



# HEEL & TOE *Online*

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The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club, Inc.

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Well, that's it for another year ... 50 more issues done and it's time for a break. *Heel & Toe Online* will be in holiday recess until Tuesday 7 January, when Issue #1 of 2025 will hit your screens.

Many thanks to all our correspondents – local, interstate and overseas – who've kept me supplied with so much interesting material over the course of 2024. Please keep the news, results, articles, photos and other items flowing in over the break.

May I wish you and all of our readers a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year, full of good race walking news and exploits.

Take care, everyone!

**Stu**

**\*H&T Notice Board – Page 13**

- Research project (Latrobe University)

## **\*\* WALKER OF THE WEEK \*\***



Sunday's Australian 35km championships produced a number of great performances, three of which – all by female walkers – yielded this week's successful WsOTW - one of whom was also the centre of some drama.

Paris Olympian **Olivia Sandery (SA)**, eminently suited to the longer distances, tackled her first-ever 35km at Middle Park – and was soon in judging trouble. Having worked to improve her technique as well as her fitness in the eighteen months following her DQ in the Budapest World Championships, Olivia went out hard with the 20km field, seeking to use them as a launching pad. She must have been gutted to find herself once more in the penalty zone – normally death for a walker's chances against peer opposition. On her release three and a half minutes later, knowing one more red card would end her day but that a Tokyo qualifier was at stake, Olivia damned the torpedoes and went for it. Knuckling down with more than half the race to go, she produced an extraordinary performance to eclipse Bec Henderson's Australian record with a time of **2:45:31**, placing her 2<sup>nd</sup> on this year's World Athletics top list. It is a testament to Liv's mental toughness that she was able to rein in any technical demons and turn on a display of powerful distance walking that, but for her 'sin binning', would have seen her set a new mark of 2:42:01! A great future beckons.

Pressing Olivia hard from behind was her fellow 35km debutante, **Elizabeth McMillen (NSW)**, who also used the company of a quality 20km field to set herself up for a wonderful inaugural result of **2:47:26** and 5<sup>th</sup> place on the WA list. Lizzie's star has been in the ascendancy throughout 2023 and she now adds this award to her two previous ones this year – for the AV 20km championship and the ANSW 10,000m track walk titles in Blacktown. We said at the time of the latter that a re-match between Lizzie and Liv was eagerly awaited. We didn't have long to wait ... nor will we before they face off again in January-March's schedule of elite races.

Our third winner has been here often. **Kelly Ruddick (VIC)** stamped herself long ago as one of the world's premier Masters race walkers. Recent times have been lean for Kelly who, since 2022, has battled with nagging injuries and the other demands impacting upon any mother of four. But the word 'resilient' was coined with those such as Kelly in mind. Her love of the sport and of testing herself to the limit whilst in her 40s (she represented Australia in the 2022 World Championships in Eugene, Oregon, as the oldest athlete in the field) have seen her return to training and racing yet again, this time with a 35km time of **3:09:53** that set new VRWC, State and Australian Masters W50 records and will probably be accepted as a maiden World W50 mark as well.

Congratulations to Olivia, Lizzie and Kelly on three wonderful displays of distance race walking, and especially to Liv for her gritty comeback.

#### \*Honourable mentions

- **Ela Uzun (VIC, 13)** – at Middle Park on Sunday, Ela powered over the lakeside 1km loop to clock new Australian U16 and VRWC U14 road 5km records with her time of **23:41**.
- **Marcus Wakim (VIC)** – a huge PB by over 6 minutes in only his 2<sup>nd</sup> 20km race, clocking **1:31:48**.
- **Carl Gibbons (NSW)** – took full advantage of a fast and flat course to cross in **2:36:58**, lowering his 35km PB by an impressive 4:34. **Alejandro Stephens (VIC)** – equally noteworthy in taking 4:03 from his 20km PB for **1:40:22**.
- **Bridget Bell (NSW)** – out there on the 35km course longer than anyone else, Bridget came away with a big 4:15 PB of her own after finishing in **3:13:36**.

\*\*\*\*\*



## CLUB NEWS and RESULTS

### VRWC AA 35km Road walk Championships & VRWC Club races, 15 December – Middle Park

Conditions were cool to mild at 7am for the 13 starters in the 35km championship, held on the Aughtie Drive 1km loop. The temperature rose steadily with the sun, though thankfully not to the fierceness of 2022 at Fawcner Park which saw a slew of DNFs.



*They're off in the 35 and 20k races. Judging by the shadows those sunglasses came in handy on the return leg.*

The Men's race saw the field walk pretty much as a pack for 20-25km before the rubber band started stretching and **Rhydian Cowley** finally snapped it, surging away for another title win in **2:32:33**. 21yo excitement machine **Will Thompson** kept Cowley in his sights all the way for a stirring 2<sup>nd</sup> place in **2:34:15**, while **Mitch Baker's 2:35:06** was a good follow-up from his Takahara PB in October. **Carl Gibbons** achieved the only PB in the field, hacking 4:34 from the time he set in Muscat in 2022. Only 4:25 separated 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> places.

The day's drama came in the Women's race, with **Olivia Sandery** and **Lizzy McMillen** having their first crack at the distance, and it was Olivia who produced one of the finest debut performances seen in a long time to set a new national record of **2:45:31** (despite an enforced loading of 3:30 in the cone castle). Lizzy, a year younger, had an equally astonishing first result, with her **2:47:26** also breaking Bec Henderson's previous national mark. It's a great pity that Bec, who was entered for this race, had to withdraw with suspicious muscle soreness. What a contest it would have been between these three women! It should be noted that their results in 2024 place all three in the World Athletics 35km Top 10 list for the year.

**Allanah Pitcher**, still some way off her best form, stuck to the job for 3<sup>rd</sup> in **2:57:51**. Next home was the Masters marvel **Kelly Ruddick**, herself a comeback veteran, whose **3:09:53** set three local W50 records and possibly a World mark of recognised by WMA. Fingers crossed on that one.



