

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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DATES ... DATES ... DATES

The 2025 European year still has plenty of firepower left, with the following races (amongst others) coming up soon.

Aug 16-17, 2025	100th English Centurions Qualifier	Lewes, ENG
	This will be a track based walk at the Lewes Leisure Centre, East Sussex See https://centurions1911.org.uk/next-events/100-miles/	
Sept 20-21, 2025	28 Heures de Roubaix	Roubaix, FRA
Oct 18-19, 2025	24 Heures de Lipsheim	Lipsheim, FRA
Nov 23, 2025	8 Heures d'Etampes	Etampes, FRA

This year's English Centurion qualifier is the 100th edition of this prestigious event, and it coincides with the 125th anniversary of the promoting organisation, Surrey Walking Club. The race, hosted by Lewes Athletic Club, begins at noon on Saturday 15th August and boasts a strong field, with lots of international walkers in attendance. I look forward to reporting on it in the next newsletter..

And of course, there are always opportunities on the Australian front. A good starting point is the events page on the AURTA website: <https://www.austra.asn.au/upcoming-events>. Our 4 designated centurion qualifying opportunities are as shown below. The first 2 have now been completed but the final 2 are still to come.

Mar 21-23, 2025	Sri Chinmoy 48H Track Festival	Canberra, ACT
	See https://au.srichinmoyraces.org/events/48hour	
June 7-8, 2025	Butter24 Track Ultra	Gold Coast, QLD
	See https://raceroster.com/events/2025/94108/butter-24-2025	
Sep 6-7, 2025	SA Track Ultra	Adelaide, SA
	See https://satrackultra.com.au/	
Sep 26-28, 2025	Southern Sydney Track Ultra	Sydney, NSW
	See https://southernsydney24hourultra.com.au/	

I must also mention the inaugural New Zealand 6 Day Ultra Marathon Festival which will be held at Hagley Park, Christchurch, from 29 September to 6 October 2025. It will feature 6 Day, 72H, 48H and 24H races. Quite a few of our Australian walkers are going across and I might even make the trip myself (I haven't been to NZ in years).

Sep 19-Oct 6, 2025	New Zealand Z 6 Day Ultra Marathon	Christchurch, NZL
	See https://www.nz6dayultramarathon.com/	

Looking further ahead, some 2026 dates are already known

Feb 8, 2026	8 Heures de Charly-sur-Marne	Charly-sur-Marne, FRA
Feb 28 - 1 Mar, 2026	24 Heures de Bourges	Bourges, FRA
Mar 28-19, 2026	24 Heures de Château-Thierry	Château-Thierry, FRA

Also the 2026 NZ Centurion Qualifier in Auckland will be held earlier than usual to avoid clashing with the Asia/Pacific Championships in late May 2026 The date is now set as 21-22 March 2026.

Mar 21-22, 2026	2025 New Zealand Centurion Qualifier	Auckland, NZL
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OUT AND ABOUT

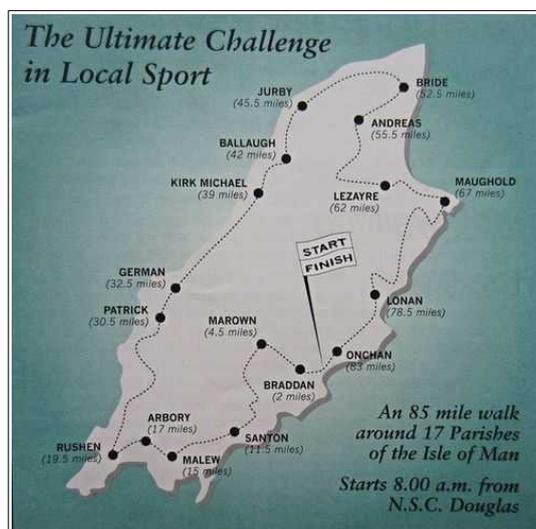
Our newest Australian Centurion, **Alicia Heron (C87)**, was in action in running mode on the first weekend in July at the Australian 24 Hour Track Invitational in Canberra (see <https://www.australian24hourtrackinvitational.com.au/>). She had a great run in the cold Canberra winter weather, finishing second in the women's event and fifth overall with a distance of 200.877km. Her comments:

Last weekend was the Australian 24 Invitational - my second time running it, and my second podium finish. It's been a hectic week since (footy in Sydney, school holidays, recovery, life, more footy and finding Bethany her first car), but I didn't want to let it slip by without a proper thank you. This was the final year of the event, so no chance now to chase that third podium finish, but what a way to finish! Like all 24-hour races, there were tough stretches... but also some really strong patches. I ended up being the fastest on the track in the back end, and managed to finish with a smile (or maybe some gritted teeth, depending on the moment)

Terry O'Neill (C18) and **Karyn O'Neill (C45)** have been enjoying the Victorian Race Walking Club winter roadwalking season in Melbourne, racing most weekends at Middle Park. I thought I should include a couple of photos of them in action. Well done, Terry and Karyn!



