



HEEL AND TOE ONLINE

The official organ of the Victorian Race Walking Club
2020/2021 Number 19
Tuesday 9 February 2021



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PAUL F DEMEESTER TALKS WALKING

Thanks to US Attorney at Law Paul F. DeMeester for another wonderful article - the 45th – and it's as good as ever. You can see links to all Paul's articles at the bottom of webpage <http://www.vrwc.org.au/save-the-50km.shtml>.

In Defense of Yoshirō Mori, Sort Of

By Paul F. DeMeester

I have six articles and one blog piece in front of me from the internet publication insidethegames.biz, a great website about the politics of sport. All seven deal with one topic, the recent derogatory remarks about women made by 2020 Tokyo Organising Committee President Yoshirō Mori, an 83-year old who used to be Prime Minister of Japan. This chap got all this ink in less than a week's time, six days to be exact. Among the gems that Mori spouted was, "*we have about seven women at the Organising Committee but everyone understands their place.*"

I'm really jealous now. I know about women understanding their place but I only got two write-ups over a time span of about nine months, when I filed a lawsuit in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) to get women admitted to the Tokyo 2020 50K Race Walk event, and when I lost the case. I was trying to tell CAS that a women's place is on the Olympic 50K race walk circuit but I guess I was wrong. Still, I would have loved for insidethegames.biz to write about the controversy every day, just like they did this past week about Mori.

Mori also said that, "*women have a strong sense of competition.*" Wow, he took the words right out of my mouth, or should I say legal brief, because that's what I was trying to tell the CAS Court. I have seen the women 50K race walkers compete, in London, Taicang, Santee and Melbourne. I couldn't agree more. Women do have a strong sense of competition. So much so that they belong in the 50K at Tokyo 2020.

Mori seems to think I'm a woman. He says that women talk too much at board meetings and that you have to regulate their speaking time lest the meetings never finish. Boy, has he been talking to the judges in front of whom I appear, because they are constantly trying to limit my speaking time. Hello there, insidethegames.biz, could you tell Mori that I'm not a woman? Then again, never mind, Mori might think exceptions prove the rule.

I'm even more jealous of the reaction Mori's comments provoked. The current Japanese Prime Minister (male) got in on the act, as did the Governor of Tokyo (female), Mori's wife, his daughter and granddaughter, a former world judo champion (female), more than 136,000 people who signed a petition, a three-time Grand Slam tennis champion (female), and insidethegames.biz's own reporter (female). Where were all these people when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) refused to let women athletes walk the Olympic 50K? I'll tell you where they were. They were nowhere to be seen or heard.

The website's reporter Nancy Gillen wrote this in her 7 February 2020 blog: "*If Mori remains in place, would anyone be able to take the IOC's drive for gender equality seriously? The situation is already severely undermining the organisation's pledge to make more women feel accepted and appreciated in sport.*" Had Gillen studied up on the fight for the women's 50K, she would have known by now that the IOC's gender equality work consisted of driving the women out of the 50K, first by refusing their admittance, then by abolishing the event altogether.

Let's face it, Mori is the most honest Olympic official there is. The IOC is an organisation of sexist pigs, with Thomas Bach and Kit McConnell leading the troops. Mori expressed the true sentiments of Tokyo 2020. The gender equality provisions of the Olympic Charter are a bunch of baloney in the eyes of the Olympic ringmasters. Finally, one of them spoke the truth. All those who are shocked by Mori's comments and who demand action should study what has happened to the women's 50K. The only action that should be demanded is the inclusion of women in Tokyo's 50K. Then Mori can babble on about how much longer the event takes waiting for all those women to finish the race. Or maybe he'll repent and take his wife, daughter and granddaughter to go watch women race the 50K in Sapporo. Now, that would be one heck of an apology.

WALKER OF THE WEEK

My Walker of the Week is 19 year old South Australian walker **Tristan Camilleri** who recorded a big PB time of **11:54.3** in Adelaide last Saturday, bettering his own U20 state record by 13 seconds.

