

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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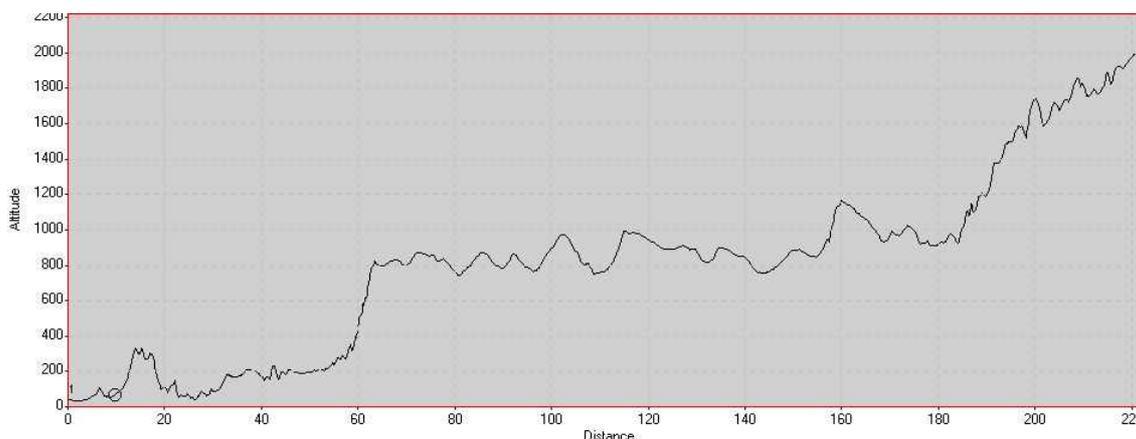
DATES...DATES...DATES

There are always ultra opportunities on offer for those walkers wanting a challenge. Some are shown below. In addition, the AURA calendar shows additional Australian ultra events that may suit serious ultra walkers – check it out at <http://aura.asn.au/>.

Jan 6, 2017	Narrabeen All-Nighter (12 Hours)	Narrabeen, NSW
Jan 20, 2018	SA 100km Track Championships	Adelaide, SA
Feb 24-24, 2018	Les 24 heures de Bourges (Paris-Alsace qualifier)	Bourges, FRA
Mar 16-18, 2018	Canberra 48H Carnival	Canberra, ACT
Apr 21-22, 2018	2018 Australian Centurions 24H Qualifier See http://www.coburg24hr.org/24hr/race-entry/	Coburg, VIC
Apr 21-22, 2018	Les 24 heures de Dijon (Paris-Alsace qualifier)	Dijon, FRA
May 17-18, 2018	Les 24 heures de Château-Thierry (Paris-Alsace qualifier)	Château-Thierry, FRA
June 2-3, 2018	2018 USA Centurions 24H Qualifier See http://www.fans24hour.org/index.html	Fort Snelling, Minnesota, USA
June 2-3, 2018	Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Track Race	Sydney, NSW
Jul 14, 2018	Adelaide 24H/12H/6H	Adelaide, SA
Oct 7-8, 2018	2018 NZ Centurions 24H Qualifier See https://nz.srichinmoyraces.org/races/auck/24hr	Aucklsnd, NZ

CENTURIONS CHALLENGE THEMSELVES IN THE ANNUAL COAST TO KOSCI

In early December, a large field of 43 runners gathered in the southern NSW coastal town of Eden to contest the annual Coast to Kosci ultra, now in its 12th year. It is a very tough ask, requiring competitors to run a total of 240km from Eden to the top of Mt Kosciuszko, Australia's highest mountain, before backtracking to finish at Charlotte Pass. The course profile says it all – a total rise of well over 2000m, with the road rising steadily for the first 180km before a very challenging last 60km, a lot of it offroad.



Australian Centurions **David Billett (C50)** and **Justin Scholz (C61)** were amongst the runners, Justin coming 8th with **33:28:03** and David coming 10th with a PB time of **33:42:10**. It was David's sixth finish. For team Scholz, it was the 8th finish, with Sharon on 5 (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, with a best time of 32:14:32, set in 2010) and Justin on 3 (2013, 2014 and 2017, with a best time of 31:21:12, set in 2014).

Full C2K results at <http://www.coast2kosci.com/live.php?sort=12&type=1>.

