

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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DATES ... DATES ... DATES

The Australian Ultra scene has bounced back in 2021 with lots of events. As always, check the AURA calendar (<http://aura.asn.au/>) for the latest news. Sadly, there are not many international walk ultras left standing. The big news is that the Continental Centurions qualifier, that was canceled in late May, is now back on the calendar and scheduled for the weekend of 9-10 October 2021. This is fantastic news. Then the NZ Centurions 100 Miles Qualifier rounds out the long distance walking year 5 weeks later, in Auckland.

Oct 9-10, 2021	Continental Centurions 100 Miles Qualifier	Weert, NED
	See https://www.olat.nl/iwe	
Nov 13-14, 2021	Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Track Race (NZ Centurions 100 Miles Qualifier)	Auckland, NZL
	See https://nz.srichinmoyraces.org/races/auck/24hr and https://www.facebook.com/NotJustAWalkInThePark	

With Australia expected to open up from the last of its covid restrictions in mid to late November, we should be all set for a bumper 2022, with our own Australian Centurions qualifier at Coburg leading the way, in April.

Apr 9-10, 2022	Coburg 24 Hour Carnival (Aust Centurions 100 Miles Qualifier)	Coburg, VIC
	See http://www.coburg24hr.org/24hr/race-entry/	

ADELAIDE 6 DAY RACE, THORNDON PARK, ADELAIDE, 26 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER 2021

In our last few newsletters, we have been following the progress of **Justin Scholz (C61)** and **Sharon Scholz (C63)** as their cycle around Australia continues. Since last month's issue, they have ridden across the Nullabor Plain into South Australia. Their aim was to arrive in Adelaide in time for the annual Adelaide 6 Day race, which has now kicked off at Thorndon Park in the Adelaide suburb of Paradise, and that they did. Their quick progress across the continent ensured they arrived in time for a final few days of walk training, to wake the legs up after their long cycling regime.

When the gun sounded on the morning of Sunday 26th September, Justin was the sole walker amongst the field of runners, as they set off to see how many laps they could complete around the flat and picturesque 1430m circuit. He was straight into business, striding out at a pace of 8 minutes per km. As Day One progressed, he worked his way up through the field and was actually in front when he passed the 100 mile mark (he completed his 113th lap in a time of **21:31:52**, for a total distance of 161.0815km). That's close enough for me.

With his aim achieved, Justin called it quits. His comment: *Yes, finished for now. We'll spend time at the event over the next 5 days helping out, and I might do a few more laps as light recovery. I do have a large blister under my left heel which I can't walk on right now, so that might be the biggest hurdle in the short term. Hopefully goes down overnight.*

That is Justin's fourth hundred this year and his 17th overall. Here's how they read:

22:09:03	14-15 July 2012	Adelaide, SA (road)	(C 61)
19:43:21	15-16 June 2013	Blacktown, NSW	
22:40:37	14-15 Sept 2013	Middle Park, Vic	
21:03:00	14-15 June 2014	Blacktown, NSW	
22:29:51	06-07 June 2015	Minnesota, USA	(C 76)
22:24:28	03-04 Oct 2015	Auckland, NZ	(C 20)
21:45:13	14-15 May 2016	Schiedam, NED	(C 437)
20:43:51	18-19 Apr 2016	Campbelltown, NSW	
21:04:54	5-6 Aug 2017	Bury St Edmunds, ENG	(C 1173)
21:48:12	2-3 June 2018	Campbelltown, NSW	

22:47:46	20-21 Oct 2018	Cape Town, SA	(C 32)
22:40:08	15-16 Mar 2019	Canberra, ACT	
22:43:53	9-10 May 2019	Balatonfüred, Hungary	
22:50:00	26-27 Mar 2021	Canberra, ACT	
21:32:28	17-18 Apr 2021	Coburg, VIC	
23:10:00	14-15 Aug 2021	Bunbury, WA	
21:31:52	26-27 Sep 2021	Adelaide, SA	



Left: Justin strides out with fellow Aust Centurion **David Billett (C50)** who is one of the 6D runners
 Right: Justin celebrates his 17th centurion finish

BITS AND PIECES

- In other news, Justin was not our only Australian Centurion in action in a 6 Day race this month. US based **Ivo Majetic (C71)** was in action in the EMU 6 Day Run in Balatonfüred, Hungary, which started on 2nd September. Alas, it did not work out for him and he was forced to retire on Day 2, with 156.632km completed. Bad luck, Ivo!
- A number of our European members were in action in the annual *Nacht van Loon op Zand* walk. The event was initially scheduled for April but had to be put back due to covid concerns. It was eventually held on the weekend of 4-5 September, starting at 9PM on the Saturday evening at the sports hall in Houten, Netherlands. The aim of this popular event is to complete 80km within the 15 hour limit. If you complete this distance, you can stop, but you may also continue for the full 15 hours to see how far you can get. Overall, **Martin Vos (C79)** finished second with a PB 111.871km, while **Sandra de Graaf (C69)** finished 11th with 93.583km. Full results at <https://www.wsv-hartvanbrabant.nl/Eindoverzicht%20NVL%20%202021%20plaatsvolgorde.pdf>.
- Now this is an interesting rule change that may eventually filter through to other ultra events like the long walks. The organizers of the *Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc* (UTMB) World Series will be banning the use of painkillers within 24 hours of and during all their races. This includes all non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen. The announcement was made after the UTMB's Quartz Event health program carried out post-event drug tests for the first time this year and three athletes' samples contained NSAIDs. According to Doctor Patrick Basset, the medical director of Dokever, the company that manages the medical teams at all UTMB events, these regulations have been put in place to protect athletes from the dangers of self-medicating. Interestingly, NSAIDs are not banned by The World Anti Doping Assn (WADA), so UTMB is actually implementing rules above and beyond those of the world body. You can read more of the detail at <https://runningmagazine.ca/trail-running/utmb-bans-painkillers-at-all-events/>. So the rule of thumb is now keep it to paracetamol and keep off the more potent pain killers.

