

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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NEW 6 DAY WALK WORLD BEST FOR SHARON SCHOLZ

The lead story for this edition of the Australian Centurions newsletter has to be the new 6 Day Walk World Best for **Sharon Scholz (C63)**, who completed an astonishing **711.900 km** in the EMU 6 Day Ultra Championship in Hungary. To give some perspective to her feat, Sharon finished 16th out of the field of 112 athletes, nearly all of them runners and walked 20km further than the current world best which was held by Allicia Heron (C87) with 691.802 km.



You can read more about this wonderful effort in the race report later in the newsletter.

DATES ... DATES ... DATES

The 2026 ultra walking year continues to produce lots of great results world wide. This year saw 4 of the 5 Centurion clubs hosting qualifying races (Continental, New Zealand, US and Australian). Interestingly, there was no English Centurions qualifier in 2026 but they will be back in 2027 (see below).

As usual, there are lots of European walk ultras coming up

Oct 17-18, 2026	24 Heures de Lipsheim	Lipsheim, FRA
Nov 11, 2026	La Voie Sacree (Bar-le-Duc to Verdun)	Bar-le-Duc, FRA
Nov 22, 2026	8 Heures d'Etampes-sur-Marne	Etampes-sur-Marne, FRA
Feb 7, 2027	8 Heures de Charly-sur-Marne	Charly-sur-Marne, FRA
Feb 27-28, 2027	24 Heures de Bourges	Bourges, FRA

Apr 3-4, 2027	24 Heures de Chateau-Thierry	Chateau-Thierry, FRA
Jun 26-27, 2027	Parish Walk	Isle of Man

And of course, there are always opportunities on the Australian front. A good starting point is the 2026 events page on the AUTRA website: <https://www.autra.asn.au/upcoming-2026>. A couple of interest for walkers include

Sep 27, 2026	Australian 6 Day Ultra Marathon Festival	Adelaide, SA
Oct 10-11, 2026	SA Track Ultra (24H, 100M, 100km, 50M, 50km)	Adelaide, SA

We already have dates for 4 of the 2027 Centurion Qualifiers. It is great to see the English Centurions back in action after a year off in 2026. I hear their Nottingham based qualifier is likely to be road rather than track.

May 8-9, 2027	Sri Chimnoy NZ 24 Hour Track Championships Including the 2027 NZ Centurion Qualifier	Auckland, NZL
May 15-16, 2027	Continental Centurion Qualifier	Eindhoven, NED
Jul 2-4, 2027	Southern Sydney Track Ultra (48H, 24H, 12H, 6H, 3H) Including the 2027 Australian Centurion Qualifier	Sydney, NSW
Aug 21-22, 2027	English Centurion Qualifier	Nottingham, UK

Following the success of the 2025 and 2026 New Zealand 6 Day Championships in Christchurch, New Zealand, the organisers are extending the concept to a 10 Day Race in 2027. See more at <https://www.nzultramarathonfestival.com/>. Walk options will include 10 Days, 6 Days, 3 Days, 2 Days and 1 Day.

Mar 31 – Apr 10, 2027	New Zealand Ultramarathon Festival	Christchurch, NZL
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WHAT'S COMING UP – THE AUSTRALIAN 6 DAY ULTRA MARATHON FESTIVAL

Good luck to the walkers who will be competing in the Australian 6 Day Ultra Marathon Festival in Adelaide, starting this coming Sunday, 27th September. Unfortunately I can't make it to South Australia this year but will be following along online. Key links are

Event website: <https://australian6day.com.au/>
Live results: <https://my.raceresult.com/425236/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/558265266115097>

David Billett (C50) and **Greg Ponych (C88)** will both be walking in the 6 Day event while **Geoff Hain (C49)** will be walking in the 48 Hour event. David, who holds our Men's Australian 6D record, will be out for another big 6D total while Greg, fresh from his Australian Centurion qualification earlier this year in Sydney, will be attempting his first 6D walk. Geoff has never gone beyond 24 hours before but he is a wonderful example for us all. Having just turned 80, he has decided to see if he is still capable of walking for 100 miles. Stan Miskin holds the M80 record at 42 hours so it will be interesting to see if Geoff the match his performance. Go David, Greg and Geoff!

EMU 6 DAY RACE (GOMU 6 DAY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP), BALATONFURED, HUN, SEPT 3-9, 2026

Earlier this month, I spent a number of days following the EMU 6 Day Ultra in Hungary and it was a huge event, hosting the 2026 Global Organisation of Multi-day Ultramarathon (GOMU) World Championships and the Hungarian National Championships (see <https://www.emusport.hu/race-details/6>). In fact, it is one of only a small number of International Association of Ultramarathons (IAU) Gold Labelled events.

