

Profile - Stan Perkins



Stan Perkins is an outstanding administrator in the management and development of masters athletics at the State, National, Oceania and World levels. He has not only devoted a significant part (well over 35 years) of his adult life to masters athletics, but he continues to do so in many roles and levels with great distinction. Besides his administrative roles Stan is a qualified throws coach, qualified and experienced throws, jumps and walks official and field event referee, and uses his broad technical knowledge to great effect in other areas of masters athletics. Stan is commonly seen officiating at all levels of masters athletics or heard behind the microphone providing informed commentary both about the event and the individuals in the event.

Prior to Stan's ongoing commitment to masters athletics, he was been involved in other areas of athletics; being an Executive Officer with Qld Little Athletics and National Development Officer with Athletics Australia. Stan joined Queensland Masters Athletics (QMA) in 1981 and quickly became involved in administration of the sport; joining the QMA Committee; becoming QMA Secretary in 1984; QMA Newsletter Editor; and then QMA President; and QMA delegate to Australian Masters Athletics (AMA) Annual General Meetings for some 5 years.

Having honed his skills at the State level Stan was elected to the AMA Board (then Australian Association of Veterans Athletics Clubs or AAVAC) in 1988 and was its Secretary for some six years until 1995 and then its President for a further six years until 2003. During his tenure on the AMA Board Stan demonstrated leadership and interpersonal skills in coaxing the Board to help implement management changes to the organisation to make it more effective and professional. There were many initiatives undertaken or commenced under his leadership, including the annual AMA Handbook; the AMA Strategic Plan; the AMA Championship Manual; the updating of the AMA Constitution and By-Laws; the AMA Hall of Fame; the creation of the AMA website and so on. It was also Stan who changed the name of the organisation from Veterans to Masters, which is now the universally accepted name of our sport accepted by the IAAF.

During his tenure on the Board Stan was also the Australian Team Manager for the 1987 Melbourne and 1989 Eugene World Championships. Stan's knowledge and experience was particularly useful in his eight year stint as an Australian Delegate to the World Masters Athletics (WMA) (World Association Veteran Athletics or WAVA) General Assembly. This role provided him with a good understanding of the issues and politics at the world level, and also enabled him to establish contacts in the international masters athletics arena.

Stan was also AMA's delegate to the Oceania Masters Athletics (OMA) Council (then Oceania Association of Veteran Athletes or OAVA). He was soon elected to the OMA Council becoming its Vice-President and ultimately President for a number of years. Here Stan also worked on making the organisation more efficient and effective within the region as well as increasing its voice at the world level. He became Oceania's Regional Delegate to the WMA Council for some 14 years from 1995 to 2009. Obviously in recognition of his management expertise, Stan was appointed Chair of the WMA Anti-Doping & Medical Committee for 12 of those years and dealing with the medical challenges of older athletes as well as occasional doping infringements by athletes.

In 2009 Stan was elected President of World Masters Athletics and will remain President until 2018 when he will be required to step down. At the World level Stan continued his reformist innovative goals. WMA had major organisational and management issues when Stan was

elected, not least of which was its ongoing financial viability. During his tenure he restructured the World body and Council to make it more open, efficient and effective through major organisational reforms that provided for future growth and development of masters athletics. These changes were reflected in the adoption of a completely new Constitution and By-Laws as well as Championship Rules which took some five years to develop and adopt. This was a significant achievement for Stan who had to use all of his astute negotiating skills to bring the Council, the powerful European Region and all 150+ WMA Members on board. Stan's role in the new Constitution was not just as a salesman but also to identify areas that needed changing, and to act as a sounding board for proposed clauses and wording.

Stan also improved the awarding and contracting of World Championships to ensure WMA retained control over its Championships and received its financial dues. He particularly sought to avoid the financial perils that had plagued the organisation with previous Championship contracts that had almost brought the organisation to its knees. At one stage Stan even used a significant amount of his own money to keep WMA afloat while the Treasurer was AWOL for an extended period of time. Not surprisingly there is now a clause in the new Constitution that prevents such a situation ever happening again.

He developed WMA's relationship with the IAAF at the highest level; resulting in the establishment of the IAAF Masters Athlete of the Year; the incorporation of masters events at World (open) Athletics Championships; and secured significantly increased funding support for WMA amongst others. The co-location of WMA with the IAAF in Monaco was part of Stan's vision to ensure masters athletics was an inclusive, integral as well as visible part of the World Athletics Family, and that WMA was recognised as the responsible entity for masters athletics worldwide.

It is impossible to list all of Stan's achievements in this brief citation. However, some of his less obvious but nevertheless important achievements as WMA President include resolving challenging conflicts within dysfunctional Member countries and in the African Region. The resolution of these challenges demonstrated Stan's strong resolve, astute leadership, and negotiation skills.

Despite his status as WMA President, Stan has always remained approachable to anyone, and continued his involvement at the grass roots level of our sport – he is there at every Australian, Oceania and World Championships usually in an administrative or officiating role. It should nevertheless be noted that Stan is not just an administrator or official, and does actually compete in masters athletics. Stan has completed two marathons and ran in both the cross country and marathon at the Melbourne World Championships, and is a regular shot put and discus competitor. However, he is often prepared to sacrifice his participation to fill in the ever necessary role of an official.

At the international level Stan is an outstanding ambassador for Australia and the Oceania Region and a role model for the sport. Throughout Stan's masters athletics administrative career he has demonstrated an remarkable commitment to the sport, showed great leadership and determination to improve the organisations in which he served and the status of masters athletics. Rarely has anyone served their sport with such distinction in so many different ways and at so many levels.