2018 AUSTRALIAN CENTURION ENTRIES

It's early days yet but we already have 13 walkers entered in the 2018 Coburg 24 Hour Carnival, which also doubles as our official Australian Centurion qualifying event. The list reads impressively:

24 Hour Walk Women			
Achterberg, Gertrude	NED	47	Gertrude is one of 3 Dutch walkers who will be appearing at Coburg this year, and all are very accomplished. Gertrude herself has 4 Centurion badges to her credit: English (2017, 23:49:28), Continental Europe (2017, 23:52:15), New Zealand (2017, 23:29:45) and African (2016, 23:42:50). Will Australia provide her fifth badge?
Parris, Dawn	VIC	65	After a long and illustrious ultra running career (she is one of the legends of Australian ultra running with a 24H best of 202.65km), Dawn swapped to ultra distance walking some years ago with immediate success. She came 2nd in our 2007 6H walk (43.8km), won our 2008 12H Walk (78.5km), came 2nd in our 2009 24H walk with 137.27km and won our 2010 24H walk with 134.12km. Is now a regular at Coburg and will be is again in 2018 for the 24H walk.
Young, Iesha	VIC	41	Iesha last competed at Coburg in 2016, completing just over 108km in the 24H Walk. She has also completed 2 Oxfam 100km's as well as numerous 50km walk events. Should definitely challenge or better her 2016 effort.
24 Hour Walk Men			
Burn, Chris	UK	43	Chris is from the Isle of Man, a veritable hotbed for ultra distance walkers. He has twice completed the UK Centurion 100 Mile walk - (2013, 23:44:57) and 2015 (22:39:34) - as well as the Isle of Man Church to Church (85 Miles) and 5 or 6 finishes in the Isle of Man End to End Walk (45 miles). We are very excited to see him appearing at Coburg.
Carter, Ken	VIC	65	Ken is a regular walk competitor, having best times of 32km for the 6H, 58km for the 12H and 60km for the 24H. This year, he will once again participate in the 24H walk. Good luck Ken!
Cogan, David	VIC	57	David has completed the Oxfam 100km on 5 occasions so is no newbie to the ultra distances, but this will be his first venture into track ultras. Good luck David!
Evans, David	VIC	59	This is David's first foray into the world of ultra distance and he has thrown himself into the deep end, choosing the 24 Hour walk option. We wish him well.
Heywood, Colin	NT	63	Colin is no stranger to the sport of athletics, having been firstly a runner and then switching to racewalking in the early 2000's. And he is a quality walker indeed, winning 2 golds and a silver in the M60 walks at the 2016 World Masters Championships in Perth. He competed in the 2017 Coburg 24H walk as his first foray into the ultra distance world, completing 100km in the very good time of 13:53:38, and will be out this year to complete unfinished business. The 100 mile standard beckons.
Kandelaars, Arie	NED	54	Arie is one of 3 Dutch walkers who will be appearing at Coburg this year, and all are very accomplished. Arie himself has 3 Centurion badges to his credit: English (2017, 23:49:27), NZ (2017, 23:36:29) and African (2016, 23:52:00). Three badges in quick succession and the aim is to add a fourth one in Coburg.
Ros, Adrie	NED	57	Adrie is one of 3 Dutch walkers who will be appearing at Coburg this year, and all are very accomplished. Adrie himself has 2 Centurion badges to his credit - UK (2017, 23:05:03) and Continental (2015, 22:55:14) - and is the fastest of our three Dutch visitors, so will be expected to lead them out.
Scholz, Justin	VIC	43	Justin has a huge CV as an ultra runner and as an ultra walker and has competed in the Coburg 24H on 5 occasions in run mode. This time around, he has chosen the 24H Walk and we are very excited to see just how far he can walk in 24 Hours. On the running side, he has PBs of 77km (6H), 122km (12H) and 214km (24H), along with 3 Coast to Kosci finishes to his credit (best time of 31:21:12). On the walking side, he is a multiple Centurion with badges for Australia, UK, NZ, USA and Continental Europe (best time of 19:43:21). Talk about versatile!

12 Hour Walk Men			
Hoad, Ian	VIC	66	Ian competed in our 2015 Coburg 6H run and 24H walk events and was back again in the 6H walk in 2016 and the 6H run in 2017. This time around, he has chosen the 12 Hour Walk. Now that is what I call variety!
6 Hour Walk Men			
Hartley, Ernie	VIC	68	Ernie has a long and impressive ultra distance running CV which includes two firsts and two seconds (2004-2007) in the Coburg 12 Hour Run. This year, he has chosen to break new ground with the 6 Hour Walk. Good stuff!

SANDRA BROWN CLOCKS UP 10 HUNDREDS IN 2017

Sandra Brown (C36) remains our most active centurion, continuing to amass more and more one hundred mile walks and runs each year. 2017 was no exception with an amazing ten. I have reported on the first 8 as they happened in previous newsletters. To complete the reporting process, here are the final two hundreds for the year for Sandra.

