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# orths news

Official newsletter of North Canberra Athletic Club Inc  
P.O. Box 1221, Belconnen, ACT 2616

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## Farewell Chris Cook

The sudden death of Chris Cook has shocked and saddened all those who knew him, and our sincerest sympathies are extended to his family – Amelie, Heidi and Daniel. Included in this newsletter are three tributes from fellow North Canberra athletes. In addition, the tribute written by David Osmond which was read out at Chris's funeral, will be posted, along with those that appear here, on the North Canberra website.

### Chris Cook, a Norths man through and through

*by John Harding*

Chris Cook died tragically of a massive heart attack only 2kms after the start of the Australian Mountain Running Championships on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June on Camp Mountain south of Brisbane. He was only 40 but had one blocked and two partially blocked arteries, despite being regarded as one of the fittest 40 year olds in Canberra.

Chris had immense pride in being a member of North Canberra and when he won the Terry Fox Fun Run only one week earlier he was wearing his long sleeved North Canberra top. He joined the club nearly 20 years earlier and was one of the top few steeplechasers in Australia, coached by 1970 Commonwealth gold medallist Tony Manning, who spoke eloquently of Chris at the funeral. Chris loved training with his mates and doing things for his mates. During the decade-long reign of Weston Creek as the ACT's winter premier club, Chris had a dream of toppling the champions. He helped out on the club committee and as club captain and he led by example in getting club members out to points score races. There was no prouder man when Norths achieved that first winter premiership, and Chris was able to

share the celebration of that victory with his training mates and the other A grade team members that contributed—runners like Danny O'Dea, Peter Haynes, Bill Kirkland, Greg Webster, Bruce Cook, Garry Briggs, Roger Pallazzo and others—and with the B and C graders in the club.



Over the years, most of us have started to get a bit long in the tooth, and even, such as Jon Stanhope, moved on to bigger and better things. Chris was the only one still in there as an A grade runner on a consistent basis. His enthusiasm was undiminished, as was his sense of humour. To the last, in his friendly sort of way, he was still encouraging Danny and others to make yet another comeback. He loved turning up for a race and finding some of his mates there. He was a home handyman par excellence, and was always helping someone out with something. Earlier

this year I needed Mountain Running Association cheques signed on a few occasions and met Chris at Peter Haynes' new house in Ainslie where he was helping lay pavers and garden mulch. The latter stunk like high heaven, and, if ever one saw a mate in action, it was helping Peter move that stuff.

Last track season I saw Chris most weeks at the interclub meets where he would bring son Daniel out for an 800 or 1500. Chris didn't race himself but had great enjoyment in seeing Daniel participate and improve, not just on the track but as part of the junior cricket team which Chris coached. In one of my last conversations with him, Chris was very proud that Daniel who attends high school in Queanbeyan had finished in the top 5 in the region CHS cross country at Nowra and would be going on to the NSW championships in Sydney.

We will all miss Chris greatly—the club man, the leader, the enthusiast, the devoted father and husband, the good mate to so many of us. Our sorrow goes out to Amelie, Heidi and Daniel, who have suffered the greatest loss of all.

### **Some memories from Greg Webster**

I joined North Canberra in 1982. My first run was the Pennington that year, a race which Chris won many times. By the end of that season, I had been in a number of North Canberra "A" teams with Chris, who as national steeplechase champion was something of a hero to me as a 15 year old schoolboy new to running. My particular memories of Chris at this time are that he was always there for Norths whenever there was a points score event on. I contrast this with the current crop of national stars in the ACT who very rarely turn out for their clubs in points score or other local events.

