

Westfields Athletics Club

Athlete profile no. 6:

Matthew Outzen

D.O.B. 10/12/87

Coach: Lukas Cannan

Previous 2000-2009 Roger Green (deceased), Peter Lawler/Uwe Hohn 2010

Occupation: Plumber

Club: Joined Westfields A.C. in 2000, awarded life membership 2010

Progression

Year	Javelin
2000 (13 years)	36.80 (600gm)
2002 (15 years)	46.35 (700gm)
2003 (16 years)	61.87 (61.31 700gm)
2004 (16 years)	59.67 (71.23 700gm)
2005 (17 years)	75.35
2006-7 injured	59.27 Comeback throw 07
2009	75.62
2010	79.41
2012	78.16
2013	78.10
2014	78.05
2015	81.80
2016	79.71



Internationals

2004 Commonwealth Youth Bronze medal Javelin 62.55

2005 Pacific Schools Games Gold medal Javelin 75.35 (Pacific Games record)

2009 Australia Cup 3rd place 70.74

2009 IAAF Athletics World Tour 3rd place Javelin 71.80

2010 Australia Cup 3rd place Javelin 71.77

2010 Scottish Open (Pitreavie) 2nd place 79.41

2010 Bedford International Games 1st Place Javelin 74.44 (Torrential Rain 1 round only)

National Championships:

2000 Australian All Schools – (Adelaide) U14 14th place Javelin 31.65
2002 Australian All Schools – (Hobart) U16 9th 44.07
2003 Australian All Schools – (Brisbane) U18 6th place Javelin 60.47, U20 Gold medal Javelin 61.87
2004 Australian Youth – (Canberra) U18 Gold medal Javelin 71.23
2004 Australian Junior – (Sydney) U20 Gold medal Javelin 59.67
2004 Australian All Schools – (Sydney) U18 J Gold medal Javelin 73.89 (record), U20 Gold medal U20 Javelin 63.10
2005 Australian All Schools – (Sydney) U20 Gold medal javelin 69.39 (record)
2009 Australian Open – (Brisbane) Bronze medal 75.62
2009 Australian U23 – (Adelaide) Gold medal 70.43
2010 Australian Open – (Perth) Silver medal 76.81
2012 Australian Open – (Melbourne Olympic Park) 4th Javelin 73.96
2013 Australian Open – (SOPAC) Bronze medal Javelin 76.36
2014 Australian Open – (Albert Park Melbourne) 6th Javelin 73.42
2015 Australian Open – (Brisbane) Gold medal Javelin 80.00

NSW Championships

2003 NSW Youth – ???
2003 NSW CHS – Bronze medal 16's Javelin 60.78
2003 NSW All Schools – Silver medal Javelin 60.68
2004 NSW Youth – U18 Silver medal Javelin 65.00
2004 NSW Junior – U20 Gold medal Javelin 59.49
2004 NSW Open – Open 4th Javelin 58.26
2004 NSW CHS – Gold medal 17+ Javelin 68.67
2004 NSW All Schools – Gold medal Javelin 61.67
2005 NSW CHS – Gold medal 17+ Javelin 75.83 (record)
2005 NSW All Schools – Gold medal Javelin 71.25 (record)
2007 NSW U23- Gold medal Javelin 59.24
2009 NSW Open – Silver medal Javelin (3rd overall) 70.59
2010 Victorian Open – Gold medal Javelin 71.48
2012 NSW Open – Gold medal –75.91
2013 NSW Open – Silver medal Javelin 66.78
2014 NSW Open – Gold medal Javelin 73.80
2015 NSW Open – Gold medal Javelin 77.38
2016 NSW Open – Silver medal Javelin 73.04

RECORD(S):

2004 Australian All Schools Record – U18 73.89
2005 NSW CHS Record – 17+ 75.83
2005 NSW All Schools Record – U20 71.25
2005 Pacific Schools Games Record – U20 75.35

If there ever was an inspirational story about a WAC athlete who came from adversity to achievement, against all odds, then the career thus far of Matthew Outzen is the one. Never in WAC's 20 year history has there been an athlete who has achieved so much despite having everything that could possibly go wrong be put up in front of him; and not once did he ever back down. The story of Matt Outzen is an inspiration to us all.