LES 28 HEURES DE ROUBAIX, ROUBAIX, FRANCE, 18-19 SEPTEMBER 2021

Thanks to Emmanuel Tardi who was in Roubaix in mid September for the annual 28 Heures de Roubaix. As well as featuring the classic 28 Hours walk, the meet also included the French 100km Walk Championship which had been rescheduled from its usual date earlier in the year. Numbers were down overall (only 30 starters) due to covid. For the second consecutive year, walkers from Eastern European countries were absent, in particular the Russian Dimitriy Osipov, Roubaix winner on a record 10 occasions.

The race was held in perfect conditions on a 2km lap in the Parc Barbieux. **Fabien Deparday**, **Maxime Laneau** and **Christophe Erard** walked together for the first 4 hours, before Deparday cleared away to win the 100km race for the third time in a row, his time an excellent 10:54:53. He was over 30 minutes ahead of second placed **David Vandercoilden** (11:28:02). Special mention to M80 walker **Robert Daloz** who finished in 15:28:37.

Once Deparday had won the 100km, he then stopped, and attention turned to the 28 Hours race which was won by **Serge Georgelin** (213.043km), ahead of 70 year old **Gilles Letessier** who finished 2nd with 206:158km. In the women's 28 Hour walk, **Corinne Fauqueur** led early but did not finish the race. The women's win went to **Emilie Bizard Planchot** (175.645km) with her mother **Claudie Bizard** second with 171.596km.

Lots of photos at <https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipMJHWKvOFiJmHPRHyU65CyyTFw-FN8hNiiRUqAk0pSjCITwGqicr4Ildtni4ffwmw>

French 100km Championship

1.	DEPARDAY Fabien	Saint-brieuc Athletisme	10:54:53
2.	VANDERCOILDEN David	Villeneuve D Ascq Fretin Athle	11:28:02
3.	LANEAU Maxime	Us Camon	11:57:51
4.	GEORGELIN Serge	E.a.c	11:59:08
5.	LACHE Cyrille	Ca Balma	12:30:01
6.	KERLAU Yves-michel	Cm Roubaix	12:51:03
7.	GROS Gildas	Es Thaon	13:12:33
8.	LETESSIER Gilles	Rochefort Athletisme Club	13:14:26
9.	DELANGE Dominique	Aj Auxerre Section Marathon	13:56:25
10.	GRADOS Stephane	Cm Roubaix	14:10:51
11.	YVERT Louis	Cm Roubaix	14:13:00
12.	THOUMELIN Laurent	Athletisme Sarthe Loir 72	14:21:21
13.	DALUZ Robert	Neuilly Sur Marne Athletisme	15:28:37
14.	CECCALDI Georges	Entente Chalon/saone Athl.	16:01:44
15.	GUILLOT Mickael	Ac Chateau Thierry	16:15:28
16.	ROBERT Jean-pierre	Villeneuve D Ascq Fretin Athle	17:58:34
1.	BIZARD PLANCHOT Emilie	Neuilly Sur Marne Athletisme	14:28:23
2.	CANTET Nadege	Tarbes Pyrenees Athletisme	15:03:01
3.	PANNIER Josiane	Havre Ac	15:23:49
4.	BIZARD Claudie	Thiais Ac	15:44:43
5.	GILLARD Lydia	Marche Mythique Organisation	17:16:45

Les 28 Heures de Roubaix

1.	GEORGELIN Serge	E.a.c.	213:043km	28:00:00	7.609 km/h
2.	LETESSIER Gilles	Rochefort Athletisme Club	206:158km	28:00:00	7.363 km/h
3.	KERLAU Yves-michel	Cm Roubaix	196:059km	28:00:00	7.002 km/h
4.	GROS Gildas	Es Thaon	183:945km	28:00:00	6.569 km/h
5.	THOUMELIN Laurent	Athletisme Sarthe Loir 72	178:432km	28:00:00	6.373 km/h
6.	YVERT Louis	Cm Roubaix	170:151km	28:00:00	6.077 km/h
7.	PORCHER Claude	Nl	165:666km	28:00:00	5.917 km/h
8.	GRADOS Stephane	Cm Roubaix	161:958km	28:00:00	5.784 km/h
9.	CECCALDI Georges	Entente Chalon/saone Athl.	158:687km	28:00:00	5.667 km/h
10.	DELANGE Dominique	Aj Auxerre Section Marathon	157:353km	28:00:00	5.620 km/h
11.	ROCHA Fernando	Nl	145:506km	28:00:00	5.197 km/h
12.	RASSAIND Andre	Al Voiron	123:939km	28:00:00	4.426 km/h
13.	ROBERT Jean-pierre	Villeneuve D Ascq Fretin Athle	122:715km	28:00:00	4.383 km/h
14.	DEPARDAY Fabien	Saint-brieuc Athletisme	121:843km	28:00:00	4.352 km/h

