moved on and running isn't so important in our lives," she says. "We're both a bit more wise."

Which isn't to say that running isn't important at all to the champion. She might be placid, she might be serene, but she did hire a college coach to train her. She does compete against women half her age. The family received a two-year visa to live in the United States last year. Zola wanted to expose the kids to another country's educational system. But she also wanted to try the master's running circuit here. They chose Myrtle Beach because they wanted to be on the East Coast, which makes it easier to fly to their homeland, and because Michael loves golf, and there are more public golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area than almost anywhere else in the world. Zola does not play golf. "It's dangerous if I play golf," she says. "It's better for everyone if I don't play."

She doesn't watch sports on television. She does not watch the Olympics. She has watched her Olympic duel with Mary Decker only once, the day after it happened.

She wants to give her children what she once had as a child, before the world discovered her, before there was a story. She says she understands adolescents who cut themselves, "because physical pain can be better pain." She remembers a time before she was aware of any emotional pain, when she was just "that young kid who plays barefoot

## Zola Budd: After The Fall



*Zola leads a group of college athletes*

on the farm.”

She talks about that kid a lot, about life on the farm, about the time when no one knew about her speed, when no one cared. She is asked about Jenny.

She grows quiet for a moment. She remembers that her sister’s favorite color was green. She remembers that Jenny had her own dog, a pinscher named Tossie (after her mother) who followed her everywhere, and she remembers Jenny’s sweet tooth, and the way she would eat her pastry while the rest of the family sat down to breakfast, before she went upstairs, to sleep.

She remembers Jenny reading to her, and running beside her. She remembers the story of the little runt, Jock of the Bushveld, and how he grew up to be a brave, beloved champion. She remembers how when Jenny died, Zola attacked the hills and trails with a vengeance she never knew she possessed.

“Her death made everything in my life, even eating and drinking, seem of secondary importance...” Budd wrote in her autobiography. “Running was the easiest way to escape from the harsh reality of losing my sister because when I ran I didn’t have to think about life or death...There is no doubt that the loss of Jenny had a major effect on my running career. By escaping from her death I ran into world class...”

“[The family] did not talk about her death a lot afterward,” she wrote in a recent e-mail. “I started training a lot and that was it.”

Jenny has been gone for 30 years, but at the moment it’s as if she’s in the next room, in front of one of her morning pastries, or in her bedroom, pulling her curtains closed, getting ready to sleep. Budd talks about her sister quietly, and matter-of-factly, and then she quietly and matter-of-factly weeps.

“If Jenny hadn’t died,” she says, “I probably would have become a nurse.”

She talks about her father, too, and recounts the visit she made to his gravesite, where she made peace with him. She knows he suffered, too. She doesn’t believe her father made any advances against his killer.

Asked about her father in 2002, she told a reporter, “Back then South African society didn’t accept homosexuals. It took a terrible toll on him.” Today she says, “If he had been around now, he could have been more open about who he was.”

The intimate details that the world knows about Frank Budd are largely due to Zola’s fame. She knows that. She knows that his actions are part of the Zola Budd story. What she also knows—what the world doesn’t know—is he was a good dad, before all the money and fame and fighting. So much of what the world knows about Zola Budd is the simple story, the one with cartoon villains and epic struggles and bright, bold lines of right and wrong. But things were always more complicated than that. Frank Budd was greedy, and pushy, and that fit into a simple story, but he was other things, too. The world doesn’t know that Frank Budd watched a cow chase his little 10-year-old girl and the family dog, Dobie, and that he remarked on how fast she was, before anyone else had, and that the two of them laughed and laughed at how afraid of the cow she had been. The world doesn’t know that he constructed a little duck pond for his youngest child, and that she would tell him stories about how she took care of the ducks, that she fed them just like he told her to, that father and daughter loved each other and were happy, once upon a time before the world discovered her gifts, before the gifts became so heavy. She sheds a tear for her dad, too.

Running was so much fun when she was just a child, then it became a release, and finally, a means to an end she never wanted— money and political symbolism and international fame. It became so important. It became part of a larger narrative. And it wasn’t her narrative.

And now, even though she still is intensely competitive, even though she sometimes runs too hard for her own

## Zola Budd: After The Fall

good and is preparing for a return to competition that may bring with it a lot of scrutiny that she never welcomed nor enjoyed, it's okay, because she's got her balance about her now. She knows what's important. She knows what's hers. She'll do her best in the upcoming marathons. She'll do well in the master's circuit, too. That's the plan. Truth be told, she plans to kick some serious American ass, not that she would ever say that. She might be shy, and sensitive, and misunderstood and have the face of an angel and all that. But she is still a champion.