PARISH WALK, ISLE OF MAN, JUNE 21-22, 2025



The Manx Telecom Parish Walk (<https://www.parishwalk.com/>) is a walking race that takes place on the Isle of Man each year, usually on the weekend nearest to the Northern Summer solstice. The biggest walking event in the Isle of

Man, it is so called because the walk passes through every parish on the Isle of Man, a total distance of **85 miles (137 km)**. Originally, walkers had to touch the door of each of the seventeen parish churches but nowadays electronic timing chips are worn. A time limit of 24 hours is enforced, and there are cut-off times for reaching each stage. Only a small number of walkers complete the full distance each year. Walkers may drop out at any of the stages, which correspond to each parish. You can read more about it at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parish_Walk.

This year, Isle of Man walkers donned the shoes on the weekend of 21-22 June, with 1065 walkers toeing the start in the National Sports Stadium in Douglas. How's this for a couple of start line photos:



Callum Gawne claimed his maiden Manx Telecom Parish Walk victory in impressive fashion, crossing the finish line near the War Memorial on Douglas Promenade shortly before midnight to take the tape for the first time. In a race of considerable attrition, many of the top-30 competitors to reach Port Erin (19.5 miles) failed to make it to half-distance. In conditions that ranged widely from hot and sultry, to overcast and cool with light showers of rain, reigning champion and leader to Patrick, **Dean Morgan**, was disqualified after Ballaugh. Gawne, who was runner-up last year, took hold of the lead at Peel and held a 15-minute advantage over twice women's race winner **Sammy Bowden** at Jurby (45 miles). **Tristan Shields** was only 10 seconds adrift in third place, then a near 20-minute gap to defending women's champion **Lorna Gleave** in fifth overall. From there, Gawne simply never looked back as he held his lead all the way through to the finish, ultimately crossing the line in a time of 15 hours 49 minutes and 49 seconds. Bowden and Shields stayed together on the road throughout the remainder of the race and crossed the line at the same time to take joint second place, with Bowden clinching her third Parish Walk women's victory in the process after also winning in 2021 and 2022.



Winners Callum Gawne and Lorna Gleave (Isle of Man Today)

Of the 1065 starters, 106 finished the entire course, with a further breakdown as follows

8 Gold Standard finishers (under 18 hours)
 28 Silver Standard finishers (under 21 hours)
 70 Bronze Standard finishers (under 24 hours)

Here are all the GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE finishers. Kudos to everyone.

