

John was a promising Western Australian State Athlete when his sporting career was interrupted by World War Two. He enlisted in 1940, was captured at the fall of Singapore in February 1942 and incarcerated in the infamous Changi Prison. He was subjected to brutal beating and near starvation in Changi and later in Japan. After three and a half years as a POW he was a physical wreck on his return to Perth in 1945. His weight had decreased to about 42 kilos and he was classified as a blind soldier. He was placed in a convalescent home for about 12 months. His health gradually improved but his sight was and still is poor. Due to his immense will power John resumed running. Up to 1956 John set a number of WA State records and gained state selection five times for the WA team for the Australian Nation Cross Country Championship. He retired from open athletics in 1956 but made a comeback in 1962 competing for the next five years. John was very much involved with more than just competing. He is a founding member of MAWA (then the WA Veterans Athletic Club), the WA Marathon Club and the prime mover behind the formation of the Canning Districts Athletic Club.

John was twice nominated for WA Sports Person of the year and he won the award in 1975. In 1987 John received the WA Visually Handicapped Sportsman of the year award. He received an Order of

Australia in 1978 for services to sport.

From 1972 to 1991 John set 114 world age group records, 87 track and 27 road as detailed on the pages attached.

Some of these are single age records not generally recognised.

John still holds the World records for - M60, M65 and M70 one hour run. Also he still holds the following

Australian records;

3000m M55, M60, M65 and M70

5000m M60, M65 and M70

10000m M60, M65 and M70

Half Marathon M55, M60, M65 and M70

Marathon M60

A summary of his WMA Stadia Championships results is as follows.

1975 Toronto M55 2 Gold 3000m and 5000m. World record 3000m

1977 Gotenburg M55 3 Gold 800m, 1500m and 5000m all world records. Silver in Marathon

1979 Hanover M60 5 Gold 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 10000m all world records and Marathon

1981 Christchurch M60 Gold 800m, 1500m, 5000m and 10000m. World record 800m

1983 Puerto Rico M60 Silver 5000m injury during race. Withdrew from competition

1985 Rome M65 Gold 1500m, 5000m, 10000m. World records 5000m and 10000m. Silver Marathon

1987 Melbourne M65 Gold 10000m and 10k CC. Silver 5000m, Bronze 1500m

1991 Turku M70 Gold 5000m and 10k CC, Silver 10000m and 1500m

1993 Miyazki M70 Gold 10000m and 10k CC, Bronze 1500m and 5000m

Listings of significant results as a Veteran/Masters Athlete follow. We have for convenience not retyped these pages on to the nomination form. The listings were prepared for the nomination of John by Masters Athletics WA and the WA Marathon Club for recognition in Western Australian Hall of Fame. We were advised that John was not eligible as his results were not achieved in OPEN Athletics. John is the Patron of Masters Athletics WA. He has for many years and still is coaching junior athletes. A listing of some of the athletes he has coached is part of the

John is held in very high esteem in the sporting and wider community and is a positive role model for athletes of all ages.

In 1975 John was recognised as the WA Sportsman of the Year.

In 1978 John was awarded an Order of Australia.

In 1987 he received the WA Visually Handicapped Sportsman of the Year Award and was the Community

Newspapers WA Sportsman of the Year.

He was an Olympic Torch Bearer for Sydney 2000 and is Patron of the WA Lest We Forget Run, conducted by

Athletics WA on behalf of Athletics Australia and he is also Patron of Masters Athletics WA.

The Open Athletics WA State Championship is the John Gilmour 10000m track event in honour of his

Achievements.

David Hemery, 1968 Olympic Gold Medallist in the 400m hurdles race published a study of those athletes he considered to be the highest achievers. Over two years he interviewed 63 top performers selected from 22 sports and 12 different countries. John Gilmour was one of 16 world champion athletes chosen for this study.

It was reported in this study that Herb Elliott had this to say of John:

John [is] the greatest track and field athlete in Australia. His record is impressive not only because he won so

many titles, but he has also shown that advancing age need not be as much of a disadvantage as most people allow themselves to believe. His times alter little with age.

COACHING ACHIEVEMENTS

John has coached numerous school children and senior and junior athletes, including-

Max Binnington, Australian 110m Hurdles champion, record holder and representative;
Australian High Performance Coach-

Aron Baxter, National Junior Cross Country champion-

David Eltringham, National Half Marathon record holder-

Jim Langford, National Cross-Country and National Marathon champion, 3 times Australian Cross Country representative-

Fred Langford, National Cross Country and National Steeplechase champion-

Kerry O'Connell, National 100m 200m and 400m Hurdles champion-

Roxanne Gelle, National 100m Hurdles champion and Australian representative-

Mike Hill, National Junior Steeplechase champion-

Barry O'Kane, National Junior Cross Country champion-

Lyn Young, National Junior 400m champion

The 1998 unsuccessful submission made to the WA Hall of Fame included Testimonials to John from well-known sports and community identities such as:

- Herb Elliott, Olympic Gold Medalist, subsequently an Athletics Australia Board Member
- Richard Telfer AM, Coach at AIS
- Robert de Castella MBE, World Marathon champion
- Ron Burns, Deputy CEO, Confederation of Australian Sport
- Dennis Lillee, legendary Australian cricketer
- Malcolm Brown, AFL and WAFL legend
- Torsten Carlius, President, WAVA
- Stan Perkins, Member, Oceania Region World Veterans Council; Immediate Past President, AAVAC;
Immediate Past President, OAVA
- Sir Charles Court, Premier of Western Australia
- Kim Beazley, Federal Member for Brand and Leader of the Opposition
- Michael C Hall OAM, RSL State Executive Member