



## HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club  
2009/2010 Number 15  
6 January 2010



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### TEN OF OUR TOP PERFORMERS IN 2009

With another calendar year now completed, it is time to review and highlight 10 of our top Australian performers for 2009, as per my own reckoning. As usual, such a list is produced with the best of intentions but not guaranteed to meet everyone's approval!

#### **Jared Tallent**

Jared has to sit at the top of any list given his two top ten finishes in the 2009 IAAF World Champs in Berlin. But these were just two of many highlights for Jared last year. The list includes a new Commonwealth Track Record of 18:41.83 recorded in February in Sydney, a superb 1:19:42 in winning the Australian 20km Summer championship in March, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in the IAAF Challenge events in Mexico and China, a new course record of 2:14:57 in the Canberra 20 miler in June (with a PB 30km split of 2:05:15), 6<sup>th</sup> (1:20:27) and 7<sup>th</sup> (3:44:50) in the IAAF World Championship 20km and 50km events in Berlin in August, 8<sup>th</sup> in the IAAF Challenge Series Final in Seransk (39:28) in September and a PB time of 3:38:56 in winning the 2009 Australian 50km championship in atrocious weather conditions in Melbourne in November.

#### **Luke Adams**

Luke continued on from his superb 2008 year with a wonderful 2009, beating Jared on a number of occasions and recording a top ten finish in the 50km in Berlin. His highlights included 7<sup>th</sup> (1:24:53), 6<sup>th</sup> (1:21:17), 6<sup>th</sup> (1:21:30) and 6<sup>th</sup> (39:16) in his 4 IAAF World Challenge outings in Mexico, China, Spain and Russia, second in the Canberra 20 miler in a PB time of 2:18:49 and 6<sup>th</sup> in the IAAF World 50km championship (with a PB time of 3:43:59) in Berlin. Luke's good form in the IAAF Challenge events earned him third overall, following on from his 2007 overall win.

#### **Jess Rothwell**

Jess was our top woman during the summer season, recording a number of superb 5000m walks that culminated in a win in the Victorian 5000m in a new Victorian record of 21:03.33, second only to the great Kerry Saxby-Junna in time. She then won the Australian U23 20km championship in 1:30:25, the fourth fastest Australian of all time, and all while still 19 years of age. She won the Canberra 10 mile event in June in a super fast 1:14:33 and then finished as the first Australian with her 22<sup>nd</sup> place in the IAAF World 20km championship in Berlin in August. Now aged 20, she has a huge future.

#### **Cheryl Webb**

Cheryl chased Jess Rothwell over the summer, reducing her 5000m time to 22:19.19 in Sydney in February. In March she won the Australian Open 20km Summer championship in a huge PB time of 1:29:44, becoming the first woman to break the 90 minute barrier in Australia and the third fastest of all time. An unfortunate disqualification in the IAAF World Championship event in Berlin put a dampener on what had been, to that point, a wonderful year but I have no doubt that Cheryl will bounce back in 2010 with more great walking.

#### **Peter Bennett**

Peter continues in the forefront of the world in ultra distance walking. His repeat win in the Rouen 24 Hour classic in France in May 2009 was his third in four years and his distance of 213.886km led the world 24 Hour walk rankings for 2009. This is a strong sport in Europe and for an Aussie to be showing the way is pretty astounding. This was actually one of three 24H walks that Peter did this year (May – Rouen in France, July – Brisbane, August – Caboolture) so he shows great resilience in such a demanding discipline. Apart from that, he is a regular racewalking competitor over the shorter distances and won the Queensland 30km title earlier this year.

#### **Dane Bird-Smith**

Dane took all before him this year, mixing it with the senior walkers during the summer season (20:22 for 5000m walk at 16 years of age) and being undefeated in junior ranks throughout the year. His wins in the Australian U20 10,000m track championship (43:47) in April, the Australian U20 10km championship (44:07) in August, the RWA 10km championship (44:17) in June and his great 8<sup>th</sup> place in the World Youth championships in Italy (43:53) in July show a continuing excellence. To cap it off, all this was done while he completed the tough Year 12 study year. He finished off the year in style with a win in the Australian Schools U18 5000m walk (21:08). Add to that, his excellent 400m running (48.4 for 400m!) and you have one of our brightest prospects for many years.