No Finish Line Monaco 24 Hour, Monaco, 11-19 November 2018

In November, Kathy Crilley and I went to the *No Finish Line Monaco 24 Hour* - the last time we were there was in 2011. We both walked the 24h, enjoying the event in glorious weather- blue skies and sparkling seas, attractive mountain backdrop to this interesting place which was a Phoenician trading settlement way back before the Greeks and then the Romans dominated the Med! The great thing about this event is that the banks pledge 1 euro [about a pound] to children's charities for every 1 km run or walked, and during the 8 days of the event, over 13,000 people participated this year, wearing a chip and doing their bit for charity. This year, Kathy and I were part of the team for an educational charity along with two other English ladies who have also done the event before, and it was great to walk for this good cause.

One downside of the event is that the circuit gets crowded, as hundreds of local people, from little kids upwards, come along to do their bit for charity, along with the 160 in the 24h event and a similar number doing the full 8 days race. The chip timing system seemed to work fine, but information during the event was sparse [unless you had a helper or stopped to log on] and the final results are still incomplete: <http://childrenandfuture.com/no-finish-line/resultats-nfl-archiv/?an=17&course=24h>. I was 2nd lady and 13th overall, and the results show me with 181.120 kms at 23.50.11, and Kathy with 142.915 kms in 32nd. Our positions were supposed to be measured at 24h. Whatever the final distance, we were both pleased with our results and with having legitimately taken a useful sum on money from the banks for our chosen charity!

Bello Gallico 2017, Belgium, 15-17 December 2017

Another lovely event to finish the year! I went over to Belgium for the weekend to do the *Bello Gallico* [named from Julius Caesar's book, *The Gallic War*] a cross country 100 miles with a 50 miles option. This event is made tough by the mid-winter conditions [we've had lots of rain, so there was plenty of mud, uphill and down, and my feet were not nice] and the long hours of darkness [I walked and finished in 30h 01m and I reckon around 20h of that was darkness and torch work!] At the 100 kms checkpoint, the guy I was walking with retired, and we were followed by another man and woman – and the man said he was all-in and retired. So the Belgian lady and I teamed up to the finish. We were joint third ladies and won and shared a box of Belgian artisan beers – in my experience, prizes in Belgium are often excellent craft beers, and what a lovely surprise!

The format was 2 x 50 mile loops, the first anti-clockwise and then the second clock-wise, so that checkpoints every 20kms were each used twice. This is a very rural, wooded and farmed area, with small communities. After some showers and rain on Saturday, we had a crisp frosty night and beautiful morning to finish. The results are here, with some impressive running performances: <http://bellogallico.legendstracking.com>. You click on the results symbol on the left.

To see the start of this year's Bello Gallico event, check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVbC0W7-zvU>. And to see some extended action from the 2016 event, check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SH00i8ng4QU>.

So for Sandra it was 10 events of 100 miles or more this year, making 186 in total. Here is how it unfolded:

177	Mar	24 Heures de Bourges	177.027km	24hW
178	Apr	Crawley, West Sussex	174.346km	24hW

179	Apr	LDWA 100, Yorkshire	100mi / 34h04m	L
180	June	Weert	100mi / 22:07:25	C
181	June	Sint-Annen, Holland	100mi / 26:27:11	R
182	Aug	Bury St Edmunds, England	100mi / 21.44:16	C
183	Aug	Liverpool to Leeds Canal Race	130mi / 34h42m	M
184	Sep	Nijmegen/Rotterdam	100mi / 29h	W
185	Nov	Monaco No Finish Line 24H	181.120km	24hW
186	Dec	Legends Bello Gallico 100M	100mi / 30:01:00	W

A NEW TROPHY TO HONOUR JIM GLEESON (C 3)

In 2004, former British Centurions secretary and Centurion legend Freddie Baker passed onto our club an historic trophy that had been awarded to his grandfather many years previously. The inscription on the pewter trophy read as follows

ONE MILE WALKING HANDICAP
WON BY
R. FARMER
OCT 10TH 1881

Fred invited us to find a use for this trophy so that it could have an ongoing life. It was decided to use it as a perpetual trophy to record the annual winners of the Australian 100 km Championship which were to be held for the first time that year. It was silver plated and mounted and has been awarded each year since to the winning man and woman in the 100 km walk championships. The list of winners currently engraved on the trophy reads as follows

