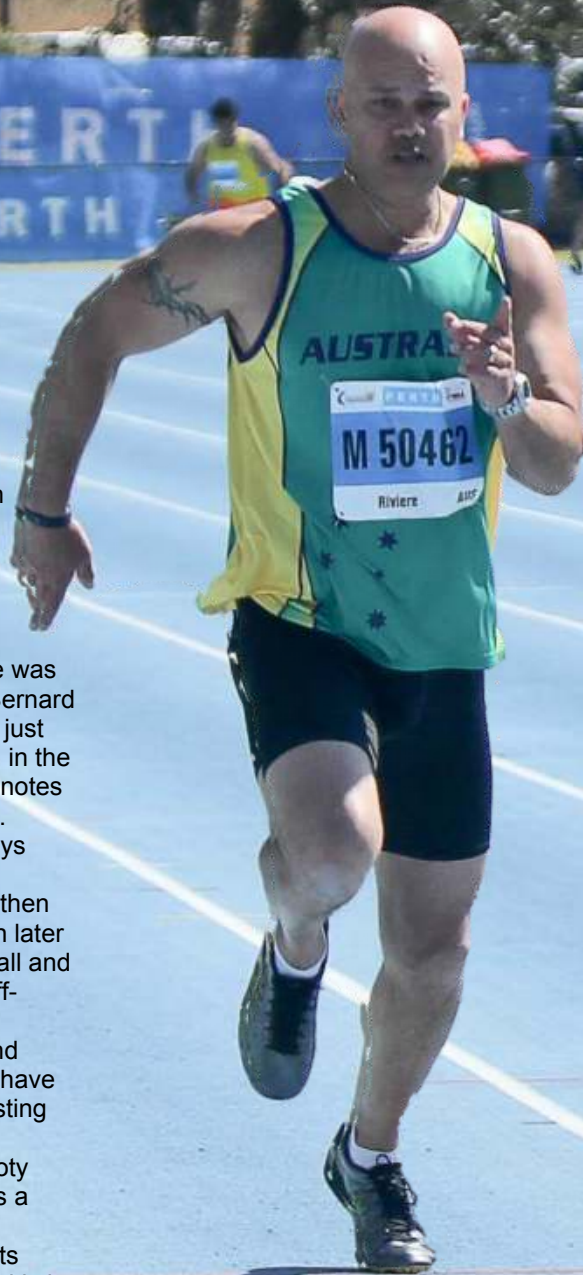


Bernie's back in town



You know the summer athletics season is upon us when speedster Bernard Riviere returns to the track. Year-round competitors such as Colin Smith can then rejoice and enjoy tussles with Bernie in the short sprints.

Born in Mauritius young Bernard and his family immigrated to Australia when he was three years old. Answering to Bernard or Bernie, his family and friends just call him Bern. The family settled in the northern suburbs, which Bernie notes finished at Wanneroo back then. Sports of many kinds have always been a passion for Bernie. He competed in Little Athletics and then took part as a teenage helper. In later years he enjoyed Masters football and played beach volleyball in the off-season. He also served on the committee of his football club and worked as a gym manager. We have Bernie's dad to thank for suggesting MAWA as a possible change of direction when volleyball and footy injuries (Bernie played mostly as a midfielder) were taking their toll. Bernie's dad had seen the results Barrie Kernaghan publishes weekly in the West Australian. A quick internet search and Bernie was on his way back to athletics.

After 28 years working in the mining industry with BHP Bernie is currently responsible for training and development in "Remote Operations". His lovely wife Annette, whom he describes as both loving and tolerant, is a great supporter of his. I first met Annette when they travelled to Bunbury for the annual City vs Country event some years ago and she was, of course, cheering on from the stands at last year's World Championships in Perth. Between them, Bernie and Annette have five boys who are all off doing their own thing now. Bernie can't quite understand why they aren't mad

at a long jumper of note and is able to use his speed to power off the board. He feels these events come naturally but that doesn't mean he isn't keen to stray from his comfort zone. He would also like to look at middle distance events such as the 800m and 1500m - "John Oldfield would like that!" says Bernie. And then there's the Pentathlon; also on his list.

