

Mr Excitement

Rudy Kocis
rekindles
love of
running

Born in Yugoslavia in 1961, Rudy Kocis came to Australia aged three and grew up mainly in Sydney and Adelaide. Sport was in his genes (though none of his three sons (though none of his three sons has inherited the running bug) and he started running when he was about six. He loved competing and won many races as a junior, usually finishing in the top four in state championships. He joined the Navy at eighteen and although you “can’t sprint too far on a ship” he represented the Navy several times in the Forces games. He also played soccer at a reasonably high amateur level for about forty years until his “knees gave in” and couldn’t cope with all the twisting and turning.

After ten years in the Navy, he worked in Perth for six years before moving to Northam, where he has been for the last seventeen years. He runs a business, Country Copiers, and was Avon Valley Business Person of the Year in 2010.

It was his marriage breakup that kick-started his running again. He needed to refocus and concentrate his energy on something constructive. And maybe it had something to do with his recurring dream about buying colourful sprint spikes! He joined MAWA in 2010 and found that “after such a long absence, the pain of getting back to competitive running, let alone sprinting, was pretty hard going”. But with support from fellow athletes he has grown in confidence and is looking forward to regaining strength and speed commensurate with his age and ability.

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Determination a key

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His first serious challenge was at the Australian Masters Games in Alice Springs in 2010 where he ran away with the golds in the 100m and 200m. Soon afterwards he broke the M45 state 60m record. This year, at the Games in Adelaide, he was more ambitious and entered all the events he had loved as a child. He won three golds (60m, 100m and long jump) and two silvers (200m and high jump).

He plans to compete in the state and national championships this season and is looking (hopefully) towards the Pan Pacific Games next November and possibly the Worlds in Brazil in 2013. Just for fun, he participates in short course triathlons, enjoying the necessary training and dietary discipline. And he also enjoys the challenge of competing

against the younger guys at WAAS on Fridays.

Not one to sit still, Rudy likes to encourage people to be the best they can be. He has been involved in juniors soccer for years and is currently looking at completing Level 1 and 2 athletics coaching to assist the youngsters in Northam. He has also just started a personal fitness trainer course with a view to changing careers - "scary stuff". He hopes this may mean he can eventually move to Perth.

His biggest motivator is improvement – he says "Medals, records and winning are just indicators that all is going well". It has been immensely satisfying for him to have achieved so much in so little time. He finds that training alone in the country makes it difficult, but makes him even more determined to succeed.