Though most participants were entered as runners, **Sharon Scholz (C63)** had the approval of the Australian Centurions to use this event to achieve an official six-day walking total. Organisers of the event were made aware of Sharon's 'walk only' entry, and her race bibs were marked with a "W" to indicate that status. She was not alone, with English ultra walkers **Kathy Crilley** and **David Hoben** also participating in this event as walkers.

Sharon and husband **Justin Scholz (C61)** interrupted their ongoing tandem bike adventures and timed it to ride into Balatonfured on Wednesday 2nd September 2026. With a night's sleep, Sharon was off and walking the next day. She was one of 112 athletes from five continents who toed the start line at 12:00pm local time on Thursday 3rd September.

The link to the overall results is <https://tinyurl.com/3m47am3y>. Here are the first 15 runners, along with the 3 walkers. As you can see, Sharon finished 16th (in the field of 109 runners and 3 walkers) with a new World Best walk mark of 711.900km.

EMU 6 Day Ultra Marathon

1.	Megan Eckert	W40	USA	W	1024.319 km
2.	Simen Holvik	M45	NOR	M	940.874 km
3.	Mario Celikovic	M40	CRO	M	862.066 km
4.	Szabolcs Beda	M45	HUN	M	853.693 km
5.	Daniel Trusca	M55	ROU	M	833.949 km
6.	Jean-Michel Terme	M40	FRA	M	825.880 km
7.	Kyohei Yoshizawa	M50	JPN	M	807.417 km
8.	Christian Mauduit	M50	FRA	M	803.424 km
9.	Tomomi Bitoh	W35	JPN	W	802.927 km
10.	Merijn Geerts	M50	BEL	M	761.314 km
11.	Zsuzsanna Maráz	W55	HUN	W	754.558 km
12.	Henrik Elsig Andersen	M60	DEN	M	751.750 km
13.	Marcela Bayerová	W50	CZE	W	746.098 km
14.	Louise Petersen	W50	DEN	W	721.620 km
15.	Endymion Kasanardjo	M55	NED	M	712.229 km
16.	Sharon Scholz	W50	AUS	W	711.900 km
...					
94.	Kathy Crilley	W75	GBR	W	336.765 km
98.	David Hoben	M70	GBR	M	331.888 km

Sharon's lapsplits can be reviewed at <https://www.korido.hu/events/resultTableLaps.php?rc=3600&bib=W21>. Analysis shows that she reached the end of lap 792 (711.374km) in 5:59:54:05. With just under 6 minutes to go, she headed off on lap 793, covering an extra 536m before the final gun to finish with a 6 Day total of 711.900km.

Her daily totals/splits are as shown below. She headed off strongly, reaching 152km in the first 24 hours and passing the 100 mile mark in a time of 25:26:47. From then on, she walked 100km or more on each of the remaining 5 days.

Day 1	152 km	152 km
Day 2	270 km	118 km
Day 3	383 km	113 km
Day 4	507 km	124 km
Day 5	612 km	105 km
Day 6	712 km	100 km

Justin was busy posting extensive race updates, photos and videos on his facebook feed and they all show Sharon patiently walking her way around the course, day after day, never going fast but always going steadily, with great focus and determination. If you are a facebook person, just point your browser to <https://www.facebook.com/JustinS007> and then scroll down.

Justin's final post sums it all up nicely

The event is done, and Shaz achieved a new Women's World Record, became the first women ever to walk 700 kilometres in six days, and only has three people who have ever walked further than her in six days (all men, obviously). An outstanding final distance of 711.9km is something she is very proud of, especially considering the less than routine and normal training systems adopted over the last 18 months. Clearly (you'd think), no-one has ever cycled 88,000 kilometres in 4 years and 3 months on a tandem bicycle to attend a six-days walking event before. In itself, that would nearly have been enough.

This was no easy feat, and the final 24 hours, though carefully managed, never gave us assurance that the record would be achieved. Her swollen calves were always the biggest area of concern, and could have stopped her if not for the medical team onsite. A total of three visits were made to that team, who used a 12 minutes program to bring some relief. Depending on the temperature at the time of treatment, Shaz was more comfortable after the treatment for between 1 and 4 hours.

When the sunlight left, everything improved, and hence the final tally mentioned above.

At times defeated and in tears, Shaz mostly responded to encouraging words and the realisation of short term goals – food options, distance marks, 5 minutes in the chair, the next opportunity to see the medical team, whatever. With her own commitment and the hard work she did getting here, ultimately giving up was never an option that she could live easily with.

