

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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WELCOMING ALLICIA HERON : C87



I am very excited to introduce our latest Australian Centurion, **Alicia Heron (C87)**. Read all about how she qualified in this newsletter.

AUSTRALIAN 6 DAY CHAMPIONSHIP, ADELAIDE, 29 SEPT – 5 OCT 2024



SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 29TH - SATURDAY OCTOBER 5TH

The Australian 6 Day Championship in Adelaide last weekend was one of the designated 2024 events in which walkers could qualify as an Australian Centurion, so I made sure I was present. I had attended this event in both 2022 and 2023 but only travelled across for the first couple of days on each occasion. This time I was present for the full 6 days, so was able to gain a much greater appreciation of what is an amazing event and an amazing endurance feat.

As usual, the event was held at Thorndon Park in suburban Adelaide, with a 1.426km lap around the ornamental lake in the park. It is by no means an easy course, undulating and on a path that is 100% concrete. But those are the only negatives. In every other way, it is a truly magnificent event.

It is without doubt the most well organised ultra running event I have ever seen, with the race director Justin Brock and his team going above and beyond what might be expected, in every possible way. I just can't speak more highly for the professional and enthusiastic and supportive way in which the event was conducted. It's an 11 out of 10 event for me! Check out more at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/australian6dayultra> and <https://australian6day.com.au/>.

The weather was generally good and the record sized fields (41 in the 6 Day, 4 in the 3 Day, 3 in the 2 Day and 13 in the 24H) produced records galore. And to put the icing on the cake, there were 8 serious walkers amongst the 61 entrants.

You can check out the full results at <https://eventstrategies.racetecresults.com/results.aspx?CI=90&RI=557>. For my part, here is how the walkers fared.

6 Day Race

6.	David Billett (C50)	Male	50-54	SA	625.018 km
7.	Sabina Hamaty (C86)	Female	55-59	NSW	623.182 km
16.	Albin Hess	Male	60-64	VIC	404.058 km
17.	Marie Boyd	Female	75-79	AUS/USA	402.166 km

48 Hour Race

1.	Allicia Heron (C87)	Female	40-44	ACT	270.086 km
3.	Justin Halejko	Male	35-39	SA	94.700 km

24 Hour Race

9.	Greg Ponych	Male	55-59	QLD	71.300 km
12.	Marnie Zakis	Female	45-49	VIC	55.614 km

Now the bare results do not really tell the full story, so let's drill down into what was a wonderful set of results.

The 48 Hour Walkers

I'll start with the 48 Hour race which was contested on Days 5 and 6. It featured 2 walkers, **Allicia Heron** of Canberra and **Justin Halejko** of Adelaide. Allicia, who is one of our top female ultra runners, had contacted me in the leadup to the race to let me know she was intending to try for Centurion membership in the event.

In the last 3 years, Allicia had done a number of outstanding runs, winning the Australian 48 Hour Championship in 2022 (328.392 km) and winning the Australian 24 Hour Championship in 2023 (225.428 km), as well as representing

Australia in the 2022 IAU Asia and Oceania 24 Hour Championship (210.640 km), the 2023 IAU 24 Hour World Championship (184.336 km) and the 2024 IAU 24 Hour Asia and Oceania Championship (203.5312 km).

Alicia did not disappoint, walking flawlessly and covering a little over 45km in the first 6 hours. She continued on in fine style through her first night to eventually reach the 100 mile mark in **23:15:33** and qualify as **Australian Centurion number 87**. After a few hours break, she was back on the track and into her second day. Now it's hard ask to walk so hard in the first 24 hours and then back up for the same again, but she was up to the challenge. She passed the 200km mark in a time of **32:27:40**, taking over 3 hours off Sabina Hamaty's Australian Open Record and achieved a final 48 Hour distance of **270.086 km**, again a new Australian Open Record, over 19 km further than Sabina's mark.

SA ultra runner Justin Halejko was also walking in the 48 Hour event and he started off well, before being forced off the track with a few issues. To his credit, he kept at it and recorded a final distance of 94.700 km. I am sure he will be back!



Alicia Heron (C87) reaches the 100 mile mark and is congratulated by C86 Sabina Hamaty



Justin Halejko

The 6 Day Walkers

Alicia was not the only walker to tick off a centurion performance. **David Billett (C50)** did his usual, setting off fast and motoring through his first 100 miles in the fine time of **23:39:56**. This was his 12th Centurion walk and his third this year. What a machine!