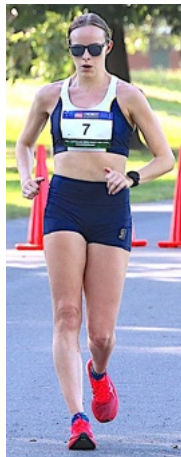
*Hard at it: Alexandra, Olivia, Lizzy, Mitch, Declan, Rhyl and Will (who'd both have appreciated some hills by the look of it), and Corey.*

**Women 35km Road walk c'ship (World Bronze event)**

1 Olivia Sandery	2003	SA	2:45:31	AR PZ3:30
2 Elizabeth McMillen	2004	NSW	2:47:26	FO
3 Allanah Pitcher	2003	NSW	2:57:51	
4 Kelly Ruddick	1973	VIC	3:09:53	MReccs
5 Hannah Mison	2001	NSW	3:11:42	
6 Bridget Bell	2002	NSW	3:13:36	PB 4:15
.. Christina Papadopolou	1996	GRE	DNF	

**Men 35km Road walk c'ship (World Bronze event)**

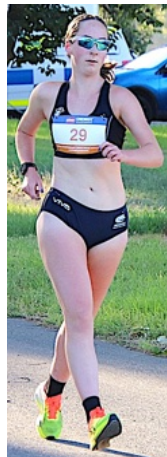
1 Rhydian Cowley	1991	VIC	2:32:33	
2 Will Thompson	2002	VIC	2:34:15	
3 Mitchell Baker	2001	ACT	2:35:06	
4 Carl Gibbons	1996	NSW	2:36:58	PB 4:34
5 Dylan Richardson	2000	NSW	2:47:02	
.. Corey Dickson	2002	VIC	DNF	



*Allanah*



*Marcus*



*Nellie*



*Carl, Dylan*



*Alejandro*



*Kelly*



*Fraser*



*Jack*



*Tayla*



*Bridget*

**Alexandra Griffin's** first outing over 20km saw her take the race in **1:36:32**, a reasonable result in what was a learning experience. **Tayla Billington** went out hard from the gun and established a good lead before she was forced to retire. As expected, **Declan Tingay** used the race for a good, fast hit-out, while **Marcus Wakim** was another on a 20km learning curve with his **1:31:48** slicing a huge chunk from his PB, despite a second-half fade out. Marcus will be much the wiser as to pace judgement come the National 20km in February.

#### Women 20km Invitational

1 Alexandra Griffin	2005	WA	1:36:32 FO
2 Hannah Bolton	2003	NSW	1:43:55
3 Nellie Langford	2005	SA	1:45:50 FO
.. Tayla Billington	1997	QLD	DNF
.. Alanna Peart	2003	VIC	DNF
.. Char Hay	2003	VIC	DNF

#### Men 20km Invitational

1 Declan Tingay	1999	WA	1:25:54
2 Jack McGinniskin	2002	NSW	1:31:47
3 Marcus Wakim	2006	VIC	1:31:48 PB 6:33
4 Alejandro Stephens	1993	VIC	1:40:22 PB 4:03

AR – Australian record

PZ3:30 – penalty zone 3m30s

FO – First one over distance

MRecs – Kelly's time set new Australian, Victorian and VRWC Masters W50 records for the 35km road walk. In addition, this could be an inaugural World record, as it was done in a WA-sanctioned event.

#### \*VRWC Club races

With the 35 and 20km 'tall timber' striding *Ent*-like (okay, more hastily than *Ents*)<sup>1</sup> up and down the course, many may not have noticed the splendid walk by 13yo **Ela Uzun** whose 5km road time of **23:41** set new Australian and VRWC age group records. **Angus Shuttleworth** also used the occasion to attack his PB, taking 36 seconds from it to clock **25:42**.

#### VRWC Club 3000m Open

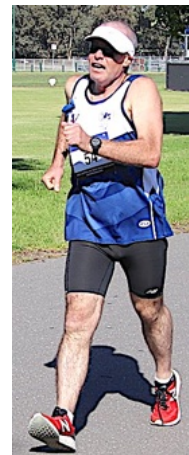
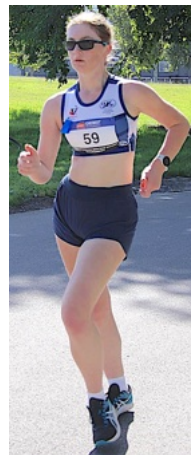
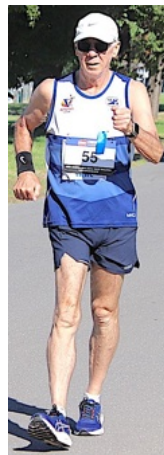
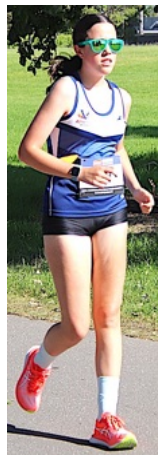
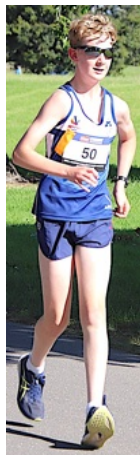
1 Emily Smith	F	17:22
2 Carolyn Rosenbrock	F	17:32
3 Donna-Marie Elms	F	19:59
4 Marnie Zakis	F	22:39

1 Jonathan Ho	M	16:02
2 David Smyth	M	17:41
3 John Nottle	M	21:05

#### VRWC Club 5000m U18

1 Ela Uzun	F	23:41 Aust U16, VRWC U14 recs
2 Hannah Matthews	F	29:26
3 Havana Ali	F	DNF

1 Angus Shuttleworth	M	25:42 PB 0:36
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**\*Action models** – Hannah, David, Emily, Ela, Angus and John.

As always, none of this would happen were it not for the input from our officials, helpers and supporters. (Note: If you assist in any way during the season, please sign the Officials check-in at the Club so that we can recognize your contribution.)