1. Callum Gawne (3)	Senior Men (1st)	15h49m49s	The Finish	GOLD
2. Tristan Shields (13)	Senior Men (2nd)	16h35m35s	The Finish	GOLD
3. Samantha Bowden (9)	Veteran Ladies (1st)	16h35m35s	The Finish	GOLD
4. Lorna Gleave (8)	Veteran Ladies (2nd)	17h13m5s	The Finish	GOLD
5. David Williams (12)	Senior Men (3rd)	17h13m5s	The Finish	GOLD
6. Emma Wilson (65)	Veteran Ladies (3rd)	17h24m16s	The Finish	GOLD
7. Samuel Cannell (72)	Senior Men (4th)	17h55m26s	The Finish	GOLD
8. Connor Gilbert (10)	Senior Men (5th)	17h57m35s	The Finish	GOLD
9. Ryan Downey (78)	Senior Men (6th)	18h21m30s	The Finish	SILVER
10. Louise Gimson (43)	Veteran Ladies (4th)	18h24m30s	The Finish	SILVER
11. Ross Deakin (92)	Senior Men (7th)	18h38m20s	The Finish	SILVER
12. Daniel Gibson (327)	Senior Men (8th)	18h42m3s	The Finish	SILVER
13. Amy Sykes (19)	Veteran Ladies (5th)	18h46m31s	The Finish	SILVER
14. Gustav Rober (77)	Veteran Men (1st)	18h51m44s	The Finish	SILVER
15. Rob Monk (406)	Senior Men (9th)	19h15m39s	The Finish	SILVER
16. Chris Cale (25)	Veteran Men (2nd)	19h19m21s	The Finish	SILVER
17. Dougie Scott (53)	Veteran Men (3rd)	19h22m58s	The Finish	SILVER
18. Claire Bass (934)	Veteran Ladies (6th)	19h25m45s	The Finish	SILVER
19. Henry Wood (85)	Senior Men (10th)	19h27m8s	The Finish	SILVER
20. Anna Grobelna (89)	Veteran Ladies (7th)	19h30m31s	The Finish	SILVER
21. Greg Hoskisson (59)	Veteran Men (4th)	19h37m23s	The Finish	SILVER
22. Andrew Titley (16)	Veteran Men (5th)	19h42m55s	The Finish	SILVER
23. Rachel Gawne (56)	Senior Ladies (1st)	19h46m55s	The Finish	SILVER
24. Bernie Johnson (29)	Veteran Ladies (8th)	19h54m27s	The Finish	SILVER
25. Jayne Farquhar (14)	Veteran Ladies (9th)	19h58m28s	The Finish	SILVER
26. Kathryn Prince (190)	Veteran Ladies (10th)	20h7m42s	The Finish	SILVER
27. Martin Allan (57)	Veteran Men (6th)	20h16m0s	The Finish	SILVER
28. Mark Fullerton (321)	Senior Men (11th)	20h26m1s	The Finish	SILVER
29. Jayden Fayle (318)	Senior Men (12th)	20h26m55s	The Finish	SILVER
30. Lucy Swift (1149)	Veteran Ladies (11th)	20h27m28s	The Finish	SILVER
31. Joe Burrows (118)	Senior Men (13th)	20h38m31s	The Finish	SILVER
32. Mel Kermeen (94)	Veteran Ladies (12th)	20h48m53s	The Finish	SILVER
33. Danny Metcalfe (70)	Veteran Men (7th)	20h49m0s	The Finish	SILVER
34. Monica George (188)	Veteran Ladies (13th)	20h49m0s	The Finish	SILVER
35. Dean Greenland (784)	Veteran Men (8th)	20h53m47s	The Finish	SILVER
36. Nick Hurt (203)	Veteran Men (9th)	20h55m12s	The Finish	SILVER
37. Marta Telesinska (685)	Senior Ladies (2nd)	21h4m19s	The Finish	BRONZE
38. Elspeth Blake (145)	Veteran Ladies (14th)	21h4m29s	The Finish	BRONZE
39. Zoe Lambie (191)	Senior Ladies (3rd)	21h8m50s	The Finish	BRONZE
40. Andrew Marshall (396)	Senior Men (14th)	21h12m12s	The Finish	BRONZE
41. Jeffrey Silsby (885)	Veteran Men (10th)	21h21m1s	The Finish	BRONZE
42. Aaron Curphey (176)	Veteran Men (11th)	21h21m41s	The Finish	BRONZE
43. Juan Hunter (357)	Senior Men (15th)	21h28m25s	The Finish	BRONZE
44. Stephen Caley (187)	Veteran Men (12th)	21h32m18s	The Finish	BRONZE
45. Joseph Swan (58)	Senior Men (16th)	21h37m23s	The Finish	BRONZE
46. Juan Kinley (48)	Veteran Men (13th)	21h38m42s	The Finish	BRONZE
47. Courtenay Heading (50)	Veteran Men (14th)	21h47m42s	The Finish	BRONZE
48. Ryan Healy (96)	Senior Men (17th)	21h48m29s	The Finish	BRONZE
49. Alex McKeeman (401)	Senior Men (18th)	21h49m2s	The Finish	BRONZE
50. Stephen Brown (139)	Veteran Men (15th)	21h54m8s	The Finish	BRONZE
51. Emily Knight (115)	Veteran Ladies (15th)	21h54m52s	The Finish	BRONZE
52. Clare Callow (960)	Veteran Ladies (16th)	21h56m16s	The Finish	BRONZE
53. Michael Farnworth (15)	Veteran Men (16th)	21h58m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
54. Kirsty Duke (107)	Senior Ladies (4th)	21h58m49s	The Finish	BRONZE
55. Pauline Taylor (205)	Veteran Ladies (17th)	22h2m58s	The Finish	BRONZE
56. James King (818)	Veteran Men (17th)	22h5m26s	The Finish	BRONZE

