

125 Greatest Ever Stawell Gift Moments

Countdown from 125 to 1

#	Stawell Gift Moment
125	Current St Kilda President Rod Butters began his career at Stawell with a win in the 1978 Bill Howard. In 1983 he collected wins in the 70m and CUB Invitation Backmarkers.
124	After three third placings, Ross Henderson wins the 1988 Herb Hedemann. The distance star also collected two 1600m victories at Central Park.
123	Stawell's Lindsay Kent collected the Jack Donaldson 200m in 1958, and was fifth in the Gift in 1961. In 1964 he collected the 70m win and was second in the Gift. 11 years later he won the Sportsman's sprint to round off a memorable career.
122	Coleraine's Peter Gunning proved ageless at Stawell running 45 consecutive mile races. He won the Victory Handicap in 1958 and the Federation Mile Handicap in 1959. Such was the importance of Stawell, that he proposed to his girlfriend on the way home from an Easter Carnival.
121	Adelaide's Hal Thomas had a controversial career in the professional ranks. A true character, Thomas finished second in the Gift and 70m at the 1973 Carnival. He collected three Veteran's sprint titles, the first in 1978, the last in 1991 when well into his fifties.
120	Frank 'The Tank' Corsello storms to victory in both the Bill McManus Backmarkers 400m and Jack Donaldson 200m at the 1987 Carnival.
119	After just shading defending champion Joshua Ross by an eyelash in the semi final, Jason Hunte from Barbados went on to defeat Chris Tuohy to win the 2004 Gift in 12.07. He became the first international winner since George McNeill in 1981.
118	Stawell's Darcy Devine had a memorable 1911 Easter weekend, winning the Gift in 11.4 off 13 yards to collect £80. He also won the Encourage Stakes.
117	In front of Governor Sir Thomas Gibson Carmichael, distance runner J.Russell won the Federation Mile and Grampians Two Mile double at the 1910 Carnival. He won the two miles by 100 yards and repeated the dose to claim victory again the following year.
116	At the same 1947 carnival as the famous Gift dead heat and run-off between Martin and Gardiner, J.F.Waters won the Federation Mile. The following year he collected a distance double - winning the Stawell 880 yards Handicap and a second successive Federation Mile.
115	Running into a strong headwind in the 8th Stawell Gift final, W.Mummery won the 1885 event in 12.3 from 10 yards in front of a crowd of 4500. He also won the Ladies Purse Handicap over 220 yards.
114	South Australian Shane Thiele had a memorable 1999 Carnival, winning a distance double in the Grampians 3200m and Stawell 1600m Backmarkers.
113	Three-time Australian steeplechase champion Gary Zeuner produced an impressive effort to win the Mile and Two Mile double in 1988.
112	At the 1950 Easter Carnival, Sir Dallas Brooks became the first Governor to present the winners sash at Stawell for 40 years. American speedster H. Norwood "Barney" Ewell, the 1948 Olympic 100m and 200m silver medallist, competed but it was Ken Trewick who sprinted to victory. Ernie Muldoon came out of retirement at the age of 70 to coach Queensland's Ken Trewick to victory to win the £500 first prize.
111	Port Augusta's A.J. Reid collected £500 in defeating Brunswick's J.T Smith by inches in 12.2 off 8½ yards in the 1940 Gift. It is reported that P.Clark won the quoits match.
110	Stawell-born Noel Beachley had made three previous visits to Stawell but had failed to win a heat. In 1962 he trained for 12 months under coach Jack McLean and won his heat, the semi and the final in the same time, 12.1 off 8¼ yards. He collected the first prize of £500.

109	Ivanhoe's Noel McMahon won the 98th Stawell Gift in 1979, along with the first prize of \$6000, a methuselah of champagne from Seppelt and an automatic washing machine. McMahon, who was told he was too slow for football, beat the favourite Scotland's George McNeill in the final, running 12.0 off 8¼m.
108	Castlemaine's R.C.McCann won the 1936 Gift in the last stride, running 12.4 off 6½ yards. Essendon's R.H. Spargo was third, a performance he repeated in the 1940 Gift final.
107	After finishing 5th in 1990 and 6th in 1992, South Australian Steve Hutton, the son of Curiosity Show founder and star Deane, won the 1996 Gift in 12.26 off 6m.
106	After appearances in the Arthur Postle 70m final in 1979 and the McManus 400m Backmarkers in 1980, Bentleigh's Dallas O'Brien won the 1983 Gift in 12.22 off 6m. 1982 winner Chris Perry again made the final, finishing 4th.