Tristan was on track to represent Australia in last year's World Athletics U20 Championships in Nairobi. He had won the Oceania U20 10km Championship in Adelaide in February 2020 and was building up for the World U20 Trial, which was to be held at the Australian T&F Championships the following month.

Alas, the Australian Championships were cancelled due to the covid pandemic, and the World U20 Championships also fell foul of covid and were postponed for 12 months (they will now be held in Nairobi in August 2021). That's all well and good, but since Tristan turns 20 this year, he is no longer eligible and has missed out on his opportunity to represent Australia.

Such a huge disappointment might have been a major setback for a lesser athlete, but Tristan is made of stronger stuff and has continued training and racing and is now reaping the rewards.

Well done Tristan. Your opportunity will come.



Tristan walking in the Elite 10,000m Track Walk at Clifton Hill on 31st January 2021 (photo Terry Swan)

WHAT'S COMING UP

Our Athletics Victoria Shield League continues next Saturday around Victoria, with track walks amongst the events on offer. On Sunday, we have VRWC races at Middle Park, as well as the Australian Summer 20km Roadwalk Championships in Adelaide.

Feb 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 7 (2000m walks)	Various venues
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	Australian 20km Roadwalk Championships	Adelaide, SA

The VRWC Fixture for Sunday reads as shown below. Remember to enter online at <http://vrwc.org.au/wp1/>. Entries close at 11:59PM on Wednesday. No entries are being taken on the day, due to covid restrictions.

Sun 14th February 2021, Middle Park Bowling Club	
9:00am	VRWC 2km Walk
9:05am	VRWC 20km Walk
9:15am	VRWC 5km Walk
9:55am	VRWC 10km Walk

Entries have now closed for the Australian 20km Summer Championships meet in Adelaide next Sunday. As per Athletics Australia, the entry lists read as shown below. Just about all the main players will be in attendance and some great racing is expected.

Australian 20km Summer Roadwalk Championships, Adelaide, Sunday 14 th February				
Open 20km	Fraser, Tim	ACT	Barber, Alana	NZL
	Baker, Mitch	ACT	Hayward, Katie	QLD
	Richardson, Dylan	NSW	Henderson, Rebecca	VIC
	Gibbons, Carl	NSW	Montag, Jemima	VIC
	Jones, Tyler	NSW		
	Bird - Smith, Dane	QLD		
	Bruniges, Mathew	SA		
	Camilleri, Tristan	SA		
	Cowley, Rhydian	VIC		
	Mann, Bradley	WA		
	Prasad, Pramesh	FIJI		
	Reid, Benjamin	WA		
	Rew, Quentin	NZL		
	Swan, Kyle	VIC		
	Tallent, Jared	SA		
Tingay, Declan	WA			
U20 10km	Dickson, Corey	VIC	Hay, Char	VIC
	McGinniskin, Jack	NSW	Hill, Gabriella	QLD
	McCure, Lachlan	QLD	Peart, Alanna	VIC
	Thompson, Will	VIC	Sandery, Olivia	SA
	Young, Gwyllym	ACT		
U18 5km	Kamish, Zayden	SA	Braithwaite, Daisy	SA
	McCure, Sam	QLD	De Ruvo, Katie	SA
	Rech, Cooper	SA	Langford, Nellie	SA
			Lynch, Emily	SA

Our own Victorian T&F Championships happen on the following two weekends, so it's a big month for locally based walkers.

Feb 19-21, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 1)	Lakeside Stadium
Feb 26-28, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 2)	Lakeside Stadium

Looking further ahead, our **VRWC 2019/2020 Annual General Meeting**, which was due to be held in November 2020, has finally been rescheduled and will be held on Sunday 14th March 2021 at Middle Park after our road races.

Sun 14th March 2021: AV 5000m Teams Race, Clifton Hill	
Venue: George Knott Athletics Track, Clifton Hill	
9:00am	VRWC 1500m Walk
9:10am	VRWC 3000m Walk
9:35am	AV 5000m Walk Teams Race
11:30am	VRWC AGM

All Executive and Committee positions will be declared open and anyone wishing to nominate should do so via the nomination form which is available on the website at http://vrwc.org.au/documents/VICTORIAN%20RACE%20WALKING%20CLUB%20Nomination_proxy%20Form-2021.pdf. Nominations or proxy voting forms must be forwarded to club secretary Terry Swan by 7th March. All members are welcome to attend the AGM and new committee members are also welcomed.

