

Presidents Report to SAMA 2023-2024

The year just passed was my first as President of SAMA. My thanks to the members of the committee who supported me during the year by undertaking roles and functions to ensure the efficient running of the club and its activities.

I would also like to acknowledge the role of Ros Lowe in her ex-officio position of Records Office, a role she has undertaken for several years. The last season was a particularly busy one for Ros with numerous National and SAMA records having to be updated due to outstanding performances.

Unfortunately, we will be losing several of the present committee, namely David Bates, Richard Moyle, Miriam Cudmore and Elizabeth Slattery. To date I am aware of only one nomination to fill the vacancies created which will increase the workload on those nominating for the 2024/25 year.

Also, I sincerely thank the many volunteers who kept our competitions going both through summer and winter. Overall, there are too many to name but 'I know who you are' and hopefully so do all competitors who are reliant on them for their ability to compete.

It was a busy year for competition which commenced with the Winter Season. A total of 317 runners and walkers competed on 14 weekends averaging 22.64 per meet. The two best attended weekends were when the newly introduced multi-events were held at Peacock Road. Congratulations to Stephen Dunn for winning the Winter Achievers Award.

The National 20k Walk was again held in Adelaide with ten competitors entering. Of those four were from interstate. The six SAMA entrants competed also in the 20k SAMA Championships.

Whilst numbers overall were down on those of years past the start of the 2024 Winter Season competition indicates a strong increase in the number of walkers and, particularly, runners.

A total of 1,250 competitors attended the 24 Wednesday night Summer Competition meets, including the two Championship evenings, at an average of 52.08 per evening. The attendance for the Championships was down on previous years, eg, 117 as compared to 135 the previous year.

However, it is anticipated that the overall number of competitors will increase in 2024/25 with the AMA Championships to be held in Adelaide in April 2025 attracting strong interest leading to an increase in membership numbers and thereby competitors.

Congratulations to Dean Mortimer on winning the Summer Season Achievers Award.

SAMA facilitated the three out-of-stadia events for Athletics SA's component of the Australian Masters Games in early October 2023. A total of 145 entrants competed in the City Mile, the Cross Country and the Road Walk. SAMA's involvement resulted in a profit of \$3,484 being achieved.

Of note, a total of 21 SAMA members (and associates) were involved in officiating & volunteering during the three days of events and their efforts were of a high standard and greatly appreciated.

Several one-off events were very well patronized during the summer. The Bob Clark Challenge attracted the greatest number of runners to date. Congratulations to Marlene Norton-Baker on winning the Final.

SAMA's involvement in the ASA relay day in December was exceptional with 11 teams of runners (7) and throwers & jumpers (4) competing against other ASA registered clubs. A total of 6 SAMA records were either broken or set in the run relays on the day.

SAMA had a great representation of 13 runners in the Bay Sheffield Carnival, Exurbia sponsored, 800m Masters handicap race. The build-up with runners at their start positions, an excellent race call and a terrific finish up the straight with Dean Mortimer being triumphant over Lisa O'Keefe and Gino Geracitano, created an electric atmosphere for the event.

SAMA members Liz and Cassie Neubauer undertook the journey in June last year to compete in the Oceania Masters Athletics Championships held in Saipan in the Northern Marianas. Both athletes returned with an increase in weight in baggage due to the numerous gold medals won. Of note, Lisa Attenborough received the AMA 2023 Official of the Year award at the dinner held in Hobart in March this year in conjunction with the National Championships. The award was for her services as an official for both AMA and SAMA during that year.

SAMA and its members have much to look forward to in 2024/25. As I write this report a contingent of athletes are competing in the Oceania Masters Athletics Championships in Fiji whilst several members are travelling to Sweden in August for the World Masters Athletics Championships to be held in Gothenburg.

Undoubtedly SAMA will be represented at the AMA Indoor Throws Championships (NSW, July 2024), the AMA 20k Postal Walk Championships (Adelaide, August 2024), the Winter Throws Championships (Brisbane, October 2024), the Alice Springs Masters Games (October 2024), the Pan Pacific Masters Games (Gold Coast, November 2024) and the WMA World Indoor Championships to be held in Florida in the USA in 2025.

The final 'big' event of the upcoming season will of course be the AMA Championships to be held in Adelaide from 18-21 April 2025. They were last held in this city in 2016.

Whilst a Local Organising Committee (LOC) has been formed and planning and preparation are underway for next year's event anyone wishing to become involved and to assist is most welcome to join the LOC. Contact either Lisa Attenborough or myself.

In summary, I will again be standing for President and, if successful, look forward to working with those elected to the committee as well as liaising with and representing all SAMA members.

Viddy Jermacans
President, SAMA
2023/2024