15.	LANEAU Maxime	Us Camon	118:564km	28:00:00	4.234 km/h
16.	GUILLOT Mickael	Ac Chateau Thierry	112:567km	28:00:00	4.020 km/h
	ALEXANDRE Alain	Rfc Liege	100:000km	14:56:09	6.695 km/h
	TRIZZULLA Giacomo	Rfc Liege	82:000km	12:32:42	6.536 km/h
	SEYNAEVE Serge	Cm Roubaix	62:000km	09:22:38	6.612 km/h
	MARECHAL Pascal	Ac Chateau Thierry	50:000km	07:06:19	7.037 km/h
	FAUQUEUR Raymond	Cm Roubaix	32:000km	07:04:07	4.527 km/h
	TARDI Emmanuel	La Postillonne Longjumeau	20:000km	03:03:30	6.540 km/h
1.	BIZARD PLANCHOT Emilie	Neuilly Sur Marne Athletisme	175:645km	28:00:00	6.273 km/h
2.	BIZARD Claudie	Thiais Ac	171:596km	28:00:00	6.128 km/h
3.	CANTET Nadege	Tarbes Pyrenees Athletisme	157:220km	28:00:00	5.615 km/h
4.	PANNIER Josiane	Havre Ac	148:442km	28:00:00	5.302 km/h
5.	GILLARD Lydia	Marche Mythique Organisation	132:532km	28:00:00	4.733 km/h
6.	DEPREZ Celine	NI	103:443km	28:00:00	3.694 km/h
	FAUQUEUR DUDA Corinne	Cm Roubaix	64:000km	10:11:39	6.278 km/h
	DELANNOY Tiphaine	NI	40:000km	08:36:19	4.648 km/h



28 Hour walkers Emilie Bizard Planchot, Serge Georgelin and Gilles Letessier



100km walkers Fabien Deparday and Robert Daloz (all photos from Emmanuel Tardi)

RAMSAY BAKERY END TO END WALK. ISLE OF MAN, SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2021

The same weekend also saw the annual End to End walk, contested in near perfect conditions on the Isle of Man. As usual, it started at the Point of Ayre and finished at the Sound, a distance of 39.22 miles.

Richard Gerrard has dominated this event over the past decade. Since finishing second to Michael George in 2013 – the year Michael set the course record of 6:24:32 (which still stands), Richard has won every event: 7 wins in a row. And he did it again in 2021, completing his eighth victory in a row and his ninth overall, having initially intended to stop at Peel. His time of 6:35:07 was his third fastest, and was the fourth fastest ever recorded on the west-side course, first used in 2002. **Simon Gawne** claimed an excellent second place, eight minutes in arrears of Richard, having been passed on the ascent to the Round Table. His time of 6:43:08 ranks him number 11 on the all-time list, and his performances in both the Parish and the End to End this year indicate that his first big win can't be too far away. **Aaron Kneale** walked a very strong second half of the race to come through to third place. **Stew Jones** and **James Quirk** crossed the line together in joint fourth, and **Dean Morgan** competed the top six with a strong walk.

Steph Burton claimed a hard-earned maiden 'major' victory in the women's race with a fine performance to come home in 12th place overall with 7:54:32. The other podium positions in the women's race went to **Karen Mercer** and **May Hooper**.

After taking out those who retired at The Cronk (12.43 miles), Peel (22.16 miles), Dalby (27.70 miles) and Cregneash (37.00 miles), 111 of the 298 walkers completed the full course. See more at <http://www.endtoendwalk.org/>.



Ramsay Bakery End to End Walk (walkers under 9 hours)

1.	Richard Gerrard	Men 45-49	6:35:07
2.	Simon Gawne	Senior Men	6:43:08
3.	Aaron Kneale	Senior Men	7:09:30
4.	Stewart Jones	Men 45-49	7:17:41
5.	James Quirk	Men 45-49	7:17:41
6.	Dean Morgan	Men 35-39	7:18:48
7.	Tony Edwards	Men 55-59	7:29:25
8.	Michael Readshaw	Men 60-64	7:44:24
9.	Dougie Scott	Men 35-39	7:47:15
10.	Paul Jennings	Men 35-39	7:47:49
11.	Rhodes Brown	Senior Men	7:51:06
12.	Steph Burton	Women 55-59	7:54:32
13.	Josh Knights	Senior Men	7:55:36
14.	Stu Osborne	Men 35-39	8:12:59
15.	Dan Dickinson	Senior Men	8:17:11
16.	Graham Jackson	Men 50-54	8:20:23
17.	Michael Farnworth	Men 45-49	8:24:26

18. Chris Addy	Senior Men	8:25:12
19. Phil Riley	Men 35-39	8:27:29
20. Stephen Oates	Senior Men	8:29:17
21. Michael Shippides	Men 55-59	8:30:21
22. Adey Callister	Men 35-39	8:31:66
23. Karen Mercer	Women 40-44	8:32:47
24. May Hooper	Women 50-54	8:37:16
25. Neil Wade	Senior Men	8:37:16
26. Perry Downward	Men 60-64	8:39:35
27. Paul Hotchkiss	Men 45-49	8:43:21
28. Karen O'Reilly	Senior Women	8:43:31
29. Amy Sykes	Senior Women	8:43:31
30. Bob Kermod	Senior Men	8:46:36
31. Zoe Lambie	Senior Women	8:47:18
32. Kathryn Clough	Women 45-49	8:47:46
33. Ash Humphrey	Senior Men	8:48:59
34. David Garrod	Senior Men	8:49:51
35. Matt Cory	Men 35-39	8:50:25
36. Colin Cowley	Men 50-54	8:50:25
37. Lawler Amanda	Women 40-44	8:50:43
38. Aaron Clark	Senior Men	8:50:43
39. Colleen McPhillips	Senior Women	8:50:46
40. Rebekah Snell	Senior Women	8:50:49
41. Nicola Raven	Women 55-59	8:50:56
42. Paul Jones	Men 45-49	8:51:11
43. Chloe Spooner	Senior Women	8:53:17
44. Sophie Cowin	Senior Women	8:55:43
45. Alex Jones	Senior Women	8:55:43
46. Simon Pack	Men 60-64	8:55:51
47. Harri Kennish	Senior Men	8:56:62
48. Sammy Clague	Senior Men	8:57:10
49. Philip Morris	Men 40-44	8:57:52
50. Ann-Marie Clucas	Women 40-44	8:58:25



