



AMA WINTER THROWING
CHAMPIONSHIPS
THE FIRST 20 YEARS
1996-2015

AMA WINTER THROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS – THE FIRST 20 YEARS

INTRODUCTION: Veterans athletics began in Australia in the 1970s. One by one the states formed associations until eventually creating a national body, the Australian Association of Veterans Athletic Clubs (AAVAC) in 1973. The associations grew out of the burgeoning “get fit” movement that spread across the western world and centred on jogging and distance running. The people behind the development of organised Veterans athletics in Australia were largely men who, with increasing time on their hands as they consolidated their professions and were looking towards retirement, wanted to maintain fitness and social contact but outside senior, open athletics. The advent of Veterans Athletics became a world-wide phenomenon during the 1970s and 1980s with clubs, national associations and regional groupings creating a demand for a world association. This occurred in 1977, two years after the formation of a steering committee established during the Toronto, Veterans World Championships.

Importantly the focus of Veterans Athletics shifted from jogging and distance running to encompass all athletics pursuits across running, jumping, throwing and walking. And in creating a new emphasis on athletics for older athletes Veterans Athletics was a trailblazer in creating new events, such as hammer throwing and triple jump for women and the Throws Pentathlon. Alongside these developments Veterans Athletics also provided access to events in throwing such as the Heavy Weight and Super Heavy Weight Throws and the Heavy Weight Pentathlon. Through innovation, and by attempting to provide participants with events that they want, Veterans Athletics has been able to stay relevant, catering for the traditionalist and the modern, important characteristics of an organisation that needs to maintain its place in the community.

This is particularly important in an age when mainstream open athletics is diminishing in popularity as competition from professional and semi-professional sports such as all football codes, basketball, netball, cricket, golf, tennis, etc as well as sports coaching and sports administration offer career opportunities that athletics cannot. Indeed three reports into Athletics Australia in the past 15 years – Roe, Elliott and Buchanan, have all pointed out shortcomings with the organisation and the need for major administrative and participatory changes. Clearly Veterans Athletics holds a very important niche position in the athletics world, one that must be nurtured and sustained for the benefits it provides in a community where the population is ageing and the provision of organisations that are able to meet the challenges that an ageing population brings becomes strategically important.

THE BEGINNINGS: While 1996 was the year in which the AAVAC Winter Throwing Championships was first held, the idea came from a “national” event held in Canberra in 1995. Trish Thomas had approached Ray Green with the idea of holding an open invitation event for Veteran athletes that would be solely for throwing events. A small team was able to generate interest from NSW, Vic and ACT with 30+ veteran athletes participating over a weekend.

Following this event, Ray Green wrote to the ACT Veterans Athletic Club (ACTVAC) committee requesting the President, Bryan Thomas, seek permission from AAVAC to conduct a National Championships event for throwers commencing in 1996. The AAVAC committee’s response was positive on the condition that the event would be cost neutral, that is, not requiring financial support from AAVAC. (Appendix 1)

Ray Green convened a meeting of people from the AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY VETERANS ATHLETIC CLUB interested in forming an organising committee early in 1996. The committee formed consisted of

Ray as Chair/Convenor; Atila Spaits, Jenny Bourke, Peter Neill and Raylea Rudov. Venue, logo and program initiatives were discussed. At the second meeting decisions were made to hold the event at the AIS throwing ground at Bruce, adopt the “Discobolus” image as our logo, representing throwers, and to provide a program based on all the throws and the Throws Pentathlon spread over three days of the October long weekend.

“The Canberra Times”, the national capital’s daily newspaper, carried a major article a week before the event (Appendix 2) and introduced the article stating: *“The ACT Veterans Athletic Club pulled off a coup recently when the Australian Association of Veterans Athletic Clubs awarded it the rights to host the National Winter Throwing Championships in Canberra.”*

42 athletes registered for the inaugural Championships which were proclaimed very successful.

THE COMMITTEE: The initial committee remained largely intact for the first four years. From 2000 the committee has consisted mainly of: Ray Green, Convenor; Sharon Gibbins, Treasurer; Jayne Hardy, Logistics and Equipment; and Raylea Rudov, Publications. On occasion the committee has been supplemented by others including Trish and Bryan Thomas, Jan and Bob Banens, Barbara Burton and Stuart Reid.

PHILOSOPHY: From the first meeting of the 1996 committee it was stressed that that the concept of a national veterans throwing event should embody distinct principles and values. These were inclusivity, friendliness, participation, fairness, sportsmanship and socializing. In practice this was meant to result in a program provided at the lowest possible cost, where competition, while important, would be only one feature of the outcomes. The organisers wanted an event where everyone would help run it, where competitors could receive coaching and helpful advice from each other, where competitors could always be in close proximity to each other, where, because the competitors were assisting in running the event, fairness and friendliness would be the basis of decision making, where competitors, no matter what their level of achievement or their level of athletic ability, would be welcome, and where competitors and their personal achievements could be recognised and celebrated.