But that's not why she's running. Not to win. That was never the main reason she ran. That was never the real story.

Most people don't think too much about why they run. They never have to, because running simply feels good and helps them. Zola Budd, though, has had to think about why she runs.

She runs not for medals or glory or to set anyone straight, either. Not to make anyone understand her. That never worked.

She runs for the thing that running once bestowed upon her, a long time ago, and that running almost snatched away. She is running to get it back.

"I run to be at peace," she says.

Story Update · August 4, 2016

Zola Budd—now Zola Pieterse—reunited with Mary Decker Slaney in March for the first time in decades at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum for the making of the documentary *The Fall*; the film premiered in the U.K. on July 27, although for now there is no word on when it might be released in other countries. (They both participated in *Runner*, the 2013 ESPN film about their collision and the aftermath, but did not meet then.) "We had time to spend together and an opportunity to talk about things other than running and get to know each other," Pieterse says. "One of the reasons both of us decided to do this is that it hopefully will give us closure." Last year, Pieterse became a full-time assistant track-and-field coach at Coastal Carolina University after volunteering with the team since 2008. She balances coaching with working on her masters in sports management (she also has a graduate degree in counseling) and raising her three kids: 20-year-old Lisa, and twin 18-year-olds Azelle and Michael. Pieterse is still a competitive runner at age 50, averaging 50-mile weeks. She finished seventh at South Africa's Comrades Marathon in 2014 and ran her most recent marathon, the 2015 Columbia Marathon, in 3:05:26. She dropped out of this year's Boston Marathon midrace—"Some days, you just don't have it," she says—but plans to run another 26.2 next spring. "Of all the athletes I've profiled, she seemed more at peace than anyone despite having gone through more bad stuff than most," writer Steve Friedman says. "Her athletic accomplishments were so far from the most important things in her life." -Nick Weldon





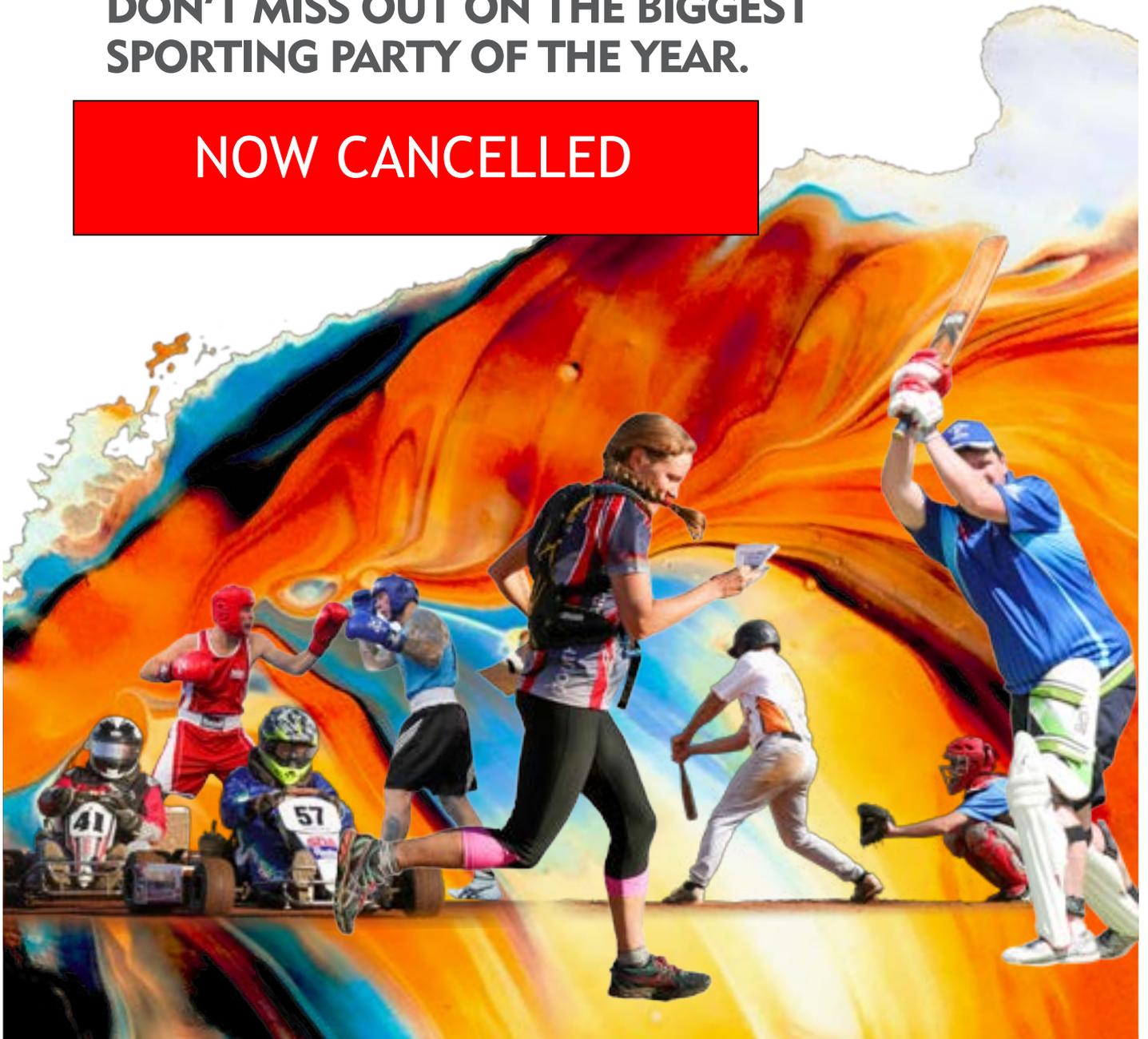
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I hereby declare that I am in good health and will be properly conditioned for the activities which I will enter with the Victorian Masters Athletics Inc.. I absolutely relieve Victorian Masters Athletics Inc. of any responsibility for any injury or damage to myself which I may sustain in the course of competing in events organised by the Association.

