

Victorian Athletic League – Stewards Report

Meeting: Mortlake Gift

Date: Sunday, 26th October 2025

Venue: Mortlake Recreation Reserve

Weather: Wet with thunderstorms early, causing a delayed start. Conditions improved to a fine afternoon with light to moderate winds.

Track: 395m grass track

Officials

Commentator: Ollie Wurm

Wind Gauge: Automatic

Starters: Rob McIntosh & Graeme Humphrey

Photo Finish: Chloe Blennerhassett & Joe Spenceley

Results: Nila Blennerhassett

Stewards: Chief – Richard Wearmouth; Tim Mason & John Henry

Handicapper: Colin Lane

Official Media: Neil Jameson, Didier Le Miere & Max Blennerhassett

Colour Stewards: Jess Burrows

Ground Setup: Scott Burrows

Performance Classifications

NAP (No Allowance Performance)

Breaks:

- **120m Masters:** *Dom Condello*
- **120m Men:** *Preston Degarma*
- **300m Masters:** *Carl McMeel*

LOT (Loss of Time):

- **300m Masters:** *Corey Williams*
- **400m Women:** *Kelsie Roberts*
- **400m Men:** *Hudson Downs, Matthew Warren*

OTR (Outside Time Range):

- **70m Open:** *Jennifer King, Peter Biggs, Madeline Parris*
- **120m Women:** *Kelsey Roberts, Chloe Kinnersley, Kathrine Wright, Jennifer King*
- **400m Women:** *Chloe Kinnersley*
- **400m Men:** *Matt Stanfield*

False Starts

- Breaking in a heat or semifinal and not progressing = **NAP (No Allowance Performance) at best.**
- Breaking in a final = **automatic NAP at best.**

General Notes

Acknowledgements:

The Stewards congratulate the **Mortlake Recreation Reserve Committee of Management** for their excellent efforts in hosting the meeting.

Special thanks to **Jacob D** for coordinating the track setup and ensuring all handicaps were correctly marked — a mandatory requirement for all VAL events.

Recognition is also extended to **Jacinta Wareham, Noel McConnell**, and their team for their outstanding work and contribution throughout the day.

Operational Observation:

During the circular events, the finishing line area was obstructed by athletes not clearing the track after their races.

All athletes are reminded to move clear of the finish line immediately upon completion, and officials must ensure **no spectators or runners enter the area until the race has concluded.**

Stewarding Comments

Due to the **inclement weather and delayed start**, it was agreed to conduct the **70m Open, Men's Gift, and Women's Gift** events **without semifinals.**

Only **heat winners and the next fastest** progressed to the finals — a necessary adjustment to recover lost time.

Athlete Discussions and Feedback:

- **Marcus Downs** – Spoken to regarding a lack of early speed in the 300m Masters. He explained that, as a distance-trained runner, his pacing strategy results in slower starts. Explanation accepted and noted.
- **Jack Kinnersley** – Reminded of the importance of running *through* the finish line and avoiding easing before completion.
- **Hudson Downs.** – Provided feedback on his performance in the Men's Gift. The stewards emphasised the need for consistent effort and intensity across all future competitions.

Reminders to Athletes and Trainers

Attendance:

Athletes are responsible for being present at the start line on time for all heats and finals.

Performance Declarations:

- All athletes must declare any performance history outside of the VAL prior to competing.
- Personal Bests (PBs) must be reported immediately to the VAL office.
- New athletes must ensure that all performance history is complete and accurate.
- Failure to comply may result in sanctions.

Consistency & Intent:

All competitors are reminded to review the **Stewarding Notes** issued at the start of last season, focusing on *“winning intent”* and maintaining *consistent performances* from week to week.

Access Control:

Only **registered runners and trainers** are permitted on the infield for warming up or competing. Any non-registered persons will be asked to vacate the area immediately.