Simon Gawne leads Richard Gerrard



Aaron Kneale



Steph Burton

NOT JUST A WALK IN THE PARK – 100 MILE WALK, OWEGO, NY, 25-26 SEPTEMBER 2021

Last weekend saw the second of two American Centurion Qualifying walks, this one organised by Dave and Erin Talcott and held in Owego, in New York State. The event saw 2 walkers join the ranks of the American Centurions, Isle of Man walker **Chris Burn** and American walker **Jeff Weaver** each completing 161 laps of the 1km course within the required 24 hours. Chris is of course already an Australian Centurion (**C72**), having won our 2018 event at Coburg. This is his fourth centurion badge. Partial results at https://my.raceresult.com/180806/#0_C51C4. Event website at <https://raceroster.com/events/2021/15288/not-just-a-walk-in-the-park-v30-2021>.

Alas, no further information at this stage and no photos.

THE PROGRESSION OF THE 24 HOUR RUN

On 30th September 2021, Lithuanian ultrarunner **Aleksandr Sorokin** shattered the 24 Hour Run world record, covering 309.4 km (192.4 miles) during the Polish 24 Hour Championships in Pabianice, Poland. ¹ To put this in perspective, Sorokin averaged 4:39 per kilometre for 309 kilometres.

The previous record of 303.5km had been set by Yiannis Kouros in 1997. It was widely believed that Kouros' achievement would never be broken, having been described as 'untouchable', but incredibly Sorokin added almost six additional kilometres to the record.

While it's not an ultra walking performance, it is such an astonishing run that it deserves some attention.

First, let's consider the progression of the 24 Hour Run record. ²

John Hague of England was the first runner known to complete 100 miles within 24 hours. He reached that mark in a time of 23:15 in August 1762. This was in the early days of the pedestrians.

The upsurge in the 100 miles/24 hours started in 1879 when **George Hazael** ³ ran 214.144 km (133 miles) in April of that year in London. **Charles Rowell** ⁴ improved the 24 Hour mark to 235.194 km (146 miles) a year later, in 1880, in London. Interestingly, both marks were set in 6 Day events.

In 1882, Rowell improved the mark to 150 miles in 24 Hours, but he actually stopped at 23 hours. In that particular 6 Day race, he set new world records for 100 miles (13:26), 24 Hours (150 miles), 48 Hours (258 miles/415 km) and 300 miles (58:17:06).

Fifty years later, in 1931, **Arthur Newton** ⁵ improved the mark to 152 miles. Twenty years later, in 1953, **Wally Hayward** ⁶ ran 159 miles. Twenty years later in 1973, **Ron Bentley** ⁷ ran 161 miles. So only eleven miles progress in 90 years!

However, one could argue that even less progress had been made in that 90 year period, as Rowell's 150 miles in 23 hours on the first day of a 6 Day race in 1882 indicates that he was probably capable of 160+ miles if he had attempted a flat out 24 Hour run.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, slow growing competitive pressure had gradually pushed the 24 Hour best time upwards and, by 1982, **Bernard Gaudin** of France held the best mark with 274.715km (170.7 miles). But it was slow going as there were no truly international 24 Hour championships and few invitational international races. Lausanne was a notable exception, as were the Milton Keynes races. Eventually, regular annual 24 Hour races started to pop up on the calendar, the longest running of which is the Self-Transcendence 24 Hour Race which has been held in Ottawa, Canada, since 1981. The Sri Chinmoy Australian 24 Hour Track Championship started in Adelaide in 1982 and the Victorian 24 Hour Track Championship (now incorporated into the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival) kicked off in 1984. The

1 See <https://runningmagazine.ca/the-scene/aleksandr-sorokin-of-lithuania-runs-309-kilometres-in-24-hours-to-break-world-record/>

2 Thanks to English statistician and running historian Andy Milroy for much of the info on the record progression

3 See http://www.kingofthepeds.com/George_Hazael.pdf

4 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Rowell

5 See <https://ultrarunninghistory.com/100-miler-6/>

6 See <https://ultrarunninghistory.com/100-miler-8/>

7 See <http://www.scottishdistancerunninghistory.scot/ron-bentley-obituary/>

first international championship was held in February 1990 in Milton Keynes, England and the IAU 24 Hour European Championship started in 1992.

It was only a matter of time before Australian/Greek runner **Yiannos Kouros** turned his attention to the 24 Hour Run and, in 1984, he raised the ante to 177 miles (284km) in New York. He returned to New York a year later, increasing his 24 Hour world best to 178 miles in torrential rain. In 1996 he bettered this with 294.504km (183 miles) in Melbourne, despite running in strong wind and rain, and in 1997, he improved the record to 303.5km (188.5 miles) in Adelaide. When he finished that race, he declared, "I will run no more 24-hour races. This record will stand for centuries." His performance was 17 miles further than anyone else had ever gone in 24 hours.