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**For VMA Uniforms Information** - Contact Ewen Wilson (Ph) 9529 5260 (M) 0423 424185

**Please Note:** The regulation VMA uniform must be worn for all VMA championship events.

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## Victorian Masters Athletics Inc.

### Venues

<b>ABERFELDIE</b> Athletic Track	Aberfeldie Park, Corio Street, Moonee Ponds <b>Wednesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 28 D6
<b>CASEY</b>	160 Berwick - Cranbourne Rd, Cranbourne East <b>Monday nights, 7-9pm</b>	Melway134 E8
<b>COBURG</b> Athletic Track	Harold Stevens Athletic Field, Outlook Road, Coburg <b>Thursday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 18 A9
<b>COLLINGWOOD</b> Athletic Track	George Knott Reserve, Heidelberg Road, Clifton Hill <b>Tuesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 30 F12
<b>CROYDON</b> Athletic Track	Behind Arndale Shopping Centre, Mt.Dandenong Road, Croydon <b>Tuesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 50 K5
<b>DONCASTER</b> Athletic Track	Tom Kelly Athletic TrackRieschieks Reserve, George Street, East Doncaster <b>Monday nights, 7.30pm</b>	Melway 33 J11
<b>EAST BURWOOD</b> Athletic Track	Burwood Road, opp. Mahoneys Road, behind basketball stadium <b>Thursday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 62 C7
<b>FRANKSTON</b> Athletic Track	Ballam Park, Bananee Terrace, Frankston <b>Thursday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 103 B4
<b>GEELONG</b> Athletic Track	Landy Field, off Barwon Terrace, Geelong <b>Wednesday nights, 6 - 8pm</b>	Melway 228 C7
<b>GLEN EIRA</b> Athletic Track	Duncan McKinnon Reserve, cnr North Road & Murrumbeena Road <b>Tuesday nights, track events, 7 - 9pm.</b> <i>Sunday, field events</i>	Melway 68 K9
<b>KNOX</b> Athletic Track	Bunjil Way, off Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby <b>Wednesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 73 D7
<b>MENTONE</b> Athletic Track	Dolamore Reserve, cnr First Street & Queen Street, Mentone <b>Wednesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 87 B6
<b>SPRINGVALE/NOBLE PARK</b>	Ross Reserve, Memorial Drive, off Corrigan Road, Springvale <b>Wednesday nights, 7 - 9pm</b>	Melway 80 E12
<b>SOUTHERN PENINSULA</b>	<i>Fortnightly in winter on Sunday at 9:00 am</i> <i>Contact Managers for details. Truemans Road</i> <i>track no longer in use.</i>	
<b>EASTERN MASTERS</b>	A middle distance Running Group who offer structured Speed & Tempo training sessions for VMA runners of all abilities. Meeting Tuesday & Thursday evenings . Jells Park : Summer. Knox Track Car Park: Winter 6pm Start	

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