Like Alicia, he then had to refocus and think about what came next. In his case, a further 5 days of walking! He certainly went through some bad spots in the middle but kept at it and actually came good in the final couple of days. He was rewarded with two new Australian Open records – 500km in **4:18:42:38** and **625.018 km** for the full 6 Days. His final 6 Day tally bettered his own Open Residential Record by over 18km and bettered Gerald Manderson's Open All-Comers Record by 3 km. That particular record had stood since 1999.

And he needed to produce a big final result to beat **Sabina Hamaty (C86)**. Sabina started off much more conservatively, recording a distance of 131km in the first 24 hours, With a lot more in the tank after her slower start, she gradually caught up to David and, by day 5, they were on the same lap. It actually looked possible for a while that Sabina might actually get further in the 6 Days than David, which would have meant that our women's Open Record would be superior to our Men's Open Record. This was the spur that inspired David to his final distance of 625.018km. Sabina was only 2km in arrears, her final distance of **623.182km** bettering her own Australian 6 Day Open Record by a whopping 86 km! Along the way, she set a new Australian 500km Open Record of **4:21:46:36**, a 19 hour improvement on her existing record. It was exciting stuff

To put Sabina's walk in perspective, it is the fourth longest 6 Day total (female) of all time, world wide, as per Emmanuel Tardi's All-Time ranking list (see <http://centurions.org.au/documents/6%20Day%20Walk%20Ranks%20from%20Emmanuel%20Tardi%202023.pdf>).



Left: David acknowledges his 500km milestone

Right: David and Sabina locked together at 618km (alongside runner Nikki Wynd)

Not to be outdone, the other two 6 Day walkers were also in record breaking form. 76 year old **Marie Boyd** had competed twice in the Adelaide 6 Day event (2019 and 2023) but as a runner, recording distances of 385.019 km and 364.503 km respectively. This year, she decided to move out of her comfort zone and challenge herself with the Walk. While we had very strong W75 age group records over the shorter distances, compliments of Val Chesterton and Lorraine Billett, the longer category records did not yet have holders. Her plan worked out perfectly, as she set **inaugural Australian W75 age group records for 100 Miles (2:02:21:04), 200km (2:14:22:07), 48 Hours (149.252km) and 6 Days (402.166 km).**

Interestingly, Marie's 2024 walk total exceeded her 2019 and 2023 run totals! That's indeed an interesting stat.

Victorian walker **Albin Hess** competed in the Adelaide 6 Day in 2022, setting new Australian M60 records for 200km and 6 Days. He returned this year to see if he could improve and he certainly did, breaking his own **M60 Australian Records for 200km (2:08:45.00) and 6 Days (404.058 km)**. His 6 Day total was 30km further than he did in 2022.



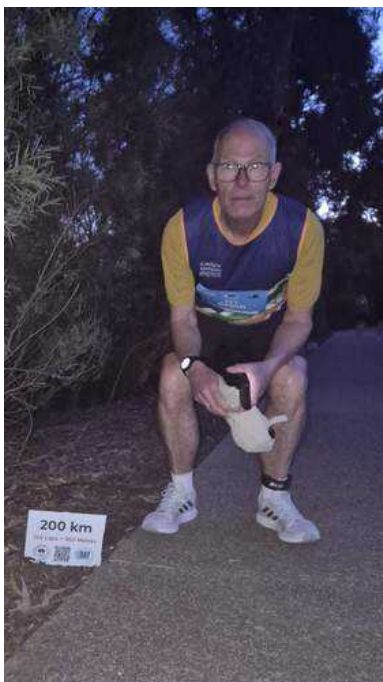
Sabina early on



Smiling at the 500km mark



A lot tougher by the 600km mark!



Albin at the 200km mark



Marie at the 100 Mile mark

The 24 Hour Walkers

To complete the report, we had two walkers in the 24 Hour event, namely **Greg Ponych** and **Marnie Zakis**. Both headed off briskly but were forced to retire early, Greg after **71.200km** and Marnie after **55.614 km**.

Putting it all together, we had a whole swathe of Australian Open and Age Group records.

Alicia Heron	200km	W40	Australian Open Record	32:27:40
		W40	Australian W40 Record	32:27:40
Alicia Heron	48 Hours	W40	Australian Open Record	270.086 km
		W40	Australian W40 Record	270.086 km
David Billett	500km	M50	Australian Open Record	4:18:42:38
		M50	Australian M50 Record	4:18:42:38
David Billett	6 Days	M50	Australian Open Record	625.018 km
		M50	Australian M50 Record	625.018 km
Sabina Hamaty	500km	W55	Australian Open Record	4:21:46:36
		W55	Australian W55 Record	4:21:46:36
Sabina Hamaty	6 Days	W55	Australian Open Record	623.182 km
		W55	Australian W55 Record	623.182 km
Marie Boyd	100 Miles	W75	Australian W75 Record	2:02:21:04
	200km	W75	Australian W75 Record	2:14:22:07
	48 Hours	W75	Australian W75 Record	149.252 km
	6 Days	W75	Australian W75 Record	402.166 km
Albin Hess	200km	M60	Australian M60 Record	2:08:45:00
	6 Days	M60	Australian M60 Record	404.058 km

and two Centurion qualifying performances

David Billett	C50	100 Miles	23:39:56
Alicia Heron	C87	100 Miles	23:15:33

All in all, a wonderful week of walking!

