



Janet Naylor – AMA Board Member

1976 was a pivotal year – for Christmas I received a book about the Montreal Olympics and my first ever album, ABBA ‘Arrival’. I read the athletics pages over and over and expected to meet ABBA when in Stockholm the following year! It was also my first season of Little Athletics and netball. Once I hit high school, hockey replaced netball and so the pattern of hockey in winter and athletics in summer continued till the end of university, and then later in my thirties.

Being sport mad, I embarked on a Bachelor of Education degree in Human Movement at the University of Sydney and joined the athletics club. This is where I had my first taste of club administration and team management.

Fresh out of university, I was a physical education teacher and after two years teaching went travelling in East Africa – highlights were seeing gorillas and chimpanzees in the wild. On return, I knew I wanted something different and then spent the next 10+ years working in the sports industry mostly in Paralympic sports. The highpoint was being general manager for the World Wheelchair Basketball Championships in Sydney in 1998. This was a test event for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. I met some amazing people and am grateful for what I learnt from some very inspirational athletes and sports administrators, in particular Mike Wrublewski and Ian Holmes. We made a surplus for the funding partners and won a number of awards including - advertising, volunteer program and NSW Event of the Year.

Alongside my work in Para sport, I qualified as an athletics official in 1996 and went to the Paralympic Games in Atlanta as one of two Australian officials to learn and then educate Australian officials ahead of Sydney 2000. I was a member of the technical advisory panel for the 2000 Paralympics and a technical official at both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Working in the call room at both events, I came face to face with the who’s who of athletics at the time. There are many stories best told in person – ask me!

It was through working in Para sport that I discovered I was old enough for masters athletics and I competed in my first world championships in Brisbane 2001 as possibly the youngest competitor. It was at this event I



met my future husband. I have since been to World

Masters Championships at every opportunity and we even married at the World Championships in San Sebastian!

On the work front I ended up back in education in various marketing and communications roles in the independent school sector. This gave me time for training and being on various committees and filling volunteer roles.

A casual conversation about team management saw me managing AMA teams in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2017 for World Indoor Championships and 2013, 2015 and 2018 for the Stadia Championships. Having numerous injuries during this period, being team manager enabled me to still be involved and to help other athletes achieve their best.



Sport has provided so many opportunities, friendships (both professionally and personally) and the opportunity to travel. Some highlights include:

- *At school* – leading my school to Champion Girls' School in NSW at the Combined High Schools Athletics, representing NSW at the Pacific School Games and winning premierships in school girls hockey.
- *At uni* – winning Inter-Varsity three times in a row and Sydney Uni Sports Team of the Year twice.
- *As an official* – making a difference in the recognition and status of Para athletes as elite athletes along with various Technical Delegate appointments and qualification as a TOECS Level 1 Lecturer.
- *As a masters athlete* – winning some medals along the way with significant ones in relay teams. The first gold was in Puerto Rico 2003 and this was followed with silvers and bronze and more gold! The silver in the 4x200m at Clermont-Ferrand in 2008 is special as it was also an Athletics Australia open record, which stood for 8 years.
- *As an administrator* – introduction of masters age groups into Athletics NSW interclub competition along with support from Kriszta Kovacs and Stuart Paterson.
- *Recognition* for my involvement in sport is the 'icing on the cake' and awards have included carrying the flag at the opening ceremony for World Indoors in Daegu, Sports Administrator of the Year in NSW, Sport Australia Masters Team of the Year, Australian Sports Achievement Award, AA Service pin for 20 years, life memberships of Athletics NSW, UTS Northern Suburbs AC, Sydney Uni AC and Hornsby RSL Hockey.
- *Travelling* after world championship events:
 - Volgograd in Russia to research the Battle of Stalingrad (Stuart's grandfather died as one of the last POWs)
 - Angel Falls in Venezuela, Galapagos Islands and walking the Inca Trail
 - Rock climbing in Yosemite National Park and 3,000 mile road trip
 - Cheese and chocolate factories in Switzerland

My favourite events have been the sprints, relays, hurdles and long jump, though I have dabbled with multi-events, completed a triathlon, some fun runs and the 100km Oxfam Trailwalker. I have even hurdled in a wedding dress for a TV ad!

