

REMY VAN DEN BRAND C83: 21:04:52

Four weeks before our 2022 Coburg 24 Hour Carnival, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a 24 Hour Walk entry from Dutch walker Remy Van Den Brand. I didn't know much about Remy, although I had seen his name on a few race results, and I knew that he already had Continental and African Centurion badges.

That made 5 overseas walk entrants, all of them centurions in their own countries (**Remy Van Den Brand** and **Arie Kandelaars** of the Netherlands, **Andrew Titley** of the Isle of Man and **Erin and Dave Talcott** of USA). Add in Australian Centurions **Sharon and Justin Scholz**, **Pramesh Prasad** and **David Billett** and we looked set for some very competitive and high quality walking.

Justin Scholz, Dave Talcott and Pramesh Prasad led the field out early and, when Dave and Pramesh eventually retired from the race, Justin was left well in front. Walking strongly, he passed the 12 hour mark with 99km, some 5km ahead of Remy and seemingly well in control. But Remy had timed his walk to perfection and, from then on, he gradually bridged the gap, eventually catching and passing Justin with 4 hours to go.

Remy reached the 100 mile mark first, in a time of 21:04:52, to become Australian Centurion 83. He then continued on, walking to a final distance of 175.029km.



*Left: Remy strides out in the early part of the centurion walk event at Coburg
Right: Remy completes his 100 mile walk at Coburg*

He was one of five walkers to reach the centurion standard on the day.

Remy Van Den Brand	NED	C83	21:04:52
Justin Scholz	AUS	C61	21:17:26
David Billett	AUS	C50	22:33:38
Andrew Titley	IOM	C84	22:48:59
Sharon Scholz	AUS	C63	22:53:06

This was Remy's third centurion badge. His list now reads as follows

2016	Continental Centurion	C433	21:15:01
2016	African Centurion	C12	22:39:59
2022	Australian Centurion	C83	21:04:52

Remy explains how he got into ultra walking:

It all started in June 2012 when my brother-in-law at our annual family barbeque said that he planned to walk the Kennedymars (50 miles) from Waalwijk in September. That is the largest and coziest Kennedymars in The Netherlands. In a fit of bewilderment, I said I would walk with him. I think I've had a few beers already..... A friend of his would also walk with us and we started training.

In July, I went on holiday with my family and when I came back, I walked the Kempenlandwandeltocht (also 50 miles) on August 3. What better preparation for a Kennedymars than a Kennedymars? The last 25 km were unpaved and it took me 13:45 to complete the walk.

In Waalwijk it took us almost 4 hours to complete the first 20 km. After consultation, I decided to continue on my own at my own pace. I reached the finish in 13:04 in 138th place (out of 2,157 finishers).

Remy continued to explore his new sport of walking and, in that year, he walked 3 more Kennedymarsen, the last one within 12 hours.

In 2013 he walked 7 Kennedymarsen and in 2014 he walked 9 including the 2014 Schiedam 50 miles (10:39:36). That race qualified for the Kennedylvriend badge and he was awarded KV411.

In 2015 he walked his first longer distance event (De Mergellandroute 135km). He walked 4 more longer distance walks that year, including Amsterdam-Tilburg (125 km) and Nijmegen-Rotterdam (160 km).

In 2016 when he walked the Nacht van Loon op Zand, he completed 118km in the 15 hours available, a great preparation for the Continental Centurion walk in Schiedam. With such a good performance under his belt, it was no surprise that he qualified in Schiedam as Continental Centurion C433 with a time of 21:15:01 (he was 9th to reach the 100 mile mark). Others to complete centurion walks in that same event were Australians Sharon and Justin Scholz and John Kilmartin.



Remy in action in the 2016 Continental Centurions qualifier in Schiedam

In that year Gertrude Archerberg (who became Australian Centurion 80 in 2019), Marco Bloemerts (who became Australian Centurion C77 in that same year), Arie Kandelaars and Remy went to South Africa for the first African Centurion on Robben Island. There, he came 12th with a time of 22:39:59, one of 19 walkers to gain inaugural African Centurion badges.



Remy celebrates his African Centurion finish and badge

After 5 years of continuous improvement, 2017 saw him pick up an injury which sidelined him for most of the year. In fact, he only walked one long distance event that year (the De Bossche 100 -110 km)

Once he had recovered from his injury, he decided to concentrate on improving his 50 Mile PB and, over the next few years, he chipped away at his times. In the 2018 Loon op Zand he walked 9:29:00, in the 2019 Someren Kennedymars (the third largest Kennedymars in The Netherlands) he won with 9:20:43, in the 2020 Loon op Zand he walked 9:16:16 and in the 2021 Loon op Zand he walked 9:05:30. That stands as his current best.



Remy action in the 2018 Continental Centurions qualifier, where he won the 50 Miles walk with 9.31.19

And finally, to 2022 when he joined Arie Kandelaars on their mission to Australia. That has been discussed above.

When I asked him what was next on his agenda, he advised that he and Arie plan to participate in the famous Isle of Man Parish Walk in June, followed by the inaugural German Centurion in October.

Looking further ahead, he has more longer term goals

- To qualify as an English Centurion, perhaps in 2023
- To walk 50 miles within 9 hours
- To walk 100 km within 11.5 hours

Remy has achieved a lot in the last 10 years and I suspect there is a lot more to come. Born in July 1975, he is still only 46 years of age, young for an ultra specialist. Stay tuned!

Tim Erickson
Wed 20th April 2022