AVSL ROUND 6, ACROSS VICTORIA, SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2021

Athletics Victoria Shield competition continued last Saturday, with metro venues at Doncaster and Knox and county venues at Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo. 60 walkers were in action across the various competitions and conditions were generally good. Most of our top walkers chose to bypass the races, preferring to prepare for Adelaide next weekend.

AV Shield Round 6, Tom Kelly Athletics Track, Doncaster, Saturday 6 February 2021

Doncaster had the biggest walk fields, and **Corey Dickson** led the 3000m field home with 12:44.9 while **Marcus Wakim** won the 1500m walk with a PB 7:06.1. I also note that **Liam McLennan** (14:56.7) and mum Laura McLennan (17:52.6) both did PBs, as did Essendon's **Brian Anderson**.

3000m Walk

1.	Corey Dickson	KNA	M20	12:44.9	522
2.	Jason Kozica	STK	MOP	13:51.9	464
3.	Heath Beveridge	WES	M18	14:08.7	479

4.	Liam McLennan	DAC	M16	14:56.7	466	PB 0:02
5.	William Dynes	DIV	M20	16:28.3	375	
6.	Simon Evans	BOH	M60	16:30.3	490	
7.	Andrew Jamieson	OSC	M65	17:02.1	500	
8.	Jade Chitty	WES	F18	17:36.7		
9.	Laura McLennan	DAC	F40	17:52.6	392	PB 0:24
10.	Brian Anderson	ESS	M60	18:11.6	439	PB 0:28
11.	Kerryn Walshe	KSB	F55	18:11.8	465	
12.	Donna-Marie Elms	PTN	F55	18:56.9	440	
13.	Phillip Dunstone	WES	M50	19:23.8	332	
14.	Tracy Colbert	COB	F50	19:34.9	383	
15.	Duncan Knox	ESS	M60	19:35.6	397	
16.	Stephen Murphy	ESS	M55	19:46.5	352	
17.	Ross Reid	COL	M65	21:13.2h	375	
18.	Sarah Papadopoulos	DIV	FOP	21:37.7h	206	
19.	Robert Gardiner	COL	M65	22:16.8	336	
20.	Debbie Voogd	RWD	F55	22:43.4	287	
21.	Jenny-Rose Szuhai-Andrews	BWK	F55	24:18.7	241	
22.	Brenda Cashin	WES	F55	25:24.1	209	

1500m Walk

1.	Marcus Wakim	COL	M16	7:06.1	474	PB 0:03
2.	Joel Imbriano	STK	M16	7:39.8	433	
3.	Eddie Bridgewater	PTN	F16	8:59.0	388	
4.	Hannah Paton	PTN	F14	13:57.1	121	

AV Shield Round 6, Knox Athletics Track, Knox, Saturday 6 February 2021

Kyle Swan (12:18.0) and Liam Hutchins (7:09.5) were the fastest at Knox

3000m Walk

1.	Kyle Swan	ANW	MOP	12:18.0	528	
2.	Mark Blackwood	KNA	M40	13:16.4	515	
3.	Charlotte Hay	KNA	F18	14:50.9	502	PB 0:01
4.	Kylie Irshad	VMA	F45	16:51.3	459	
5.	Grace Louey	KNA	F18	16:59.3	419	
6.	Dee Holohan	SAN	F55	18:55.9	440	
7.	Adam McCann	ANW	M40	20:34.0	233	
8.	Merilyn Thompson	MPA	F55	20:55.9	362	
9.	Gwen Steed	GHY	F65	21:23.4	432	
10.	Geoffrey Barrow	MEN	M65	21:31.7	364	
11.	Anthony Doran	GHY	M65	22:15.1	337	
12.	Jill Jeanes	DSA	F40	22:59.4	194	
	Thierry Vaidie	GHY	M40	DQ		