57. Stuart Mainwaring (831)	Veteran Men (18th)	22h6m12s	The Finish	BRONZE
58. Chris Moore (407)	Senior Men (19th)	22h6m12s	The Finish	BRONZE
59. Ashley Burgess (66)	Senior Men (20th)	22h9m19s	The Finish	BRONZE
60. Adam Shafiq (451)	Senior Men (21st)	22h10m38s	The Finish	BRONZE
61. Chris Till (899)	Veteran Men (19th)	22h19m9s	The Finish	BRONZE
62. Adrian Gell (125)	Veteran Men (20th)	22h22m30s	The Finish	BRONZE
63. Richard Cannell (168)	Senior Men (22nd)	22h33m14s	The Finish	BRONZE
64. Megan Hutton (79)	Senior Ladies (5th)	22h37m57s	The Finish	BRONZE
65. Tiffany Faragher (183)	Senior Ladies (6th)	22h38m12s	The Finish	BRONZE
66. Georgina Franks (134)	Senior Ladies (7th)	22h39m48s	The Finish	BRONZE
67. Alex Lambie (820)	Veteran Men (21st)	22h40m30s	The Finish	BRONZE
68. Dean Crowe (217)	Senior Men (23rd)	22h43m36s	The Finish	BRONZE
69. Sam Cubbon (299)	Senior Men (23rd)	22h43m36s	The Finish	BRONZE
70. Georgie Groves (589)	Senior Ladies (8th)	22h45m30s	The Finish	BRONZE
71. Rhiannon Callin (527)	Senior Ladies (9th)	22h45m34s	The Finish	BRONZE
72. Rebecca Stride (207)	Veteran Ladies (18th)	22h47m43s	The Finish	BRONZE
73. Clare Naylor (95)	Veteran Ladies (19th)	22h48m32s	The Finish	BRONZE
74. Catherine Sayle (123)	Veteran Ladies (20th)	22h50m1s	The Finish	BRONZE
75. Emma Keeley (93)	Senior Ladies (10th)	22h54m10s	The Finish	BRONZE
76. Harry Read (435)	Senior Men (25th)	22h57m44s	The Finish	BRONZE
77. Jason Crowe (297)	Senior Men (26th)	23h0m43s	The Finish	BRONZE
78. Mykel Boyde (244)	Senior Men (27th)	23h1m49s	The Finish	BRONZE
79. Edward Anderson (710)	Veteran Men (22nd)	23h2m3s	The Finish	BRONZE
80. Bobbie Hemsall (594)	Senior Ladies (11th)	23h5m0s	The Finish	BRONZE
81. Daniel Dowdall (761)	Veteran Men (23rd)	23h5m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
82. Mikel Hida (794)	Veteran Men (23rd)	23h5m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
83. Nadine Scott (668)	Senior Ladies (12th)	23h5m41s	The Finish	BRONZE
84. Adie Corlett (105)	Veteran Men (25th)	23h6m57s	The Finish	BRONZE
85. Adrian Evans (764)	Veteran Men (26th)	23h9m47s	The Finish	BRONZE
86. Simon Smith (888)	Veteran Men (27th)	23h10m10s	The Finish	BRONZE
87. Sean Askin (223)	Senior Men (28th)	23h13m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
88. Archie Walter (141)	Senior Men (29th)	23h15m57s	The Finish	BRONZE
89. Shaun Atkinson (151)	Senior Men (30th)	23h18m18s	The Finish	BRONZE
90. Gabriel Farmer (178)	Veteran Men (28th)	23h20m42s	The Finish	BRONZE
91. Samuel Richardson (440)	Senior Men (31st)	23h21m17s	The Finish	BRONZE
92. Cory Addy (919)	Veteran Ladies (21st)	23h21m25s	The Finish	BRONZE
93. Danielle Atkinson (927)	Veteran Ladies (22nd)	23h21m47s	The Finish	BRONZE
94. Matthew Quayle (430)	Senior Men (32nd)	23h30m3s	The Finish	BRONZE
95. Jack Hunter (356)	Senior Men (33rd)	23h30m38s	The Finish	BRONZE
96. James Garnett (323)	Senior Men (34th)	23h31m35s	The Finish	BRONZE
97. Hattie Killey (624)	Senior Ladies (13th)	23h33m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
98. Megan Thomas (181)	Senior Ladies (13th)	23h33m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
99. Beth Rogers (1130)	Veteran Ladies (23rd)	23h33m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
100. Gregory Norris (416)	Senior Men (35th)	23h34m11s	The Finish	BRONZE
101. Karl Callister (259)	Senior Men (36th)	23h39m50s	The Finish	BRONZE
102. Jack Harrison (341)	Senior Men (37th)	23h41m27s	The Finish	BRONZE
103. Mark Hughes (353)	Senior Men (37th)	23h41m27s	The Finish	BRONZE
104. Ed Walter (55)	Veteran Men (29th)	23h44m39s	The Finish	BRONZE
105. Faith Woolf (1183)	Veteran Ladies (24th)	23h48m21s	The Finish	BRONZE
106. Martin Woolf (494)	Senior Men (39th)	23h48m21s	The Finish	BRONZE

