

Geoff Gee

Digging deep



In focus

With Christine Oldfield

Born in Sydney in 1953, Geoff has been married to Ai Lin since 2005 and is a geologist by profession. His work has taken him to many remote places around the world and he recalls one of the strangest athletics sights he has ever seen: *"It was while working in Namibia. My base town of Swakopmund had a modern synthetic athletics track, complete with a fully regenerated savanna forest growing on the infield! Needless to say I met no local throwers there"*. It's just as well that situation is not common because Geoff is a thrower.

He began athletics as an undergraduate at the University of NSW, mainly as a thrower. But he developed into what he describes as *"a half-decent decathlon competitor"* and had

several top five finishes at the NSW Open Championships in the 1970s. He competed regularly in the Sydney Interclub competition from 1972 to 1979 where his contemporaries included John Everard and Lajos Joni who are also now MAWA members. Geoff received an Athletics Blue from the University in 1977 but had to give up competition in 1980 as a consequence of career demands.

He found out about MAWA accidentally *"whilst internet browsing"* and joined in 2002. The economic recession at that time meant that he had ample spare time to prepare for the upcoming 2003 AMA National Championships, staged in Perth. He won M45 gold in the shot put, with silvers in the discus and weight throw, beating many of

the younger throwers, and came second in the pentathlon. With the return of economic boom times, work increased and Geoff's athletics activity was limited to *"patchy participation"*.

But in the early 2000s he still managed to achieve a bunch of state records. His M45 records in the weight throw and throws pentathlon are still current, as are his M50 and M55 state records, set in 2009 and 2010 in the shot and throws pentathlon. He has competed in three National Championships – he says *"with mixed success"* – and the shot has been his most successful event as far as medals go. But he regrets being *"a perpetual bridesmaid in the weight pentathlon"*.

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Geoff aims for 2016



In focus

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At the moment, close to the top of his age group, he is just biding his time until next season when he hopes for “a *big start as an M60*”. But he is still keeping his arm exercised and in good shape on a Tuesday evening at WAAS, where he also helps out with the officiating of the throwing events.

His long term goal is the World Championships here in Perth in 2016 where he will be targeting top-ten finishes in shot, weight throw and throws pentathlon. A longer term aspiration is an Australian record in the shot put.

Geoff epitomises the attitude of many club members when he says “*Notwithstanding that I am a thrower, I keenly follow all the track results of MAWA Club members, and indeed, Australia-wide masters. Never ceases to amaze me when vets come out of the woodwork after decades of inactivity and set records. I love this sport and plan to be in it for life.*”