105	Celebrating the formation of the Victorian Athletic League in Stawell, W.Joy won the 1895 Gift in 12.3 off 5 yards
104	After breaking in the Gift final in 1996 and some controversy surrounding his Handicap when he was given an additional .5m after appealing his original mark, Edithvale's Dale Seers won the 1998 Gift by two metres in 12.04 off 7¾ m defeating Greg Saddler (1.25m) in the first of his four Stawell Gift final appearances. Extroverted American Jon Dummond was run out in the semi finals. Seers's father, Kevin, won five races at Stawell in the 1960s over distances ranging from 800 metres to 3200 metres.
103	New South Wales distance runner D.J.Howe won £135 and two handsome sashes in producing a winning distance double at the 1951 Carnival. Howe won the half-mile Stawell Handicap & 600 yards Wimmera Handicap.
102	W.Kimber from New Zealand won the half mile Stawell Handicap at the 1927 Carnival and was second in the one mile Federation Handicap. He was later found to be a criminal and was subsequently banned for life.
101	The Stawell Athletic Club moved to Central Park from the Botanical Reserve for the 1898 Easter Gift meeting. The Botanical Reserve was said to be a gravelly patch on the outskirts of town, which hosted the first 20 editions of the Gift.
100	Casterton's Ray Holmes crossed the line first in the 880 yards Stawell Handicap in 1965 by 8 yards but failed to breast the tape, falling underneath the tape at the line. The officials determined that he hadn't broken the tape despite the fact that two thirds of his body was across the line. Officials placed him second behind Stawell's R.T. Laffy. The following year, Holmes finished second in the 600 yards Wimmera Handicap.
99	Eddy Govan made the two mile Grampians Handicap his own in the early 1900's. He won the race in 1903 and 1904, finished second in 1906/07/08 and 1917, third in 1910/1915 and 1916 and fourth in 1913. He won the prize as best dressed pedestrian five times between 1906-1914.
98	Bendigo's Bob Bergmeier won the Grampians Handicap twice, in 1957 and 1958. He also had five second placings and two third placings at Stawell over 19 years. Bergmeier returned in 1959 in an attempt to win a third consecutive two mile. In a classic Stawell distance encounter, Bergmeier hit the lead, but Brian Short refused to concede, gaining the upper hand in the straight to deny Bergmeier a three-peat.
97	Tasmanian Gerald Davey won the Grampians Two Mile Stakes & Herb Hedemann Backmarkers mile double in 1971 defeating Kevin Seers in both events.
96	In what is believed to be the only occasion in the event's history, coach Jim Bradley trained the Gift quinella in 1991. Steve Brimacombe produced one of the most impressive wins in Gift history, with training partner and 1985 Gift winner Paul Young finishing in second.
95	After finishing 3rd in the 1962 Gift, Port Melbourne's Bill Sutton won the Jack Donaldson 200m off 5 yards and the Invitation backmarkers 120 yards in a slick 11.4 of just off ¾ yards in 1963.

94	After place finishes in both events in 1972, Preston's Bruce Walker returned in 1974 to win the Bill McManus 400m middle markers and Wimmera 550m Handicap. He repeated the Wimmera Handicap win at the Centenary Year Carnival in 1977. Years later he was murdered and his body found wrapped in barbed wire and thrown into the sea.
93	Eaglehawk's Joe Midson is reputedly the smallest ever Gift winner. At 5'2"/1.58m and wearing size two shoes Midson ran 11.9 off 11 yards. There was a stampede onto the ground after the race when local Stawell runner J. Newton was left out of the placings despite the views of the crowd that he had finished second.
92	The Easter Carnival in 1969 was significant as it was the first year in which running took place on Easter Sunday. In the Gift, Braybrook's Barry McLeod won the \$1700 first prize in 12.0 off 7¾ yards.
91	South Australian Maurie Bishop started as even money favourite to win the 1935 Gift and after finishing 5th in the 1931 final, his experience prevailed, finishing with "dramatic suddenness" to win the Gift in 12.0 off 7½ yards.
90	In the last race offering pounds for the winner, Brighton's B.Cox collected the £850 first prize in 12.0 off 7½ yards.
89	Essendon's Andrew McManus produced an impressive display to capture the 1992 Gift in 12.03 off 7m. 4th place getter Tim Mason, who was the odds-on favourite to win the 1990 Gift, again experienced the disappointment of Gift final defeat.
88	With his band of Sydney-based supporters known as the "Waahlynskis" in his corner, Sydney University Athletic Club President Andrew Pym easily won the 2001 Gift in 11.97 off 7¾m. Despite suggestions that his Sydney mates won a fortune from bookmakers, it can now be revealed that none believed Pym's proclamations of impending victory prior to the heats, refusing to support him with any of their money.
