

Peter Crombie, 67, has over 52 years in the Australian athletics scene and is one of the longest-serving active athletes in NSW, having first competed in local ANSW meets in 1960. Peter began competing at Masters level in 1980 and has served as a coach and administrator during that period. He has competed at the World Titles for some 25 years and is the only person in WMA history to reach the finals in the 100m, 200m and 400m at every meet in which he competed over a period of ten outdoor world titles and the 60m, 200m and 400m in five world indoor titles.

### **Personal History**

Peter grew up in Canterbury, the son of a carpet layer. He attended Canterbury Boys High and later studied Chartered Accounting in the evening while working in the profession. He has developed and managed a number of businesses, ultimately working as an investor in the property development field. Now living in Dee Why, Peter is supposedly semi-retired but still works most days in areas relating to coaching and athletics' administration.

He has three adult children all of whom competed at Ku-ring-gai Little Athletics during their childhood.

### **Personal Athletics Achievements**

Peter has had outstanding success at World Titles since first competing in 1987. In addition he has also won a medal at every meet he has competed in the sprint events. Peter has also received more medals than any other Australian male sprint athlete ever at WMA world titles. In fact he has likely won more medals than any other track and field male masters athlete. He has competed in 10 Outdoor World titles in 30 individual sprint events, always making the final and medaled on 20 occasions.

In addition to this unprecedented individual achievement, Peter has been a prolific Australian relay athlete at the World Outdoors level winning 18 medals from 20 starts, together with 2 fourth places. An unsurpassed achievement in World Masters athletics history.

Peter has also dominated the sprint events at the 5 World Masters Indoor Championships winning an unprecedented 13 medals from 14 sprint events, only missing one due to injury. No other male sprint athlete has ever achieved this.

Currently, Peter is the holder of some 19 Australian records both indoors and outdoors some dating back to 1995. Peter holds the Australian Indoor records for every sprint event in which he has competed in, including the relays. None of these indoor records have ever been broken.

Peter has competed in four World Masters Games, winning 10 gold and 3 silver medals in the 13 events in which he has competed, making him the most successful sprint athlete in the world during this period. At the

2005 World Masters Games held in Edmonton Canada he won 5 gold medals from as many events and was the most successful sprint athlete at the meet.

At a local level Peter has been a prolific place-getter in local and State athletics meets. In his early years he was a multi-events specialist but later progressively dropped those additional events to concentrate on sprinting.

Peter was a race walker for over 25 years but gradually eliminated that discipline also. In his earlier athletic years in the Masters Peter could be seen competing in and medaling in such diverse events as javelin, discus, shot, long jump, triple jump, 110m hurdles, race walks and pentathlon. He won a number of state and national titles in these events. Peter's most recent achievement was being awarded the ANSW Masters Sprinter of the Year for 2011/2012 as well as for his local club.

Peter is also a keen competitor at State and National level with many sprint medals achieved over the last 30 years as a Master. He has achieved more sprint medals than any other athlete in NSW or Nationally during that period. In fact Peter has won the Australian Masters Sprinter of the Year Award on two occasions in 2003 and 2006.

This has never been achieved by any other male athlete.

In 2010 he won the Australian Masters Award for the Best Individual Male Performance.

In 2005 Peter was part of the team(s) which won 2 gold medals in the 4x100m and 4x400m in the M55 age group in the World Titles in San Sebastian in Spain. This outstanding team effort was awarded the trophy as The Australian Masters Team of the Year at the Confederation of Sport Australian Sport Awards in Canberra.

It comes as no surprise that Peter was awarded the highest honour by his sport. In late 2010 Peter was unanimously voted by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) as the World Masters Male Athlete of the Year at a gala function in Monte Carlo. What makes Peter's achievements even more remarkable is that he is self coached.

As a keen athlete Peter could often be seen competing overseas in such varied places as the UK, Hong Kong, Finland, Puerto Rico, Canada, New Zealand and, his favourite, the United States. Peter has competed in at least 10 US Titles, both indoor and outdoor and various US Regional meets, more often than not picking up first place but never out of the medals.