Now that the results have been finalised, I can confirm a number of new Australian All-Comers and W50 records

200km	1.07:47:22	Open and W50 Australian and Residential Records
500km	3:22:46:36	Open and W50 Australian and Residential Records
48 Hours	269.749 km	W50 Australian and Residential Records
6 Days	711.900 km	Open and W50 Australian and Residential Records



And here is the big news - Sharon's 6 Day total set a new 6 Day Walk World Best, beating the distance of 691.802km currently held by Alicia Heron (C87).

Here is the newly updated 6 Day All-Time Ranking List as per <https://6dayracewalking.com/>. Sharon now sits in fourth place overall, with only three men ahead of her. With **Alicia Heron (C87)** now second overall among the women and with **Sabina Hamaty (C86)** the fifth longest female of all time, our Australian women are leading the way.

1.	786.744 km	Ivo Majetic	CZE/USA	49	M	Balatonfured	HUN	03/05/2018
2.	752.271 km	Dominique Bunel	FRA	46	M	Privas	FRA	02/08/2015
3.	744.176 km	John Dowling	IRE	54	M	Stoke-On-Trent	GBR	20/05/1984
4.	711.900 km	Sharon Scholz	AUS	50	F	Balatonfured	HUN	03/09/2026
5.	711.299 km	Richard McChesney	NZL	54	M	Vallon Pont d'Arc	FRA	15/04/2023
6.	710.060 km	Christian Mauduit	FRA	39	M	Privas	FRA	18/10/2014
7.	704.387 km	Fabrizio Pavone	ITA	52	M	Vallon Pont d'Arc	FRA	02/05/2026
8.	703.133 km	Daniel Duboscq	FRA	60	M	Privas	FRA	02/08/2015
9.	701.892 km	Alain Grassi	FRA	50	M	Antibes	FRA	06/06/2010
10.	691.801 km	Alicia Heron	AUS	42	F	Christchurch	NZL	29/09/2025
11.	687.189 km	Robert Davidson	USA	36	M	Arizona	USA	27/12/1984
12.	677.533 km	Trishul Cherns	CAN	66	M	Augusta	USA	08/05/2023
13.	665.225 km	Dominique Naumowicz	FRA	48	M	Antibes	FRA	05/06/2011
14.	665.175 km	Yolanda Holder	USA	61	F	Milwaukee	USA	25/08/2019
15.	658.506 km	Louis Thiriot	FRA	65	M	Privas	FRA	02/08/2015
16.	651.180 km	Bob Wise	USA	45	M	Arizona	USA	27/12/1984
17.	650.192 km	Dominique Delange	FRA	65	M	Vallon Pont d'Arc	FRA	15/04/2023
18.	650.123 km	Philippe Clement	FRA	53	M	Privas	FRA	20/08/2017
19.	649.611 km	Karine Zeimer	FRA	55	F	Vallon Pont d'Arc	FRA	02/05/2026
20.	649.079 km	Christophe Biet	FRA	50	M	Privas	FRA	23/10/2016
21.	643.183 km	Patrick Cailleaux	FRA	65	M	Privas	FRA	23/10/2016
22.	641.773 km	Bernardo Jose Mora	ESP	47	M	Antibes	FRA	05/06/2011
23.	638.369 km	Sabina Hamaty	AUS	56	F	Christchurch	NZL	29/09/2025

Of course, Sharon is no newcomer to the world of ultras. She has had a long and successful career both as a runner and as a walker and has set a number of Australian Ultra Run and Walk Records and represented Australia as a runner on many occasions. Check the stats at <https://centurions.org.au/centprofiles/63%20sharon%20scholz.pdf>. What was a surprise was that for the last 3+ years, she and Justin have been cycling the world. Obviously a diet of long riding day after day is different to the normal sort of prep for a multi day walk but it worked!!!

And there is an interesting addendum to the story. The race finished at midday on the Wednesday, to be followed by presentations and a dinner in the centre of Balatonfured from 5pm. Although shuttle buses were available for the short trip from the camp, Sharon and Justin felt it would be more appropriate to quietly arrive on Happier II, their tandem bike. What a fitting testament to the role that the bicycle plays in their lives, and its role also in Sharon's preparation for this outstanding achievement! An early night, the first extended sleep in a week and, with panniers packed, they set off cycling at 10:30am the next morning, bound for Enying, 47km away. A short day's ride by their usual standard but a huge one, given the circumstances.



Justin and Sharon resume their cycling the day after the 6 Day has finished

I would be remiss if I did not also discuss the performance of the overall winner, **Megan Eckert** of America, whose run distance of 1024.319 km bettered by some 54km her existing world record of 970.685 km, set in France in May 2025. In doing so, she became the first woman ever to cover more than 1,000 km in a six-day race.

