

1987 VICTORIAN VETERANS' ATHLETIC CLUB 24 HOUR TRACK RACE, BOX HILL, 27-28 FEB

The 1987 VVAC 24 Hour Championship was delayed a few weeks, taking place at Box Hill in late February rather than the early February timeframe of previous years. And unlike the last 3 heatwave schedulings, this time around it was held in very different conditions, with heavy rain until around 5PM on the Saturday, followed by overcast skies and cool conditions.

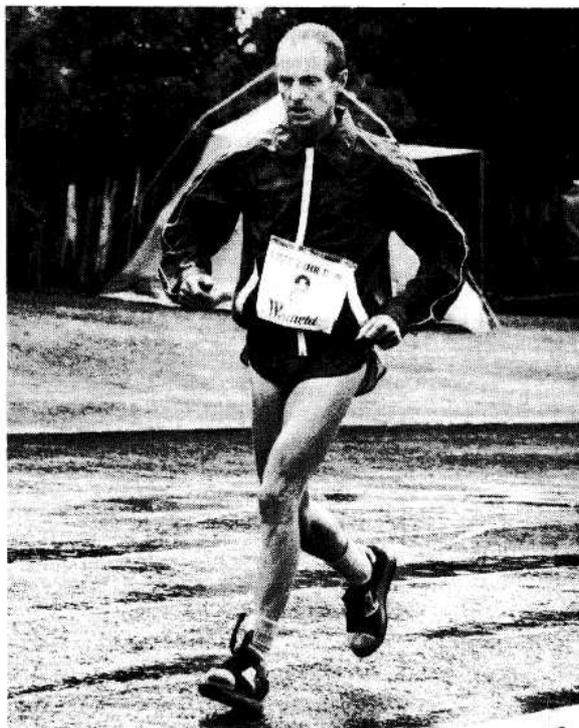
With the big guns absent this time around, 46 year old Ballarat runner Barry Brooks ran a well-judged race, eventually overtaking leader Ian Javes in the 16th hour and going on to win in fine style with 227.574 km. It was good to see him finally succeed as he'd been a gallant runner-up in both the Australian track and road championships in 1986 and rightly deserved his success on this occasion.

With 7 runners over 200km and 19 runners in excess of 100 miles (160.9km), it was another high quality event.

24 Hour Run

1.	Barry Brooks	VIC	227.574km
2.	Ian Javes	QLD	217.070km
3.	Bill Beauchamp	VIC	213.875km
4.	Alfred Bogenhuber	USA	205.318km
5.	Maurice Taylor	NSW	202.666km
6.	Bryan Smith	VIC	201.200km
7.	Barry Allen	VIC	200.776km
8.	Cliff Young	VIC	197.115km
9.	Howard Ross	VIC	196.886km
10.	Klaus Schnibbe	VIC	176.330km
11.	Greg Wishart	VIC	175.696km
12.	Max Bogenhuber	NSW	173.617km
13.	Tony Rafferty	VIC	172.246km
14.	Colin Donald	VIC	170.842km
15.	Frank Biviano	VIC	168.645km
16.	Peter Milne	VIC	164.199km
17.	Peter Vernon	VIC	163.200km
18.	Gerry Riley	VIC	161.600km
19.	Tony Tripp	WA	161.200km
20.	John Bencze	VIC	157.221km
21.	Gordon Burrowes	VIC	152.213km
22.	Andy Docherty	SA	150.251km
23.	Leif Michelsson	VIC	149.204km
24.	Cynthia Cameron (F)	VIC	141.057km
25.	John Champness	VIC	136.113km
26.	Kery Hartnett	VIC	136.000km
27.	Ken Hough	VIC	131.307km
28.	Geoff Hook	VIC	130.000km
29.	Graham Light	VIC	125.320km
30.	John Sumner	VIC	120.000km
31.	Joe Gobel	VIC	117.200km
32.	Bob Moore	VIC	111.600km
33.	Robert Whelan	VIC	104.266km
34.	Kaven Dedman	SA	102.052km
35.	Claude Martin	VIC	100.000km
36.	Eileen Lush (F)	SA	92.000km
37.	Alan Croxford	WA	62.400km

Race Director's Report – Dot Browne



Barry Brooks, 46 on his way to a great win in the 1987 VVAC 24 Hour Track Race, at Box Hill, on 28 February.

