

Introduction:

During the recent NZMA AGM, the functionality of the Masters Committees was discussed. Since the introduction of the MOU between NZMA and Athletics NZ, both organizations have collaborated more closely. All masters events have been integrated into the Athletics Canterbury programme, and this integration is mirrored in many other Centres. This structure has applied to cross country, road, and trail events for several years and now includes track & field meetings.

The only exception involves Anne Davison, supported by Rick, who continue to organize events for our mature group of throwers. These events are held either prior to interclub meetings or on Wednesdays or Sundays. This initiative is greatly appreciated by this group and helps reduce some of the pressure on senior interclub throwing events. It also provides an opportunity for athletes from Otago to participate.

The Opening Day of the seventh track & field season at Ngā Puna Wai is scheduled for 19th October 2024. The average attendance at Athletics Canterbury interclub meetings is approximately 135 participants. Of these, the average number of masters attendees is about 15 athletes. The lower number of female participants is due to 'older' members conducting their events outside of the normal interclub programme.

South Island Masters Track & Field Championships:

With South Island Championships were held in Christchurch from 24 – 26 January 2024, at Nga Puna Wai. Of the 88 competitors, there were 51 from Canterbury.

The following Canterbury athletes broke records: Helena Dinnissen - W40 60m (8.22); Craig Oliver - M40 400m (54.56), Peter Richards - M65 3000m (11:05.36), 5000 (18:59.98), Georg Ludwig - M70 80mH (19.03), high jump (1.30), J Jarvie - M45 1500m TW (11:16.00), D Smyth - M55 1500m TW (8:53.59), Rozie Robinson - W30 3000m TW (17:43.34), 5000m TW (31:51.86), J Eketone - M45 high jump (1.66m), G Wilson - M55 high jump (1.45m), Colleen Maloney - W85 shot put (4.11m), discus (10.02m), hammer (16.86m), weight throw (7.68m), throws pentathlon (2277pts), J Pratten - M40 throws pentathlon (2433pts), Richard Davison - M75 throws pentathlon (2842pts).

NZMA Track & Field Championships:

Due to the busy season, the NZMA Track & Field Championships were held at Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland from 28th-30th March 2025. The organisation of a master's championship has evolved beyond local Master's Centres, with the Auckland LOC comprising Auckland Masters members and the Athletics Auckland Track & Field Committee. This year, Police and FENZ members were invited to participate. My responsibilities included liaising with the LOC, establishing the order of events, organizing online entries, preparing the programme booklet, race numbers, seed events, and assisting with the results. This task was substantial, particularly in creating a workable programme. We were fortunate to have experienced Auckland officials on the LOC who managed the delivery efficiently throughout the weekend.

The event attracted 282 competitors, the largest number since my involvement dating back to 2010, with over 100 participants from Auckland, with only a small group of 25 from Canterbury. The average age of competitors was 56. It was encouraging to see many younger masters attending, which bodes well for the future.

The following Canterbury athlete set a NZMA Championship record: David Smyth - M55 1500m TW(9:01.69).

NZMA Board Up-date:

At the NZMA AGM was delayed and not held during the NZMA Track & Field Championship weekend. Those who usually attend the AGM are not really the future of NZMA, being established, mature members who have already contributed to the sport. The AGM was moved to online (22 June 2025), with the hope that more members would attend. This has happened and while there was an increase in attendance, I was little disappointed that more did not attend.

The biggest issue was a remit from WBOP (prepared by Murray Clarkson), requesting that the MOU between NZMA & ANZ be discontinued. The point raised by WBOP were factually incorrect and the remit was lost.

The fact that 90% of those attending the NZMA Championships in Auckland were masters who belonged to Athletics NZ clubs demonstrated that the MOU is working.

The Board has a good mix of young and old, yet the on-going challenge is up-skilling the newer Board members to take over the 'rains' when the time is right. It is proving difficult at times, as the younger Board members are 'time poor', due to family and work demands. Liz Mitchell joined the Board, Ian Carter and Carolyn Smith stepping down.

The 2026 NZMA Track & Field Championship will be hosted by Taranaki (Inglewood). This event will be held from 13th - 15th March 2026. The North Island Championships will be in Tauranga (28th - 30th November 2025) and the South Island Championships will be at Saxon Field, Nelson (23rd - 25th January 2026). I can also report that the 2027 NZMA Championships will be in Dunedin. NZMA has also been asked to hold the Oceania Masters Track & Field Championships in New Zealand 2027. I currently investigating if we hold them here in Canterbury and that would be in January 2028, in the warmer weather.

Work continues in the background to ensure the future of Masters' athletics within the New Zealand summer season, which is very congested during the months of February / March. Recently there was a big restructuring with several Athletics NZ roles being disestablished. How this will affect the sport, I am not sure. When I know more, I will let you know.

CMA 2023 / 2024 Membership Details:

The previous membership figures are as follows: 160 (2010), 131 (2011), 110 (2012), 97 (2013), 82 (2014), 70 (2014/2015), 90 (2015/2016). All of these figures include members of clubs & NZMA.

Since the MOU in 2016, we have two separate groups. CMA members who only join NZMA have been as follows: 32 (2016/2017), 13 (2017/2018), 22 (2018/2019), 22 (2019/2020), 11 (2020/2021), 14 (2021/2022), 12 (2022/2023), 10 (2023/2024) & **17 (2024-2025)**.

Once again a majority of masters (**200+ within clubs**) do not come near Nga Puna Wai. While the Don Greig Racing Stables Club does train regularly at Nga Puna Wai and it would be great if others did the same and race at Nga Puna Wai. Athletics Canterbury's Track & Field Committee are more than happy to offer some masters specific events to encourage more masters to 'have a go!'.

The success of masters track & field relies on us encouraging ANZ club masters to attend events at Nga Puna Wai.

CMA Records:

Anne Davison has maintained a list of records set by our throwers. However, I am currently looking for someone to take over looking after the records. Please contact me if you can help.

CMA Committee:

During the past season, the committee has not met since the AGM. CMA is an Incorporated Society and we will have to decide if we re-register. It is advantageous for CMA to remain this way, as it enables us to make funding applications, independent of Athletics Canterbury.

The future of CMA?

Each year the CMA / NZMA membership numbers seem to have remained about the same, but still lower than in previous years. This is not unique to just Canterbury. I remind ALL members that any athlete who is over 30 and a member of a club is also by default a member NZMA / CMA. Our challenge is to work out how we engage with this group and not let it feel like it's 'them' & 'us'. If you don't think we need a separate group, let me know.