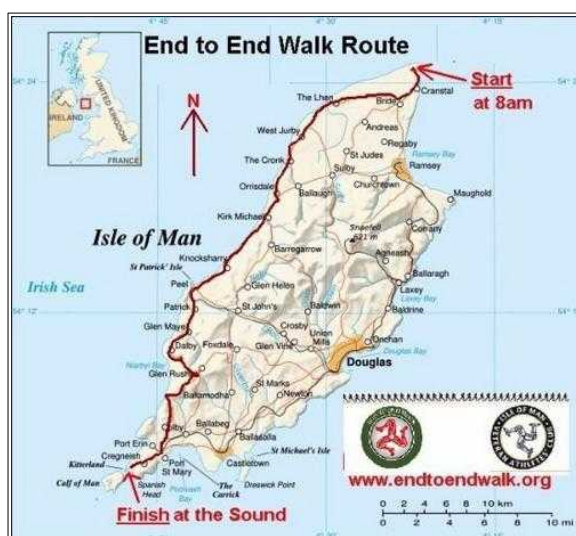


She also bettered the overall US six-day record of 975.653 km, set by Joe Fejes in 2015. And she won the whole championship! No man in the field of 108 starters finished within 83 kilometres of her. Norway's Simen Holvik was second overall on 940 km. Japan's Tomomi Bitoh was second in the women's race, 222 kilometres behind. And perhaps even more astonishing, only four men in history have gone further in six days.

Eckert is a 40-year-old special education and maths teacher from Santa Fe, New Mexico. She ran her first six-day race in 2024. She ran her second in France in 2025 to break Camille Herron's world record. She has now broken it again, with over 1,000 km. She also held the women's world record for the backyard ultra with 362.5 miles (87 hours) until it was beaten in 2025 by Sarah Perry. Her running resume is amazing.

IOM END TO END WALK, ISLE OF MAN, SUN SEPT 13, 2026

The 39.22-mile MFX End to End Walk (see <http://www.endtoendwalk.org/>) is an event which I always like to include in my newsletter. It is one of the Isle of Man's premier walking events, and sees participants begin at the Point of Ayre in the far north of the island and finish at the Sound in the far south west of the island. Whilst the race is less than half the distance of the Parish Walk, it is the terrain of this event which forms a big part of how difficult the challenge is:



The 2026 event, which was held on Sunday 13th September, saw 210 starters, with 118 reaching the finish line at the Sound.

Simon Gawne's winning time of 6:34:54 was only a few minutes behind his winning time of 2025 (6:29:44). It was his third win in four years and his margin of victory was an emphatic 45:44 over **Chris Addy** (7:15:38), with **Sophie Watterson-Jones** third overall (7:16:52), winning the women's race for a second time (and slashing almost 12 minutes off her previous best from 2022). By way of comparison, the course record is 6:11:23, set by GBR Olympic racewalker Dominic King in 2022.

Gawne stormed into the lead shortly after Bride and was approximately 15 minutes clear by Kirk Michael, with Sam Fletcher and Chris Addy next. Leading female Lorna Gleave looked good in fifth spot, but Lucy Langford, visiting from the Lake District, was not too far behind in seventh. At Peel, Gawne was more than 20 minutes ahead of Addy, with Fletcher and Gleave joint third. The latter stopped at Glen Maye as she is training for the Backyard Ultra at Archallagan plantation in early October. Langford moved up to sixth, but not far behind was Watterson-Jones who then showed her strength on the southern hills to grab the lead, striding past the Cumbrian on the steep climb up from Dalby towards Eary Cushlin. Gawne's lead had stretched to 25 minutes at Round Table and he continued to pile on the coals on the long descent to Rushen. He powered up the tough climb at the Howe and reached the finish outside the Sound Cafe in a winning time of 6:34.54. Watterson-Jones reeled Addy in substantially to cross the finish line 1m 14s behind in third place overall.

Full results at <https://my.raceresult.com/385031/results>. Here are the stats for those who finished in under 8:30:00.

The Sound (Finish) - 39.22 miles

1. Simon Gawne (93)	Senior Men	6h34m54s
2. Chris Addy (2)	Men 35-39	7h15m38s
3. Sophie Watterson-Jones (240)	Women 35-39	7h16m52s