It was the year of the Sydney 2000 Olympics and Westfields Sports was about to send the strongest school team the World have ever seen to the Australian All Schools in Adelaide. Westfields' team of 44 qualified athletes would come home with the biggest medal haul in Australia's History: 30 individual medals, 8 Australian Titles, 7 Australian records, 9 NSW records and 2 World Junior qualifying performances. It included the first National medal won by a 13 year old Dani Samuels, it was John Thornell's first National level appearance where he took Gold and an Australian U16 record in the long jump, it was Fabrice Lapierre's 'coming of age' with 7 medals, 4 National titles, 3 Australian U18 records and 2 World Junior qualifiers, Paul Stickler won the Hurdles double and 8

athletes would go on to represent Australia at Commonwealth Youth, World Youth, World Juniors, Commonwealth Games, World Championships and Olympics. Needless to say, I was in 'seventh heaven' surrounded by the most talented group of school athletes ever produced. It was Westfields Sports' proudest moment.

Amongst all the excitement was a 13 year old boy who had struggled all year to throw the qualifying standard for the javelin throw; 36.00 metres. Earlier that year he hadn't made it to NSW CHS, he finished 11th at NSW All Schools with 32 metres and then at an Allcomers meet he threw 36.20 and he was ecstatic to have earned a spot on the plane to Adelaide. It was a physically small and slightly overweight Matthew Outzen. He had worked hard with coach Roger Green all year to achieve that qualifier. In Adelaide, team manager and Westfields Deputy Principal Mrs Wilson took a liking to Matty probably because he was an 'underdog' but more likely because she saw 'the fire in his eyes'. She was very perceptive of the athletes' personalities and in particular of Fabrice she said ".... he shows inner strength and self discipline both on and off the track". Fabrice, despite his National titles and many successes, is not petulant, demanding, nor a burden on coaches or team members. Mrs Wilson certainly got it right, and she particularly made comment to me about what she thought of Matty; she believed he was one to watch in future despite the fact he finished 14th with a throw of 31.65m.

For the next two years Matt did not medal at any of the ANSW or Schools Championships, although at the end of the 2001-2 summer season at the age of 15 he finally broke the 50 metre barrier at the NSW Youth Championships. It would all come together for him and coach Roger in 2003 when at the NSW CHS State Championships Matt threw his first 60+ metre performances to take Bronze and Silver at the NSW CHS and NSW All Schools with 60.78 and 60.68 respectively. Then Matt would travel to Brisbane for the 2003 Australian All Schools (historically Westfields' 2nd most successful meeting). Even though Dani Samuels won 6 National medals in shot put, discus and hammer, Matt became the star of the show. He had thrown 60.42 with the 700 gram javelin to finish 6th in the U18 final, but all hell broke loose when he won the National title in the U20's throwing the fully-weighted 800gm implement 61.87 metres. He was only 16 years old and he had finished as the number one junior (U20) school athlete in the country and just 4.63 metres under the 2004 World Junior standard; amazing, considering Matty was still young enough to qualify for the following World Juniors in 2006 as well. Coach Roger received the news of his throws at the Brisbane All Schools via mobile messages (Roger found it difficult to travel having to sleep with a breathing machine due to a sleeping condition where he would otherwise stop breathing) and accordingly he was overjoyed with Matty's performance. He and Matt had 'worked their butts off for 4 years and their efforts were beginning to reap rewards.

Early in the new year, before the 2003-4 season was over, Matt had earned kudos as an Open competitor and received entries into the Canberra and Melbourne Grand Prix's. He finished the season with a win at the Australian U18 titles (the last national Youth Championships before they were revived in 2010) and a massive performance of 71.23 metres as the National Youth Champion. He also picked up the Silver medal at the Australian Junior (U20) Championships.

