

by KEVIN CASSIDY

WITH our World 100km team being reported on the next page, it would be remiss not to update the local ultra scene. The National 24 Hour Track Championships were run in Adelaide, with the respective titles being taken out by Mick Francis and Carol Baird.

The entire width of Australia separated the two ultras on offer in the first week of October. David Kennedy took out the Waterous 65km in WA, while Queensland's 46km Bribie Island Beach Bash produced victories for John Pearson and Susannah Harvey-Jamison.

The glory days of Canberra's 54km Brindabella Classic returned with the event being run on its original course. An assortment of circumstances had necessitated the use of a number of alternative courses in recent years, which resulted in a slump in numbers. National 48 Hour Champion and 24 Hour representative Martin Fryer charged home to win ahead of Simon Fairweather, with Robin Cameron taking the female trophy. An archery gold medallist at the Sydney Olympics, Simon has taken to distance running with much aplomb. Evidently, he has been getting an earful of good advice from his wife, Jackie, a current-day world class marathoner and previously a World Champion at both the Triathlon and Duathlon—in the same year!

In an extraordinary solo performance, Tasmania's Vlastik Skvaril covered the 5,500 kilometres from the bottom of the Apple Isle to Cape York in a mind-boggling 92 days.

The month of November sadly saw the cancellation of the Cliff Young Australian Six Day Race. A number of meetings have been held and optimism abounds as to its resurrection in 2007.

Just north of Sydney, the Great North Walk 100s provided a gruelling encounter for all involved. The extremely tough trail combined with minimum aid en route dished up many memorable experiences. In the 100 mile event (actually measured at 108.5 miles), Ian Wright prevailed with a time in excess of 30 hours. The 100km option produced excellent wins for Joel McKay and Sharon Harrison.

The country Victorian town of Moe once again hosted the Traralgon Harriers' annual Victorian 50km and Six Hour Track Championships. For the 50km race, the incomparable David Criniti burnt up the track on his way to a new Australian Track record of 3:07.13, with the women's title going to Australian 100km representative Sandra Timmer-Arends. The Six Hour titles went to Kelvin Marshall and Shirley Young, two of our long-term competitors.

Picturesque is probably the most suitable description of December's first two ultras. The 64km event that traverses Tasmania's Bruny Island produced victories for Paul McKenzie and Janine Crotty, while in Victoria, Kelvin Marshall took out the Mount Feathertop 50km "Sky Run".

Back in Queensland, a record 40 competitors (along with an equivalent number of relay teams) took to the cycle paths that host the 50km Kurrawa to Duranbah and return. Zavier Bent-Kruger went on to win with a fine time of 3:39.50. Only 10 minutes adrift was the emerging talent of



David Criniti in record-breaking form in the Victorian 50km Track Championship.

Adriani Ngawati, who took the female honours from Siri Terjesen. Keep your eyes open for Adriani's name in the future.

The concept of running from sea level to Australia's highest point is something that will always hold a fascination to any ultra runner. The 246km Coast to Kosciusko run

attracted nine hardcore entrants, who set off on their epic journey from Eden. Tradition usually calls for runners to collect some sand or a shell from the beach and deposit it on the summit. "The Last Hill is a Beauty" was a description that seemed to sum things up succinctly. The emerging star of Wayne Gregory was first of the five finishers in a touch under 34 hours, with Californian Carol La Plant third overall and first woman, who sneaked home in a shade under 42 hours. Carol and her husband Phil are regular visitors to the Glasshouse Mountains 100s, and the ultra fraternity have bestowed honorary citizenship upon them. Brendan Mason's wife didn't doubt his ability to finish. "He has three things in his favour", she exclaimed. "He is tough, durable and a bit loopy"!!

As per usual, a number of Australians made the journey across the Tasman for New Zealand's premier off-road ultra, the 60km Kepler Challenge. Congratulations to Tony Fattorini, who showed up many of our Kiwi cousins by taking third place outright.