1500m Walk

1.	Liam Hutchins	KNA	M14	7:09.5	490	PB 0:24
2.	Riley Coughlan	KNA	M14	7:17.1	482	
3.	Ariana Pashutina	KNA	F14	7:22.5	528	
4.	Maddison Nash	DIV	F16	7:34.9	499	
5.	Emily Smith	KNA	F16	7:50.7	479	
6.	Zachary Matters	BOH	M16	8:00.2	409	
7.	Lula Parrott	DAC	F14	9:47.7	334	

AV Shield Round 6, La Trobe University Track, Bendigo, Saturday 6 February 2021

Bendigo was the only country venue where walkers were shown in the results, so it looks like none were in action in either Ballarat or Geelong.

3000m Walk

1.	Jennifer Payne	SBE	F60	19:32.4	453	
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1500m Walk

1.	Andrea Smith	BEU	F45	09:42.8		
2.	Wendy Ennor	EAG	F60	13:03.7		
3.	Peter Savage	EAG	M65	13:40.0		

SAMA TRACK WALKS, SA ATHLETICS STADIUM, MILE END, ADELAIDE, WEDNESDAY 3 JANUARY 2021

Thanks to Colin Hainsworth for this week's Masters results from South Australia.

800m Walk

1.	JACK RUSSELL	04:22	M68	81.59%
2.	MARIE MAXTED	04:27	W60	79.23%
3.	GEORGE WHITE	04:41	M75	83.02%
4.	PETER CRUMP	04:41	M60	69.84%
5.	GIL MCINTOSH	05:00	M70	72.98%
6.	LIZ DOWNS	05:37	W65	66.07%
7.	VALMAI PADGET	05:56	W76	71.94%
8.	ROGER LOWE	06:31	M77	61.31%
9.	MIKE VOWLES	06:49	M77	58.61%

800m Club Walk

1.	KEVIN FINN	04:59	M69	72.35%
2.	MALCOLM TIGGEMAN	05:38	M68	63.25%
3.	LIZ NEUBAUER	05:54	W69	65.88%
4.	MARGARET MCINTOSH	06:10	W68	62.28%
5.	DAVID ROBERTSON	07:14	M87	64.63%

5km Walk

1.	GEORGE WHITE	30:35	M75	87.41%
2.	PETER CRUMP	30:45	M60	72.95%
3.	BILL STARR	44:26		

5km Club Walk

1.	BRIAN WITTY	37:05	M70	
2.	GIL MCINTOSH	35:56	M70	69.71%
3.	DAVE FALLON	39:31	M68	61.88%

3km Walk

1.	VALMAI PADGET	25:16	W76	70.58%
2.	MIKE VOWLES	25:16	M77	63.88%

ACTRWC TRACK WALKS, WODEN PARK, CANBERRA, THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2021

Thanks to Val Chesterton for this week's results from the ACT Racewalkers Club in Canberra.

3000m Walk

1.	Kodi Clarkson	14:49
2.	Peter Baker	18:33
3.	Julia Grocott	20:31
4.	Doug Barrett *	20:45
5.	Bryan Thomas *	23:06
6.	Doug Fitzgerald *	23:40
7.	Geoff Barker *	24:42
8.	Lorna England *	25:58
9.	Peter Davies *	27:03

* Fitness Walker

ATHLETICS SA INTERCLUB, SA ATHLETICS TRACK, MILE END, ADELAIDE, SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2021

Kim Mottrom reports from Adelaide: A cold and wet day here today, but that made for some fast times. **Tristan Camilleri** beat his own U20 state record by 13 seconds. **Anthony Tana** and **Emily Lynch** both beat their 3000m PBs.

