

## AUSTRALIAN CENTURION DETAILS

29     **Robin Whyte (24/02/1942)**  
23:34:20  
05-06 October 1996  
George Knott Athletic Field, Clifton Hill, Vic

Robin Whyte, born 1941, is one of the most well known of Australia's racewalkers, having been racing, first for NSW, and then for the ACT, since the 1960's.

A former international walker, he represented Australia in the IAAF World 50km Championships in Malmo, Sweden, in 1976 and is a former Australian 50km champion (1973) and multiple National medallist. Nowadays, aged 69, he is still a regular competitor on the local ACT front and is one of the main organisers of the annual Lake Burley Griffin racewalking carnival, held each June in Canberra. In that context, he has the distinction of having started in every one of the 45 schedulings of the LBG 20 Mile event and has finished in all bar two.



**Robin, second from left, in a 1970 Australian Championship**

His introduction to the world of Centurion walking was in 1978 when the annual qualifying event was held in Gosford in NSW. On that occasion, Robin walked the first half with John Smith (who was successful and became C16) and was well on schedule for a successful finish until he withdrew for an hour's rest in the early hours of the Sunday morning - he had completed 110.96 km in 13:39:44. He did not return to the track and thus missed his window of opportunity. It would be 18 years until he tried again, this time successfully.

His next attempt was in October 1996 when the George Knott Athletics Track in Clifton Hill, Melbourne, was chosen for the annual qualifying event. Robin started at a brisk pace (2:45 per lap) which he maintained until the 50 mile mark, walked in continuous rain. At 90 km he took his only break for the entire race - a 5 minute rest to change into dry clothes. Then he was off again, maintaining a pace of between 3:00 and 3:30 for the rest of the race. He was determined not to stop, remembering what had happened last time in Gosford. There was never any real likelihood of him retiring and it was a very pleased competitor who crossed the line just after 10:30 AM on the Sunday morning. His feet were a mess with bloodied shoes and he had to be helped from the track - but this was a small price to pay and only a temporary inconvenience when compared with the great achievement of walking 100 miles inside 24 hours. With his walk, he became Australian Centurion number 29 in a time of **20:37:12**. Just over 3 hours later, Merv Lockyer also finished to become Australian Centurion number 30.

Three years later in September 1999, he fronted for the annual qualifying walk, this time at the Coburg Athletics Track in Melbourne. This was our best ever Centurion finish with 7 qualifiers, 5 of them new. Robin was the fourth of the group to finish with a time of **21:34:48**.



**1999 - Robin is one of 7 centurion finishers**  
**Back: Herbert Neubacher, Gerrit de Jong, Gerald Manderson**  
**Front: Jill Green, Robin, Carol Baird and Sandra Brown**

Four months later, in January 2000, he was back in action in the annual Coastal Classic 12 Hour Event in Gosford. Showing wonderful form, he won with a new walk record of **98.12 km**. This time stood for many years at the Gosford Coastal Classic record and still stands over 11 years later as the M55 Australian 12 Hour Record. it will take some beating!

In September 2000, he snared his third centurion finish at the annual qualifying event at Coburg. Then aged 58, he strolled through the 100 miles in a time of **22:29:32**.

Since then, he has restricted his endeavours to 12 Hour and 6 Hour walks. The Coastal Classic was obviously his favourite event as he competed in it every January until 2007, nearly always finishing in the first 3 and consistently walking around or above 90 km.

He made a welcome return in the 2005 centurion 24 Hour event at Coburg, taking second place in the inaugural Australian 100 km championship with a time of **13:57:09**.

A couple of years later, in August 2007, he entered the 12 Hour event at the Australian 48 Hour Championships carnival on the Gold Coast, Queensland. Not really expecting anything special given his current level of training, he surprised even himself with his performance, passing the 50 Mile mark in 10:53:50 and covering a final 12 Hour distance of 88.301 km to set two new M65 Australian records.



**August 2007 - Robin sets new M65 records in Queensland**

Robin has a large number of M55, M60 and M65 Australian ultra distance walking records now and has not retired by any means. However, his appearances are now less frequent as his other activities take precedence.