We thank the following for their efforts in providing a rewarding competitive and social experience for our athletes. If you're not on the list, be assured that we appreciated your contribution:

<b>VRWC Race secretary-manager</b>	Mark Donahoo
<b>VRWC timekeepers</b>	Ian Laurie, Bob Gardiner, Karyn O'Neill, Dylan Shuttleworth
<b>Set up/Pack up</b>	Terry Swan, Stu Cooper, Terry O'Neill, Michael Bodey, Ian Laurie, Karyn O'Neill, Bob Gardiner
<b>Red card collection</b>	Terry O'Neill
<b>Transport</b>	Terry Swan
<b>Photography, editing, uploading</b>	Therese Smith
<b>Canteen</b>	Donna-Marie Elms

<sup>1</sup> You mean, you haven't read or seen 'Lord Of The Rings'?



**Athletics Australia Officials List 35km Road Walk championships  
Sunday 15 December - Middle Park, Melbourne**

- TECHNICAL DELEGATE:** Khan Sharp (V)  
**ANTI-DOPING DELEGATE:** Lynda Gusbeth (AA)  
**JURY OF APPEAL:** Brian Roe (T)  
**COMPETITION DIRECTOR:** Andrew Duncan (V)  
**CALL ROOM/STARTER/POST EVENT/CEREMONIES:** Pam Drake Noden (V)  
**ROSTER/HYTEK RESULTS:** Peter Hamilton (AA)  
**TIC/PENALTY ZONE MANAGEMENT:** Matt Gough (AA)  
**TECHNICAL TEAM:** Tom Thorpe (AA) and RWV  
**AID STATION MANAGEMENT:** Alex Baez (AA) and RWV  
**OUT OF STADIUM REFEREE:** Josh Savage (V)  
**ASSISTANT REFEREE/PENALTY ZONE:** Shane Bicknell (V)  
**UMPIRE:** Andrew Stirling (V)  
**CHIEF LAP SCORER:** Kevin Wigmore (V)  
**LAP SCORERS:** Michael Bodey (V), Liz Bradley (Q), Greg Simpson (V), Terry Swan (V), Matthew Webster (V)
- CHIEF TIMING JUDGE:** Danny McGrady (V)  
**TIMING JUDGES:** Maureen Austin (V), Bob Cassell (N), Bruce Wilson (W)  
**CHIEF WALK JUDGE:** Renee Cassell (A)  
**WALK JUDGES** Rodney Clarke (Q), Lisa Colquhoun (A), Kirsten Crocker (N), Zoe Eastwood-Bryson (S), Brenda Felton (V), DiLowden (V),  
**RECORDER:** Lorraine Morgan (V)  
**POSTING BOARD:** Kathleen Marsh (V)
- AA COMPETITIONS MANAGER:** Peter Hamilton  
**AA EVENTS AND LOGISTICS MANAGER:** Tom Thorpe

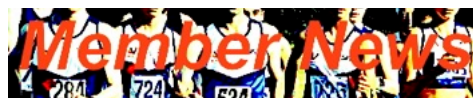
**\*\*Next VRWC races ...**

**Sunday 12 January - Middle Park**

<b>8:30am</b>	20km, 15km
<b>8.45am</b>	10km
<b>9:10am</b>	5km, 3km
<b>9:50am</b>	2km, 1km

To pre-enter, go to <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/vrwc/>  
then select this fixture in 'Upcoming Events'  
Entries close Friday 10 January, 6.00pm

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- **David Smyth**, who is leaving Australia to return to his home across the Tasman, posted the following on the VRWC's Facebook page:

*"Thank you for being an amazing race walking club in the 13 years I have been in Melbourne  
Everyone has been really amazing and friendly.*

*I will be forever grateful for such an amazing bunch of people. ❤️❤️❤️  
Until next time I see you,  
David Smyth"*

Thanks Dave. Thank you, also, for your continued support for the Club and its racing program – and for the sweet slices!

- I met up with **Peter Vysma** at his residence last Saturday. When I arrived, he was studying the Brisbane weather radar in some frustration, hoping against hope for a resumption of play in the third Test. Peter's rehab is continuing, with small gains (such as a return of function to a finger or a slight refinement of a manipulative skill). Most encouraging for him is his purchase of a specialised mobile chair-walker that enables him, with assistance, to move about while standing and to sit when necessary, to recover. His focus remains upon return of function rather than gross strength development, which will come much more slowly. However, I have yet to visit Peter without his reporting the return of some skill or neural function, however tiny. And that's cause for optimism in anyone's book.

If you'd like to send Peter a message, send it to me at [stuwalks@yahoo.com.au](mailto:stuwalks@yahoo.com.au), and I will forward it.



- The advert for 'Race Secretary' you've been seeing on the Notice board for several weeks has been answered. New Committee member **Emilie Garside** and photographer **Therese Smith** have expressed interest in sharing the role for the 2025 Winter season. This is a welcome break for Mark, who will now be freer to engage in such activities as coaching and coach education, with which he is heavily occupied at present.

Many thanks to Emilie and Therese. We know they'll do an excellent job.

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## The COACHING POINT

Club coach **Mark Donahoo** has done an enormous amount of work to get a **practical** coaching course, specifically for race walking, up and operating under the auspices of Athletics Victoria and, by extension, Athletics Australia.

This is something of which aspiring and practicing coaches have been starved for well over a decade ... a development pathway for present race walking coaches and a means of introducing the basics of race walk coaching to novice coaches, so that they may start their own development journey.

There is no way to be sure of how many prospective walkers out there (especially at Little Athletics level) have withered on the vine for want of informed coaches and mentors. Some are noticed at their centres and are clearly 'naturals', or are at least good at it or just want to do more. LAVic centres with little or no race walk coaching expertise in their ranks are urged to avail themselves of this opportunity by advertising it around their clubs.

Nor are the youngsters the only ones in need. Adults of all ages, including those eligible for Masters competition, need proper coaching advice to help them get a foot in the door to our sport, especially if time, injury or circumstance have excluded them from whatever sports they played before. We have to reach these budding walkers and help them grow. Mark's course outline below will help you to embark upon that journey:

### **\*\* To all present and aspiring Race Walking coaches**

I am writing to you to inform you that Athletics Victoria have assigned a **Racewalking Practical Coaching course** as part of their coaching courses. It can be accessed through the AV members portal, search under Coaching courses. The heading about is also a link to the information page. The course will be conducted at Mentone athletic track on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March from 1.00 – 4.30pm**.

