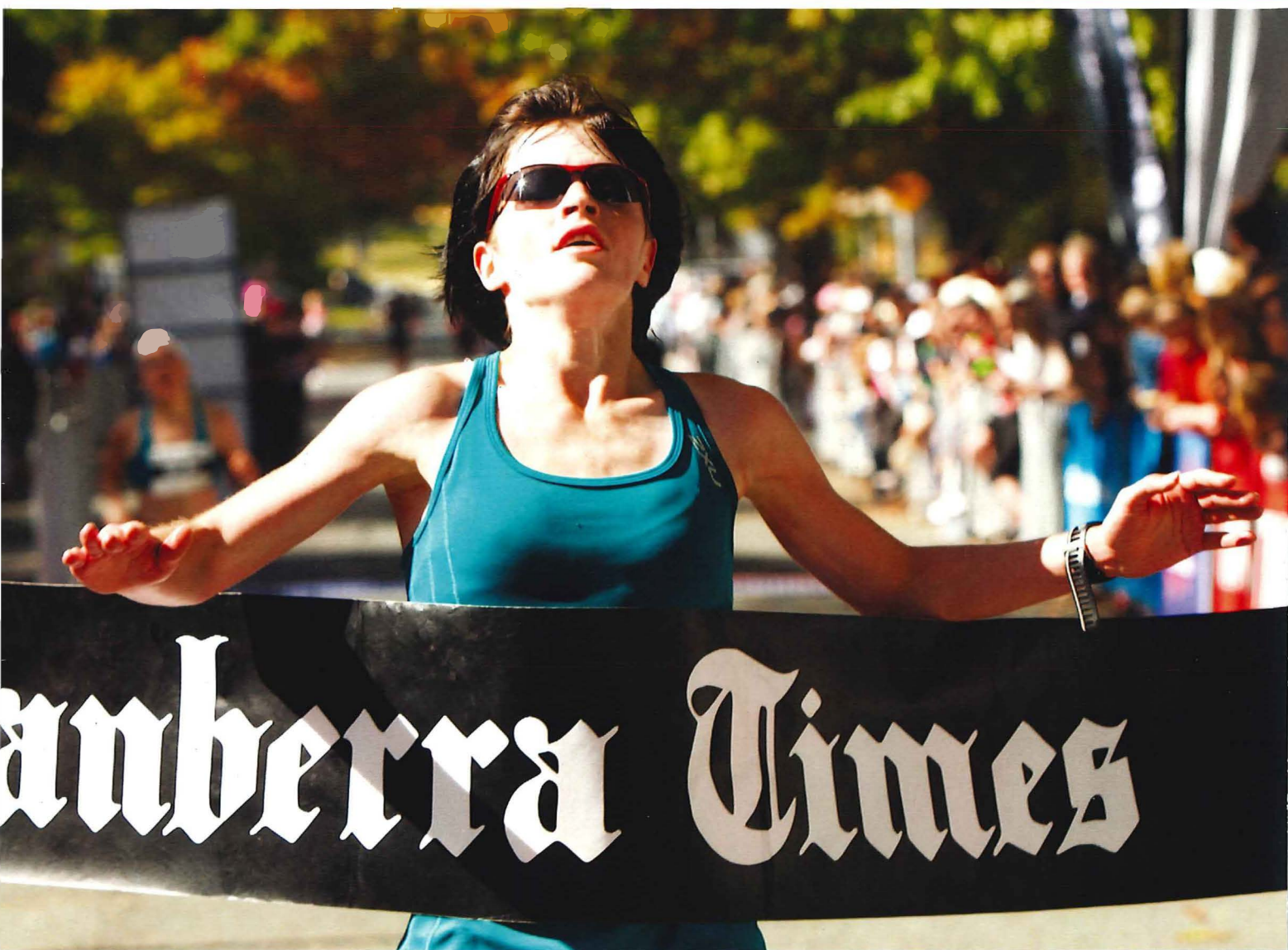


ULTRAMAG

June 2012
Vol 27 No 2



► Interview with Helen Stanger

► Fatigue Management

► Probiotics

► Member Profiles

► Injinji Stromlo 12hr, Narawntapu Trail Race, Coburg 24hr and more



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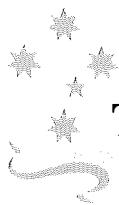
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UltraMag:

The Magazine of the Australian Ultra Runners' Association

June 2012

Contents

Table of Contents	1
Committee Corner	2
Apparel Report	3
State Roundup	3
AURA Contacts	5
AURA Calendar	6

AURA Race Reports & Results

Cradle Mountain Ultra	10
Caboolture Dusk til Dawn	11
Injinji Stromlo 12 Hour Race	14
Maroondah Dam Trail Run	15
Narawntapu "Four Beaches" Ultra	17
Lark Hill 50km/100km Ultra	20
Coburg 6 Hour Race	21
Alpine Challenge (2)	23
Water World	28
Nerang SF	30
Wild Horse Criterium	31
Coburg 24 Hour	33
Canberra 50km	34
Rollercoaster Run	37

Other Articles

Member Profiles	39
Interview with Helen Stanger	43
Probiotics for Peak Performance	46
Endura Advertorial: Have You Discovered the Benefits of Gels?	48
Fatigue Management.....	49
Copper Canyon Run & Ultra Marathon	51
International News	53
Rethinking Aid Station Food Choices	55

Cover Photos:

Front: *Natasha Fraser winning the Female Division Canberra 50K*

Inside Front: *Andrew Heyden & Brendan Davies, Australian Representatives at the 2012 IAU
100K World & European Championships, Italy, April 2012*

Inside Back: *AURA Race Calendar 1987*



Committee Corner

Updates from the AURA Committee

Robert Boyce, President

Happy 25th Birthday AURA

As it is for many of you, AURA has become a big part of my life. It's not only because I'm on the committee, but it's also sharing in the magazine, going to the races, and making friends over the years.

I would sincerely like to thank the founding committee members for their courage and hard work in starting a new association. Also, I would like to thank all the committee members, volunteers, and race directors of the last 25 years, bringing us to the point that we can celebrate this milestone. We have come a long way and I believe the best is yet to come. I hope all of you will be able to enjoy this great association for many more birthdays to come. Our birthday run was a great success and it was great to see so many members take part.

I was very honoured to be at the 100km World Championship in Italy to watch Andrew and Brendan put in two gutsy performances. Brendan's sub 7hr performance was the 4th best by an Australian and truly inspirational. Let's hope next year that we will be able to attract more runners and will be able to send full teams.

Bernadette Benson, Vice President

Luckily for some, I've been recovering from running injury through the summer, so able to ignore a bit of my own training demands. But, be warned, I think I'm coming back out to play again! So that means I won't be able to keep up my eight-armed, two-headed volunteer standards. We're still needing some people to come on board to take on tasks. Thanks so much to Debra Gehring and Carol Cunningham who have been clicking away furiously on their

computers, helping with results and Ultramag. They're getting to know the membership quite quickly this way!

The technical nitty gritty of the AGM is out of the way and we were able to dust off a few other projects. We decided to source our own AURA championship trophies from China, directly. This allows us to save on costs and get more for our money. But it also meant learning all about reviewing products with Chinese companies, dealing with importing and customs, and learning the "language" of shipping. As I write, 200kg of glass trophies have just come to rest on Aussie soil and we should have a 3 year supply.

The recent loss of Prinrun for AURA's Ultramag after all these years certainly created some upheaval. Actually, it felt a lot like that panic feeling when you aren't sure if you've missed a marker and gone off course during the race. Is everything going to turn out okay or has it just gone very, very pear-shaped? And so we embarked on a frenzy of talking to people and obtaining quotes. Again, there was a new language to learn... I never needed to know what GSM our magazine was printed on, what saddle stitching was, or how the Australian Post bulk post rules worked. Amazing what new information I've gotten as an ultrarunner! If you ever see me around the track, I'll be able to tell you inane facts all night long!

Karen Hagan, UltraMag Coordinator

We use many things in life to measure the passing of time; increasingly, the dominant time keeping feature in my life is each new edition of UltraMag. It's almost like preparing for a race. Three weeks of recovery work where things are relatively

quiet and you work quietly logging slow kilometres as you picture the pace soon increasing; then three weeks of base work as I realise that the last month came and went and I didn't feel like I did enough. Then there are three weeks of (trying to be) a speed demon and high intensity; losing sleep and worrying if it is all going to come together! Then it becomes a wrap; it heads off to the printer, and I wonder how we pulled it off, yet again.

This edition is another race-report-packed motivational read for you all. With the added challenges of sourcing a new printing company, the pressure has been on the committee. I would like to thank Sue and Bruce Cook of *PrintRun* for all of their efforts over the past years; above and beyond expectations, as they were more than the printer of our magazine, they were part of AURA and part of the stories that evolved on the pages in between the covers. In their "printing" retirement I truly hope they find more time in their day to do the things that make them happy, and enjoy reading the magazine from a member's perspective. We should all give three cheers for Sue and Bruce.

A special thanks to Carol Cunningham and Debra Gehring for coming on board for this edition (and many more to come, I hope.) It always involves a "jump into the deep end"; hopefully the water was inviting? It seems the more hands we find to help, the larger this magazine becomes; which is a true testament to the growth of our sport and our club, AURA. If you know of past members who have let their membership lapse, give them a quiet nudge and "remind" them back into the fold. With strength in numbers we can continue on, to a further 25 years of history! Happy 25th birthday AURA.

AURA Apparel

Stephen English

Since taking over the role of apparel manager from Brett Saxon, I can appreciate his past efforts. It's not a hard job but it is time consuming, so please be patient with us. Rolf and Bernadette have done a great job getting the new shopping cart up and running. That IT stuff makes my head spin!

Our new apparel sub-committee of April Palmerlee, Susannah Harvey-Jamieson, Martin Fryer, and I, are busy sourcing suppliers of good quality, branded apparel that ultra runners would be proud to wear. And we're chasing up good value deals on accessories that you can buy on our site with member-only discounts.

So whenever you go to the AURA site to see your race results, make sure you check out the apparel and membership links.



AURA State Roundup

June 2012

Queensland, Susannah Harvey-Jamieson

Queensland's winter season is when the ultra scene warms up! The Glasshouse series begins in May, continues in July, and finishes with the 100 miler in September. Remember to register early! Visit the race website for detailed information, which you can access from www.aura.asn.au/FlindersTour.html and www.aura.asn.au/glasshouse100.html.

Further to the north, the Spiny Cray 57km race is in June for those who are near, or can get to, Cairns. For further details the Adventure Sport website is the place to visit from www.aura.asn.au/SpinyCray.html. There are plenty of social opportunities to run with fellow ultra marathoners, along with training runs to familiarise yourself with the Glasshouse courses. Alun Davies often organises these informal events. For additional info contact Susannah.

Congratulations to our very popular member, Keith Sullivan (a.k.a., Skin 'n' Bone), on turning 60 in style. He celebrated in the most amazing way, by staying up all night to do 57km and finish off with a time trial of 3km – in under 15 minutes.

Wow! Many happy returns, Keith!

Please remember to keep your contact information up to date so that we can keep you informed on the latest activities and news. I am happy to take any enquiries; if I don't know the answer, I'll get back to you once I find out! Phone 0409 891 949 or email qldstaterep1@aura.asn.au.

Tasmania, Allan Hood

Cradle Mountain Ultra had a very worthy winner in 50 year old Dave Heatley, a Hobart expatriate now living in Wellington, NZ. He ran brilliantly to win after many top placings in recent years.

Dave Brelsford's Launceston 6 / 12 track races have temporarily gone off the calendar, as he was organising the inaugural Launceston marathon, which has now been postponed until 2013.

Sean Smith took part in New Zealand's Tarawera Trail 100km in March, finishing in just over 13 hours. A good effort and good result from someone relatively new to the ultra scene.

Michael Meredith (not yet an AURA member, at least last time I

spoke to him! Hint, hint!) is taking part in a 100 mile trail race in Japan this month.

Team Whistler took part in an eventful Three Peaks race over Easter, and are going to the UK in June for a third successive attempt at the British Three Peaks race. This year's race was eventful due to the weather extremes - the yacht Haphazard (with AURA member John Claridge aboard) was almost added to the long list of shipwrecked vessels on Flinders. Fortunately no one was injured, and the beached vessel was refloated next day.

Victoria, Nikki Wynd

Well, a big couple of months on the Victorian ultra scene as we leave the very fine weather Victoria produced in March and April for the wet and windy winter months.

We can once again "tip our hat" to the race directors for providing athletes with some wonderful events, and to the athletes for some even better race results in the Coburg 6 Hour Track Race, Alpine Challenge, Coburg 24 Hour Track Race and the Rollercoaster Run.

The highlights from these would



AURA State Roundup

June 2012 (*continued*)

have to include AURA members Matt Cooper (25:19) and Dan Beard (29:10) running 1st and 2nd in the Alpine 100 Miler. It would have to be one if not the most challenging ultra races Australia has to offer. Apart from the terrain, it's the difficulty the weather presents that makes it a very tough event.

The Coburg 24 Hour race produced one of the most competitive races seen in recent history, with AURA member Ewan Horsburgh running a very even and controlled race to finish first with 234km. We also saw the inaugural Rollercoaster Run in the Dandenongs, a new event organised by the Two Bays Trail Run event director Rohan Day. It was well attended considering the Melbourne Oxfam event was on the week prior. Once again it showcased Rohan's passion for putting on a great event. This event will know doubt grow significantly in the future.

Nestled in there, although not an AURA sanctioned event, was the Oxfam Trail Walker on April 20th. It is an amazing event for charity with over 800 teams of 4 runners/walkers testing themselves over 100km

from Glen Waverly to Warburton.

AURA members and regular competitors Rohan Day and Kevin Mannix, along with their teammates Chris Wight and Michael Clarke, as *Team Mutley*, were the first team in Oxfam history to break 10 hours.

Next month we have the Macedon Trail Runs incorporating the AURA National Trail Championship over the 50km distance along with the Victorian Trail Running Championships over 50km, 30km, and 10km.

In the coming months, keep an eye on some of the big races around the world that Victoria AURA members will be competing in, including Comrades Marathon, Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc, Western States 100 Miler, and Badwater Ultramarathon.

Western Australia, David Kennedy

This summer saw the end of the WA 12 Hour (Cannington track race) and the beginning of the Lark Hill 50k / 100k trail race. Around 40 experienced and rookie ultra runners toed the line for a night of

3k, slightly undulating, limestone loops. The trophies were taken home by Chris O'Neill and Jodie Osborne in the 50k, and Tim Eva and Hunna Watson in the 100k.

As usual, many West Aussies have been training for the Comrades Marathon, which is now only 4 weeks away. A lot of these runners took part in the WAMC 40 Miler, which was won by 24 hour stalwart Mick Francis, in just under 5 hours

The popular Kep Ultra, over 75 or 100k, is just around the corner once again, only 2 weeks after the 50k option at the Bunbury Marathon. Personally, I'm giving the local races a miss this year and heading off to New Zealand for a couple of low-key races, and hopefully some serious hill training.

If any of our eastern states colleagues are looking to scratch their 6 Foot itch, consider flying over for the 6 Inch Trail Marathon in December, where we will offer cash prizes for the first time. Just be prepared for warm to hot conditions. Meanwhile, enjoy the cooler weather and hope to catch you at a race soon.



AURA Contacts

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AURA EVENTS CALENDAR

This calendar contains only races sanctioned by AURA. This does not purport to be a complete list of Australian ultras. 2012 sanctioned races will be eligible for the AURA aggregate points competition. AURA reserves the right to modify this calendar at its discretion. Always check the AURA website for late changes to race details at www.aura.asn.au. Some international races, particularly IAU and Commonwealth championship events, are also shown on the web calendar.

June 2012

Sunday 3 June HOKA ONEONE KEP ULTRA (WA)

100km and 75km trail races, Northam to Mundaring.

Contact: Rob Donkersloot 0411 748 479

Email: rdonkers@iinet.net.au

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/Kep.html>

Sunday 3 June MACEDON RANGES (VIC)

30 and 50km trail races. AURA National Trail Championship event for 2012.

Contact: Brett Saxon 0418 557 052

Email: brsaxon@bigpond.net.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/Macedon.html>

Sunday 10 June GOLD COAST 100 SUPERMARATHON (QLD)

100km, 50km, double marathon, and other distances. Australian 100km championship event for 2012.

Contact: Ian Cornelius 0408 527 391

Email: info@goldcoast100.com

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/GoldCoast100.html>

Saturday/Sunday 23-24 June SRI CHINMOY 24 HOUR (NSW)

IAU labelled 6 hr and 24 hr track race in Sydney, 2012. AURA 24hr National Championship venue for 2012.

Contact: Niboddhri Ward 0449 286 553

Email: sydney24h@srichinmoyraces.org

Web: http://www.aura.asn.au/SriChinmoy_6-12-24.html

Sunday 24 June SPINY CRAY ULTRA (QLD)

57km trail race

Contact: Shane White 0438 758 862

Email: shane@adventuresportnq.info

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/spinycray.html>

July 2012

Friday/Sunday 6-8 July THREE MARATHONS IN THREE DAYS (QLD)

3-day stage race totalling 126.6km on trail with relay option

Contact: Lorraine Lawson

Email: trailrunning@roadrunners.org.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/3marathons3days.html>

Saturday/Sunday 14-15 July ADELAIDE 6-12-24 HOUR (SA)

IAU labelled loop race on 2.2k footpath

Contact: Ben Hockings

Email: yumigo@y7mail.com

Web: http://www.aura.asn.au/adelaide_12hr.html

AURA EVENTS CALENDAR

Saturday 14 July THE KOKODA CHALLENGE (QLD)

96km team trail event

Contact: Julie Watson

Email: info@kokodachallenge.com

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/kokoda.html>

Sunday 22 July YOU YANGS 50-50 (VIC)

50km and 50mile trail races

Contact: Brett Saxon

Email: brsaxon@bigpond.net.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/youyangs5050.html>

22 July MT HAIG MARATHON (QLD)

45km trail race (& shorter options)

Contact: Lorraine Lawson

Email: trailrunning@roadrunners.org.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/mthaig.html>

Saturday/Sunday 28-29 July CABOOLTURE 24-48 HOUR (QLD)

IAU labelled 24 & 48 hr races, with shorter options, on a 500mtr loop.

Contact: Geoff Williams

Email: gjcarpet@caboolture.net.au

Web: http://www.aura.asn.au/Caboolture_6-12-24-48.html

Sunday 29 July FLINDERS TOUR (QLD)

50km trail (& shorter option)

Contact: Ian Javes

Email: ijaves@caloundra.net

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/flinderstour.html>

August 2012

Sunday 12 August THE TAN ULTRA (VIC)

50km and 100km loop races

Contact: Brett Saxon

Email: brsaxon@bigpond.net.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/tanultra.html>

Sunday 26 August KURANDA TO PORT DOUGLAS ULTRA (QLD)

64km trail race (& shorter options)

Contact: Lorraine Lawson

Email: trailrunning@roadrunners.org.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/kuranda.html>

September 2012

Sunday 9 September WALHALLA WOUND UP TRAIL RUNS (VIC)

Trail runs from Walhalla's Star Hotel with 50km, 37km, 19km options.

Contact: Bruce Salisbury 03 5174 9869

Email: bruised@bigpond.com

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/Walhalla.html>

AURA EVENTS CALENDAR

Saturday/Sunday 15-16 September GLASSHOUSE 100 (QLD)

100km and 100 mile races with shorter options.

Contact: Ian Javes Tel 07 5495 4334

Email: ijaves@caloundra.net

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/glasshouse100.html>

Saturday 22 September SURF COAST CENTURY (VIC)

100km trail race near Anglesea, with relay option.

Contact: John Jacoby 0408 035 261

Email: john@rapidascent.com.au

Web: <http://www.aura.asn.au/surfcoastcentury.html>

Sunday 23 September YURREBILLA TRAIL (SA)

56km trail run amongst the beautiful Adelaide Hills

Contact: Sonia Conrad 08 8362 0639

Email: office@sarrc.asn.au

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/YurrebillaTrail.html>

Sunday 30 September ALTRA CENTENNIAL PARK ULTRA (NSW)

50 and 100km IAU labelled races on a 3.55km loop.

Contact: April Palmerlee 0414 366 514

Email: apalmerlee@yahoo.com

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/CP100.html>

October 2012

Saturday/Sunday 13-14 October GREAT OCEAN WALK 100 (VIC)

100km along the Great Ocean Walk trail in western Victoria.

Contact: Andy Hewat 0421 040 700

Email: andy@trailrunningcompany.com

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/GOW100.html>

Saturday 20 October HUME AND HOVELL 50/100 (NSW)

50 and 100km courses on the Hume and Hovell tracks outside Tumut, NSW.

Contact: Peter Fitzpatrick 0428 423 633 or Warwick Hull 0427 206 366

Email: peterfitz@dragnet.com.au or warwick.hull@lands.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/HumeHovell.html>

Sunday 21 October WASHPOOL (NSW)

54km course in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks.

Contact: Greg Waite (07) 3225 1093 (work), (07) 3869 1661 (home)

Email: g_waite@optusnet.com.au or info@runtrails.org

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/Washpool.html>

Saturday 27 October WILSONS PROMONTORY (VIC)

100km trail and shorter options. Typically held in April, but date moved for 2012 due to Parks Vic trail works.

Contact: Paul Ashton 0418 136 070

Email: runningwild56@tpg.com.au

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/WilsonsProm.html>

AURA EVENTS CALENDAR

November 2012

Saturday/Sunday 10-11 November THE GREAT NORTH WALK 100s (NSW)
100 miles or 100km. South from Teralba on the shores of Lake Macquarie.

Contact: Dave Byrnes 0428 880 784

Email: dave@davebyrnes.com.au

Web: www.aura.asn.au/GNW100.html

TBC Sunday 18 November MOE 6HR/50KM (VIC)

6hr and 50km track events, previously with IAU labelling. Victorian track championships.

Contact: Greg Semmler 0400 742 806

Email: gregsemmler@hotmail.com

Web: http://aura.asn.au/Moe_6hr.html

Saturday 24 November RAZORBACK RUN (VIC)

73km trail race & shorter options from Mt Hotham in the Victorian Alps.

Contact: Paul Ashton 0418 136 070

Email: runningwild56@tpg.com.au

Web: <http://aura.asn.au/RazorbackRun.html>

If you have a race that you would like included in our race calendar, please contact our Compliance Officer Bernadette Benson (see the AURA contacts listing). Sanctioning requirements are posted on the AURA website www.aura.asn.au



Cradle Mountain Ultra

February 4, 2012 - by Ian Dunican

Arriving in Launceston again for Cradle Mountain 82km I was a little nervous, as everyone gets prior to a race like this. My goal this year was to finish within 11hr 30min.

After jumping into an oversize taxi, I soon realised that my nervousness and issues were menial compared to the driver. The taxi driver, a recent refugee from the Queensland floods in 2011, had relocated to Launceston to start again. A friendly guy who, just like all taxi drivers across the world, was developing an extraordinary body of knowledge. After a couple of laps of Launceston town centre, and a brief visit to Coles to stock up on food for the run, I was back in my room relaxing, eating room service, and watching the Biggest Loser for inspiration. Paul Kofman arrived from Melbourne and we went down to the local bar for some carb-loading (Boags beer) and a session of telling lies, comparing training and talking nonsense; it was good to catch up. Last year Paul and I completed the run together and shared many a story during the last 20km.

Departure from Launceston to Cradle Mountain was at the usual time at 12:00. A number of familiar faces milled around with a few new people. We jumped on the bus and headed off. We stopped at Sheffield and filled our faces with meat pies; my favourite part of the journey. Arrival at Waldheim was around 16:00 and we were assigned to our cabins. Like a bunch of boy scouts we had to share a cabin in the woods. In our cabin was Allan, originally from Scotland and living in Tasmania, Paul from Holland and living in Australia, Andrew and John, both from Tasmania, and Dave from Australia.

After packing and repacking, unpacking, repacking and packing again, we headed for dinner. A nice evening filled with race briefings, more beer drinking and pasta all round. Nervous jokes and laughter filled the air along with a swarm of

midges/mozzies. We returned to our cabin where we packed, unpacked and repacked our race bags. This is quite normal, I think. It's just a way to ease the nerves and pass the time. Once this activity was over, we drank tea, spoke about races, and dreamed of events. Next came the excessive taping of feet, back, shoulders, etc., before retiring to the bunk beds for a few hours of staying awake before the race. No one sleeps the night before; at least not well anyway.

