



## Life Membership Citation for Victor Gamperle

Good evening,

I'm told by some very wise people, who are probably here tonight listening, so I'd better get this right, that to be awarded Life Membership of Athletics Canterbury, you must have contributed considerably to athletics in Canterbury, as either an official/administrator or as a top athlete, most likely having won gold at the Olympics.

The recipient I have the pleasure of announcing tonight is a serious competitor but has not yet won a gold medal at the Olympics, maybe next year in Tokyo, although not many master's athletes win Olympic gold.

Our recipient has been and still is a versatile athlete, running any distance between 1.57 for 800m to 2:34 for the marathon. He was a senior 800m champion at school in the top of the North Island where he fell under the spell of coaches like Don Willoughby. Remembering the rules already mentioned, I'm only going to share one other competitive exploit of our recipient. Many years ago, sadly I was beaten by this athlete in a Canterbury Road Champs, and I have never been allowed to forget it since.

Upon shifting to Dunedin, he joined the Taieri Athletic Club, before competing for the Ariki Athletic Club for several years. In 1989 chasing a new challenge in his work, he and the family shifted to Christchurch, where a long and continuing association with the Christchurch Avon Athletic Club started. Being a Chartered Accountant, he was soon co-opted into looking after the finances of Christchurch Avon, firstly as auditor, and for many years now he has held the position of club treasurer. He has already been awarded Life Membership of Christchurch Avon. His other key role with the club has been as the registration official, where he is well known to Shona Brown for finding the few weak links in her registration system.

Importantly for us, this shift to Christchurch allowed him to transition into a long association with Athletics Canterbury as an official and administrator. His first appointment was probably being asked to help on the Athletics Canterbury finance subcommittee chaired by Craig Brown, which he enjoyed as it meant he got to go to Brown's and taste Shona's baking once a month.

Over ten years ago, he became the treasurer for the Cross Country and Road Committee, and proved to me that accountants, while being very black and white, can also be artists with how they portray finances. Enough said.

By now you will have guessed that I'm introducing our good friend Victor Gamperle.

Victor hasn't been a President or a Chairman, yet, but his contribution to the sport in Canterbury behind the scenes is immense and I feel he still has plenty to give in the future. Victor has had a long career in organising races within Canterbury. His contribution on the Cross Country and Road Committee is considerable. He is a voice of experience at our meetings, always willing to speak up, debate with reason and point out forcefully when something is not right.

Victor's keen willingness to meet early on a Saturday to setup cross country courses is probably missed by most athletes still at home in the warmth. A very capable leader of people, he can easily orchestrate a team of helpers to put on a successful Canterbury Cross Country or Road Champs. His knowledge of what makes a good course operate without issues and how to mark it out properly helps make our events run so smoothly each week. We have been very lucky to have Victor's help at many New Zealand championships over the last 15 years, usually serving as Course Manager. When he's in charge of the course, you know he's got your back.

While he only holds a B grade officials' qualification for Out of Stadia events, he operates like an A grade official most weekends of the winter. Time you knocked off that next exam Vic, quite a few of us will vouch for you if you need a good word.

Victor is also at home inside the stadium, having help as a Technical Assistant, that's code for "muscle with brains", at three New Zealand Track and Field Champs in Christchurch.

Having shown an interest in the bigger financial picture of Athletics Canterbury for a number of years, earlier this year Victor was asked by the Athletics Canterbury Board to take on the responsibility of overseeing the finances of all sections of Athletics Canterbury, a job he has already thrown himself fully into. He has already put a lot of time into talking to and listening to people and asking the hard questions when needed, three qualities that make him an excellent administrator.

Victor has a strong personal ethic to serve others, both in his paid employment and as a volunteer here at Athletics Canterbury. I know this willingness to serve our sport has driven him to nominate himself for the Athletics Canterbury Board tonight.

Thank you Victor for what you have done to date for athletics in Canterbury, I look forward with interest to seeing what you achieve in the future and I ask that you come forward now and accept Life Membership of Athletics Canterbury, congratulations.

John Gamblin  
29<sup>th</sup> July 2020