

AUSTRALIAN CENTURION DETAILS

51. David Billett (24/09/70)
23:52:27
16-17 April 2005
Coburg Harriers Track, Coburg, Vic

The 2005 official Australian Centurion Qualifying event, held in conjunction with the Coburg 24 Hour carnival at the Harold Stevens Reserve in Coburg, saw a record total of 19 walkers and 34 runners. The carnival started at 10AM on the Saturday morning in overcast cool conditions. The sun broke through after several hours but was never too debilitating with the day recording a maximum temperature of 19°C. A cold still night was followed by a sunny Sunday morning as the 24 hour competitors closed in on their various individual targets.

Three walkers completed in excess of 100 miles - Jill Green (C 38), Geoff Hain (C 49) and David Billett (C 51).

The third centurion finisher was young South Australian runner **David Billett**. In this same event the previous year, David had completed 163.8 km in the 24 hour run. On this occasion, he entered as a walker and recorded a very similar distance – 161.887 km. Along the way, he passed the 100 mile mark in **23:52:27** to become Australian Centurion Number **50** and became a member of the very elite group of ultra competitors who have completed both 100 miles as a runner and as a walker.

David was behind the required schedule at the 18 hour mark and had to dig deep during the final stages of the event to bring himself back into contention. But his easy long striding pattern was perfectly suited to the task and he came in just under 8 minutes under the margin. The final outcome was a fitting reward for his efforts and it won him the Jack Webber Trophy which is awarded annually to the best Centurion performance of the meet.



David on the way to his centurion qualification in 2005 at Coburg

In November 2005, he was back in action as a runner in the annual Colac 6 Day Championship. Showing good form in his first ever multi-day event, he finished 9th with 602.40 km.

He returned the following year in April 2006, intent on another centurion finish, but suffered badly from blisters and a bad knee and had to lower his expectations in the last 6 hours and be content with a distance of 152.992 km.

Later that same year in August 2006, he walked his way into the record books in the Australian 48 Hour Championship on the Gold Coast in Queensland, setting new M35 walking records for the 200 km (43 hours 47 mins) and 48 hours (227.515 km) and finishing 6th overall. He was showing himself pretty adept at swapping between running and walking and had expressed a wish to keep both disciplines going.

A month later, he was back in action as a runner in the annual Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Championship in Adelaide

and he clocked up another hundred.

2005 and 2006 had indeed been good years for David from both run and walk perspectives.



David in action in the 48 Hour event in Queensland in August 2006

12 months later and he was back in action in the next Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour event, running once again, and his final distance of 182.658 km was a great PB and gave him 4th place overall.

Over the last couple of years, David has battled a series of niggling injuries so I was very pleased to see him back in action in a new Adelaide 24 Hour event on 16-17 July 2011. He showed that he has lost little of his form, coming fourth overall (he was a runner on this occasion) with a distance of 163.949 km. The venue was the Adelaide University Sports Field in North Adelaide and the lap was a 2200m circuit on footpath through parklands.



David Billett in action in the Adelaide 24H event earlier this month

Hopefully this marks a restart to his career.

Tim Erickson
10 August 2011