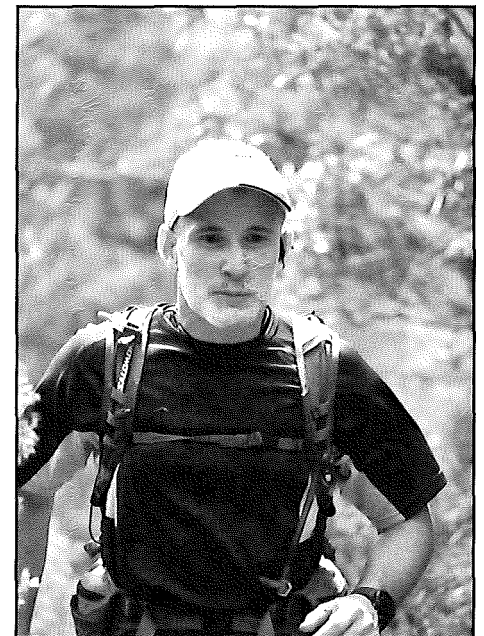
BANG. WALLOP. What the @*%# was that??? The green background light on my phone illuminated my watch at 03:00. WALLOP. A bang on the wooden wall. I headed outside where I found myself staring at the fattest wombat I had ever seen. "Good one, Wally!" I shouted. I returned to bed to stare at the wall for the next hour, then 04:00 up and at 'em. A breakfast of baby food and baby porridge and a mug of tea. Packing and unpacking, repacking of gear recommenced before we headed to the start line at around 05:45.

The run started with cloud and mist in the distance, although it was a lot warmer than last year's race. I felt great and powered along. Taking it nice and steady, I needed to make sure I didn't succumb to an adrenaline dump, which can sometimes happen at the start of a race or event. After crossing the first peak after some 12km I opened up and started to get into a nice rhythm. And then I was on my own and that's the way it remained until the end. Running an ultra completely on your own, when you have no one to pace off or draft from, is quite different. With only a small field of competitors (50) this was highly likely to happen. Along the way I could see people in the distance but my erratic pacing kept me from clinging on.

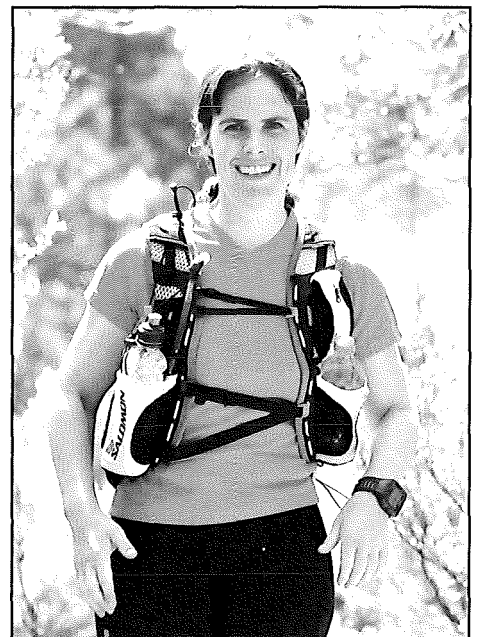
Like last year, there were a number of walkers on the track who were very supportive and encouraging along the way. I was feeling really good until

around the 45km–50km mark when I started to experience a dead sensation in my hip and right thigh. Tagging in at Windy Ridge, I pushed on through a relatively flat section of the course and tried to run the pain off, with no success. The abundance of snakes on this section ensured I kept moving.

Narcissus was the next stop at 60km and I was glad to see the table set up and kindly crewed, with watermelon and Coca Cola on offer. It tasted so good. With that goal



Ian at Cradle Mountain –
photo courtesy Bernard Walker



Katherine Macmillan at Cradle Mountain –
photo courtesy Bernard Walker

of trying to crack 11hr 30 min this year I strapped up my thigh, rubbed some Voltaren in, and pushed on.

The last 20km along the lake is quite slippery and technical. This year, however, it was also full of snakes. After three snake sightings I was starting to imagine snakes jumping out at me. I also started hallucinating slightly; trees became people and I imagined people running parallel to me. At this time I was in some pain and thinking about my 166km

run later in the year at Leadville, Colorado, USA realising “this is only half the distance.” Emerging from the canopy through the bushes and onto the track at Watersmeet, I powered on to the finish line in a time of 11hr 55 min. Not quite achieving my goal, but still 35 minutes faster than last year.

A few beers, a bowl of chips, and lots of soup and bread that evening ensured all the bad parts of the day disintegrated and only the good remained. A post race visit to the

podiatrist revealed that my trainers were worn out and didn’t provide enough support, and the elastic laces in my trainers are really bad as they allowed me to roll over on my ankle three times that day. The lack of stability caused a cuboid issue in my foot, which caused the dead feeling in my hip and thigh. I am glad to report this has been eliminated with a different type of trail shoe and some strapping. On towards the next race!

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		8:45	Heatley	Dave
2	2		9:24	Dose	Wesley
3	3		9:35	Turnbull	Chris
4	4		9:52	Hood	Allan
5	5		9:55	Woolley	Robert
6	6		10:18	Terpening	James
7	7		10:37	Cannell	John
8	8		10:42	Fitchett	Steve
9	9		10:50	Miles	Michael
10	10		11:10	von Bibra	Julian
=10	=10		11:10	Graham	Dave
12	12		11:11	Marcant	Christophe
13	13		11:28	Ranson	Brent
=13	13		11:28	Tatchell	Robert
15		1	11:29	Marshall	Billie
16	14		11:31	Dose	Stephen
17	15		11:34	Parker	Gareth
18	16		11:36	Owens	James
19	17		11:53	Hodder	Jeff
20	18		11:54	Brunning	Robert
21	19		11:55	Duncan	Ian
22	20		12:00	Sutton	Andrew
23		2	12:03	Macmillan	Katherine
24		3	12:29	Eisler	Marita

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
=24	21		12:29	Kofman	Paul
26	22		12:31	Wilson	Matthew
27	23		13:09	Palfreyman	Andrew
28		4	13:18	Glass	Leah
=28	24		13:18	Boeker	Judd
=28	=24		13:18	Timms	Nathan
31	25		13:26	Swan	Greg
=31		5	13:26	Quinlan	Meredith
=31		5	13:26	Atkinson	Sally
=31	26		13:26	Price	Martin
35		6	14:01	Todd	Karen
36	27		14:12	Sutcliffe	Jonathan
37		7	14:13	Cole	Karen
38	28		14:16	Strohfeld	Doug
39	29		14:23	Jones	David
40	30		14:56	Little	David
41	31		14:56	Hoare	Peter
DNF				Rundle	Sue
DNF				Vos	Sylvia
DNF				Monte	Wil
DNF				Ewing	Paul
DNF				Davies	Peter
DNF				McKenna	Peter

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



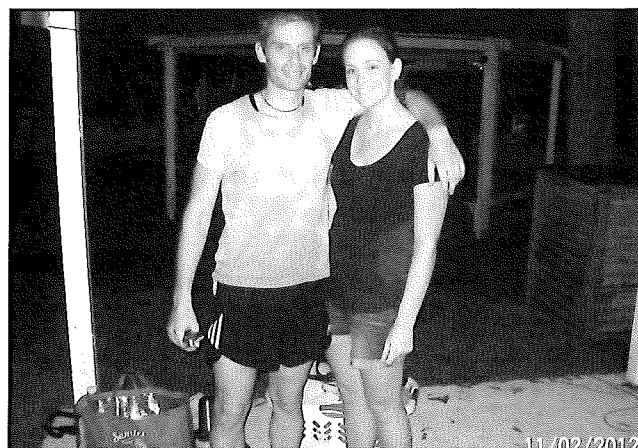
Caboolture Dusk to Dawn 6 Hour

February 11, 2012 - by Mark Vickers

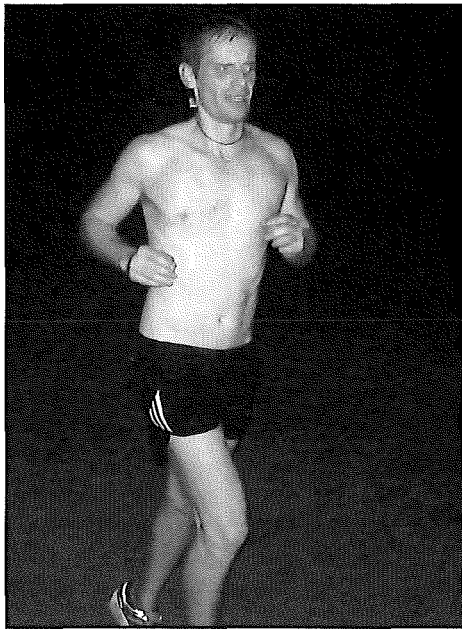
My journey leading up to the Caboolture Dusk to Dawn 6 Hr solo event started roughly 10 years ago, with endurance bike rides at Lake Taupo in New Zealand and the Broadbeach to Point Danger 50km. I followed this 8th place finish in my first 50km with an 84.4km a few months later; finishing in a fairly awful state. Despite my father’s warnings about too much, too soon, (a seasoned ultra runner himself with a best of 6:58:00 in the Comrades Marathon) I persisted

and spent many months recovering from the harsh lesson of pushing too hard, too soon, at an early age. I’ve since treated the ultra distance with great respect.

I dabbled in races for the next decade, racing shorter distances on foot in London and Australia, with a single endurance



Mark and Cassandra – photo courtesy Jim Vickers



*Mark working hard –
photo courtesy Jim Vickers*

cycle in Wales. Upon my return to Brisbane, I took part in the famed Endeavour 500km, getting involved through an ex-training partner, Wes Swindale. Running in Mark Taylor's team I met the Red Man Runner's Club (led by Judy) with whom I would spend many Tuesday evenings pounding the strip along West End.

I learnt of the Caboolture Dusk to Dawn in mid-to-late 2011. A small group of ultra enthusiasts, comprised of Matt Bourke, Brad Willis, Hereward Swire and I, started tackling longer distances through Mt Cootha on the weekends. It was only a matter of time before the training paid off with a 1st and 3rd place for Matt and Brad, respectively, in the Washpool 54km. I was eager to attempt longer distances again and avidly read as much material I could find about the Dusk to Dawn.

Impressively, I was able to download lap times for each competitor in 2011 thanks to the electronic timing. I became fascinated by being able to read where competitors started faltering. Based on these figures, I started adjusting my training terrain and timings accordingly. I suspected that Graham's 72.292 in 2000 was going to be out of reach on my first attempt and so I targeted a time of around 2:40-2:45 per 500m, using my Garmin.

Geoff released the list of entrants

a few days before the race and it looked to be a packed course. Ipswich Grammar School was entering a number of teams, and the number of 6 hour solo participants totalled 20. On top of that, the track was going to include relay runners (2x3 hours and 3x2 hours), plus marathoners, half marathoners and the respected 12 hour runners. I was wary of these figures but without ever seeing the course, I was certain that this had been factored in.

I arrived at the historical village with my support crew (Cass and my father, John) at around 15:30. It was hot and humid. As the night wore on, this humidity played a major factor for some competitors, particularly when the race was hit by the outside fringe of a storm. By the time we arrived tents were already set up and I registered at the officials' tent; greeting a few of the other competitors who, in true pre-ultra-race style, were stretched out in various forms on the ground or in the shade. I refused to walk the course and instead chatted with Cass and my dad as more competitors arrived. Despite my initial embarrassment about the amount of supplies we had brought, I was soon astounded by utes delivering entire barbecues, fold out shelters and tables, as well as tents. Soon the quiet village was thronging with people. I had read that the ground was made up of decomposed granite; the closest thing to it in Brisbane is the outside ring road of the University of Queensland. A tip to future competitors would be to spend some time getting used to it as it can play a part on race day.

Timing chips were handed out about an hour before the start and I noticed that Don Wallace was working as an official. Just to be handed a timing chip from Don was brilliant and I mumbled something before heading off to put on my shoes. John Pearson arrived not long after and I pointed him out to Cass and my dad. I was looking forward to sharing a course with an ultra running legend.

The race started at 6pm and most competitors made sure they crossed

the mat to ensure they were recorded as a start. Some unforeseen issues immediately became apparent; I had assumed that people would set off at a similar pace, but half marathon runners and relay runners took off at a great pace. I was compelled to tag along, for some reason in the rush of it all, and entirely neglected the 'run-my-own-race' mantra. I finally settled into my 2:40-2:45 pace at around 9.5km and attempted to maintain reliable splits without a watch.

Cass and my dad let me know about my splits as soon as anything changed beyond 10 seconds from lap to lap. They also ensured that I was well fed and watered, with Cass sticking with me for a few hundred metres now and again so I could take a hefty swig from my water bottle. Despite my trepidation around the 'turnaround' process, it worked seamlessly; which with that many competitors on the track, was impressive. As the race continued, John Pearson noticed my "Red Man" runners top before it was thrown off due to humidity, and let me know that I was doing okay. As an aside, John's ability to keep people smiling with a few words of encouragement to those who were in pain is amazing. I am in awe of his ability to do this; he had us laughing in the middle of an ultra, which is no easy feat.

I passed James Bamber at one point and surged to the front of the 6 hour race. Despite warnings from my dad, I charged straight into a wall at about the 3:30 mark, where my times started tumbling. I was also starting to grow increasingly agitated by the amount of people I was forced to dodge, skip around, surge past and avoid tripping over as the race wore on and competitors slowed. I was also surprised by the sudden sprints by the relay runners as they passed, hunting down their own objectives for the night. James came back at me and passed me before lapping me. I felt flat and heavy for the first time in the race; then there was an impressive display of lightening on the horizon as the first drops of rain hit the course. I was desperate to plug in my music

and take my mind away from the crunching of shoes on the course but, as a precaution, these were not permitted during the first 6 hours.

I hung in there, literally, as I increased my Endura intake over consecutive laps and my long-awaited turnaround started to happen at just after the 5 hour mark. I passed James with 30 minutes to go and gained another lap back. It was challenging to make sense of what was happening on a crowded course at night, but with cheers and high fives from Cass and my dad, I went on to finish on my 131st lap; just staving off a massive cramp in my right leg.

It was only after I'd sat down, eaten and removed my feet from my shoes that I realised I still had no idea where I'd finished. I limped

my way to the officials' tent and found a flurry of activity; as (from what I understood) all times had been recorded but they were having trouble identifying which races people were taking part in. We decided to wait, during which time I managed to have conversations with various supporters, officials and competitors. I was also sure to clap John Pearson as he charged on. The results were finally announced at 2am, after which time I was desperate for food and sleep. I was given a trophy and applause and whisked home by Cass.

I've read the many comments following the race on *Coolrunning* and sense that there has been mixed opinions on the electronic timing. From my perspective, once the issues

had been sorted, it aligned with my expectations. Organisationally it all appeared to flow smoothly with water and Endura available from an easily accessible table, and race times recorded. I enjoyed the fact that supporters could cheer you along and provide you with what you needed. I also liked the fact that everyone kept their sense of humour about them even though the timing system was a touch overloaded. The loudspeaker cut in and out now and again but, by-and-large, people knew what to do and how to do it. Yes, the course was packed initially, but if you are committed to running your own race this is a tough track on which to test yourself. Many thanks to Geoff for arranging this ongoing event and I hope to see you there in future years.

Caboolture 12 Hour					
Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		126.643	Pearson	John
2	2		121.637	Hack	Martin
3	3		117.236	Gamble	Malcolm
4	4		110.248	Canty	Mike
5	5		108.958	Moloney	Nic
6	6		106.779	Beattie	Andrew
7		1	106.046	Williamson	Kerrie
8	7		103.999	O'Brien	James
9		2	98.307	Hasthorpe	Cindy
10		3	96.916	Symons	Cheryl
11	8		95.232	Woodger	Greg
12	9		95.1	Knowles	Robert
13	10		94.593	Bennett	Peter
14			94	Gibbons	Wayne
15		4	93.26	Jaques	Sara
16	11		92.184	Last	Geoff
17	12		90.626	Sewell	Andrew
18	13		88.31	Bennett	Mark
19	14		86.577	Houldsworth	Steven
20		5	85.482	Smith	Cassie
21		6	83.375	Moloney	Mallani
22	15		76.137	Cornelius	Benjamin
23	16		75.659	Hardy	Bruce
24	17		65.307	Afflick	Jean-Paul
25		7	58.511	Morris	Kerrie
26	18		46.5	Davies	Alun
27		8	31	Tindall	Christine
28		9	28.5	Haslam	Sue
29	19		15	Nathan	Malcolm
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					

Caboolture 6 Hour					
Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		65.689	Vickers	Mark
2	2		65.136	Bamber	James
3	3		63.664	Jewell	Brad
4	4		61.013	Walmsley	Lee
5		1	60.029	Hussey	Lisa
6	5		59.410	Stuart	Maish
7	6		59.034	Hooper	Craig
8	7		58.812	Williams	Lee
9	8		57.381	Ponych	Greg
10	9		56.922	Phipps	Nic
11	10		56.546	Willis	Campbell
12		2	56.108	Watson	Natalie
13	11		55.100	Morrell	Sandon
14	12		53.960	Wright	Stephen
15	13		52.995	Brown	Jamie
16	14		52.816	Xanthopoula	Jan
17	15		49.006	Coding	Mike
18		3	48.251	Thom	Rebecca
19	16		46.363	Bool	Alan
20		4	46.043	Bool	Candice
21		5	45.948	Mugridge	Amanda
22	17		45.483	Glover	Chris
23	18		43.587	McNevin	Allan
24	19		43.503	Cossey	Alan
25	20		40.163	Bates	Craig
26	21		34.504	Casteli	Paul
27		6	33.619	Brown	Judy
28	22		30.000	Carter	Ken
29		7	30.000	Small	Marg
30		8	26.500	Gracie	Michael
31	23		26.000	Rogers	Paul
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					

The Inaugural Injinji Stromlo 12 Hour

February 18, 2012 - Mt Stromlo, Canberra ACT - by Billy Pearce

Mt Stromlo holds a special significance to me. In December 2000 I travelled from my home in London to marry the love of my life Claire at the Stromlo Observatory. We had our reception in the cafe and my family were particularly charmed by the grazing 'roos who turned up for the ceremony. It all seemed so very exotic and such a long way from life in the UK; a life that, at the time, didn't involve running. Fast forward to 2012 and life is somewhat different. Numerous ultra events under my belt, 3 gorgeous kids to keep me busy, and now I live just 4km from Stromlo!

Life with a young family and fulltime job means that I don't get to travel to as many ultra events as I would like to. So I was extremely pleased to hear that the Canberra-based 12Hr Fat Ass event put on by ultra historian Phil Essam had evolved into an official race on the AURA calendar, with Phil and ultra legend Martin Fryer to be joint race directors. The fact that the race was to be held at the Stromlo bike track so close to home was the icing on the cake.

I felt confident that Martin would apply his "scientific, hippy and mongrel" self to the task. Simultaneously, Phil would guide the event with a keen eye to tradition. The race notes demonstrated all of this; from the level of detail regarding the surface of the 1km loop, to the accurate measurement and timing. Competing in a 12 hour track race is a true measurement of oneself, there is nowhere to hide. This is particularly true on the Stromlo course as the whole 1km is visible at every point on the track. This is pleasing for a runner like me as I rarely see the front of the field. Like an 80's style mullet, it's serious business at the front but, for me, a party out the back!

In terms of race preparation I was keen to see what a steady three months of training had achieved, on the back

of a light year in 2011. After a well organised registration and clear race briefing, we all set off with high hopes. The dark clouds blustering across the skies of south Canberra loomed ominously. Following a spectacular show of lightning and some brief rumblings, we found ourselves being dumped upon by some serious rain, which lasted for the first hour and a half. The sky then eased and nightfall brought a drop in temperature, which was perfect for running. Other than a necessary change of shoes, no damage was done.

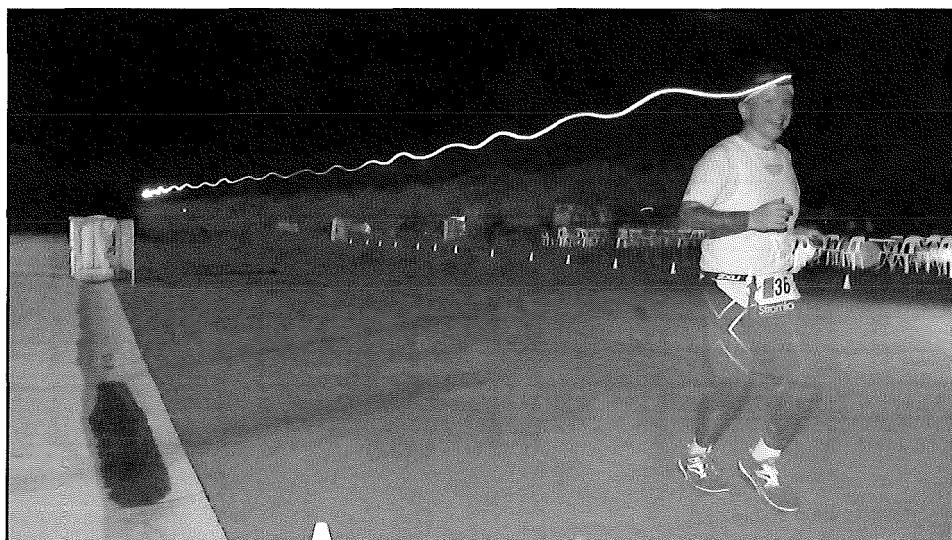
I found a comfortable rhythm early in the race and was able to run to plan without putting myself under any undue pressure. I watched my fellow racers with much enjoyment. There was a real mix of experience and ability out on the track, from C2K winners to young guns and newbies, and most other abilities in between. The hours soon passed. I got to catch up with some old buddies and, as I was confident in the accuracy of the lap counting, all went very smoothly. On top of that, my crew attended to my every need with Rhian (C2K Medic) knowing me well enough to predict what I needed almost before I did (thanks mate!)

As I was lapped by a variety of people I managed to retain my groove, and was pleased to find

that my feet were holding up well. A recent change to Hokas has been a real breakthrough. Due to a childhood accident, I have a two and a half size difference in shoe size between my feet. Even with specialist orthotics, I have always struggled to find shoes that are comfortable and which allow me to run blister free. The Hokas have given me a real boost and I finished the 12 hours without a mark on my feet. I ticked over a comfortable total of 91km with no damage and, even better, in the days to follow with no DOMS or tiredness. Got to be happy with that!

The race results demonstrate what a great course the Stromlo track provides and what a professionally organised event this was. So many competitors passed the 100km mark, but we were all winners with barrel prizes galore. I will certainly be back next year. My thanks to Martin and Phil for putting on such an excellent event; one which will surely be a mainstay of the ultra calendar.

Editor's note: Since writing his race report for the Injinji 12 Hour event, Billy has committed himself to embark on an ultra challenge of 4 races incorporating the Canberra 50k, the TNF100, the Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour and Caboolture 48 Hour, in an effort to raise funds for charity.



Looking strong – photo courtesy Billy Pearce

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		120.067	Zambon	Oliver
2	2		115.631	Horsburgh	Ewan
3		1	113.485	Muston	Pam
4	3		110.986	Cockshutt	Marcus
5		2	105.598	McConnell	Bryony
6	4		101.865	McCann	Joseph
7	5		101.661	Riedl	Arnulf
8	6		101.362	Every	Paul
9	7		101.296	Miller	Alex
10		3	101.158	Thompson	Michelle
11	8		101.025	Mullins	Peter
12	9		96.345	Thompson	Michael
13	10		92.177	Butterworth	Simon
14	11		91.000	Pearce	Billy
15		4	84.360	Bennett	Kelly

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
16		5	82.000	McIlwain	Angela
17		6	81.201	Marshall	Sarah-Jane
18	12		81.004	Watson	Peter
19	13		77.000	McIlwain	Kenny
20	14		71.227	Jordan	Steve
21	15		61.000	Cockshutt	Todd
22	16		60.000	Rhee	Ben
23	17		57.000	Fairweather	Simon
24		7	56.000	Robson	Jessica
25	18		44.000	Wall	Simon
26		8	43.000	Fairweather	Jackie
27	19		31.000	Smith	Benjamin
28		9	27.000	Hepworth	Annabel

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



Maroondah Dam Trail Run 50km

Maroondah Dam, Yarra Ranges, VIC- February 19, 2012 - by Lisa Lucas

I was plagued with bad memories of the Maroondah Dam 50km event from 2011, and was feeling a sense of apprehension when I arrived at the Henderson Park picnic area. It is a tough trail and last year competitors had to contend with overgrown grass and bushes that shredded our arms and legs as we galloped through. I was really hoping that this year would be different. I was also dealing with niggling knee issues and hadn't tapered for this run, so knew I would have tired legs. Regardless, I was looking forward to catching up with fellow runners and I am always impressed with the organisation of events run by Brett Saxon and his team.