Yiannos Kouros flies on the track

Fast forward 24 years to 2021. Someone was finally ready to challenge Kouros's unbeatable record, and that man was **Aleksandr Sorokin**. Sorokin, who turns 40 this year, came to his 2021 24 Hour attempt with great credentials. He was the IAU 24 Hour Run title holder, having won in Albi, France, in 2019 with 278.972km. He was also the world record holder for 150km (10:27:48), 100 miles (11:14.56), and 12 hours (170.3km). His overall pace for the 12-hour record comes out at 4:14 per kilometre. ⁸

Sorokin had taken a chance that paid off at his 100-mile record run early in 2021. "A friend of mine gave me pair of Nike Alphafly's to try before the race. I liked the softness of the shoe. I took the risk of wearing the Nike Alphafly during the race," he says. "I find that cushioning is important when running long distances." It certainly worked!

He used the same brand of revolutionary shoes in his 24 Hour run last month in Poland.

Where to from here? Is 200 miles/320 km in 24 hours possible (back to back sub 12 hour 100 miles)? And what of the 100 mile run? Sorokin holds that record with 11:14. Is a sub-11 100 mile coming soon?

It sure could, and perhaps the man to do it might be marathon world record-holder and dual Olympic champion **Eliud Kipchoge**. In a recent interview with Rob Steger in the Training for Ultra Podcast, he revealed his next goal after he finishes his marathon career: to tackle an ultra. ⁹ And he also races in Nike Alphaflys.

We may be entering an exciting new period for ultra distance running.

⁸ See <https://runningmagazine.ca/the-scene/meet-aleksandr-sorokin-the-man-behind-the-new-24-hour-world-record/>

⁹ See <https://runningmagazine.ca/the-scene/eliud-kipchoge-wants-to-try-an-ultramarathon/>



Aleksandr Sorokin runs 309km in 24 hours in Poland last month

I finish off with a review of the Men's 24 Hour All-Time Ranking ¹⁰ (I = Indoor, T = Track, S = Split). Amazingly, Kouros still has 11 of the top 14 performances and only 5 men have run further than 280km. They form a very small and elite group at the top of the 24 Hour Run pyramid.

1	309.399 km		Sorokin, Aleksandr	LTU	30.09.81	M35	1	29.08.2021	Pabianice (POL)
2	303.506 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	1	05.10.1997	Adelaide (AUS)
3	295.363 km		Tkachuk, Andrii	UKR	16.08.85	M35	2	29.08.2021	Pabianice (POL)
	295.030 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	2	03.03.1997	Bruce (AUS)
	294.504 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	3	14.04.1996	Coburg (AUS)
	290.221 km		Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	4	03.05.1998	Basel (SUI)
	286.463 km		Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M23	1	28.09.1985	New York (USA)
4	285.366 km	T	Hara, Yoshikazu	JPN	13.08.72	M40	5	07.12.2014	Taipei (TPE)
	285.362 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M35	3	07.05.1995	Surgeres (FRA)
	285.304 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	6	04.05.1996	Surgeres (FRA)
	284.853 km		Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M23	2	08.11.1984	New York (USA)
	284.070 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M45	1	03.03.2002	Taipei (TPE)
	283.600 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M23	3	16.03.1985	Montauban (FRA)
	282.981 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M35	4	09.04.1995	Coburg (AUS)
5	282.282 km		Zhalybin, Denis	RUS	30.06.80	M23	4	03.09.2006	St. Petersburg (RUS)
	280.860 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M23	5	05.08.1990	Melbourne (AUS)
6	279.427 km	T	Ishikawa, Yoshihiko	JPN	25.04.88	M23	6	15.12.2019	Taipei (TPE)
	278.972 km		Sorokin, Aleksandr	LTU	30.09.81	M35	5	27.10.2019	Albi (FRA)
7	277.543 km		Morton, Michael	USA	20.10.71	M40	7	09.09.2012	Katowice (POL)
8	277.484 km		Csecsei, Zoltan	HUN	25.07.84	M35	6	25.10.2020	Balatonalmádi (HUN)
9	277.476 km		Filipov, Iulian	ROU	18.01.84	M35	7	18.04.2021	Bucuresti (ROU)
	277.416 km		Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M45	2	15.09.2002	Sylvania, OH (USA)
10	276.221 km		Bodis, Tamas	HUN	29.07.88	M23	7	27.10.2019	Albi (FRA)
11	276.209 km		Schwerk, Wolfgang	GER	28.07.55	M23	8	09.05.1987	Köln (GER)
12	275.982 km	T	Kruglikov, Anatolii	RUS	09.10.57	M35	8	25.06.1995	Podolsk (RUS)
	275.828 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	GRE	13.02.56	M45	3	23.09.2001	San Giovanni Lupatoto (ITA)
13	275.684 km	T	Sekiya, Ryoichi	JPN	12.02.67	M40	8	25.11.2007	Taipei (TPE)
14	275.576 km	I	Safin, Nikolai	RUS	1959	M23	9	28.02.1993	Podolsk (RUS)
15	275.485 km		Leblond, Olivier	USA	30.04.72	M45	4	27.10.2019	Albi (FRA)
	275.357 km	T	Kouros, Yiannis	AUS	13.02.56	M40	9	03.05.1997	Surgeres (FRA)
16	274.715 km		Gaudin, Bernard	FRA	18.09.49	M23	10	14.11.1982	Niort (FRA)
17	274.480 km	T	Dowdle, David	GBR	07.11.54	M23	11	23.05.1982	Podsmead (GBR)

¹⁰ See <https://statistik.d-u-v.org/getintbestlist.php?year=all&dist=24h&gender=M>

18	274.332 km	T	Penalba Lopez, Ivan	ESP	06.10.91	M23	12	15.12.2019	Taipei (TPE)
19	274.119 km		Erdmann, Hans-Martin	GER	09.09.44	M40	10	09.05.1987	Köln (GER)
20	273.828 km	T	Nunes, Valmir	BRA	16.01.64	M35	9	09.03.2003	Taipei (TPE)

DOT BUTLER (NEE ENGLISH) AND MARY STODDART – WALKING PIONEERS

I have written previously on the feats of our first 2 Australian centurions, **Gordon Smith (C1)** and **Jack Debert (C1A)** who qualified by walking 100 miles within 24 hours at Centennial Park, Sydney, in October 1937.

