

Todd Davey

Mountain man

YOU might think Todd is a big lad but he's a shadow of his former self. Read on

Todd's childhood was spent in Perth, but he has worked all over the world as a manager in the mining, resources and construction industries. Currently based in WA, and often spending time away from home, he is involved in large construction projects for the likes of BHP and Woodside. He is married to Marilyn, who happens to be the daughter of the late Keith McDonald, who was the club's first president back in 1974. He has a dog and two cats and, through his two adult step children, he also has three grandchildren.

At Scotch College he excelled in sport and thinks he still holds the school's open discus record from 1983, the year he was vice-captain of the State All Schools Team. As a junior, in an era when Western Australian throwers were dominant, his coaches included Matt Barber and Shirley Strickland and he represented WA in throws events and as a decathlete. He coached at Scotch College and Wesley College for a year or so after he left school and in the mid 90s, whilst working in Papua New Guinea, he had the rewarding experience of coaching a couple of athletes to national titles.

He himself won 30-40 state titles in his earlier years but, after a severe shoulder injury, he focussed on his work, becoming (in his own words) *"somewhat of a workaholic"*. About 25 years later his weight had escalated and he realised things had to change. So he dropped 20kgs and decided it was *"time to get active"*. As a younger athlete he had trained at Perry Lakes where the vets also trained. He remembers thinking, *"when are these old guys going to get out of the way?"*. But he did some research and discovered how



In focus

With Christine Oldfield

big Masters Athletics had become. So in 2012 he joined MAWA and he says it *"has given me a completely new lease of life and a great work/life balance"*.

And he wasted no time in climbing to first place in the Club Tops for all five throws and establishing new state records in his M45 category in discus, heavyweight, shot and throws pentathlon. In 2013 he achieved six gold medals at the MAWA state championships, gold, silver and bronze at the open state championships and, at the masters national championships in Canberra in 2013, he won four silver medals. Spurred on by all this success he went to the Great Barrier Reef Masters Games and came away with another six golds along with world rankings in the discus and throws pentathlon. He sees this as a great personal achievement considering he has three compressed vertebrae in his upper neck. But as someone said to him recently *"Masters is 15% talent, 15% training and 70% injury management"*.

October and November were busy months for Todd with the Australian Masters Games in Victoria followed immediately by the WMA Championships in Brazil. His world rankings and performances had indicated *"a chance"* of a medal in Brazil so he went with fingers crossed and thinking *"It would be fantastic"* to win a medal of any colour. And he ended up with one of each; bronze in the shot, silver in the discus and gold in the throws pentathlon, in

torrential rain and in considerable pain – *"Amazing"*.

Now Todd is looking forward to the Oceania Championships in Bendigo in January and the AMA Championships in Hobart in March when his great rival, Stuart Gyngell, will have moved into the next age group. Then the state championships, probably followed, he says, by physical rehab for six months. Todd himself moves into the M50 age group just three weeks before the world championships in Perth in 2016 so that is a major target for him. He says *"I'll then get a little discus and shot put to play with. It's the only sport whereby you actually look forward to getting older!!!"*

He also loves *"the competitiveness of people even as we all get older. I love throwing against my younger colleagues in MAWA and training with them. Great camaraderie exists and whilst we love to beat each other, given we exist in separate age groups, we really support and get behind each other at training and in competition"*.

Todd is most appreciative of the support and help he has enjoyed since his return to athletics. He cites Tom Gravestock, his mentor, Lindsay Glass who has tried *"to coach him"* as a hammer thrower, and also Damien Hanson and Paul Edmiston. And he includes his fellow throwers, who have supported him despite his *"derogatory comments about their age and lower distances - Great Fun"*.

And on the subject of derogatory comments, Todd admits that Marilyn calls him Grump Head – *"the one statement she makes that I cannot refute - mostly!!! However those that know me also know I have a very dry sense of humour too!!!"*