Open 3000m

1.	Tristan Camilleri	11:54.43
2.	Alix Harlington	14:58.52
3.	Sebastian Richards	14:58.98
4.	Anthony Tana	15:26.71
5.	Nellie Langford	15:44.71
6.	Emily Lynch	16:46.00
7.	Katie DeRuvo	17:36.40
8.	Peter Crump	17:44.45
9.	Jordan McKenna	18:24.71
10.	Cooper Rech	18:31.14

11. James Hoare 23:40.44

Open 1500m

1. Zayden Kamish 8:16.96
2. Marie Maxted 8:41.76
3. Tarique Kamish 10:00.41
4. Liz Downs 11:09.00

NSW 5000M CHAMPIONSHIPS, SOPAC SYDNEY, SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2021

5000m and 3000m walks were on offer at the NSW 5000m Track Championships meet last Saturday in Sydney.

5000m Walk Open

1.	Mison, Hannah	20	Koorinal -W	24:44.12
2.	McMillen, Elizabeth	17	Manly Warrin	25:28.95
3.	Blanch, Emma	18	St. George D	27:29.72
4.	Laytham, Tara	16	Manly Warrin	27:57.37
5.	Parker, Hannah	19	Randwick Bot	28:10.47
6.	Pengilley, Teegan	20	Bankstown Sp	28:31.64
7.	Bell, Bridget	19	Asics Wests	28:40.78
	Boughton, Milly	15	Randwick Bot	DNF
1.	Pyda, Raven	17	Westfields	24:58.00
2.	Dundon, Harry	16	Balmain Athl	25:47.33
3.	Barendregt, Travis	21	Nepean Distr	28:40.68
4.	Strahl, Caleb	17	St. George D	30:23.00

3000m Walk Open

1.	Pitcher, Sienna	14	Mingara Athl	15:01.41
2.	Fagan, Nicole	32	Asics Wests	15:23.86
3.	Beck, Grace	13	Asics Wests	15:25.46
4.	Lamb, Chloe	14	Manly Warrin	16:27.24
5.	Cassilles, Ciara	14	Westfields	16:27.70
6.	Munroe, Ella	15	Hills Distri	16:48.48
7.	Krklinski, Chloe	15	Parramatta C	17:15.73
8.	Norden, Lilah	14	Kiama	19:05.22
9.	Varga-Strike, Zsofia	16	Hills Distri	19:19.38
10.	Woodward, Antoinette	65	U.T.S. North	20:51.58
	Armstrong Reading, Evie	13	Randwick Bot	DQ
1.	Beacroft, Isaac	14	Blacktown Ci	14:11.53
2.	Varga-Strike, Thomas	13	Hills Distri	17:27.50
3.	Horton, Jai	15	Westfields	17:47.29

ATHLETICS TASMANIA INTERCLUB, DOMAIN ATHLETICS CENTRE, HOBART, SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2021

And finally to Tasmania, where Dave Moore reports from Hobart: After a night of torrential rain, good conditions prevailed for today's Interclub Walk event. **Oliver Morgan** blitzed the small field with a PB and is well on track to crack the seven-minute barrier before season's end. Oliver was followed home by Masters stalwarts, **Elizabeth Leitch** and **Dave Moore**.

1500m Walk

1.	Oliver Morgan	OVA	7:08.01	PB
2.	Elizabeth Leitch	TMA	9:57.65	
3.	Dave Moore	TMA	13:39.19	

MARCIADALMONDO AND OMARCHADOR ROUNDUP

Marciadalmondo has 5 press releases for us this week

- Sat 6 Feb - Ancona (ITA): Great result for Davide Finocchietti (U20) in Italian Indoor U20 and U23 5000m Walk Champs http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3975
- Fri 5 Feb - Antequera, Malaga (ESP): Results of the road walking championships of Andalusia, Spain http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3974
- Thu 4 Feb - El Vendrell (ESP): Results of the road walking championships of Catalonia http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3973

- Wed 3 Feb - Clifton Hill (AUS): Excellent results in 10,000m track race
http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3972
- Tue 2 Feb - Recife (BRA) - Results of the Pernambucan race walking cup
http://www.marciadalmondo.com/eng/dettagli_news.aspx?id=3971

while Omarchador has 12 press releases.