I had slept well the night before and live relatively close to the start, so did not feel the usual sleep deprivation that normally accompanies ultra events. It was a beautiful cool morning and forecast to be a nice day. We piled into the buses at 7.30am that transported us to the start at Fernshaw's Reserve. After the customary line up at the toilets we were briefed by Brett and also heard that this was Andy Hewat's (Whippet) 10th run at Maroondah,

and had a chance to appreciate his role as sweeper for this event.

Finally, we were off and running. The first 8km is my least favourite part of this run as it is a single-file goat's trail, and not great for ankles that are highly susceptible to ankle rolling or those who are regular fallers, like me. We arrived at the first hill at about 5km and the running stopped for most of us while the uphill climb began. This uphill section is deceiving, as many are, because when you think you have finally reached the top, surprise, surprise, there is still more to come!

Finally, Dom Dom Saddle and the first checkpoint/aid station. I am always overwhelmed to see the volunteers at these events that get up early and travel to feed and encourage us runners. I didn't stop at this checkpoint, as I had enough food and water on me, and I was feeling quite good at this point. From there we entered the Dom Dom Saddle Loop, which is a nice, non-technical downhill run for about 7km, then a climb back up. I felt great on the downhill section and then uphill where I took the

opportunity to power walk and eat.

Next was the Monda Track checkpoint; again, there was plenty of encouragement from the fantastic volunteers. I was still feeling surprisingly good, but knew that ahead of me was the monster climb up Mt St Leonard. Legs burning, I reached the top but had that same sense of apprehension return as with the goat's trail at the beginning as I knew what was coming. What goes up must come down, and this descent is certainly the most challenging I have ever experienced. Down, down; with quads feeling like they are being ripped up! I had passed plenty of runners and continued to do so, which is always nice, and helps to keep the legs turning over as you know you are getting somewhere. My legs were working super hard, and so was my body, just to keep me upright. At least it wasn't raining like the previous year.

Finally at the bottom and then it's all about just keeping the legs going. Another great reception from volunteers at the aid station and then off for the home stretch. The flat section around the canal was



Lisa working hard for a PB -
photo courtesy fstop5

tough as my legs were so fatigued from the downhill effort but I kept going, although at a fairly slow pace as my knee was really hurting at this point. Over the dam wall and on to the finish in 5 hours 59 minutes; I finished 3rd female with a PB for this event so was pretty happy. I was even happier when Brett handed me a bottle of red with my trophy. All up a fantastic, challenging run amongst some great people. Is it any wonder trail running is so addictive?

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		4:13:55	Goerke	Damon
2	2		4:32:06	Eadie	David
3	3		4:40:11	Mannix	Kev
4	4		4:43:17	Day	Rohan
5	5		4:51:30	Selby-Smith	Andrew
6	6		4:52:32	Scholz	Justin
7	7		4:55:24	Williams	Glenn
8	8		4:55:41	Evans	James
9	9		4:57:29	Wiadrowski	Toby
10	10		4:58:06	Beard	Dan
11	11		5:00:32	Elliott	Stuart
12	12		5:04:35	Callahan	Steve
13		1	5:09:27	Wynd	Nikki
14	13		5:11:15	Hemburrow	Dean
15	14		5:19:51	Langelan	Dan
16	15		5:20:36	Fuller	Brad
17	16		5:25:23	Muller	Kevin
18	17		5:26:43	Grigg	Aaron
19	18		5:26:46	Koester	Byron

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
20	19		5:26:46	Gladwell	Paul
21	20		5:29:53	Johansson	Fredrik
22	21		5:32:08	Gullifer	John
23	22		5:32:36	Minogue	Des
24	23		5:34:58	Fraser	Lachlan
25	24		5:36:43	Mitchell	Scott
26	25		5:37:55	Drummond	Steve
27	26		5:39:12	Nest	Andrew
28	27		5:39:53	Turner	Andrew
29	28		5:40:08	Smith	Glen
30		2	5:41:24	Bespalov	Isobel
31	29		5:43:04	Hall	Robert
32	30		5:45:20	Louw	Eric
33	31		5:48:52	Montfort	Jason
34	32		5:50:21	Street	Josh
35	33		5:53:34	Jones	Brian
36	34		5:56:44	Kaiser	Nicholas
37	35		5:57:24	Guest	Steve
38	36		5:58:35	John	Michael
39		3	5:59:21	Lucas	Lisa
40	37		6:04:13	McCann	Norm
41	38		6:04:47	Savage	Robbie
42	39		6:07:41	Marshall	Kelvin
43		4	6:11:55	Grose	Fleur
44		5	6:12:41	Emmerson	Kellie
45	40		6:12:53	Bignell	Peter
46		6	6:13:03	Moore	Anna
47	41		6:16:37	Mckeown	John
48		7	6:17:23	Macmillan	Katherine
49	42		6:17:45	Smith	Jamie
50	43		6:18:30	Phillips	Ben
51	44		6:18:52	Breese	Ian
52	45		6:18:57	Crozier	Luke
53	46		6:18:57	Evans	Owen
54		8	6:19:01	Pate	Karen
55	47		6:20:28	Robbs	Chris
56	48		6:20:48	Swinkles	Mark
57	49		6:23:37	Bowden	Damian
58	50		6:25:20	Vlachos	Theo
59		9	6:26:51	Wallace	Natalie
60		10	6:27:15	Barker	Nicole
61	51		6:27:15	Kew	Greg
62	52		6:27:28	Porceddu	Daniel
63	53		6:30:36	Davis	Rob
64		11	6:31:10	Stevens	Terrie
65	54		6:32:18	Jenkins	Dave
66	55		6:33:06	Rogers	David
67		12	6:33:57	Cowling	Gayle
68		13	6:36:02	Donnelly	Michelle
69	56		6:37:21	Palmer	Daniel
70	57		6:48:03	Falls	Mark
71		14	6:49:39	Ross	Catherine
72		15	6:52:51	McTaggart	Kerryn
73	58		6:52:51	McDonald	Andrew
74		16	6:58:14	Shadbolt	Jane
75	59		6:58:26	Josephs	Derek
76	60		6:58:58	Corner	Stephen
77	61		7:00:12	Macnae	William
78	62		7:00:12	Farrelly	James

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
79	63		7:02:28	Morgan	Matthew
80	64		7:02:28	McNamarra	Matt
81	65		7:02:28	Kift	Edward
82	66		7:03:29	Watts	David
83	67		7:17:10	Searcy	Angus
84		17	7:20:19	Letts	Nicola
85	68		7:20:19	Vaughan	Matthew
86		18	7:27:50	Lopez	Andrea
87	69		7:29:53	Mihalakellis	George
88	70		7:30:15	Hopkins	Paul
89	71		7:35:32	Jansen	Erwin
90	72		7:36:26	Monfries	Philip
91	73		7:37:59	McCormick	Richard

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
92	74		7:40:36	Hughes	David
93	75		7:41:57	Lindsay	John
94		19	7:46:48	Ervin	Kaye
95	76		7:46:48	Meyer	Bernd
96		20	7:46:48	Lavoie	Ellen
97	77		7:47:47	Anderson	Jason
98		21	7:48:45	Palcak	Kristy
99	78		7:48:45	Harrison	David
100		22	7:59:46	Shiu	Crystal
101	79		8:06:41	Feldman	Adam
102	80		8:10:32	Hewat	Andrew
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					

Narawntapu “Four Beaches” Race

Narawntapu TAS - February 26, 2012 - by Marina Brun-Smits

After three weeks holiday in Vietnam, I was feeling a little flat and not wanting to face the truth about my loss of fitness during my time-out. I was eager to get out on the weekend for a run after a 4 week hiatus and I was up early on the Sunday, before dawn break. I headed out around the town and hills of Mullumbimby, only to find myself struggling after 12km and wishing someone would recognise me and offer a lift home. I would never accept a lift normally, so why would anyone stop? Needless to say I struggled back, feeling like I had lost most of my conditioning and was pretty disheartened knowing that I had a bit of hard work ahead of me if I was serious about participating in future ultras.

I went onto the internet to see what runs there were in February to entice me back, and noticed the inaugural Mountain Marathon (held just outside Queenstown NZ and starting from Skippers Canyon) was open for registration. So, this was going to be my slow reintroduction back into ultra marathons. I never do things in half measures and, to cut a long story short, if I had known what was to be ahead of me I would have reconsidered. This was a serious mountain marathon with 2000 metres of climbing over a marathon distance. The half way

cut-off was 5 hours, and I arrived there in 4 hours; but then the second half saw me struggling over fence lines, tussock grass and sheep tracks, and a slow run became a walk, but I completed the race in 9hrs24mins. I was disappointed with my time, but what else could I have expected after being out of condition for a month.

Putting the experience of my first mountain marathon of 2012 behind me, I had a look at what other ultras were taking place in February. On previous occasions I made enquiries of the Narawntapu 50km Ultra, and after exchanging several emails with the race director Ian Cornelius and booking my flight to

Launceston, I was off to Tassie. I had last visited approximately 18 years ago, and was very excited at the prospect of running a relatively flat course on the coast of Tasmania in cooler conditions. Well, how wrong I was! “Didn’t I know that high temperatures of over 30 degrees Celsius were predicted for that weekend?” asked a friend. I was secretly wishing she was wrong and that Ian would postpone the run due to the extreme weather conditions, but no such luck, and before I was aware of it I landed in a very balmy Launceston airport on the Saturday afternoon, only to be warmly greeted by Ian and Dave holding a placard with my name. It’s moments like this that one appreciates the sight of



Marina Brun-Smits far right with other runners before the race – photo courtesy Ian Cornelius

a familiar face.

We travelled 70km to Greens Beach and familiarised ourselves with our surroundings. After the (formalities) we trotted off to the local shop and ordered our dinner. This was devoured with great gusto as I was starving after travelling from the Gold Coast to Launceston, via Melbourne, and refusing to pay for outrageously overpriced food at the airport. After dinner we sat around with Gary and Nick, sharing some nibblies and beer, and compared running stories before retiring early. Thanks to my two gentlemen companions for offering me the room with the queen size bed whilst they shared the bunks.

I slept soundly, woken by the stirrings of Dave and Ian in the kitchen brewing an early morning cuppa. Today was the day and there was no rest for the wicked. I donned my running gear, and shared toast and coffee, before heading to the race shed to gather my number, liberally apply sunscreen and grab some gels. It was going to be a warm one and I had opted to begin with the earlier group at 7:00am knowing that I would not reach the 6 hour cut-off time; which was a wise move as I know only too well how I struggle in the heat. After the photo shoot, Ian waved us off and I ran behind another male runner in the hope of not losing sight of

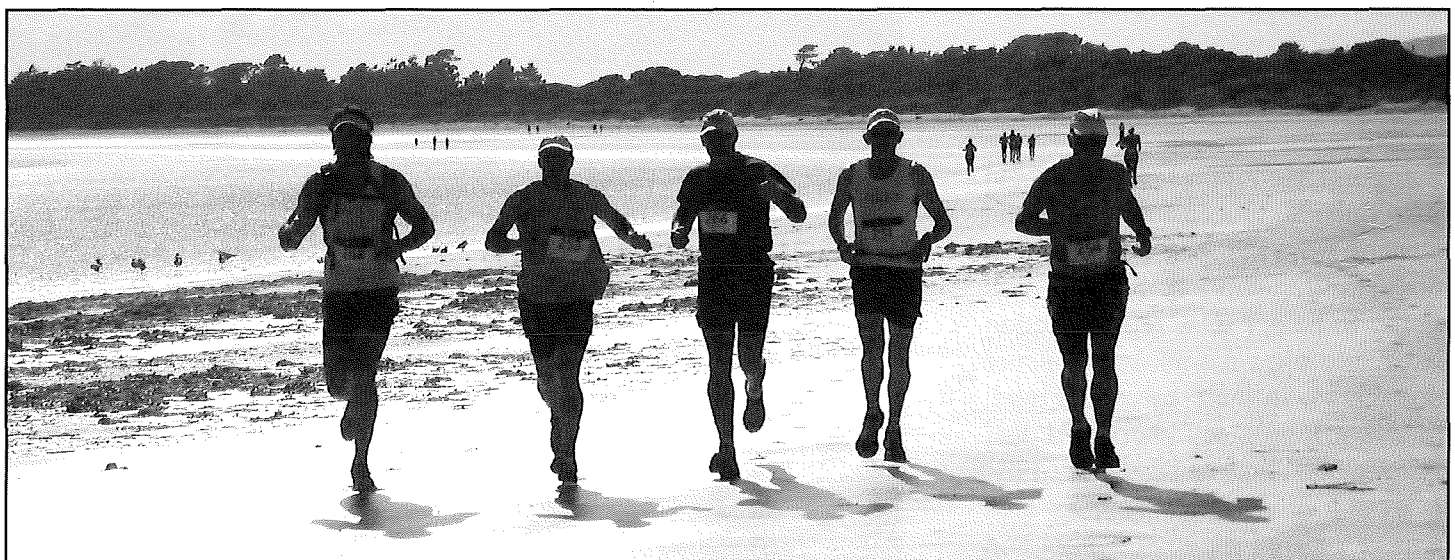
him. I was not confident about the course even though Ian assured by me it was pretty obvious; “just keep to the coastal track, traversing the beach four times” - hence its previous name “4 Beaches Ultra”.

I was relieved that I had chosen an early start as the first 25km was run under relatively cool conditions. The course is totally within the confines of the national park, and stunningly beautiful. Not the flat course I was hoping for, but undulating towards the headlands with a mixture of shaded trails and open heath land. Running towards Baker’s Beach was a little tricky; having to rock hop, but the tide was low so there was no threat of being swept away. -One third of the way in I glimpsed from the corner of my eye the first runner in the second pack, and wasn’t he looking good. I was soon to lose sight of him, and several others were to pass me (and then back again heading home); I still had to make CP1 at the half way point! I felt pretty comfortable and soon the first female passed, gave me a wave, and I lost her. I later managed to have a chat to Amy Hinds, an ex-weight lifter, and now an Ironman competitor. (I was very impressed by her story and after receiving her award, she hopped onto her bike to cycle the 20km home!)

They say that time is wasted on the

youth; but getting back to me. I finally reached halfway in 3hrs11mins; grabbed some jellies, gulped down some Endura and turned around for the journey back home. By now the sun was beginning to bite and I was grateful for the first 8km run back along the beach, even though it seemed to be endless. I do my best thinking when I am caught in this situation; knowing there is only one way ahead and no point in fighting it as I don’t have speed to rely on, so my thoughts go into overload! By now the breeze had picked up and I was running into it. I watched the seagulls, as large as chickens, (and to be honest I had to look twice to see they were gulls) playing along the seashore, and took in the beautiful surroundings of this part of the world. I felt honoured to be part of the experience. Every now and again I had to bring myself back to reality, as my mind wandered off on a tangent of thoughts and ideas.

By now I had gotten into a good rhythm, and began focusing on the foot prints left on the sand by the leading runners, until I made a right hand turn over a rocky outcrop and began meandering up along the coast where the vegetation consisted of low lying heath exposed to the elements. The sun was beginning to take effect and I decided to conserve some energy and walk the steepest sections of the track, reaching the top and gently running



Competitors enjoying the beach run – photo courtesy Ian Cornelius

down towards Baker's Beach, and continuing along at a comfortable pace on a single trail of soft sand and leaf matter, until I reached CP2. I was so very pleased to see the volunteers. I grabbed a handful of jellies and fresh bananas, before mixing together a potent concoction of Coca Cola and a double shot of Endura powder. Bidding them a thank you and farewell, I threw a handful of ice blocks from the esky under my cap to cool my head. "That should recharge the batteries" I thought to myself, as I passed Dave several metres ahead handing out cups of much appreciated water.

I was on my way to the last 11km - and feeling euphoric at the thought of an easy run home. But, again, as has been the pattern I have adopted over the past ultras, I became disoriented as my mind drifted. When I became aware of my surroundings, I began to question the course I was following and whether or not I was on the right trail. Twice I had to stop, follow my tracks back for about 100 metres, only to turn back and continue; secretly hoping to stumble across another runner. A run in the Australian bush would not be complete without the encounter of the odd snake or two, and that is exactly what I experienced as I was approaching the homeward stretch and, fortunately for me, on both occasions the snakes slithered back into the scrub upon my approach. It has been said that I run like an elephant!

The sun was taking its toll and I began to feel extremely warm, especially where the trail followed a course a little way off the coast surrounded by thick vegetation and not open to the sea breezes. Pacing myself, stumbling over rocks and roots and, after several near face-plants, I reached the short run along Greens Beach. I spied the Endura flag and made my way up towards the road to the finish line, but of course I did not hear what Ian had said before we started, "that the finish line would be on the grass verge and not back at the shed." So I continued along the road to the shed to be shaken out of my state of euphoria by a voice shouting, "Hey, how far do you want to run?" Oops! I turned around when I clicked off my Garmin at 7:01, to cross the official finish line in 6:59:59. Relieved that I had completed another ultra, I was handed a beer and enjoyed the atmosphere amongst the other runners. Then it was off with my shoes and socks as I made my way to the ocean, thinking how hardy these Tasmanians were braving the cold seas, only to be pleasantly surprised by the tropical warmth of the water and relished in it, along with several other runners.

Getting back to the group for the official award ceremonies it was decided that a runner, who had suffered heatstroke, now required medical attention and was soon whisked off by ambulance to hospital where he made a full

recovery. We soon packed up, and upon leaving Greens Beach discovered several walkers who, having lost their way before reaching CP 1, were just returning. They were so relieved to see us and, after exchanging information about what went wrong, we were on our way back to Legana.

What can I say about this ultramarathon? Only that it is another great run in a stunningly beautiful part of the world, where the locals are friendly and happy to have us visit. A big thank you to the volunteers, to Ian and Dave for putting on a great show and making it happen, and for giving me another opportunity to "run the world"; even if only a snippet at a time. At 53 years of age, time might be against me, but I feel in my own heart that as long as I have the passion for running in the natural world, anything is possible.

So, what's next? I have the Nerang 50 in April, and then the TNF100 as a solo runner in May which, no doubt, will challenge me on many levels. Who knows what great ideas will evolve as a result of many hours of solitude and reflection? Until then, stay focused, stay strong but, most importantly, have fun.

Editor's Note: Later that evening the RD, Ian Cornelius, did make enquiries as to the condition of the hospitalised runner; to find that he'd made a full recovery.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		4:16:19	Ling	Darryn
2		1	4:39:28	Hinds	Amy
3	2		4:47:59	Meredith	Michael
4	3		4:56:02	Hood	Allan
5		2	5:15:24	Guy	Jacqui
6	4		5:30:51	Deany	David
7	5		5:37:42	von Bibra	Julian
8	6		5:41:23	Radford	Dean
9	7		5:41:42	Smith	Sean
10	8		5:50:37	Kaiser	Nicholas
11	9		5:51:29	Beeston	Phil
12	10		5:52:55	Young	Greg

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
13	11		5:57:51	Law	Andrew
14	12		6:02:21	Cannell	John
15	13		6:15:00	Talbot	Christopher
16	14		6:25:50	Wilson	John
17	15		6:34:48	Sweetman	Neville
18		3	6:38:46	Seaman	Teresa
19	16		6:38:47	Seaman	Charles
20		4	6:59:59	Brun-Smiths	Marina
21	17		7:25:00	Godwin	Billy
22		5	9:27:00	March	Leanne
23	18		9:27:00	Ronald	Smith

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



Lark Hill 50km/100km Ultra

Lark Hill, Safety Bay WA - March 3, 2012 - by Race Director – Dave Kennedy

With the demise of the WA 12 hr (Cannington track race) I was looking for an opportunity to run 100km+. Having run around Lark Hill a number of times, including a fat-ass 6 hour last summer, the venue seemed to fit the bill. When we ran the 6 hour the limestone track was lit up nicely by moonlight, allowing for headlamp-free running during the night. This year the moon was very similar, just over half-full and setting around 1:30am. I'd also set up a lot of solar lights to add to the visibility, especially after the moon set.

The race started to build in momentum and, rather than a few friends joining me for a long training run, we were looking at quite a production with over a dozen volunteers needed. With the entry of Chris O'Neill we had a bona-fide star in the field; he's just a flat course away from a sub-2:30 marathon and likely to be near the front at Comrades this year. My race plan was to run 14:10/laps (3k per lap) to get me through to 50km in 4 hours, and then hopefully run a decent 2nd half. I went out with Chris, running

around 13 minutes for the first few laps, feeling comfortable and enjoying the company. Though it was a little demoralising to hear Chris had run a 17km speed session that morning as he pulled away after 3 laps.

Whilst a number of the runners wore theirs, Chris and I elected to run without headlamps. It was quite a sight to look out over the course and see the lights bobbing away in the distance. Our start/finish area and aid station was atop a small hill, in and around an old homestead. This was the place to be with all the volunteers enjoying themselves on a beautiful windless night. In the women's 50km race Jodie Osborne was well out in front but a little unsure of her position in the field. Hunna Watson was certain of her position in the 100km, as the only female entrant, and was having a great debut over the distance.

Chris was soon a lap in front, but Marc Simkin was also having a good race. As Chris slowed towards the end Marc took his lap back and



Hunna Watson – 100km Female Winner –
photo courtesy Susan Grober

narrowed the margin to just 10 minutes. My own race was going OK until 36km, when my stomach rebelled. Having spent most of the 6 hour race last summer stopping every lap, I decided to pull the pin and just help out. Soon after, Tim Eva arrived from a lap of the 100km course so I decided to join him for another lap and at least hit the marathon mark. After this



Pre-race briefing – photo courtesy Susan Grober

somewhat slower lap I was feeling OK, but decided to see Chris cross the line to finish the 50km rather than go again.

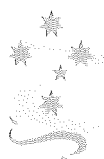
Chris finished in 3:39, showing that the course is fairly fast, even at night. Ten minutes later Marc was second across the line, and Ben Noonan rounded out the podium. Both these runners were competing in their first ultra, hopefully the first of many. Jodie was first across the line in 4:38 in the women's 50km, ahead of Beck Hefferon and Jo Rees, who were equal second. The 100km runners steadily went about their business, as the finish line/aid station got progressively quieter. Some of the hardier souls pulled up a chair to lap score or cheer the 100km runners after their own 50km race;

Karen Hagan and Grant Wholey stayed until after the clean-up, which was great.

Around 4am the aid station lit up as the nearby horse racing track was prepared for track work. Not long after, I had eaten as much chocolate as I could take and crawled onto the back of the ute for a short nap with instructions to be woken when Tim came through with a lap to go before his 100km victory. It was a pleasure to present the winners' trophies to Tim and Hunna around 8am. The trophies looked very nice and I would love to have one displayed at my place. Many thanks to all the volunteers in what was a very successful debut event. March long weekend again next year; we'll see you there.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Name	Last Name	Distance	Time
1	1		O'Neill	Chris	50K	3:39:42
2	2		Simpkins	Marc	50K	3:49:42
3	3		Noonan	Ben	50K	4:18:56
4	4		Gray	Jeff	50K	4:33:00
5	5		Foley	Paddy	50K	4:34:00
6		1	Oborne	Jodie	50K	4:38:39
7	6		Fonte	Justin	50K	4:41:21
8	7		Swart	Derik	50K	4:48:20
=9	=8		Wholey	Grant	50K	4:53:21
=9	=8		Kaesler	Shaun	50K	4:53:21
1	10		Rutherford	James	50K	5:00:07
12	11		Sutton	Robert	50K	5:13:55
=13		=2	Rees	Jo	50K	5:20:48
=13		=2	Hefferon	Beck	50K	5:20:48
14		4	Elton	Jane	50K	5:21:05
15	12		Coates	Roy	50K	5:21:05
16	13		Reynolds	Geoff	50K	5:35:19
17		5	Bowman	Amanda	50K	5:35:29
18		5	Williams	Kylie	50K	5:35:29
19		7	Decicco	Emma	50K	5:41:25
20	14		McNaught	Travis	50K	5:50:04
21		8	Dean	Joanne	50K	5:54:40
22		9	Cossom	Kelly	50K	5:54:49
23	15		Bunce	Russell	50K	5:54:52
24		10	Chin	Liza	50K	6:01:50
25		11	Hagan	Karen	50K	6:32:26
26		12	Green	Lisa	50K	6:39:19
27	16		Miller	Peter	50K	6:54:23
28		13	Merrick	Hailey	50K	6:58:20
29		14	Blackwood	Wendy	50K	7:02:12
30		15	Adams	Andrea	50K	8:06:00
1	1		Eva	Tim	100K	10:50:26
2	2		Pollupuu	Peeter	100K	12:20:53
3	3		Adams	Rob	100K	12:51:07
4		1	Watson	Hunna	100K	13:15:31

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



Coburg 6 Hour

March 11, 2012 - by John Nuttall

Towards the end of 2011 my partner, Lyndie, and I decided that to dodge "Yasi 2" we needed to put a few kilometres between ourselves and Townsville during the cyclone season. So, shortly after Christmas, off we went on a camping/hiking trip to NSW and Victoria in my old Hiace van. As runners do before making a trip, they find an event to stretch their legs, so it was onto the web for a day at the races. I'd been wanting to run Ronnie Schwebel's Narrabeen Allnighter since its inception, so that was

the obvious choice. Lyndie didn't feel fit enough to run 12 hours, so I obtained an instant crew. And she owns a western Queensland cowboys horse whip for when I started slacking! So it was off to the Warrumbungle Mountains for a walk, then to Sydney to meet up with Ron and Horrie for a run. Perfect conditions, great course, friendly organisers and competitors – but I had a shocker! By 10 hours and 83km my mind was telling me I was on holiday, so I sat down with a beaut NSW brew called "Tooheys"

and that was that!