There are lots of links to Parish Walk articles:

- <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/sport/athletics/are-we-ready-for-a-new-name-on-the-parish-walk-trophy-803777>
- <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/parish-walk-is-officially-underway-805113>
- <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/callum-gawne-wins-maiden-parish-walk-title-805180>
- <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/man-forced-to-retire-from-parish-walk-challenge-posts-emotional-update-from-hospital-805357>
- <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/parish-walk-2025-ten-of-the-best-pictures-as-more-than-1000-competitors-take-part-805404>

Andrew Titley (C84) was after his 23rd finish (see article <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gkdp43gzwo.amp>) and he made no mistakes, finishing 122nd with a time of 19:42:55. He reported as follows

It was a hot day (for the Isle of Man), which took its toll on a number of walkers. As expected the walkers did have slightly slower times. It was extremely well organised as usual and the Manx community came out in full strength to give their support to all competitors. It was good to see the young age range of the walkers who performed so well. Let's hope they continue in the sport. It would be wonderful to see Australian walkers competing in the Parish Walk in the coming years.



Andrew completes his 23rd Parish Walk (photo Andrew Titley)

2025 SWEDISH FOTRALLY, MARIEFRED, SWEDEN, JUNE 27 ONWARDS

The *Backyard Ultra* continues to be the flavour of the month around the world, with events being scheduled at a rate of knots (the backyard ultra is a form of ultramarathon race where competitors must consecutively run the distance of 6,706 meters (4.167 miles) in less than one hour. When each lap is completed, the remaining time within the hour is typically used to recover for the next hour's race.)

What's with the odd looking hourly distance of 6,706m. Well, multiply that by 24 and you get 160.94km (ie 100 miles). While it's a great concept, it is certainly not the first of its type and the standard remains the Swedish Fotrally which is held each year in that country (see <https://www.fotrally.se/> and <https://www.facebook.com/fotrally.ik/>). Let me explain.

The Long Walk is a novel by Stephen King, published under the pseudonym Richard Bachman in 1979. It was collected in 1985 in the hardcover omnibus *The Bachman Books*, and has seen several reprints since. Set in a dystopian present, the plot revolves around the contestants of a gruelling walking contest, held annually by a totalitarian version of the United States of America. In 2000, the American Library Association listed *The Long Walk* as one of the 100 best books for teenage readers published between 1966 and 2000. According to Stephen King, it is the first novel he wrote, begun eight years before his novel *Carrie* was published in 1974, when he was a freshman at the University of Maine in 1966–1967. It's a ripper yarn that I first read many years ago. Of course, in the book, once you dropped behind, you were shot. Luckily that does not happen with Fotrally – you are simply out of the race but live to fight again another day!

So, just how far can a person go before he/she can go no further? Well, in 2009, Pontus Kylberg decided to put the concept to the test and organised what is perhaps the ultimate ultra challenge. The walkers walk day and night, without rest until there is only one left standing. Hundreds test themselves each year but only a few get beyond the 24 hour mark. From then on, it's a brutal war of attrition as, one by one, they fall by the wayside. All contestants walk together as a group at a speed of 5 km/h. In the front there is a leading vehicle which the contestants may not pass and in the back there is a portable toilet which the contestants may not be passed by. Each contestant gets 25 minutes per 24 hours for toilet breaks (all the contestants are timed). You must carry what you need, with support zones only once every 6 hours where you can supplement drinking water and food stocks. But the race itself never stops, even for such refreshment points. You must get going before the rear vehicle passes.

Wow! What a concept. Let's focus on a few key milestones from previous editions.