The Racewalking course is designed to enhance your coaching expertise, focusing on both technical and practical aspects of the discipline. It covers key aspects of coaching, including mastering correct technique, implementing drills to refine mechanics, addressing common technical faults, understanding biomechanics to improve performance and prevent injuries, and planning training programs tailored to athletes' needs and goals. This course will equip you with the tools and knowledge to coach race walkers effectively, improving their technical proficiency and competitive performance.

**This course is open to accredited coaches and contributes credits toward Level 3 Performance Coach accreditation.** Eligibility for the course is anyone who has a Level 1 or Level 2 coaching qualification.

For those who would like to begin their coaching journey and be able to attend the racewalking practical course, there are a few courses being conducted by Athletics Victoria that are available on their coaching page as part of the members portal. I would recommend applying for one of these courses before applying for the racewalk coaching course.

My recommendation is:

- **Level 2 Development coaching course** – This is mostly online and has a practical component on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February.

However, the other course options are:

- **Level 1 Youth course**
- **Recreational Running Course Level 1**

I am looking forward to seeing coaches at the first racewalking practical course for many years.

**Mark Donahoo**

Level 5 Racewalking Coach

VRWC Club coach

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## VICTORIA - METRO & REGIONAL



## AVSL UPDATE

Following the weather cancellation of Round 6 of AVSL, the next Round (7) will be held on **Saturday 11 January 2025**, with the Walks taking place at the **Meadowglen International Stadium** in MacDonalads Rd, Epping. (Yes, we know it'll tax your GPS's capacities, but you can always dig your dog-eared Melways out of the boot ... )

### \*AVSL Round 7 – Saturday 11 January

*All races open to Male and Female competitors*

<b>Metro – Meadowglen</b>	1.00pm	1500m walk (all ages)
	1.20pm	3000m walk (all ages)

<b>Ballarat region –</b> Llanberris Stadium	To be announced
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<b>Bendigo region – Lar</b> Birpa Athletics Complex (formerly Latrobe Uni Athletics Complex)	To be announced
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### ENTRIES

*Entries close at 12.00 noon on Wednesday 8 January*

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## AROUND THE COUNTRY

### **A.C.T.** ACTRFWC & ACTMA results, 12 December- Woden

Results courtesy of **Ann Staunton-Jugovic**:

#### **2000m race walk:**

Hana Jugovic	9:50
Peter Baker	11:42
Sebastian Ryan	12:25
Lorna England	17:21
Jillian Ryan	DNF

#### **2000m fitness walk**

Sue Archer	14:08
Bryan Thomas	16:00

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA** ASA Interclub results, 14 December – Mile End Stadium

**Kim Mottrom:** ‘Another 30c day again today, so no PB’s. Also a smaller turn out after All Schools and as it was our last race of the year.’

<b>Open 3km</b>	<b>Time</b>
Kim Mottrom	13:21.09
Cooper Rech	15:17.71
Liam Freundt	16:53.74
Peter Crump	19:33.25
Jessica Clelland	22:39.28
Zachery Freundt	23:58.46
Alex McEwan	24:24.82

## **TASMANIA** Athletics South Interclub, 14 December – Domain AV, Hobart

Results courtesy of **David Moore:**

<b>Result 3000m Walk</b>		
1. Oliver Morgan	SB	14:53.59
2. Adele Woodward	OVA	20:24.28
Dave Moore	TMA	DNF

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## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **IRELAND:** Irish National Road Walks championships, Sunday 15 December - Dublin

While Australia was conducting its 35km road walk championship in Melbourne’s summer heat, Ireland was conducting its own in Dublin’s winter cold, as part of the Irish National Road walks championships. A WA Bronze Tour event, the championships are obviously popular with overseas walkers looking for a good out-of-season race on what looks like a flat, fast course at St Anne’s Park. Olympic luminaries **Massimo Stano** and **Caio Bonfim**, to name two, certainly made the most of it.

But it’s the domestic participation that lends these championships their charm. The many photos, spiced with some footage, that Pierce O’Callaghan has posted on his own and Rob Heffernan Race Walking Academy Facebook pages of participants from seniors to Under 10s show the health of Ireland’s developmental structure and are evidence of the carnival’s celebratory atmosphere. For Aussie readers, it would be reminiscent of the glory days of LBG carnival races at Weston Park in Canberra.

### **Olympic Medallists Shine at World Athletics Racewalking Tour in Dublin**

by **Perri Williams** (reprinted from [Run Republic](#) – 16 December 2024)



*Ortiz and Stano locked in battle at Raheny  
(Photo: Athletics Ireland)*

It was a decisive victory for the Olympic Gold Medallist **Massimo Stano** at today’s World Athletics Racewalking Tour final in Raheny, Dublin. Competing over 35km the Italian dropped long time leader **Ricardo Ortiz** (Mexico) over the final 5km to take the World Athletics Tour by a margin of two minutes. A further minute behind **Caio Bonfim** (Brazil) the 2024 Olympic silver medallist from Paris, sealed his World Athletics Tour victory with a third-place finish. Spectators lined the course from start to finish, one of the largest audiences seen in recent years.

With over 250 athletes participating from over 30 countries and 4 continents, this World Athletics Tour event was as successful as it was prophesied to be. Supported by over 100 international athletes, it was as much of a victory for the organisers as it was for the athletes themselves. Encouragement was given at every opportunity with international athletes getting that “racing at home” vibe as much as the domestic ones. From the jolly antics of Stano, who as a sportsman knows how to entertain his audience, to the top-class performances all round, this



certainly was the sporting event to be at this weekend. The organization of this event is in no small way attributed to the great racewalking luminary of World Athletics – Pierce O’Callaghan, who despite his love of all things athletics has an obvious predilection and passion for race-walking.