2005	HAIN, Geoff	QLD	13:51:31	GREEN, Jill	GBR	13:28:55
2006	O'NEILL, Terry	VIC	13:19:08	BOLLEN, Karyn	VIC	14:02:39
2007	O'NEILL, Terry	VIC	13:08:08	BOLLEN, Karyn	VIC	14:51:40
2008	LUDWIG, Andrew	QLD	12:28:09	COX, Catherine	SA	14:32:52
2009	O'NEILL, Terry	VIC	12:44:09	MESTDAGH, Caroline	BEL	13:27:08
2010	BENNETT, Peter	QLD	12:24:43	O'NEILL, Karyn	VIC	17:56:18
2011	WALL, Mark	GBR	13:55:56	THOMPSON, Michelle	VIC	12:43:24
2012	BENNETT, Peter	QLD	12:03:41	THOMPSON, Michelle	VIC	12:09:52
2013	BENNETT, Peter	QLD	12:07:30	SCHOLZ, Sharon	VIC	13:25:36
2014	RCHARDSON, Saul	NSW	17:37:23	THOMPSON, Michelle	VIC	11:48:14
2015	KILMARTIN, John	VIC	13:03:50	THOMPSON, Michelle	VIC	11:38:04
2016	ROBERTSON, Rob	USA	14:05:11	THOMPSON, Michelle	VIC	11:36:29
2017	MAJETIC, Ivo	USA	12:06:56	PARRIS, Dawn	VIC	15:55:31



The Farmer Trophy – before and after refurbishment

Sadly, the trophy is now full, with all all four sides of the base fully engraved.

Our Executive has decided to take the opportunity to commission a new perpetual trophy to honour Australian Centurion C3 **Jim Gleeson** who passed away in 2014. The Farmer Trophy will now be decommissioned and will join our extensive archives, alongside our other historically important items of memorabilia. Its use from 2005 to 2017 will also be documented on our centurion website at <http://www.centurions.org.au/centtrophies.shtml>.

I have confirmed with Jim's widow Gladys that the new trophy should be called *The Jim Gleeson Trophy*. This will be used for the first time in our 2018 Centurions qualifying event at Coburg and will recognise the winners of the Australian 100km Walk Championships from now on.

CENTURIONS ARE VOTING FOR THE 2017 GORDON SMITH AWARD

This annual award, named after **Gordon Smith**, Australian Centurion Number 1, is awarded for the **Best Australian Ultra Distance Walking Performance of the Year**. Award criteria are as follows

1. It is restricted to performances done in Australia.
2. It is awarded for the best SINGLE performance.
3. All Australian Centurions will vote on a short list of performances, as proposed by the Executive.

Previous winners are	2005 Deryck Skinner (C 51)	2006 Stan Miskin (C 23)
	2007 Terry O'Neill (C 18)	2008 Deryck Skinner (C 51)
	2009 Peter Bennett (C 24)	2010 Peter Bennett (C 24)
	2011 Michelle Thompson (C 58)	2012 Barry Loveday (C 62)
	2013 Tim Erickson (C 13)	2014 Michelle Thompson (C 58)
	2015 John Kilmartin (C 67)	2016 Linda Christison

As is always the case, we have a number of very worthy local nominations and it has been tough to whittle it down to four. But here they are, in date order, as proposed by our Executive:

- **Michelle Thompson (C 58) - 1st in the 6 Hour Walk with 54.639km**
The 2017 Coburg 6 Hour Walk Championships, held at the George Knott Athletics Track in Clifton Hill in March, saw an easy overall win to Michelle Thompson with 54.639km. She was the first overall and her distance confirms her spot as our top distance walker in Australia, whether male or female.
- **Robin Whyte (C 29) – M75 6 Hour Record**
75 year old Robin Whyte celebrated his entry into the M75 age group with record breaking performances at the Coburg 6H and 24H events. In the 6H he set a new M75 record of 49.406km and this is the performance for which he is nominated. This significantly bettered Deryck Skinner's M75 record of 47.9km and has set a very high standard that will be hard to match.

6 Hours	M75 All-Comers/Residential	49.406 km	Coburg	05/03/2017
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- **Linda Christison – W55 200km and 48 Hours Records**
The second Canberra 48 Hour Carnival, held at the AIS track in Bruce in mid March 2017, saw a small number of walkers in action but one performance stood out, namely that of 56 year old **Linda Christison**. Linda, who suffers from Parkinson's disease and walks with the aid of a walking stick, won our Gordon Smith Award last year for her record breaking performance in this event. This time around, she went even faster and further, improving her 200km time from 43:18:31 to 39:35:20 and improving her 48H distance from 219.496km to 236.703km, breaking her own W55 and Open records.

200 km	Open & W55 All-Comers/Residential	39:35:20	Canberra	17-19/03/2017
48 Hours	Open & W55 All-Comers/Residential	236.703 km	Canberra	17-19/03/2017

- **Lorraine Billett - inaugural W70 records in Canberra 24H**
71 year old Lorraine Billett walked a few shorter distance ultras some years ago (6H PB 40.969km and 12H PB 57.435km) but decided this year to attack the W70 records, with an aim to see how close she could get to 100km. She did very well, reaching a final distance of 92.105km and setting new inaugural 50 miles and 24 Hour records for that age division.