Each year examples of these principles were demonstrated: David Wookey seriously injuring himself in his first throw of his first event on the first day of the Championships in 2014 and consequently unable to compete, yet offering his services as an official for the full three days. Cindy Lee Arbelbide, a competitor from the United States, leaving her event with a cry of joy and chasing after a group of kangaroos that happened to cross the ground. She had never seen kangaroos before. Legally blind Royce Foley giving coaching advice to athletes as they sat waiting for their next throws. The Jones family (Bob, Karen and Warren) coming to the Championships because they love the friendly, helpful atmosphere. Cornel Vena (a Melbourne 1956 Olympian in the Modern Pentathlon) saying he finds the Championships the best run program he’s ever been to. Ron Simcock who says this is the event that he competes in, in preference to any other.

THE PROGRAM: From the 1996 beginning the focus was on throwing. For the first few years this consisted of two of the throws (hammer, discus) occurring on Day 1, the Throws (at that time Weight) Pentathlon on Day 2 and the final three individual throws (javelin, shot, weight) on day 3. With occasional gaps in the early program it was supplemented by a 40m sprint, standing triple jump and overhead shot, all events proving popular (even though Keith James always tore a hamstring!). From 2001 a new event was added to the program, the 100lb Weight Throw (the implement was half an elevator counterweight at this time!). This event proved very popular with both men and women so the committee introduced the 56lb Weight

Throw as well and had both weights specially made as spheres. These were made by Ken Priestly, a competitor and engineer from Melbourne. With the advent of the 56lb and 100lb Weight Throws, the 40m sprint, standing triple Jump and overhead shot were deleted from the program.



Ray Green



Chris McCahill



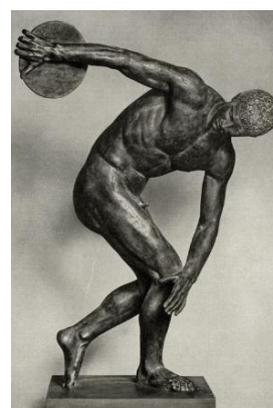
Kellie Watson



Grant Edwards

Soon after, another event was added to the program. Ray Green devised the Heavy Weight Pentathlon, an event where the athlete throws five Heavy Weights, the age related weight and the two immediately above in weight and the two immediately below in weight with the throwing order being from lightest to heaviest. Scoring tables were initially developed by Bob Banens with a new, updated version created by Stuart Reid some years later.

DISCOBOLUS: At the first meeting of the 1996 committee the suggestion was made to identify the event with a significant logo. “Discobolus” was quickly accepted by the group as an outstanding representation for throwers.



“Discobolus” is derived from the Greek “diskobolus” meaning discus thrower: diskos/discus and ballos/to throw. The iconic image is from a famous Greek statue attributed to Myron from about 450BC representing an athlete throwing a discus. This representation, including the size of the discus relative to the size of the athlete’s arm, is said to show the classic Greek style of discus throwing and was part of the modern Olympics from 1896 alongside normal discus throwing. It was discarded in the early 1900s as being too complex.

Alongside the decision on the logo, the 1996 committee decided to merchandise a T shirt displaying the Discobolus logo on the front and “AAVAC Winter Throwing Championships” on the reverse. The 1996 shirt was white with a blue logo, while the 1997 shirt was also white but with a red logo and included the year. In each of these two years 20 shirts were printed and sold to competitors. From their inception the T shirts have been very popular, so much so that in some years up to 35 have been printed. From 2000 windcheaters were added to the merchandising and proved just as popular as the T shirts. At international meetings such as the World Masters Athletics Championships they draw favourable comment from many athletes. Initially, printing the T shirts was contracted out to graphic designer Carol Harding, but since 1999 all T shirts and windcheaters have been printed in house by Sharon Gibbins and Ray Green, with over 600 printed in that time.

Additionally, the T shirts and windcheaters are used by the organisers to recognise loyalty to the Championships. Athletes competing in 10 Championships are presented with a complimentary T shirt, while those competing in 20 Championships are thanked by receiving a windcheater. After the 2015 Championships, up to 35 T shirt and two windcheater presentations will have been made.

Ten year T shirt recipients are: Ray Green, Raylea Rudov, Jayne Hardy, Sharon Gibbins, Bob and Jan Banens, Ewen Drummond*, Astrid Rose, Graeme Rose, Trish Thomas*, Mary Wahren, Tanya Colyer, Bryan Thomas, Noel Donohue, Keith James, Wendy O’Brien, Joyce Schmidt, Andrew Atkinson-Howatt, Kevin Blewitt, Peter Freeman, Rad Leovic, Denise Palmer, Helen Searle, Ron Simcock, Atilla Spaits, Peter McWilliams*, Lyn Smith, Brett Sowerby, Jean Thew, Judy Brown, Nola de Chazal, Phil Frkovic, Robin Whyte. (*deceased)
 Twenty year windcheater recipients are: Ray Green and Raylea Rudov.