A couple of years later, I started running 10 milers on Wednesday afternoons with Chris, Phil Aungles and Peter Haynes. Competitively I was no match for these guys, yet they accepted me into their training circle, and I think the base I built up at that time is the cornerstone on which all my future success has been built. Although Chris was a regular winner of ACT Cross

Country Club races and ACT Championships, I can never recall him putting down or speaking ill of any other athletes, present or otherwise (OK, apart from Graham Clews, but I'm sure that was all tongue in cheek!). Over the 17 years that I have known Chris as an athlete and club mate, he has been a hero, a mentor, but most of all a friend. Legend has it that Chris used to seek out the toughest, hilliest courses around Queanbeyan for his long runs. I have always enjoyed following that lead, and have recently been building up to a run from home that takes in the peaks of the Pinnacle, Mt Painter and Black Mountain. I was looking forward to challenging Cooky with it once I had mastered it myself. Now I will just have to run it in memory of him.

North Canberra will miss Chris dearly. He was a stalwart of the triumphant Norths teams of the late 80's and early 90's that won many winter premierships. And in recent years, he has always been there for Norths teams at a time when the club has not been doing so well. As a club member, Chris has always been worth two regular people, in recent years more than ever as he has started bringing his son Daniel to participate in club events. My hope is that many Norths members, both the stars and the plodders, will be inspired by Chris's example and turn up at runs in honour of Chris to return the club to its rightful position as the premier winter athletics club in Canberra.

### **Louis Young remembers**

Chris was one of the first runners I met when I arrived in Canberra at the beginning of 1991. At that time we were both in similar form and I can remember some tough races in the first half of the year. As team mates in the winning North Canberra team at the 1991 ANZAC relays I think we ran almost identical times, but I was starting to believe I had the upper hand.

That belief vanished soon after at the "Bilga Bash" cross country race, where Chris's special talent for clearing fence obstacles was demonstrated. Chris was always a tough competitor, but he was in another class on that sort of terrain. Like me, my car failed to cope with the bush terrain that day, so after some

delays and help from others on the homeward journey, Chris invited us back to his place for the afternoon. It was typical of Chris: highly competitive when it counted, but laid back and hospitable the rest of the time.

I regret now that I didn't see more of Chris away from the athletics scene, where you only see glimpses of the complete person behind the athlete. He was a good team mate, and one of the few people I would seek out for a chat before or after a race, because you could always rely on Chris to be positive and approachable, even when competition loomed. I suspect he would have been a good man to have in the trenches besides you. I will miss him.

## **Level 1 coaching course**

The ACT Branch of the AT&FCA has announced that it will conduct a Level 1 course on the two weekends 28-29 August and 4-5 September. If there are any NC members, or parents of members, who would like to undertake this course, the club will subsidise the costs involved. We strongly urge anyone who has an interest in this area of athletics to take part – a lack of qualified coaches is one of the factors holding back increased participation in our sport.

The course will cost \$175, which includes a copy of the Manual, with a non-refundable deposit of \$50 due by **Friday 13 August**.

The exact location has yet to be decided. The holding of the course is again dependant on achieving a sufficient number of participants to make the course cost-effective (around 16 in number).

The format of the Level 1 course has changed and now only occupies 23 hours of teaching time, with an emphasis on practicals. There is an "open book" exam with a pass mark of 80% at the conclusion of the course.

This new course is geared more to coaching the younger athlete and provides a good all-round introduction to coaching. Unlike the previous arrangements, candidates do not have to choose a specialisation at this stage. Instead, they are able to complete a Level 1 specialisation at a later date, if

they wish. The course they attend in August-September is sufficient to obtain the basic Level 1 qualification

## Norths contingent to officiate at the Olympics

Our congratulations go to four NC members who have been chosen as National Technical Officials for the 2000 Olympics Games. **Owen Heness**, **Heather Jones** and **Hugh McGowan** have been appointed Track Umpires. **Don Jones** is to be a Start Line Umpire. A just reward for their countless hours of dedicated service to athletics. Technical Officials for the ParaOlympics have yet to be announced.

