



# Tasmanian Masters Athletics Inc.

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## SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

It is very pleasing to advise that our 43<sup>rd</sup> year has been another successful one. We managed an increase in our membership numbers to 253 which is the first time we have achieved an increase since the 2018-19 season. This is an increase of 19 (8.11%). The membership split by region is south 196 (+6.5%); north 38 (+11.7%); north west 13(+8.3%) and interstate 6 (+50%). The gender split: female: 101 (+5.2%) and male 152 (+10.1%).

We are scheduled to host the 2024 Australian Masters Athletics Track and Field Championship in Hobart from 29 March - 1 April which is over the Easter weekend. We usually experience a spike in membership numbers during our AMA Championship hosting years. Planning for the 2024 Hobart event has commenced with the Local Organising Committee meeting monthly.

Track and field competition from October to March continued to provide a range of opportunities for members. Participation in the south was strong where we again enjoyed excellent numbers at our Wednesday evening competition in Hobart. This was particularly evident from January onwards with average attendance numbers exceeding the pre-Christmas period. Often, we have experienced a drop in participation in the New Year so that is a trend we are keen to continue. Participation in the North continues to be low but there are continued signs of improvement with a pleasing increase in numbers from that region.

TMA continued to combine with Athletics South for Interclub 3000m or 5000m events on Wednesday evenings in Hobart during the summer season. These distance events attract more participants and provide improved competition and atmosphere. Many TMA members also represent Athletics Tasmania affiliated clubs in track and field competition.

Our Northern Branch once again combined with the Northern Tasmanian Athletics to conduct joint meetings. Integrated meets are likely to continue in all three regions of the State into the future. The committee of the state association remains aware of the challenges being experienced concerning participation by Masters athletes in the state's north. There are however increasingly encouraging signs for our future in this region.

### TMA Awards

Competition for the annual TMA Awards was again very strong with solid contenders in all categories. There was exceptional competition for the Distance / Walks Athlete of the Year. Winners were:

- **Female Athlete of the Year** - Anna Smee
- **Male Athlete of the Year** - Craig Downie
- **Sprints / Hurdles Athlete of the Year** - Alan Sharp-Paul
- **Middle Distance** - Craig Downie
- **Distance / Walks Athlete of the Year** - David O'Brien
- **Jumps / Multi Events Athlete of the Year** - Sharee Maksimovic
- **Throws Athlete of the Year** - Ian Murray

Craig Downie had an exceptional season. Craig broke his own state age record in the 800m. He won Gold in his 800m, 1500m and 5000m events at the AMA Track & Field Championships in Sydney against very strong competition. Craig also won gold in a number of other State Championship events and medals at the World Cross Country Championships in Bathurst NSW.

Anna Smee had another outstanding season and was a standout winner after being desperately unlucky to win an award in the 2021-22 season. Anna broke State age records over distances ranging from 800m to 5000m and also won three medals at the AMA Track & Field Championships including gold in the 5000m.

Alan Sharp-Paul is another athlete worthy of special mention. In March 2023 he broke Geoff Gibbon's 200m record by 0.15 seconds. Alan also broke the 33-year-old state high jump record at our State Championships in Launceston. At the AMA Track & Field Championships, Alan won gold, silver and bronze medals.

Other athletes who received nominations were:

- Male Athlete of the Year - David O'Brien, Ian Murray, Alan Sharp-Paul, & Daniel Smee
- Female Athlete of the Year - Sharee Maksimovic, Cathy McKeown, Sue Westbrook & Vicky Gunn
- Sprints / Hurdles Athlete of the Year - Paul Buckley, Andrew Hay, Daniel Lemoto & Sharee Maksimovic
- Middle Distance - Vicky Gunn, David O'Brien, Anna Smee, Daniel Smee & Sue Westbrook
- Distance / Walks Athlete of the Year - Craig Downie, Nick Earl, Anna Smee, Daniel Smee & Michael Davis
- Jumps / Multi Events Athlete of the Year - Caleb Gardner, Geoff Gibbons, Andrew Jenner, Cathy McKeown & Alan Sharp-Paul
- Throws Athlete of the Year - Cathy McKeown, Nic Burns, Tracy Canham, Hamish Peacock & Sue Westbrook

Congratulations go to all award winners and nominees each of whom had excellent seasons.

### **Track and Field Championships**

Approximately 40 Masters athletes participated in the 2023 State Track and Field Championships at the Northern Athletic Centre in Launceston in conjunction with the Athletics Tasmania Open and Age Championships. This is a decrease from the previous year when approximately 60 athletes competed and fewer than the 2020-21 season where approximately 70 athletes took part. This season the Championships were held in mid-March, a date more favourable for us than the February dates used for the 2021-22 season. Participation numbers were however fewer because the Australian Masters Track and Field Championships were held the previous weekend in Sydney N.S.W. In addition, given 77% of our members reside in the south, we also usually experience fewer athletes participating in our Championships when they are held in the north. While the fall in participation numbers is of concern, we are confident of an increase in the 2023-24 season with the Hobart 2024 AMA Championships approaching.