87	Coached by 1976 Gift runner-up Neil King, Glenn 'Vern' Chapman beat Rob Ballard in the 1986 Gift Final in 12.01 off 7m. Chapman and Ballard were both from Albury, lived within 2km of each other and both ran off 7m, with Chapman winning the match race by 1/2 metre.
86	Polynesian Powerhouse Rod Lewis from Ringwood caused a massive upset to win the 1994 Gift, giving veteran coach Brian Morgan his first Stawell Gift. Long odds on favourite Michael Bourke was considered a certainty and Lewis gave Bourke a start, but had Bourke beaten at 60m. A shattered Bourke finished last as Lewis sped to victory in 12.05 off 7½ m. Steve Brimacombe's second place makes its own appearance in this list.
85	Running off 7¼ m and coached by the legendary Jim Spain, Ripponlea's Peter Durham won the 1974 Gift in a slick 12.0. R.A Spargo made the first of two Stawell finals, finishing 5th on both occasions.
84	The 1949 Easter carnival was memorable as runners competed under lights at Central Park on Saturday night for the first time. The Draper Electric Finish Machine was used for the first time to determine the winner. Broken Hill's John Cann won the Gift in 11.9 off 8¼ yards, but it was J.D. Stoney's effort from 2 yards that captured attention. Stoney finished 3rd, running 9 yards inside even time.
83	Running off 8 yards, Brighton's Gerald Hutchinson collected £650 and the medal presented by W.H. Earle of Stawell, along with the "handsome sash" with his win in the 1951 Gift in 11.8. In a blanket finish, less than 24 inches separated the five finalists.
82	A record £250 was on offer to the winner of the 1928 Stawell Gift. In the 51st running of the Gift, Jeparit's Lynch Cooper won by inches in 11.9 off 8 yards.
81	Ascot Vale's Mal Durant won the 77th Stawell Gift taking home £750 with his victory in 1958 in 11.8 off 8¼ yards.
80	After finishing second in the Sprint Handicap in 1952, Chelsea's R.J.Hart won 1953 Gift in 12.0 off 5¾ yards.
79	South Melbourne's W.B. Clarke collected £70 with his 6 inch win in the 9th edition of the Gift in 1886. Running off 7 yards, Clarke ran 11.8 and started as even money favourite, the first time that betting prices were quoted in the press.

78	Yaapeet's Rod Mathews made the 1990 and 1991 Gift finals, finishing 5th in both. In 1999, with supporters gathered at the community centre in his hometown to watch the final, the Len Templar trained Matthews beat Ross Smith to the line to win the 118th Gift in 11.91 off 9.5m.
77	Queensland's Stuart Uhlmann produced a stunning run to easily win the 2002 Gift. Veteran American Greg Saddler ran an impressive 12.04 off 2.25m to capture his second runners-up placing. Todd Ireland competed in his third final.
76	After winning the Bill Howard 100m in 1992, Jason Richardson charged to an easy win in the 1993 Gift in a very fast 11.94 off 7.5m. Richardson returned the following year to win the Invitation backmarkers.
75	After collecting two Jack Donaldson 200m wins (1985 and 1991), along with a Sportsman's Sprint title in 1996, Greg O'Keefe won the Bill McManus 400m in 2005, 20 years after his first win at Stawell.
74	George Nelson, himself a winner at Central Park over 220 and 880 yards, became the first aboriginal to train a Gift winner when Noel Hussey won the 83rd edition of the Gift in 1964, running 12.1 off 8 1/2yards.
73	If open athletics was available in 1978, then surely NSW's Steve Proudlock would have achieved Australian representation. In 1978 Proudlock was 25-1 before the semi finals, and after an impressive semi victory he started second favourite for the final and beat Lloyd Stringer by a clear metre to win in 11.9 off 8m. Proudlock went on to be a mainstay in the CUB Invitation sprint and finished 4th in the 1981 Gift final despite breaking in the final.
72	Trained by Monty Hurst, Ian Miller arrived at Central Park for the heats of the 1968 Gift to discover he was the favourite, his stable missing the opportunity to support their runner as word had leaked that he was in the form of his life. He retained favouritism through the weekend to win in 11.6 off 9¾ yards.
71	Dimboola postman Bill McCann produced the fastest heat time in 1960. In the final McCann hit the front at the 60 yard mark to record a victory in 11.8 off 6¾ yards. After the win he would only agree to an interview with the Sporting Globe if they drove him to the pub for a beer.