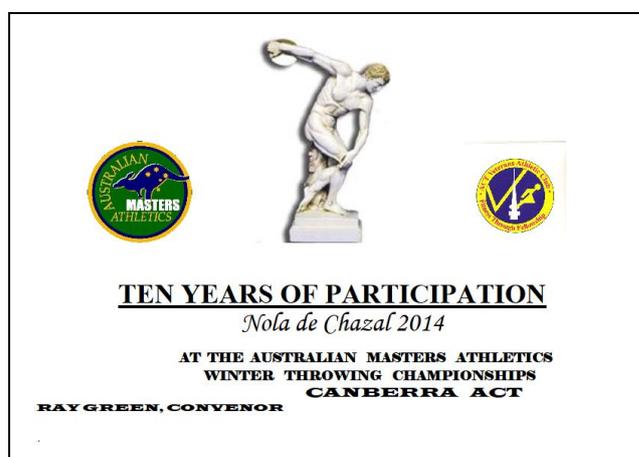
NINETEENTH AMA
WINTER THROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS
 CANBERRA Oct 4th to Oct 6th, 2014

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

NAME: _____
 AGE: _____

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | THROWS PENTATHLON | HEAVY WEIGHT PENTATHLON |
| HAMMER _____ | HAMMER _____ | WEIGHT 1 _____ |
| SHOT _____ | SHOT _____ | WEIGHT 2 _____ |
| DISCUS _____ | DISCUS _____ | WEIGHT 3 _____ |
| JAVELIN _____ | JAVELIN _____ | WEIGHT 4 _____ |
| WEIGHT _____ | WEIGHT _____ | WEIGHT 5 _____ |
| | TOTAL SCORE _____ | TOTAL SCORE _____ |
| | | SUPER HEAVY WEIGHTS |
| | | 56 LB _____ 100 LB _____ |

RAY GREEN, CONVENOR



THE GROUNDS: The first two Championships were held at the Australian Institute of Sport throwing fields, Bruce, in Canberra. The 1997 Championships commenced at the conclusion of the Australian Masters Games, meaning many competing athletes had been involved for up to ten days in high level competition. However, hiring the AIS field was expensive and the committee decided to shift the 1998 Championships to the Masson St throwing field in Turner, a ground almost in the centre of the city. Masson St had been a training ground for Canberra throwers for many years, including people like Atilla Spaits, Ray Green, Jayne Hardy and Charlie Rann, and had been used by the ACT Veterans Athletic Club since 1990 for its monthly handicap program. It was a public ground and was also used for Australian Football and Cricket.



During the mid 1990s Masson St underwent massive reconstruction works. The Australian Football posts and the concrete cricket pitch were removed as the ACT Dept of Works (DoW) sank a number of 20 metre deep overflow tanks for the nearby Sullivan’s Creek, below the surface of the field. This work destroyed the existing throwing facilities but they were eventually replaced by the DoW and the ACTVAC in 1997. DoW put in new throwing circles and cages while ACTVAC put down the Javelin runway, complete with synthetic top scavenged from an AIS track refurbishment, the Shot Put landing area, as well as all sector lines (thank you Ewen Drummond) and arcs. Consequently the Committee has been able to offer the Championships at an almost unchanged cost for 18 years.

THE TROPHIES: While the guiding principles for the Championships embraced inclusivity and egalitarianism it was recognised by the Committee at the conclusion of the 1996 Championships that trophies should be awarded to the Champion female and male athletes as judged by members of the committee. These awards could take into account any or all of a number of achievement attributes including records at Championship, Australian and World levels; relativities to World/Australian Records; results in one event or a number of events and dominance of results in an age group.



Champion Thrower Trophy



Len Childs

Ray Green

Len Childs, then President of AAVAC, and Ray Green, Convenor of the Winter Throwing Championships, donated perpetual trophies with the awards being made first in 1997. Marion Skarratt (dec) from Tasmania and Graeme Rose from Victoria were the inaugural Champions. Graeme has proven his durability and champion qualities by winning the award on six occasions. The leading female Champions are Ruth Frith (dec) and Jayne Hardy with four awards each.

In 2014 the Committee decided to present a new award, the Thomas/Frith Trophy, to honour two trail blazers in Veterans/Masters athletics: Trish Thomas from ACT and Ruth Frith from Queensland.



