

**VALE ANDREW LUDWIG 24/06/1966 - 27/01/2009**

It is indeed tragic to lose one of our most well known walkers at only 42 years of age and so it was with much anguish that we heard last week of the untimely death of Queensland athlete Andrew Ludwig. I start with the following short obituary, put together by Queensland Racewalking Club president Peter Bennett.

It is a very sad day for the race walking community as we try to come to terms with the news of the tragic death of Andrew Ludwig in a car accident on Tuesday night January 27<sup>th</sup>. Most of us are still in shock at the news and we feel for Andrew's loving wife Sue and his three children Tyla, Jade and Mike. We send our deepest condolences to Sue and the family for the loss of a devoted husband and Dad who will not be coming home.

Andrew was a young 42 and still a picture of health and fitness courtesy of a lifetime of hard work as a dairy farmer. He was involved in race walking from his days as a junior athlete right up until his untimely passing. He was entered for the Queensland track 10,000 metres championships this weekend. Andrew was looking forward to the Caboolture Dusk to Dawn 12 Hour walk in a fortnight in which he hoped to cover over 100km and was set to compete in the Coburg 24 Hour race in Victoria in April in which his goal was to achieve his third Centurion mark ( 100 miles in 24 hours). Later in the year he wanted to better his 2008 performance in the 48 Hour Track Championships. I have been fortunate enough to travel and compete in some overseas ultra races. I would have loved to have taken Andrew to an overseas race to see what he really could have achieved.

Andrew first starting winning the club Open road walk championships back in 1986 and soon starting winning the first of a record number of Queensland 50km road walk titles. He was the most respected of athletes by his peers, by officials and with everyone with whom he came into contact. Andrew never had a disparaging word to say about anyone and his impeccable sportsmanship was backed up by a tough and dogged competitor who just never gave up. Even if he had not been able to do a lot of training before a big race no one could discount Andrew when they got to the business end of the race.

It has often been the subject of discussion to surmise what Andrew could have achieved as an athlete if he had been able to put in the hours of training required to become a top walker. In his twenties Andrew undoubtedly had the same level of talent as his peers and he certainly had the strength and courage to make it to the top. Andrew put his race walking ambitions aside to run the family farm and to raise a family. With a loving and caring wife and children who adored him no one can argue with his choice.

Many people freely use the term 'legend' to describe virtually anyone who competes in or wins a number of races. For someone who raced for over 25 years and won more Queensland Open State titles than any other walker (over distances of 5, 10, 20, 30 and 50km) represented the State at National level over two decades, won National medals, competed in a large number of 12, 24 and 48 hour races and with it set numerous Age National records Andrew deserves that mantle. What made Andrew's achievements even more astonishing is that he often lined up at the start line for a Championship or ultra distance race after doing a full day of hard manual labour. Andrew never used this as an excuse even when he had suffered some severe injuries during the course of his working day. We will never forget the fairly regular sight of Andrew jumping out of his car and putting on his shoes as everyone else was on the start line. A few quick stretches for a warm up and Andrew was ready to race.



**Andrew, far right, contesting the 2003 Australian 50 km championship in Melbourne**

In my years involved with race walking I have met a lot of wonderful people and made many life long friends of what we affection call the "racewalking family". I feel honoured and privileged to have been able to call Andrew a friend. We have lost a good mate.

If you wish to send any tributes to Andrew please feel free to send them to me and I will pass them on to the family. If you wish to pass on personal condolences. Sue's contact details are:

Sue Ludwig  
"Patona Park"  
Four Mile Lane, Boyland  
Via Canungra QLD 4275  
075 -5430294

Take care. All the best.  
PETER  
Racewalking Queensland – President

From my own perspective, I first came into direct contact with Andrew when he came down to Melbourne in October 1992 to try the Centurion race at Clifton Hill; he was in fact the only serious starter. He made his intentions clear from the start, covering the first 50 km in 6:04:56, reaching the 50 mile mark in 10:06:47 and passing the 100 km mark in 13:13:53. The weather was atrocious with intermittent rain, especially tough for a Queenslander used to warm conditions. Due to the combination of cold wet weather and lack of support, Andrew retired in the early hours of the Sunday morning after completing 110.8 km (approximately 68 miles).

He was back two years later, prepared and determined to finish. As it turned out, he needed all this determination to help him through what turned out to be a tough hundred. A sore ankle soon spread to general leg problems, a sore knee and other sundry pains and he was forced to forsake any game-plan and just concentrate on surviving a torrid second half. He adjusted this pace to vary between 03:00 and 03:30 per lap and had frequent short breaks to help him survive (for it was a survival effort at this stage). To his credit, he never contemplated pulling out or giving up and eventually stormed home as one of three walkers to complete the hundred miles and become **Centurion number 25** with a time of **22:26.09**. The other two finishers were QRWC president Peter Bennett (19:42.54) and Victorian Ken Walters (22:28:31).



**The 4 finishers in the 1994 Centurion walk - Peter Bennett, Carmela Carrassi, Ken Walters and Andrew Ludwig**

We saw nothing further from Andrew on the ultra front for many years until, in January 2007, he fronted for the Gosford 12 Hour event. Coming off a very limited preparation, he started with his trademark early fast pace, covering the first 50 km in 5:12:42. Although suffering mid race, he held on for a winning distance of 103.335 km, setting a new race record and finishing 5 km ahead of fellow Queenslander Peter Bennett who was second.

This race seemed to rekindle his ultra walking ambitions. In January 2008, he came second to Peter Bennett in the Caboolture 12 Hour walk with 93.026 km, finished his second hundred mile walk at Coburg in April with 22:34:20, and then followed in August with his first ever 48 Hour walk, completing a massive 240.033 km km in Caboolture.



**Left: Jan 2007 - the new Gosford 12 Hour record holder Andrew Ludwig and the old event record holder Robin Whyte**  
**Right: Andrew in the 48 Hour event at Caboolture in August 2008**

He was planning a big 2009 but, alas, this was not to be. Personally, I have lost a good mate and a longstanding friend and walking has lost a great ambassador. To Sue and to the family, we offer our deepest condolences. We will remember Andrew as a true and honest competitor and as a wonderful person.