70	Despite many close misses, Stawell's only hometown winner remains 1923 Gift champion Jack Curran. After the death of his father, Curran had to run the family's sheep farm but was convinced to try his hand at foot running. After winning the 1992 Maryborough Gift he paid off the family home and presented the title to his mother. Curran gave up droving sheep and trained full-time for the 1923 Gift. He captured the coveted Stawell Gift in 12.0 off 9 yards with the town band breaking into "See the Conquering Hero Comes". He later trained the 1925 Gift winner and world champion Tim Banner.
69	In 1900 West Australian Dave Strickland survived a protest regarding inconsistent performances following his heat to win the Gift in 12 seconds flat off 10 yards. Strickland played one game for St.Kilda and his daughter Shirley Strickland-Delahunty won seven Olympic medals, including three golds in a career that spanned three Olympic Games.
68	After finishing as runner-up to Dallas O'Brien in 1983, NSW's Paul Singleton returned in 1984 in even better form. Singleton won the Gift in 11.95 off 5m and also won the 70m sprint. He made the Gift final again in 1995, finishing third.
67	After winning the Wimmera 600 yards in 1966, Pat Bowd returned in 1968 to record a winning double, taking the Bill McManus Backmarkers 400m and the Wimmera 600 yards Handicap. After a string of placings, Bowd collected his final podium finish at the 1979 Carnival finishing third in the Penetrene 800m.
66	Tasmanian Pat McMahan collected a winning 400m/800m double at the Easter Carnival in 1975 winning the McManus Middlemarkers and Penetrene Handicaps. In 1978 McMahan repeated his McManus victory and was runner-up in the Wimmera and Penetrene Handicaps.

65	Templestowe's Tony Hirst was runner-up in the Herb Hedemann in 1973, and returned in 1974 to win the Federation 1600m and Herb Hedemann Invitation 1500m. Hirst finished 4th in the following two Hedemann's.
64	Three consecutive wins at Stawell has been achieved by only a handful of athletes in 125 years. Graeme Cope joined the exclusive club in 1991 when he produced another superb effort to win the Bill McManus 400m to go with his victories in 1989 and 1990.
63	Three Essendon footballers have won the Gift, the last was in 1952 when Albury's Lance Mann defeated fellow Essendon player Norm McDonald. Mann won in 11.9 off 7¼ yards. D.J.Gardner, who lost the re-run after a dead heat in the 1947 Gift, finished 5th - 15 years after his first Gift final appearance, a feat he repeated in his third finals appearance in 1954.
62	Four months after breaking the Australian Under 16 800m record, 15-year old Mark Holcombe won the Sportsworld 800m Handicap at Central Park, unleashing a withering finishing effort that commenced at the Hall of Fame. The Youngest ever winner at Stawell his victory produced a standing ovation.
61	After an already decorated career at Central Park, including victories in the 3200m frontmarkers in 1987 and 2001, Roger Simondson won the 1600m & Veterans 1500m at the 2004 Easter Carnival. Brother Gary also recorded four victories at Stawell from 1988 to 2001.
60	Sydney's Bill McManus dominated the 440 yard events, winning in 1899 and 1900 and finishing second from a tight handicap of just 6 yards in 1901 and 1902. He also started favourite for the 1899 Gift final, finishing third. He moved to Stawell and won the 880 yards and was 6th in Gift in 1908. In 1957 the 440 yards event at Stawell was renamed the Bill McManus Handicap in recognition of his contribution to the Easter Carnival.
59	Balliang's A.G.Cashmore became the first Stawell born winner with victory in 1920. Second place getter Jack Lindsay from New Zealand ran under the assumed name of A. (Jack) Peterson. The attempt was both brazen and foolish as Lindsay was a former New Zealand amateur champion and just months earlier had finished second in the Australian 100 yard championships. He was banned for life.
58	After breaking down when looking the winner in his semi final the previous year, NSW's runner Scott Antonich returned in 1988 for the 107th Stawell Gift. He had no such issues with his notoriously suspect hamstrings, winning the Gift in 12.28 off 6m.
57	The 116th running of the Stawell Gift in 1997 added yet another chapter to the history of Australia's most famous footrace when Daniel Millard, the great grandson of the Gift's first winner W.J Millard, stormed to victory in 11.98 seconds from 10.75m. Daniel Millard continued his winning form at Stawell, taking the Bill McManus 400m in 2004.
56	John Toleman had two victories at Stawell, remarkably they were 17 years apart. He won the 1967 Federation Mile and the 1984 1600m Handicap. He also produced four second placings and one third at Stawell in 1mile/1600m events. He was a successful coach for many years and as the main promoter of the Gift Toleman introduced the World Sprint Championships to Stawell and was responsible for the arrival of the top American athletes in the 1970's, 80's and 90's including Ravelo and Warren Edmonson.