- The 2014 event was fought out between Swedish walkers **Silvio Cannavá** and **Lena Jensen**. Lena eventually had to call it quits after 55 hours of walking, leaving Silvio as the last man standing. In fact, Swedish walkers filled the first 25 places that year.
- The 2015 staging really upped the ante on what was possible with winner **Fredrik Forsström** walking for an amazing **87 hours and 45 minutes**, just over 32 hours above the previous record. **Jonas Davidsson** took second place in the same time (but obviously could no longer continue) while Silvio Cannavá, Pia Rosvall, PerOla Axelsson and Niklas Grebäck also shattered the 2014 record of 55 hours. For 44 year old Forsström, it was his 4th Fotrally – his previous placings had been 20th (2012 24:20), 3rd (2013 33:26) and 5th (2014 48:18). 5km/hr for some 88 hours comes out at around 440km of continuous walking.
- In 2016, it came down to another two person duel, with **PerOla Axelman** eventually winning with 72 hours 12 minutes, after **Robert Jonsson** had to stop, total distance 361km! Obviously Axelsson could have gone on but he called it quits at that stage, content with being the last person standing. It was his sixth attempt and the win gave him his first victory after 5th, 4th, 3rd and 2nd placings in previous years.
- A similar two person duel happened in 2017, when **Richard Andersson** outlasted **Ange Truss** by walking for 81 hours (405km).
- 2018 saw a duel between the same two walkers. After **87 hours and 48 minutes**, the win was finally decided when officials forced Agne Truss to retire, worried that her condition had deteriorated too much to continue. That left Richard Andersson as the final walker, repeating his 2017 win. They had both bettered the previous record of 87 hours and 45 minutes and had each walked a total distance of 439km! Richard chose to stop then as well. I suppose when you have won and set a new record, you can be excused for resting on your laurels!
- 2019 saw Agne Truss of Estonia finally take the overall title and become the first non Swedish winner, outlasting Swedish walker Niklas Yjord, with a final time of **75 hours and 6 minutes**.
- After a two year covid break, the event returned in 2022, with the win going to **Anders Jungefors**. He scored repeat wins in 2023 and 2024.

The history of the event can be traced with the winning times from the 14 annual stagings held up till 2024.

Year	Name	Location	Time (hh:mm)
2009	Thomas Gjutarenäfve	Tullinge, Sweden	9:45
2010	Maria Thomsen	Stockholm, Sweden	29:58
2011	Jonas Davidsson	Hägersten, Sweden	33:21
2012	Jonas Davidsson	Hägersten, Sweden	50:40
2013	Silvio Cannavá	Stockholm, Sweden	48:05
2014	Silvio Cannavá	Stockholm, Sweden	55:00
2015	Fredrik Forsström	Huddinge, Sweden	87:45
2016	PerOla Axelsson	Stockholm, Sweden	72:12
2017	Richard Anderrson	Lund, Sweden	81:00
2018	Richard Anderrson	Lund, Sweden	87:48
2019	Agne Truss	Södertälje, Estonia	75:06
2020	Cancelled due to Covid		
2021	Cancelled due to Covid		
2022	Anders Jungefors	Stockholm, Sweden	55:10
2023	Anders Jungefors	Stockholm, Sweden	42:00
2024	Anders Jungefors	Stockholm, Sweden	56:48

The big question was the same as always – how far would they go in 2025? Like last year, the event was held in the Swedish city of Mariefred, with four different six-hour routes around the city. The walk got underway at 9PM on Friday 27th June, with 68 entrants toeing the line.



Out on the course – unlike the Backyard Ultra, there is no stopping here

The Race Report from <https://www.fotrally.se/> is comprehensive

This year's edition of the Marathonmarschen/Fotrally was the fifteenth edition since its start in 2009. For the fourth time, the competition was decided on four different rounds around Mariefred. The event has really taken root in Mariefred, where the depot area on the shooting range has received better support each year. This arrangement is clearly easier for both organizers and participants and supporters. However, we see that it is more difficult to attract participants compared to when we started in Stockholm and went around Lake Mälaren. The competition management will have to think through how to attract more participants during the autumn. Those of you who went this year are welcome to bring friends and training buddies. This year's starting field included 68 participants, the lowest since 2011 and 16 fewer than last year.

An hour before the start, competition director Nicklas Ulvnäs gave a review of the rules and structure. **Noomi Grimstad**, who was making her twelfth start, received a well-deserved round of applause. Since the winner of the last three years, Anders Jungefors, was not going to participate, it was clear that there would be a new winner this time. However, **Fredrik Forsström** registered later that evening. Fredrik, who won in 2015 in 87 hours and 45 minutes, was going with his daughter Matilda this time.

