

OCEANIA ASSOCIATION MASTERS ATHLETICS

WMA REGIONAL OCEANIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

TOWNSVILLE, QUEENSLAND 2008

It's a Big Region

The Oceania Association Masters Athletics Championships were held in the Townsville, Australia. Athletes came from as far as the Cook Islands in the east to Perth in the west. From Cook Islands athletes needed an air flight to Auckland of five hours, then a four hour flight to Brisbane, followed by a two hour flight to Townsville. By the time airport transfers is added in, the trip was over fifteen hours. From Perth, athletes flew to Brisbane and then onto Townsville, taking almost ten hours of travel time. Athletes living in the Brisbane, the capital of Queensland needed a two hour air flight to Townsville.

Most of the island affiliates in attendance had to reach Townsville by flying to Auckland, New Zealand before embarking on a four hour air flight to Brisbane followed by a two hour air flight to Townsville. Oceania is a large region and as a consequence travel costs can be very prohibitive.

A Week of Summer in Winter

The Championships were held in delightful weather with very warm days and cooler nights. This was a most pleasant change for athletes from the southern end of Australia and New Zealand as these athletes had been experiencing a very cold winter and Townsville conditions provided a respite in the middle of winter.

Almost five hundred athletes participated with ten affiliates represented of which thirty eight percent were women.

Competition and Holiday

The highlight of an Oceania Championships is that the program is held over six or seven days with one or two of those day non competition. This provides a built in day for the General Assembly and a recovery day for officials and athletes. In reality the program is held in this fashion as a result of the huge travelling distances in attending the Championships as most athletes and accompanying persons combine their holiday time with the Oceania Championships. This does not take away from the quality conduct of the event or the competitiveness of the athletes when competing.

The Townsville Local Organizing Committee, under the guidance of Yvonne Mullins, ran a very professional championship. The program ran to time, officials were efficient and friendly, the results were posted promptly, medal ceremonies conducted immediately after each event, massage and first aid were available as needed and the daily dinner evenings at the track were a great success.

Tahiti 2010

In two years time, the Oceania Regional Championships will be held in Tahiti from 4th to the 10th July 2010. The program will be adjusted, taking into consideration the limited number of days per week of air flights to Tahiti. Athletes attending will be keen to enjoy the tropical island relaxation, sightseeing and activities between competition events.

Tauranga, New Zealand 2012

In four years time, the Oceania Championships will be held on the North Island of New Zealand at Tauranga under the direction of the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Centre. The dates for this Championship will be 5th February to 12th February 2012.