### 35km - Olympic, World, and European Medallists

Twenty-five personal bests were set by Irish athletes, in a day that was conducive to fast times, no wind, a large group of encouraging spectators and most importantly, the will to succeed. As expected, **Kate Veale** added another national title to her growing repertoire of titles, as she crossed the line in **3:25.57**, and fourth in the international competition. The winner was **Alejandra Ortega** of Mexico with the Brazilian pair of **Gabriela De Souza Muniz** and **Eliany Pereira** second and third. The men’s race was very much dominated by Olympic Gold medallist **Massimo Stano** (Italy) and **Ricardo Ortiz** (Mexico). Content to let Ortiz lead the way, the taller figure of Stano tucked in behind the Mexican, who was maintaining a steady pace throughout. Ortiz was feeling the effects from his strong pace with his laps starting to drop by ten seconds each. Stano moved ahead and increased his pace over the final 10km bagging not only a win but also valuable world ranking points. While the effervescent Stano was celebrating his win, Ireland’s **Oisín Lane** (Mullingar) and **Joe Mooney** (Adamstown) were accumulating valuable ranking points with both recording new personal bests. Over ten nations were represented in this very competitive field.

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*Happy winner Ortega  
(Photo: Deportistas Mexicanos en el Extranjero Demex)*

### 20km - Ireland's David Kenny outshines the international talent

There was a welcome return to competition for **David Kenny** (Farranfore/Maine Valley) as he took both the National Title and the World Athletics Tour title in the 20km. That nefarious devil called injury sidelined him for 2024, forcing him to forego his Olympic dream in favour of injury rehab. The former European u23 silver medalist recorded a very respectable time of **1:22.31** in a strong international field of twenty-eight athletes. **Callum Wilkinson**, the British national champion who was 16th over a similar distance at the Paris Olympics was unable to respond as Kenny started to inject pace over the final 5km. In third place was **Michele Antonelli** (Italy) who recorded his third fastest 20km race this year.

Despite an excellent start from **Samuel Gathimba** (Kenya) the highly decorated African champion, he was forced to retire at 16km, which was no doubt a disappointment to him. It is worth noting the rise of racewalking in Africa, in particular in Kenya, where endurance athletes thrive. A possible indication of a force waiting to be unleashed on the racewalking world.

**Karla Ximena Serrano** (Mexico) won the ladies 20km. The former World u20 champion recorded her second-best time over the 20km distance this year as the 21-year-old adjusts to the longer senior distance. Ireland was amongst the fourteen nationalities that was represented, many of them national champions in their respective countries.

### 10km - Irish athletes shrouded with personal bests.

The 10km races for men and ladies u20 demonstrate the huge international potential Ireland has within its remit currently. While ambivalent about tackling the longer 10km distances **Savannah O’Callaghan** (Tuam) and **Matthew Newell** (Tuam) were reassured that their recent winter training proved efficacious. Both athletes had represented Ireland at the u18 European Championships this summer. A huge increase in motivation on the back of this representation, saw both athletes mix with some of the best international walkers around. O’Callaghan was up against **Alessia Pop** (Romania) the European u18 silver medallists who was also 4th in the World u20s this year. Pop led from the gun but behind her a stream of Irish girls were making their own history. Mullingar’s **Aisling Lane** (u20), Kenmare’s **Éabha DE Faoite** (u23) and O’Callaghan (u18) all recorded new personal bests. A promising indicator of what 2025 may be like for them. Matthew Newell was pushed all the way by **Jake O’Brien** (Moy Valley) and **Seamus Clarke** (Moy Valley). The three Irish boys worked together for most of the race, with the more experienced O’Brien moving ahead over the final 2km to

take the gold. Newell on the other hand finished with a time of **45.44**, which puts him very much on the trajectory to qualify for the 2025 European u20 championships.

### Juveniles Impress

**Julia Lebeau** (France) was the overall winner of the girls 5km with the vastly improved **Leah O’Gara** (Finn Valley) finishing second and **Robin Og Murphy** (Longford) in third. Their respective results are the quintessential example of perseverance and dedication to a sport despite the adversities thrown at them through the years. **Panagiotis Saltis** (Greece) was a runaway winner of the boys 5km where both **Ciaran Kelleher** (South Galway) and **Daniel Glennon** (Mullingar) both recorded personal bests.

**Clodhnaíl Chonail** (Castlegar) has improved substantially this year. The 14-year-old recorded a new personal best of **16.22** to hold off a much-improved **Tailte O’Callaghan** (Tuam) who staged something of a comeback after struggling with competition this summer. **Sean Walsh** (Adamstown) and **Senan Markey** (Tir Mona) both recorded new personal bests to finish first and second in the boys 3km.

A large field of over 30 athletes contested the 2km race where four countries were represented. The lead in this race oscillated between **Natalia Gavrilovic** (Roumania) and **Cusile O’Callaghan** for much of this race, the Romanian finally getting ahead to take victory in a new personal best. Smiling as incandescently as ever O’Callaghan was happy with her second place as she dipped under 10 minutes by one second. **Hazel Dinkin** (Clare River Harriers) finished 3rd. The boy’s race was won by **Tadhg O’Callaghan** (St Senans) from **Grofu Newell** (Tuam). The gravy train of talent continued with **Owen Gannon** (Athenry) recording a rather deft 5.32 to win the boys u12 with **Ann Dinkin** (Clare River Harriers) winning the girls u12.

There was much excitement in the Cork camp with Robert Heffernan cheering on his two daughters who looked every bit the champions in the girls u10 race. **Regan** and **Tara Heffernan** demonstrated top class race-walking for their tender years.

**Nicolas Picard** (France) took the gold in the Masters men’s 10km from **Modris Liepins** (Latvia). The ladies’ race was won by **Modra Liepina** (Latvia). **Colm Walsh** (Mullingar) won the Irish championship with **Maggie O’Connor** (St Josephs) winning the ladies. St Coca’s AC **Bobby King** is an enduring figure in race walking. The 78-year-old has been walking for over five decades and once more took part in the Raheny event.

Brazil, Greece, Mexico, Hungary, India, Kenya, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, Ethiopia, Romania, France, UK, USA, Sweden, Latvia, Spain, Italy are just some of the 30 nations represented in Dublin today. Testimony to the success of Ireland in hosting this event is their commitment to return to this race year after year bringing with them more competition, more athletes and continued excellence in racewalking itself.