Trish



Ruth

The award is made to the person, who in the opinion of the Committee, best represents the ideals of Athletics defined through Sportsmanship and interpreted as Helpfulness, Initiative and Determination. An event from the past best promoting these ideals occurred at the 1956 Australian Athletics Championships when John Landy, the great Australian mile runner, stopped mid-race to assist Ron Clarke, World Junior Mile Champion at the time, back to his feet after he fell, with little thought for the consequences. Landy then set off to catch the field, now 50metres ahead, which he did and won the race! A statue commemorating this feat and called “Sportsmanship” is displayed at Olympic Park in Sydney. The first winner of this award was David Wookey from Victoria (described previously).



Ray Green David Wookey



“Sportsmanship”

LOGISTICS: Other than the throwing areas, the Masson St field lacks facilities and until 2004 lacked storage facilities. That year a shipping container was purchased by ACTVAC and placed at the ground with necessary equipment stored in it permanently.



Equipment shed, Masson St. Helen Searle, Ray Green and WTC T-Shirts

However in our first year of using Masson St, 1998, the Committee decided to erect tents to house a canteen and provide an area for administration. All equipment was brought to the ground in a special purpose club trailer and all ground sector tapes were laid in all throwing areas. Rather than remove everything from the ground each night, with the necessity to re-erect everything the next morning, the Committee decided to leave everything in-situ overnight. Jayne Hardy volunteered to spend Saturday night sleeping at the ground in a tent to protect ACTVACs assets. While there was some reluctance from the rest of the Committee to the idea, Jayne assured members she would be “fine”. The next day, after no sleep during the night, Jayne was not as positive and until the shipping container was installed all equipment was removed from the ground each afternoon to be re-assembled next morning.

The practice of assembling/disassembling/re-assembling, under the supervision of Jayne Hardy, continues and has been a major source of the camaraderie built up over the years between participants as they joined in to do the required work each morning and afternoon. While there are too many athletes who helped, to name all, there are two in particular who can be singled out for special mention – Graeme and Astrid Rose - who were usually the first of those outside the Committee to arrive and assist and the last to leave with the Committee after everything had been stored.



Setting up the tent.



Canteen/Admin tent



Astrid Rose



Graeme Rose

MEDALS: Until 2002 the Championships awarded individual first, second and third place medals in all events, in all age groups, that is, to all placegetters. Additionally all medals were presented to all placegetters on a presentation dais. These activities presented major logistical, programming and cost challenges to the Committee. From 2002 the Committee decided to inaugurate a presentation ceremony as the commencement of the first day's activities at which each athlete would be introduced to the crowd, and receive a participation medal and results certificate upon which athletes could record performances as they competed. Additionally all placed athletes could receive a place card certificate at the conclusion of each event from the event official.



The participation medals were designed by Sharon Gibbins and Ray Green and were a gold oval, 50mm x 25mm, featuring the Discobolus logo in either, red, green or blue enamel and surrounded on an edge margin by the words "AUSTRALIAN MASTERS ATHLETICS WINTER THROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS". The reverse was clear to allow printing.

CHAMPION ALL SORTS: There are many types of champions who compete at the Championships – Trish Thomas though suffering many years with serious chronic illnesses; Sharon Gibbins after major back surgery and with an inoperable 10 cent piece size hole in her patella; Roger Glass with two hip replacements and a vertebral fusion; Peter McWilliams in the early stages of motor neurone disease; Geoff Crumpton with Guillian-Barre disease; Keith James with severe arm and leg nerve damage; Lesley Dawson with no athletics history but tons of determination; Kevin Blewitt with missing toes on one foot; Tom Hancock with cancer; Russell Foy with one eye – there are many others.



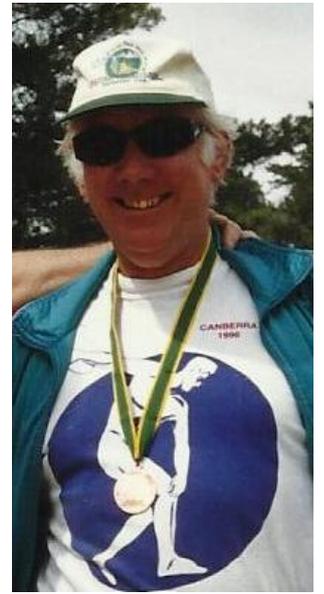
Trish Thomas



Sharon Gibbins



Roger Glass



Peter McWilliams



Geoff Crumpton



Keith James



Lesley Dawson



Kevin Blewitt



Tom Hancock

On the athletics achievements side there are two standouts: Ruth Frith and Graeme Rose.

Ruth Frith is the only person ever to set a world record at the Winter Throwing Championships, besides winning the Champion Thrower Award four times. She set her world record, at the age of 100, at the 2010 Championships in the Hammer with a throw of 11.30m. Ruth is also the oldest person ever to compete at the Championships, still competing in her 101st year and confounding the points tables in the Throws Pentathlon with her impossibly high scores nearing 1500 points for a single event. Of course she was setting the agenda for the 100+ age group!