A few days later, while sitting atop Mt Bogong, I received an email from Ron with the results. To my surprise, Ron had been good enough to put my name forward for two 60+ Aussie age road records – 59km in 6 hours and 50 miles in 9hrs 25mins. Now, I know for a fact that Cliff Young did 50 miles in about 7 hours every time he went for a run when he was 60, but the 59km in 6 hours I thought was a legitimate record. I thought it was a bit soft so, when



Left to right: Kevin Muller, John Nuttall and Daniel Pelly – photo courtesy Coppermine Gallery

I returned home to Townsville, I decided to find a race where I could attempt a fair dinkum record.

I had run at Coburg about five years ago and got the feeling that this event was steeped in tradition – I thought about Kouros, Cliff Young and Brian Smith waltzing around this track. My son had just achieved his Masters degree in Psychology at Monash University, so I thought I'd kill two birds with one stone – visit Anthony and have a run while I was down there. Everybody who travels from hot and humid northern Queensland to Melbourne to do a foot run dreams of these conditions – 22 degrees, clear blue sky, little wind – perfect! These were the conditions on race day in Coburg. Anthony will readily admit to sleeping all day and playing all night at the weekends (as most uni students do!), so it was a surprise to be woken by him at 5am with a coffee and a smile – “Come on, Dad, you’ve got work to do today!” Yeah, yeah, yeah - where am I? It's COLD!

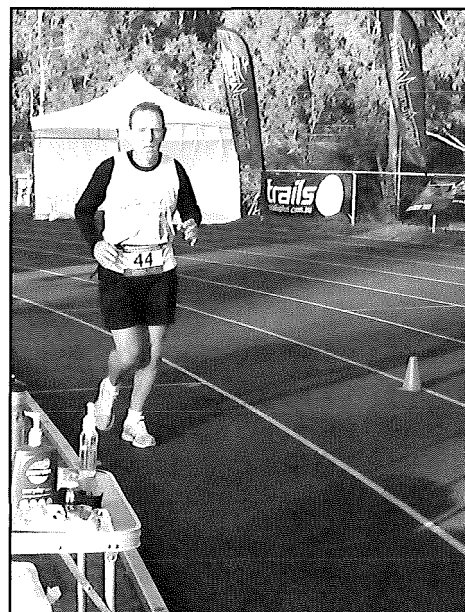
We arrived at the track with plenty of time to spare and I recognised a few faces of people I knew. Rob Boyce was there for a bit of a jog, Mal Gamble as a crew for just about “everybody” and Michelle Thompson, who breaks a record almost every time she goes out these

days! I'd notified Tim Ericksen that I was attempting to go past Vlastik Scavrell's 60+ distance of 63.600km - that he probably achieved in one of his great 6 day runs. He'd had that record for 11 years, so I thought, “that's long enough!” It's a good feeling when you're on the start line of a run, even at 60! It took me back to five years ago – Kenny Matchett was running the 24 hour and I think he was 84 at the time – plenty more time for me, I thought! With 44 people on the start line, I wondered how the caller was going to see all the numbers! But the crew at Coburg have got it down to a fine art, so that's the last I thought of it. Perfect conditions greeted the 44, especially for a North Queenslander who runs saturated all the time at this time of year up home.

My tactics were simple – two 12km hours, two 11km hours and two 10km hours, which would give me 66km and a job well done. Unlike trail and road runs where you get to sample beautiful scenery and testing gradients, running the track can become tedious if you let it. I looked at it this way – on the track you have 43 other competitors, their crews and the race volunteers (which were many) that you can chat with, and usually by day's end you get encouragement from most. The first two hours went like clockwork – 62 laps – I'm ahead

of schedule! I was getting lapped regularly by Stuart, Justin, Daniel and others, which indicated some really good distances from these guys. Tim and Bernie would be happy! I would just like to mention here the real sportsmanship of ultra runners. Dave Brelsford (who is almost 70) knew that he was going to run slower than most, so he ran the whole 6 hours in the second lane so as not to impede the other runners – “good onya Dave!” Three hours – 92 laps – another 12km hour – “good going John!” Four hours – 119 laps – still on schedule! Five hours – 145 laps – still on schedule but slowing – “have another gel, John!”

About 4 laps into the final hour I got one of the best feelings I've had in running. At one end of the track I had Sharon Scholz (international Ultra Runner of the Year) shouting encouragement, and at the other end I had Mal Gamble (probably the busiest runner in Australia today) going ballistic! Talk about endorphins; I was running on air and went past Vlastik's record without even knowing it! I passed Justin and Kevin a couple of times in the last hour, which gave me confidence for some longer runs later in the year. When my Garmin clicked past 70km I thought I'd won the Lotto! And



John Nuttall –
photo courtesy Coppermine Gallery

when I dropped my sack of sand, it read 70.61km. GPS watches are inaccurate of course, so when my final result was 69.435km, I was rapt! I know there are guys out there who are capable of beating that distance, but when I was slumped on the track looking at that sack, I thought – “I’ve got a record for a day – that will do!”

Congratulations to all the other runners and walkers – it was a high class field in both. Big thanks to the crews and volunteers around the track, who provided lots of encouragement and, of course, thanks to Tim and Bernie for putting on a great show where nobody, but nobody, is overlooked!

Editor's Note: After discussions with AURA's records officer and executive, John found out he was not eligible to claim the M60 record because he never pursued Australian citizenship, despite decades spent as a resident here. John has assured us that's in the cards now, as he has "plenty left in the tank." Look forward to seeing you out there again soon, John!

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Distance	Last Name	First Name
1	1		77.357	Elliott	Stuart
2	2		76.607	Scholz	Justin
3	3		74.196	Muller	Kevin
4	4		70.935	Gladwell	Paul
5	5		70.537	Louw	Eric
6	6		69.647	Webb	Matt
7	7		69.438	Nuttall	John
8	8		66.989	John	Michael
9	9		63.770	Guest	Steven
10	10		63.682	Marsh	Ken
11	11		63.330	Nakatani	Kayuzo
12		1	62.311	Voitin	Clare
13	12		61.700	Mullins	Peter
14		2	59.782	Siemonek	Amie
15		3	59.617	Dryden	Tracey
16	13		59.482	Murray	Alan
17		4	58.137	Chan	Karen
18	14		57.144	Saxon	Brett
19	15		56.275	English	Stephen
20	16		55.713	McMormick	Richard
21		5	55.406	Donnelly	Michelle
22	17		55.309	Lawrence	Brendan

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Distance	Last Name	First Name
23		6	54.636	Thompson	Michelle
24	18		53.379	O'Neill	Terry
25	19		53.114	Boyce	Robert
26	20		52.819	Anderson	Jason
27	21		52.477	Brassington	Matthew
28	22		51.644	Marshall	Michael
29	23		51.200	Bree	David
=29	24		51.200	Evans	Owen
31	25		50.702	Brelsford	David
32	26		50.260	Jack	Clarrie
33	27		47.613	Cook	Kim
34		7	45.364	O'Neill	Karyn
35	28		44.492	Jordan	Steve
36	29		43.940	Sharp	Philip
37	30		43.021	Timms	John
38	31		42.400	Pelly	Daniel
39	32		39.027	Poore	Alex
40		8	38.422	Howarth	Sandra
41	33		29.459	Carter	Ken
42	34		29.444	Skrucany	Rudolf
43		9	22.400	Bayley	Michelle
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					



Alpine Challenge

Victorian Alps, VIC - March 17-19, 2012 - Race Director – by Paul Ashton

The 2012 Alpine Challenge saw records crash in one of Australia's toughest and most scenic 100mile/100km mountain races, run in the spectacular Australian Alps.

Starting with a record number of entries of 75, up from 32 the previous year, the lead up to the event was beset by record rains in the Alpine National Park. With over 500 mm falling in the 2 weeks leading up to race day, the three major river crossings to be forded provided significant issues for the event organisers and the need to review alternate routes. Luckily, recons of the rivers at 1:30am on the

morning of the race saw river heights back to a safe level and the race was able to take its normal route.

Starting at Bogong Village, 65 runners fronted the start line for a 4:30am start, with a 14km dash up Spione Kopje. Due to the heavy rains and wind, runners had to weave through a mass of downed and tangled undergrowth. In spite of that, the first runners came through covering the 1200m climb in just over 2 hours, before heading off to climb Victoria's highest mountain of 1996m, Mount Bogong.

Simon Morcom, Andrew Vize, Matt Cooper and Clarke McClymont set a cracking pace taking only 2.5 hours to get from Warby Corner to the summit of Mt Bogong. They continued this pace returning to Warby corner by 11:36am – just 7 hours after the run started, having run over 50km and covered 3,500m of ascent and descent. In comparison, the last runners reached Warby Corner at 6:30pm that same day!

From then on it was just a matter of seeing who would last and who would burn out, as records continued to tumble. As night fell

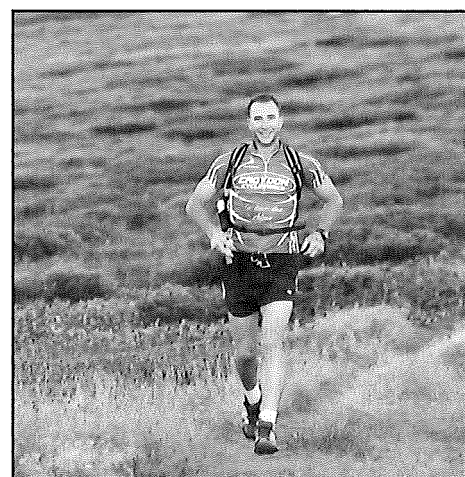
and runners passed Pole 333, a major checkpoint located on the windswept Bogong High Plains, the wind picked up and temperatures plummeted to below freezing. In the 30km between Pole 333 and Harrietville – now named “Mortien Alley” as runners dropped like flies - 8 of the 20 starters in the 100 mile distance succumbed to fatigue, cold and loss of direction. Alpine Search and Rescue, who had coordinated a training event in support of the Alpine Challenge, responded professionally and quickly located one disoriented runner and worked with event management in assessing and withdrawing another runner suffering from exposure around Mt Loch and Mt Hotham.

Runners were fantastic in checking into checkpoints and recording their times all through the night – although this meant that event support personnel were exhausted by morning as runners came through every 15-20 minutes. With the dawning of a new day runners found their second wind and surged across the Fainters and back down

to Bogong Village, chasing a new record and aiming to break the 24 hour mark.

24 hours still stands; the cold and wind had done its work in weakening runners but, in spite of that, Matt Cooper took over two hours off his PB for the event, and set a new course record for the 100 miles of 25:19! Kathy MacMillan was the first woman across the finish line in a time of 37:45. In the 100 mile relay event, records crashed from 27 hours to 20:07 hours as Andrew Vize and Darrell Robbins pounded their way across the high plains.

Overall, the 100 mile solo event maintained its reputation as one of Australia’s most challenging trail runs, with a 45% DNF result in the face of a strong field and ideal running conditions; once again demonstrating that this event is not one to be taken lightly. In the 100km run team mates Simon Morcom and Chris Carr smashed the course in 12:49, with Todd Jenkinson from Queensland leading home the solo runners in 19:51.



Dan Beard –
photo courtesy dandyrunner.com

Most fun on the course was had by those participants in the 60km Alpine Experience, a 2 day introduction to trail running with team *Suck it up Princess* having a great time and finishing in a leisurely 15:19.

Special thanks to all the participants, event volunteers, sweeps, the Alpine SAR, and the team at Bogong Village for helping to make this such a great event. Next year we hope to see Matt break his record and go sub-24 as he takes on a challenge from one of Victoria’s top mountain runners over the weekend of 16–18 March 2013.

Alpine Challenge **Victorian Alps, VIC - March 17-19, 2012 - by Melanie Parker**



Amulf Riedl – photo courtesy dandyrunner.com

Well, it was to be my third attempt at the Alpine Challenge. This year I was tackling the 100 mile for the first time. Since it was my first

attempt at this distance, and had 8000m each of gain and loss in it, I was assuming it would take me somewhere between 40-44 hours to complete. It seems that the better my preparation is, the worse my race is. Taking this into account, it was going to be an awesome race. In 2010 I did the 100km, and finished in 22.5 hours after managing to get lost in the dark. (You might notice a theme emerging here.)

Last year I attempted the 100km again, however I only made it to 60km before having to withdraw after breaking a rib from tripping myself over, and landing

on my walking poles and the pole stuck into my side. (Another theme emerging here?)

This year was a little cooler than last year, thankfully. I would expect nothing less in one of Paul Ashton’s races, and what a way to start; straight up Spione Kopjie to Warby Corner. What an awesome climb. Given there had been a storm cell in the area in the preceding weeks, it was expected for there to be numerous downed trees. It was going to be an obstacle course. Maybe it should have been called the Alpine Challenge Steeple Chase. (Note: I refer to the steeple chase instead of hurdles as there was plenty of water on the course.) But, we will get to that later.

I started the race with two of my friends, Shane Hutton and Michael Collins, and was determined to stick with them as long as possible. That did not turn out to be very long in the scheme of things as they dropped me at 7km; not to worry. I climbed Spione Kopjie faster than I had done in the previous 2 years, so was pleased with myself regardless. When I approached Checkpoint 1, I was informed by Paul Ashton that I was the second female at that point. It was looking like it was going to be a good day; I was already ahead of my predicted times.

I took off from Warby Corner and made my way down Duane Spur to Big River without any issues. We were warned that the river might be up and moving fast and to cross at the chain with caution. Turns out it had gone down heaps as it was only around knee height...except for one place that went mid-thigh. Must be more careful with which rocks I stand on.

It was time to make the arduous climb up T Spur, which I managed more easily than in previous years. The weather was perfect. Halfway up T Spur I was passed by Clare Weatherly. We walked together for a bit and then she took off. I managed to catch her again at Cleve Cole, where we both put on sunscreen for the first time (probably a bit too late) and then proceeded to start chatting and took off in the wrong direction; which was funny as I have done that part heaps of times. Paul does, however, warn us if you chat you will get lost; turns out he is right.

Coming across the top of Bogong, the weather began to change and fog set in. After 15 minutes it was clear again, and then it was time to go down Quartz Ridge. Coming down Quartz Ridge has fantastic views; sheer cliffs either side. Until you get to the tree line and it makes it hard to miss the path, as long as you stay on the tiny little path just the left to the ridge. Clare and I were still managing to stay together during this part, which was nice for some company. When we got to the

bottom, crossed Big River again, and started up Timms Spur before she went on alone. I needed a break to get my head in the right place before I was to attempt Timms Spur again.

I had not done Timms Spur since last year when I fell over and broke a rib at the 50km mark. I had to walk another 10km, in the heat, to get medical assistance; mentally this was the hardest part of my race. Again, it was getting hotter and there is no shade in this 10km stretch. I got the pleasure of seeing a few snakes, which I happen to like, but I had to bargain with myself for every step I took up this part. This time I remembered to fill up with water at Big River. Last year I ran out of water on this section, which contributed to my lack of enjoyment. Compounded by my memories of last year's dehydration, heat stroke, and my broken rib, it got so hard at one point that I told myself if I could just make it up to the top then I would downgrade to the 100km. Then it got tougher, so I bargained that as long as I kept moving I would pull out at Langford's Gap.

Once I got to the top of Timms Spur, and past the section where I had to pull out last year, things started to improve. I thought I could possibly do the 100km, rather than pull out at Langford's Gap. Then I started to feel stronger and stronger; the 100

mile it was. Steve Meehan caught me coming down Big River fire trail, at which point I was walking as was just elated that I was going to be doing the whole event I entered.

When we got to Langford's Gap I changed my clothes and shoes and felt (almost) brand new. It was going to be dark and start to get quite cold in a few hours. It ended up taking me 30 minutes to get changed. Poor Steve was waiting for me and it turns out he ate food for the whole 30 minutes. Steve and I continued to walk at a fast pace down the Alpine Walking Track and, not long after we left Langford's Gap, we passed Clare Weatherley and her pacer, who were walking and running this section. The high plains was fairly flooded everywhere. Initially, we tried jumping from rock to rock, however, the ground was so boggy that even if you thought you were going to be treading on grass, more often than not you sank into mud. By the time we reached Pole 333 it was dark and I was not avoiding any puddles at all; walking straight through the biggest ones. It was getting cold and I was very wet. We stopped briefly at the checkpoint at Pole 333 and put on our waterproof pants and jackets as the wind chill was quite cool. It started to get so freezing I had to start running again as could not stop shaking from the



Melanie on the trail – photo courtesy Melanie Parker



*Melanie during her first encounter with Alpine Challenge in 2010 –
photo courtesy Paul Ashton*

cold. If you could not run anymore at this point in the race you would be in trouble.

We then put our torch lights on and proceeded to head down to Cobunga Gap. Steve had been struggling with his stomach not processing the foods he ate at Langford's Gap and was starting to feel quite ill. We made it down to Cobunga Gap with no issues, however, when we were coming up Swindler's Spur Steve told me to go on without him. I think it was his leg or ankle that was also playing up, in addition to his stomach issues. I know from past experience that there is no quicker way to ruin a race than nutrition issues. Painful! I had to leave Steve and when I got to the top of Swindler's Spur I had to start running. With the wind chill, the temperature at the top of Hotham was -3 Celsius. It was icy, windy, and a white out, and it proceeded to get whiter and whiter as I approached Hotham until I could not see more than 1m in front or to the side of me. Lucky I had a GPS, and luckily I had this part of the course mapped out on it. You could not even see the reflecters on the snow poles until you were right next to the pole. There were a few tracks that went to the ski runs that I had to walk down a little before realising this was not the path. I tried my best to make

sure that my little blue arrow on my GPS (i.e., me) was staying on the little blue line. I trusted this and it eventually got me (albeit, really slowly) to Mt Loch carpark around midnight. I found out at this point that I was making up time on people in the race. I quickly stocked up with some more food at Mt Loch carpark then made my way off to Diamantina Hut, to find the start

of the Razorback Track and then down to Harrierville, via Bon Accord Track. It took me a little while in the white out to find Diamantina Hut, and then longer than usual to find the Razorback Track. For some reason the rest of the course was not marked out in my GPS; oh well. Once on the Razorback it was a lot more exposed and open. The cross winds were so strong it was almost blowing me over and, still white, it was hard going finding the Bon Accord Track. I kept thinking it was only 1km into the track when it ended up being 2km; this difference felt huge.

I managed to find Bon Accord and as I started to make my way down the side of the mountain the wind dropped as it was coming from the other side. The weather also started to clear up, with no fog. Yay! I could see again. Soon after I ran into my mates, Shane and Michael, who at that point were reduced to a walk as Michael had really bad blisters and was struggling to walk at all. Shane was suffering a bit from exposure and could not stay warm after being in WA with 40C+ all week. They were going to stop their race at Harrierville. I stayed with them for a little, and then I had to go on. Everyone I spoke to said that Bon Accord felt like it was

the longest part of the race. I don't know whether it was because we were doing this section in the early hours of the morning, but it seemed to never end. It eventually took us 6 hours to get down to Harrierville, when I know previously Shane and I had done it in 1.5 hours.

My GPS stopped working properly as it said I was facing a different direction to what I was. It said I was standing in a river when there was no water. I stood on a path when it said there was none; the track I was meant to find was not there. Weird things were happening and, after running nearly 24 hours non-stop, I had little brain power to work it out. Once I got to the bottom and crossed the river I managed to get lost. I ran for about 15 minutes until I was so tired that I decided to run back up to where I knew the track was, and hope that my mates were still coming down. I only had to run back another 5 minutes, or so, and found them. We then walked back down to the river and they assured me that the path I was on before was the right one, in spite of what my GPS was telling me. I then ran off again and got maybe 5 minutes further before I started to get an uncomfortable feeling again. I decided to run back and just stay with them and walk until we got to Harrierville; I would rather be a little slower and have some company at this point in the race. We went on and had to keep stopping every kilometre or so and we realised then that we were lost. It turned out, later, that there was another path we ended up on that was just off the track and not on our maps – confusing!

We eventually made it into Harrierville at around 5-6am. Steven managed to not get lost and caught us coming into Harrierville. Then he announced that his stomach wasn't any better and that he would be stopping his race at Harrierville also. We were 108km into the race at this



*Melanie at the finish –
photo courtesy Melanie Parker*

point, and leaving Harrietville alone, and heading up Bungalow Spur, was one of the hardest things that I have had to do. I stopped only for 10 minutes then had to go, as otherwise it would've been likely that I would have stopped as well. I stormed off in a huff, knowing I shouldn't have been, however I was pissed and clearly sleep deprived. I was so angry with everyone for pulling out, and so angry with myself for getting lost, and I was certain that I had lost so much time to the first female, Katherine Macmillan, who was at last checkpoint around 3-4 hours in front of me. It was not until I almost got to the top of Bungalow Spur that I managed to pull myself out of the angry hole I had dug.

At this point in the race, when the sun came up, I was finding it so hard to stay awake. I really wanted to stop and have a quick nap on the side of the path, however, I knew as soon as I shut my eyes I would not open them for a long time so I had to resist. Once I got to the top of Bungalow Spur it was time to climb Mt Feathertop. I really didn't want to do the Mt Feathertop loop; it is extremely steep and rocky and is an out and back part added onto the course. It would

be very easy for anyone to miss this section, however, even though I really wanted to, I couldn't bring myself to. I would be even more pissed off with myself. I decided to change my thinking at this point and to finish the race, all of the race, no matter what. No matter whether I had to crawl on my hands and knees I would be finishing every single kilometre. I had to stop and sit every few hundred metres up Mt Feathertop. Once I got to the top the views were spectacular; so worth it. I then made my way down to the next checkpoint at the Diamantina Spur, and it was at this point that I found out just how many people had pulled out of the race due to the tough conditions. It turned out Katherine was only 2-3 hours in front of me now, and that all the other females (and a lot of the males) in the 100 mile had either downgraded to the 100km, or had pulled out. Woo hoo! This gave me the boost I needed to keep going. No matter how slow I went as long, as I made the 48 hour cut off, I would finish the race as 2nd female. My feet at this point were so sore that I had to take some Panadeine just to be able to walk faster than about 2km/hour. From here on in it was a mental challenge to ignore the pain in my feet. I started to get really good at dissociating; I managed to see a few more snakes in this section as well. It was extremely painful on the downhill section that was so steep at some points I had to go down on my bum. I got to Kiewa River and started to make my way back up to Pole 333. The hardest thing was trying to stay awake; I had not factored in how hard this actually is.

Finally, I made it to Pole 333, which felt like forever, and was advised that I did the last part an hour faster than everyone else. I felt like I was going so slowly and it was so painful and I was so tired. It was so hard and yet I was getting stronger and stronger; this was nice to know. Then the bog was back; my shoes were full of mud and water and I did not care. The cool mud

and water actually felt nice on my blisters and sore feet at this point. Occasionally, my feet would start to dry off and hurt so I would walk through the biggest mud puddle I could find for temporary relief. I made it to Tawonga Huts and had less than 30km to go. I saw my support crew for the last time, and then started to make my way past the Fainters towards Bogong Jack Saddle, and then down the Fainter fire trail. Most of this section is a blur; I was so exhausted at this point that I would regularly find myself completely disassociated. Suddenly I would realise I was running, then realise I was in the Alps, then realise I was in a race....then completely forget it all again; only maybe 30 minutes later to go through the same thing again, and again. I guess this is a form of exercise-induced-sleep-deprived amnesia. My mind was trying to protect itself from the pain I was inflicting. Amazing! On the last 6 km down the Fainter fire trail, especially the closer I got to the end of the trail, the more I would find myself bent over stopped and on the path. To anyone passing by (luckily there were none) they would've thought I was mad. My body would stop and I would yell out loud at myself to keep going. I would go another 500m and stop and yell at myself, and on it went. Looking back on it now it was kind of comical. In the last 2km I swear I could hear all these footsteps running and voices, and thought that the people behind me in the race had almost caught up. I did not want to lose a place in the race at this point so this pushed me to run. Also, it was at this point that I realised that if I ran I would make it under 40hrs, even with getting lost earlier. I ended up finishing in 38 hours and 47 minutes and I was so happy. What I was feeling most though was tired. What an awesome race. I will be back for the 100 mile next year for sure! This was my favourite race ever. I would encourage every ultra runner to do this race once and you will be hooked!