#### **Brad Aiton**

Like his club mate Dane, Brad took all before him in the U16 ranks, winning the LBG U16 3km walk (14:09) in June, the Australian U16 5km roadwalking championship (23:54) in August and the Australian Schools U17 5000m (23:19) and the U16 3000m (13:19) in December. A prolific racer (over 30 races for the year) with a set of very respectable PBs all done this year.

**Chris Erickson**

It is easy to focus on the winners and not bother to look further down the ranks but doing so means you might miss other walkers who have had excellent years. Over the past 12 months, Chris has improved his PBs over all distances, taking his times down to 11:32 (3000m), 19:25 (5000m), 41:09 (10km), 1:22:53 (20km), 2:12:34 (30km) and 3:55:30 (50km). Only an illtimed and serious abscess stopped him from competing in the IAAF World 50km championship in Berlin and this was the one blight on an otherwise top year. It is no mean feat to beat all your PBs when you are already competing at a high level.

**Amy Burren**

It is difficult to pick out one or more walkers from the many very talented girls currently racing in Australia but Amy Burren certainly deserves to be in any short list. Possessed of an impeccable style, she was pretty much unbeatable in major competitions in the second half of this year. Wins at Parramatta in the Australian U16 5000m roadwalking championship (25:01) and in the Australian Schools U16 3000m (14:18) and a great second in the Australian Schools U17 5000m (25:00) put her at the head of the pack. Still only 15 years of age, she has a big future.

**Rachel Tallent**

Sixteen year old Rachel Tallent is shaping as our top junior female walker after a wonderful year's racing. Producing leading 10km (49:34) and 5000m (23:42) times last summer, she took this form into the winter with a series of big 10km performances, reducing her time to 49:31 and being the first Australian to finish in the Australian U20 10km championship in Sydney in August. She finished off her year with a good win in the Australian Schools U17 5000m (24:42) in Hobart in December.



**Jared, Luke, Jess, Cheryl and Peter in action during 2009**



**Dane, Brad, Chris, Amy and Rachel in action during 2009**



**GJ McDONALD & CO. REAL ESTATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, GEELONG, SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER**

Thanks to Bronwyn Clark for the walk results from the Geelong Championships, held on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Great times by Jmara Hockley Samon and James Seid-Christmass in particular.

U14 Girls	3000m Walk	Megan Walker (Cor)	17:58.61
U16 Girls	3000m Walk	Jmara Hockley-Samon (Chi)	14:31.01 – 5 sec PB
		Jill Lockwood (Cor)	24:04.31
U16 Boys	3000m Walk	Jared Walker (Cor)	15:06.38
		Josh Dillon (Cor)	16:15.07
Vets 40+ Men	3000m Walk	James Seid-Christmass (Cor)	14:20.00 – 5 sec PB

**2009 IAAF CHALLENGE FINAL PLACINGS**

The following fine report from IAAF correspondent Paul Warburton was recently published on the IAAF website.

Monte-Carlo - Winners of the 2009 IAAF Race Walking Challenge Eder Sanchez of Mexico and Kjersti Platzer proved that experience counts when it matters as both veterans of race walking they prevailed over the younger challengers in the season-long challenge.



**Left: Sanchez in action in Berlin**



**Right: Platzer wins the Challenge event in Chihuahua**

It pays to keep going if you race walk – ask Eder Sanchez. It may seem the most blindingly obvious advice to athletes, but the Mexican champion would be the first to agree after he surmounted swine flu, a so-so collection of OK but unspectacular results, and other disappointments before finally sitting top of the IAAF Race Walking Challenge for 2009. Sanchez gets to pocket the top-dollar \$30,000 cheque for his efforts – and the knowledge that come next year when the IAAF World Walking Cup fetches up in his backyard at Chihuahua in May, he'll probably be in pole position to make his bank manager smile there too.

From a different point of view, it also nudges his country back into walking's limelight after a lean time of it for most of the decade. More than 40 years ago Polish coach Jerzy Hausleber was hired to make sure Mexico City had at least one athletic medal to show for their pains in putting on the 1968 Olympics.

