

Ironman Andrew



ANDREW Brooker has had an extensive athletics career but for Patron's Trophy devotees he is spoken of in glowing terms as 'that guy' – the man who in 2014 came tantalizingly close (less than one point) to wresting the trophy from superstar David Carr.

Andrew was born in Sydney, spent formative years in Canberra and moved to Perth during high school. He is married with two children and is happy to have had his 'support crew' with him at two World Champs and seven Nationals.

Andrew has an intriguing and varied career history – stints at Universities in Perth and Germany, a position in the UK for a Nuclear Power company, a primary school



In focus

With Carmel Meyer

Phys Ed teacher and his current position for Iron Ore miner Fortescue Metals Group (FMG) doing groundwater analysis.

At the tender age of five Andrew joined Belconnen Little Athletics in Canberra. He continued through until U13s when he joined Belmont Athletics Club in WA and was coached by Peter Muller (whom many current Masters athletes probably know of). Andrew's favourite events in those days were Long Jump, 800m and 1500m walk. Junior highlights included making the

Australian Championships qualifying time for 400m hurdles and completing his first Decathlon in high school.

Andrew's children are now in Little As so he has spent Saturday mornings over the past five years coaching and officiating.

Stress fractures in his back and then in his feet at the end of high school led Andrew into swimming and cycling. The natural progression was into Triathlon which Andrew competed in during his 20s and 30s. During that period, he completed two Ironman and seven half Ironman triathlons as well as two sub-3 hour marathons.

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Searching for another goal

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In 1999 whilst still in the UK, Andrew returned to athletics at Gloucester Athletics Club. He says he really enjoyed the interclub league competitions and got to do events no one else wanted to do- 400m hurdles, 3000m Steeple, Pole Vault and Javelin. *"That suited me fine!"* says Andrew.

Leaving the English weather behind Andrew got back into triathlon on his return to Perth. Then his friend Katrina Spilsbury (editor of Vetrun 1999 and 2000) convinced him to join Masters. He has been hooked ever since!

The 800m is Andrew's pet event and the one he focuses most of his training around. He says he likes 800m training as he feels it allows him to race at pretty much any distance with only a few modifications to his program. There are multiple ways to train for 800m which keeps things fresh and interesting. Andrew says the most important thing is to be consistent and stay injury -free.

From his earliest days in Little As Andrew can remember the thrill of achieving goals and striving for PBs. He believes that the great thing about competing in so many different events is that every year there is still a 'soft' PBA in one event or another to aim for. And he thinks age-grading tables are fantastic for goal setting. This season Andrew has two goals. One is to build a good aerobic base; the other is to find a way to compete more often in throws and jumps without injuring himself. Let's hope that if Andrew discovers the latter he will bottle it and sell it to the walking wounded among us! Andrew has the Perth World Championships in his sights and will assess his 2015 season before deciding what to focus on for 2016.

Andrew truly is an all-rounder so we will no doubt see some great performances from him in this year's Patron's Trophy. Any events that still beckon?

"Well, I guess I still have the Walks to get back to and the Hammer throw to master!"