Peter demonstrated his versatility and competed at the World Surf Life Saving Championships in Sydney at North Steyne Beach in 2000/2001 where he became a dual gold medalist running in Masters' competition. He competed for the North Steyne Club and collected the first gold medal(s) ever achieved in their 100 plus year history in the sprint and relay events.

### **Athletics Administration**

In addition to Peter's on track achievements he has fulfilled many administrative roles from local to

international level.

Peter has been actively involved in the administration and management of his local athletic clubs. He first joined Bankstown Athletic Club in 1960 as a teenager and had only competed for a few years when he then took over the management of athletes at weekly interclub competition.

He later assumed a committee role and acted in every official capacity for the club except Secretary. He was the instigator for a later affiliation with the Bankstown Sports Club, a local licensed club. Once this connection was formalized the athletics club changed its name to Bankstown Sports Athletic Club and began receiving thousands of dollars each year from the licensed club. This meant that athletes' membership joining fees and uniforms were subsidized and the club was able to acquire plenty of equipment. Peter was later honoured with a Life Membership in recognition for his long-term work with the club.

After moving to northern Sydney, in 1985 Peter founded the Ku-ring-gai Athletic Club. He secured sponsorship with Reebok, who provided more than \$25,000.00 a year in funds and benefits. The club later merged with Manly and Warringah Athletic Clubs and became Reebok Athletic Club. This was the first major shoe company to allow an athletic club to use its name. The club soon grew to become the largest in Australia with over 350 members. Peter acted in the role of Vice President and adviser to the committee. Again Peter was honoured with Life Membership for his long-term work with the club.

Peter joined the board of ANSW soon after it was placed in Receivership. He provided management advice and financing to allow the Association to trade out of its problems. Peter remained on the board for four years and, during that time, actively championed the role of Masters athletics within the state. He was also presented with a merit award by ANSW for services to the sport over a long period.

In 1989 Peter started a Winter Series meet which catered for athletes of all ages but, in particular, masters athletes who wanted to prepare and compete at the World Titles. That meet was held continuously for some 20 years. The 60m was one of the events in the programme and it proved to be the most popular of all sprints. This together with competition at various international indoor meets where the 60m event is one of the highlights led Peter to push to have it as an annual event at the National Master's Championships and the NSW Championships which eventually came to pass.

For some 20 years he was the Australian delegate at the World Masters Congress and a Board Member of Australian Masters Athletics for five years.

In 2009 Peter was awarded Life Membership to NSW Masters in recognition of his contribution to the sport of

athletics as an athlete, coach and administrator.

## **Coaching**

Peter began coaching sprints in 1989 after some years of training with Reg Austin. Peter initially coached open athletes and elite schoolboys but soon found that he had great affinity with other Masters' athletes whom he immediately added to his squad now known as SprintForce.

He is a Level 4 Coach in Sprints and Relays, which enables him to coach up to international level. Peter has a local squad of about 20 athletes, including 18 Masters athletes. He covers distances from 60m to cross country, but tends to concentrate more on shorter distances up to 800m. In addition to his local athletes he has coached many athletes by correspondence, something he still does for two athletes.

Peter has trained many Masters athletes ranging from local club athletes up to international level. A number of his athletes have achieved medals and world records at local and international level. It is believed that Peter's squad is the largest single group of master's sprinters in the world, certainly in Australia.

Athletes from his squad have been the most successful team at the NSW State Relay Championships in each year since the event was inaugurated over 15 years ago. This current season they won 10 of the 11 relay sprint titles for men including first, second and third in one event and in three other events they finished first and second.

In recent years Peter organised and chaired a lecture titled 'The Long Sprints'. There were a number of speakers including Penny Gillies, a Level 5 Sprint Coach and the coach of 400m Olympian, Joel Milburn. This event was widely advertised through NSW Masters for Masters' athletes and was well attended.

For more than 20 years, Peter organized and led a six-week conditioning program at the sand hills at Palm Beach. This has proven to be excellent base conditioning work for these athletes. There were often a group of 15 master's athletes as well as younger athletes running the hills followed by breakfast and chat thereafter.