4. Rob Monk (165)	Men 35-39	7h20m12s
5. Adam Killip (136)	Men 35-39	7h23m14s
6. Lucy Langford (142)	Women 35-39	7h28m00s
7. Samuel Fletcher (85)	Men 45-49	7h32m53s
8. Richard Sille (211)	Men 50-54	7h34m44s
9. James Quirk (191)	Men 50-54	7h45m12s
10. Jayne Farquhar (84)	Women 55-59	7h53m09s
11. Dougie Scott (206)	Men 40-44	8h01m30s
12. Peter Robertson (202)	Men 55-59	8h01m55s
13. Juan Corrin (58)	Senior Men	8h13m12s
14. Greg Hoskisson (116)	Men 45-49	8h13m34s
15. Danny Metcalfe (163)	Men 45-49	8h17m30s
16. Richard Cannell (35)	Men 35-39	8h18m42s
17. Stewart Jones (125)	Men 50-54	8h19m22s
18. Richard Leigh (145)	Men 55-59	8h21m32s
19. Yanisa Sananueah (205)	Women 55-59	8h27m32s

Just about everyone made it to the first checkpoint at The Cronk, with 34 calling it a day there. Another 40 stopped at Peel, 15 stopped at Dalby, 2 at Cregneash and everyone from then on made it the whole way to The Sound. Great work in what is a super tough race!

The Cronk	12.43 miles	34 retirees
Peel	22.16 miles	40 retirees
Dalby	27.70 miles	15 retirees
Cregneash	37.90 miles	2 retirees
The Sound (Finish)	39.22 miles	118 finishers



Simon Gawne on his way to victory

28 HEURES DE ROUBAIX, ROUBAIX, FRANCE, SEPT 19-20, 2026

Last weekend saw the 72nd edition of the 28 Heures de Roubaix, held as usual over a 2km loop in the beautiful Parc Barbieux in the NE French city of Roubaix. The 28H story dates back to 1954. The first edition, held in October of that year, was won by Gilbert Roger with 250 km. Even the unusual duration of the race (28 hours) bears the mark of the city. A history of the event compiled by walking expert Emmanuel Tardi recounts that originally, in the Épeule district, the start and finish were timed to coincide with screenings at the Colisée cinema: starting before the first movie for the day and finishing before the third movie of the day ensured that spectators would be lining the streets. The 28 hour race thus seems to have originated as much from an organizer's ingenuity as from a sporting standard.

Emmanuel's history: https://centurions.org.au/documents/Les_28h_de_roubaix_a_la_marche_Full_History.pdf

The number of competitors this year was small, with only 23 walkers assembling at 11am on the Saturday for the start of the blue riband 28 Hour event. The timing was manual, with no live feed, so it was difficult to follow the event from afar. I hear the weather was cloudy, with rain for a few hours on the Sunday morning.

Alexandre Forestieri and **Fabrice Henry** led the men's race for the first 8 hours, at which stage Henry retired. That left Forestieri out in front and he kept his lead to the end, finishing with 201.548km, ahead of **Yves-Michel Kerlau** and **Kurt Tempels**. The women's race was more straightforward, with **Claire Caoudal** leading from start to finish, her final distance being 181.257 km. The minor places went to **Claudie Bizard** and **Nadia Delafaite**.

28 Hour Walk Men	100km	24h	28h
1. Alexandre FORESTIERI	11:57	176 km	201.548 km
2. Yves-Michel KERLAU	13:10	166 km	191.257 km
3. Kurt TEMPELS	14:29	150 km	171.359 km
4. Giacomo TRIZZULLA	14:40	142 km	165.507 km
5. Ludovic TILLIER	17:26	126 km	144.867 km
6. Louis YVERT	21:05	116 km	140.136 km
7. Fabrizio PAVONE	22:29	110 km	136.554 km
8. Bernardo JOSE MORA	13:21	112 km	121.027 km
9. François VANDENBERGHE	23:05	102 km	118.481 km
10. Gérard BERTIN	18:12	112 km	117.016 km
11. Stéphane PIERMAY	x	72 km	97.569 km
Alain DUCHEMIN			92.000 km
Sébastien HASSEVELDE			76.000 km
Fabrice HENRY			68.000 km
Jeremy DANDOY			58.000 km
Pascal BIEBUYCK			38.000 km

28 Hour Walk Women	100km	24h	28h
1. Claire CAOUDAL	14:35	156 km	181.257 km
2. Claudie BIZARD	15:16	152 km	178.330 km
3. Nadia DELAFAITE	15:12	132 km	148.622 km
4. Mélanie ROCQUAIN	26:23	84 km	109.447 km
Céline DEPREZ			10.000 km



Claudie Bizard, Alexandre Forestieri, Claire Caoudal and Yves Michel Kerlau (photos Emmanuel Tardi)



*Left: Women's Podium: Claudie Bizard, Claire Caoudal and Nadia Delafaute
Right: Men's Podium: Yves-Michel Kerlau, Alexandre Forestieri and Kurt Tempels*

Additional events included two 6 Hour races, one on Saturday and one on Sunday.

