

# Johan enjoys friendly



Johan Hagedoorn is a regular Tuesday night competitor and helper at WAAS. He was born in The Netherlands in 1943 and came from a very lively household comprising five brothers and three sisters. In his early years, he says sport was mainly football (soccer) and this is where he first developed his running skills. Before coming to Australia Johan's studies took him to technical college and he worked in engineering quality control.



## In focus

With Carmel Meyer

Johan emigrated to Perth in 1965. He worked here for about a year and then worked in both Sydney and Brisbane. Wanting to get to know his new country better, Johan then spent three months travelling around the North of Australia and the Red Centre. With the travel bug still biting, Johan next worked in New Zealand for a year and explored the country by hitchhiking for a couple of months. He says he absolutely loved it.

On his return to Perth, Johan worked as a supervisor with an engineering company, later moving to the position of production manager in elevator manufacturing for forty years. He has probably heard the one about the ups and downs of a career in elevator manufacture!

Johan married in 1970 and with his wife had two children, son Brett and daughter Coby. Sadly, his wife passed away in 1985. Johan is now the proud 'Opa' of six grandchildren.

Johan joined the Northern Suburbs Running Group and met good friend Mike Anderson, who told him about Masters Athletics. He started taking part as a visitor at Sunday run events in 1998 and credits Bob Schickert for encouraging him to become a member of MAWA. Johan says he has always enjoyed the friendly competition of Masters. His favourite event was 10km or 12km and his 10km PB is a creditable 36.58mins. Johan also completed the Perth Marathon in 2000 and 2005, coming in just under four hours both times. Johan and Mike have been the Mullaoo Magic Race Directors for an impressive total of 16 years.

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# masters' competition

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Johan found love again and has been with his partner Julie for twenty years. They used to train together and even won the Dick Horsley couple's trophy in 2002.

Unfortunately, the distance events took their toll on Johan's knees and he decided that Race Walking was a better option. He entered the MAWA State Championships in 2018 and says he was duly disqualified for problems with his walk technique. He is grateful for the help provided by the Walking fraternity to sort out these issues and later in 2018 he won the Curtin 5km Walk handicap event. Johan is now a diligent and successful competitor in Race Walking. He took part in the 2019 State Championship 1500m, 3000m and 5000m and happily reports no disqualifications and three gold medals! A recent target was to stay under 21 minutes for 3000m but having achieved that aim he thinks he will have to revise the target down to 20mins 30 seconds. Johan and Mike now have a regular Thursday morning training walk of around 7km and Mike says, 'Johan always wipes the floor with me!'

Johan has learnt the value of mixing up his training and also enjoys bike riding and swimming. With this broad regime, he has managed to avoid injuries but is always mindful of protecting his knees. He is lucky to have a physiotherapist grandson, Aidan, so he will be in good hands if he needs some injury assessment and rehab. Aidan has come along to compete on Tuesday evenings and is keen to return, says Johan -- as soon as he has completed his own rehab. following a basketball ACL injury!

Not surprisingly, Bushwalking is a favourite hobby of Johan's and his resume is impressive – The Camino in Spain, the Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory, Cape to Cape in the Southwest, and the Bibbulmun Track, twice; some sections of the Bibbulmun with Aidan.

Johan is a great example of determination to overcome injury issues, branching out into a different and challenging athletic discipline and setting realistic new goals. Johan's good friend Mike has the last word – 'Johan is the most optimistic person I have ever met. We are both passionate Perth Glory fans and when I am exasperated at a Glory 3-0 loss Johan will always say 'well, it could have been worse...'