55	Dimboola's Bobbie Kinnear was the first aboriginal winner of the Gift. Kinnear started as favourite for the sixth Stawell Gift final in 1883 and crossed the line with his hands in the air having won in 12.5 off 14 yards.
54	When Brendan Liddicoat crossed the line to win the 500 Handicap in 2001 it culminated 53 years work from coach Sandy Hurst. Hurst won the 75 yards sprint Handicap in 1940 and his first winner as a coach was Reg O'Toole in the 1948 75 yards. Sandy Hurst trained a winner at every open distance at Stawell in a 53 year career with his crowning achievement the win of Andrew McManus in the 1992 Gift final.
53	The 1984 Stawell Gift final added another chapter to the success of the O'Donnell family at Stawell, John O'Donnell won the 1955 Gift in 12.0 off 8¾ yards and also collected victory in the 100 yards Park Handicap at the same meeting. Brother Peter won the Bill McManus Handicap in 1961 and brother Francis won the Bill McManus Handicap in 1969 and was 3rd in the 1970 Gift Final.

52	Nunawading's Colin Savage won the 80th Stawell Gift in 12.2 off 6¼ yards and also claimed victory in the Arthur Postle 75 yards to land the sprint double.
51	Ballarat's Peter Donovan, who is now a long serving member of the Stawell Athletic Club Committee and former Club President, set a world record for 600 yards of 1m11.0s when he finished 3rd off 20 yards in the 1962 Wimmera Handicap.
50	The Stawell Athletic Club was served by two outstanding individual contributors who worked tirelessly for the success of the Gift for more than century. Harry Henderson first became a member of the Committee in 1897, served as President on three occasions and was appointed Secretary from 1922 until he died at his desk in 1946. A.E.'Hank' Neil became Stawell Athletic Club secretary immediately following Henderson's death. Hank held that position until his death in 1988.
49	Essendon's Paul Young joined a select group of runners to win the Gift and the 70m sprint at the same carnival when he captured both titles at Easter in 1985. Young provided his 85 year old coach Ferg Speakman with his fifth Gift winner.
48	VFL umpire Peter Sheales liked the uneven years at Stawell, winning the Backmarkers miles in 1957 before winning the Herb Hedemann Handicap in 1959 and 1961, the 1961 win coming from scratch in a time of 4:06.2
47	Wagga Wagga's Simon McIntyre was a surprise winner of the 1989 Gift, however an investigation into his entry performances meant that the all-clear on his victory was not declared until 5.40pm on Easter Monday after most people had left Central Park. He won in 12.14 off 6m.
46	The Easter Carnival has been held every year bar 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945 when it was abandoned due to World War II. Once the Government gave its approval the 1946 Easter Carnival was quickly re-convened. Tragically, Ken Hutton from Tasmania, the 1941 winner, was killed whilst serving with the R.A.A.F and was unable to defend his title in 1946.
45	A dead heat for first occurred in just the second edition of the Gift, when E.Grose & T.Ray couldn't be separated in 1879. Grose won the run-off after an excellent start and Ray jogged over the line when he felt he had no chance of winning.
44	Following the completion of the 1918 Gift, won by A. Roach from Melbourne, a series of appeals by runner-up W. Dennison led to the threat of a Supreme Court challenge. After months of bickering, the Stawell Athletic Club's own investigation determined to disqualify the first three placegetters. In 1919 A.Fooks (SA) won the Peace Handicap for non-disqualified runners with Fooks taking the £60 first prize withheld from the 1918 event.
43	Neil King was the unbackable favourite to win the 1976 Gift final after running 11.7 in the heats. After a less impressive semi final King was not the same athlete in the final with Alan Pollack causing a massive boil over to win in 12.1 seconds. King later went on to have a hugely successful coaching career producing Gift winners Chris Perry, Dallas O'Brien, Glen Chapman and Russell Elliott.
42	Tom Malone from Ireland was the first international to compete at Stawell, making his debut in 1884. He won over a half mile and 120 yards. He made two Gift finals but it was his effort in 1884 that was most infamous. The Irish champion broke three times and was disqualified.
41	The Victorian Police Gaming squad caused a sensation at the 1981 Gift when they raided the Sloane Street Drill Hall. The police were leading a crackdown on off-track bookmaking, and confiscated the books of a leading bookmaker shutting down betting.
40	Popular Ringwood runner Anne Fearnley created history in 2001 when she collected the open 400m frontmarkers Handicap against the men to become the only woman to win an open event at Stawell. A short time later she finished 3rd from the backmark in the women's 400m final.
39	Nigerian Ambrose Ezenwa is a regular visitor to Stawell and has finished third in the Gift semi finals on three occasions but is yet to make the final. In 2005 he won his 4th consecutive Backmarkers Invitation 120m sprint.