Graeme Rose is possibly the best all round male thrower Australian Veterans/Masters has seen. He has never been beaten in the Throws Pentathlon in Australian competition and is the holder of all age group Australian records in the Throws Pentathlon from 55 years to 65 years inclusive . He has also been Champion Thrower at these Championships on six occasions.

CALAMITIES AND CATASTROPHIES: The introduction of the 100lb and 56lb Super Heavy Weight Throws, albeit at different Championships, provided some unseen scheduling problems. So many women and men wanted to enter these events (and at that time day entries were accepted) that it meant the program ran well over time at some Championships. Canberra in Winter/very early Spring darkens early and these events were completed with the athletes competing by the light of car headlights!



In 1999, not long after the completion of the new facilities at Masson St, a major storm submerged much of the ground with floodwater, in particular, the Javelin area. A large drain, about 60cm deep, was dug around the runway by the competitors to draw the water away. At the same Championships a drain had to be dug under the timber sector markers at the Shot Put to drain the flooded sand landing area. In spite of the drain, mud still flew when the iron balls landed. Some had to be dug out, they were buried so deeply.



Canberra's weather at the beginning of October is often problematic. In 2009 on the final day of the Championships the ground was lashed in cyclical fashion by sunshine, wind, rain, thunderstorms, hail and sleet. No one left the ground and all events were completed.

During the 20 years of the Championships the event has been fortunate in avoiding serious accidents and injuries to competitors. There have been occasional pulled hamstrings (Keith James), torn Achilles (David Haggith), and strained backs, shoulders and necks (name anyone). However on one occasion an athlete, while taking photographs of a Hammer event, was inadvertently struck in the leg by a wayward hammer throw. The thrower had pulled out of the throw and let it go from a position where it struck the ground outside the cage and bounced towards the photographer. Because he was looking through the lens at the time his perspective was disoriented, and though a warning was yelled to him he could not move in time and was struck a heavy blow on the thigh (quadriceps). He was taken immediately to hospital where examination and scans revealed no serious damage. Andrew Atkinson-Howatt was very lucky that day.

The Championships always has a designated Safety Officer yet even that provision can't prevent all dangerous situations. And even though it is explicitly stated in the Championship Rules that warm up activities are allowed only in the competition area sometimes athletes find themselves on the wrong side of such rules. On one occasion an athlete began warming up for a discus event well before it was scheduled. The athlete was throwing the discus across the javelin sector on the other side of which there is an on field car park. The athlete threw towards the cars, misjudged direction and flight, and landed the discus on a car's bonnet! Fortunately only a few scratches resulted, but the result could have been much worse. The athlete did not escape the Safety Officer's wrath.

Canberra is prone to extremely strong winds on occasion and the mainstays of our administration/canteen and social areas are two large tents, one a 3m x 3m square, pole tent, the other a 5m x 3m metal frame barn tent. The westerly/north westerly winds that strike Canberra can be vicious, so much so that in 2007 the barn tent started to lift and would have left the ground and/or been torn to bits except for the quick action of our Equipment Officer, Jayne Hardy commandeering some assistance and dismantling the tent in extremely difficult conditions. Fortunately the pole tent stayed intact although one of its sides had to be removed allowing the wind to blow harmlessly through.

REFRESHMENTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: One of the disadvantages of using the AIS facilities was the ban on the Championship organisers providing refreshments for competitors and spectators. This was a rule applied by the AIS because the Bruce Athletic Field had a contracted caterer operating its canteen. That the canteen was never open in the two years that the Championships were held at the AIS was irrelevant to the application of the rule in spite of protests by the organisers. With the shift to Masson St in 1998 the Committee organised a limited supply of soft drinks, tea, coffee and biscuits for purchase by competitors. From 2000, with Sharon Gibbins taking on catering responsibilities (she was the treasurer after all), a larger range of refreshments including health bars, various sandwiches, soup, soft drinks, Milo, cake and fruit, was added to the menu. This proved most popular with competitors and their families and on a number of occasions the canteen had the services of young teenage managers: Michael Freeman and Gabe Ellis were excellent in the position. When they were unavailable the canteen operated on an honour system.



The canteen



Canteen helper, Gabe Ellis

The canteen ran on a small profit basis to cover the cost of potential wastage. Whatever profit made goes to the ACTVAC as do all funds raised by the Championships. All committee work is voluntary.

The 1996 Championship dinner was held at Rydge's Hotel. The 1997 barbecue was held at the Entertainment Park in Watson. Thereafter, on the Sunday night of the Championships, a barbecue was held at the Urambi Village Townhouse complex in Kambah, for the first few years in Ray Green's house and for the past 10 years in the Community Centre Hall. Copious quantities of steak, sausages, chicken, various salads, buns, ice cream, cake, tea and coffee were provided for the hungry masses. All catering was done in house by Sharon Gibbins. As the barbecue usually coincided with the Australian Rugby League Final a TV screen was provided for those interested.