Competition for the Male and Female Athlete of the Championships awards was again extremely strong with a number of contenders to choose from. Award winners were as follows:

- **Graeme Cruise Award** (best age-graded performance<sup>1</sup>) - Alan Sharp-Paul. Alan was denied a State M45 record in the 60m due to an illegal tail wind, however his performance of 7.31s resulted in a 90.66% or 88.83% (with wind assistance removed). Alan also performed exceptionally well, winning his 100m, 200m, 400m and high jump events.
- **Masters Track Athlete of the State Championships** - Anna Smee. Anna set two new W50 State records in the 800m and 1500m at this event, with all her age grade percentages being over 80% (87.10, 85.36 and 81.52). Anna's run in the 800m was particularly impressive as she fought against and across gusting winds over both laps.
- **Masters Field Athlete of the State Championships** - Andrew Jenner. Andrew set a new M55 State record in the high jump, jumping 1.55m with an age grade percentage of 79.15%. The previous record had stood since 1983.

The following athletes put in excellent performances in Masters events at these Championships: Daniel Smee, Daniel Lemoto, Andrew Hay, Paul Buckley, Paul Tucker, Andrew Bonsey and Paul Williams. There were also some excellent performances by TMA members in Athletics Tasmania Open events at the Championships including Nick Earl and Hamish Peacock.

<sup>1</sup>At the March TMA committee meeting, it was agreed that performances in 60m events at the Championships are now eligible for this award.

## **10,000m Track Running Championship**

There were 12 entrants in our 10,000m championship held on 5 February 2023 in Hobart at the Domain Athletic centre. Michael Davis (M50) achieved the highest age grade percentage of 84.63 with his time of 35:23.35 which also was the fastest time of the day. Anna Smee achieved an age grade percentage of 82.10 for her time of 39:48.84.

## **State Teams**

David O'Brien (M57) was selected for the 2022 Tasmanian Marathon team for the Sydney Marathon running a creditable 3:01:19.

Craig Downie (M61) was our sole representative in the 2022 Tasmanian Half Marathon team competing at Alexandra Headland, Sunshine Coast finishing in 1:24:31.

## **Australian Masters Athletics 2023 Awards**

The following athletes were nominated for AMA Awards covering the 2022 calendar year:

- Geoff Gibbons (Most Outstanding Individual Performance and Multi events / Relays)
- Sharee Maksimovic (Most Outstanding Female Athlete and Sprints/Hurdles & Jumps)
- Anna Smee (Middle Distance)
- Craig Downie (Distance)
- Cathy McKeown (Throws)
- Daniel Smee (Most Outstanding Male Athlete)

While none of our athletes was successful in winning a national award, all of the above athletes had great years. Please note that these awards cover the 2022 calendar year whereas the TMA awards cover the period 1 April 2022- 31 March 2023 (but not the AMA Championships in Brisbane from 1 - 4 April 2022).

## **Other Championship Events**

- **Combined Events Championships.**

There were just 2 Masters athletes who competed in these championships which were held in January 2023.

Caleb Gardner (M54), was the only competitor in the Men's Open Decathlon scoring 2765 points. Michael Higgs (M39) was the sole competitor in the Masters Decathlon achieving 3625 points.

Cathy McKeown (W52) with 4385 points won the Women's Heptathlon, setting a new State Open record. Sue Westbrook (W79) was the only other competitor in that event scoring 1780 points.

- **Track & Field Pentathlon Championships**

A modest field of 11 athletes took part (4 female and 4 male) this season which was held for the third consecutive year in Hobart on 20 November 2022. Andrew Bonsey won the men's event with 2738 points and Cathy McKeown won the women's with 2802 points. Ian Cole broke the M75 record with 2115 points and Suzanne Westbrook set an inaugural W80 record with 2247 points.

- **Cross-Country Championships**

47 members participated in the 2022 Cross-Country Championships held over the challenging course on the Queens Domain in Hobart in July 2022. This was only a small drop compared to the 2021-22 season (51 competitors). The championships were again conducted in conjunction with the Athletics Tasmania Open Cross-Country Championships.

Michael Davis, Daniel Smee, Fiona Lennon, David O'Brien, Anthony Baines, Craig Downie, Adele Lucas, Bonnie Davies and Anna Smee were the outstanding performers in these Championships.

- **3000m Track Running Championship**

This event was again held on the 26 January public holiday at Penguin Athletic Track in conjunction with the Athletics Tasmania Open 3000m Championship. There were just 5 participants this season. Craig Downie was the outstanding performer finishing in a time of 10:08.09 (89.17%). Vicky Gunn (12:24.28 (83.35)) and Yvette Edward (11:07.04) (80.93%) were the other athletes achieving age grade percentages over 80%.

- **Walk Championship Events**

A small but dedicated group of members continue to participate in regular race-walking club events as well as in Athletics Tasmania and TMA Road Walk Championships over various distances.