AUSTRALIAN 6 DAY WALK ALL-TIME RANKING LIST

Time for an update to the Australian 6 Day Walk ranking list. This is still quite small at the moment, due to the very small number of races on offer. The current list includes almost exclusively performances achieved at either the iconic Colac 6 Day Race that ran until 2005 or the Adelaide 6 Day Race that is now held annually in that city.

It is pleasing to see the increasing number of walkers competing in the Adelaide race. If this trend continues, the ranking list will continue grow over time.

6 Day Men

1.	625.018 km	David Billett	AUS	24/09/1970	M50	Adelaide (SA)	29/09-05/10/2024
	<i>607.921 km</i>				<i>M50</i>	<i>Adelaide (SA)</i>	<i>02-08/10/2022</i>
	<i>551.893 km</i>				<i>M50</i>	<i>Adelaide (SA)</i>	<i>01-07/10/2023</i>
2.	622.000 km	Gerald Manderson	NZL	11/11/1943	M55	Colac (AUS)	15-20/11/1999
	<i>410.000 km</i>				<i>M55</i>	<i>Colac (AUS)</i>	<i>17-23/11/2002</i>
3.	571.848 km	Justin Scholz	AUS	08/10/1974	M40	Balatonfured (HUN)	09-15/05/2019
4.	540.000 km	Peter Waddell	AUS	25/01/1931	M65	Colac (AUS)	16-22/11/1997
5.	495.200 km	Norman Morris	NZL	30/01.1941	M55	Colac (AUS)	15-21/11/1996
6.	482.539 km	Stan Miskin	AUS	31/07/1925	M75	Colac (AUS)	16-22/11/2003
	<i>429.600 km</i>				<i>M75</i>	<i>Colac (AUS)</i>	<i>20-26/11/2005</i>
	<i>181.600 km</i>				<i>M75</i>	<i>Colac (AUS)</i>	<i>21-27/11/2004</i>
	<i>138.200 km</i>				<i>M75</i>	<i>Colac (AUS)</i>	<i>17-23/11/2002</i>
7.	404.058 km	Albin Hess	AUS	09/01/1960	M60	Adelaide (SA)	29/09-05/10/2024
8.	<i>374.180 km</i>				<i>M60</i>	<i>Adelaide (SA)</i>	<i>02-08/10/2022</i>
9.	306.800 km	Ron McGregor	AUS	15/01/1942	M60	Colac (AUS)	20/26/11/2005
10.	90.000 km	Don McKechnie	AUS	1933	M70	Colac (AUS)	20-26/11/2005

6 Day Women

1.	623.182km	Sabina Hamaty	AUS	14/11/1968	W55	Adelaide SA)	29/09-05/10/2024
	<i>537.513 km</i>				<i>W50</i>	<i>Adelaide (SA)</i>	<i>01-07/10/2023</i>
2.	448.170 km	Deborah de Williams	AUS	10/09/1969	W35	Colac (AUS)	21-27/11/2004
3.	402.166 km	Marie Boyd	AUS	11/09/1948	W75	Adelaide SA)	29/09-05/10/2024

WORLD RECORDS FOR WALKING ?

I often get asked about our ultra distance walk ranking lists and whether the best times recorded have world record status Here is how I respond.

The shorter distance walks (up to 50km) are controlled by World Athletics (WA) and the World Masters Assn (WMA). Open and Masters records for all the shorter distances are clearly documented and there is a rigorous process if you wish to apply for a new one. Obviously only elite racewalkers ever aspire to that sort of standard.

Alas, as there is no world governing body for ultra distance walking, there is no such thing as an "official" world record for any ultra walking distance (100km, 12 Hours, 100 Miles, 24 Hours, etc, etc).

Certain countries may maintain their own record lists. For instance, Great Britain includes some ultra walks in its records list - see <http://www.gbrathletics.com/uk/> or <http://www.gbrathletics.com/uk/mh99.htm> - but they are not necessarily kept up to date. The Australian Centurions control and maintain Australian Ultra Walk records but we are an exception to the rule here and some would argue that our records are really just "best on record" rather than "records", but I won't get into that discussion. As far as we are concerned, the Australian Centurions recognise them as Australian Walk Records.