During the evening small "trophies" were presented to individuals for idiosyncratic acts that had been observed during the weekend (such as Keith James getting lost and ending up at the Tidbinbilla Deep Space Tracking Station 30km away!). These were delivered with "Charitable Malice" by Convenor, Ray Green, amid hilarious laughter and received with gleeful embarrassment by the athletes involved.

For the 2015 dinner, given that the 20th Championships would be the last held in Canberra, a very gracious offer was made to the organising committee by Helen Searle (Helen is a former Olympian – Rome/Tokyo: High Jump, Long Jump, Pentathlon). Helen offered to pay the cost of a specially catered for dinner for all athletes and their families at the Championships. Although the committee was overwhelmed by the offer, Helen's kindness was quickly accepted. Jayne Hardy accepted the coordinating role.

PUBLICATIONS: The main publications are the Championships Program, and the Report/Results issued at the conclusion of the Championships. Prior to entries being received Raylea Rudov develops a pro forma for the presentation of the Championships Booklet, usually with suggestions for photos and an updated list of participants over the years (supplied by Bryan Thomas). Sharon Gibbins receives all entries, compiling them into a competition matrix as well as updating records. At the closure of entries the print ready copy of the Program and Participation Certificate are given to Jayne Hardy for taking to the printer. All competitors receive a copy of each upon check-in.

At the conclusion of the Championships Sharon Gibbins and Ray Green check all results and Sharon enters them to two websites, ACTVAC.com.au and AMA.com.au. Additionally she e-mails all results to all competitors within two days of the end of the Championships. Ray writes a report on the Championships and along with the results sends it AMA, and ACTVAC for publication in its magazine, Vetranner.

CONCLUSION: In some respects the provision of the Winter Throwing Championships in Veterans Athletics broke the mould of how to cater for the requirements of athletes of any age. In catering for a specific group within the athletics family the organisers were making a statement about needs, innovation and possible futures. In general, fun runners and distance runners were being catered for in a variety of low and high profile running events including major marathons in numerous cities around the globe such as New York, London and the Gold Coast. In addition, city specific fun runs such as the Sydney, City to Surf catered for both, elite and fitness runners as well as the general public. Organised winter cross country running was a major feature of most athletics organisations world wide while triathlon, orienteering, mountain running and ultra distance activities were plentiful.

Catering for the needs of throwers through an event like the Winter Throwing Championships has resulted in other countries adopting similar programs or parts of the Australian program. Cindy Lee Arbelbide took the idea back to the United States and has run successful programs. New Zealand, through the initiative of Chris McCahill, has introduced the concept in that country. Knud Hansen plans to introduce the event, particularly the Heavy Weight Pentathlon, to Denmark. What this interest indicates is that here is an opportunity for administering authorities to tailor events to specialist groups within the athletics community. For example, given the development of the Heavy Weight Pentathlon, a Javelin Pentathlon, a Hammer Pentathlon and a Discus Pentathlon could be easily developed. In sprinting a 50m, 100m, 150m, 200m and 250m pentathlon could be developed. In jumping a Long Jump, Triple Jump, High Jump Triathlon could be developed. Only imagination is required to develop these concepts.

THANK YOU: Raylea Rudov was a member of the original 1996 committee. Her commitment to the committee over the past 20 years has been passionate. She has worked tirelessly over the years to ensure that the many activities associated with publications, sponsorship and logistics/equipment were planned for and developed and produced on time. She spent many hours late into the evening coordinating results, creating pro forma and researching photo requirements. Even with ageing into her seventies she still assisted with equipment assembly and packing up and for many years was responsible for the storage of the equipment trailer at her home. Noted for her “no nonsense” attitudes she often left those around her in no doubt about requirements when preparing the ground or gathering material for Championship publications. Thank you Raylea, from a most grateful Convenor. You are an exceptional team member.

Jayne Hardy is both a Champion athlete and Champion Equipment/Logistics committee member. She is extremely well known in the athletics community for her sporting prowess and her expertise in providing equipment and grounds in pristine order, with all equipment exact in measurement and when required, freshly painted. Her duties are numerous during competition, ensuring all equipment is in the right place at the right time. She is always the first to arrive and the last to leave on competition days. Yet, in spite of this, she has won the Champion Thrower Award on four occasions. Most athletes competing would not know that she has suffered some serious injuries over the past few years, but in spite of this and without complaint maintained her high level involvement ensuring the success of the Championships every year of her involvement. There is no better description of Jayne’s expertise than her ability to direct large groups of people in preparing the grounds, sorting equipment and erecting the tents, particularly the barn tent, during the Championships. And this year Jayne has added coordination of the dinner to her tasks. Thank you Jayne, from a most grateful Convenor. You are an exceptional team member.