Overall, 4 long distance walks were held in Sydney during the 13 month period from September 1937 to October 1938.

Sept 5, 1937	NSW Amateur Walking Club 50 Mile Trial	Centennial Park, Sydney
Oct 10-11, 1937	NSW Amateur Walking Club 24 Hour Trial	Centennial Park, Sydney
Sept 17, 1938	NSW Amateur Walking Club 12 Hour Trial	Centennial Park, Sydney
Oct 15-16, 1938	NSW Amateur Walking Club 24 Hour Trial	Bankstown Oval, Sydney

Smith and Debert were part of an enthusiastic group of walkers who contested these events, with most of them members of both the NSW Amateur Walking Club and the Sydney Bush Walkers. However, what has been lost in the mists of time are the performances of two trailblazing female walkers, **Dorothy Butler (nee English)** and **Mary Stoddart**.

What makes their performances so special is the fact that, during that period, long strenuous exercise was frowned upon for those of the “weaker sex”. The 880 yards walk was the longest racewalking event in which women could participate, a restriction which lasted until 1967, when women could finally race over a “long” distance like 3km. Female runners were similarly hard done by, with the distances just as ridiculously small.

Here is what happened.

NSW 24 Hour Trial, Centennial Park, Sydney, 10-11 October 1937

The second of the 1937 walks was a 24 Hour Trial, put on by the NSW Amateur Walkers Club and held over a 2 mile course in Centennial Park in Sydney. This was the race in which Gordon Smith and Jack Debert finished first and second, both walking in excess of 100 miles and both being retrospectively awarded Australian Centurion status. A *Sydney Morning Herald* article of Monday 11th October 1937 sums it up nicely: ¹¹

The placings were as follows:

1.	Gordon Smith	110 miles 831 yards
2.	Jack Debert	100 miles 266 yards
3.	Dave Stead	80 miles 371 yards
4.	C. N. Smith	retired at 20 miles (4hrs 11m 3s)

A 30-mile scratch race was also held and it saw 26 year old Dorothy English come third with a time of 7:11:45.

1.	Ben. Hall	5h 49m 55s
2.	Max Gentle	6h 12m 45s
3.	Dorothy English	7h 11m 45s

NSW Amateur Walking Club 12 Hour Walking Trial, Centennial Park, 17 September 1938

The first of the two 1938 walks was a 12 Hour Trial put on by the NSW Amateur Walking Club and staged in Centennial Park in Sydney. Like the other events in this period, it provided yet another record breaking opportunity for Gordon Smith who set a new Australian 12 Hour record of 65 miles and 781 yards (105.321km). It also saw 27 year old Dorothy English complete 40 miles in 10 hours and 20 minutes (most of it barefoot) and 22 year old Mary Stoddart complete 32 miles in 7:39:15.

1.	Gordon Smith	65 miles 781 yards (50 miles in 8:50:25, 100 km in 11:21:30)
2.	Harry Barrett	59 miles 1367 yards
3.	Jack Debert	57 miles 781 yards
4.	Max Gentle	54 miles 414 yards

¹¹ See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17418034>

- 5. M. Stannett 53 miles 1514 yards
- ? Dorothy English 40 miles in 10 hours and 20 minutes (barefoot)
- ? Mary Stoddart 32 miles in 7:39:15.

Their efforts were captured in the Sydney newspapers *The Sydney Sun*¹² and *The Daily Telegraph*¹³ Extracts are reproduced below and make for fascinating reading. The main reason that the two women stopped was that they each had bushwalks planned for the next day and did not wish to do too much damage with a big effort the day before!

She Walked Forty Miles in Ten Hours

A SYDNEY NURSE'S ANSWER TO MALE HIKER'S CHALLENGE

DOROTHY ENGLISH, a Sydney nurse, claims to be Australia's most enthusiastic woman walker.

Last week she walked 40 miles in 10 hours around Centennial Park. This is not bad walking in any man's shoes, but Miss English did it in her bare feet. She finds walking easier that way.

The occasion was the challenge issued by the men of the Sydney Walking Club to the women of the Bush-walkers' Club to join them in their annual walking marathon, nicknamed the "Bunion Derby," just to see if they were real walkers.

Dorothy English and a friend, Mary Stoddart, joined the male walkers in the long hike, and surprised them with their endurance.

Miss Stoddart dropped out after doing 33 miles in seven and a half hours. She wasn't tired, but she was really going walking the following day, and she didn't want to overdo it.

Miss Stoddart, by the way, is studying architecture, and has designed some beautiful homes.

Miss English walked 40 miles before deciding to call it a day.

Fair hair, blue-eyed, and sturdy, Miss English is a nurse at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, where she cares for the little infantile paralysis victims.

"I suppose my nursing career got me used to walking," she says, "but I have always loved a hike. There is some sort of challenge to me in the test of endurance it offers."