50 Miles	W70 All-Comers/Residential	18:42:40	Coburg	23-23/04/2017
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Michelle, Robin, Linda and Lorraine in action in their nomination walks last year

Our centurions will now vote on which of these is “the best of the best”. I look forward to announcing the winner in the next newsletter.

THE HISTORY OF THE 6 DAY RACE

This superb article by Andy Milroy, the Association of Road Racing Statisticians (ARRA) coordinator and noted historian and statistician, was picked up from the EMU 6 Day Run website (see <https://www.emusport.hu/en/node/80>). What a superb writeup about the 6 Day Race and its development.

By Andy Milroy

Posted on October 18, 2008 by planetultramarathon

Although the classic Six Day race developed in the 1870s, the event has a much longer history. A hundred years earlier the first great British pedestrian or professional distance athlete, **Foster Powell**, had come to fame with the feat of walking from London to York and back, some 396 miles/637km in less than six days. It was a feat he attempted several times in his career, and was to be copied by later pedestrians.

A later pedestrian, **Thomas Savager**, walked 404 miles from Hereford via Leamington to Ludlow in 1789, and in October 1811 another pedestrian called **Rimington** reputedly walked 480 miles/772 km in six days in Holt in Dorset. In 1824 the pedestrian **Macgowan** made a wager to walk 400 miles in 5 days 12 hours. This challenge was probably a response to **John Phipps Townsend** breaking Foster Powell’s record and taking just 5 days 14 hours and 50 minutes to walk from London to York and return two years earlier.

Thus by the mid nineteenth century the six day event was already recognised, and the possibility of covering 500 miles in that time being considered and debated. However to ignite this into widespread interest and to make the organisation of six day races a commercial success was to take considerable showmanship. An American pedestrian, **Edward Payson Weston**, was such a showman.

In 1861 Weston undertook to walk from Boston to Washington to attend the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. Delayed by heavy snow, Weston missed the inauguration, but he had averaged 51 miles a day over the 453 mile course.

Weston’s professional career took off in 1867 when for a \$10,000 wager, he completed a walk from Portland, Maine to Chicago, some 1,326 miles in 25 days, not walking on Sundays. The following year he walked 100 miles in 22:19:10 at White Plains, New York, in what was claimed to be a world record.(In fact a faster time had been set some eighty years earlier.)

Through into the early 1870s Weston made a series of well publicised walks against time. 400 miles in five days, was

accomplished, and then in 1874 he made a series of attempts to achieve the widely regarded as impossible feat of walking 500 miles in six days, (the maximum period of allowable non-stop activity between Victorian Sundays.) He was not without competition.. In August 1874 another American pedestrian called **Avery** attempted the feat and on failing declared, that no man living could walk the distance in that time. Yet on the 14-19 December, 1874, in one of the major turning points in ultra history, Edward Payson Weston finally achieved that distance,

The publicity generated immediately inspired others to become would-be pedestrians. The greatest of these was **Daniel O'Leary**, an Irish door to door book salesman, who quickly established his ultra walking credentials. A challenge match with Weston was arranged in Chicago. The Irishman covered 503.3 miles, some fifty miles ahead of Weston's final distance. The latter had played a waiting game, expecting O'Leary to collapse.

In 1876 and 1877 Weston and O'Leary travelled to Britain, where Weston had outclassed the native walkers the previous year. Despite being defeated by a couple of British walkers in shorter events, O'Leary again emerged the winner in a two man match event against Weston. 70,000 people came to watch the race and Sir John Astley, the promoter, was so taken with the event that he decided to promote a whole series of such races for the Astley Belt, for "the Long Distance Challenge Championships of the World". Because of disputes about the fairness of Weston's walking action, the events were 'go-as-you-please'- open to both walkers or runners. Weston did not contest the first Astley Belt race and O'Leary won yet again with a new world best of 520.25 miles with Britain's **Harry Vaughan** in second.

O'Leary returned to the States and defended the belt against the overly optimistic John Hughes who offered him little opposition. However in 1879 O'Leary had to defend his title against a much tougher opponent, British newcomer **Charles Rowell**. The latter wore down his opponents with his relentless dog-trot and emerged the winner with 500 miles, and the remarkable sum of \$20,398 – this at a time when the average working man's annual salary was around \$500.

Weston wasn't finished with the six day event. He took up running, and using his wife's inheritance for his \$500 entry fee, he entered the fourth Astley belt race to be held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, London. Rowell had injured his heel and withdrew from the event. After a tough battle over the first three days against the Briton **Henry 'Blower' Brown**, Weston emerged the stronger. At that stage Astley bet him he could not complete 550 miles in the six days; he did so, setting a new world best for the event.

