

Fleet of foot



UNFORTUNATELY we don't see much of Garry Hastie at our weekly T&F meetings since he has been based in Bunbury since 1963, when he was two. His move there from the cold of Bridgetown led to an improvement in the lung problems he had been suffering. He grew up playing football (AFL) but at 15 he weighed just 35kg so regularly got injured "taking on the big guys".

Garry was married for 15 years and has two sons. For almost 32 years he has worked for BHP Billiton and is now a Process Analysis and Improvement



In focus

With Christine Oldfield

specialist with training as his main role.

As a junior in Little Athletics, Garry was "handy at middle distance running but hopeless at race walking". He also did the odd bit of racing at Perry Lakes as a teen. In his early twenties, having broken his collarbone twice, he gave up football and got back into athletics. He gave

race walking another go and did a 1500m walk on grass in 7:13.00 and thus began his race walking career. Over the years he has competed with the WA Race Walking Club and in 2014 he did the national 20k in Albany. In the early days he raced against Terry Jones, Don Stone, George Audley and Jim Turnbull, amongst others. But his success could not keep him away from football and he broke that collarbone another three times before learning his lesson and concentrating on athletics.

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Known primarily
as a walker
Garry Hastie
shows his
versatility in the
high jump and
as a sprinter.



High flyer

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HE won his first state open walk title in 1987 and thirteen more followed, at various distances. His most recent title was the 2014 open 10,000m track walk. It is interesting to note that his 1987 5000m title came with a time 30s slower than the 24:59.28 he did in the masters' national championships in 2014.

Garry began competing with the Vets in 1996 shortly after the M30 age group was introduced. The nationals were held in Perth that year and, for the first and only time, he was disqualified in the 5000m walk. But he went on to win gold in the 20k road walk, setting a state record which still stands today – as do his M30 state records for 1500m and 3000m walks.

By the late 90s, having stopped enjoying athletics, he gave up the sport, not rejoining masters until 2005 after the break-up of his marriage. He is known primarily as a walker but he does not limit himself to this – as he demonstrated in the 2014 masters state championships where he performed well in the high

jump, javelin and pentathlon. He also runs with the Bunbury Runners Club.

In recent years he has won medals at the nationals in distances from 1500m to 20 km. He says *“it is great to catch up with everyone, including the great friends I have made from interstate”*. In 2009 he attended the World Masters Games in Sydney and won gold in the 10,000m road walk. Two years later at the World Masters Athletics Championships in Sacramento he was *“lucky enough to win gold and silver in the team walks”*.

No such luck in 2013 in Brazil where he competed just three months after suffering a smashed wrist in a cycling accident and had been unable to prepare properly. This season his training has been curtailed by a foot injury so he has had only about six weeks to prepare for the upcoming state championships and eight weeks for the nationals.

Garry has been involved in the administration of Bunbury Regional Athletics Club on and off for the past 30 years or so. He has been President for three different periods

and now looks after their website and officiates at the weekly club meetings. He is a qualified walk judge and coached juniors when his boys were doing Little A's. For the Eaton Boomers Football Club he has been an assistant coach, runner, fitness advisor and mentor. And he is proud of two of his more unusual achievements – scoring a hole in one in competitive golf and a 276 in ten pin bowling.

Garry enjoys athletics and being active and what he lacks in talent he makes up for with determination [his words]. He has a heart murmur, so if he is feeling good he goes for it, if not, he backs off. But his motto is *“If you don't use it, you lose it”* and he wants to compete as long as he can – *“I get my free drugs from exercise. All those endorphins”*.

This year, he aims to concentrate on supporting his boys with their cycling so he's giving Lyon a miss - but then, he says, *“Bring on Perth 2016”*. He will have just entered the M55 category and would love to win a world title. But he knows that *“everything has to fall into place as well as doing all the hard work”*.