It all came good when Jose Pedraza staged a last-minute charge to come within a second of winning gold. And so up to 2000 it was a case of think walking – think Mexico. But Bernardo Segura's controversial DQ inside the Olympic stadium in Sydney heralded a lean time of it internationally for the country until Sanchez's coming of age in 2009. He finished third in last year's Challenge having led the standings until the last couple of months of the season. But an average Olympics and a DNF in the final race at Murcia saw both Jared Tallent and the retiring Jefferson Perez nip ahead of him in the shake-up.

This time, the improved Sanchez held his form to make sure there would be no second slip.

He opened his campaign in March with a repeat victory in Chihuahua half-a-minute quicker than his victory there 12 months ago. But the key race proved to be his next tussle in China, at Wuxi to be precise, on April 18. Sanchez's battle-royale with Olympic champion Valeriy Borchin may have seen the Mexican lose out by five seconds as he shot through the line in 1:19:36 – but it relegated Hao Wang to fourth. Come the final tally in September, the Chinese finished just two points down on Sanchez - 44 to 42 - but the 10 points he gained to Wang's seven in Wuxi proved crucial. An eight-pointer at La Coruna in June, finishing third to another Wang fourth, and then a reversal when the Chinese took silver and a PB to Sanchez's bronze in the IAAF World Championships in Berlin, set up the showdown in Saransk for the finale on September 19. The Mexican's

38:31 over 10km to Wang's 39:03 in Russia rubber-stamped a fine series.

"It gives me special joy to be able to re-establish Mexican walkers as among the best internationally," Sanchez said. "People have noticed I have been climbing up the ladder of international race walking. In all my races this year, I finished in the top three and the judges have noticed my technique is good. Only in China I was given a yellow card, in Russia I finished with a clean board."

Australian Luke Adams returned to the Challenge podium for third place having won the 2007 series. And despite drawing a blank in the previous two Challenges, China scored a hat-trick of appearances in the top seven when Yafei Chu finished fourth and countryman Faguang Xu came seventh.

But will there be a better ambassador of the Challenge than Kjersti Platzer? The Norwegian competed in the inaugural 2003 series where she finished second, added another runner's-up spot in 2007, and won the women's event for the last two years before announcing her retirement in Saransk. By the way, if you're counting, that's also a pretty hard slap in the face to the sceptics who claim you can't get rich from a cinderella sport. The 37-year-old's earnings made it into six figures long before she got to the end of the road in the eastern Russian city.

Prepared to globetrot with brother Eric and husband Stephan, she had notched up four firsts by the Krakow edition on May 31 – and was already out of sight of the chasers. Having defended her title in Chihuahua, she broke the tape at the Sesto San Giovanni and Rio Maior races, but came second to Sabine Zimmer-Krantz, who incidentally tied the knot down a coalmine in February, and then dug out a win in La Coruna by 30 seconds over Platzer. That was still enough to create a path for the amiable and multi-lingual Norwegian to the top of the podium, and one, who's enhanced more than a few Challenge press conferences over the years as well. She said: "After Berlin and the World Championships, I had a lot of pain and it made it hard to train mentally. But two weeks before Saransk – the pain went. I didn't think about it as my last race until afterwards. But two steps after the finish line I let out a big sigh of relief. Come the spring and competitions starting, I know a part of me would like to go out and race."

But if the winner was clear from a long way out, the race for second came down to the wire. In fact, had Elisa Rigauo held off just a little as the Italian forged a five-second gap in the series final in Saransk – she might have been the one picking up the \$20,000 cheque for runner-up. As it turned out, Olive Loughnane drew level a little after 2km, and as the 10km race sea-sawed between the two, a last kilometre sprint from the Irishwoman was worth an extra \$6,000 to her. Loughnane hinted at a decent year back in February. But she exceeded all expectations when she charged through the Brandenburg Gate to take silver at the World Championships in Berlin – and her Challenge success was another tale in the annals of dogged persistence winning out over heartbreak along the way.

