

Robert de Castella — MBE

Personal Profile

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Robert de Castella is the only Australian runner to have placed in the top 10 marathon finishers at three straight Olympics. He dominated the world marathon scene throughout the 80's and was voted the world's best marathon runner for that decade.



Although he never won an Olympic medal, he finished in the top ten on three of his four attempts. Deek has earned a revered place in the history of Australian sport, running fifth at the LA Games, winning the world Championship in 1983, setting a world's best time and winning two Commonwealth Games gold medals in 1982 and 1986.

An Australian cross-country champion at 22, Rob took up marathon running in 1979 and made his Olympic debut one year later at Moscow at age 23, finishing tenth, behind the reigning champion. Two years later, he claimed his first victory and the world record, at the Fukuoka Marathon in Japan.

In 1982, Rob won gold at the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane and the following January he was voted Australian of the Year and honoured with an MBE. He went on to win two Rotterdam Marathons and the World Athletics Championships in Helsinki and several other major city marathon and races.

Rob went into the 1984 LA Olympics as clear favourite, but managed only fifth place in the tough conditions. Two years later, he retained his Commonwealth Games title in Edinburgh and won the Boston Marathon in record time. In 1988 he travel to Seoul for the Olympics and placed eighth. Four years later at Barcelona, he ran 26th. Rob retired from the sport after the 1993 London Marathon.

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Rob was the Director of the Australian Institute of Sport for five years in the early 1990s and heavily involved in establishing the elite sports system being used today by our Olympic athletes and teams.

After retiring from competitive sport after his fourth Olympics in 1992, Robert worked for 5 years as Director of the Australian Institute of Sport and more recently as Managing Director of his own company specialising in children's health, SmartStart (Australia).

Rob developed and launched SmartStart in 1998, a company targeting children's obesity, overweight and inactivity. Based in Canberra and working through the schools in the ACT, Brisbane and Adelaide, thousands of children are involved in his program.

SmartStart is committed to making the health and fitness of students just as important as their literacy and numeracy and has developed the largest longitudinal database of children's health and fitness statistics in Australia, to enable the production of reports and a range of fun and educational activities and services for students, parents, schools and government.

He is also involved in many other health programs and activities with charities, government and business.

In January, Rob and family, together with some 500 other Canberran's lost their home and all possessions in the horrific bushfires that claimed 4 lives. Rob's strength, positive attitude and leadership helped many people as they struggled with the disaster. He served on the ACT Government's Recovery task force and was instrumental in aiding the affected community recover and regenerate.

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Personal

- Date of Birth: 27 February 1957
- Lives in Canberra
- Married to Theresa, with three children from his previous marriage, Krista, Trent and Lachlan.

Athletic Achievement

Major Achievements

World Champion, Marathon: 1983, Helsinki

Commonwealth Champion, Marathon: 1982 Brisbane (2:09.18), 1986 Edinburgh

World Records, Marathon: 1980 84. 15K Road 1983

Major Marathon wins: Fukuoka 1981, Rotterdam 1983 and 1991, and Boston 1986

Five times under 2:09.00

Nine times under 2:10.00

World Marathoner of the 1980's

Member of 18 National Teams

Australian Olympic Teams: 1980 (10th), 1984 (5th), 1988 (8th), 1992 (26th)

Australian Cross Country Teams: 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988

Australian Marathon Champion: 1979

Australian Cross Country Champion: 1978, 1979, 1980, and 1988

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Academic Profile

Educated at Xavier College, Melbourne

BSc. Graduated from Swinburne College of Technology in 1981 with a Double Major in Biophysics and Instrumental Science.

Publications

"Deek" with Mike Jenkinson, 1984

"Jog with Deek" with Len Johnson, 1984

"de Castella on Running" with Gayelene Clews, 1984

"Smart Sport" co-compiled with Wayde Clews 1997

Numerous magazine and newspaper articles

Regular columnist for "Australian Triathlete" magazine

Weekly column in Canberra Times, "Update 2000"

Professional Positions and Employment

Employed at Prince Henry's Hospital, Melbourne, 1980

Sports Biophysicist at AIS 1981 - 1984

Self employed as Athlete and Sports Consultant since 1981

Director, Australian Institute of Sport, 1990 - February 1995

Consultant, Focus on You, March 1995 - August 1996

Consultant, Healthtrac, April 1996 - July 98

Director, decorp Pty Limited, June 1995 - current

Non Executive Director, RWM Publications Pty Limited, October 1995 – June 2001

Non Executive Director, Leisure Australia Incorporated, 2000 - current

Managing Director, SmartStart (Australia) Sept 1995 - current

“Excellent. A consummate professional and a tireless worker. Deek is a model example to us all.”

— Client

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Business Dealings Current

International Management Group since 1981

Corporate spokesman and TV, Radio and Print commercials:

- Centrum Multi Vitamins

Television commentary with:

- BBC, Boston Ch4, ESPN and Australian networks ABC, Ch7, Ch9, Ch10

Events Commentated:

- Olympics 1996, 2000, Commonwealth Games 1998, 1998, World Athletics Championships 1993, 1995, 1997, City to Surf 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003

Audio and video training and sports tapes and TV programs

Publication editor and writer

Public Speaking, health and fitness, motivation, business strategy and entertainment

Sporting and Community Awards

MBE, awarded 1983

Australian of the Year, 1983

Keys to the City of Melbourne and the City of Canberra

Most popular Australian Sportsman, CAS, 1983, 1984

Australian Sportstar in 1982, 1983 by CAS and ABC

Top athlete of the Australasian Continent, 1983

Inducted into the Australian Sporting Hall of Fame, 1986

Foundation Member of the Australian Gallery of Sport

IAAF Diploma for Contributions to Sport, 1987

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Community Involvement

Founder of Rexona de Castella scholarship, 1984-88

Patron of World Expo, Brisbane, 1988

Television commercials for Red Cross, Anti-Drug Campaign, Olympic Telethon & SIDS

Clinic programs for Mazda and John Hancock in the community and schools

Former member Australian Athletes' Commission

Anti-Smoking advertisements

Camp Quality Program

Life Education Centres Program

Patron, National Heart Foundation (ACT Division)

Patron, City to Surf

Patron, Brisbane Marathon

Patron, Fred Hollows Foundation 500Km Road Relay

Patron, SIDS

Founder, de Castella-Diadora Development Squad (for talented young distance athletes)

Founder, Team Diadora (athlete support program)

National Spokesperson, Active Australia Day

Board Member, Sport Australia Hall of Fame, Chairman of the Selection Committee

Healthpact, (Health Promotion Board ACT), Chairman, 1995 – 2003

Member, PM's Team, supporting young aspiring athletes

Member, ACT Bushfire Taskforce, following the 2002 Canberra Bushfire

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Boards and Appointments

Leisure Australia Foundation, Chairman

Leisure Australia Incorporated, Director

Sport Australia Hall of Fame, Non Executive Director

ACT Olympians Association, Vice President

SmartStart (Australia) Pty Limited, Managing Director

SmartStart for Kids! Limited, Managing Director

RWM Publishing Pty Limited, Director

decorp Pty Limited, Managing Director

Prim Minister's Science & Engineering Working Council, Committee member

Memberships and Interests

Member, Australian Institute of Company Directors

Traditional Okinawan Karate, Scuba Diving, Camping, Hiking, Cross-Country Skiing, Fly Fishing, Motorcycle -Touring and track days.