By the fifth Astley Belt race, a completely professional set up was in place. All the runners had managers; the price of admission to spectators was one dollar and gate receipts were carefully monitored by the performers. Rowell set off strongly and had a commanding lead by four days into the race, however at that point he was taken ill and took eleven hours off the track. **Samuel Merritt** (USA) closed on him but the Englishman recovered enough to walk for most of the sixth day, ensuring that he won with 530 miles to Merritt's 515.

The Astley Belt event was not the only such competition. O'Leary had sponsored a belt competition in his own name to develop new talent, and there were in fact a wealth of multi-day races spread across the English speaking world. Although concentrated on the Eastern seaboard in the USA, there were pedestrian events across America, even in the gold fields of California.

The first all woman six day match seems to have taken place between **Mary Marshall** of Chicago and **Bertha Von Hillern** in January 1876, and was won by Marshall with 234 miles. A rematch was held in New York in November in which Hillern turned the tables and won with 323.5 miles, when Marshall had trouble with her feet. When the British pedestrienne Ada Anderson came over to States it became fashionable to attend such events. Americans **Bertha Von Berg** and **Amy Howard** forced the record upwards.

The pedestriennes' rewards were not as great as the men's, even in the major venues, despite the newspaper coverage their races generated. In May 1880 a World Championship race for a gold, silver and diamond championship belt was held in San Francisco, with many of the top women performers taking part. Amy Howard of New York set new world bests for 24 hours of 95 miles, and 410 miles 251 yards for six days beating **Sara Tobias**, who also covered over 400 miles. However the winner received just \$1000, and Tobias \$750.

These major championship events were just the tip of the iceberg. Variations on the 6 day race were held in cities across Britain and the East Coast of the United States, and included the popular 6 x 12 hours and 6 x 10 hour events, designed to maximise the pedestrian activity during the period when most spectators would be present. Some enterprising promoters had a travelling circus, complete with tent, in which pedestrians would "compete", showing off their paces to new audiences intrigued by the novelty of these endurance events.

Even in Australia such events were contested with **William Edwards** winning a six-day tournament over 432 miles

around Melbourne in 1882.

The six day record continued to creep ever upwards under the pressure of the sustained international competition. **Frank Hart**, the professional name of Fred Hichborn, perhaps the first major African-American ultrarunner, regained the six day record for the States in 1880, after Blower Brown had taken it in mid-1879, and in 1881 his fellow Americans **John Hughes**, **Robert Vint** and finally **Patrick Fitzgerald** edged the record ever closer to 600 miles. In February 1882 Rowell returned to the scene in earnest. At the Madison Square Gardens, New York in a blitz start he set new world bests for 100 miles (13:26), 24 Hours (150 miles) and 48 hours (258 miles/415km), reaching 300 miles in 58:17:06 (a record which still stands today despite the efforts of Yiannis Kouros!) During a rest period Rowell inadvertently swallowed some vinegar which eventually forced his retirement, and it was left to his fellow countryman, George Hazael, to be the first man to cover 600 miles/965km in six days.

Rowell was never to dominate the six day event again. In an epic struggle in 1884 he was defeated by American **Pat Fitzgerald** when the latter set a new world best of 610 miles/981km, but by now the pedestrian era was on the wane. In 1888 a new American star, **James Albert** became the first man to run over a 1000km in a six day event with 621.75 miles, and in November the Briton, **George Littlewood** travelled to New York for an attempt on Albert's record. After a four day struggle with **Daniel Herty**, a consistent US performer, the Briton broke the world best with 623.75 miles/1003km. Apparently he could have gone further, but did not want to make his task too difficult next time.

There was to be no next time for Littlewood. The interest in the six day event had declined in the face of competition from the more energetic and exciting cycling events.

The great public attention given to professional ultrarunning had inspired the amateur long distance runners on both sides of the Atlantic. In February 1882 the British runner, **James Saunders** achieved a new 24 hour amateur best of 120 miles 275 yards/193.3km at the American Institute Ring in New York City, setting a 100 mile mark en route of 17:36:14 – strangely enough there appears to have been \$100 prize money! Despite this, Saunder's mark is credited as the amateur world record in contemporary recordbooks. A year later, **Peter Golden** set an American amateur 50 mile best of 7:29:47 on the track at Williamsburgh.

Golden was to go on to set a 'world record' of 352.5 miles for six days as a professional in 1899 on a minute twenty laps to the mile track – a mere 88 yards in circumference! By then the golden age of the event was over. **Pat Cavanaugh**, an Irish American was the most successful runner during the declining years with 532.125 miles/856km in 1902, also setting a two man relay world best with **Peter Hagelman** of 770.5 miles/1240km the previous year. But by 1903 the event was gradually petering out.