Talking of dogged, Claudia Stef must know every Challenge venue like the inside of her kitbag. The 31-year-old Romanian even bettered Platzer by taking part in ALL seven series. Her debut in the Paris World Championships in 2003, where she finished fourth, then saw her bag a first, two seconds, a third, a sixth and this time, a fourth again, to show her whole-hearted support for the initiative. She claims that even on rough days she's never ever contemplated a retirement from a race - and like Sanchez, Platzer and Loughnane, will tell you all good things come to those who wait.

Paul Warburton for the IAAF

### Final Standings

Men			Women		
1.	Eder Sánchez	Mexico	1.	Kjersti Plätzer	Norway
2.	Wang Hao	China	2.	Olive Loughnane	Ireland
3.	<b>Luke Adams</b>	<b>Australia</b>	3.	Elisa Rigauo	Italy
4.	Chu Yafei	China	4.	Claudia Stef	Romania
5.	<b>Jared Tallent</b>	<b>Australia</b>	5.	Ana Maria Groza	Romania
6.	Xu Faguang	China	6.	Susana Feitor	Portugal
7.	Jesús Sánchez	Mexico	7.	Vera Santos	Portugal
			8.	Inês Henriques	Portugal

### LATEST UPDATE ON THE AUSTRALIAN 20KM CHAMPIONSHIPS IN HOBART

I have just hung up the phone after getting the latest status from AA Competition Manager David Gynther on the Australian 20km Championships (and U23 Aust vs NZ 20km and U20 10km World Cup trial) scheduled for Hobart on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February.

I had been told that everything would be up on the AA website before the office closed for Christmas. Unfortunately this did not eventuate and the office did not reopen for business until this Monday so I had to wait a further 10 days to find out what was going on. In the meanwhile, Triathlon Australia announced that they were cancelling their elite triathlon series and that one of the cancelled legs would be the Hobart event. As we were piggybacking on the back of the Hobart triathlon for our inner city racing course, this meant a further flurry of activity by local organiser Brian Roe to clarify our status.

David Gynther now tells me that we look safe and that things are proceeding again even though the triathlon will not longer be run. He expects entry procedures and race information to be on the AA website by the end of this week. The only thing that may not be finalised by that stage is the race timetable as Brian Roe is still liaising with Tasmanian Govt officials to ensure that we can use the previously agreed docklands course. It may be necessary to change the events from the Saturday evening to the Sunday morning to ensure we still can get the course but that is an ongoing discussion. This is not AA's fault but is just a really unfortunate flow on from the Triathlon Australia decision. Hopefully all will be known very soon.

Once entries are in, AA will then select the Aust U23 vs New Zealand 20km team representatives from the eligible entries. So keep monitoring the AA website online entry panel (see left hand side box on <http://www.athletics.com.au/>) and get your entry in as soon as entries open. This promises to be a great event even if we are having to negotiate a significant last minute hiccup.

## WALKERS FEATURE IN AUSTRALIAN UNDER-19 TALENT SQUADS

Five walkers are amongst 31 Under-19 walkers invited to join the 2010 Australian Under-19 Talent Squad. Full details can be read at [http://www.athletics.com.au/news/news/2009/december/under\\_19\\_talent\\_squad\\_announce](http://www.athletics.com.au/news/news/2009/december/under_19_talent_squad_announce). Congratulations to

Beth Alexander	VIC
Dane Bird-Smith	QLD
Sean Fitzsimons	WA
Blake Steele	SA
Rachel Tallent	VIC

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Some years ago, I published an article on Tommy Hammond, one of the competitors in the inaugural 1908 Olympic walks and one of the greatest English walkers of the early twentieth century. I have recently been sent lots more information from his grandson Adrian and have been able to significantly extend the article. I reproduce it here for your general edification!

### T. E. (TOMMY) HAMMOND, "WORLD'S BEST"

Thomas Edgar Hammond, born on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1878 in Suffolk, was a tall lanky walker who stood just over 6 feet in height. He first came into prominence in the 52 mile Stock Exchange London to Brighton walk on May 1, 1903, when he finished third (9 hr 35 min 7 sec) to E. F. Broad and G. D. Nicholas (but well outside Jack Butler's record time of 8 hr 43 min 16 sec).