## Carillon relays hot dog stand

Following his success with a 'soup kitchen' at the Dunrossil Drive cross-country races, Owen Heness is expanding his culinary skills and is planning a hot dog stand at the Carillon Relays – the last of the point score races this season for both the seniors and the juniors. Join us there for some great racing and some delectable post-race nourishment!

## KL international towerthon stair race

**Paul Crake** had to settle for 2nd in the Kuala Lumpur international towerthon (2058 steps) on the 11 July. Paul said he was very pleased with his race but Jonathon Wyatt (World Mountain Running Champion) was too good on the day. They both smashed the previous record - Jonathon ran 10.39, Paul ran 11.22 and 3rd, a Malaysian, ran 12.16. There was an 800m race to the bottom of the stair well, which Jonathon reached first, with Paul third about 80 metres behind. Paul said he settled into a good rhythm and went from there. About half way he caught Jonathon back, but it wasn't to be. Paul said he finished well and is now

looking forward to getting some solid training in Europe.

## Venues for summer competition

With the re-laying of the synthetic track at the AIS, alternative venues had to be found for the first two months of the ACTAA's interclub competition. For the first half of the summer season, competition will be held at two separate locations – Macquarie enclosed oval for the track events, and the AIS throwing field for field events.

In order to give junior athletes the chance to post All Schools qualifying times on a high-quality track, ACTAA has arranged for local athletes to attend 3 interstate meetings. The first will be at Wagga on the weekend of 30/31 October. Wagga boasts one of the best grass tracks in the country. Then on 13 and 27<sup>th</sup> November, athletes will be encouraged to compete at the Sydney interclub competition at Homebush. No ACT interclub competition will be conducted on these three weekends.

Transport arrangements are still to be made for the three competitions out of Canberra. In the event that ACTAA does not arrange bus transport, then NC will organise a car pool. A number of committee members have already indicated their willingness to take athletes to one or more of these events.

It is hoped that the new track will be available for use by the beginning of December. If work is completed on time, the competition scheduled for the 4<sup>th</sup> December will be held at the AIS.

The official opening of the new track will be held on Saturday 15 January. The day of athletics will include the Canberra Grand Prix. The preliminary program for this event includes the men's hammer and 800m, and the women's 200m and long jump. The day will also feature the traditional Coca Cola Distance Classic events, and will incorporate the ACT 5km Championships.

Details of the summer competition program can be found on ACT Athletic's website

## Coming Events

### Saturday, 7 August

Powerhouse 1k/5k/10k - senior and junior point score race

*Mariner Pl Yarralumla*

### Saturday, 14 August

Eucalypt Trail 1k/3.4k/6.8k

*Purdie St, Bruce*

### Saturday/Sunday, 14/15 August

Australian All Schools CC Champs

*Darwin*

### 20-29 August

World Athletics Championships

*Seville, Spain*

### Saturday, 21 August

O'Connor Ridge 1k/2.5k/5k

*Masterman St, Bruce*

### Saturday, 28 August

Pinnacle 1k/4k/8k – novice

*Springvale Dr, Weetangera*

### Saturday, 4 September

CCC Carillon Relays 4 x 3k – junior and senior point score race

*Wendouree Drive, Parkes*

### Sunday, 19 September

Canberra Times Fun Run

### Saturday, 9 October

ACTAA Competition

*Macquarie Oval - 2-4pm (track)*

*AIS Throwing Fld - 4.30-6pm (lj, throws)*

### Saturday, 16 October

ACTAA Competition

*Macquarie Oval - 2-4pm (track)*

*AIS Throwing Fld - 4.30-6pm (hj, throws)*

### Saturday, 23 October

Wagga carnival - LA's to vets

*Wagga (in place of ACT competition)*

### Sunday, 24 October

Weston Creek Fun Run

*Irish Club*

## 1999-2000 registrations due

Just a gentle reminder that registration fees for the 1999-2000 season are now dues. The fees, set at the last AGM, are:

### Winter Season Only:

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Senior & Under 20 athletes | \$45 |
| Under 18, 16 & 14 athletes | \$30 |
| Families                   | \$70 |

### Summer Season Only:

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Senior & Under 20 athletes | \$50 |
| Under 18, 16 & 14 athletes | \$40 |
| Families                   | \$90 |

### Full Year

|                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Senior & Under 20 athletes | \$70  |
| Under 18, 16 & 14 athletes | \$50  |
| Families                   | \$120 |

|           |      |
|-----------|------|
| Officials | \$10 |
|-----------|------|

The club also has a full supply of our new competition singlets, and a limited number of club rugby tops.