2x6 Hour Walk

	Dist	Time
1. Dominique DELANGE	88 km	12:22:34
2. Mickael GUILLOT	82 km	12:11:29
3. Robert DALOZ	76 km	12:13:25
4. Anthony GARCIA	72 km	12:09:59
5. Jean-Pierre ROBERT	72 km	12:16:04
6. Josiane PANNIER	70 km	12:00:53

6 Hour Walk

	Dist	Time
1. Rudy VANCANENBROECK	46 km	6:03:25
2. Christophe BOHREN	44 km	6:00:11
3. Corinne FAUQUEUR	44 km	6:15:31
4. Raymond FAUQUEUR	44 km	6:15:31

CAN AI CREATE A 48 HOUR WALK ALL-TIME RANKING LIST?

If you have ever wondered how much of the world's data has been captured by AI, wonder no more. It's all been sifted and stored in AI's many huge datasets, and the data stored therein includes all of our ultra distance walking stats. Consequently, it is now possible to query tools like ChatGPT and get all-time lists.

Of course, they are not always accurate, given that it's not always obvious if an athlete is walking or running in the event in question. But it's pretty good. Joffrid Mackett was interested in how Sharon Scholz's 48 Hour split (269.749 km) would compare with other 48 Hour performances so he asked ChatGPT to produce an All-Time ranking list for the 48 Hour Walk. He forwarded the resulting table to me and I was impressed, so I decided to try it for myself, and put following query into ChatGPT last week

Produce an all time list of the top 20 walkers for the 48 hour ultradistance walk. Put into a table. Order by Rank, Distance (km), Walker, Sex, Country, Year, Event / Venue, Performance type, Surface, Walking classification, Verification status, Primary source, Source URL, Notes.

AI's attempt to produce the 48H top 20 all-time list has Sandra Brown on top with 327.527km (Surgeres, 2007), just ahead of Annie van der Meer (Paris-Colmar 1983), followed by John Dowling (Nottingham 1983)

Rank	Dist (km)	Walker	Sex	Country	Year	Event / Venue	Performance type	Surface	Walking classification
1	327.527	Sandra Brown	F	Great Britain	2007	48 Heures Pédestres de Surgères, France	48-hour walk	Circuit	Dedicated pedestrian/walking event
2	327.500	Annie van der Meer	F	Netherlands	1983	Paris-Colmar, France	48-hour split	Road	Ultradistance walking
3	319.609	John Dowling	M	Ireland	1983	Nottingham, England	48-hour race-walk	Track	Formal multiday racewalking
4	304.164	Daniel Dubosq	M	France	2016	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
5	294.973	Joffrid Mackett	M	Australia	2023	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
6	294.114	Ann Sayer	F	England	1982	Nottingham, England	48-hour race-walk	Track	Formal multiday racewalking
7	292.849	Yves-Michel Kerlau	M	France	2025	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
8	286.128	Dominique Delange	M	France	2017	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
9	283.500	Barry Loveday	M	Australia	2012	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
10	282.514	Alain Grassi	M	France	2015	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
11	281.748	Christine David	F	France	2025	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
12	280.203	Peter Bennett	M	Australia	2010	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
13	278.466	Richard McChesney	M	New Zealand	2018	48h Royan – Marche, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking event
14	275.957	Sabina Hamaty	F	Australia	2025	Sri Chinmoy 48H, Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
15	275.673	David Billett	M	Australia	2019	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
16	270.086	Allicia Heron	F	Australia	2024	Australian 48H Championship, Adelaide	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
17	257.877	Deryck Skinner	M	Australia	2006	Australian 48H Championship, Runaway Bay	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
18	240.033	Andrew Ludwig	M	Australia	2008	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
19=	236.703	Linda Christison	F	Australia	2017	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
19=	236.703	Heather Christison	F	Australia	2017	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance

It took ChatGPT a little over 30 seconds to produce this table, along with its own explanatory text. Try it for yourself. Point your browser to <https://chatgpt.com>, copy the above query into the query box and press the ENTER key.

Now you have to review the findings and decide what is true and what has been misreported. I did just that with Sandra Brown who confirmed that her Surgeres race result was done as a runner. So we delete that table entry and consider the next entry, that of Annie van der Meer (327.500km). Was that legitimate? Did she really walk 327.500 km during the first 48 Hours of in the 1983 Paris-Colmar event. I checked with Emmanuel Tardi who confirmed that she actually did. Here is Emmanuel's analysis, showing the time for each checkpoint, starting from kilometre zero at 6:30PM on Day 1.

