

Delia Baldock wanted to be a running granny, but is certainly

The dark horse

If ever someone was born to run it was Delia Baldock. Couple this with the fact that her favourite event is the hurdles and you have to empathise with her when she says "I think I'm part horse."

She was born in New Zealand in 1962 and, as a child, "read a book about a granny that ran everywhere and decided then and there that that was my ambition – to be a running granny!" Although she ran around the playground with the boys every day, she never placed in school races. Like many girls she did ballet and had horse riding lessons but also used to follow the Olympics fervently. A poster of John Walker (NZ middle distance runner) graced her bedroom wall.

She moved to Perth in her mid teens and used to run to school but it wasn't until Year 12 that she won her first school race. She then joined Canning Districts

Athletics Club where she trained with John Gilmour, her hero.

She remembers "In those days we competed at Perry Lakes – but only the boys were allowed in the Stadium – we girls had to run on the horrible old black track outside the stadium which I thought was disgusting. I ran the 100m, 200m, 400m and hurdles but despite my enthusiasm I was always in the last, slowest, heats.

Somewhat disheartened I decided to try cross country which was lots of fun – but I was still one of the slower runners."

Delia met Eric at University and they ran for the UWA Athletics

Club where she added the 800m to her repertoire. After they got married they moved to Busselton and ran track and field and cross country with the Bunbury Athletics Club for a year. Here Delia had some success with the high jump and also played hockey

After a back injury she decided to retire from hockey and a year later, at 35, she joined our club. She loved it but with her back still playing up and two daughters who had to be taken to ballet on Thursday nights she was 40 before she could re-join. "This was exciting because Perth was also hosting the Nationals that year!" That was 2003 and since then she hasn't looked back. She can't wait to turn 50 later this year - "as you do in Masters – we all look forward to getting older!" (How often do we hear that?)

CONTINUED – Page 7

What's training?

FROM – Page 6

Delia likes to run as fast as she can so prefers the shorter sprints and competing rather than training – “what is that?” And we’ve all noticed that her idea of warming up for a race is to run from her car to the start line. She’s not keen on longer distances now so for fitness she does the shortest Sunday runs. She enjoys the jumps and to practise for the hurdles she uses horse jumps – “Hardly ever see a real hurdle”. Her goal is “to run till I die”.

Over the years Delia has picked up around 100 medals and several relay state records. In 2006, she won the club’s achievement award and also took the opportunity to catch up with her mum and dad when the Oceania Championships were in Christchurch. She competed in nine events and won two gold and two silver medals – her most memorable and rewarding experience. She will be heading to NZ again in February to see if she can be as successful in Tauranga.

Delia will always offer help at club events. And the skills needed for her job as an administration officer were clearly in evidence as she carried out her role on the 2010 LOC for the Nationals in Perth.

She says “MAWA is the best club I have been in because no matter what your pace is you get the same encouragement. Every masters athlete is an inspiration to me and I admire them all.”