The 1987 Victorian Veterans 24 Hour Track Race was certainly different this year. The race, established at Box Hill track in 1984, had previously experienced, heat-wave conditions — temperatures of 35 degrees C. and more. The problems for me as Race Director have always revolved around trying to keep runners and lapscorers cool, keeping the hoses gong, maintaining the ice supply, returning the sponges to the bins, keeping the drinks cool and ensuring that the lap-scorers didn't get sun-stroke. There was no call for ice or sponges this year. The soaking rain which persisted from early Saturday morning, and continued all day until around 5p.m. caused headaches of a different kind. Wet socks gave the runners blisters, wet singlets chafed. The waterlogged track splashed the black rubber shavings up the legs of the runners, and down into their socks. Lapscorers, experienced great difficulty writing on wet scoring sheets, and even the spirit marker pen refused to work on the wet leaderboard slats.

However, as usual, despite all the trauma, we survived the ordeal to ensure the event was a resounding success. Surprisingly though, when we compared results of the heat-wave versus cool/wet conditions, athletes performed better in the heat. Whilst 25 runners ran more than 100 miles in 1986, only 19 covered the same distance in this year's event.

Despite the conditions, John Punshon, our official photographer, braved the elements and took action shots in his raincoat all afternoon, and was back at the finish of the race the next day to exhibit the proofs.

The sky was overcast and grey, but the spirits of the runners and their support crews were certainly not gloomy, just simply supportive and encouraging.

We were really grateful this year to have a squad of masseurs available for the full 24 hours. The students and graduates from the Victorian School of Massage provided an efficient and most appreciated service and kept many of the suffering athletes going a little longer.

Spiro Moraitis and Terry Howells, two of our club members, both medical practitioners, were called on several times for their professional advice. They recommended that both Kerry Hartnett and Bill Beauchamp be taken to hospital when suffering from complete exhaustion and were unable to stand. We were helped also by generous donations from several people. Klaus Schnibbe provided bread for sandwiches to keep the lap-scorers from dying of starvation, and the aroma of his toasted raisin-bread wafted in the cool air in the wee small hours. Ken Walters also provided crates of milk for hot drinks and Lift Beverages donated 80 litres of Prolift electrolyte drinks to give the runners a boost track-side.

Of the 40 competitors in this year's event, one quarter of the field had travelled from interstate, several camping at the track overnight. Alfred Bogenhuber came all the way from California, USA to run in the race. He and brother Max had both earned the coveted silver buckle last June in the Western States 100, for covering 100 miles in less than 24 hours over a tough mountain-trail course. Four three of our competitors, It was their first attempt at anything more than the

marathon distance — John Bencze, Colin Donald and Rob Whelan.

We were particularly interested in how Colin would cope. He came to us at 29 years of age with an outstanding athletic record over every distance from 400 metres to the marathon (PB 2.23.46), and was also a top racewalker. Colin paced himself well and covered 100 miles with two and a half hours to go, a remarkable achievement for a first ultra, even though he went through agony in the last couple of hours.

Our vote, for the top performance of the day went to another first-timer, big Robert Whelan, weighing in at 107kg. He ran an amazing 104km. However it appears he had great motivation though, as friend and training partner John Driver had promised him a years free subscription to his gymnasium if he covered more than 100km. I was amazed after the race when most runners were at the “ never again” stage, that Rob asked me if I had an entry form for the 1988 event!

The leaders in the early stages were Greg Wishart (still wearing an orthopaedic collar from a pushbike accident four months ago), folk-hero Cliff Young, and Geoff Hook, who ran through the marathon in 3.32, 3.24, and 3.39 respectively. However, they all paid for their suicidal early pace as the race progressed into the night.

It was not until the 16th hour that Barry Brook from Ballarat, running a well-judged race, passed Ian Javes from Queensland to ultimately take the lead and go on to win in fine style. We were delighted to see him finally succeed as he'd been a gallant runner-up in both the Australian track and road championships in 1986 and rightly deserved his success on this occasion.

A sincere vote of appreciation to those hardy souls who stayed up all night to lap-score and crew. Also grateful thanks to Westfield who sponsored the race and helped to make it such a wonderful event. And of course congratulations to the competitors who performed so well under adverse conditions.