- Mon 8 Feb - Riverside path honors Kerry Saxby-Junna
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/caminho-beira-rio-homenageia-kerry.html>
- Mon 8 Feb - Pietro Notaristefano and Alessia Titone, the best in the Italian Indoor U20 walks
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/pietro-notaristefano-e-alessia-titone.html>
- Sun 7 Feb - Davide Finocchietti highlighted at the Italian U-23 Indoor Championships
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/davide-finocchietti-em-destaque-nos.html>
- Sun 7 Feb - Results of the 2021 Balearic Islands Championship Roadwalk Championships (Spain)
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/campeonatos-das-ilhas-baleares-de.html>
- Sat 6 Feb - Results of the Indoor Club Championships of Ukraine
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/campeonatos-de-clubes-da-ucrania-em.html>
- Sat 6 Feb - another Russian drugs cheat gets justice - Ivan Noskov
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/ivan-noskov-com-resultados-anulados-em.html>
- Fri 5 Feb - Results of Belarusian Masters Indoor Championships in Minsk
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/masters-da-bielorrussia-disputaram.html>
- Fri 5 Feb - María Pérez and Alberto Amezcua stand out in Antequera
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/maria-perez-e-alberto-amezcua.html>
- Thu 4 Feb - Young walkers stand out in indoor races at Lyon and Liévin, France
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/jovens-na-pista-coberta-de-lyon-e.html>
- Thu 4 Feb - Results of the Copa de Marcha Atlética 2021 in Recife
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/pernambuco-disputou-copa-de-marcha.html>
- Wed 3 Feb - Raquel González and Daniel Chamosa win 20 km in El Vendrell
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/raquel-gonzalez-e-daniel-chamosa-vencem.html>
- Tue 2 Feb - Álvaro Martín with auspicious start of season in Murcia
<https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/alvaro-martin-com-auspicioso-inicio-de.html>

OUT AND ABOUT

- COVID-19 and sport crashed into each other a couple of times this week. First, the Australian cricket team pulled out of a three-Test tour to South Africa. A sombre Cricket Australia chief executive Nick Hockley told journalists that despite the protocols put in place for the team, there was simply too much risk that one of the touring party could catch the virulent form of the disease in South Africa. Secondly, a single positive COVID-19 case in Melbourne forced more than 500 tennis players and coaches into isolation, stopping all matches in the Australian Open lead-up events. The Olympic Games will comprise around 10,000 athletes plus another 5,000 or so coaches and officials and several thousand more media flying into Tokyo. It puts the logistical challenge of staging the Olympics into some sort of perspective. See <https://amp.abc.net.au/article/13126944>.
- Athletics Australia (AA) has confirmed its commitment to holding the 2021 Australian Track and Field Championships in Sydney. AA acknowledges that the circumstances surrounding health and safety guidelines are evolving, however, the intent is to conduct the Championships in its entirety from April 12 – 21. Read their press release at <https://www.athletics.com.au/news/statement-on-the-2021-australian-track-and-field-championships/>.
- This year's Los Angeles Marathon has been postponed for the second time due to the coronavirus pandemic. The annual event was originally scheduled to be held on March 21 before a decision was taken last November to move it to May 23 providing it received support from city officials and health experts. But with coronavirus cases continuing to rise in the United States, organisers have decided to postpone the race again as it now looks to stage it later this year. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103761/los-angeles-marathon-postponed-again>.

And now to Olympic news:

- Is it little wonder that the Japanese Olympic Games Organising Committee has not seen fit to push for the women's 50km. According to Yoshiro Mori, president of the Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee, said last Wednesday that women have an "annoying" tendency to make meetings run unnecessarily long. And the comments got worse as he warmed up. The home of paternalism and sexism! Read more at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2021/02/03/yoshiro-mori-tokyo-olympics-sexist-comments/>.
- For the record, Mori has apologised for his "inappropriate" remarks about women but refused to resign from his position, despite the outrage triggered by his comments. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103815/tokyo-2020-chief-apologises-not-resign>.
- His apology not placate Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, who subsequently described Yoshiro Mori's comments about women as a "major issue" for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. "I myself was struck speechless by his comments, which should not have been made." Japan has faced criticism for its gender equality efforts as it ranks 121 out of 153 nations surveyed in the 2020 global gender gap report of the World Economic Forum. Perhaps we now see why this is so. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103862/koike-calls-mori-comments-major-issue>.
- A day later, more than 110,000 people had already signed a petition calling for action to be taken against Mori. There is a lot more to come here. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103899/petition-tokyo-2020-president-mori-row>.
- This is just one of many challenges facing the Olympics organisers. There are fears Tokyo 2020 organisers could face a shortage of medical professionals able to lend a hand during the Olympic Games as they continue their fight against coronavirus. Satoru Arai, director of the Tokyo Medical Association, told Reuters it was "impossible" to envisage doctors and nurses volunteering at the rescheduled Games during the global health crisis. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103824/medical-volunteers-tokyo-2020-olympics>.
- And in more bad news for the Olympic LOC, according to the latest poll conducted by NHK, approximately 80 per cent of Japanese people think Tokyo 2020 should be postponed or cancelled. But it's actually worse than that, with nearly 40 per cent of those surveyed advocating for the complete cancellation of Tokyo 2020, rather than postponing the event until it can be safely held. See <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1103848/blog-yuhei-inoue-tokyo-support>.

KERRY SAXBY-JUNNA HONOURED

I completely missed the following wonderful bit of news, and it took an article in marciadalmondo to alert me (see <https://omarchador.blogspot.com/2021/02/caminho-beira-rio-homenageia-kerry.html>). I then checked the local media and found the following had been published by David Lowe in the local Ballina newspaper (<https://www.echo.net.au/2021/01/ballinas-race-walking-champion-honoured/>).

Ballina's race walking champion honoured By David Lowe, January 18, 2021



Then and now... Kerry Saxby-Junna AM with her parents (and Ballina Shire Senior Citizens for 2020) Barry and Jan Saxby with the new signage in Ballina. Photo David Lowe.

Kerry Saxby-Junna returned to her old home of Ballina on Friday for the unveiling of a new tribute and tourist attraction in her honour.

An enthusiastic crowd of friends, family and supporters were there for the unveiling by Mayor David Wright of the new interpretive signage display, beside the Richmond River, near the Ballina War Memorial Pool. The new aluminium display is over two metres high and details Ms Saxby-Junna's extraordinary athletic achievements, which include 32 world records, three Olympics and 27 national titles.

The podium is made from sandstone, and will provide a great photo opportunity and rest location for people using the re-vamped Kerry Saxby Walkway, which now goes all the way from Captain Cook Park to the end of North Wall. The total length is close to the 5km distance for which Kerry Saxby-Junna held the race walking world record for almost two decades.

Mayor David Wright said the new signage aimed to inspire both the local community and visitors. 'It acknowledges Kerry's outstanding contribution to international athletics and her important connection to Ballina,' he said.

Although Ms Saxby-Junna was born in Young NSW, her family moved to Ballina in her early teens. Describing herself as a 'normal country girl', Kerry joined the local athletics club and achieved state level success in swimming and middle distance running before switching to race walking at 21.

Kerry Saxby-Junna told Echonetdaily she'd planned to return for the opening in July 2020, but COVID caused the ceremony to be delayed. 'It's always great to come back to Ballina, especially at the moment when we can go swimming, and the weather's good. My dream of going to the Olympics all started here,' she said. 'In those days Ballina never had the walking paths, but now we're getting more and more coming through, which is fabulous. This has to be one of the most picturesque places I've seen around the world to go for a walk.'

When she and her sister did training runs out to the bar in the early days, it was 'a very very rough track'.

After Ms Saxby-Junna was invited to go to the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra by coach Craig Hilliard, she won multiple gold medals for race walking. She also met her husband, soccer coach Ray Junna, at the AIS. Ms Saxby-Junna won her first international gold medal at the 1986 Goodwill Games in Moscow. She was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1992.

On Friday she told Echonetdaily she's happy that people remember her career on the track, although 'it's just so long ago!

Ms Saxby-Junna retired from race walking in 2001. These days, she lives in Canberra, where she works with kids who have disabilities. She still enjoys running, walking and riding her bike.