Alpine Challenge 2012 100 Mile Solo March 17-19, 2012 - Victorian Alps, VIC					
Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Distance	Last Name	First Name
1	1		25.19	Cooper	Matt
2	=2		29.1	Beard	Dan
3	=2		29.1	Stokes	Adam
4	3		33.47	Rhee	Ben
5	4		33.57	Stein	Paul
6	5		35.04	Smith	Innes
7	6		37.09	Riedl	Arnulf
8		1	37.45	Macmillan	Katherine
9		2	38.47	Parker	Melanie
10	7		40.53	Edwards	Michael
11	8		44.27	Brewster	Shaun
DNF			DNF	Whitten	Phil
DNF			DNF	Weatherly	Clare
DNF			DNF	Hanney	Roger
DNF			DNF	Hutton	Shane
DNF			DNF	Meehan	Shane
DNF			DNF	Nikolaides	Alexander
DNF			DNF	Collins	Michael
DNF			DNF	Satori	Cozmo
22	17		55.309	Lawrence	Brendan

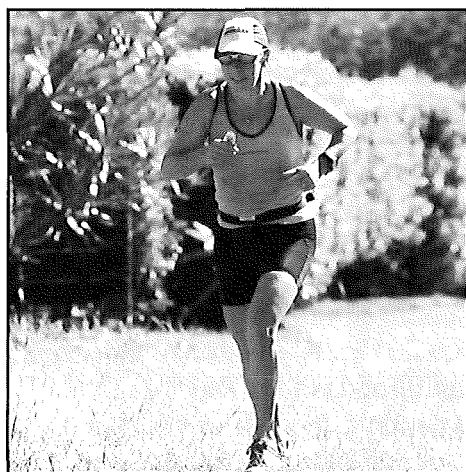
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.

Alpine Challenge 2012 100km Solo March 17-19, 2012 - Victorian Alps, VIC					
Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Distance	Last Name	First Name
1	1		19.51	Jenkinson	Todd
2	2		20.34	Robinson	Richard
3		1	20.34	Barnes	Tamsin
4		2	24.47	Laenen	Ruth
5		3	24.47	Bell	Tamyka
DNF			DNF	Bowden	Damian
DNF			DNF	Purcell	Sean

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.

Water World Great Ocean Run

Red Rock to Coffs Jetty - April 1, 2012 - by Steel Beveridge, Race Director



*Melissa Bulloch – overall winner –
photo courtesy Yvonne Vaughan*

She did again. Ten years on from her outright win in the Water World Great Ocean Run, Emerald Beach's Melissa Bulloch posted her third victory in the ladies' section of the run. Even more remarkably, she beat all the men to the finish first for the second time. Her last outright victory was in 2002. Melissa's time of 3:44:37 this year was only 2 minutes shy of the run record she set in 2002. Second to Melissa in

the ladies' division was Woolgoolga's Amy McGuiggan, whose time of 4:03:01 was the third fastest female time since the inception of the event in 1991. Even the third lady to finish, Whitney Valentine, could have won many editions of the women's section of this event with her time of 4:16:45.

The men's winner was another local runner, Warren Turner, who said afterwards that finishing only a couple of minutes behind Melissa was a proud achievement. He certainly had no time to waste in the run along Jetty Beach, as Nashua's Michael Douglas was charging in, finishing four seconds adrift. Bulloch had passed Turner almost within sight of the finish. The earlier duel between Turner and men's runner-up, Douglas, had left both with cramping while Bulloch finished looking as if a return journey may have been on the cards. Third male was former Woolgoolga High student

Brad Willis, who was well pleased with his first attempt at the event.

There were a number of special efforts right through the biggest field to contest the event.

Mitchell Stewart had the distinction of backing up after a game of rugby on Saturday, while Tom Holbut at 76 years of age had the double distinction of finishing the event for the fifth time, and being the oldest male to do so. Neil Vaughan was in the second pack when his hamstring 'went' but there is no stopping an old marathoner and he knuckled down to shuffle his way to the finish.

For Angie Grattan, a former female winner and finishing for the 15th time, it was especially poignant as her mother had passed away just days before. It had been her mother's dying wish that she do the event. Peter Gardiner logged his 10th finish, Di Holt her fifth, Peter McKenzie his

17th and Bob Beer his 18th. And yes, there was a southerly headwind all the way.

This year's event was the largest in the 21 years it has been held. All the runners and the organisers from

WRATS were full of praise for the volunteer helpers, both local and from the Gold Coast and Tweed running clubs. After checking the tide charts, next year's event will likely go ahead on Sunday, 21st April 2013.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1		1	3:44:37	Bulloch	Melissa
2	1		3:46:53	Turner	Warren
3	2		3:45:57	Douglas	Michael
4		2	4:03:01	McGuiggan	Amy
5	3		4:14:56	Willis	Brad
6		3	4:16:45	Valentine	Whitney
7	4		4:21:53	Cotsell	Nigel
8	5		4:32:13	Rose	John
9		4	4:34:09	Wingreen	Carol
=10	=6		4:39:27	Nolan	Matt
=10	=6		4:39:27	Bray	Shane
12	8		4:41:16	Kemp	Peter
13	9		4:41:45	Hutchinson	Bomber
14	10		4:43:02	Koopmans	Rodney
15	11		4:46:30	Mollica	Joe
16	12		4:48:20	Sayers	Garry
17	13		4:51:05	Vaughan	Neil
18	14		4:59:17	Maloney	Kyle
=19		5	5:01:09	Staite	Cathy
=19	15		5:01:09	Anson	Malcolm
21		6	5:05:04	Marle	Kylie
22	16		5:05:16	Lawrance	Graeme
23	17		5:09:47	Ansell	Warren
24		7	5:14:19	Johnstone	Nicola
25	18		5:21:45	Last	Geoff
=26		8	5:24:24	Dowell	Carol
=26	19		5:24:24	Gofton	Norm
28	20		5:26:18	Beer	Bob
29		9	5:26:28	Robertson	Cindy
30	21		5:27:21	Sutherland	Tim
31	22		5:30:11	Barton	Gary
32	23		5:31:48	McKee	Peter

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
33		10	5:38:08	Mahoney	Janie
34		11	5:44:00	Stevens	Jennie
35	24		5:53:09	Smith	Russ
36	25		5:54:15	Cohen	Chris
37	26		5:58:12	Churchward	Craig
=38		=12	6:01:57	Grattan	Angie
=38		=12	6:01:57	Knauth	Johanna
=40		=14	6:06:39	Maile	Kelly-Ann
=40		=14	6:06:39	Cheffers	Kellie
42	27		6:07:44	McKenzie	Peter
43	28		6:07:47	Stringer	Bernard
44	29		6:16:10	Gardiner	Peter
45		16	6:17:30	Holt	Di
46		17	6:42:48	Pavey	Melinda
47		18	6:43:27	Beath	Karen
48	30		7:00:29	Roder	Grant
49	31		7:02:49	Mavin	Ken
50		19	7:03:37	Lyons	Jenni
=51		=20	7:19:40	Williams	Jenni
=51		=20	7:19:40	Urwin	Robina
52		22	7:34:35	Beker	Alana
53	32		7:35:03	Healy	Sean
54	33		7:55:49	Stewart	Mitchell
55	34		7:57:34	Lyons	Robert
56	35		7:57:46	Holbut	Tom
=57		23	8:16:03	McKenzie	Di
=57	36		8:16:03	Forrestal	Russell
=59		=24	10:21:27	Lloyd	Lee-Ann
=59		=24	10:21:27	Thompson	Tina
=59		=24	10:21:27	Clarke	Sue
=59		=24	10:21:27	George	Rachel

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



And they're off! – photo courtesy Yvonne Vaughan

Nerang State Forest 50km Ultra

Gold Coast, QLD - April 1, 2012 - by Nigel Waddington

My previous experience of running in the Nerang State Forest largely consisted of encouraging (dragging) team mates through the last few dark kilometres of ups and downs in the Kokoda Challenge; just willing and waiting for the lights at the velodrome on the edge of the forest. So when I dragged myself out of bed at 3am to head down for the Nerang State Forest 50km, I was looking forward to seeing the place by the light of day and checking out what more the forest had to offer in the way of running trails. I'd decided to run the event after being advised it was a good lead-in race for the North Face 100; my next main target race. So I was treating the event as a dress rehearsal and an opportunity to practice some different nutritional approaches; things that seemed to work in training but could still all "go to custard" in an event where the gut is under a bit more strain. Goal number two for the event, perhaps it should have been number one, was to finish in good shape. My last ultra finish hadn't been too pretty; with the final 18km of the 2010 Coast to Kosciusko taking 6 hours of pathetic shuffling, and I felt the need to restore some confidence prior to the North Face.

The Nerang event itself has two options, a single loop 25km and a double loop 50km. The 25km is billed as good practice for the Kokoda Challenge and walkers are encouraged. The 50km option is a selection race for the world trail championships, and the course is on hilly fire trails. I don't remember much (any) flat sections, but there are no really long climbs. Despite never being too far from 'civilisation' the course does feel reasonably remote, with good views in a couple of places if you dare to lift your eyes off the trail. There are several creek crossings and, in spite of recent rain, all were crossable with dry shoes and a bit of nifty rock hopping. The rain had given the course a "wash" and made

some sections quite rocky, while others were a bit slippery. With tired legs this made a few stubbed toes and swearing inevitable. I'm glad to report I stayed on my feet, but a few bloodied limbs showed that not everyone was quite so lucky. A nice feature was the named signs along the course marking particular points. These provided a sense of progress, particularly on the second lap, and some amusement. "Heartbreak Hill" proved predictably vertical but "Kelvin Marshall Straight" certainly wasn't.

At the start I resisted the temptation to go with my normal ultra pacing strategy - go out too fast and hold on for grim death - and worked into a rhythm with the lead pack still in sight. After about 7.5km the lead pack had disappeared and I found myself on a nice long downhill section. My nervousness grew as I passed a couple of offshoots in the trail that were not marked. Slowing down, I was relieved to find that another runner was behind so I ran on enjoying the downhill for a while longer. Eventually, after the usual cycle of denial and realisation of the navigationally challenged; swearing, attempted map interpretation and backtracking, we rejoined the course where we'd left it. Of course spotting the next course marker was obvious at that point, and luckily a fellow competitor was enjoying the delights of sitting/leaning against a tree at the turn-off. I never did get his story, sitting down after 7km seems to be a conservative pacing strategy for a 50km. As it turned out, the involuntary upgrade into the 52km version of the event was actually quite a bonus. I spent the rest of the day slowly passing people, including 50km entrants and 25km walkers, which was a pleasant change. Perhaps this slow start thing has merit after all.

As the day wore on the heat picked up, and we were reminded that

the Queensland summer was not yet quite done. Some inner quad cramping in the last 10km gave me the opportunity to enjoy some salt tablets and practice some stride counting to distract my mind from the last few climbs. It's funny how cramps will sometimes vanish as soon as a salt tablet goes into my mouth; it wasn't funny that these didn't. Anyway, that was just another thing to add to the list to fix for the North Face. The heat and cramps made the final downhill, and the last step through the fence into the grounds of the velodrome, very welcome. The feed, chats and showers in the great facilities at the finish capped off a nice, relaxing Sunday morning on the trail.

On the day Caine Warburton and Delina Rahmate were both a class above the opposition, with clear wins in the 50km race. With 4 hour 21 minutes, Caine set a new course record, in the process nudging out Jonathan Worswick's 4hr 22min from 2011. A first for me was the race results including full date of birth for each finisher. Not something I would expect to thrill all competitors, but perhaps ultra runners are not that sensitive. Despite some disappointment with my time, I was happy to note that only younger people finished ahead. That was one small victory for the day, complemented by lots of reminders and new lessons to work on in training over the next couple of months.

Thanks to Ian Cornelius and volunteers for a well organised and value-for-money race. 49 finishers in the 50km meant the ultra field had nearly doubled in size from the year before. With the growth in ultra running, and the race's handy location for Brisbane and the Gold Coast, I'd expect this event to keep on growing. Next year's race is planned for March and I would certainly recommend it as an accessible, well run and enjoyable trail ultra.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		4:21:37	Warburton	Caine
2	2		4:51:22	Bishop	Jordan
3	3		4:55:20	Devlin	Jules
4		1	4:55:47	Rahmate	Delina
5	4		5:18:19	Moreland	Nick
6	5		5:28:36	Enkelmann	Rodney
7	6		5:32:11	Waddington	Nigel
8	7		5:32:46	Laine	Laurie
9	8		5:32:56	Lucas	Stephen
10	9		5:35:08	Pesut	Geoff
11		2	5:35:20	Balmanno	Kirra
12	10		5:35:39	Truloff	Gregory
13	11		5:43:30	Lyons	Sean
14		3	5:46:52	Buss	Vivienne
15		4	5:51:35	Warburton	Tymeka
16	12		5:55:09	Marshall	Kelvin
17	13		5:59:07	Schodde	Carl
18		5	6:03:57	Eisler	Marita
19	14		6:04:21	Kirkpatrick	Graeme
20	15		6:05:35	Sutton	Robert
21	16		6:08:07	Wells	Bob
22	17		6:10:23	Rasi	Mark
23		6	6:10:59	Holloway	Belinda
24	18		6:11:53	Emr	Mark
25		7	6:18:21	Grady	Shelley
26	19		6:25:00	Toby	Mike
27		8	6:28:35	Quinn	Nicole
28		9	6:29:21	Naughton	Shahan
29	20		6:30:07	Newberry	Bob
30	21		6:31:31	Wise	Peter
31	22		6:35:49	Griffiths	Rob
32	23		6:36:33	Cattell	Gary

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
33	24		6:37:45	Bendall	Gavin
34	25		6:39:54	Ewing	Paul
35		10	6:41:03	Sewell	Andrew
=36	=26		6:49:03	Corr	Sean
=36	=26		6:49:03	Taylor	Josh
38	28		6:52:51	Goucher	Jeff
39	29		6:57:44	Evans	Ross
40	30		6:58:31	Evans	Brian
41		11	7:18:54	Brun-Smiths	Marina
=42		=12	7:21:43	Bendall	Raelene
=42		=12	7:21:43	Poh	Seivland
=44	=31		7:27:46	Cornelius	Benjamin
=44	=31		7:27:46	Peckover	Sean
=46		=14	8:21:02	Jaques	Sara
=46		=14	8:21:02	Moloney	Mallani
48		16	8:46:13	Bower	Sue

Bold **SURNAME** indicates AURA member.



Nigel at Nerang SF – photo courtesy Michael Brown

Wild Horse Criterium

Wildhorse Mountain, QLD - April 8, 2012 - by Rebecca Thorn

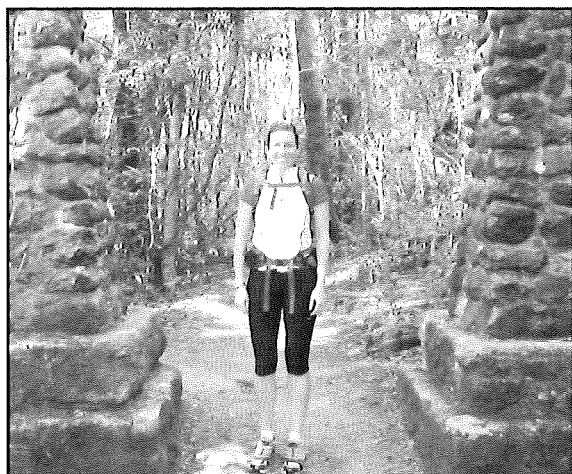
On Easter Sunday this year I ran the Wild Horse Criterium. I had competed at Wild Horse the past two years; the 10km in 2010 and 30km in 2011. I had a great time both years so was keen to go back again. The event is relaxed with small numbers and the course is lots of fun to run. The Easter eggs at the finish line help too. This year I entered the 60km option as preparation for The North Face 100 in May.

Considering that this was my first solo ultra event, I really didn't know what to expect and probably overdid the preparation the day before. I drove my poor fiancé crazy packing

the car with every possible thing I might need, including a whole esky of water bottles, chair and 4 spare pairs of shoes as there was a creek crossing each lap.

When I first entered the event I didn't pay too much attention to the detail as I had competed twice before. If I had read the start time I may have reconsidered; the 60km event started at 3.30am! As the event is held about 1 hour north of Brisbane, the alarm was set for 1.30am. This meant I had to be in bed trying to sleep at 7pm on Saturday night. Luckily the preparation all day Saturday wore me out and sleep wasn't a problem.

After a very dark and lonely drive down the highway, I arrived at the start to find about 30 other nutters trying to stay relaxed, get registered and organised to start. I set up my esky and massive race bag and got everything sorted. I'm usually putting on sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, etc., before a big run but that wasn't going to help at 3.30am. As the laps were approximately 11.5km long I needed to carry pretty much everything with me in my pack, which was good practice for all the gear I need for The North Face 100. It was also a great opportunity to run with lights,



Rebecca Thorn –
photo courtesy Rebecca Thorn

considering the first 2 hours would be run in the dark.

The Wild Horse course is one of my favourites but running it in the dark is a different story! The course is mostly run through the pine forests, beside the Bruce Highway, and there isn't much around. I admit I'm scared of the dark and decided to stick with other runners for the first lap. It seemed quite a few of us had the same idea as a group of about 15 ran together for the first 45 minutes. Unfortunately, my plan involved a slower pace than the group was doing, and a fair bit of walking (1 minute every 15 minutes) so I decided to slow down and try and run by myself.

Approximately 1km from the end of the first lap we crossed a small creek. I did my best to keep my feet dry but it was impossible. The options were a shoe full of mud or water so I decided to just run straight through the middle, especially as I had all the spare shoes in my bag if I needed them. I then realised there was no real point changing shoes as we changed direction each lap which meant I would be

back in the creek in another 2km! I didn't change shoes or socks at all during the race, and only ended up with one tiny blister.

The first two laps went by very quickly, probably because I was just looking forward to seeing sunrise rather than focusing on the full 60km I had to complete. Once the sun came up, the next thing I focused on was the 30km runners starting at 7am, which was going to provide some distraction for another 2 laps or so. I also made sure I was strict with my plan and made sure I was taking my walk breaks and eating / drinking regularly. The early start had made eating a bit tough as I'm not used to eating lollies / pikelets / salt tablets, etc., at 3.30am in the morning.

I was doing my best to stick to my plan and all seemed to be going ok until the second last lap, at around 43km, when the tiredness and soreness started to kick in. I was really fighting the evil voice in my head that was trying to convince me to walk more but I kept plodding along as fast as I could. Then all of a sudden I only had one lap to go! I don't think I was thinking straight as I probably should have been relieved to be almost finished, but one lap seemed so far. I couldn't even calculate how long each lap had been taking so I gave up thinking and headed out on the last lap. Luckily I caught up to a really lovely couple on this lap who were training for Comrades, so I had someone to talk to rather than trying to convince myself it was ok to walk.

Like the rest of the race, the last lap went fairly quick and then it was all over! As it was my first solo ultra I didn't really know how long it was going to take me. I was just hoping to make the cut-off so I told my fiancé not to bother arriving until around the 7 – 8hr mark. I ended up finishing in 6:36, which meant he missed me finishing. I'll be sure not to make the same mistake at The North Face!

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		4:52:15	Duffus	Benjamin
2	2		5:06:53	Moloney	Nic
3		1	5:54:27	Shaw	Kirsty
4	3		6:10:33	Vidal Maestre	Benjamin
5	4		6:11:15	Moreland	Nicholas
6	5		6:13:47	Smyth	Andrew
7		2	6:13:58	Banaghan	Glenda
8	6		6:14:55	Lucas	Stephen
9		3	6:18:17	Woodward	Tylana
10		4	6:22:47	Hussey	Lisa
11	7		6:24:28	Guard	Roger
12	8		6:25:34	Anson	Malcolm
13	9		6:27:26	Sarra	Lucas
14	10		6:33:46	Schodde	Carl
15		5	6:36:25	Thorn	Rebecca
16	11		6:43:55	Crozier	Rob
17		6	6:43:56	Crozier	Leigh
18	12		6:45:23	O'Brien	James
19		7	6:49:15	Laloli	Chrissie

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
20	13		7:02:35	Marshall	Kelvin
21	14		7:07:53	Taylor	David
22	15		7:29:02	Reeve	Dion
23	16		7:29:06	Maskiell	Lee
24		8	7:30:47	Leung	Sherin
25	17		7:41:14	Bool	Alan
26		9	7:41:15	Bool	Candice
27		10	8:05:22	Johnstone	Kylie
28		11	8:05:23	McMeniman	Karen
29	DNF		DNF	Abrey	Dave
30	DNF		DNF	Abrey	Paul
31	DNF		DNF	Dinkelman	Wayne
32	DNF		DNF	Nunan	Dan
33	DNS		DNS	Russell	Elizabeth
34	DNS		DNS	Clark	Murray
35	DNS		DNS	Eckford	Matthew
36	DNS		DNS	Noble	Chris
37	DNS		DNS	Malby	Ben

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



Coburg 24 Hour

Coburg, VIC - April 14-15, 2012 - by Kevin Muller

After completing the last four Melbourne Marathons without enough training, I decided to sign up for the Gold Coast 2012 and do the Coburg 6 Hour in March to ensure I had a few kilometres in the legs. When filling in the entry form I noticed I could also do the 24 Hour at a discount and, in a temporary moment of bravado, I ticked both boxes.

I doubt I had ever run more than 70km in a week before. I started counting kms for the first time and did my first 100km+ training week in late February. The most common questions I got from non-running friends were "24 hour run, how long will that take?" and "Why are you doing it, is it for charity?"

At the Maroondah Dam 50km I asked Justin Scholz for advice on nutrition and race pacing. He was very forthcoming and freely gave some useful advice. I had a ball park figure of 160km to aim for, but he told me I should aim for 180km. I planned on completing 66km in the Coburg 6 Hour in March, but managed 74km. I then set a dream goal of 200km, but was keeping this to myself as I didn't have a great deal of confidence that I would get there.

I never count calories, so my simple nutrition plan was to eat and drink regularly. Bananas, honey sandwiches and gels were my staple, washed down with Torque sports drink mixed with maltodextrin powder.

I arrived at Coburg and it was a warm day with a dry northerly wind. I weighed myself prior to the 10am start, and again at the 6 hour mark, and I had only lost 1kg. I was happy with that. My two sisters, Sandra and Allison, had previously volunteered on several Trails Plus events and when I told them I had entered Coburg I didn't need to ask them to crew; they

started planning straight away. I had no pacing strategy other than to follow the experienced ultra runners. I studied previous results and was well aware of what fellow competitors were capable of, and knew who I shouldn't be in front of. If I averaged 20 laps per hour I would get to 192km. This all went out the window on the first lap. I started off in 3rd position, and after a few minutes I was in 2nd but was determined not to overtake Justin, who led for the first two hours.

After 2 hours Justin slowed down slightly and I was now living my worst nightmare; I was leading a 24 hour event during the early stages. I was feeling good but thought I would be swamped by some of the runners behind me at anytime. I started the run wearing racing flats, but after four hours my feet were aching so I changed into normal road runners. I kept these on for another 3 hours until my toes were feeling very squashed, so I changed into a lightweight runners a 1/2 size bigger for the remainder of the run. I remained out in front until around the 9 hour mark when Ewan Horsburgh flew past. I had read about his exploits at C2K and knew he would run well for the entire 24 hours. I was relieved when he passed me as I was no longer the leader that everyone was chasing.

At the end of each hour Trevor Allen would fly past doing a 400m interval. I relied on the hourly lap scoreboard to keep track of him and the other runners. John Pearson, Mal Gamble and Trevor Allen had all completed over 200km previously, and they were all not far behind me. I passed 100km in approximately 9:50 and was feeling tired but knew if I had a rest I would soon drop a few places and might not be able to get going again.

Justin withdrew soon after 10 hours due to injury/illness. I was mindful

this could happen to me anytime, and I still had 14 hours to go. I watched the hourly updates as Mal Gamble steadily worked his way from 10th to 4th place; he also succumbed to injury after 16 hours. I was disappointed for both of them as I know how much time they would have invested to get to the start line.