2004-5 season would become one of Matt's most successful when Matty easily won the NSW CHS and NSW All Schools titles and was subsequently selected in the Australian team for the 2004 Commonwealth Youth Championships. This was his first Australian uniform and coach Roger would make the effort to travel to Bendigo for the event. Also in the team from Westfields were Dani Samuels and Candice Morley, so Westfields coaches Fred, Denis, Roger and myself travelled to Bendigo. We put Roger in a separate room to make him feel comfortable with his breathing apparatus. Matty performed brilliantly finishing with the Bronze medal and an almost P.B. behind Scotland and India. It was an outstanding milestone for Matt; a medal in his first ever Australian team. Matty would then go on to Win the 2004 Australian All Schools in Sydney with a new Australian U18 record of 73.89. It was his birthday on the day of competition and as usual the officials had laid out the red tape marking the existing record. Each of his throws were getting closer and closer to the line and the crowd were very aware and eagerly watched each of his deliveries with loud 'oooooooohhhhhs'. Then on his 6th round throw, the announcer drew the attention of the crowd to the runway where matty released his final effort. It sailed through the air and as it reached its apex and began to descend everyone knew it was going to land beyond the line. The crowd "oooooooohhhhhed" as it descended and when it landed several metres over the Australian record there was a spontaneous roar of applause from the crowd. Matty did a little 'boxing shuffle' and pointed to coach Roger in the stand. It was a magic moment, one of WAC's finest.

Unfortunately Matty would not throw again for the rest of the 2004-05 season with stress fractures in his lower back. He missed the 2005 NSW Junior and Open Championships. However Matty would return with a vengeance and the 2005 school season would become his finest series of competitions setting two State records, a National record and an International record at all four meetings. First came the 2005 NSW CHS Championships where Matty smashed the 17+ record (700gm javelin) with an unbelievable 75.83 metres. This performance earned him the "Outstanding performance by a field athlete" and he also won the SSW and NSW CHS Blues (only the fourth WAC male to win the coveted NSW CHS Blue). He then broke the NSW All Schools record with ease and would travel to Melbourne for the 2005 Pacific Schools Games. This time using the 800 gm javelin, and with Roger there to direct him, Matty threw a massive 75.35 metres smashing the Pacific record, beating the number one athlete in the world from South

Africa (Noel Myers) and becoming the first Australian to post an official 2006 Commonwealth Games qualifier. It elevated him at the time to the number one Open athlete in the country and placed him on the Australian all-time Junior list as number 2.

But Matty would not throw again for almost three seasons with a fracture in his elbow that required extensive operations. He would miss the 2006 World Junior Championships in Beijing even though the selectors left a position open for him and he only had to throw 66 metres to prove his fitness. Matty would also win the Adhemar Ferreira da Silva Scholarship declaring he would be ready to throw by mid year, but unfortunately he wasn't and he didn't travel to Brazil.

There was a temporary comeback in 2007 when Matty picked up a Javelin and managed to throw a disappointing 59.37 to win the Gold medal at the NSW U23 Championships in 2007. For those three years 2006, 2007 and 2008, Matty struggled to maintain his fitness while suffering the effects of the operation and other related injuries. However Roger and he worked their "butts-off" in order to make his comeback.

By 2009 Matty was well on the comeback trail and starting to throw in the 70 metre range again.

He took 3rd place at two International meets (Australia Cup and the IAAF Tour in Melbourne), Silver at the NSW Open and Gold at the Australian U23; all throws just over 70 metres. Then an amazingly courageous performance was to come at the 2009 Australian Open in Brisbane where he threw a personal best of 75.62 metres to win his first Australian Open medal, a Bronze.

Everything was starting to come together for Matty, but unfortunately for Roger it was not. Roger had for a few years been struggling with health issues, but all the experts couldn't pin-point what was wrong. His heart was 'given the okay', but he was becoming increasingly run down. He would be exhausted from walking 50 metres. Numerous days in hospitals at a time and all the tests possible showed up nothing. Finally in 2009 it was discovered that the lower part of his intestinal system which is supposed to absorb iron was not doing so. They fixed the problem and finally Roger was improving. During those difficult times Matty's training was moved to Illawong which was closer for Roger to travel and after Matty's brilliant performance at the Nationals in March of 2009 everything was set for the biggest comeback ever. All reports from training showed that Roger and Matt were ready for an assault on the 2010 Commonwealth Games. Then on the 2nd last day of school term 2, Roger had a heart attack and passed away in his home. Roger had for 15 years been WAC's throws coach. He had coached athletes up to Olympics level, he was a life member of the AT&FCA with the highest coaching accreditation possible in Australia. He left behind his wife Elaine and two sons. The funeral at his Church in Engadine was so overcrowded with friends, family, athletes and coaches there were people who couldn't fit inside and dozens stood at the doors.