The Twentieth Century Resurgence

Chinese-American **Don Choi**'s pioneer work in multi-day races in 1979 and 1980 in California revived a whole new branch of the sport. Without his work, there would probably be no present day 48 hour or 6 Day races. Choi then **Park Barner** edged modern 6 day record well over 400 miles, but the former glories of the 6 day event began to emerge when Briton **Mike Newton** became the first man to covered 500 miles /800km in a modern 6 days at Nottingham in November 1981. **Tom O'Reilly** took the record passed 900km the following year at the same venue.

Women soon tackled the event led by the pioneer **Marcy Schwam** who covered 384 miles/617km in 1981. It was Britain's **Eleanor Adams** who drove the track record upwards, eventually reaching 866km/538 miles.

1984 saw George Littlewood's 6 day mark beaten by **Yiannis Kouros** [635 mile/1022km] This performance had a major impact on the event. Without the mystic of the hundred year old record, and the world best now beyond the reach of many, interest in the event subsided again.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there was again a revival in the event when first Australian **Bryan Smith**, and then **James Zarei**, the Iranian born British based runner, exceeded 1000km/ 621.3 miles on the track. It was in this period that New Zealander **Sandra Barwick** set the current women's track best of 883.6km/549 miles. In 1992 the La Rochelle indoor race saw Frenchman **Jean-Gilles Boussiquet** set an absolute best for the event, covering 1030km/640 miles, with fellow countryman **Gilbert Mainix**, also running over 1000km in second place. After this upsurge in performance, once again it was some years before such levels were to be matched.

Meantime on the road, the American based British/Australian runner , **Catherine Dipali Cunningham** set new world female marks for 6 days, 811km/503 miles in 1990 and 820km/510 miles in 2001 in New York

In 2005 Yiannis Kouros set a new absolute best on the track at Colac, running 1036km/644 miles, and since then the German **Wolfgang Schwerk** has been dominant, running 1010km/627 miles at Erkrath in 2007. **William Sichel** has

emerged as the strongest British protagonist in recent years.

It is difficult to judge just how good the current 6 Day records are. The marks set in the nineteenth century were very tough in relation to other events, primarily because of the levels of prize money on offer..

A comparison with the mile event, which was high profile then and has remained so over the decades since, is possibly useful. The world mile record has progressed by some 13% over the past 120 years. Similar progress in 6 Day performances would result in a record of over 1126km/700 miles. The 6 Day has not had the same level of competitive pressure and certainly not the same level of prize money on offer in the 20th and 21st centuries as the mile event, but if such comparable prize money was on offer, then perhaps such a distance could be expected.

The six day event continues to be a focus for multi-day runners all over the world, but there are relatively few such races, due to the cost and commitment needed to organise such a prolonged race. Consequently the number of six day runners is not large. The race continues to have a unique place in the sport of Ultrarunning, and for many remains a fascinating and formidable challenge.

SUPER-VETS AND THE ONE HUNDRED MILE STANDARD

I recently received a series of emails from Andy Milroy (the author of the above article), with information written by USA historian Nick Marshall. Nick had been working from a 2012 list produced by Dan Gaglione of runners 70 years or older who had completed a 100 mile race. Nick brought it up to date and broke it up into the Masters/Veterans Age categories of V70, V75, V80+. The list comes to over 200 entries.

It got me thinking of our own Australian Centurions who have achieved this feat, and two names immediately come to mind in **Deryck Skinner (C51)** and **Stan Miskin (C23)**. Here is how it came to pass.

The annual Sri Shinmoy 24 Hour Track championship, which was held at Santos Stadium in Adelaide on 15-16 October 2005, saw local walker **Deryck Skinner** become Australian Centurion number 51, with a 100 mile time of **22:39:55**. He had walked in the 12 Hour event there in 2004 and had set new Australian M70 walking records for 50 miles (11:15:30) and 12 hours (85.580 km). In 2005 he had upped the ante with his new performance, breaking his 50 miles and 12 hour records along the way and completing a total distance of 166.033 km.

It was a real record breaking spree for Deryck - new Australian M70 walking records at 50 miles, 12 Hours, 100 km, 100 miles and 24 Hours and new Australian M70 running records for 100 km, 100 miles and 24 Hours (even though he was walking!). His 100 miles and 24 Hour records were probably M70 World Walking bests for track and he became the first Australian male in that age group to cover 100 miles either running or walking. He also became the oldest ever Centurion Walker on Debut. This performance gave Australia the rare distinction of boasting both the the youngest Centurion debutante (Bill Dyer – 16 years) and the oldest Centurion debutante (Deryck at 72 years and 10 months). Deryck was born 27 November 1932. Hence he was only just short of his 73rd birthday when qualifying as a Centurion!



