

## Ann Cooper



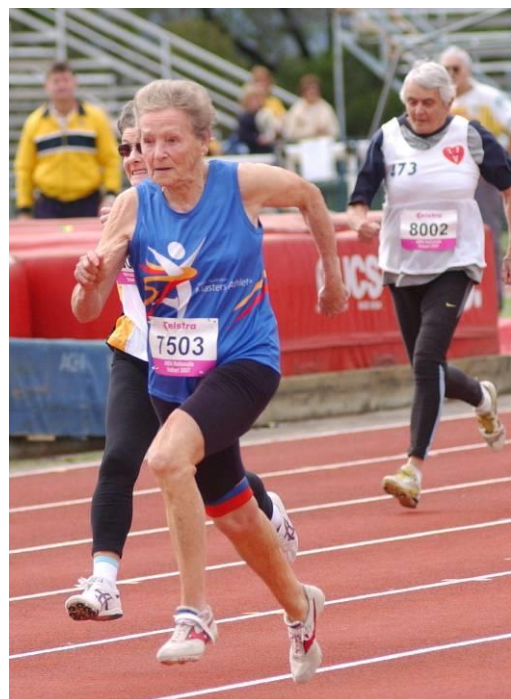
In March 1942 at the age of 13 Ann Shanley (later to become Cooper) won the State Open 220 yards Championships in 27.9. In 1943 she slipped in the 100 yards and sprained her ankle preventing her from competing that year. However from there on she won every 100 yards State Championships for the rest of the decade. Ann was South Australia's first female National champion in 1950, first female National record holder and first International female athlete. Surprisingly Ann's National title in which she also set a National record – was in the shot. In total Ann won 26 State Championships in 100 yards, 200 yards, 440 yards, shot and long jump.

Competing in the 1950 Empire Games in Auckland, Ann came sixth in the 100 yards and fourth in the 220 yards and then teamed with Marjorie Jackson, Shirley Strickland and Verna Johnson to win gold in the 660 yards medley relay. Ann ran the third leg (110 yards) increasing Australia's lead.

Soon after this gold medal win in the Empire Games Ann retired from top level athletics and with her husband Colin, moved into the more traditional role of family and work. In the early 1980's she started running again with some low key events but it was not until 1986 that the athletic interest was really re-kindled when she joined the Vets and competed in the Adelaide National Championships. The following year at the WAVA Championships in Melbourne she set her first World Record and from then on she has been the outstanding sprinter in her age groups at the world level.

In 1990 Ann was awarded a Certificate of Outstanding Performance by the Confederation of Australian Sport for the "Best Individual Performance in 1990". This award is not just for Masters but is open to all athletes. Ann's world records in the 200m, 400m and 800m in 1989 and her dominance in these events were the key.

In SAMA's Athlete of the Year Awards Ann won the sprint award in 2007. She also won the most outstanding performance in 2006 and most outstanding female athlete in 2007. She has twice been selected as a winner of the AMA Annual Award; in 1999 winning the Female Sprints/Hurdles category and in 2007 as the Most Outstanding Female athlete.



Over the years she has been a top performer in the sprint Champion of Champions event at the AMA National Championships. She was the winner in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2007. At the Championships in Hobart in 2007, award categories were introduced for the best Age Graded Performances and Ann was the winner in the Sprints/Hurdles category. Her 60m sprint time of 10.53 achieved an age grading of 104.69%.

It is remarkable that in more than 20 years of competing at the highest level in Masters competition Ann has only been beaten twice in her events (100 to 800). The first was in the 1987 World Championships in Melbourne. She broke the world record in her heat of the 400m but in the final, though a clear leader heading for the finish, had to settle for her only bronze medal. In 1991 having won gold in the 100, 200 and 400m she took silver in the 800m. During her career at the World Championships Ann has won 20 individual gold, one silver and one bronze medal. She has also won several relay medals. At the National level Ann has established 25 Australian records, six of which still stand. Seven world records have fallen to Ann.

Ann has been the dominant performer in her age groups for about 25 years and in 1997 Ann was inducted into the Athletics SA Hall Of Fame in recognition of her contribution to athletics in Australia. In 2009 Ann was one of three inaugural members of the newly established Australian Masters Hall of Fame.