Taking the pastime up in an enthusiastic manner, he improved very quickly and in April 1904, he won the next edition of the London to Brighton in a best on record time of 8 hr 26 min 57 sec, over an hour faster than Broad's winning time the previous year and 17 minutes ahead of Butler's record.. Making reasonable allowance for the extra 2 miles, we have 50 miles in something like 8 hr 10 min.

A number of his fellow Stock Exchange friends recorded the occasion for posterity by presenting him with a suitably engraved garniture clock which is still in the family's possession



**The garniture clock and engraving to commemorate Hammond's 1904 Brighton walk**

Soon after this, in June 1904, Hammond joined the Surrey Walking Club (he subsequently went on to become one of the club mainstays, filling at various times the positions of Secretary and President) and over the next couple of years, he competed in various long walks as well as throwing himself further into the administration of the sport, becoming a member of the Southern counties Road Walking Association Committee.

On the walking front, he had some fierce battles with the other famous walkers of the period. Soon after the Brighton win, a track 50 mile event was staged and Hammond was beaten into second place by F. B. Thompson in a new record. Then in a subsequent 50 mile track race in June 1905, Jack Butler regained his 50 mile record with an amazing **7 hr 52 min 27 sec**. Then on Sept 22, 1906, Butler beat Hammond by over 10 min in the London to Brighton race, finishing in a record time of **8 hr 23 min 57 sec**.

Finally, on Good Friday 1907, Hammond gave people a further taste of his quality as a genuine 'World's Best'. On this occasion, he walked from London to Oxford, a distance of 54¾ miles in **8 hr 51 min 14 sec**. A correspondent of the time noted

*I affirm that this was as fine a piece of walking as it has ever been my privilege to witness. There was no hurry about it. There were no patent "bad times". The style was delightful to watch, precisely because it did not require an expert eye to appreciate it. It was walking, in the plain undiluted meaning of the term, without any artifice whatever. A more striking combination of ease and efficiency one could hardly imagine. The record breaker was quite fresh at the finish.*

Three months later, on 21-22 June 1907, Hammond was back on the roads and once again left the field in his wake in winning the

London to Brighton and Return walk. His time for the 104 mile distance was an amazing **18 hr 13 min 37 sec** and broke H. W. Horton's course record by over 2 hours. He covered the 62 ½ miles (over 100 km) to Brighton in 10 hr 30 min 36 sec and passed the 100 mile mark in **17 hr 25 min 22 sec**. Second place at the end of the race was over 2 hours behind him. Pundits of the day thought that this record would be unbeatable.

The course for that event was described as follows

*The race was walked from The "Swan and Sugarloaf", Croydon , to the Clock Tower, Westminster Bridge, 10 miles 3 furlongs; then right face and back to Brighton, 51 ½ miles more, making a total of 61 miles 7 furlongs. Then, wheeling around once more, back to the "Swan and Loaf", thus completing the double journey of 103 miles.*



**Hammond on the London to Brighton Rd and cooling off in a horse trough in the 1907 race**



**Hammond passing through Redhill on the return journey after completing 90 miles.  
Published with permission - <http://www.oldredhill.com/?goto=londonroadredhill>**

There was heated discussion as to whether a long distance walk should feature at the 1908 London Olympics but the discussion was lost and only two track walks featured – a 3500m and a 10 mile walk. Hammond was duly selected to represent Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the 10 mile track walk and thus had the honour of being one of the inaugural Olympic walkers. Unfortunately, being engaged in long distance training at that time, he did not prove fast enough to get into the final although the papers commented that he walked in beautiful style. <sup>1</sup>

Long distance walking had a high profile in those days and it was not surprising that in the post Olympic euphoria, a 24 Hour Track Walk race was set up by Middlesex Walking Club. This was reminiscent of the great ultra races of the previous century and it provided a perfect opportunity for Hammond to set even more records. The date was the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1908 and the venue was the White City Stadium, Shepherd's Bush. 42 of the leading long distance walking exponents toed the starting line.

<sup>1</sup> He came 6<sup>th</sup> in Heat 1 in a time of 1:23:44.0 but only the first 4 from each of the two heats advance to the final.