Sharon Gibbins is an extraordinary organiser. As Treasurer she was responsible for receiving all entries (and collating them) and moneys coming to the Championships, the purchase and distribution of all T Shirts, Windcheaters, Medals and food and the required payments. Prior to the Championships she

contacted all previous competitors by e-mail, submitted copy of the entry form to AMA for publication in their Handbook, sent the entry form to the AMA and ACTVAC websites and to the ACTVAC publication, Vetranner, for publication. At the conclusion of the Championships she collated all results and sent them by e-mail to all competitors and AMA, reconciled the finances, forwarding funds to AMA and ACTVAC. Additionally she prepared all record applications and sent them to the appropriate State/National authorities. The fluency with which the Championships ran was greatly influenced by Sharon's abilities. Thank you Sharon, from a most grateful Convenor. You are an exceptional team member.



Raylea Rudov



Jayne Hardy



Sharon Gibbins

It has been a privilege for me to be the Convenor of the Local Organising Committee for the AMA Winter Throwing Championships over the past 20 years. During that time I have been fortunate to meet hundreds of champion people, people from all walks of life who share a common belief in the benefits of fitness and fellowship through the sport of Athletics. The event has grown substantially. From the initial numbers of 42, the Championships now average over 60 athletes per year. Thank you all athletes and officials.

I am in no doubt that the event can continue to grow, and with the transfer of the tradition to New South Wales Masters Athletics an opportunity arrives for the new committee to put their own slant on the competition. I wish them every success in their endeavours.



Ray Green
Convenor
AMA Winter Throwing Championships
1996 – 2015

July 15, 2015



**THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION
OF VETERAN'S ATHLETIC CLUBS LIMITED**

Mr Bryan Thomas
President
ACT VAC Inc,

Dear Bryan

Reference your letter
AAVAC Annual Throwers Carnival - 14 May 1996

Further to our telephone conversation it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Australian Association of Veterans Athletics Clubs to advise you that the Executive of this organisation has agreed to an Annual AAVAC Throwers Carnival being established in Canberra as from October 1996.

The Executive wishes to express appreciation of your Association's enterprising activity, and in doing so wishes you to note:

- (i) that the ACTVAC is fully responsible for the organisation and conduct of these AAVAC meetings, on behalf of AAVAC
- (ii) that ACTVAC is financially accountable for the meetings
- (iii) that AAVAC retains the responsibility and right to request ACTVAC to establish a fee for services in excess of that amount received by ACTVAC
- (iv) the date of three (3) above as yet to be established

Congratulations once again on your desire to improve AAVAC facilities and competitions for its members.

With best wishes

Len Childs
President
36 Womerah Avenue
POTTS POINT NSW 2011

SPORT

Star throwers set for national titles

The ACT Veterans Athletic Club pulled off a coup recently when the Australian Association of Veterans Athletic Clubs awarded it the rights to host the National Winter Throwing Championships in Canberra.

The inaugural championships will be at the lower throwing field at the AIS complex at Bruce during next month's long weekend.

Association competition director Ray Green has provided an excellent program beginning on Saturday, October 5, with the hammer and discus in all the five-year veterans' age groups for male and female competitors.

Day two on the Sunday will be devoted to the Weight Pentathlon which comprise the hammer, discus, shot and javelin with the added event, the heavy weight throw. The heavy weight is

somewhat similar to the hammer with a shorter handle and an increase in weight. As with the other throws, the weights vary according to the age of the athlete.

On the final day of competition, throwers return to individual competition in javelin, shot and the heavy weight. A number of current and ex-world and Australian champions will be vying for the championship medals. They include W50 Mary Thomas, of NSW, a world champion and record holder in the javelin in her age group. Thomas has the record of competing in more championship events than any other veteran athlete.

From Victoria comes W50 Jan Davies, who, until recently held the world record in the hammer throw. Locally, M55 Attila Spaits is an Australian record holder in the discus, and also in the discus is another Australian cham-

pion in M65 Charlie Rann. They will be joined by M45 Bob Banens and M50 Ray Green who both hold Australian records in the javelin. M55 John Hunt, who holds the Australian record in the high jump is diversifying by competing in the shot and heavy weight. For the ACT, the two oldest throwers competing are both well into their 70s, with Audun Fristad in all events and Ewen Drummond entering the pentathlon.

For the women, W55 Irene Mitchell is an ex-world record holder for the hammer, albeit some years ago. Also in the field is W45 Margaret Taylor, a world record holder for the triple jump. Taylor one of the ACT's top track competitors, has entered in the javelin, shot and the heavy weight. For more information on the event contact the AA-VAC Competition Director, Ray Green on 231 6712 or 207 2310.



