

Bob Clarke Memorial Challenge

SAMA will continue with the Bob Clarke Memorial Challenge series of races as part of its 2020/2021 summer track & field program.

It is an event that will cater for sprinters as well as middle distance and distance runners of all ages, both male and female, competing together in two handicap heats (200m & 1000m) with the aim of qualification for a 500m trophy final.

See below for full details of The Challenge.

Bob Clarke

The SAMA committee has received approval from the family of Bob Clarke to name the series of races in his honour.

I draw on extracts from George White's publication '*Age Is An Advantage (A History of Veterans/Masters Athletics in South Australia)*' to provide a brief biography of Bob Clarke who was one of the twenty one founding members of the South Australian Veterans Amateur Athletic Club.

Specifically, I refer to the section of George's book titled 'Magnificent Masters'.

"Bob Clarke was a founding member of the Veterans Club and is the only person to have maintained continuous membership to this day" (2010 at the time).

"In the 1970's Bob held all M50 Veteran Club records from 100m to 1500 metres as well as the triple jump. He also had the fastest M45 Marathon. In the 1978 SAAAA Championships in the over 40's division only two younger rivals were able to beat 53 year old Bob home in the 800m.

Over his career he broke Australian records four times. In Australian National competition, overseas nationals and World Championships in various age groups from 50+ to 65+ (1975 to 1993), Bob won 10 gold, 15 silver and 17 bronze medals.

At State level Bob set multiple M50, M60, M65 and M70 State Age Group Records.

One of Bob's big satisfactions from the sport came from seeing the growth of the City-Bay Fun Run which he founded in 1973 and organised for many years, seeing the race grow from 1637 entrants in the first year to over 10,000 ten years later."

George's book is available as a pdf on the SAMA website and is highly recommended reading (or re-reading as in my case.... VJ).

In the 2016 Australia Day Honours list Bob was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to athletics.

In April of 2016, Bob Clarke passed away at the age of 91.

The Challenge

The two heats and handicap final of The Challenge will be run over three Wednesday evenings during the months of November and December 2020.

Entrants will need to register up to 48 hours before each heat to allow for handicaps to be calculated and for the track to be marked on the day of competition.

Male and female athletes compete jointly in the heats and final.

Athletes are handicapped on a set sliding scale (based on age and gender) **with possible, discretionary, additional handicapping based on an assessment of comparative skill levels.**

Heat 1. 200m

Run [Wednesday, 4 November](#) as per the SAMA Summer Program (A2).

Athletes entered in The Challenge will be catered for in the required number of races. It should be possible to use more than the 6 lanes SAMA is allocated on competition nights as races will commence on the bend entering the straight and will not interfere with athletes training in the back straight.

It is anticipated that there will be two to four races with up to nine runners in each race.

Heat 2. 1000m

Run [Wednesday, 18 November](#) as per the SAMA Summer Program (C2).

These heats will not be run in lanes with all runners to start as per handicaps and marked in lane one (1).

Qualification for trophy final

Points will be awarded to runners in each race of the two lead up heats on the following basis:-

1 st	10 points	4 th	6 points	7 th	3 points
2 nd	8 points	5 th	5 points	8 th	2 points
3 rd	7 points	6 th	4 points	9 th	1 point

Points are combined from the 2 heats and the top 10-12 (in case of ties) runners will qualify for the final.

Below are indicative handicaps proposed for the two heats and the 500m final.

Trophy Handicaps in Metres

<u>Age</u>	<u>200m run</u>		<u>1000m Run</u>		<u>500m Run</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
30	Scratch	12	Scratch	70	Scratch	27
35	Scratch	19	Scratch	106	Scratch	41
40	7	26	35	142	13	55
45	14	33	70	178	26	68
50	21	40	106	216	40	82
55	27	46	144	254	54	97
60	33	53	183	295	69	112
65	40	60	225	337	85	128
70	48	69	271	383	102	146
75	57	77	321	433	121	165
80	66	87	376	487	142	186
85	73	93	412	523	156	199

The final will be run as per the 2nd heat with all runners to start as per handicaps and marked in lane one on [Wednesday, 2 December](#) as per the program (B2).

A trophy and prizes will be awarded to the first three place getters in the final.

Viddy Jermacans

Series Convenor

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