38	John Dinan won the 99th Stawell Gift in 1980 12.3 off 5.5m providing trainer Monty Hurst with his third winner. After nursing a painful tendon injury in the weeks leading up to Easter, Dinan produced a perfect exhibition of running in the heat, semi final and final and went on to compete for Australia at the 1986 Commonwealth Games along with Chris Perry - the first 'professionals' to compete for Australia in open athletics.
37	Chris Perry provided 1976 Gift runner-up Neil King with his first winner as coach. Perry won the 1982 Gift in 12.19 off 7m and then made the final the following year to finish 4th. He joined John Dinan in the 1986 Commonwealth Games after fighting a hard battle to be able to compete against the amateurs.
36	Kevin Seers collected a total of five wins at Stawell beginning with a win in the 880 yard Stawell Handicap in 1964 and finishing with the Commonwealth Bank 3200m in 1978. In 1965 he produced a winning distance double in the Grampians 3200m & Victory Mile.
35	Ted Paulin won the Grampians Handicap in 1968 and his son Dean, himself an Australian 1500m and Mile champion repeated the win in 1989. He also collected the Mile Handicap in 1991. However his finest moment came in 2002 when he won both the 3200m and the Invitation Mile.
34	The versatile Mark Hipworth produced outstanding results at Stawell across a variety of distances. Hipworth won the 3200m and 800m events at the 1981 carnival and nearly won the Bill McManus 400m finishing third in what would have been an unprecedented treble. Three years later Hipworth had transformed himself into a sprinter to finish 4th in the 1984 Gift final. He won back-to-back 3200m events in 1993 and 1994.
33	Darren Lynch compiled an impressive record at Stawell, collecting five wins over six years including the 1997 Herb Hedemann, the 1993 VicHealth Mile and 1998 3200m Backmarkers. In 1992 he won the Victory 1600m and Stawell Handicaps.
32	Albury's Robert Ballard represented Australia at the 1986 Olympic Games and 1990 Commonwealth Games, but he is best known for his performances at Central Park. 2nd in 1986, 3rd in 1997 and 4th in the 1998 Gift finals, Ballard collected three consecutive Backmarkers sprint wins from 1987 to 1989.
31	W.Smith had a big Easter in 1884, defeating Irish champion Tom Malone to win the Gift in 12.0 off 7½ yards. He also won the Maiden Plate and the Ladies Purse. There was a protest against all his wins but they were all disallowed.
30	W.J (Bill) Millard won the first Stawell Gift at the Botanical Reserve in 1878 collecting the princely sum of £20 in the form of gold sovereigns. Running off 3 yards he recorded 12.8. Millard also won the high jump and eleven years later staged a comeback to make the final of the 1889 Gift, along with the 220, 880 and 120 yard Handicaps. He was married twice and fathered 20 children.
29	Trained by Stawell's first hometown winner Jack Curran, Tim Banner won the Gift in 12.1 off 5 yards in 1925. Following a campaign by the Sporting Globe he was sent to England to run for Australia in the World Sprint Championship the following year.
28	Extroverted American Jon Drummond made his Stawell Gift debut in 1998 where he produced a stunning heat run to win in 12.08 seconds off scratch. He was run out in the semi final. In 2000 he returned and produced a full length hooded lycra bodysuit which made an impact at Central Park.
27	1984 Olympic Games 200m and 400m champion Valerie Brisco-Hooks arrived in Melbourne to run in the 1986 Gift. Amid much media interest she was informed by media conference master of ceremonies Bruce McAvaney that she had no chance of winning due to the Handicap limit. She promptly got on the next plane home without running a step.
26	Katamatite's Glenn Crawford produced a stunning win on a wet track to win the 1995 Gift in 11.79 from 6.5m. The warning siren sounded after the heats and an inquiry launched into his lead-up performances at the Smithton Gift in Tasmania. After a long hearing in the Stawell Club rooms he was cleared to run and subsequently won the 1995 Gift.

25	In 2000 Wodonga teenager Jarrem Pearce became the youngest ever winner of Australia's most famous footrace, winning in 12.01 from 8m in his first appearance at Stawell. Pearce benefitted from the introduction of the repercharge for the fastest losing time in the heats the year before. After losing his heat, a repercharge win followed a semi final win allowed him to upstage his rivals in the final to collect the \$32,000 first prize..
24	The final of the 1947 Gift was a magnificent contest with Arthur Martin and Doug Gardiner dead heating in the final. The dead-heaters both objected to the judges decision and the stewards ordered a re-run at the conclusion of the program. In the run-off Martin won by six inches.