City	km	time	position
Vincennes	0.0	6:30PM	-
Lagny	23.5	9PM	23
Meaux	43.0	11:24PM	22
La ferté sous jouarre	63.5	2:02AM	22
Charly	79.0	3:57AM	22
Château-Thierry	94.0	5:52AM	22
Trelou	116.0	8:35AM	19
Epernay	145.0	12:46PM	18
Condé sur Marne	162.5	3:09PM	16
Chalons sur Marne	180.0	5:33PM	16
Togny aux boeufs	196.0	8:04PM	15
Vitry le français	215.5	10:57PM	13
Larzacourt	231.0	1:06AM	14
Saint Dizier (official stop)	255.5	arrive 4:26AM start at 7:48AM	14
Bar le duc	279.5	11:23AM	15
Ligny en Barrois	295.5	1:36PM	14
Gondrecourt	324.5	6:02PM	15
Domremy	341.5	8:36PM	12
Neufchateau	351.5	10:19PM	12
Chatenois	366.5	0:41AM	12
Mirecourt	391.5	4:55AM	10
Dompaire	405.5	7:06AM	11
Epinal (official stop)	424.5	arrive 9:59AM start at 11:20AM	11
Chenimenil	438.5	1:42PM	11
Le Tholy	454.5	4:17PM	11
Gerardmer	464.5	5:56PM	11
Col de la Schlucht	480.5	8:26PM	11
Munster	498.0	0:22AM	10
Colmar	518.5	4:10AM	10

Yes, those splits show she was 324.5 km down the road (at Gondrecourt) at around the 6:02PM mark, just under 2 days later. She obviously arranged for a 48H split to be taken, hence her quoted ranking distance of 327.500km.

I think all the entries further down are verifiable walk performances so do we now have an All-Time Ranking List?

Rank	Dist (km)	Walker	Sex	Country	Year	Event / Venue	Performance type	Surface	Walking classification
1	327.500	Annie van der Meer	F	Netherlands	1983	Paris-Colmar, France	48-hour split	Road	Ultradistance walking
2	319.609	John Dowling	M	Ireland	1983	Nottingham, England	48-hour race-walk	Track	Formal multiday racewalking
3	304.164	Daniel Duboscq	M	France	2016	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
4	294.973	Joffrid Mackett	M	Australia	2023	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
5	294.114	Ann Sayer	F	England	1982	Nottingham, England	48-hour race-walk	Track	Formal multiday racewalking
6	292.849	Yves-Michel Kerlau	M	France	2025	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
7	286.128	Dominique Delange	M	France	2017	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
8	283.500	Barry Loveday	M	Australia	2012	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
9	282.514	Alain Grassi	M	France	2015	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
10	281.748	Christine David	F	France	2025	48 Heures de Royan, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking division
11	280.203	Peter Bennett	M	Australia	2010	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
12	278.466	Richard McChesney	M	New Zealand	2018	48h Royan – Marche, France	48-hour walk	Road	Dedicated walking event
13	275.957	Sabina Hamaty	F	Australia	2025	Sri Chinmoy 48H, Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
14	275.673	David Billett	M	Australia	2019	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
15	270.086	Allicia Heron	F	Australia	2024	Australian 48H Championship, Adelaide	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
16	257.877	Deryck Skinner	M	Australia	2006	Australian 48H Championship, Runaway Bay	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
17	240.033	Andrew Ludwig	M	Australia	2008	Australian 48H Championship, Caboolture	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance
18=	236.703	Linda Christison	F	Australia	2017	Australian 48H Championship, AIS Canberra	48-hour walk	Track	Dedicated walking performance

I'm afraid not. Consider that Annie was in 15th spot at Gondercourt. That means there would have been 14 walkers ahead of her at that time, all with hence with potentially greater 48H times. And there would be other great 48H splits in Paris-Colmar races in other years. Here is what Emmanuel had to say, once he did some further research.

*It would be a very big job to extract approximate 48 Hour walk splits for all the Paris-Colmar walkers. For instance, in the 1999 Paris-Colmar, the start was at 8PM on Day 1. **Zbigniew Klapa** arrived in Dompaigne (396.5km) at 7:15PM and in Epinal (415km) at 9:34PM. His 48 Hour split would have been in excess of 400km. In my opinion, due to excellent weather conditions, it is the best 48 Hour walk distance for the men. In the same race, **Gregor-Adam Urbanowski**, **Alexsei Rodionov** and **Alexander Roditchev** were not far behind and would also have had huge 48 Hour splits.*

Zbigniew Klapa	Dompaigne (396.5km)	7:15PM	Epinal (415km)	9:34PM
Gregor-Adam Urbanowski		7:23PM		9:41PM
Alexsei Rodionov		9:45PM		0:18AM
Alexander Roditchev		10:51PM		1:34AM

*For the women, **Kora Bouffler** walked 333km in 48h02 in 1995, **Isabelle Duchene** walked 334km in 45h59 in 1993 and **Isabelle Duchene** walked 331.5km in 44h58 in 1996.*

So, as things now stand, it is impossible to get any sort of real 48H all-time ranking list. The one that AI has generated marks a remarkable advance in AI capability but it is by no means comprehensive.