During the graveyard shift I ran with John Pearson periodically, as we were running a similar pace and he was good company. Each hour I would decide how many laps to aim for then continually worked out the target time for each lap. This kept my mind busy so I wasn't constantly thinking about how sore and tired I was. The distinctive fast cadence of Ewan Horsburgh became a familiar sound as he passed by regularly. Peter "Chilli" Mullins and Ken Marsh were travelling better than me at various stages during the night and I couldn't keep up with them when they ran past.

By dawn I knew I could walk to 200km, but I kept running with a



Kevin heading for a 2nd place finish –
photo courtesy Kevin Muller

new target of 220km. I had heard that a lot of runners get a second wind when the sun rises, but I only got wind and farted a lot. I slowed during the last 3 hours and noticed the leading walkers also struggling. With half an hour to go I started to walk/run for the first time. I immediately felt a lot worse and won't be doing that again if I can help it. When the finish gun fired I was expecting to feel much better, but within minutes I was feeling very stiff

and sore and became nauseous.

I am very happy to have achieved 221.4km and 2nd place on debut, which is much better than I was aiming for. I remained injury and illness free during the run and my nutrition plan worked well, with my sisters offering food and drinks nearly every lap. I'm now hooked on this crazy long distance stuff and can't wait for more.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		234.870	Horsburgh	Ewan
2	2		221.454	Muller	Kevin
3	3		218.053	Pearson	John
4	4		208.127	Allen	Trevor
5	5		187.546	Marsh	Ken
6	6		186.354	Mullins	Peter
7		1	184.908	Hamaty	Sabina
8	7		183.776	Louw	Eric
9	8		174.729	Webb	Matt
10		2	173.927	Chan	Karen
11	9		173.387	Schoors	Rudy
12		3	162.562	Mestdagh	Caroline
13		4	162.070	Smith	Cassie
14	10		162.068	Kelly	Chris
=15	=11		161.318	Goeman	Eddy
=15	=11		161.318	Bennett	Peter
17	13		157.232	Jordan	Steve
18	14		156.889	Appleby	Steve
19	15		155.927	Vermeulen	Willy
20	16		152.241	Fryer	Martin
21		5	149.707	Thompson	Michelle
22	17		148.095	Wright	Paul
23	18		143.050	Brelsford	David

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
24		6	141.097	Parris	Dawn
25	19		138.000	Gamble	Mal
26	20		134.694	Cook	Kim
27	21		128.682	Timms	John
28	22		126.469	Saxon	Brett
29		7	125.244	Kelly	Diana
30	23		110.849	Commings	Louis
31	24		110.400	Valentine	Ian
32	25		106.730	Metcalfe	Dean
33	26		101.490	Gray	Peter
34	27		101.200	Scholz	Justin
35	28		87.916	O'Neill	Terry
36	29		86.467	Essam	Phil
37	30		86.000	Mason	Brendan
38	31		70.499	Pender	Sean
39		8	70.000	Ziogos	Agni
40		9	66.800	Voitin	Clare
41	32		60.132	Carter	Ken
42	33		59.717	Mckay	Doug
43		10	53.496	Howorth	Sandra
44	34		48.105	Jack	Clarrie
45	35		33.591	Turner	Gary

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.



Canberra 50km

Canberra, ACT - Australian/AURA Championships

April 13-14, 2012 - by Natasha Fraser

In my preparation for the Canberra 50km I managed to increase my mileage to 100km of running a week, and still managed to include cross training exercises at my local gym. This type of weekly distance is a first for me as I have always been too injury prone to run consistently. Having periods of time off due to injury has made me grow up, and realise how crucial proper nutrition and recovery is to success in any sport. We have really challenging hills out in the bush our way and I think the Sunday long run with Steve Monaggetti's stable is a

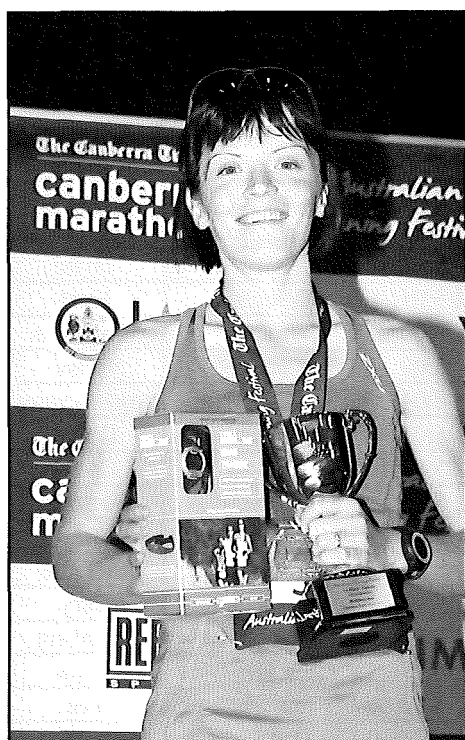
session I most credit for my success this year. Those boys are fast!

Going to a race in another state cannot only involve a long journey, but other challenges. After ending the night before in emotional tatters (the car alternator died, I got lost for hours driving in endless loops and saw someone threatening to jump off a bridge), I wasn't very positive come race morning.

The 5:30am start gave me enough time to pack up, eat breakfast, get changed and jog the 2km to the race start from the B&B I stayed in with

my husband. After waiting a good 20 minutes to use one of the limited portable toilets, we both realised a search for a good tree was going to be required in order to get a good position at the start line.

At the start line it was obvious that the weather was going to be a lot warmer than last year, where it rained all through the race. I was feeling very positive about the better weather, as I had a few niggles in my hamstring and thought this might help. The line was quite cramped with the half marathoners, marathoners and ultra



Natasha with some well-deserved hardware –
photo courtesy Bob Givens

runners, all packed into a narrow street, but there was a definite air of excitement and anticipation.

Once the gun went off my main aim was to cut through the crowd and cross the line as quickly as possible as I missed out on a second place last year due to a slower gun time. Once

I was free of the crowd I slowed my pace from 4:14km to 4:25km pace. Settling into this pace the first 10km was uneventful; having no clue as to what or where my competition was, but being very glad that it was an undulating course as it broke things up nicely. Competitors running the ultra just wore the marathon number, so there really was no way to tell who was running the ultra and who was running the marathon.

I remember feeling quite ordinary up until I noticed the eventual second place-getter running past. Towards the 15km mark her pacer suggested that she work with me to keep on her target pace. At this point I clarified with her that she was running the ultra, and being pretty evenly matched in pace we spent most of the distance passing, or being passed by, each other which was a fantastic distraction! Closer to the marathon finish I made a decision not to go with the other girl and to keep my pace consistent and body relaxed; this resulted in me finishing behind her in the marathon.

On coming through the marathon finish line, and venturing onto the ultra course, I was directed onto a bike path that was incredibly congested (half the people on the path didn't seem to be aware that a race was coming through.) About 3km into the ultra I caught up to the other girl, and the two of us then stuck together up until the last kilometre. We were both very thankful when the lead bike turned up to clear the way. When I saw the last KM marker in the distance I decided I had to make one last break for it. Ignoring the lactic build up in my quads, I visualised the finish line dragging me in and surged to the finish. I ended up winning the Canberra Ultra Marathon by five seconds and could not be happier! This race doubled as the Australian 50km Road Championships and I ran a qualifying time of 3:41:35. I will now be running for Australia at Worlds in Italy later this year. Imagine the challenges around that journey! Can't wait! Now floating on cloud nine, my mind has to come to grips with the fact I have achieved my biggest goal to this point.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		3:06:52	Walker	Sam
2	2		3:26:15	Polidano	Adrian
3	3		3:29:01	Cradock	Tim
4	4		3:33:56	Gillan	Paul
5	5		3:39:02	Jenkins	Peter
6		1	3:41:44	Fraser	Natasha
7		2	3:41:49	Selby	Melissa
8	6		3:44:37	Robertson	Thomas
9	7		3:44:40	Hayward	Todd
10	8		3:45:12	Glendinning	Adrian
11	9		3:45:58	Nolan	Steve
12	10		3:49:00	Whitaker	Matthew
13	11		3:49:17	Blake	Jonathan
14	12		3:52:55	Bruning	Paul
15	13		3:54:35	Malligan	Shaun
16	14		3:55:50	Hipwell	James
17	15		3:55:55	Trewhitt	Tory
18	16		3:59:11	Scott	Peter
19	17		4:01:42	O'Connor	Damien
20	18		4:01:52	Austin	Tim
21		3	4:03:39	Vandierendonck	Annelore
22	19		4:03:03	Murphy	Jason
23	20		4:03:29	Graham	Dave
24	21		4:03:31	Kennedy	Anthony
25	22		4:04:03	Levy	Jeremy

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
26	23		4:04:07	Tappin	Carl
27	24		4:05:10	Fraser	David
28	25		4:07:00	Irvine	Glen
29	26		4:08:18	Collins	Bradley
30		4	4:07:29	Watson	Natalie
31	27		4:08:39	Hibbs	Mark
32		5	4:08:48	Savage	Kate
33		6	4:11:35	Zhang	Shirley
34	28		4:10:45	Muller	Sean
35	29		4:11:18	Sawa	Mak
36	30		4:11:24	Mun Koo	Ray
37		7	4:11:42	Atkinson	Carmen
38		8	4:14:58	Tebbutt	Jo
39	31		4:14:31	Travill	Mark
40	32		4:15:40	Le Marinel	Phill
41	33		4:15:59	Ruardij	Jeroen
42	34		4:18:18	Breckenridge	Wylie
43	35		4:17:13	Moore	Geoff
44		9	4:17:32	Vaughan	Keri
45	36		4:20:50	Hall	Sam
46	37		4:20:34	Rutter	Barry
47	38		4:21:07	Lamb	Giles
48	39		4:21:33	Craig	Tim
49	40		4:21:43	Yates	Chris

Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
50	41		4:22:59	Murray	Robert
51	42		4:22:35	John Ymana	Nigel
52	43		4:22:57	Heaton	Kevin
53		10	4:24:00	Hart	Bridget
54	44		4:25:53	Burdett	Chris
55		11	4:27:37	Muston	Pam
56	45		4:28:08	Blackwell	Tym
57		12	4:29:06	Kartsounis	Vivienne
58	46		4:29:57	Burnet	Matt
59	47		4:30:53	Watkin	Gideon
60	48		4:31:05	Kellner	Anthony
61	49		4:31:10	Jameson	Craig
62	50		4:31:10	Vials	Steven
63	51		4:31:11	Macpherson	Glenn
64	52		4:32:54	Alcock	Angus
65		13	4:31:08	Spink	Sharon
66		14	4:33:21	Steele	Carly
67		15	4:32:21	Burgess	Teresa
68	53		4:40:11	Edwards	Sam
69		16	4:33:04	Catton	Rosemary
70	54		4:34:16	Trimmer	Jason
71	55		4:36:47	Nicholls	Robin
72	56		4:37:23	Petersen	Kevin
73	57		4:40:19	Clarke	Peter
74	58		4:39:42	Mills	Martin
75	59		4:41:15	Kirk	Nicholas
76	60		4:43:04	Whittaker	Matthew
77	61		4:44:57	Swan	James
78	62		4:43:38	Adam	Connor
79	63		4:44:39	Gooding	Ryan
80	64		4:44:39	Topper	Kurt
81	65		4:46:20	Gregory	Matt
82		17	4:46:44	Elliott	Abbey
83	66		4:47:47	Boocock	James
84	67		4:46:20	Ridley	Graham
85	68		4:49:04	Marshall	Hayden
86	69		4:48:15	Steele	Andy
87	70		4:48:39	Buckley	Shane
88	71		4:50:52	Mingazov	Rustam
89	72		4:49:20	Richards	Wayne
90	73		4:50:34	English	Stephen
91		18	4:51:24	Rose	Mia
92	74		4:54:16	Davis	Morgan
93	75		4:53:44	Martens	Brad
94		19	4:53:44	Hui	Tennille
95	76		4:54:16	Moulin	Stephane
96	77		4:57:01	Smyth	Andrew
97	78		4:56:59	Lindsay	Russell
98		20	4:56:59	Che Wilson	Dionette
99		21	4:57:19	Ngoh Nestor	Ngoh

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
100		22	4:58:29	Shing	Lindsey
101	79		5:00:01	Saxby	Douglas
102		23	4:58:54	Adams	Carol
103		24	5:00:01	Horne	Natasha
104		25	5:00:02	McCormick	Debra
105		26	5:00:33	Bawden	Jayne
106	80		5:04:28	Vaughan	Kent
107	81		5:04:06	Lucas	Benjamin
108		27	5:04:13	Maxwell	Betsy
109	82		5:04:35	David	Jean-Jacques
110	83		5:03:48	Brown	David
111	84		5:07:16	Stone	David
112	85		5:06:59	Holland	Wayne
113	86		5:09:13	Levin	Alan
114		28	5:11:22	Awiszus	Stefanie
115	87		5:09:13	Aaron	Gary
116		29	5:10:04	Russell	Elizabeth
117		30	5:11:24	Ridley	Lena
118	88		5:12:06	Knapton	Lee
119		31	5:11:30	Hepworth	Annabel
120		32	5:12:12	O'Connor	Theresa
121	89		5:13:44	Moore	Christopher
122	90		5:14:15	Snelling	Nathan
123	91		5:14:01	Pearce	Billy
124	92		5:18:21	Paxton	Robert
125	93		5:17:31	Schaefer	Heiko
126	94		5:24:22	Thomson	Scott
127	95		5:24:56	Wade	Damian
128	96		5:24:56	Caron	Teifi
129		33	5:26:00	Trimmer	Carolynn
130	97		5:27:38	Mullins	Damian
131	98		5:27:09	Griffin	Aodhan
132	99		5:29:07	Nel	Pieter
133	100		5:32:47	Nicholls	Mark
134	101		5:32:19	Reynolds	Stephen
135		34	5:32:45	Cooke	Liesel
136		35	5:33:02	Crim	Jade
137		36	5:33:53	Marshall	Sarah-Jane
138		37	5:45:38	Williams	D Lynn
139	102		5:46:55	Russell	Rich
140	103		5:46:55	Russell	Geoff
141	104		5:48:42	Lim	Jon
142	105		5:51:24	Smith	Ken
143		38	5:53:16	Walden	Joy
144	106		5:53:17	Finlay	Greg
145	107		5:58:45	Whalebone	Gavin
146		39	6:00:58	Barnes	Natika
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					



Roller Coaster Run

April 28, 2012 - Mt Dandenong, VIC - by Jamie Smith

WOW! What an event. After doing the Two Bays Trail Run back in January and seeing just how well organised and fun the team that orchestrated this event made it, I just had to give this one a go. For a maiden event, Race Director Rohan Day, and Assistant Race Director Michael Clarke, put together a spectacular run thoroughly enjoyed by all involved. The volunteers at the aid stations were a godsend, donned in crazy wigs, full clown suits and pom poms. Not only did they tie in very well with the carnival theme, they assisted tired runners with water and nutrition, offered loads of encouragement and were simply upbeat in helping to lift the spirits of the runners.

Sky High, Mt Dandenong was such an impressive venue for the start, midway point and finish of the 2-loop 43km run. You couldn't have asked for a better morning to start the race; the air was clear and crisp (albeit a little chilly), and the amazing views over metropolitan Melbourne as our backdrop just added to the magnitude of what

lay ahead. This was also special for my wife and I as this was where we had been married just over three years ago. It would also be the furthest distance my wife was "attempting" to run by about 11km, by doing the 1 loop / 21.5km option. She, along with many other first timers, managed to finish with a huge smile, and a few tears of joy!

After the race briefing the second wave of mixed long and short course runners set off at 7:30am. With a small field of 73 starters for the 43km event, there was a huge amount of enthusiasm and you could really feel the excitement. Be it a mix of pre-race nerves, adrenalin, or both, this set the tone for the rest of the run. One runner, Lachlan Fraser, didn't even let an altercation with a glass door (which left him with a nasty gash requiring 13 stitches) dampen his enthusiasm, and went on to finish the long course in a respectable time of 5hrs placing 14th. Now that's dedication for you.

We descended the Sky High parking area via a steep, slippery trail that connected us with Kyeema Track; an undulating groomed track that continues for the first few km bringing us to the start of Zig Zag Track, the steepest and slipperiest descent on the course. Quite a few people came undone here, skidding, sliding and tumbling down the track ever so gracefully. I believe this section largely contributed to the almost 20% withdrawal of the field from the race; a number like that is worth mentioning in order to display how technical the course is

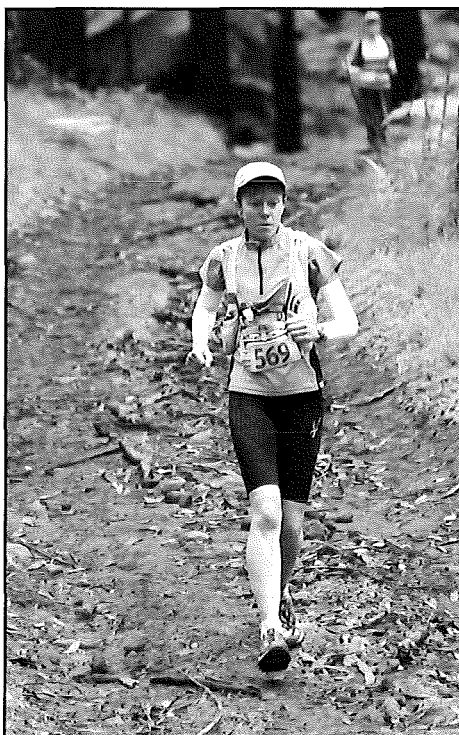


Grace Bailey enjoying a fantastic day on the trail – photo courtesy dandyrunner.com

in certain sections.

Once past the steep descent, it was a relief to get some fast, flat downhill sections on Zig Zag and Channel 10 tracks, which lead us into Doongalla Rd and the Doongalla aid station. It was here that we first experienced the crazy, zany encouragement of Katrina and her aid station crew. A little after the 5km mark a sharp left was made and we were on the infamous Dodd's Track, a long gradual climb which turns into the longest, steep ascent on the course. I think the only thing harder than ascending Dodd's on this course, was having to do it twice! After a bit more climbing along Range Rd, we got some reprieve on the downhill School Track; this took us to the undulating Banksia Track. With another steep climb, followed by a rough, steep descent down Ridge Track (are you seeing where this run gets its name yet?), the next few km offered twists and turns on about 4 different tracks leading us back onto Doongalla Rd, and through the buzz and excitement of the aid station and the 12.5km split timing mats.

More ups and downs, twists and turns followed on Stables, Bill's and Edgar Tracks, which culminated in a long, uphill slog onto Camelia



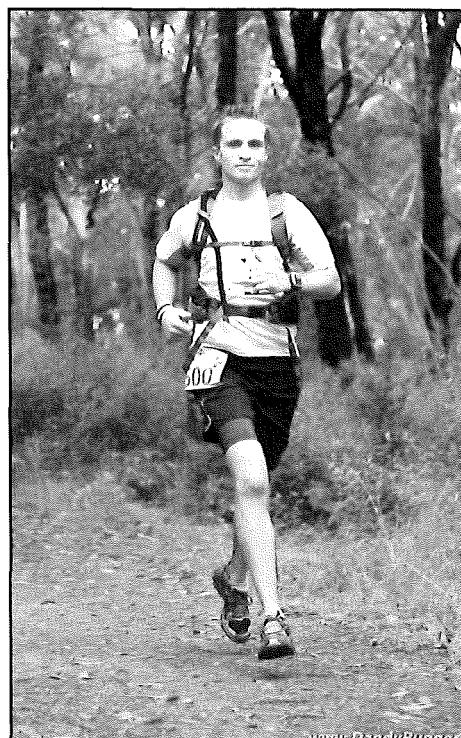
Sandy Suckling heading for a 2nd place finish in the female division – photo courtesy dandyrunner.com

Track. Continuous smaller up and down undulations entertained us runners for a while, before a quick left, then right, put us onto Singleton Terrace; the longest gradual climb of the run. This came in stages (I'm sure a possible spirit breaker for a few), but also provided some flat 4WD track for a couple of km to help stretch the legs out a bit. It didn't, however, take long for the flat section to end, yielding to a climb up Old Mountain Rd; which offered some magnificent views to the clearing at Kalorama and the start of Trig Track. This is the most technical section of the course, affectionately referred to as a 0.5 trail. I had my first official fall on a trail run here; good to get it out the way with a quick down and bounce back up. The technical stuff didn't last too long, but you come out of it into another steep climb followed closely by a few more short, but steep, climbs all in the last couple of km before hitting the Sky High parking lot and, finally, the finish

line. Yes, we finally made it to the finish line...to find the bollard that read "43km turn around". Take a moment, refuel, recompose then head back out to repeat it all again!

As a mid-pack runner I didn't get to see the pointy end of the race, but looking at the results the winner Damon Goerke 3:49:57 (who went on to win the 45km Delatite Dash the next day; super human or what?) had a very strong, convincing win; coming in just over 30 min ahead of subsequent place getters, and AURA members, Toby Wiadrowski (4:21:25) and Simon Marcus (4:24:13). In the female division, Samatha Gash (5:01:48) had a convincing win with a 17 min+ lead on AURA member Sandy Suckling (5:19:39), closely followed by Maria Plyashechko (5:21:20). Well done to all the place getters at the inaugural Roller Coaster Run.

To sum it up, a day literally filled with ups and downs was superbly orchestrated by the organisers,



Jaime Smith looking strong –
photo courtesy dandyrunner.com

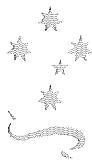
volunteers, photographers Erwin & Gilda from DandyRunner, fellow participants and spectators; thank you to everyone involved. Next year I'll have to try and finish earlier making it in before the brunch cut off.

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
1	1		3:49:57	Goerke	Damon
2	2		4:21:25	Wiadrowski	Toby
3	3		4:24:13	Marcus	Simon
4	4		4:30:19	Kurov	Serge
5	5		4:32:52	Calder	Garth
6	6		4:35:14	Sime	Martin
7	7		4:37:26	Devlin	Jules
8	8		4:38:33	Langelaaan	Daniel
9	9		4:41:15	Vintin	Sean
10	10		4:43:33	Jones	Brian
11	11		4:46:32	Perry	Dion
12	12		4:55:36	Shepherd	Ken
13	13		4:57:10	Elliott	Stuart
14	14		5:00:37	Fraser	Lachlan
15	15		5:01:37	Mitchell	Scott
16		1	5:01:48	Gash	Samantha
17	16		5:04:54	Smith	Sean
18	17		5:08:38	O'Connell	Ryan
19		2	5:19:39	Suckling	Sandy
20		3	5:21:20	Plyashechko	Maria
21	18		5:25:23	Cummings	Drew
22	19		5:29:43	Smith	Jamie
23	20		5:32:07	Robbs	Chris
24		4	5:32:28	Barker	Nicole
25		5	5:33:47	Smith	Margot Ann
26	21		5:34:08	Tulloch	Dean

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
27	22		5:41:09	Evans	Owen
28		6	5:42:16	Shadbolt	Jane
29	23		5:42:17	Carson	Matthew
30		7	5:44:37	Edwards	Diane
31	24		5:45:28	Corbett	James
32	25		5:48:24	Duggan	Graham
33		8	5:48:53	Morgan	Elizabeth
34	26		5:50:14	Mcnamara	Matt
35	27		5:52:28	Phillips	Ben
=37	29		5:58:11	Sutton	Rob
=37	28		5:58:11	Hartnell	Gregor
38	30		5:59:37	Anderson	Jason
39		9	5:59:52	Horwood	Barbara
40	31		6:06:20	King	Andrew
41	32		6:09:50	Whelan	Steve
42	33		6:11:07	King	Brendan
43		10	6:15:28	Allan	Eliza
44		11	6:16:44	Bailey	Grace
45	34		6:17:11	Searcy	Angus
46		12	6:26:17	Mcgrady	Emma
47	35		6:26:19	Koelmeyer	Gerard
48	36		6:27:03	Yeo	Vince
49		13	6:29:26	Bell	Lauren
50	37		6:37:33	Lennon	Chester
51	38		6:42:17	Piper	Owen
=52	39		6:44:54	Meyer	Bernd

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
=52		14	6:44:54	Adam	Carole
54	40		6:45:27	Kinder	Neil
55	41		6:45:45	Pollard	Graeme
56		15	6:49:42	Bolton	Vanessa
57	42		6:50:51	Talento	Martin
=58		=16	6:53:31	Evans	Sophia
=58		=16	6:53:31	Holmes	Katherine
DNF			2:04:27	Sheppard	Campbell
DNF			2:05:43	Finocchiaro	Dion
DNF			2:17:18	Gladwell	Paul
DNF			2:23:50	Callaghan	Matt
DNF			2:27:03	Schroeder	Adam
DNF			2:31:29	Brady	Luke
DNF			3:00:15	Barry	Annie
DNF			3:11:48	Hutchinson	Daniel
DNF			3:12:33	Iverson	James
DNF			3:37:10	Herman	Andrew

Rank	Cat Place	Cat Place	Time	Last Name	First Name
DNF			4:13:40	Yap	Lindy
DNF			4:13:40	Karlsen	Noelene
DNS				Hunt	Martin
DNS				Cruse	Cathy
DNS				Peterson	Jacob
DNS				Swan	Greg
DNS				Kew	Greg
DNS				Brady	Matthew
DNS				Cooling	Luke
DNS				Goss	Ben
DNS				Hevern	Matt
DNS				Griffin	Penny
DNS				Lucas	Benjamin
DNS				Parker	Melanie
DNS				Wilson	Matthew
DNS				Trewhitt	Tory
Bold SURNAME indicates AURA member.					