To attend the Ballina ceremony, she drove all the way north with her husband, and was struck by the improvements along the highway. 'There's only a couple of traffic lights between here and Canberra at the moment. It's like a super highway now! I reckon there'll be more and more people moving here, it's so easy to get anywhere now.'

DATES...DATES...DATES

As usual, I finish with a list of upcoming events on the local, national and international fronts. Let me know of any errors/omissions. It continues to change quickly as a result of COVID-19 issues.

For VRWC race details, see <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwcs21.shtml>

For Ballarat Race Walkers Club race details, see <https://www.ballaratracewalkers.com/wp/>

For the Athletics Australia summer fixture, see <https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/cups/aa/files/aexjryarznk08gxh.pdf>

Victorian Key Dates – Summer 2020/2021

Feb 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 7 (2000m walks)	Various venues
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	VRWC Road Walks	Middle Park
Feb 14 (Sun), 2021	Australian 20km Roadwalk Championships Entries close on Monday 1 st February - https://www.athletics.com.au/events/83392/	Adelaide, SA
Feb 19-21, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 1)	Lakeside Stadium
Feb 26-28, 2021	Victorian T&F Championships (Weekend 2)	Lakeside Stadium
Mar 6 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 8 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 13 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 9 (no walks)	Various venues
Mar 14 (Sun), 2021	AV 5000m Teams Race Championships , VRWC track walks	Clifton Hill
Mar 20 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Round 10 (5000m/2000m walks)	Various venues
Mar 21 (Sun), 2021	VMA 5000m Walk Championship	Clifton Hill
Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	Australian 50km Championship (Men)	VIC
Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	AVSL Playoffs	Lakeside Stadium
Apr 12-21, 2021	Australian Athletics Championships	Sydney, NSW
Apr 17-18, 2021	Coburg 24 Hour Track Carnival (includes 6H, 12H and 24H walk divisions)	Coburg, VIC
Apr 23-24, 2021	Australian Little Athletics Championships	VIC
Apr 24-25, 2021	Victorian Masters T&F Championships	Doncaster

2021 World Athletics Race Walk Challenge

Mar 27 (Sat), 2021	RW Challenge Meet, Taicang, CHN)
Apr 10 (Sat), 2021	Rio Grande International Grand Prix, Rio Maior, POR
May 29 (Sat), 2021	Gran Premio Cantones de La Coruña, La Coruna, ESP
Aug, 2021	Olympic Games, Sapporo, JAP
Oct 9 (Sat), 2021	RW Challenge Meet, Mexico City, MEX
Oct 16 (Sat), 2021	Invitational Race Walking Meeting, Coatzacoalcos, MEX

Other International Dates

Mar 20 (Sat), 2021	Dudince 50km Meet, Dudince, Slovak Republic
May 16 (Sun), 2021	European Race Walking Team Championships, Podebrady, CZE
July 23 – Aug 8, 2021	32nd Olympic Games, Tokyo and Sapporo
July, 2021	23rd World Masters T&F Championships , Tampere, Finland (NOW POSTPONED TILL 2022)
Aug 8-19, 2021	World University Summer Games , Chengdu, China
Aug 20-21, 2021	18th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships , Nairobi, Kenya (POSTPONED FROM 2020)

Jan 2022	Oceania Masters Championships , Norfolk Island (POSTPONED FROM JANUARY 2020)
TBA, 2022	9th World Masters Indoor T&F Championships , Edmonton, Canada
Apr 23-24, 2022	29th World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships , Minsk, Belarus
July 15-24, 2022	18th World Athletics Championships , Eugene, USA
July 27 - Aug 7, 2022	XXII Commonwealth Games , Birmingham, GBR
Aug 11-21, 2022	European Athletics Championships , Munich, GER
TBA, 2022	19th World Athletics U20 T&F Championships , Cali, Colombia

TBA, 2023	24th World Masters T&F Championships , Gothenburg Sweden
Aug 2023 (TBC)	19th World Athletics Championships , Budapest, Hungary

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Copies of recent newsletters are kept on the VRWC website (<http://www.vrwc.org.au>)