With the international competitive action closed for 2024, Athletics Ireland can be confident that the peek given today of the current quality and quantity of Irish racewalkers indicated enormous potential success for 2025.

#### Women 35km Open

1.	Alejandra ORTEGA	MEX	2:56:22
2.	Gabriela DE SOUSA	BRA	3:01:27
3.	Elianay PEREIRA	BRA	3:12:59
4.	Yadira FRANCO	MEX	3:18:54
5.	Kate VEALE	IRL	3:25:57
6.	Anett TORMA	HUN	3:45:25
	Valeria CURTUÑO	MEX	DNF
	Federica CURIAZZI	ITA	DQ
	PRIYANKA	IND	DQ

#### Women 20km Open

1.	Karla Ximena SERRANO	MEX	1:33:38
2.	Vitória OLIVEIRA	POR	1:34:05
3.	Abigail JENNINGS	GBR	1:44:04
4.	Arely ENRÍQUEZ	MEX	1:53:31
5.	Grazia MANZOTTI	GBR	1:58:30
6.	Emily GHOSE	GBR	2:01:37
	Marion MANARESI	FRA	DNF
	Bruna MARQUES	POR	DQ

#### Women 10km Open

1.	Hannah HOPPER	GBR	52:00
2.	Eabha DE FAOITE	IRL	52:16
3.	Meabh O’CONNOR	IRL	53:22
4.	Rachel BOUQUIN	FRA	55:12
5.	Natasha MITCHELL	GBR	56:20
6.	Latifa AARABI	MAR	1:01:02
7.	Siobhan DOHERTY	IRL	1:01:04

#### Women 10km U20

1.	Alessia Cristina POP	ROU	46:29
2.	Aisling LANE	IRL	50:38
3.	Savanagh O’CALLAGHAN	IRL	52:25

#### Men 35km Open

1.	Massimo STANO	ITA	2:24:19
2.	Ricardo ORTIZ	MEX	2:26:15
3.	Caio BONFIM	BRA	2:27:48
4.	Bence VENYERCSÁN	HUN	2:33:49
5.	M B GONCALV. DOS STANOS	BRA	2:37:20
6.	Oisín LANE	IRL	2:37:35
7.	Mattéo DUC	FRA	2:39:21
8.	Joe MOONEY	IRL	2:40:56
9.	Sandeep KUMAR	IND	2:41:26
10.	Georgios KELEPOURIS	GRE	2:54:44
11.	Diego PEREIRA LIMA	BRA	3:01:26
12.	Ross ALEXANDER	IRL	3:28:16
	Julio César SALAZAR	MEX	DNF
	Kevin CAMPION	FRA	DNF
	Ismael BERNAL	MEX	DNF
	Nathaniel SEILER	GER	DQ
	Joao Victor SILVA	BRA	DQ

#### Men 20km Open

1.	David KENNY	IRL	1:22:31
2.	Callum WILKINSON	GBR	1:23:09
3.	Michele ANTONELLI	ITA	1:23:52
4.	Jerry JOKINEN	FIN	1:25:12
5.	César CORDOVA FERNÁNDEZ	MEX	1:25:19
6.	João VIEIRA	POR	1:25:59
7.	Carlos MERCENARIO	MEX	1:27:54
8.	Javier DE ARRIBA CASTILLA	ESP	1:28:23
9.	Norbert TÓTH	HUN	1:29:59
10.	Andreas PASTERGIU	GRE	1:31:01
11.	Carlos Alberto OLIVARES	MEX	1:31:33
12.	Jaakko MÄÄTTÄNEN	FIN	1:31:53
13.	Luc LEGON	GBR	1:33:25
14.	Andre VAN SLOOTEN	NED	1:44:19

4.	Ciara WILSON-BOWEN	IRL	52:34	15.	Tomáš VOJTÍŠEK	CZE	2:07:19
5.	Jessica WILTON	GBR	55:36		Matthew GLENNON	IRL	DNF
6.	Aoife TUTHILL	IRL	57:15		Misgana WAKUMA	ETH	DQ
7.	Beabhin HOSTY	IRL	59:01		Samuel Kireri GATHIMBA	KEN	DQ

#### Women 5km U18

1.	Julia LEBEAU	FRA	24:53
2.	Robin Og MURPHY	IRL	25:57
3.	Hafsa EZATI	MAR	26:12
4.	Ciara GILMORE	IRL	28:38
5.	Holly SHAUGHNESSY	IRL	29:13
6.	Maria COONE	IRL	29:35
7.	Lusai DE FAOITE	IRL	29:46
8.	Ellie BARRY	IRL	31:40
	Aoife MARTIN	IRL	DNF
	Juliet BIGGS	IRL	DNF

#### Women 5km U16

1.	Leah O'GARA	IRL	25:45
2.	Amy WALSH	IRL	26:11
3.	Pearl SANDS	IRL	26:36
4.	Robyn MAHER	IRL	28:05
5.	Lillian O'BRIEN	IRL	28:07
6.	Anna MULLINS	IRL	28:13
7.	Elena Deea IOANOVICI	ROU	28:16
8.	Ann DOYLE	IRL	32:06

#### Women 3km U16

1.	Clíodhna NI CHONAILL	IRL	16:22
2.	Taillte O'CALLAGHAN	IRL	16:35
3.	Alexia BERCEA	ROU	17:00
4.	Faye CARROLL	IRL	17:23
5.	Sophie DAVIDSON	GBR	17:46
6.	Millie HOASHI	IRL	17:55
7.	Siun MORRISSEY	IRL	18:27
8.	Aoife MCGRANAGHAN	IRL	19:01
9.	Caoimhe PHELAN	IRL	19:10
10.	Holly KEARNS	IRL	19:34
11.	Kerry WIDGER	IRL	19:48

#### Men 10km Open

1.	Jake O'BRIEN	IRL	45:20
2.	Dávid TOKODI	HUN	47:10
3.	Mohamed MANSOURI	MAR	56:41

#### Men 10km U20

1.	Matthew NEWELL	IRL	45:44
2.	Leandro SILVA	POR	47:26
3.	Andrew GLENNON	IRL	50:19
4.	Evan WALSH	IRL	51:23
5.	John GLENNON	IRL	58:41
	Séamus CLARKE	IRL	DNF

#### Men 5km U18

1.	Panagiotis SALTIS	GRE	21:16
2.	Reda HADDAT	MAR	23:43

#### Men 5km U16

1.	Ciaran KELLEHER	IRL	26:26
2.	Daniel GLENNON	IRL	26:56

#### Men 3km U16

1.	Sean WALSH	IRL	16:23
2.	Senan MARKEY	IRL	16:38



Start of proceedings at St Anne's Park. (Shades of similar starts at Weston Park in Canberra ...)