23	Fitzroy footballer Trevor McGregor was set for the 1970 Gift but was shocked to be beaten by Barry Foley in the first of his two victories. Coach Jim Spain, at 72-years of age, collected his first win as trainer after 34 years of trying when McGregor returned in 1971 to win the Gift in 11.7 off 7¼ yards. He also collected the 70m.
22	Collingwood Premiership footballer 'Old' Bill Twomey played five seasons for the Magpies before winning the 1924 Stawell Gift in 12.1 off 8½yds. He was also runner up in 1919. The win was particularly popular as he was the playing-coach of the Stawell Football Club at the time.
21	The Blue Streak', Jack Donaldson made a sensational debut at Stawell in 1906 when he finished second in the Gift despite breaking and being penalised a yard in the final. Donaldson won the 220 yards Stewards' Purse in 20.8 off 18 yards, a race that now carries his name.
20	American Greg Saddler was a regular visitor to Central Park and made his first of four Gift finals in 1998 when he finished second to Dale Seers. The popular American also finished second in 2002 and made a record fourth final when finishing a close third behind Jason Hunte in 2004.
19	Fergie Speakman began his coaching career in 1932 and produced a Stawell Gift winner in his first year when Roy Baker won the 1932 Gift. He coached five winners: Mal Durant in 1958; John Bell in 1963; Barry McLeod in 1969 and Paul Young in 1985 when Ferg was 85 years of age.
18	1992 Olympic champion Linford Christie was the headline act in 1999. After losing to eventual winner Rod Matthews in his heat he then also lost his repercharge. Dissatisfied with the handicapping, Christie, along with his squad that included Darren Campbell and Jamie Baulch, hired vehicles and left Stawell despite the fact that Christie had qualified for the semi finals as a fastest loser from the repercharge.
17	19 year old West Australian Dean Capobianco stormed past short priced favourites Todd Ireland and Tim Mason to win the 1990 Gift from just 2.25m in a time of 12.29. Capobianco was heavily backed at 66/1 on Friday night by amateur athletics officials who had watched the teenager win the silver medal over 200m at the Australian 200m titles just a week earlier.
16	Steve Brimacombe cruised home to win the 110th Stawell Gift in 11.93 from 6.75m. But his best run came in 1994 when he finished second to Gift winner Rod Lewis. Running off scratch he clocked 12.18 seconds.
15	Regarded by many as one of Australia's great distance runners, Herb Hedemann won the Federation Mile and Grampian Stakes Two Miles on the same day in both 1912 and 1913. In 1958 the Club renamed the Invitation Mile in Herb Hedemann's honour.
14	1948 Olympic 100 and 200m silver medallist Norwood "Barney" Ewell ran a world professional record for 220 yards of 20.8 from scratch in a special invitation race held under lights on Saturday night at the 1950 Easter Carnival. Ewell wanted to break his record again, so the committee offered an additional £50 bonus for the world record attempt held before the Gift semi finals. Racing against English champion Albert Grant, who acted as a rabbit and dropped out after 150 yards, Ewell stopped the clock at a splendid 20.75 to set his second world record in two days.

13	An unknown before the Gift, the 'Butch' Roberts trained Barry Foley had prepared for four years to win the Gift. Roberts had been trying to win the Gift for 30 years and guided Foley's first win off 11 yards in 11.8 in 1970. After some time off he returned to training and full fitness to produce his second win in 1972 in 11.8 from 7½ yards to become the second man to win two Stawell Gifts. On both occasions Foley collected \$1700 in prize money.
12	After winning his heat of the 1933 Gift C.G.(Goldie) Heath quickly became the favourite to win the Gift. On Sunday Morning, in front of Central Park, a vicious attempt was made to kick and injure him. Because of his presence of mind, Heath skillfully evaded the onslaught, and was not lacking in the courage to deal out a little justice for himself. His assailant, with a criminal record, received the thrashing he deserved and a holiday in jail. The Stawell Athletic Club provided an armed guard of police at Heath's boarding-house over the weekend, and he was escorted on to the ground by police and detectives and guarded in a special tent on the arena. Heath went on to win the famous race by two yards in the most dramatic meeting for years.
11	Allan 'Dizzy' Lynch played VFL football for Footscray & Richmond and won six races at Stawell including the 1987 Herb Hedemann Handicap and three successive two mile Handicaps the last in 1982. However it was his back-to-back doubles over 1600m and 3200m in 1980 and 1981 that lives in the memory of running devotees at Stawell.
