

AUSTRALIAN CENTURION DETAILS

22. **George Audley (21/08/35)**
28-29 May 1988
23:28:48
McGilvrey Oval, Perry Lakes, WA

George Audley, born 1935, took up fun running in 1981 at the age of 45. By 1988 he had already amassed an enviable record of ultra-distance runs. He was now an experienced and well known ultra-distance exponent who had succeeded in most of the big ultra challenges including the ultimate for an ultra runner, finishes in the 1987 Sydney to Melbourne run of 1060 km (6th over the line and 2nd Australian – 08:01:34) and 13th in the 1998 event (07:21:16).

In 1987, George ran the 100 mile distance in a brilliant 16 hrs 45 mins and now he had his sights set on something that would set a new standard. He wanted to walk 100 miles within 24 hours to match his 100 mile running achievement. Once Jim Turnbull heard about the attempt, he decided to line up also, but this time as a runner. Since he had done the walk in 1986 and George had already done the run, it remained to be seen who would finish first and claim the title as the first Australian to do a run/walk double.

The venue was a grass loop of 1 km at McGilvrey Oval at Perry Lakes in suburban Perth. History tells us that Jim finished his run in 21:54:36 while George finished his walk in 23:28:48. It was a personal success for both athletes. Jim had done little running in preparation for this event while George had limited walking in the legs.

Both Jim and George forwarded details of their performances to the Australian Centurions President but unfortunately, no action was taken until 1994 when we retrospectively verified and confirmed their performances and awarded them badges number 21 and 22.

It was only years later that George and Jim learnt that they had been beaten to the run/walk double by Claude Martin who had done his walk in 1975 and his run in 1987. So Jim became the second Australian and George the third to achieve this unique double.

George subsequently continued on with a successful ultra-distance running career in which he regularly placed in the Colac 6 day race, the Albany to Perth (560 km) and the Geraldton to Perth (434 km). He can be truly regarded as one of the legendary hard men of ultra-distance running. George confided to me some years back that he regards his 100 mile walk (done on the grass track) as one of the hardest events he has contested.

The Colac 6 Day race was one that George made his own. He recorded an amazing 14 finishes in his career, with a best distance of 816 km. To put it in perspective, his cumulative Colac distance of over 7000m is over half the distance around Australia!



George competing in the 2004 Colac 6 Day race

Since then, Jim and George have been firm friends.

A reunion of sorts took place in March 2002 when they walked together the 963.1 km Bibbulman Track in West Australia. It stretches from Perth to Albany and is a bushwalking trail with magnificent views. The walk took some 6 weeks - it did not have the urgency of their centurion efforts - and I am sure it was a wonderful experience.

Jim and George have now both hung up their walking/running shoes and still live in Western Australia.