2015



1997 – AIS Lower Throwing Area



2001



2002



2003



2005



2006



2007



2008



2010



2012



2013



2014

The Len Childs - Ray Green Champion Thrower Awards

1997 Marion Skarratt / Graeme Rose
 1999 Helen Searle / Jeff Hailey
 2001 Rath Frith / Stuart Gynge
 2003 Jayne Hardy / Graeme Rose
 2005 Rath Frith / Graeme Rose
 2007 Jayne Hardy / Grant Edwards
 2009 Karyne Di Marco / Tom Hancock
 2011 Tatiana Sadarikova / Roger Glass
 2013 Jayne Hardy / Grant Edwards
 2015 Melissa Holaban / Ron Simcock

1998 Jan Davies / Jeff Hailey
 2000 Helen Searle / Graeme Rose
 2002 Rath Frith / Graeme Rose
 2004 Jayne Hardy / Phil Frkovic
 2006 Helen Searle / Graeme Rose
 2008 Karyne Di Marco / Darron Haworth
 2010 Rath Frith / Ron Simcock
 2012 Jan Borens / Stuart Gynge
 2014 Helen Searle / Stuart Gynge



Len Childs Marion Skarratt



Graeme Rose Ray Green



Ray Green Jan Davies Jeff Hailey



Ray Green Rath Frith



Ruth Frith



Ray Green

Jayne Hardy



Phil Frkovic



Grant Edwards

Ray Green

Jayne Hardy



Ray Green

Helen Searle



Roger Glass



Tatiana Sadarikova



Ron Simcock



Stuart Gynell Jan Barens



Tom Hancock



Graeme Rose



Darren Haworth Karen DiMarco



Melissa Holahan Ron Simcock

Acknowledgements:

Photos:

Andrew Atkinson-Howatt, Phil Frkovic, Sharon Gibbins, Raylea Radov and other athletes.

Production:

Jayne Hardy, Raylea Radov, Sharon Gibbins

Author:

Ray Green



1997



Audin Ewen



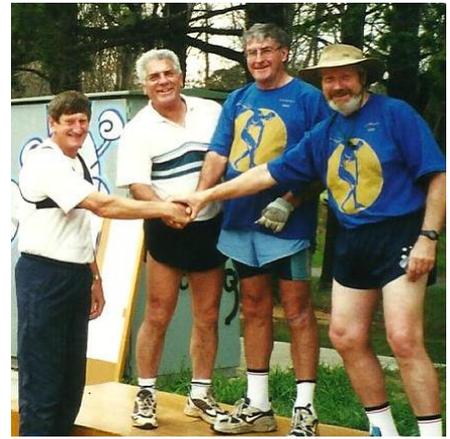
Joyce, Jan, Astrid, Jean, Nola, Mary, Ruth, Irene, Judy, Helen, Raylea



Peter, Ray, Trish



2013





Let the Championships begin!



Phil and Judy get 10 years



Sharon and Karen get headaches



Mary



Bryan



Margaret



Val



Phil



Helen



Barbara



Jean



Returning the 100lb weight and measuring



More measuring



Chris and Jayne measure shots



Gavin brings high tech



Javelin throwers



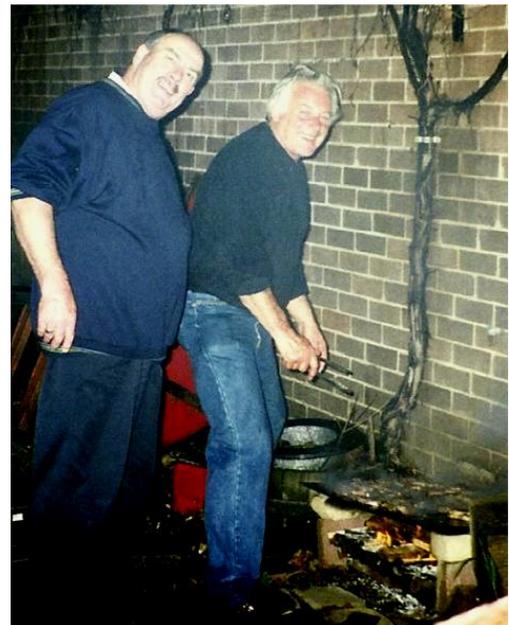
Peter Neill deserves a rest



Anatoly and future thrower



Phil and Andrew take a break



Peter and Ray barbecuing



Tent pole packing



Long weekend comes to an end

Throwers

At the Winter Throws Championships
With mighty arms and muscled hips
Athletes from both near and far
By plane and boat and bike and car
Assemble on the holy ground
In Canberra for another round
Of fair but fiercely physical strike
That taxes mind and body alike
As willing foes reveal their skills
Without regard for pain or ills
To show that time while still the master
Cannot retard their desire for faster
And as the shots and javelins fly
And as the hammers and discs flash by
They all declare their love for sport
That binds together in what can't be bought
The fun the friendship the devilled spirit
The imprimatur of classless merit
Then as the tents are slowly folded
Around fond memories already moulded
We think of days and people past
Knowing full well the die is cast
But lean into a future desired
Vowing never to be retired

Ray Green