Still overseas, 21-year-old Chris Hills showed the world his potential with second place in the seven-day 250km race across South Africa's Kalahari Desert.

The 2006 ultra year was rounded out with Western Australia's version of the famed Six Foot Track Race. Known as the Six Inch Track, the 45km trail event from North Dandalup to Dwellingup attracted seven starters, with the rapidly improving David Kennedy



Showing the fruits of their efforts, the top finishers in the Traralgon Harriers' Victorian 6 Hour and 50km Track Championships.

and first timer Cherie Clements claiming victories.

The final tally for the AURA [Australian Ultra Runners Association] Points Score Trophy is still being calculated, but it looks like Robert Boyce may have prevailed in a close finish. More information on the points score and its workings, along with all other Australian ultra news, can be found at www.ultraoz.com

Looking ahead to 2007, the early challenges are the extremely tough Bogong to Hotham 65km

mountain race. Sadly, at the time of writing, bushfires in the area look as though they may force a cancellation this year.

Still ahead in January is the Mansfield to Mount Buller 50km. February hosts Tasmania's classic Cradle Mountain Run, The Sri Chinnmoy 100km in Canberra and the 13th Maroondah Dam 50km on the fringes of Melbourne.

Further ultra events can be found at www.calendar.ultraoz.com

AUSSIE TEAMS FINISH 6TH AND 7TH IN THE 100KM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

by Ian Cornelius

THE 2006 IAU 100km World Cup was held on October 8th in Misari, South Korea, and comprised ten laps of a 10km loop that snaked around the 2.4km stretch of water used for the rowing regatta at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The Korean organizers did a wonderful job hosting their international guests and providing a flat, traffic-free course for the event. The Australian Team consisted of four men and, for the first time in years, a female team of three.

A concerted effort by the Australian Ultra Runners Association (AURA) to improve the performances of the 100km runners met with mixed results. Many runners ran PBs, but these performances were still not adequate to get Australian runners on the podium.

AURA President Ian Cornelius said, "We acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the athletes involved, but at the end of the day, the performances were not up to the standard required at international level. We need more sub 2:30 marathoners (2:50 for women) to try out for selection in the Australian team." He went on to say that the next world championships will be held in Winschoten, Holland on 8 September 2007. The major qualifying race will be the Gold Coast 100 to be held on 10 June 2007.

In the men's race, final placings for Australia were Jonathan Blake 13th, Darren Benson 23rd, Mike Wheatley 33rd and Simon

Phillips 74th. Blake and Benson both recorded PBs and mixed it up with the frontrunners over much of the race. Darren in particular showed that, with youth on his side, in years to come he will challenge for the podium.

In the women's race, Sandra Timmer-Arends led the team home in 30th place, followed by Vivienne Karnoutsis in 33rd and Julie Hooper-Childs in 36th. Sandra's performance was a welcome return to the event after last competing over the distance in 1999.

In the team events (first three to finish) the men finished in 6th place and the women in 7th. A total of 319 runners (256 men and 63 women) contested the event in Korea.

RESULTS		
1. Yannick Djouadi	FRA	6:38.41
2. Oleg Khartanov	RUS	6:42.18
3. Denis Zhalybin	RUS	6:42.18
13. Jonathan Blake	AUS	7:05.40
23. Darren Benson	AUS	7:17.19
33. Mike Wheatley	AUS	7:47.12
74. Simon Phillips	AUS	9:46.34
1. Elizabeth Hawker	GBR	7:29.12
2. Monica Carlin	ITA	7:29.16
3. Niroko Sho	JPN	7:32.04
30. Sandra Timmer-Arends	AUS	9:13.28
33. Vivienne Kartsounis	AUS	9:24.34
36. Julie Hooper-Childs	AUS	9:35.31

Jonathan Blake



Shirley Young completed over 47.5km to take the trophy in the women's Victorian 6-hour Track Championship.



Kelvin Marshall, on his way to a first-place finish in the Victorian 6-hour race.



Australia's 100km star Sandra Timmer-Arends outshone the women's field in the Victorian 50km.