72 year old Deryck Skinner in action in Adelaide – 22:39:55 for the 100 miles

Two months later (20-26 November) in the Victorian country town of Colac, the Australian 6 Day Race saw another record breaking performance by an even older walker, with 80 year old **Stan Miskin (C 23)** competing as a walker and finishing 23rd with 429.60 km to set a new World M80 6 Day Record and setting new Australian M80 100 Miles (**2 days 6 hours**), 200 km (2 days 22 hours) and 48 Hour (174.4km) records.



80 year old Stan Miskin competes in the Colac 6 Day in 2005

On 22-23 April 2006, **Deryck Skinner**, now aged 73, completed his second centurion qualifier at the Harold Stevens Athletics Track in Coburg, Victoria, with a time of **23:23:43**, going on to complete a 24 Hour distance of 165.605 km.

On 12-13 August in that same year, Deryck Skinner extended his repertoire in the Australian 48 Hour Track Championship on the Gold Coast in Queensland, finishing 3rd overall with a distance of 257.877 km. This was an Australian best ever 48 Hour Walk performance (previous best was 230.3 km, set by John Harris in 2002). What made it even more amazing was that Deryck covered 162.8 km for the first 24 hours to record yet another centurion mark (100 miles in **23:23:30**). Deryck's 200 km and 48H marks also set Australian M70 walking and running records!

Seven weeks later, on 30th September 2006, Deryck Skinner was back in action in the annual Sri Chinmoy Australian 24 Hour Track Championship in Adelaide. At 73 years of age, he finished his fourth centurion qualifier within a 12 month period with a time **23:30:12**. Deryck's one line comment - *"The heat was cruel and it was the most rugged 24 hour I have contested so far."*

Deryck Skinner's final record breaking walking performance occurred two years later, on the weekend of 29-31 August 2008, in the Australian 48 Hour Track Championship in Caboolture, Queensland. He had recently turned 75 years of age and was keen to set some new standards. This event had previously been held on the Gold Coast track but was shifted in 2008 to the venue that had been used successfully for the Caboolture Dawn to Dusk event. The course was a 500 metre circuit with a compacted decomposed granite road surface and the race direction was reversed hourly. Deryck's final distance of 238.811 km set a new M75 48 Hour record. Of significance to this article, his 100 mile split was **1:06:04:37**.

In summary, the five one hundred mile performances of Australian walkers aged 70 years or older are

15-16 October 2005	Deryck Skinner	72	22:39:55	Santos Stadium, Adelaide, SA
20-26 November 2005	Stan Miskin	80	2 Days 6 Hours	Colac, VIC
22-23 April 2006	Deryck Skinner	73	23:23:43	Harold Stevens Athletics Track, Coburg, VIC
12-13 August 2006	Deryck Skinner	73	23:23:30	Gold Coast Athletics Track, Gold Coast, QLD
30 Sept - 1 Oct 2006	Deryck Skinner	73	23:30:12	Santos Stadium, Adelaide, SA
29-31 August 2008	Deryck Skinner	75	1:06:04:37	Caboolture Historical Village, Caboolture, QLD

CENTURIONS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING COMING UP

With our financial year completed on 31st December 2017, it is now time for a few organizational matters. I enclose links to our Annual report (and associated financial statement) and other matters.

- [2017 Australian Centurion Highlights.pdf](#)
- [2017 Annual Report.pdf](#)
- [2017 AGM Agenda.pdf](#)

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Leighoak Club, 1555 Dandenong Road, Oakleigh, starting at 12:30PM on **Sunday 18th February 2018**. It's when we will confirm our new committee for the next 2 years.

FINANCIAL NEWS

Another quiet month.

Incoming:	Donation – Tim Erickson	50.00
	bank Interest	0.05
Outgoing:	Photocopying	10.00
Balance:		\$728.18

However, with a new perpetual trophy to be purchased and with our expected outlay for the 2018 Australian Centurions Qualifier in April, our bank balance will soon start to dip dangerously low. So if you have not made a donation lately, now is the time. You can always use electronic funds transfer if you are in Australia. Our bank details are

Bank: Westpac
BSB Number: 033003
Acct Name: Australian Centurions Walkers Inc.
Acct Number: 123947

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

An information packed newsletter to start the year. To all our readers, I hope your New Year's Resolution was to dust off those shoes and get into some solid walking!

Yours in Centurion walking

Tim Erickson (C 13)
1 Avoca Cres, Pascoe Vale, Victoria, Australia, 3044