

Coburg 6 Hour Championships, Sunday 15 March 2009
Harold Stevens Athletics Track, Coburg

The annual Coburg 6 Hour run and walk championships were held on Sunday 15th March at the Harold Stevens Athletics Track in the Melbourne suburb of Coburg. The Melbourne weather was at its fickle best as the competitors battled early rain and wind, were tempted mid race by some weak late morning sun and then finished the event in overcast conditions. A large field of 38 contestants faced the starter's gun at 8AM and all but 4 were still on the track when the final gun sounded at 2PM.

This year saw the runners confined to lanes 1-2 and the walkers confined to lanes 3-4. This proved a successful experiment as it allowed both the faster runners and the faster walkers a clearer passage around the track.

A number of competitors have beaten existing Australian records in the 6 Hour events

- Mick Francis bettered Max Carson's M50 record for the 6 Hour run.
- Max Carson set a new M60 6 Hour run record.
- Terry O'Neill bettered his own M50 record for the 6 Hour walk.
- Clarrie Jack set a new M60 record for the 6 Hour walk.
- Dawn Parris set a new W55 residential record for the 6 Hour walk.

The 6 Hour run for men was a high quality affair with the pace on from the gun. Early leaders Fergus McTaggart (running his first ultra) and Lachlan Fraser (having his first run since he lost all in the Victorian bushfires) were one lap ahead after 30 minutes but were soon caught by the three 100km entrants – WA running mates Mick Francis and Michael Baldock and NSW Ironman triathlete turned ultra runner Jason Dunn – along with Nathan Fawkes and Allan Devine.

As time wore on, the three 100km runners gradually asserted their dominance and by the half way mark Baldock with 100 laps led Dunn on 98 laps and Francis on 96 laps. Nathan Fawkes was next on 95 laps and Lachlan Fraser was still up there on 93 laps. From there the complexion changed quickly with Jason Dunn starting to fade along with most of the followers and the gap to Michael Baldock and Mick Francis gradually blowing out.

By the time the final gun sounded, Baldock (76.760km) and Francis (74.565) were still in front and looking to the big picture 100km. Behind them Drew Arthurson and Justin Scholz had run very well judged races and moved right up through the field to finish third (73.168km) and fourth (69.666km) respectively.

With the first 11 runners all in excess of 60km, it was a high quality finish and omens well for the Coburg 24H which will see many of these runners back on the track in 5 weeks time.



runners Michael Baldock, Mick Francis, Drew Arthurson and Justin Scholz

In the 6 Hour run for women, Caroline Pivetta forged to an early lead while Deanne Nobbs started out conservatively, treating this as a training run in preparation for her next International outing in the IAU World Champs. Mid race, Deanne picked up her pace and, with Caroline tucked in behind, the two girls ran home strongly to final 6H distances of 65.876km and 63.212km respectively. Clare Voitin ran well for third place, recording 58.865km.



runners Caroline Pivetta, Deanne Nobbs and Clare Voitin

6 Hour Run Championship Men

			Laps	Addit. Dist.	Final Dist.
1.	Michael Baldock	WA	191	0.360	76.760 km
2.	Mick Francis	WA	186	0.165	74.565 km
3.	Drew Arthurson	VIC	182	0.368	73.168 km
4.	Justin Scholz	VIC	174	0.066	69.666 km
5.	Michael Murrell	VIC	168	0.090	67.290 km
6.	Max Carson	VIC	161	0.284	64.684 km
7.	Lachlan Fraser	VIC	159	0.099	63.699 km
8.	Lawrie Lolait	VIC	157	0.214	63.014 km
9.	Nathan Fawkes	WA	157	0.108	62.908 km
10.	Allan Devine	SA	154	0.112	61.712 km
11.	Zac Savage	SA	150	0.356	60.356 km
12.	Jason Dunn	NSW	142	0.000	56.800 km
13.	Trevor Marsh	VIC	134	0.023	53.623 km
14.	David Jones	VIC	131	0.310	52.710 km
15.	Andrew Herman	VIC	129	0.160	51.760 km
16.	Robert Boyce	VIC	129	0.000	51.600 km
17.	Hugh Hunter	VIC	127	0.184	50.984 km
18.	Ahmed Al Mansoori	VIC	118	0.300	47.500 km
19.	Shadi Samir	VIC	111	0.315	44.715 km
20.	Fergus McTaggart	VIC	88	0.000	35.200 km
21.	John Timms	VIC	73	0.000	29.200 km