10	Scotsman George McNeill won the 100th Powderhall Gift in 1970 and won the world professional sprint title in 1977. In the 100th running of the Stawell Gift in 1981, his eight visit to Stawell, McNeill finally achieved his lifelong dream of Stawell Gift victory. In a final full of drama, 1978 winner Steve Proudlock broke and was penalised a metre. The favourite was Bryan Mueller, but in his third consecutive final McNeill won his first Gift at 34 years of age. He raced to victory in 11.9 seconds off 4m. After being chaired to the winners podium McNeill celebrated by singing "O Flower of Scotland".
9	John McCracken was one of professional footrunning's great middle distance athletes He had his first Stawell win in the 880 yards Stawell Handicap in 1956 and whilst honeymooning at Stawell, won the 1958 Herb Hedemann. He won three consecutive Hedemann Handicap miles from 1962-1964. However it was the 1964 Hedemann that is most remembered. McCracken and Harry Downes both ran off scratch with McCracken prevailing in a titanic tussle in 4:02.8 in a race the Stawell historians refer to as the 'Mile of the Century'
8	St Kilda's John Stoney produced what is still regarded as one of the best ever runs at Central Park when he finished third in the 1949 Gift. Running from 2 yards he was just 6 inches behind the winner J.E McCann from Broken Hill. Stoney covered the distance in 9 yards and 35 inches inside even time.
7	Ballarat's Len Sprague required heavy bandages on both feet due to fallen arches. In 1939 he won the Gift from 9 1/2 yards, along with the Sprint Handicap over 75 yards. Despite the distractions of World War II the Stawell Athletic Club still managed the conduct the Easter meeting in 1940 and 1941. In 1941 Sprague won the 220 yards Stewards Purse, running off scratch he set a new professional world record of 21.1 seconds.
6	American Sprint star Warren Edmonson represented the USA at the Olympic Games and was national champion in 1972. Edmonson first came to Stawell for the World Sprint Championship in 1974, an event he won on four occasions. In 1977 he made his assault on the Centenary Year Gift. Running from 1¼m he hit the tape in a winning time of 12.0s to become the second American to win the Gift, the previous being E.S. Skinner in 1889. Edmonson's win was the second fastest run at Stawell at the time behind Ravelo's win two years earlier.

5	Cathy Freeman was already one of the world's best 400m runners by the time she lined up in the 1995 women's 400m final. Freeman produced the first of two stunning wins from scratch to claim victory in 53.24 seconds. In miserable conditions in 1996, Freeman survived a number of checks between the Hall of Fame and the finishing straight to clamber over the field to produce a remarkable win that demonstrated her dislike of defeat. Her winning time was 50.48 seconds and she went on to break her own Australian record with a superb 48.63 seconds in winning silver at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games just four months later.
4	Harry Downes became the first professional athlete to break four minutes for the mile running 3:59.7 in Bendigo in 1963. At Stawell it was his seven wins, a second, a third and a fourth that distinguished him as a Stawell legend, including three consecutive Herb Hedemann wins in 1967, 68 and 69 - all from scratch and all just outside 4 minutes for the mile.
3	Wodonga Accountant Bill Howard claimed his first Stawell Gift in 1966. At just 20, Howard claimed his first Gift in 11.9 from 8¾ yards despite a broken bone in his foot. He became the first runner to win back-to-back Stawell Gift's when he returned to Central Park to win the 1967 Gift. Despite injury which severely limited his preparation to just one outing before Easter, he created history to win the Gift in a sparkling 11.6 seconds off 5¾ yards. 30 minutes later he returned to win the Invitation 220 yards off 5 yards in 20.8 seconds. Injuries curtailed his career, however the Stawell Athletic Club honoured his efforts by renaming the Park Handicap the Bill Howard Handicap in 1968.
2	To a thunderous roar, Joshua Ross hit the lead before the 100m mark in the 2005 Gift final, going on to score a convincing win. Ross had previously won the Gift final in 2003 by a massive margin and went on to compete for Australia at the 2004 Athens Olympics after being narrowly beaten in the semi final in 2004. Racing off scratch in 2005, Ross become only the second athlete to win from the mark of honour and became just the third athlete to win the Gift twice. For all Ross's achievements, he is best known for winning Stawell off scratch.
1	1968 Mexico Olympics 100m finalist and three time Olympian Jean-Louis Ravelomanantsoa from Madagascar produced the greatest ever moment at the Stawell Gift winning the 1975 final from scratch. "Ravelo" was brought to Stawell by promoter John Toleman for the World Sprint Championships and the Gift. In cold and wet conditions, the cantankerous Ravelo threatened not to run on the morning of Easter Monday and started at 15/1 before his semi final. After winning in 12 seconds he became the odds-on favourite. He repeated the run in the final to create his place in history becoming the first athlete to win the Gift from scratch.