This young lass has done some amazing things. For instance, after completing her forty miles around the park she left for Faulconbridge, where, after a hike of several miles, she called a halt for the night.

She slept on a "bed of pine needles," to use her own expression, and was up at dawn for a walk with friends through the Grose River country.

She said it was very rough walking through the mountains, over rocks, and in the bush, but, as usual, she wore no shoes.

"It is preferable," she says simply. "I don't slip and slide about. I have a much firmer footing. No, my feet are never cut or bruised—I'm afraid they are too tough for that."

"My mother is a psychologist, and believes that her children should have complete self-expression. I have three brothers and it was natural I should enter into their games and outdoor sports."

All Athletic

"My brothers are all very athletic. One wins tennis tournaments, another excels in sailing. He has just recently built himself a yacht and has gone off to the Islands."

"My third brother loves the water, too, but he prefers canoeing to sailing. He belongs to a canoe club."

"I have my own canoe at Bal-moral, and often go out beyond the Heads in it."

"The only trouble I ever had was when a Moaman ferry hit me. How that captain did swear!"

"Everything went to the bottom, but it came up again, and we retrieved everything, turned the canoe right side up, and paddled home again."



DOROTHY ENGLISH (left) and her friend Mary Stoddart starting out on a marathon walk around Centennial Park. Shortly after this picture was taken Miss English discarded her shoes for her forty-mile walk in ten hours.

LEFT: Miss English, marathon walker, poses for the camera just to prove that strenuous exercise such as long-distance hiking does not result in muscles or masculinity.

"Next I did a three weeks' bicycle tour of Tasmania."

"Other than my fare to Tasmania and return, I spent only two shillings."

"I lived on blackberries and fruit which were given to me by the farmers along the way."

"I carried a small tent with me and camp equipment, but I slept in the open most of the time. The weather was beautiful."

"No, I'm never afraid. I have never been molested or even frightened."

Perhaps Miss English's most outstanding achievement to date is the

mountain climbing in the Warrumbungle Range. She and Dr. Eric Dark, of Katoomba, reached the crater of an extinct volcano—a feat of strength and endurance not many men find possible, for it has never been climbed before or since.

A member of this mountaineering group was Marie Byles, who has just gone to Western China, on the border of Tibet, where she will do some serious mountaineering. Miss Byles is a Sydney solicitor.

Dorothy English has a soft, well-modulated, cultured voice, rather a shy manner, and blushes easily. She is a vegetarian, and eats sparingly, even on long hikes.

12 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/230812732>

13 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/247356829>



Competitors in the New South Wales Walking Club's 12-hour marathon at Centennial Park to-day started off with keen hearts and fresh bodies. Left: the only two women competitors, Miss Mary Stoddart (left) and Miss Dorothy English, who walked without shoes. Right.—Merv. Ray, warming up, doffs his coat and strides forward on a 65-mile ambition.

NSW Amateur Walking Club 24 Hour Walking Trial, Bankstown Oval, 15-16 October 1938

A month later, the NSW Amateur Walking Club hosted a 24 Hour Walking Trial on the asphalt track around the Bankstown Oval in western Sydney, with all the main walkers back in action again. This meet provided another opportunity for Gordon Smith to improve his 24 Hour distance from 110 miles to 113 miles; he was as usual the star attraction.

The newspapers of the time reported on the race, which saw 5 men and 1 woman (Mary Stoddart this time) in action. Two such articles were in The Sydney Morning Herald¹⁴ and The Sydney Sun¹⁵.

Girl Steps Out With Men In A Giddy Walk Round An Oval



Newspaper caption: Competitors in the 24 hours' walk around Bankstown Oval, who began their arduous task yesterday at 10:37a.m. Left to right: E. MITCHELL, whose face shows traces of the strain of the contest; S. SHEEDY, making good progress; H. W. BARRETT, accepting a drink; G. A. SMITH, who won the event last year, and covered 110 miles, 831 yards; MISS MARY STODDART, aged 22, the only woman competitor, eating fruit salad as she walks, objects to the camera, and another snap of MISS STODDART, refreshed and striding along.¹⁶

14 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17528674>

15 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/230814292>

16 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/230814292>

A further quote reads as follows

The girl, Miss Mary Stoddart, a stockily built 22-year-old, had a reputation as a bush walker and hoped to establish a record for a 12 hours walk. ... At a steady pace, Stoddart went round and round the track until she reached the 50 mile mark in 12 hours 16 minutes 45 seconds. Not surprisingly, she suffered from blistered feet and fatigue.

When Stoddart completed her 50 mile walk, she took her sleeping bag to the centre of the oval and slept until 6am the next morning.

1. Gordon Smith 113 miles, 1309 ½
2. H. W. Barrett retired at 78 miles
3. **Mary Stoddart** **retired at 50 miles (12:16:41)**
4. E. Mitchell retired at 38 miles (144 laps) with cramps
5. D. D. Shead retired at 38 miles (143 laps) with cramps
6. S. Sheedy retired at 20 miles (3:06:32)

It would not be until the early 1970s that another female walker, Adelaide based Lillian Harpur, would test herself out over longer racewalking distances but, even then, over 30 years later, she still had to battle officialdom to get her performances recognised.¹⁷

In the 1920's and 1930's, bushwalking was one of the few pastimes in which women could participate alongside men and in which they could break the barriers and norms that usually constrained the female 50% of the population. Bushwalking took off in the 1920s and the Sydney Bush Walkers, of which both Stoddart and English were members, was the first mixed gender bushwalking club in NSW.