Unlike last year when the heavens opened just in time for the start and everyone got wet from the start, this year's competition began in near perfect weather. The first night was windy but not too cold. There were a few showers on rounds two and three. After a sunny morning, Saturday was mostly overcast, which kept the temperature down. Sunday was also windy and offered thunderstorms.

Right from the start, you could feel the good atmosphere and conversations with old and new participants followed one another. After the first two hours, water controls started to appear more than often enough. With the pace-keeping app that Nicklas developed, the pace-keeping gets better and better. The first round went exactly to the second. 64 people completed the first run and 59 set off on round two towards Stallarholmen. At the end of round two, there was a slight miss, which meant that we had to walk one by one on the football field on the way to the depot. Some people apparently have nightmares about this football field. 55 participants entered the depot after twelve hours and passed the bronze medal threshold and 47 set off on round three.

1 ½ hours into round three, another twelve had dismounted. At the end of the round, we walked as usual through central Mariefred next to participants who finished in the Semesterloppet. When the line approached the depot for the third time, there were 30 participants left. Six of these broke off in connection with or just after the depot. When we rounded Gripsholms Slott after 20 hours, there were 22 left in the line.

The fight for the yellow cards, top 20 for next year, was on! The oldest participant, 73-year-old **Lennart Möllerström**, began to lean precariously and was forced to break after 21 hours and 24 minutes. Now there were 20 of us left, which made it easy for the undersigned to feel satisfied with 21 hours and 33 minutes in my tenth start.

The other 19 completed round four and reached 24 hours and the silver medal limit. Half an hour into the next round, five more had broken, including Noomi Grimstad who completed 24 hours for the fourth time in her twelve starts. When **Hans Kneczke** broke in tenth place after 27 hours and 15 minutes, the team competition was decided and Walking Dead (Stefan Edström, Stefan Jonsson and Hans Kneczke) finished second behind The Three Musketeers (Johan Nilsson, Helen Lagerblad and Anna Hessel). Nine participants completed round five (30 hours) and four broke near the pit stop. Including the best debutant **Peter Liff** who finished eighth in 30 hours and 1 minute. The competition's all-rounder **Stefan Jonsson** finished seventh in 30 hours and 5 minutes in his seventh start, all over 24 hours! **Anna Hessel** also surprisingly broke here. Anna who completed 50 hours last year had, however, had long had stomach problems. **Teodor Colombo** was the next to break, due to lack of sleep after 31 hours and 23 minutes.

Four participants completed six rounds (36 hours) but **Stefan Edström** broke shortly after in 36 hours and 15 minutes (PB 31.26 2018) in his ninth start. Now there were three left, second in 2024 **Johan Nilsson**, fourth in 2024 **Helen Lagerblad** and **Pierre Börjesson** who made a comeback after six years.



And then there were three: Helen Lagerblad, Pierre Börjesson and Johan Nilsson

All three completed round seven and round eight (48 hours). Now they had reached the limit for a gold medal. After 50 hours and 12 minutes (PB 41.50 2019) the competition was over for Pierre.

Now it was a duel between Johan and Helen. Funnily enough, the close quartet from 2024 reunited when Anders Jungefors was the pacer and Anna Hessel came back and acted as the leader. Johan and Helen passed the pit stop for the ninth time (54 hours). After 56 hours and 48 minutes, they passed the course record from last year. Johan had a really hard time during the night, but when the sunlight came back and after a biscuit chocolate, he perked up and Helen gave up after 58 hours and 32 minutes. A well-deserved victory for Johan in his fifth start. He has improved every time (24.48, 30.14, 48.05, 56.48). Helen, who made her fourth start, has also improved every time (27.54, 38.00, 48.02).

Here are those who made it past the 24 hour mark this year.

