

Board Member Profile – Jill Taylor



Compared to my fellow athletes, I'm very much a latecomer to the party, only taking up the sport, as my children were finishing up in Little A's at Cherrybrook Athletics Club, and winning my first medal at age 47. Prior to that I'd played soccer for around 20 years, enjoying most playing forward and slotting away goals. I've been with Cherrybrook Club ever since 2002, now celebrating 20 years with them as their first ever competing Masters Athlete.

My first few years at events were much more social than serious, I used to joke that State Champs were my training for Nationals, and I didn't bother training for anything else. It was definitely a fun time, but I had an epiphany one day that my performances might actually improve if I put some effort into training. My breakthrough moment was attending my first Oceania Championships in Townsville in 2008. I had trained to improve my throws distances for that, and after winning Bronze medals in Hammer and Weight Throw, I decided to take my throwing more seriously, returned home and located a coach (John Clark). Since joining forces, we've had quite a few successes, quite a few medals and achieving high placings in several events in the World Rankings lists each year.



In 2011, I went to my first WMA Outdoor Championship in Sacramento, and surprised myself with 5th places in Hammer and Weight. During the following four World Outdoors Championships I managed more top 8 placings, and an excruciatingly close 4th place in Perth in 2016. I had much better luck the following year, when I competed at my 3rd World Indoor Championship in Daegu South Korea, winning

Gold in Hammer and Bronze in Weight. Stepping up on the dias with the Australian flag raised and our national anthem being played for me was mind blowing, and a highlight of my athletics career, and life. Locally, my highlight so far has been winning the AMA Champion of Champions Throws (Hammer) in 2011. Hopefully once COVID has cleared up enough to let us travel again, we can resume our competitions, both here and abroad.

I was persuaded to join **NSW Masters Committee** back in 2009, and spent 3 years as Registrar before being elected as their first female President, from 2012 to 2014. I decided to take on the extra challenge to head up the Local Organising Committee for the 2015 AMA National Championships, moving to the role of Vice President whilst running the nationals campaign to its successful completion. I've also held the roles of NSWMA Secretary, Distance Rep and Newsletter Editor, so have had a well-rounded education in the workings of NSW Masters.

From 2014 to 2016 I served my first stint on the **AMA Board of Directors**, and have returned for a second time in 2021, as Director, Media and Marketing.

In 2015 NSW made the bid to host the AMA Winter Throws Championship, to continue the excellent job ACT had done for the previous 20 years. I had joined the initial organising Committee for the 2016-2018 events, then headed up that LOC for 2019-2021. The challenges of the global pandemic in 2019 afforded us the opportunity to pivot and run a terrific virtual event in tandem with the onsite Championships, uniting competitors around Australia during lockdown.

Since 2020 I've been back as NSWMA President, and once again am leading the Local Organising Committee for NSW's next hosting of the 2023 AMA National Championships (*I must be mad!*)

Recognition awards have included:

- Athletics NSW Administrator of the Year in 2012
- NSWMA President's Award, in 2011 and 2016
- Awarded NSWMA Life Membership in 2019

Outside of sporting commitments, I'm an Executive Assistant, working the last 20 years mainly in the IT space, working in global companies such as Microsoft, Cisco, Telstra, the Wrigley Company, and currently at Transport for NSW. The organisational and project management skills learnt certainly cross over well into my roles on the NSW Committee and AMA Board.



Athletics is a huge part of my life these days, and I love the opportunities it has given me. I enjoy the competition and working to be the best that I can personally be, as well as the great social interaction at our events. I'm blessed to be able to travel overseas to compete, and have so far competed in 7 Oceania Championships, 5 World Outdoor Championships, 3 World Indoor Championships and 3 World Master Games.

The other major bit for me is being able to contribute to the running of our Masters organisation in Australia, at both State and National level, and I feel I've been able to make some positive impact in those areas. I've served on committees continuously since 1984, across school, community and sporting groups. My father was also a committed committee member: co-founder of the Gemmological Association of Australia in 1948, and founder of the Australian Lapidary Club in 1957, spending many years helping to run those organisations, as well as travelling around Australia lecturing and prospecting.

I like to think that particular DNA force is strong in this one 😊

If I do ever have spare time, I enjoy photography, home and garden renovations, and am currently obsessed with family history research.

000--000