AURA Member Profile

Brad Miller



Name: Brad Miller

Age: 40

Birthplace: Tucson, Arizona, United States

Currently living in (suburb, state): East Brunswick Victoria

Number of years running: 30

Number of years running ultras: 10 in various forms

Favourite running terrain (and distance): Off road 50-ish km but working my way up to 100km

Hours and/or distance spent running each week: Varies quite a bit with my family and work schedule but ideally 70 to 90kms a week. I

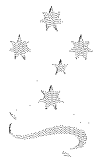
normally have to get this all done in about 5 runs/week. Over the next few months this will ramp up in preparation for TNF100 with the ultimate goal of eventually qualifying for the Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc.

Some ultras completed: My background is actually in expedition adventure racing, which typically had 1 or 2 ultras included in the race format. I have only recently switched over to an ultra-specific focus. I've done a couple of Oxfams, Uhwarrie Adventure Trail run (40miles in North Carolina), The Southern Traverse (New Zealand), Raid the North Extreme (Canada), and La Ruta De Conquistadores (Costa Rica).

Running related injuries: None, luckily. I am blessed with the joints of a tank.

Hobbies outside of running: Ironman triathlon, high altitude mountaineering, alpine climbing, telemark skiing, distance swimming, rock climbing, mountain biking and fly fishing.

Occupation: I am the CEO of the Litmus Group, an international management consulting firm.



AURA Member Profile

Mallani Moloney

Name: Mallani Moloney

Age: 28

Birthplace: Cairns, QLD

Currently living in (suburb, state): Moorooka, Brisbane, QLD

Number of years running: 5 years

Number of years running ultras: 2 ½ years

Favourite running terrain (and distance): hilly scenic trails, gravel road, or a nice bouncy athletic track – any distance up to 100km – too wussy to do 100 miles at this stage.

Hours and/or distance spent running each week: On average 50-60km per week but on occasions up to 100km as I have to work around commitments of running my own business.

Some ultras completed: Great North Walk 100km, Two Bays, Yurrebilla Trail, Glasshouse 100km, Washpool, Kurrawa to Duranbah

Running related injuries: My last running related injury was about 4 years ago (ITBFS). Fingers crossed there will be no more.

Hobbies outside of running: In a past life I lived and breathed table tennis and am also a classically trained pianist. I am married to another ultra runner and all my best friends are ultra runners, too, so you could say if I'm not running in an event I'm volunteering or crewing. And if I'm not doing that I'm working, running/walking my dogs, gardening, watching movies and doing the odd bit of travelling when I can.

Occupation: Director/Town Planner of my own company.





AURA Member Profile

Shaye Hatty

Name: Shaye Hatty

Age: 40

Birthplace: Melbourne. Grew up on a rice property at Jerilderie, southern NSW.

Currently living in (suburb, state): Parap (5km north of Darwin), NT

Number of years running: 25 years

Number of years running ultras: 5 years ultra distance triathlon (4km swim, 180km cycle, 42.2km run), only 1 ultra marathon. I must say, Comrades was more challenging than Ironman Triathlon.

Favourite running terrain (and distance): Flat terrain, high humidity, 45-50km. Litchfield National Park is a great location for long, solid cycle/run brick sessions.

Hours and/or distance spent running each week: I have recently been selected to the Australian Team - Long Course Triathlon Age Group Championships to be held in Spain, 29th July 2012. Currently my training week looks like this: swim 13km, cycle 260km, run 5.5hours. So not much running at the moment. My ride time crosses over to my run. My run sessions include one recovery run after a solid weekend, one tempo, one speed session and one long run.

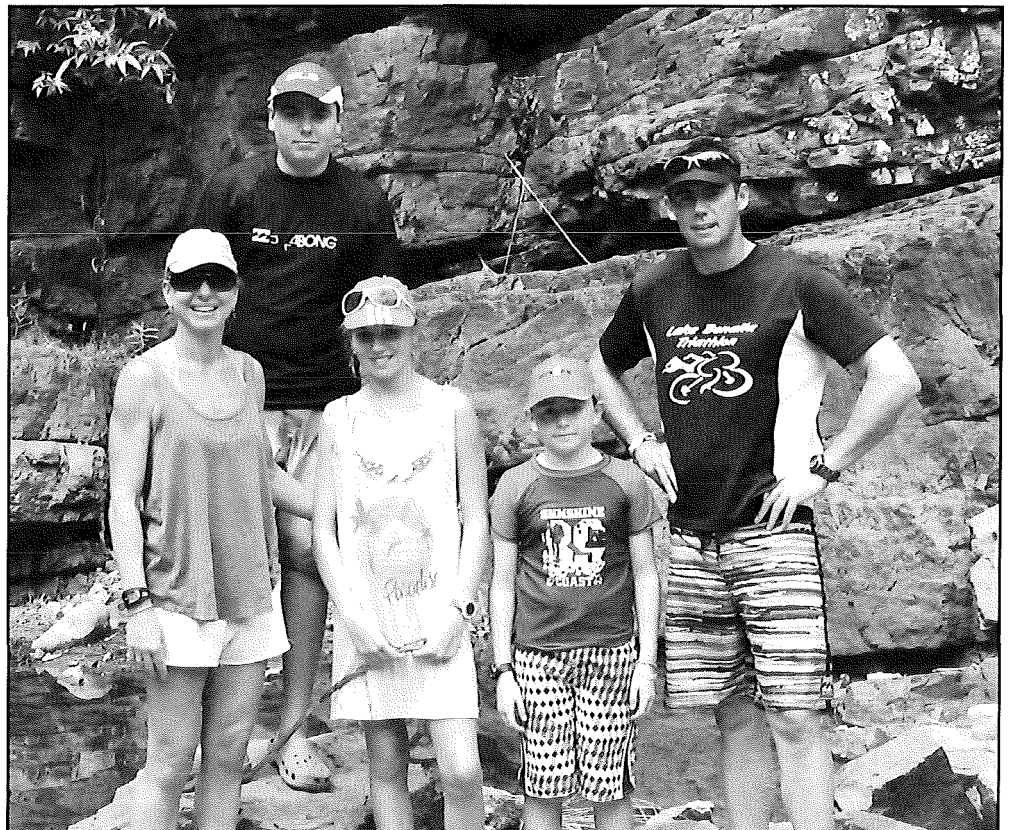
Some ultras completed: Comrades 2008, NZ Ironman 2009, China IM 2010, Abu Dhabi Long Course Triathlon 2011. Plus 14 marathons and 20 half marathons.

Running related injuries: Left achilles last year. Plantar Fasciitis 2 years ago. Triathlon has helped me offload the body. Cross training kept me moving.

Hobbies outside of running:

Swimming, cycling, waterskiing, hiking, camping and reading. Coaching Junior Development squads.

Occupation: Franchisees
Fernwood Fitness Darwin





AURA Member Profile

Trevor Allen

Name: Trevor Allen

Age: 35

Birthplace: Kogarah, NSW

Currently living in (suburb, state): Noosaville, QLD

Number of years running: 3

Number of years running ultras: 3 (participated in them for 3 years, running in them for 3 years would be an exaggeration)

Favourite running terrain (and distance): Track 24hr

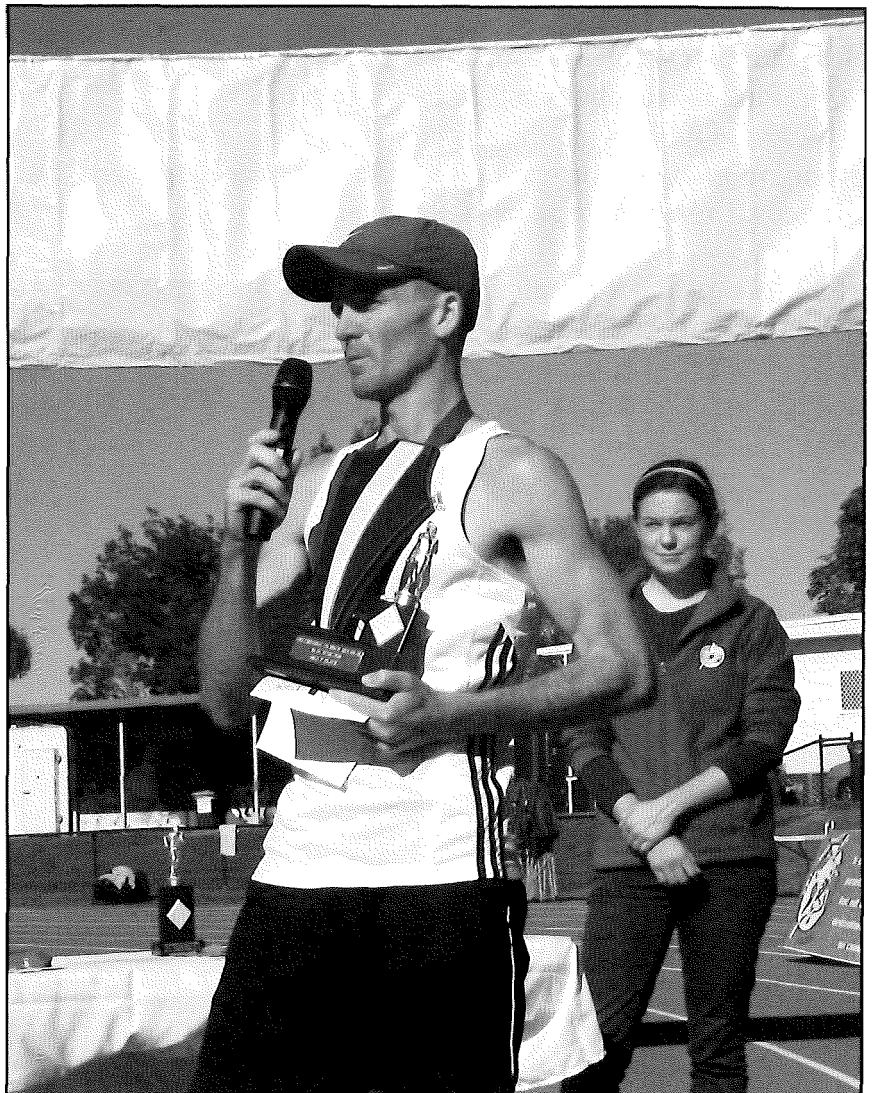
Hours and/or distance spent running each week: Recently got to 80km

Some ultras completed: Coburg 24hr, Sri Chinmoy 24hr, C2K, Glasshouse 50km, Kurrawa to Duranbah 50km and Caboolture 48hr/12hr/50km

Running related injuries: Nil

Hobbies outside of running: Currently studying Bachelor of Education, going to the gym and the occasional round of par 3 golf.

Occupation: Retail Assistant





Interview with Helen Stanger

by Bernadette Benson

I only moved to Australia 4 years ago, but Helen's was one of the first names I learned; it was whispered about trackside at my first forays into the sport. On closer look, I saw that Helen continues to hold two Australian open track records, 14 age group track records, and six age group road records. Helen is an inspiration to many and I am grateful that she took the time to let AURA members learn a bit more about her.

It appears that most of your record setting took place in the decade of the 1990s. Was there something about this particular time of your life that made it better for you to take on the extreme challenges of high intensity training?

There was nothing in particular about this decade of my life; rather the timing was determined by a series of chance events in the late eighties. I hope I won't bore you with the recounting of my story.

My motivation to start running came out of the blue in 1985, at age 35, when on holiday with my brother and his wife. They were doing a little jogging at the time and suggested I come with them. When I only made 500 metres before having to stop, I decided then and there that I would buy some joggers and begin running a few kilometres.

My very first 10km fun run nearly brought about an early exit from racing when I witnessed a competitor collapse and die on the finish line. I certainly held a strong belief at this time that a marathon was much too far for anyone to run. That all changed in 1986 when I read about a local running club, Billy's Bushies, who ran on the tracks of the Royal National Park. There I met and became good friends with runners of all distances, including Bob Telfer, a previous competitor in the

Westfield Ultramarathon. It wasn't too long before I became a "running addict" and a marathon followed in 1987.

The possibility of an ultra race had still not entered my mind until by chance I witnessed, for the first time, the final hours of a 24hr track race. I was in awe of these runners who could push their mind and body to such extreme limits. This gave me the incentive to attempt my first 50 miler, Sydney to Wollongong, the next year. After finishing the race, with the added bonus of being first placed female, I knew I had well and truly caught the "ultra bug." In no time I was planning, with the help of our club captain Billy Collis, to set myself a higher goal, the 24hr track race in 1989. We knew very little about training, nutrition, hydration, and the like in those days, and at the 23hr mark, with a distance of 186km, I collapsed. It took every effort to just stand on the track for the last minute of the race to be considered an official finisher. I should also add at this point that the late eighties had been a very difficult period in my personal life and it wasn't until 1990 that I was able to concentrate more on my training. The main goal for me was always to test myself over 24

hours to see how far I was capable of running. I achieved that in 1998, aged 48, after competing in 12 24hr races, along with several multi-day events, by running 229km. Several of those runners who shared the track with me over those years are still out there competing. I truly admire their tenacity but, for me, once I had reached my personal goal I was content to hang up my 24hr shoes.

You participated in two 6 day races, is that right? The Campbelltown 6-day race in 1990 (691.588km) and the last Sydney to Melbourne race in 1991 (stopping at 770km with injury). From there, it appears you started to specialise in the 24hr and 48hr distances. Was it that the 6-day races came to an end in Australia or was there another reason for moving to the 24/48 distance specialty?

I did compete in 3 multi-day races - the two that you have mentioned, plus the 1994 Tasmanian 7 Day Stage Race over 630km. Also I ran a 48hr in 1995. These were great experiences, but I suppose it all comes down to the old saying,



Recently competing at Sublime Point, north of Wollongong, in a Saturday Billy's Bushies run



1992 International 24hr Switzerland

“horses for courses.” I was always prone to more injuries in the longer races and mentally I was consistently drawn back to the 24hr track. The one exception would have to be the Westfield Ultramarathon as I was determined, after failing in my first attempt, to go back the following year to complete my “unfinished business” with the race. Unfortunately, as 1991 was the final year that it was held, I never had the opportunity to do so.

Sorry to ask such as stereotypical question, but it's of interest... what are a few of your most memorable events and why?

This has to be the most difficult question to answer as they all hold special memories for me; however, I will narrow it down to three.

The Westfield Race in 1991 would have to top the list for two reasons. For me it was just such an overwhelming experience both physically and even more so mentally. I remember standing on the start line at the Westfield shopping centre with the strains of Chariots of Fire in my ears and tears in my eyes, before the crowd cheered us on to the daunting 1000km journey that lay ahead. The enormity of the task had suddenly become a reality as I ran out on to the roads in Liverpool. I discovered the very depths of my soul during that race and had to face the great disappointment of not finishing due to injury. From that

race I also learnt that in ultras you compete as part of a team, the back up crew (and I had the very best) being just as important as you the runner.

The Tasmanian 7 Day Stage Race over 630km was another that I will never forget. Both

the mountainous terrain and harsh weather conditions (battering gale force head winds, freezing temps, sleet and snow) made for an extremely tough race. It is probably best summed up in the words of the great runner, Kouros, after he finished day 5 at a snowed-in Cradle Mountain. “This is a dangerous and dramatic race and there is nothing more dear than your own life and your family and friends. That’s what I thought of today and I didn’t want to leave my bones in those hills.” The race director himself had titled the race, “Hell in Paradise” and I don’t think there was a competitor that disagreed. I haven’t the words to describe the overwhelming feeling of crossing the line at the Hobart Casino at the end of day 7 in second female place behind the world champion, Eleanor Robinson. It was such a tremendous buzz...until the announcement that I had now qualified for the Trans American Race. I think I muttered quite a few expletives before collapsing on the casino’s carpeted floor with very low blood pressure. I might add that this happened at the entrance to the auditorium where a group of concert goers in full evening wear had to avoid treading on my crumpled body.

Finally, I must mention my best, and last, 24hr race in 1998 at Coburg where I felt that I reached the highest I could go, 229.08km. I couldn’t exclude that .08 on the total

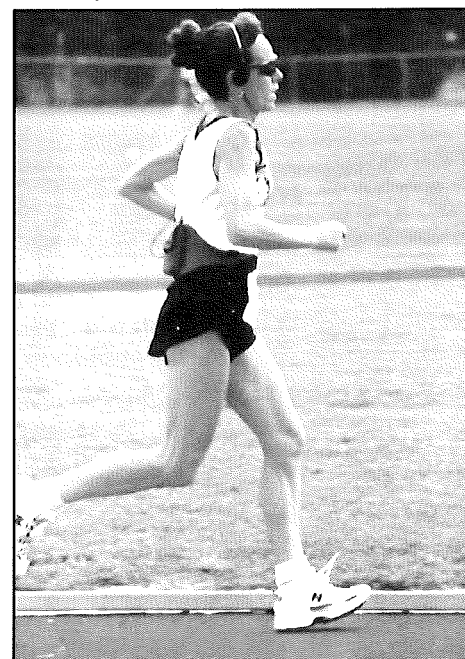
as I gave that last 80 metres 110% and I still remember the pain of it today. I was physically spent, but on an enormous runners high. Never will I forget that my successes belong not to me alone, but also to my coach, Billy, and a special group of friends who have always crewed for me over the years.

It seems like you only did a couple shorter ultras. Were any trail races? If you avoided trail, why?

I did do several shorter ultra races on trails such as Six Foot Track, Royal National Park 50 Miler and the Brindabella Classic, but I have always preferred the road under my feet. Although I love to run in the bush, I am not a natural trail runner, tending to trip over anything. I have always performed better in the road ultras such as Canberra’s 50km and the Wollongong 50 Miler.

What advice would you give to aspiring 24hr+ ultra runners?

Don’t do it!!! Only joking, of course. Firstly I would quote the old but true adage that, as in anything in life, experience is the best teacher. I found that it takes some time to learn about yourself as an ultra runner. I



1998 Coburg Race

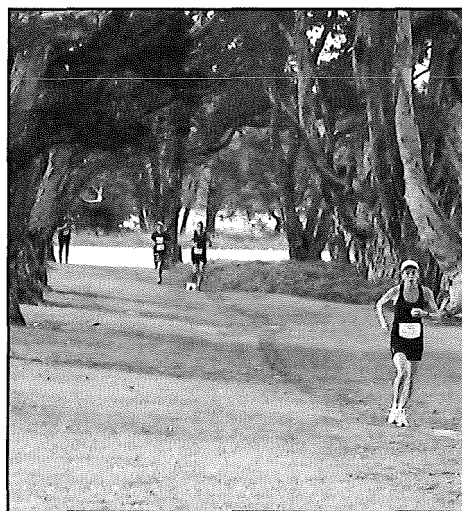


1999 Canberra 50k 3hr 46min

also believe we all train in different ways; one size doesn't fit all. I have never trained as far as many other ultra runners, whether this was the best approach or not I don't know. The race itself is really a battle between your body that desperately wants you to stop and the mind that pushes you onward. If you find yourself in a big black hole, and we've all been there, keep going, dig deeper and you will find the strength to eventually pull yourself out. There are a few little mind tricks that I discovered that were really helpful in making the enormity of the time/distance to be run less daunting. Mentally I divided the race into sections and concentrated on reaching the next immediate goal. Sometimes this would be a distance like 50km or maybe just the next change of direction on the track. Music through earphones was essential to my racing. No matter how exhausted I was feeling certain songs would always lift my spirits along with the pace I was running. Lastly, the camaraderie amongst ultra runners is like no other in the sport of running and the other competitors will always provide the support needed to reach that finish line.

You said that you never trained as far as many others – did you have a set weekly program for mileage and pace? Where did you get your training ideas from? Did you learn from others or make things up as you went along?

When I began training for ultras we had very little information on training techniques so each race became a new learning experience. Over the years I did disagree with my coach about the length of my long training runs. In preparation for a 24hr race I rarely did a training run longer than 50km, and although this was usually at a good pace I felt that the distance should have been further. The exception was my preparation for multi-day events when I often ran twice a day. For the Westfield Race we also included a three-day session of three consecutive 100km runs. Generally though, we devised our own weekly programme and continued to use it over the years. This included the long run on Sundays, a mid-week run of around 30km and distances of 10-20km on four other days. I found that this pattern worked for me, along with the one rest day every week to allow for recovery.



March 2012 racing half marathon

What have you been doing for the last decade in terms of running and life generally?

I am still running 5 days of the week, but, shorter distances and slower than a decade ago. Now in my early 60s I am grateful to still be enjoying running and I hope this will continue for many years yet. I have run a couple of marathons, some road races around 30km and also some shorter fun runs. Last year I attempted a track age record for 50km but had to withdraw with a stomach problem. This has always been an issue for me when racing but has become even more so in the last few years.

Life in general has been good. Recently my second grandson was born and I enjoy my role as Nanny, even though I don't feel anywhere near as old as the title implies. I now live alone except for the company of my four-legged friend, Oska, the dog. He is a little Maltese cross so he hasn't really got the right legs to go running with me. I still enjoy the company of my long-term friends from the Bushies Club, though these days the training runs are getting shorter and the coffees at the café afterwards longer. Developing and maintaining the native garden around my home takes up a fair amount of my spare time but I find it both relaxing and rewarding. I also work part time delivering pamphlets (that junk mail that some people hate) and the local newspaper. I think the amount of walking involved with this job has always been beneficial to my running over the years and helped to keep me fairly injury free.

PROBIOTICS FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

by Krista Bragg & Kenneth Bragg

Originally published in UltraRunning magazine, November 2011. Reprinted with permission.

You strategically schedule and execute your weekly training – pounding out your long runs, pushing through speed and pace drills, and fueling your runs with a healthy diet. You carefully plan your race schedule and rehearse the courses. But is it possible you are still lacking something in your training? Probiotics may be the ingredient your training menu is missing.

Probiotics have been credited with improving immune function as well as overall upkeep of our “internal ecosystem.”

Found naturally in foods such as yogurt, sauerkraut, cabbage kimchi, soybean miso, and kefir (a milk-like yogurt product), probiotics are becoming increasingly popular as a food supplement. Probiotics are also available in pill form with claims that regular use will speed healing, improve gut function, and other health benefits. But are any of these claims true? And

months. One group consumed probiotic-containing milk while the control group drank a placebo. Over the 16-week period, the athletes consuming probiotics experienced fewer total number of viral illnesses (colds). Of the few participants who happened to become ill with a cold, the probiotic group experienced symptoms for a shorter time than the athletes who did not consume probiotics, meaning fewer lost training days.

GASTROINTESTINAL UPSET

Most runners are no stranger to gastrointestinal upset at one time or another. Some of the most inconvenient times to experience it are during a

and competitors may increase your risk for gastrointestinal illness. Further evidence indicates probiotics may reduce infectious diarrhea associated with travel as well.

DECREASED RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

The British Journal of Medicine (2010) published a significant decrease in the number of respiratory “sick days” and overall level of illness in runners who consumed probiotics routinely.

In another study, investigators evaluated the



UltraRunning magazine's proofreader Susan Bush offers an important probiotic – Lagunitas Pale Ale aka Miwok Trail Ale – at the 2011 Miwok 100K



competitive event or the intense training prior. Probiotics encourage growth of healthy microorganisms in the gastrointestinal system while inhibiting harmful bacteria.

Investigators evaluated the use of probiotics and gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, bloating, abdominal cramps) in endurance athletes over a three-month period while they were training for a marathon. The probiotic group was found to experience the same number of gastrointestinal episodes; however, the episodes were shorter than the group not consuming probiotics. Instead of the average GI upset episode of almost two and a half days, the probiotic-protected group only experienced symptoms for one day.

