

Sharon's driven by

This month the effervescent Sharon Davis, an undisputed Queen of the 800m, has put pen to paper to tell us about her life in athletics.

I was born in Hammersmith, London and grew up in Ashford, Kent, UK. I have been with my husband since the age of 17 and have two beautiful girls, Jordan 23 and Megan 21 and two crazy boy Dalmatian dogs. We moved to Australia in 2009, straight to Mandurah, have been there ever since and love it (apart from the drive to the tracks in Perth).



In focus

With Carmel Meyer

I trained as a fitness instructor in 1996 and am still doing that for work. I first started athletics at the age of 10 until 25 when I had Jordan. It was very much a club atmosphere in the UK, and we competed for club points, so would be doing just about every track and field event (800m and 400H were always my favourites). Then just as we were shattered at the end of the day, we would have the relays to finish us off. As we all know, relays are so much fun and magically you can find energy even when exhausted. I never achieved any great results, but always had fun. We had the best team and remain lifelong friends.

I joined Masters in 2014 I think it was, at age 40, after doing some fun runs and surf sports that reignited my passion for running, but my heart lies on the track and my body prefers the middle distances. I tracked down MAWA after a chance encounter with the lovely Fiona Brown (WA Athletics official), who attended one of my Body Balance classes in Mandurah wearing a 'Masters Athletics' t-shirt. I approached her after class to find out more. I had a warm welcome from Colin Smith and Carol Bowman and was convinced to go to Nationals in Hobart a few weeks later. I loved the experience and haven't looked back. MAWA has the loveliest members, always supportive and so much fun. I have made some great friends and many MAWA athletes have influenced and inspired my journey and I hope to do the same to others.

I still prefer the 800m, with the 400m as the second choice and do the odd 1500m. I don't run the 400H anymore as I found it aggravates my constantly niggly Achilles. I found a coach relatively close to home in Rockingham, joined his squad and trained for the 2016 Perth World Champs.

I enjoyed this so much and it unlocked something that made me want to train, and train hard, for Malaga. My coach was the one to convince me I had potential and could be competitive.

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Sharon Davis enters the straight in the 800m at the nationals in Melbourne.

her love of athletics



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Next minute I'm running World Championships, lining up with ex-Olympians and actually beating some! I also joined John Dennehy's Saturday morning sessions. Wow! Definitely the best day of the week. So much fun. John's coaching and knowledge of my competitors around the world continues to be invaluable and has assisted my medal success.

Both Malaga and Poland were fantastic experiences, from bonding with teammates, making new friends from around the world, to the electric atmosphere in the stadiums and of course, winning some medals. Two races from Malaga stand out to me. A photo finish for gold in the 800m final, where I was pipped on the line by an ex-Olympian, and an unexpected silver in the 1500m. So surreal. Poland was amazing too. My first time on an indoor track. So good and so different. Another silver medal in the 800m and an Australian record.

My best achievement in Masters's came just before Malaga. I ran a lifetime PB in the 800m, beating the time of my younger self by one second and breaking the State record at the same time. I still can't believe I did that. All just in the nick of time, three weeks before my 45th birthday and a new age group.

With Covid, the plan of running an outdoor and indoor World Championship every year is now out of the window. We can only continue to train and stay fit. I have

feeling a bit lost and not sure where I belonged, then unexpectedly coaching a group of young athletes; and the challenge of living so far away from Perth. My Achilles' are a constant problem and cause inconsistencies in my training, so I must be careful.

I have had a good winter doing base training with the amazing Trevor Scott and have reintroduced Saturday training with John and his squad, slowly improving conditioning for my legs on the track. I am navigating my way forward in my new normal, training hard, but not at the intensity of a few years ago. I'm enjoying not following such a strict program and have loved joining my master's partner in crime, Lisa Limonas during the winter for random sessions from hills to steps to sprints and now Barbara's Thursday night training. Lisa has been through the whole journey with me from training with each other's daughters to running World Championships. Being from different events our training has always been different, so it's been fun just doing something together these past few months.

For this season my plan is to have fun, go with the flow, do whatever training sessions and races come my way and stay injury-free to at least compete this whole season. Who knows what will happen when the World finally reopens?

Sharon Davis
flies the
Aussie flag in
Malaga.

had a rollercoaster two years with injuries, my coach walking away from athletics and the squad subsequently disbanding, therefore