The fiercest competition for Hammond was expected to come from Butler who still held the best track 50 mile walk time and the record for the London to Brighton walk. Expectations were realized when Butler went to an early lead which he maintained for the first 10 miles before others caught and passed him. In a huge upset, he was forced to retire at the 24 mile mark just as Hammond was starting to come into his own. Walking splendidly, he took the overall lead just before the 5 hour mark and was never headed from then on. He covered the first 50 miles in 8 hr 36 min 31 sec and his 12 hour distance was an astounding 68 miles 325 yds. Powering on with no signs of slowing, he created a new 100 miles track record of **18 hr 4 min and 10 ½ sec** and eventually finished with an incredible **131 miles 580 yards** in 24 hours. This remains a distance that few walkers have been able to beat in the nearly 100 years since.



The local newspaper showed the above photo of Hammond and described the finish as follows

*As it got to minutes instead of hours, the very large crowd, who were now thronging the stands, were aroused to the highest pitch of excitement. They cheered Hammond to the echo but this does not mean that they forgot to encourage other heroes, of whom perhaps Gillespie and Sampson were next in favour. Hammond now, though striding out grandly, was doubtless anticipating the end of the contest as keenly as any of those present.*

*A continuous roar heralded the announcement that the last 5 minutes had been entered into. Even the weariest of the competitors seemed to be infused with some of the enthusiasm of the onlookers and when, at last, amid indescribable enthusiasm, Mr J. Daffern fired the pistol announcing the termination of the great "twenty four", there were none of the pitiable breakdowns so much in evidence at the finish of the "marathon" race.*

*Hammond intended to go on and complete the 132<sup>nd</sup> mile but even the Stadium authorities could not prevent the crowd breaking into the enclosure and they surged across the grass in a manner which precluded the possibility of any further walking.*

The crowd of 20,000 very badly wanted to carry Hammond around the track after he had finished. Hammond, in typically modest manner, had other ideas. With the band playing "See the Conquering Hero Comes", he walked across to the dressing room arm in arm with Horton – past and present London to Brighton record holders. It just seemed the appropriate thing to do.

The next year saw Hammond dominate another London to Brighton walk. The date was 1 May 1909 and the occasion was the Surrey Walking Club's "Dithy Club" race from Westminster Bridge to the Royal Aquarium in Brighton. Hammond had been keen to have one final go at Butler's record and this proved the occasion. His time of **8 hr 18 min 18 sec** for the 52 miles broke the record by over 5 minutes. Brighton residents in their thousands lined the final miles to witness the performance.

But if Hammond thought that he could go out on a high, he was soon to have a rude awakening. On 4 September 1909, only five months after his walk, H. Ross, in his first 50 mile race, won the Polytechnic Harriers London to Brighton race in an even better time of 8 hr 11 min 14 sec. Hammond had lost his record!

It was a time in which every athlete wanted to be a long distance walker and the cream of athletics vied for the honour and notoriety associated with winning such classic events. In this climate of one-upmanship, events tumbled on one after another.

Two weeks after the Polytechnic Harriers event, Blackheath Harriers hosted yet another 24 hour walking race, at the White City Stadium. By now the incessant racing was taking its toll and the retirees included Hammond, Butler and Ross. Tom Payne of North Shields, a member of the Lancashire Walking Club, won with a distance of 127 miles but the general disappointment was paramount – the favourites were nowhere to be seen and the records did not tumble.



**The starting line for the 1910 24 hour walk.**

This effectively marked the end of Hammond's walking career. From now on, he turned more to the administration of the sport and, in 1911, he was one of the group who set up the Centurions. This group took on the role of recognizing the feat of those walkers who walked 100 miles within 24 hours. He was retrospectively awarded Centurion membership number 10 for his 1907 record breaking walk from London to Brighton and Return. He became the inaugural secretary/treasurer for the organisation and was club captain for an incredible 36 years from 1911 to 1946.