## Recent results

North Canberra athletes were out in force at cross country events in the month of July and posted some impressive results.

At the Longstaff/Pennington races **Ian Mackenzie** came in 9<sup>th</sup> in the 8km race, while in the 16km race **Greg Webster**

placed 5<sup>th</sup> in a time of 59:50, **Ben Crabb** was 12<sup>th</sup> in 62:13 and **Danny O'Dea** 16<sup>th</sup> in 63:54.

The Gunghalin races on 11 July saw a smaller turnout, with **Ian Mackenzie** 6<sup>th</sup> in the 5km race in a time of 20:56. **Danny O'Dea** won the 10 mile race in 59:10, with **Graham Burke** coming home in 9<sup>th</sup> position in 62:21.

There was a big NC turnout for the pointscore race at Dunrossil Drive – perhaps lured by the promise of the Heness soup kitchen. In the women's 4.3km race, **Carol Harding** was 23<sup>rd</sup> in 18:28, while **Jennie Webster** completed her first competition for the club in a time of 23:40.

In the men's B grade race, **Graham Burke** grabbed 3<sup>rd</sup> spot in 15:22, with **Daniel Cook** following close behind to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in 15:55. **Ian Mackenzie** was 28<sup>th</sup> in 18:18.

A strong rumour has NC winning the men's pointscore on the day for the first time in quite a while. Well done to our competitors in the men's A grade race: **Erwin McRae** (2<sup>nd</sup> in 12:41), **Ben Crabb** (5<sup>th</sup> in 13:27), **Peter Haynes** (7<sup>th</sup> in 13:36), **Greg Webster** (14<sup>th</sup> in 14:07) and **Danny O'Dea** (16<sup>th</sup> in 14:13).

On 18 July, **Graham Burke** was our sole representative in the Sri Chimnoy half marathon. Graham had a great run, taking out the men's 50-59 age group title and coming in 2<sup>nd</sup> overall.

## NC web site

<http://www.angelfire.com/nc/NCAC>

Our website has now been set up and we hope those of you who have access to the internet will take the time to have a look. The site is still being developed and we are sure improvements can be made, so we'd appreciate your comments.

- Information that has already been put on the site covers:
- NC information booklet
- Committee contact details
- Calendar of events (cross country, summer interclub, national, international)
- Northside schools cross country pages (information, weekly results, progressive point scores for schools and individuals)
- Selected items from each edition Norths News

Thanks must go to Martin Bye and David Osmond who have put in a lot of work to get it to this stage.

## Active Australia accreditation

The committee is about to undertake the task of seeking Active Australia accreditation for the club. We hope that the detailed process involved in achieving this will help us in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the club. From this, our priorities for the coming year should emerge.

## 1999-2000 NCAC committee

|                                 |                   |           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| <i>President:</i>               | Dudley Scoullar   | 6253 5223 |
| <i>Vice Presidents:</i>         | Linda Butler      | 6254 2201 |
|                                 | Owen Heness       | 6254 6332 |
| <i>Secretary:</i>               | Ian Mackenzie     | 6251 4263 |
| <i>Registrar and treasurer:</i> | Barabara Wagstaff | 6251 6698 |
| <i>Committee:</i>               | Andrew Fiddian    | 6258 6320 |
|                                 | Shaun Creighton   | 6247 0471 |
|                                 | David Osmond      | 6251 2303 |