6 Hour Run Championship Women

			Laps	Addit. Dist.	Final Dist.
1.	Caroline Pivetta	VIC	164	0.276	65.876 km
2.	Deanne Nobbs	VIC	158	0.012	63.212 km
3.	Clare Voitin	VIC	147	0.065	58.865 km

In the 6 Hour walk for men, well known Victorian ultra walkers Terry O'Neill and Clarrie Jack swapped the lead on several occasions before Terry eventually established a winning break. His winning distance of 53.191km was a new Australian M50 record while Clarrie's second place distance of 52.505km was a new Australian M60 record. Steve Jordan, Alex Poore and Rudolf Skrucany took the next 3 places with PBs of 46.201km, 45.246km and 44.183km respectively. Doug McKay improved a lot on his 2008 Sri Chimnony Adelaide 24H walk to record 44.124km for 6th place while Deryck Skinner, the oldest in the field at 76 years of age, showed that he has lost none of his form with a fine 43.836km.

The women's 6 Hour Walk Championship saw a great battle between Dawn Parris and Karyn O'Neill with the two ladies never more than a lap or two apart. After chasing Karyn for the first 5 hours, Dawn finished the stronger to pass her in the last hour and win narrowly with 45.719km, a new Australian Residential W55 record. Karyn was close behind in second place with 45.320km while Sandy Howorth was third with 36.317km.

Because the walkers competed in lane 3, some additional calculations were required to convert their completed laps into actual distances (each lap walked in lane 3 involved a distance of 414.7m)

6 Hour Walk C'ship Men			Laps	Distance	Addit. Distance	Final Distance
1.	Terry O'Neill	VIC	128	53.082	0.109	53.191
2.	Clarrie Jack	VIC	126	52.252	0.252	52.504
3.	Steve Jordan	VIC	111	46.032	0.169	46.201
4.	Alex Poore	VIC	109	45.202	0.044	45.246
5.	Rudolf Skrucany	VIC	106	43.958	0.225	44.183
6.	Doug McKay	VIC	106	43.958	0.166	44.124
7.	Deryck Skinner	VIC	105	43.544	0.292	43.836
8.	Gary Turner	VIC	100	41.470	0.201	41.671
9.	Ken Carter	VIC	72	29.858	0.264	30.122

6 Hour Walk C'ship Women			Laps	Distance	Addit. Distance	Final Distance
1.	Dawn Parris	VIC	110	45.617	0.102	45.719
2.	Karyn O'Neill	VIC	109	45.202	0.118	45.320
3.	Sandy Howorth	VIC	87	36.079	0.238	36.317
4.	Janet Hunter	VIC	46	19.076	0.042	19.118
5.	Jean MacDonald	VIC	38	15.759	0.048	15.807



walkers Terry O'Neill, Clarrie Jack, Steve Jordan and Deryck Skinner



walkers Dawn Parris, Karyn O'Neill and Sandy Howorth

A 100 km event was also scheduled for any elite runners seeking qualifying performances for the 2009 IAU World Championship. Four of the 6 Hour runners chose this extended option with three of them eventually completing the requisite distance. Michael Baldock broke his 100 km PB by over 30 minutes to finish first with a very impressive 7:56:49. Mick Francis, after chasing his training partner for the first half of the event, fell off the pace a little in the second half but still recorded an excellent 8:37:51 to take more than 10 minutes off the existing M50 100 km record. Caroline Pivetta continued her rapid improvement with a fine 9:25:49 as the third 100 km finisher. Jason Dunn was on the pace early but was forced to retire soon after the 4 hour mark.

100 km Run

1.	Michael Baldock	WA	7:56:49
2.	Mick Francis	WA	8:37:51
3.	Caroline Pivetta	VIC	9:25:49
	Jason Dunn	NSW	DNF

Tim Erickson

On behalf of the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival Organizing Committee

Tuesday 24 March 2009