For Matty it was a turning point asking himself the question "where do I go from here?". The thought of retirement was a definite possibility. Who could replace Roger? After much consideration, he decided to move to Melbourne and join Jarrod Bannister's squad (Jarrod of course being the no. 1 in Australia for several years). A life changing experience for Matty because he was moving home, moving work and gambling whether the coaching situation would work out for him. Initially everything was going fine and he threw a personal best at the Australian Open/Commonwealth Games selection trials held in Perth to take the Silver medal with 76.81 metres – a 'B' qualifier. Athletics Australia announced a day after the meet they were not taking any 'B' qualifiers and a disappointed Matty would have to train and compete for another 4 months until August in an attempt to make the Australian team for Dehli.

Matty's new coach in Melbourne was the former Javelin World record holder Uwe Hohn (the athlete responsible for the change in specification of the javelin when at the World Cup in Canberra in 1985 one of his throws saw the implement slide across 200m start at the opposite end of the track). He had been employed by our National body to coach Jarrod and subsequently the squad including Matty. Before Roger had passed away Matty was already starting to look fit, strong and trim, but now he was even better as his injury became less of a problem. The squad decided to tour the European circuit and Matty would get his chance to achieve the 80 metre "A" qualifier. Matty suffered a few minor injuries during the early part of the trip and didn't really get to open up until the latter part of the tour. But another major setback was to occur while in Europe. Even though it was kept quiet at the time, there was an alleged issue with the new coach and apparently the National body terminated his contract and the squad was left to fend for themselves. For the second time in a year, Matty was without a coach. Matty decided not to return home and went onto Britain where he started to throw brilliantly culminating in Silver medal at the Scottish Nationals and a new P.B. of 79.41 metres. Not an "A" performance, but so close surely the selectors would put him in the team for Dehli.

Back in Australia now, the final team was announced in the middle of August and despite being number 2 in Australia and ranked top 5 in the Commonwealth Matty's name was not there. Matty and his parents decided to send a "please reconsider" request to the selectors and this too was rejected.

Obviously upset about his omission, Matty was very positive. His Appeal was rejected because of "Selectors Discretion." He and his family could easily have taken further action but they maturely accepted his fate. At the Commonwealth Games in Delhi, Matty was actually ranked number 2 with the injured South African not attending. To drive the point home Matty's best throw (only weeks before)

would have won Silver and even his worst throw during the entire season would still have given him Bronze. Matty simply said ...”don’t worry, I’ll make the next representative team.”

Injuries would continue and Matt did not throw in the 2010/11 season. A slow comeback saw him take his first NSW Open Title in 2012 and he would win another two Open Titles in 2014 and 2015. Then the highlight of his career would happen at the Sydney Track Classic where he won with a magnificent life time best throw of 81.80 metres. It was 20cm short of the World Championships qualifying mark of 82.00 metres. It ranked him in the top 10 in the World. He reaffirmed his dominance by winning the Australian Open title weeks later with another great throw of 80.00m. Training on and attempting to make the National team Matt would not improve before the ‘Worlds’ and was hoping to gain inclusion based on his World Ranking. Unfortunately he dropped a couple of spaces too low by the closing date and missed out.

Interesting facts:

- Matty is the youngest athlete ever (16) to win a National Junior (U20) title.
- He is one of the youngest male throwers ever to throw a qualifying performance for the Commonwealth Games (18)
- Along with Kurt Jenner, he is the only WAC male athlete to have set State, National and International records.
- Only Dani Samuels, Scott Burriss, Joven Clarke, Dale Jenner, Christie Chamberlain, John Thornell, Kyle Alexis and Matthew Outzen have won the NSWCHS Blue award.
- He is the number two All-time junior Javelin thrower in Australia’s history.
- He is the number 9 All-time Australian Open Javelin thrower in Australia’s history
- According to Roger Green, Matty’s 75.35 metre throw at the 2005 Pacific Schools Games could have been bigger. One of the foul attempts was closer to 78 metres. Matt was only 17.
- Matt has never been ranked lower than 4 in the Australian Open rankings:
 - 2005 Australian Open Rankings number 3
 - 2009 Australian Open rankings number 4
 - 2010 Australian Open rankings number 2
 - 2012 Australian Open rankings number 4
 - 2013 Australian Open rankings number 3
 - 2014 Australian Open rankings number 4
 - 2015 Australian Open rankings number 2
 - 2016 Australian Open rankings number 4



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