

## Phil Urquhart - AMA President



My early years were spent in the suburbs of Melbourne where there was access to all manner of sports as well as the traditional organised activities, football in winter, cricket in summer. I tended to try whatever my friends were doing, including tennis, golf, table tennis, squash in addition to cricket and football. We followed the performances of Australian distance runners during this time but had little incentive to train consistently in any sport. Eventually we were recruited for a start up basketball team. A good coach and a couple of above average team members formed the nucleus of a team which immediately enjoyed a run of premierships. Ironically it was our coach's insistence that we supplement our skills training with running several times a week to improve our fitness which hooked me on running. Eventually marriage and children saw an end to basketball, but by this time I was enjoying the regular runs, an activity that could be fitted in to a busy life.

After a change of job I noticed several colleagues disappearing every lunch time and I soon joined their regular 10 km runs and eventually at their insistence entered every fun run available. Marathons, triathlons and trail running followed and in later years, training and supporting ultra-running teams. To date my record includes twelve marathons (ten Melbourne, making me a Spartan, and two at Alice Springs) as well as over 200 monthly Tan Time Trials with the Victorian Road Runners. Over the years memorable long runs included many solo efforts in remote parts of Australia that were undertaken to maintain marathon training while on road trips. This included the Simpson Desert, Flinders Ranges, Lake Eyre, Arnhem Land, and the most memorable – a run starting in darkness from Yulara in the Northern Territory to view the sunrise at Uluru. Eventually fifteen years ago at the urging of one of the members of the running group I tried track running at a Masters venue and found I enjoyed this new phase of my running life.



First (and fastest!) Marathon 1980

Masters administration experience commenced five years after I became a member when I took on the role of Secretary at Victorian Masters Athletics in 2010. This led to a position on the Local Organising Committee for the 2012 Nationals with responsibility for fundraising, social activities, assisting with publications and on the ground management during the four days of competition. I was also heavily involved in the 2019 Nationals where we achieved close to 1000 entries.

Over last four years a challenge was the joint conduct of VMA Track and Field championships with Athletics Victoria including program, promotion, setup, volunteer recruiting and active involvement during competition. I organised the Browne Shield series (winter distance program) for five years and during this time set up a specialist training and coaching group for middle distance and distance runners to fill a gap in our offering to athletes. Initially twenty new members joined VMA and the group now numbers over forty.

Other activities at VMA included: liaison with Athletics Victoria, and overseeing the implementation of the Run Safely Tonight promotion, upgrade of the VMA website, improved VMA graphics including the tag line "Be Active Be Social Be Safe", production of a professional promotional video and implementation of GSuite at VMA.

I have attended AMA AGM and General Council meetings as VMA delegate since 2013 thereby gaining detailed knowledge of AMA processes.

My business experience includes thirty five years in major Australian and international manufacturing companies, initially in Finance but culminating in board positions responsible for IT, distribution, strategic planning and risk management. This was followed by ten years as an independent business consultant advising on business restructure and rescue and at times taking direct responsibility for implementation of my recommendations. Business involvement concluded in 2010.