(Photo: Pierce O'Callaghan)

## MARCIADALMONDO & O MARCHADOR ROUNDUP

- 07/12/2024 - Former Race Walker Curt Clausen Is new USATF President  
[http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli\\_news.aspx?id=4553&fbclid=IwY2xjawHLV1dleHRuA2FibQIxMQABHasNKgK9OP6CBUBP4brlyG0Fp2TduMEG7RwoQ\\_xE6DVIsUt\\_AhB20D0KMQ\\_aem\\_UPnx4mVUHo01-00087aXWw](http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=4553&fbclid=IwY2xjawHLV1dleHRuA2FibQIxMQABHasNKgK9OP6CBUBP4brlyG0Fp2TduMEG7RwoQ_xE6DVIsUt_AhB20D0KMQ_aem_UPnx4mVUHo01-00087aXWw)

The Portuguese race walking blog **O Marchador** posts news reports and results as they come to hand. The page has dozens of links to articles on race walking, featuring both domestic events and those from abroad.

- Tuesday 17 December 2024 - **David Kenny (Ireland) and Karla Ximena Serrano (Mexico) victorious in the 20 kilometres in Dublin** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/david-kenny-irlanda-e-karla-ximena.html>
- Monday, December 16, 2024 - **Massimo Stano (Italy) and Alejandra Ortega (Mexico) shine in the 35km walk in Raheny, Dublin** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/massimo-stano-italia-e-alejandra-ortega.html>
- Sunday, December 15, 2024 - **Sharon Herrera breaks Costa Rica record for 10km walk (San Juan, PUR 2024)** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/sharon-herrera-bate-recorde-da-costa.html>
- Saturday, December 14, 2024 - **Indian Junior National Championship – Bhubaneswar 2024 (Results)** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/campeonato-nacional-junior-da-india.html>
- Thursday, December 12, 2024 - **Marching Grand Prix and Spanish Master Championship (10 km) in Castro Urdiales (results)** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/grande-premio-de-marcha-e-campeonato-de.html>
- Thursday, December 12, 2024 - **Spanish Winter Walking Championship for Promotion – Castro Urdiales 2024 (results)** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/campeonato-de-espanha-de-marcha-de.html>
- Wednesday, December 11, 2024 - **Curt Clausen elected president of USA Track and Field** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/curt-clausen-eleito-presidente-da.html>
- Tuesday, December 10, 2024 - **Victory Oliveira and Rui Coelho victorious in Celorico da Beira (2024)** <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2024/12/vitoria-oliveira-e-rui-coelho.html>

*Note: The O Marchador blog is written in Portuguese. To access an English version, open the page in Google Chrome – if you haven't already – at <https://omarchador.blogspot.com>, then right click on any empty space (not on text) on the page. A window will appear with the option to translate the page. Click on it, and the page should reload in English.*

## FURTHERMORE ...

### **Sebastian Coe puts forth reasons for the latest Walks changes**

From **David Ainsworth** on the latest walks changes by WA:

It's not often that race walking draws headlines, but a major change and potentially momentous change in the walks was a highlight of the **World Athletics Council meeting** in Monaco:

*“The World Athletics Council also approved the introduction of new official senior road distances for race walking events, in order to help put the remarkable achievements by athletes into context, make the events more relatable for fans, and encourage mass participation. The standard senior distances for race walking will therefore change from:*

- 20 km race walk to half marathon race walk (21.0975km)
- 35 km race walk to marathon race walk (42.195km)

***These changes will be implemented starting 1 January 2026 in senior World Athletics Series events.”***

World Athletics President **Sebastian Coe** (GBR) explained:

*“I think we've made the right decision today to make it more relatable to Half Marathon and Marathon.*

*“The fact that you've got you've got race walkers that will cover that marathon distance in just under three hours, I think sort of places it into a greater context for people watching the event. Our attempts in all our innovations is to lend a little bit more understanding and context to our fans, and we recognize that at the major games, a large chunk of our fan base is watching that may well be watching the sport for the first time, so our innovation (has) a very clear rationale behind it. It is to try and make more understandable, more salient, more relevant these events.”*

The 20 km walk has been part of the Olympic program since 1956 for men and 2000 for women and the 50 km walk was a men's event from 1932 to Tokyo 2020, but was not held at Paris 2024. World Athletics changed the 50 km event to 35 km for men and women for the 2022 World Championships.

Now, all of these events are out and the new half marathon and marathon distances will be installed. As for the status of these new distances in the Olympic Games, Coe noted:

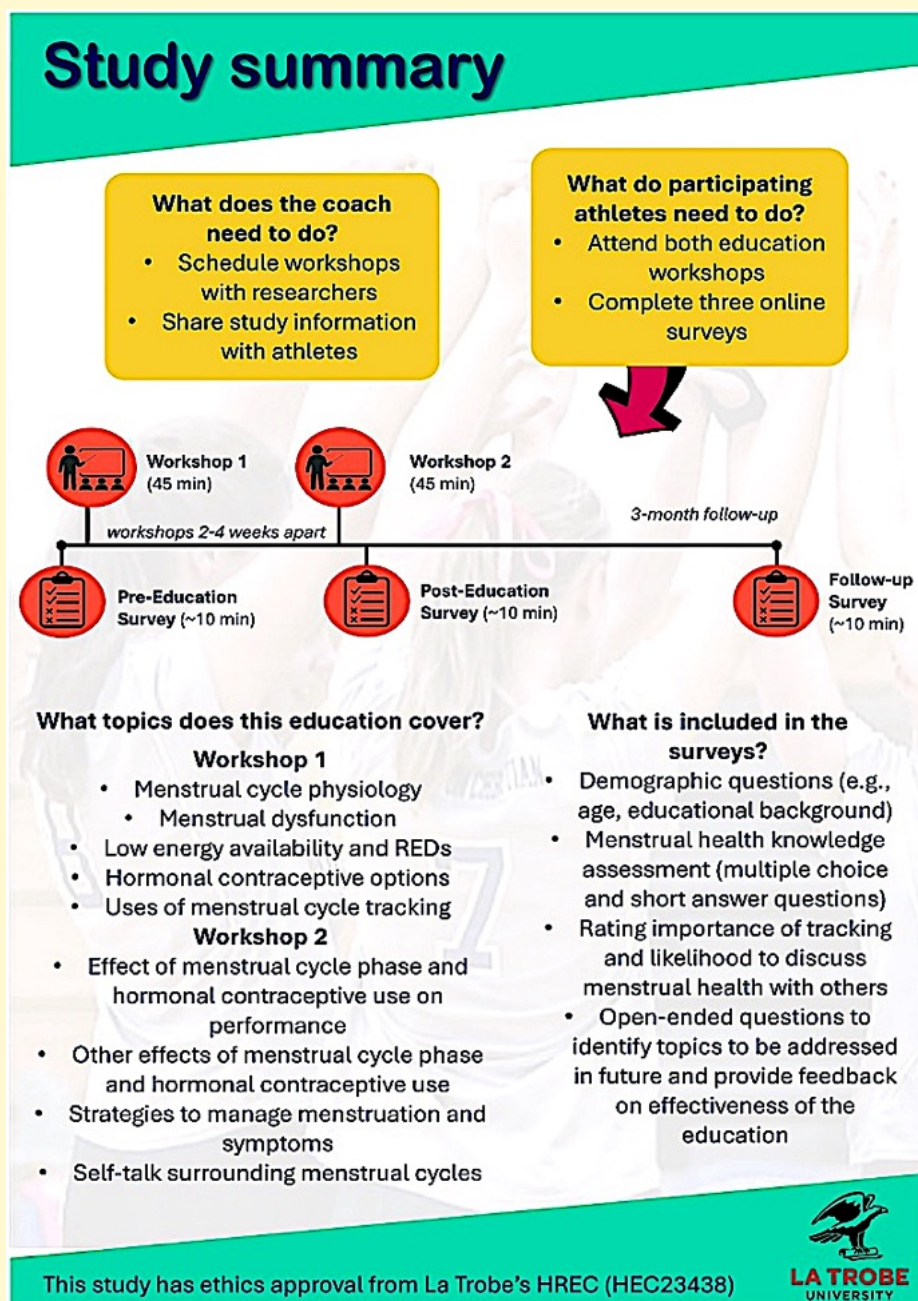
*“I think that is a question that is best directed at the [IOC] Program Commission and the Sports Department. What we've said is race walk is secure in our World Championships.”*

**\*\*What's YOUR opinion of the changes, and of Lord Coe's rationale? We welcome feedback/comments from our readers.**

## **\*RESEARCH STUDY - *Impact of Menstrual Health Education on Female Athletes***

The VRWC has been asked to extend an invitation to interested female **competitors**, aged 15 years and over, and their **coaches/support staff**, to participate in a research study on the subject of menstrual health education and its impact on competitive athletes. The study will be conducted by Mikaeli Carmichael, a PhD candidate at Latrobe University.

A summary chart of the study, explaining what is required of all participants, is included below:



It is expected that the study will take place over six months, up until June 2025. The two face-to-face sessions will be conducted at the VRWC Clubrooms at Middle Park, unless otherwise advised.

Participation is voluntary, although applicants aged under 18 must have permission of a parent or guardian to take part. Information will be gathered, stored and published in such a way as not to reveal the identity of any participant.

All questions and inquiries should be directed to Mikaeli Carmichael at [M.Carmichael@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:M.Carmichael@latrobe.edu.au).

An application form, containing all relevant information athletes' and coaches' participation, is available on request from Stu Cooper at [stuwalks@yahoo.com.au](mailto:stuwalks@yahoo.com.au)

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# WHAT'S UP AHEAD?

## Victorian & National Key Dates – 2024/2025

Sat 11 Jan 2025	<b>AVSL Round #7</b> – Meadowglen International Athletics Stadium, Epping
Sun 12 Jan 2025	<b>VRWC Summer program races #3</b> – Middle Park
Sat-Sun 25-26 Jan 2025	<b>Supernova: World Athletics Race Walking Tour (Silver)</b> – Canberra, ACT
Fri-Sun 14-16 Feb 2025	<b>AV T&amp;F championships Week 1 (U17-U20, 40+ &amp; 60+)</b> – Lakeside Stadium
Sun 16 Feb 2025	<b>Australian 20km Road walk Championships</b> – venue TBC
Fri-Sun 21-23 Feb 2025	<b>AV T&amp;F championships Week 2 (Open, U13-U16)</b> – Lakeside Stadium
Fri-Sun 4-13 Apr 2025	<b>Athletics Australia T&amp;F c'ships</b> – Perth, WA

## International Dates

21-23 Mar 2025	<b>WA World Indoor T&amp;F Championships</b> – Nanjing, CHN
4 May 2025	<b>4th Korzeniowski Warsaw Race Walking Cup (WA Gold)</b> – Warsaw, POL
18 May 2025	<b>European Race Walking Team Championships</b> – Podebrady, CZE
16-27 July 2025	<b>World University Games</b> – Bochum, GER
13-21 Sep 2025	<b>20<sup>th</sup> World Athletics Championships</b> – Tokyo, JPN
30 Oct-15 Nov 2026	<b>Youth Olympic Games</b> – Dakar, SEN

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**\*DISCLAIMER:** *The contents of 'Heel & Toe Online', and any opinions expressed therein, are those of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of the Victorian Race Walking Club.*

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