

GREG PONYCH (C88): 22:21:57

Greg Ponych (C88) was one of two walkers to qualify for membership of the Australian Centurions in our annual qualifier at the South Sydney Ultra Festival in July 2026.

Greg, born 16th April 1966, lives in Brisbane and has just entered the M60 age division.

He first burst onto the ultra running scene in 2012, with locally based participations in the Caboolture 6 Hour Run, the Glasshouse 50km and the Bridie Beach Run. His first serious interstate run was in the 2013 Centennial Park Ultra 100 km in Canberra where he finished 10th with a promising time of 10:31:26.

From then on, he has been a regular on the Australian Ultra Run circuit and has improved his PBs to 7:28:57 (50 Miles), 9:50:29 (100km), 119.477km (12 Hours), 181.712 km (24 Hours), 271.520 km (48 Hours) and 748.788 km (6 Days)

Greg first came to my attention with his participations in the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival in 2021, 2022 and 2023. He was third in the 2021 Coburg 12H Run with 119.477km, participated in the 2022 Coburg 24H Run and then decided to try his hand in the 2023 24H Walk at Coburg. He started impressively, covering nearly 45km in the first 6 hours and was looking good. Unfortunately he was forced to retire after **61km**, one of many victims to the horrendous weather conditions at that event. But it was a promising first effort and I knew he was capable of more.

That being the case, I was pleased to hear he would also be on the start line as a walker in the BUTTER 24 Hour Track Championship on the Gold Coast in June 2024. As at Coburg the year before, he started confidently, strolling through 44km in the first 6 hours and looking set for a big tally. Alas, stomach issues around the 10 hour mark saw multiple stops and a fair bit of time lost. He was still over 81km at the 12H mark but struggling with multiple issues. To his credit, he kept at it, eventually finishing with **143.44km** at the final gun. It was a gutsy performance and a valuable learning experience for Greg and I was sure he would be back to complete unfinished business.

That meet saw Sabina Hamaty join our ranks as C86. Her comments included Greg:

Despite the adverse weather conditions and the mental self imposed stress, it was a great experience and the only thing that could have made it better is if Greg Ponych had also managed to achieve his Centurion. Alas a combination of blisters due to wet shoes and an upset gut that refused to play along meant he lost precious time.



Greg at the 23 Hour mark in the BUTTER 24 in June 2024

An October 2024, he next appeared as a walker in the 24H division at the South Australian 6 Day Championships in Adelaide. As we had come to expect, he headed off briskly and was well on track at the 6H mark. Alas, the wheels fell off and he retired after **71.300km**.

We did not see him in action much in 2025. He was busy winding down his business and transitioning into retirement and was happy to potter along for the time being.

With that behind him, he bounced back in April 2026 with second overall (first male) in the New Zealand 6 Day Run Championship, with an Australian M60 running record distance of 748.788km.

Now his attention returned to unfinished business on the walking front as he prepared for the Southern Sydney 24 Hour Carnival in June 2026. He emailed me in the final leadup:

My main focus will of course be finally snaring the Centurion milestone. With training now mostly done, and the body feeling good I'm also setting a stretch target. From the website, I think 168km would be a M60 AG record so that seems to me the logical stretch target to shoot for; having moved up into that AG in April, just after the Christchurch race.

Although I did not see much of the event, it was obvious early on that something special might unfold. The early pace was set by Frank Van Der Gulik, John Rosenzweig, Greg and David Billett, all striding out comfortably and quickly. Frank led early but started to fade mid race. By the time the 100km point was reached, it was John (13:22:37) followed by Greg (13:44:15), Frank (13:48:29) and David (14:11:42) showing the way. Towards the end of the race, John started to slow and it was Greg who reached the 100 mile mark first (22:21:57) ahead of John (22:24:08) and David (23:46:05), Frank having now retired. John was now content to stop, his aim achieved, while Greg continued his relentless pace around the track, eventually finishing with 173.117km.

Of course Greg ticked both his wish-list boxes - Australian Centurion C88 (**22:51:57**) and a new M60 24H walk record (**173.117km**).



Greg celebrates his centurion walk in Sydney in June 2026

What is next on Greg's agenda:

Having found my feet (so to speak) walking, I've decided to do Adelaide 6 Day this year as a walker. Hopefully David will be doing it too and I'll just try to keep up with him for as long as I can.

I'm excited at the prospect!

Tim Erickson
27 July 2026