At the 5km Road Walk Championship held in September 2022 at Wentworth Park, there were 4 competitors with Ron Foster achieving the highest age grade percentage.

At the 2022 TMA Track and Field Championships, Elizabeth Leitch performed well in the 1500m event.

- **2020 Road Championship**

There were 37 starters in this season's Championship, a pleasing increase of 6 from the previous season. The event was again run at Campbell Town in the state's northern midlands. Vicky Gunn (W60) won the Bill and Barb Westcott Award for the highest age grade percentage of 87.88% with her excellent 8km time of 34:15 for the 8k. Michael Davis, Craig Downie, Anthony Baines and Susan Moodie also performed very well, all achieving age grade percentages over 80%.

### **Other Competition**

A number of our members participated in the "Night of Fives" competitions in Launceston held in November 2022 and January 2023. These 5000m track running events were organised by TMA member and Northern Tasmania Masters representative, Matthew Zegveld, for all athletes aged over 12 years who are graded according to their athletic ability. Overall numbers were very good and we thank Matt for continuing with this initiative which we hope will increase participation in track athletics in the north of the state.

Masters members from the north of the state continued to participate in events organised by Northern Tasmania Athletics. Events were held regularly from October 2022 to March 2023 on either Wednesdays or Saturdays.

### **Marathon and Half Marathon Challenges**

The Marathon and Half Marathon Challenges continued for the 5<sup>th</sup> year albeit with moderate support. These two challenges enable members to provide their times for marathons and half marathons anywhere in the world. The winners are decided by the highest age graded percentage during the competition period.

David O'Brien (M57), with a time of 3:01.19 at the Sydney Marathon in September 2022 won the Marathon Challenge with an age grade percentage of 78.19%.

Janet Upcher (W76) with her excellent time of 2:00.55 at the Cadbury Marathon in January 2023 won the Half Marathon Challenge with an age grade percentage of 80.15%. Janet broke her own W75 half marathon record with this run which was less than 3 minutes outside the current Australian W75 record.

### **TMA Sealed Handicap**

This season our sealed handicap competition was held for the third consecutive year with pleasing participation numbers. All members who take part in Parkrun events anywhere in the world can participate just by submitting their barcode number. This event was conducted once a month with the winner decided by the athletes' Parkrun result on the chosen Saturday. Handicaps are decided by members' most recent parkrun results. The monthly winner receives a free year's membership. We were most fortunate again to have the continued support of

Hobart Refrigeration and Appliance Repairs for this event. We thank Bruce Lansdell and his team at HRAR for their much-appreciated support. I also thank Mike Walker and Regina Magierowski for their valued work in the running of this event.

### **Volunteering**

We continue to be most fortunate to have a small but regular group of volunteers who assist with the running of TMA events, during both the summer and winter seasons. We need to continue to work hard to attract interest from members willing to help run the club. This will become particularly relevant as holding of the 2024 AMA Track and Field Championships in Hobart draws closer.

In addition to our regular volunteers, many of our people continued to perform roles for other athletic clubs and various community fun runs, all of which benefit the broader community. Our volunteers at the events like Cadbury Marathon, school track & field and cross-country events and the City to Casino Fun Run earn us valuable revenue. These funds assist us in keeping fees low. We are proud to say that we have maintained our membership fees at the same level for well over 10 years.

I thank all volunteers and also those who assisted during the season in various other roles, especially our dedicated committee members and those who helped in an ex-officio capacity.

### **The next 12 months**

The past season has continued to provide a plethora of opportunities for athletes when compared to years ago.

In addition to local competition, the AMA Postal Half Marathon Championships continue until 31 October 2023, the AMA Marathon Championships at the Gold Coast in July, the 2024 WMA Outdoor Masters Championships in Gothenburg Sweden, the World Masters Mountain Running Championships in Portugal in September, the Asia Masters Athletics Championships in Clark City, Philippines in November and the aforementioned AMA Track and Field Championships in Hobart commencing March 2024, and many other events, will offer athletes a wide choice of competition.

### **Conclusion**

I thank all committee members, ex-officios and volunteers for their hard work, support and commitment over the past season which has been another great team effort. I also thank those at Australian Masters Athletics, Athletics Tasmania, everyone involved in various capacities with Athletics South and other athletics clubs state-wide for their much-appreciated support of Masters athletics. I wish all members and their families the best of health and happiness.

As I am not re-nominating for the committee, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the running of the club for the support I have received since I became a committee member. I am most grateful to have been given the opportunities offered to me and I have learnt a great deal.

Finally, Mike Walker, is not re-nominating for the TMA committee. I thank Mike for his excellent service on the Committee, Masters athletics in general over the past 17 seasons and his personal support. Mike was awarded TMA Life Membership in the 2018-19 season and amongst other things, is a previous club President, Secretary and Treasurer. Mike was awarded the Australian Masters Athletics Administrator of the Year in 2012. His expertise and sage advice to the committee will be dearly missed.

**Philip Hand**  
**Secretary**  
**Tasmanian Masters Athletics**  
**20 May 2023**