**Tommy Hammond in the 1920s - on bicycle (photo on left) and in the middle back in hat (photo on right)**

And what of his wonderful 1907 'London to Brighton and Return' performance? Finally in June 1926, with a much improved road surface and with a crack field assembled, people finally thought that a new record might be on the cards and so it proved. 14 men completed the distance and the winner, W. F. "Billy" Baker recorded a time of **18 hr 5 min 52 secs** to break Hammond's record by just under 8 minutes. In typically generous fashion, Hammond wrote to the new record holder to congratulate him. The following reply was sent back

26-6-1926

*Mr T. E. Hammond Esq.*

*Dear Mr Hammond*

*It gives me great joy to have received your splendid letter of congratulations.*

*Of all the trophies I have won, there is none I shall prize more than that. In my own heart, I am convinced that your own record is more than equal to the time put up last Saturday, owing to the shorter distance and the better surface of the Brighton road at the present time. But I suppose that this is considered to be all in the luck of the game. I only trust I may be inspired that that wonderful spirit of true sportsmanship akin to your own, when the present record comes to be beaten.*

*I am returning your letter, for you omitted to sign it. Without that, it would not be complete.*

*Pleased to say have now completely recovered from the efforts of last Saturday. Many thanks for your kind words of encouragement during the race.*

*With all good wishes*

*Yours very sincerely*

*W. F. Baker*





**LONDON TO BRIGHTON  
AND BACK.**  
—  
**W. F. BAKER WINS IN**  
**18hr. 5min. 51 3-5sec.**  
—  
**RECORD TIME.**



**Left: W. F. Baker (left), who broke Tommy's record in 1926  
Right: Hammond in later life in his role as a stockbroker**

Hammond died in June 1946 at 68 years of age and the Centurions decided to honour his memory by purchasing a handsome three handled silver cup which would be called ‘The Hammond Cup’. This was to be awarded to the winner of the annual Centurions 100 mile walk. The cup was mislaid in the 1980’s and, when rediscovered, it was found to be missing its base and had not been engraved since 1965. A very generous donation of £300 from Richard and Sandra Brown enabled a new base to be purchased and the engraving to be brought up to date. It continues to be presented each year, a lasting memorial to Tom Hammond.

Looking back from our modern perspective, we can still appreciate the wonderful times he recorded on rough roads and with a minimum of equipment and support. He is still regarded as one of the greatest long distance walkers ever and as the ‘World’s Best’ during that exciting era. His shadow still looms large nearly 100 years later.

Hammond’s finest walk remains his 24 hour track distance of 131 miles 580 yards, done in 1908. It was not bettered until 1950 when Frenchman Henri Caron managed 132 miles 1320 yards and it was not until 1960 that Hew Nielson, with a distance of 133 miles 21 yards, beat his British record. His track performance remains even to this day the second fastest ever by a British walker.



**Hammond as he is best remembered – leading on the road, surrounded by cyclists and attendants**

#### WHAT'S COMING UP

Our Victorian competition resumes this weekend with Athletics Victoria competitions at our three country venues on Saturday

09/01/09	AV Shield - Round 11 (BENDIGO REGION)	La Trobe University Bendigo Athletics Complex, Bendigo
09/01/09	AV Shield - Round 11 (GEELONG REGION)	Landy Field (Geelong), South Geelong
09/01/09	AV Shield - Round 10 (BALLARAT REGION)	Llanberris Reserve (Ballarat), Ballarat

and with VRWC road races at Albert Park on Sunday. The fixture for Sunday reads as follows:

<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2010, VRWC Events, Albert Park</b>		
9.00am	20km, 15km, 10km	Open
10:30am	5km, 3km	Open
	3km	Under 15
11.00am	2km	Under 12
	1km	Under 9

### DATES...DATES...DATES

As usual, I finish with a list of upcoming events on the local, national and international fronts.