1.	Johan Nilsson	Nacka	Sweden	58 hrs 32 min
2.	Helen Lagerblad	Mora	Sweden	58 hrs 32 min
3.	Pierre Börjesson	Stockholm	Sweden	50 hrs 12 min
4.	Stefan Edström	Järfälla	Sweden	36 hrs 15 min
5.	Theodor Colombo	Åkersberga	Sweden	31 hrs 23 min
6.	Anna Hessel	Uppsala	Sweden	30 hrs 06 min
7.	Stefan Jonsson	Mariefred	Sweden	30 hrs 05 min
8.	Peter Liff	Hunnebostrand	Sweden	30 hrs 01 min
9.	Martin Leukhardt	Uppsala	Sweden	30 hrs 01 min
10.	Hans Kneczke	Hässelby	Sweden	27 hrs 15 min

11.	Magnus Svensson	Örebro	Sweden	26 hrs 25 min
12.	Mattias Fahlén	Boxholm	Sweden	25 hrs 50 min
13.	Mika Sinkkonen	Södertälje	Sweden	25 hrs 50 min
14.	Johan Andreasson	Kungälv	Sweden	25 hrs 06 min
15.	Micael Andreasson	Romelanda	Sweden	24 hrs 37 min
16.	Noomi Grimstad	Skellefteå	Sweden	24 hrs 34 min
17.	Stefan Larsson	Bollebygd	Sweden	24 hrs 12 min
18.	Anders Thunberg	Umeå	Sweden	24 hrs 07 min
19.	Kristoffer Pettersson	Katrineholm	Sweden	24 hrs 04 min



There can only be one winner and this year it was Johan Nilsson

With this year's competition, 1009 different people have participated in the Foot Rally/Marathon March.

107TH NIJMEGEN 4 DAY WALK FESTIVAL, NIJMEGEN, NED, JUL 15-18, 2025

I round out this newsletter with a report on the biggest annual walking event held anywhere in the world – the Nijmegen 4 Day Festival (see <https://www.4daagse.nl/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1000903390929556/>). First organised in 1909 by the Dutch military to keep their personnel fit, it now boasts over 45,000 participants each year. Competitors can choose from a daily distance of 30km, 40km or 50km. All have the same goal: to earn the coveted 4 Day Cross. The event history is well worth reading: <https://www.4daagse.nl/over-de-4daagse/historie>



Some stats from this year's 107th festival:

- No fewer than 82 nationalities were represented this year. The youngest participant was 11 years old, the oldest a remarkable 94. Hundreds of thousands of spectators along the route provided a constant stream of encouragement and enthusiasm.
- With 45,539 participants at the start, the 4 Days Marches will once again go down in history as the largest multi-day walking event in the world. It was especially noteworthy this year as the event started and finished in Nijmegen for the hundredth time.
- Of those 45,539 walkers, nearly 43,000 walkers reached the iconic Via Gladiola after four days of walking, on their way to the finish line. After this festive entry, they received their well-deserved reward.
- At 82, Willy Heij completed his 65th Four Days Marches, doing 30km each day!
- The low number of dropouts this year was striking. With a total of 2,762 dropouts, 93.9% reached the finish line (2.5% more than in 2024). According to experts involved in the organization, this is likely due to a combination of factors: participants are preparing more seriously, training specifically, and increasingly taking the event as seriously as a marathon. Although Wednesday was a wet day, the weather conditions on the other days were good.

I must make special mention of two of our UK based Australian Centurions, **Jill Green (C38)** and **Sue Clements (C35)**. Jill completed the 40km option while Sue completed the 50km option (her 11th participation in this wonderful event). Note that Jill and Sue had just come back from completing the 292km Paris to Tubize walk, with only a weekend break in between! It was Sue's 12th finish of this iconic walk. Now that's probably a whole story just by itself. There is no stopping them!

The next edition of the 4 Days Marches will take place from 21 to 24 July 2026.

RECORD UPDATE

In our March 2025 newsletter, I announced three new records that had been set at the recent Sri Chinmoy 48 Hour Championships in Canberra.

Sabina Hamaty	48 Hours Walk	Open All Comers and Residential	275.957 km	Canberra	21-23 Mar 2025
Sabina Hamaty	48 Hours Walk	W55 All Comers and Residential	275.957 km	Canberra	21-23 Mar 2025
Val Chesterton	6 Hours Walk	W80 All Comers and Residential	29.823 km	Canberra	22 Mar 2025

Thanks to David Billett for pointing out that there was actually a fourth record set, namely a W55 200km record for Sabina Hamaty.

Sabina Hamaty 200 km Walk W55 All Comers and Residential 32:59:31 Canberra 21-23 Mar 2025

Apologies to Sabina for missing that one. I have updated the records listings and will get a record certificate posted out to her. So belated congratulations Sabina – well walked!

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

Another action packed newsletter. I feel so jealous of our European and UK based walkers – the choices are limitless. Oh well, we can still get out on the local front. There are no excuses!

With kind regards

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