Bernie regrets not being able to schedule regular involvement in training groups as he lives a long way south of the river. Because of this, he is very grateful to fellow masters, in particular, Colin, Barrie, Rudy, Wendy, Chris and Gary for the great tips they have given him. Sometimes it's as simple as "just run faster!" Bernie also credits Coach Dave Wyatt for providing valuable long jump advice. He feels MAWA is a great place to chat to all comers for advice.

A year ago Bernie and Annette purchased a five-acre property at Barragup near Mandurah and hope to live there eventually to enjoy the serenity of a hobby farm. They are setting up the property, adding to the existing one-acre citrus orchard with stone fruits and native plants. "If the crop fails, the shops are only 10 minutes away" Eight years experience in the construction industry has enabled Bernie to tackle a very special project -- he and Annette are converting a sea container into weekend accommodation. Bernie says it is progressing well and the future vision is taking shape.

When asked about his favourite training regime Bernie has no hesitation in replying that it is running to the beach with his dog Zeus, an energetic mastiff/staffy cross. Bernie says Zeus is a great if competitive training partner who thinks the best way to beat Bernie at the start is to just cut him off, potentially taking Bernie's legs out from under him!

CONTINUED – over page



In focus

With Carmel Meyer

keen on sports like he is, but they are a close-knit family who have a great time when they all get together. Bernie's cousin Maurice Pascal is also well known to track regulars. "My Cuz is a top bloke", says Bernie. The cousins enjoy a chat and laugh about their athletic successes and "fails"! Whilst 100m and 200m are his favourite events, Bernie values the 400m as a training exercise. He is also

Positive people inspire



Bernard Riviere lands in a spray of sand during the Perth 2016 World Championships.

FROM – previous page

An ongoing "frozen shoulder" problem has interfered with Bernie's participation and is proving hard to recover from. He has difficulty swinging his arm properly and acknowledges that this is not great for a sprinter, or a jumper *"another event that has the arms flailing! I guess I can't complain- I am continually inspired by seeing other people going through much worse and still fronting up"*. Positive people fuel Bernie's motivation to stay healthy and feel good. He recalls an inspirational moment he and Gary Ralston came to the aid of a 90 plus competitor who had taken a tumble in the 1500m and who, despite bleeding from a head wound, had dusted himself off and set off on a "warm-down" lap. Bernie says Gary's reaction to this was priceless!

Like most MAWA members Bernie has his eye on the Perth 2018 Nationals and will work towards

"reasonable" times through the summer season. This will be the first time Bernie has competed in the Nationals but his appetite for broader competition was certainly whetted by the 2016 World Championships. Bernie says Perth2016 was a great experience- personal highlights were achieving bronze in the 4 x 100m relay with fellow West Australian Colin Smith and being the best placed Aussie in his age group for the long jump. Other members of Bernie's relay team were Darren Hughes and Stephen Jones. Bernie describes them as *"awesome athletes and great Aussies"*

Motorcycles also serve Bernie's need for speed. He has had a few bikes but started *"with a bang"* – his first bikes were a 1000cc road bike and 400cc dirt bike. He only has one bike now, a Victory Hammer 1731cc (1.8L). *"It puts a smile on my face every time I get on it!"* The lightning-

fast reflexes required for sprinting have been honed in the Boxing arena. Bernie travelled the country boxing for about 10 years as Lightweight, Light Welterweight and Welterweight. He says it is a fantastic sport for fitness and discipline. He recently noticed Max Sulejmani's name in the results. Parkrun enthusiast and MAWA member Max is a former state teammate of Bernie's. It's a small world.

I wondered if Bernie enjoyed any gentle pursuits. It seemed music could be one until I learned he had played mostly rock bands as part-time drummer and vocalist! However, songwriting has been an enjoyable pastime. He feels he is more suited to Blues and Ballads, preferring to do backing vocals for rock *"...way back!"*

Fishing and camping complete the list. Bernie says he aims to live life to the full. It is that full throttle attitude that brings out his best on the track.