The most definitive record and rankings lists are those maintained by French walking enthusiast Emmanuel Tardi and by Dutch centurion Gerrit de Jong, a number of which I have on our centurions website via page <http://centurions.org.au/centranks.shtml>. You can see the following there: 100km, 100 Miles, 6 Days. I do not have all-time ranking lists for other standards like 24H, 48H, etc but there are other sites which do attempt to maintain ranking lists. One of the best is <https://www.belgianwalkingassociation.com>. There you can find ranking lists for 100km, 200km, 24 Hours.

If you were so minded, you could try to produce definitive lists all in one place but you would then need some way to maintain them - not something I would contemplate at this time.

AMAZING ULTRA FEATS

I'm going a bit off topic at the moment, but I continue to be amazed at the endurance feats which some people undertake. I became aware of these two recently and thought I needed to share them with you all. You can't help but be inspired!

- On Sunday, September 1, 2024, Kilian Jornet finished climbing all 82 of the 4,000 metre peaks in the European Alps. And he did it all under his own power, meaning that after he finished running and climbing a peak, or set of peaks, he travelled by bike to the next one.

The route, which he called Alpine Connections, was 1,207 kilometers (750 miles) long and had 75,344 metres of elevation gain. It took him 19 days, and nearly 268 hours of moving time with 87% of the time spent on his feet and the remainder on his bike. The Spaniard, who lives in Norway, said on his Instagram, "This was, without any doubt, the most challenging thing I've ever done in my life, mentally, physically, and technically, but also maybe the most beautiful."

Check out the article at <https://www.irunfar.com/kilian-jornet-completes-alpine-connections-82-4000-meter-peaks-19-days>.

- Lachlan Morton has set a new record for the fastest ride around Australia — smashing the previous record by seven days. Morton, from the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, finished the 14,201 km Around Australia ride in his hometown of Port Macquarie last Saturday afternoon, where he was met with a crowd of cheering supporters. The 32-year-old professional cyclist left Port Macquarie on September 5 and took 30 days, nine hours and 59 minutes to make his way back again.

That averages out at 467 km per day. That is just ridiculous. And a lot of it was done at speed, with the cyclist often averaging better than 30km/hr for his daily splits. Roads Record Association of Australia president Lachlan Davis travelled behind Morton for the entire journey and said he did not believe Morton's record time would ever be beaten.

Read more at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-10-05/nsw-cyclist-lachlan-morton-sets-around-australia-record-30-days/104426998>.

DATES ... DATES ... DATES

The 2024 European year continues, with results in this issue from the most recent races. A number of remaining races are scheduled, including the following

Oct 19-20, 2024	24 Heues de Lipsheim	Lipsheim. FRA
Nov 11, 2024	8 Heures d'Etampes	Etampes, FRA

US Centurions Secretary Rob Robertson has announced that his organisation will host a second 2024 US Centurion Qualifier on December 28th. It will be held in conjunction with the Across the Years multi day ultra at the Camelback Ranch, Glendale, Phoenix, Arizona (see <https://www.aravaiparunning.com/across-the-years/>). See the announcement at Information link https://www.unitedstatescenturionwalkers.com/?page_id=1717.

Dec 28, 2024	US Centurions Qualifier	Glendale, Phoenix, Arizona, USA
	See https://www.aravaiparunning.com/across-the-years/	

On the local front, there continue to be lots of ultras scheduled in Australia, but many of them are trail based and hence not suitable for fast walking.

Since there are no specific Australian Centurion qualifiers in 2024, 5 races were identified as possible opportunities for walkers to qualify for Australian Centurion membership. Qualification is of course dependant on the willingness of the organisers to accept walk entrants and on our availability to have someone in attendance to judge the performance. Four of the five designated races have been completed, with the final one in Adelaide still to come.

Nov 9-10, 2024	SA Track Ultra 24H	SA Athletics Stadium, Adelaide, SA
	See https://satrackultra.com.au/event-details/	

If you wish to qualify as an Australian Centurion in 2024, you should target this final event, talk to the organiser and confirm you can compete as a walker, then let me know (tim.erickson02@gmail.com) in good time so that I can attend and monitor your performance. Only then should you go to the next step and enter the event. This workaround will be in effect for 2024. Hopefully we will have a formal qualifier in 2025, if things pan out.

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

I didn't expect to be publishing another newsletter so soon after the last one, but we can now celebrate another new member of our small but exclusive club. Welcome Allicia! We look forward to following your ongoing adventures in the ultra distance world.

With kind regards

Tim Erickson (C13),
Secretary, Australian Centurion Walkers, Victoria, Australia