Both women were early members of the club, which had been formed in 1927, and both were contributors to the monthly club magazine *The Sydney Bushwalker* and spent time on the Editorial Committee. Dot English was a wonderfully vivid writer. In particular, read *That's Why* to find out the background to her love of the bush. A selection of her articles follows

- | | |
|----------|---|
| May 1936 | <i>See Tasmania for Two Shillings</i> by Dot English ¹⁸ |
| Nov 1937 | <i>Breaking into New Country</i> by Dot English ¹⁹ |
| Feb 1938 | <i>Bush Walkers in New Zealand</i> by Dot English [Dot Butler] ²⁰ |
| Nov 1938 | <i>A Scientist in the Mountains</i> by Dot English [Dot Butler] ²¹ |
| Feb 1939 | <i>That's Why</i> by Dot. English ²² |
| May 1940 | <i>Easter Among New Zealand Snows</i> by Dot English ²³ |

Further, Dot was one of only two women in the elite *Tiger Walkers* who travelled light and fast in their explorations of new areas for which topographic maps did not exist. They were among the main contributors who assembled information for the Myles Dunphy sketch maps of the Blue Mountains.

There is one very interesting article that describes a weekend walk of 82 miles in the Blue Mountains (very rugged Australian mountain range) outside Sydney by members of the Tiger Walkers. This long weekend walk was 2 weeks before the Sept 1937 event in which Gordon Smith and Jack Debert both walked 100 miles within 24 hours and Dot walked 30 miles. She comes across in this article as very much a free spirit!²⁴

Dot was also secretary of the NSW Ranger's League and her forthright views on the bush are captured in a wonderful in-depth article in *The Weekly Times* of 4th January 1936²⁵. She was certainly no shrinking violet when it came to environmental issues.

While Mary Stoddart was not a regular contributor to the club newsletter, she does get her fair share of mentions in

17 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/tim-archive/articles/wa-lillian-harpur.pdf>

18 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193605>

19 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193711>

20 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193802>

21 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193811>

22 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193902>

23 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/194005>

24 See <https://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/193801>

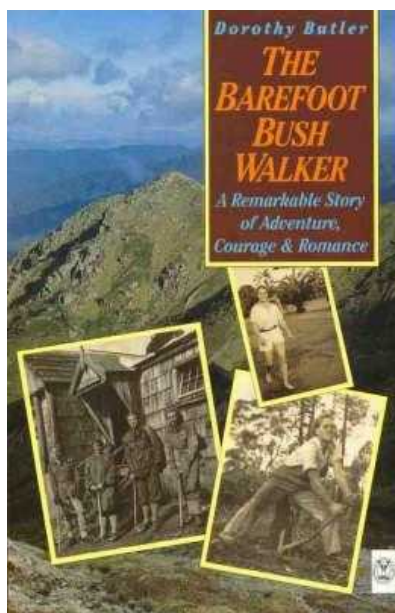
25 See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/224861194>

archival photos or newspaper clippings

1940 Bushwalking Photo (Stoddart on far left) ²⁶
1940 Bushwalking photo (Stoddart is third from right) ²⁷
Jan 1941 Lost in a Cave ²⁸

In summary, Dot and Mary were serious bushwalkers, part of that generation of outdoor Australians, tough and resilient and well ahead of the game in terms of women's rights and their ability to match it with the men.

But the story does not end there, as Dot English (or Dorothy Butler as she became known via her married name) had many strings to her bow. She was a wonderful climber (always in bare feet), a wonderful walker (again, always in bare feet), a physiotherapist and nurse and an avid environmentalist.



She wrote her autobiography, *The Barefoot Bush Walker*, in 1998 ²⁹. I have ordered a copy and am waiting for it to arrive in the mail.

When she died in March 2008, aged 96 years, the various tributes painting a life well lived:

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/2018/07/the-story-of-dot-butler/>
<http://www.bushwalkermagazine.org/dorothy-s-tribute.pdf>
<https://www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au/blog-post/the-barefoot-bushwalker-dorothy-butler/>

Her wikipedia page (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dot_Butler) is amazing!

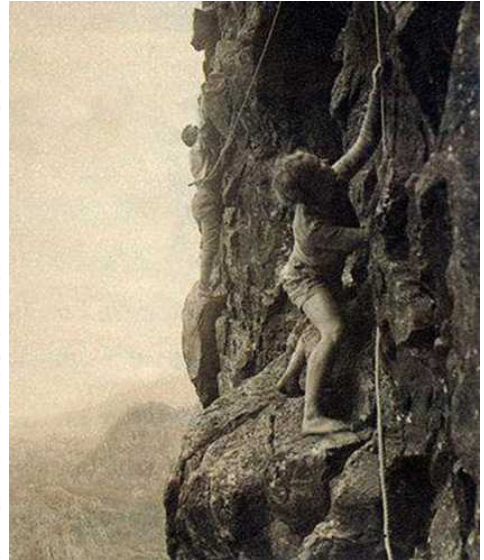
I finish with my two favourite photos of Dot:

26See <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-136353495/view>

27See <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-145885957/view>

28See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/118888319>

29See <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/7566686-the-barefoot-bush-walker>



*Left: Jack Debert and Dot English enjoy ice creams while eating on the Kowmung River (early 1930s)
Right: Dot English climbing Crater Bluff (barefoot as usual) in 1936*

I am sure that, if the Australian Centurions had existed at the time, both Dot and Mary would have been strong candidates.

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

Well, that's a bumper issue, and one that just has to inspire you to dust of the shoes and get out for a walk or a run or a cycle. It's spring here in Melbourne and we have no excuses on our local front.

Yours in centurion walking

Tim Erickson (C13)
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