Sat 9 Jan 2010	Athletics Victoria Shield competition resumes at country venues
Sun 10 Jan 2010	VRWC road races, Albert Park
Thurs 14 Jan 2010	Athletics Victoria Shield competition resumes at metropolitan venues
22-24 Jan 2009	Victorian Country Championships, Newborough
Thurs 28 Jan 2010	Invitational VMA 5000m/3000m walks at East Burwood Masters, East Bwd Aths Track, 7:50PM
Sat Jan 30, 2010	Canberra Grand Prix (including Australia Cup) – includes Invitation 5000m walks Possible 3000m handicap walk at the Victorian Athletic League meet at St Albans in Melbourne.
Sat 13 Feb 2010	Australian Summer 20 km road championships, Hobart (including U20 10km World Cup trials) Incorporating Australia U23 vs New Zealand Open 20km Teams Competition
Thurs 18 Feb 2010	Victorian 5000m track walk title (in conjunction with an AV All Comers Meet at Olympic Park)
Thurs 25 Feb 2010	AMA 4 x 800 Walk Relays, East Burwood Athletics Track, 7:45PM (also 2km and 4km walks at 8PM)
26-27 Feb 2010`	Victorian U14-U18 & U20 Track and Field Champs, Olympic Park
27 Feb 2010	Sydney Grand Prix – 5000m walks
11-14 Mar 2010	Australian U14, U15, U16, U17, U18 and U20 Track and Field Champs, Sydney (walks in all divisions)
20-21 Mar 2009	Victorian Masters T&F Championships, Hagenauer's Reserve, Box Hill
26-28 Mar 2010	Victorian Open T&F Championships, Olympic Park (note 5000m walks held separately on Thur 18 Feb)
2-5 April 2010	Easter weekend - Australian Masters T&F Champs, Perth
Sun 11 April 2010	VMA 5000m track championships and VRWC events, venue TBC
16-18 April 2010	Australian Open and U23 Track and Field Championships, Perth

#### 2010 International Highlights

May 15-16, 2010	<b>IAAF World Race Walking Cup, Chihuahua, Mexico.</b> See <a href="http://www.iaaf.org/wrc10/preview.html">http://www.iaaf.org/wrc10/preview.html</a>
July 3-10, 2010	<b>Oceania Masters Championships, Tahiti</b>
July 19-25, 2010	<b>World Junior Championships, Moncton, Canada</b>
14-26 Aug, 2010	<b>World Youth Olympics, Singapore</b> (10000m walk boys, 5000m walk girls)
Oct 3-14, 2010	<b>Commonwealth Games, Delhi, India.</b> See <a href="http://www.cwgdelhi2010.com/">http://www.cwgdelhi2010.com/</a>

#### 2010 Race Walking Challenge Series (dates now confirmed)

Apr 10, 2010	IAAF Race Walking Challenge, Rio Maior, POR
May 1, 2010	IAAF Race Walking Challenge, Sesto san Giovanni, ITA
May 15-16, 2010	IAAF World Racewalking Cup, Chihuahua, MEX
May 29, 2010	IAAF Race Walking Challenge, Na Rynek marsz Krakow, POL
June 19, 2010	IAAF Race Walking Challenge, La Coruna, ESP
Sept 18, 2010	IAAF Race Walking Challenge Final, Beijing, CHN

#### 2010 – Other International Opportunities

May 30, 2010	German 20km Championships, Naumburg (see <a href="http://www.racewalking-naumburg.de">http://www.racewalking-naumburg.de</a> )
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#### 2011 International Fixture

July 7-17, 2011	<b>World Masters T&amp;F Championships, Sacramento, California, USA</b>
Aug 27-Sept 4, 2011	<b>13<sup>th</sup> IAAF World Championships in Athletics, Daegu, Korea</b>
Aug 12-22, 2011	<b>26<sup>th</sup> World Summer Universiade Games, Shenzhen, China.</b> See <a href="http://www.sz2011.org/eng/index.htm">http://www.sz2011.org/eng/index.htm</a>
July 7-17, 2011	<b>19<sup>th</sup> World Masters Athletics Championships Stadia, Sacramento, USA</b>

#### 2012 International Fixture

May 2012?	<b>IAAF World Race Walking Cup, Saransk, Russia</b>
July 27-Aug 12, 2012	<b>Olympic Games, London.</b> See <a href="http://www.london2012.com/">http://www.london2012.com/</a>

#### 2013 International Fixture

Aug 10-18, 2013	<b>14<sup>th</sup> IAAF World Championships in Athletics, Moscow, Russia</b>
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