

A WRAP UP OF THE JUNE 5TH WORKSHOP

(see web site photo gallery for images captured at Knox Athletic Centre by our Branch Vice President, John Crane)

A major function of the Branch's workshops has been to advance the knowledge and skills of Victorian Coaches whether or not they are ATFCA members. The ATFCA's leadership role in coach education dominates our activities and is the focus of considerable energy and a major expenditure in our operations. On the weekend we provided yet another four sessions taking our 2008-2010 total to 33 separate sessions in total, and seven for this year. It would have been eight except that George Aber's session on 'Training in the Heat' had to be withdrawn at the last moment due to George being unwell. We all hope he manages to be back to full speed ASAP. His session text will appear shortly.

Returning to the issue of advancing professional knowledge and skill, this last series also formally extended an invitation to athletes. We have always welcomed athletes, teachers and interested adults however it has become increasingly obvious to serious athletes that their success can be enhanced by smarter training and that usually means becoming a student of their event. So these workshops should not be viewed simply as coach education but in a broader sense as '**event education**'.

So how did they go? Well, a great session by 'Mr. Jumps', the honorable Dr. John Boas (**Triple Jump & Long Jump**). A thoughtful and thought provoking, detailed presentation by a man who has had athletes at four Olympic Games. For this session, he was ably assisted in the more vigorous demonstrations by one of his athletes, while the more 'age appropriate' demonstrations were by John himself (see the web site photo gallery). Thank you John.



The endurance coaches and athletes were enlightened by the career experience of Richard Huggins (**Cross-Country**). A well attended session with plenty of question and answers, directions, planning and philosophy. Thank you Richard.

We had planned to follow this session with a school's cross-country workshop later this year however this has since been revised and re-scheduled for April 2011, so look for details on that early next year.

Relays: Frankly this session was brilliant, based on the outstanding feedback we received. Only one problem: only two coaches attended.

This session was lead by two of the best coaches across the State in either seniors or VLAA competition and only two attendees (1 from a VLAA centre and 1 from the Human Movement faculty of VUT). What nonsense!



OK, we do not get advertising assistance from AV or AA so the message did not go out via those channels, and that is their decision. Nevertheless some 800 coaches were emailed advertising, and similar advertising also went out via every VLAA Centre and to about 30 percent of AV's club secretaries. So as coaches do we need relays workshops; do we already know enough about relays? I doubt it. Never-the-less, my special thanks to Nev, Steve and also to Steve's champion junior relay teams who provided the demonstrations, and to their parents for bringing the kids along.

Given that relays are such a big part of VLAA regional and state competitions, similarly relays are part of weekly Shield and AV championships and AA also set aside a huge bag of money to prepare our national relay teams, I have to ask, where were the sprint coaches? Where were the VLAA centre relay coaches? To be blunt, *their absence* suggests a systemic indifference to the relevance of relays. I hope I am wrong.

As the Victorian ATFCA Coach Education Coordinator, I welcome suggestions and views. Should a relays workshop be repeated later in the year perhaps, perhaps closer to the season? I welcome your advice.



The final workshop was presented by yours truly and Pavlo (**Hammer**). As would be expected for such a specialized event, only a small number of enthusiasts attended.

Being a low participation event with very few serious athletes, there is every reason to keep pushing coach education in this event hence it being featured three times in two years. Just in case coaches had not realized this, our best male is 16m behind the WR and similarly our current best female is 14m behind the WR.

For those who did not attend, it included (Part 1) theory, (Part 2) a review, analysis and candid discussion, frame by frame of several of our nation's best men and all the men selected for the 2010 Commonwealth Games, (Part 3) a recorded clinic by world record holder Yuri Sedykh (sorry about the speaker system) then for Part 4 a practical demonstration and explanation of Yuri Sedykh's clinic by Pavlo (just like Yuri, was also trained by Professor Bondarchuk) assisted by Nigel. Great job Pavlo.

When is the next series? August. We will not offer the July series because of clashes with school holidays.

Bryan Neighbour

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