For the record, here is my brief report of that 1999 Paris Colmar event, as taken from the Aug 1999 Cent newsletter.

PARIS TO COLMAR, 3-6 JUNE, 1999

From a non competitive event in America to the biggest ultra-distance walk in the world. Thanks to Roger LeMoine for chasing up the results of this year's Paris to Colmar for me. We looked all over the internet to no avail but Roger eventually tracked them down courtesy of Colin Young. As usual, the two great Polish walkers Klapa and Urbanowski dominated the event that they have made their own. On this occasion, Klapa was the winner, completing 521km in just under 59 hours. He broke his old record by some 3 hours. His average speed worked out to be 5 ½ mph. That means that he did each 100 mile split in under 19 hours and strung 3 of them together. Just mind boggling.

Men (521 km)

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|-----|--------------|
| 1. | Zbigniew Klapa | POL | 58hrs 53mins |
| 2. | Gregor-Adam Urbanowski | POL | 61hrs 15mins |
| 3. | Alexsei Rodionov | RUS | 63hrs 06mins |

The ladies race was also very competitive. Once again, Delcina Pajoul was successful (she won last year also). The first 3 women all walked the full 343km distance in less than 48 hours.

Ladies (343km)

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|--------------|
| 1. | Delcina Pajoul | FRA | 45hrs 53mins |
| 2. | Ludmila Amirova | RUS | 46hrs 37mins |
| 3. | Irina Putintseva | RUS | 46hrs 39mins |

THE OLD STAGERS GATHER ONE LAST TIME!

Mark Wall (C59), who has resided in England for the last 25 years, was back in Australia with his partner Sue for a couple of weeks this month and he was keen to meet up with his old walking friends in Melbourne. Mark was a very energetic member of the Victorian Race Walking Club from the early seventies to around 1990 and of course he gained his Australian Centurion badge in 2011. So his birthday was a cause for celebration in both clubs.

Here's the photo of us all at the Glasshouse Restaurant in Caulfield (Melbourne)! It was a wonderful catch up for Mark and Sue. Centurions present for the luncheon included **Michael Harvey (C43)**, **Bill Dyer (C15)**, **Mark Wall (C59)**, **Terry Oneill (C18)** and **Karyn O'Neill (C45)**, **Clarrie Jack (C4)**, **Ian Jack (C17)** and **Tim Erickson (C13)**.



Here we all are. I'll leave it to you to pick who's who! – Heather and Bill Carr, Bob Gardiner, Paul Jenes, Michael Harvey, Bill and Debbie Dyer, Simon Baker, Mark and Sue, Terry and Karyn O'Neill, Dave Cash, Clarrie and Ian Jack, Tim Erickson, Mark Donahoo and Kate Switch

ARE WOMEN BETTER SUITED TO ENDURANCE EXERCISE THAN MEN?

After the outstanding performances of Megan Eckert and Sharon Scholz at the EMU 6 Day race in Hungary, it is timely to ask the question: Are women better suited to endurance exercise than men? A facebook post by Richard and Sandra Brown prompts the proposition nicely

Many Congrats to Megan Eckert for setting a new 6 Day Women's World Running Record at the EMU Balatonfured race in Hungary. Her 1024.319 km makes her the first woman to exceed 1,000kms in 6 days and she won the race outright. Many congrats also to Sharon Scholz who set a new World 6 Day Women's Walking Record of over 711.900 km to become the first women to exceed 700km. These achievements confirm, if proof were needed, that women are at least equal to men when it comes to ultra distance events.

Readers are referred to a wonderful article at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/articles/cwyzx1gxwqlo>. To quote from the article:

In running distances up to the marathon, there is on average a 10-12% performance gap between males and females. Men are generally stronger and built with a bigger aerobic engine.

But as the distance increases, those physical advantages appear to become less relevant and the gap starts to narrow. The "gender pace gap" diminishes to 0.25% in 100-mile races, according to a study, external of more than 20 years of amateur ultra-race data conducted by RunRepeat, in collaboration with the International Association of Ultrarunners.

Anything further than 195 miles and women have the potential to be faster.

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

The exciting announcement re Sharon Scholz's wonderful walk stands out in what was another bumper issue. With another 6 Day race to start this weekend in Adelaide, there may be more to come! But that will have to wait till our next newsletter.

With kind regards to all

Tim Erickson (C13)
Secretary, Australian Centurion Walkers, Victoria, Australia