“Probiotics have been shown to be helpful in decreasing symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS),” advises Dr. Constantine Marousis, a gastroenterologist and cyclist in Sarasota, Florida. “Endurance athletes stress the body in a manner that mimics the symptoms of IBS. This stress added to dehydration can adversely affect performance, training, and recovery. Staying well-hydrated and adding daily intake of probiotics can be beneficial.”

Not only can intense training weaken your immune system, but exposure to other travelers



can regular ingestion of probiotics promote a winning advantage for endurance athletes?

IMMUNITY

Intense training taxes all body systems including the immune system. Proper recovery, nutrition, and rest may suffer... Add this to the psychological stress that comes from prepping for an important race and illness may muck up your well-laid plans.

A direct link between probiotic intake and race performance has been difficult to prove. However, importantly, evidence shows probiotics may cut down on the frequency of illnesses in athletes as well as decrease the duration of sickness in runners. This translates into fewer days off due to illness, which can significantly enhance training.

For example, researchers followed two groups of endurance runners and triathletes for four

value of probiotics in decreasing upper respiratory infections in athletes undergoing intense winter training. After consuming probiotics for eight weeks, helpful immunity markers were increased in the athletes taking probiotics and they also experienced fewer upper respiratory tract infections than the non-probiotic group.

TRAINING AND RECOVERY ENHANCEMENT

Several reports in 2011 demonstrate repeated evidence that probiotics are helpful in decreasing overall illness severity and duration as well as increasing overall immunity and healing. This reduction in sick days may translate into fewer lost training days and better quality training.

Examiners measured antioxidant levels (critical to healing and muscle recovery) in two groups of athletes undergoing intense training for four weeks. One group ingested probiotics daily while the control group did not. Researchers measured blood levels of antioxidants at the end of four weeks and the probiotic athletes were found to have much higher amounts of antioxidants in

their blood stream compared to the control group. Higher levels of antioxidants translate into quicker recovery and healing during intense training.

PICKING THE PERFECT PROBIOTIC

Fortunately, many probiotics can be readily found in our local grocery stores. Foods such as (Greek, traditional, and soy) yogurts, kefir, miso, and sauerkraut all contain varying types and amounts of probiotics. Different strains of probiotics have specific benefits and each athlete may have individual digestive system needs. For example, several studies evaluating respiratory and gastrointestinal infections in endurance athletes focused on the probiotic strain *Lactobacillus*, which is found in most yogurts and fermented foods such as sourdough bread, wine, beer, sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, and more.

The most common probiotics found in foods are *Streptococcus*, *Bifidobacteria*, and *Lactobacillus* families. Bacteria counts are measured in colony forming units or CFUs. Typically 1 billion CFU is the standard “dose” used in most clinical studies and thus is often the standard in many food items. The “Live & Active Culture” seal imprinted on many yogurts designates products containing large amounts of probiotic cultures. The seal is a voluntary badge (sponsored by the nonprofit National Yogurt Association) indicating the product contains at least 100 million cultures per gram of cultures. Frozen yogurt with the Live & Active seal indicates at least 10 million cultures per gram at the time of manufacture. The lack of standards for labeling along with limited government regulation can make probiotic choices confusing for consumers.

In general, since each strain carries varying benefits, athletes may want to look for items with a higher overall number of different probiotic strains, to ensure maximum health benefits.

For example, if choosing between two yogurts, (one with two strains listed on the label and another with five strains), there may be benefit to trialing the brand with five probiotic strains. However, a yogurt containing two strains, if affordable and palatable, may be more effective in assisting with immunity than none.

If you are an ultrarunner who already ingests yogurts and other probiotics regularly, this article may just be a review on a healthy habit you have already established.

See the table (upper right) for examples of probiotic-rich food choices. Probiotics are available in pill form, many of which contain a large number of strains (which may be overkill for some athletes), are not regulated, are expensive, and may be unnecessary with so many natural probiotic sources available. Remember, if you are missing something adding it will help, but just “adding more” usually only throws off your system’s balance.

In summary, probiotics such as those found in many foods and new over-the-counter supplements found in your grocery store may improve athletic performance on race day by reducing fatigue and regulating gastrointestinal function. Just as important, probiotic use is associated

with fewer days off from training due to respiratory or gastrointestinal illness and evidence of improved recovery after intense workouts.

“Probiotics are not a short term fix,” emphasizes Dr. Marousis, “however long term consumption of probiotics can be valuable to overall immune health, gastrointestinal function, and training recovery for serious athletes.” If you are a serious athlete, adding regular consumption of probiotics to your daily diet may sharpen your competitive edge and push you to the front of the pack. ■

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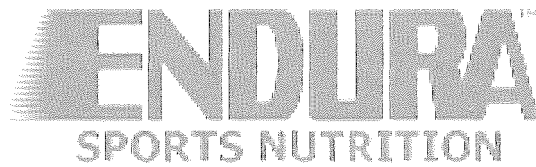
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Constantine Marousis, MD Gastroenterologist, Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Samsota, Florida

FOOD SOURCE PROBIOTIC STRAINS

Chobani Greek Yogurt	<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i> , <i>Bifidus</i> , <i>Lactobacillus casei</i>
Dannon Activia	<i>Bifidobacterium lactis</i> , <i>Lactobacillus bulgaricus</i> , <i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i>
Stoneyfield Oikos	<i>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</i>
Kefir	<i>Lactobacillus caucanus</i> , <i>Leuconostoc</i> , <i>Acetobacter species</i> , <i>Streptococcus species</i> , <i>Lactobacillus kefirianofaciens</i> and <i>Lactobacillus delbrueckii s</i> subspecies <i>bulgaricus</i>
Sauerkraut – raw or unpasteurized as heat kills probiotics	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> and <i>Pediococcus</i>
Natto (Japanese fermented soybeans often eaten with rice)	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>
Kimchi (Korean pickled vegetable dish)	<i>Lactobacillus kimchi</i>
Miso (fermented soybeans)	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>
Tempeh (Indonesian dish based on fermented soybeans)	<i>Rhizopus oligosporus</i>
Sourdough bread	<i>Lactobacillus</i>
Pickles (brine-cured not vinegar-based)	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>
Fermented cheese (Gouda)	<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>
Cultured buttermilk	<i>Streptococcus lactis</i>
Acidophilus milk	<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>
Brined olives	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>
Cottage cheese	<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>
Some fermented sausages	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>

(List may not be all inclusive, depending on brand, type of manufacturing, and expiration date)



Have You Discovered the Benefits of Gels?

Hitting the Wall

Your race is going well. You've trained hard for this event. Suddenly your legs won't work and your feet feel like cement. You slow down almost to a complete stop and worse still, you want to lie down. Disaster! You've hit the wall! The dream of achieving that PB is rapidly drifting away. Any athlete who has experienced this extreme fatigue and energy loss knows that it can prevent you from achieving your ultimate goal of crossing the finishing line. Don't hit the wall - smash through it! Read on to learn how to sustain your energy and keep all cylinders firing.

Fuel for Optimal Performance

During intense exercise your energy comes from glycogen, a stored form of carbohydrates, and one of the most important sources of energy for the body. It is stored mainly in the muscles and liver, and during exercise it forms an energy reserve that can be quickly mobilised to meet your need for glucose. 'Hitting the wall' in endurance sports is caused by depleted glycogen stores and can cause a sudden loss of energy, fatigue, weakness and dizziness. This state not only affects your performance but is potentially harmful to health.

Avoid Glycogen Debt

Athletes can increase their glycogen energy stores by consuming high carbohydrate foods. However during training or competition, glycogen stores are rapidly used up, making it difficult to consume enough food before or during exercise to maintain adequate stores. Athletes can deplete glycogen stores at a rate of 3-4 grams per minute. Only 30 to 40 minutes of exercise is enough to cause your body's glycogen stores to start to deplete and glycogen 'debt' can affect your performance. Glycogen 'debt' may lead to increased muscle catabolism as the body is forced to source energy via the breakdown of muscle. This may cause muscle soreness, fatigue and delayed recovery, greatly affecting training and future results.

Go For Gels

Sports gels are a convenient source of carbohydrates for optimising glycogen stores before, during and following exercise. Endura Sports Energy Gels are a high quality source of carbohydrates that are easy to digest and provide an instant blast of fuel for the body. These gels contain a blend of immediate impact and slow release carbohydrates to keep your body performing for longer. The Endura Sports Energy Gels provide a boost of energy in a single compact serve that can easily be carried while you train or compete.



Fatigue Management

by Ian Dunican

As ultra runners we are always looking for ways to improve. We strive to improve our time over a certain distance, improve our strength, improve how we recover, and improve (my least favourite) flexibility. When one examines areas for improvement we generally focus on two areas: exercise and diet; however, coming from the field of human performance, we are seeing references to the “Three Pillars of Health”, which are exercise, diet and sleep.

Whilst we focus so much energy on the first two aspects of health, why are we not focused on the third? Society is changing at a phenomenal pace and, as such, we are constantly challenged to do more with less; achieve more at work and at home, attend numerous social or work events, and be in touch with people for social or business, on a national or global scale.

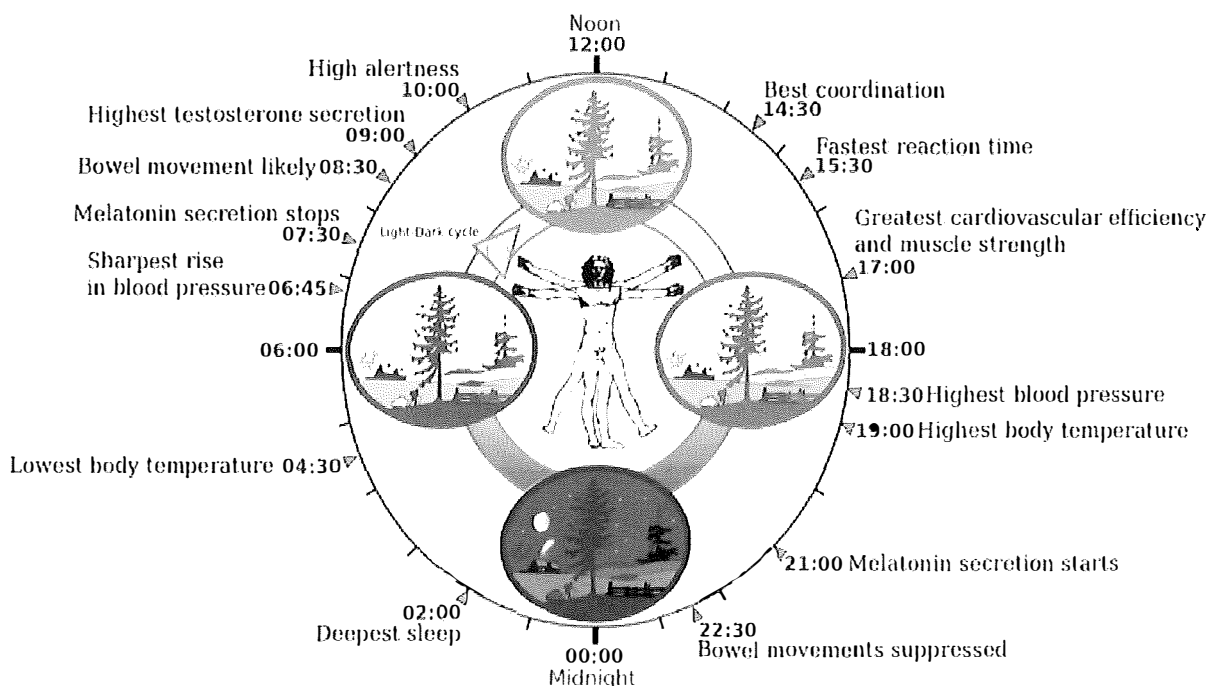
Our knowledge of sleep and its importance is limited, even amongst

medical practitioners. Today’s ultra runner comes from a wide variety of backgrounds and professions and strives to actively manage family life, social interests, business, and exercise, whilst armed with a laptop, smart phone, and a cup of coffee. Research in the sleep science field is increasing in quantity, and improving in quality, as a result of work in a number of reputable universities including Harvard Medical School and Monash Medical School here in Australia. Let’s take a look a few areas where we can observe the relationship between human performance and sleep.

Circadian rhythms occur within every human. *Circadian* is derived from the Latin word “circa” meaning “about”, and “dia” meaning “day.” Circadian rhythms happen over a 24 hour period. As we wake in the morning, between 06:00-08:00, cortisol increases. In the afternoon, between 13:00-15:00, we experience a circadian dip often referred to as the post-

lunch dip. This may explain why we often find it difficult to concentrate at work after lunch which can affect safety and quality issues in workplaces. “*Siesta*” in Latin cultures is designed to allow people to relax during this low and avoid midday high temperatures.

In the evening, between 17:00-20:00, we go through a phase called the “*forbidden zone*.” This is a time when we find it most difficult to sleep and generally when we show our greatest cardiovascular efficiency and muscular strength. This may explain why some days when we are at work all we can think about is getting home to sleep because we are so tired, but when we get home we get a “*second wind*” and become energetic and awake. Some researchers in the anthropology field believe that the forbidden zone may be part of the planet’s natural cycle, and that humans evolved this way due to predators that came out at night to hunt, while humans became hyper-alert to such dangers.



Between the hours of 02:00-06:00 we experience a circadian low. As ultra runners we often wake during this time to get our training runs in or to start a race. During this time we find it extremely difficult to stay awake and anyone who works shift work would have experienced the related feelings of drowsiness, sore eyes, yawning, inattention, low energy, and perhaps even micro-sleeps. Consistent disruption of one's sleep during a circadian low can be damaging to your health and wellbeing in the short term (acute) and the long term (chronic). This includes, but is not limited to, gastrointestinal issues, heart disease, increase in weight, and diabetes.

Contrary to common belief or hearsay, you cannot adapt your body to be awake and functioning effectively during this time. You cannot shift or change your circadian rhythms or change your biological make up. The effects of a circadian rhythm and sleep are varied across people depending on social, economic and educational factors, to name a few. On average, a person requires 7-9 hours of sleep per night. The Australian population is averaging anywhere between 6-7 hours, and in some industries we observe people obtaining 4-5 hours per night.

Sleep is like a fuel tank - what you take out must be replaced. Just like with our diets, we measure calories

in/calories out over a day. Sleep is no different. If you do not fill up your sleep tank or reservoir, you increase your chances of having an accident in the community such as a road traffic accident (RTA). State planning and infrastructure departments are now reporting that a lack of sleep and/or fatigue is making up a high proportion of the statistics in RTAs. In our running we see decrease in energy levels, poor training runs, or poor times across distances when we know we can do better. At home we may have trouble staying awake, or nod off easily when watching a movie or TV with our family or friends. In some cases it causes depressed feelings, mood swings, and irritability.

So armed with this knowledge and wanting to improve our overall "human performance" in our ultra runs, what can we do?

Following these 10 guidelines around sleep hygiene can greatly improve your performance:

- Have a regular sleep pattern. Try to go to bed at the same time every evening.
- Schedule time into your life to get 7-9 hours per night of sleep. Do it just like you schedule training runs, races and meetings.
- Avoid TV, smart phones, laptops, and work for at least 60 minutes before sleeping.
- Try reading a novel or listening to relaxing music to help you sleep. Studies show this can be just as effective as a sleeping tablet.
- Use your bed for sleep and intimacy only.
- Make your bedroom comfortable and, if possible, keep the room dark and cool (18 C–23 C) to promote a good sleeping environment. Consider using an eye mask and ear plugs.
- Don't lay awake thinking and watching the clock. If you can't sleep, try getting up and reading or writing but avoid TV, computers and the like.
- If you consistently have issues sleeping, consult a sleep physician or consult your general practitioner.
- Avoid waking up or scheduling training runs before 05:30. If you are time poor, consider running to work. Use lunch breaks to catch up on kilometres. Consider cross training to improve performance.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and cigarettes for at least three hours before bed.

In conclusion, sleep must be actively managed like other aspects of health and wellbeing. Sleep well, eat right, and run hard.

Ian Dunican, MBA, BA (Ed), Adv Dip OHS, is the Global Principal Adviser for Fatigue/Human Performance for an international mining company. In addition, he is a PhD student at Monash University, School of Medicine, Nursing & Health Science in Australia, a member of the Australian Sleep Association, a research associate at Harvard Medical School and a research associate at Brigham Women's Hospital. Ian is also a member of the Australian Ultra Runners' Association and is in training for two major ultra marathons this year.

Copper Canyon Run and Ultra Marathon

Urique, Mexico - March 4, 2012 - by Anna Orr

I first heard about the Mexican Copper Canyon Run and Ultra Marathon when my husband, Duncan, gave me the bestselling book *Born to Run*. Dubbed “the greatest race the world has never seen” it certainly lived up to its expectations. 80km+ in 38 degree heat, up and down some of the most extreme climbs and descents imaginable with some of the most amazing running people. The indigenous people of the area, known as Tarahumara or Raramuri, have embraced this run as a celebration of their lifestyle and culture as they have lived for thousands of years.

Running with the Raramuri, whose name translated means the running people, was an experience in itself. These people manage to run without any proper training or nutrition, and definitely without any of the modern running gear that we use. The women are especially notable, running in full length, beautifully coloured dresses and sandals, carrying nothing with them and relying purely on the aid stations out on the course. The men wear homemade tyre rubber sandals called huraches, and I could not find one Raramuri running with bad form, not even the ones who were running as slow as me. There is definitely something to be taken away from this, but I don’t think we will be running in the huraches that we bought as a souvenir quite yet.

The race started at 6:30am and the pace at which the Raramuri start the race is phenomenal. I had the strategy to run the flats and downhill while walking up the hills to save energy for the finish. The Raramuri went hard from the start and quickly filled out most of the front half of the field. They appeared to have no

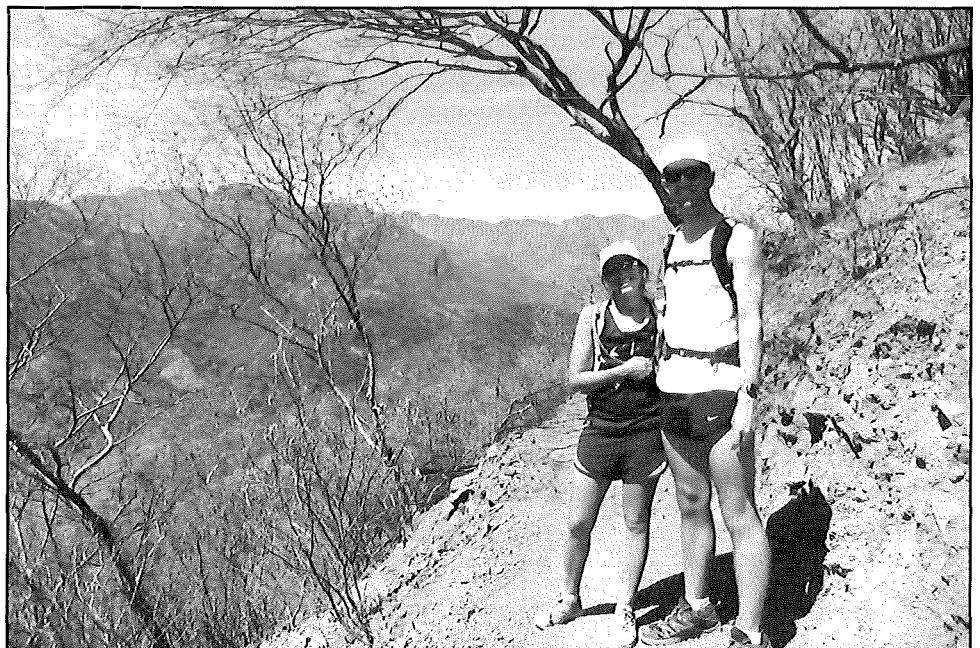
real race strategy, just ran when they wanted to, walked when they felt tired regardless of the terrain and laid in the shade when it got too hot.

After crossing back over the Urique River and heading back up for the second climb of the first loop, Duncan passed me on the tricky, rocky climb, before reaching the small town of Naranjo which offered some amazing views of the canyon below. We ran the 7km or so of the descent together back into Urique, and to our surprise passed Barefoot Ted along the way, who was wearing his own fashioned version of the huraches. As we passed him he told us that each loop was about just “riding the wave” and “paddling home.” Not sure exactly what he meant, but we felt strangely inspired nonetheless.

We reached the end of the 34km first loop in around 4hrs 10min and we were still feeling fairly strong, despite the heat. We spent a bit of time in Urique topping up our packs with food and purchasing a frozen jelly. The heat of the day was starting to pick up. Duncan

had already drunk about 6 litres of water at this stage; we really needed to try and stay cool. We left Urique together for the start of the second loop and ran together for the next 10km, or so, through another small village. Villagers had lined the streets for the race and were cheering and shouting for us, “arriba, gringos,” despite us being a few hours behind the leaders at this stage. We even had some of the children running alongside us as we went through the streets.

As we reached the 42km mark in about 5 hours and crossed the suspension bridge across the Urique River, Duncan decided he would try some local “magic” food – pinole (a ground corn mixed with water). This seemed to go down pretty well, as we then had the long climb up to the tiny settlement of Los Alisos high up on the canyon walls. This climb alone would be as tough as any of the Victorian alpine mountain climbs that we have completed. I reached the top a minute or so before Duncan. After 50km in the heat, he was starting to feel a bit weary and needed a short



Anna and Duncan soaking in the trail – photo courtesy Anna and Duncan Orr

rest to try and rehydrate before attempting the fast descent back to the river. After drinking about a litre of water and having a few oranges, we looked at the bean burritos on offer and decided that it might be a bit too much for our guts to handle, especially flying down a steep hill!

I left Los Alisos a few minutes before Duncan and he passed me again a few kilometres before the river crossing. We continued passing each other where finally he caught me again at the aid station as I was getting some water. It was at this point when we agreed that we seemed pretty closely matched and, considering the conditions, it would be best if we supported each other through to the finish and now run together. We also calculated that even if we walked back into Urique we would still make the 64km/10 hour cut-off required to start the third and final 16km part of the course.

On the way back into town we had the uniquely Mexican experience of two young men running alongside us, and although we don't speak much Spanish we understood enough to know that they were trying to sell us marijuana and opium; there is a lot of it growing in this region! As we closed in on Urique, the strategy of walking the uphill continually changed, as did our perception of what constituted a hill.

We reached Urique again, 64km in, just after 9 hours and were feeling hot and very fatigued. After going to one of the shops to buy a Gatorade and a local specialty, frozen mango juice, and have a bit of a rest, we were back out on the trails by 9 hrs 30 to try and finish the course before dark. We grabbed our head torches just in case.

The last 16km out and back to Guadalupe Coronado was more of a death march than a run, with our

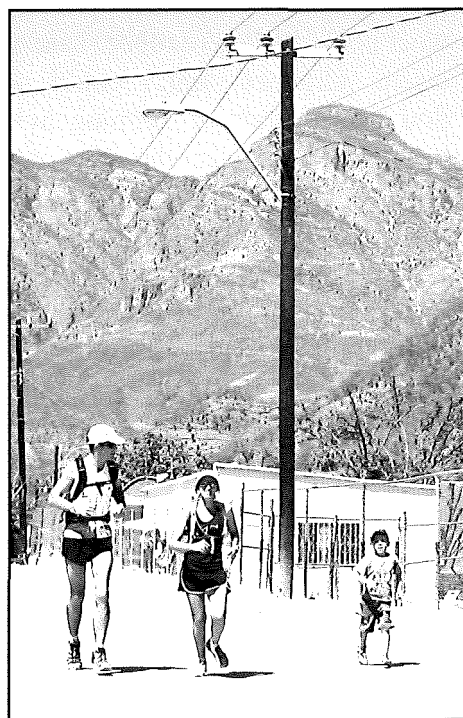
strategy changing again; to walk the flats and hills and jog downhill, and was very slow. We finished the race side by side in 12hr 32min. Testament to the difficulty of the course was the fact that only one person passed us on the last loop and we even managed to pass about 6 people, despite our extremely slow zombie-like stagger. When we crossed the line we were greeted with cheers as if we had just won the race, with hugs all round for the other "Mas Locos" that had shared this experience with us. That's the thing about this race; everyone who finishes is a winner.

The race is more than just the event itself. The entire lead up was part of the experience; including the hikes into and around Urique, which had some of the most amazing scenery that I have ever seen in one of the biggest canyons in the world. It was also an experience to meet and see "characters" from the book *Born to Run* come to life; such as Caballo Banco himself, Barefoot Ted and Arnulfo Quimare. The other like-minded people we met along the way during the hikes and at Tita's lovely restaurant in town, and even during the race, made the experience even more enjoyable and worthwhile. Duncan was also surprised at not being the only person attempting their first ultra. It was interesting to hear stories from very experienced ultra runners about 160km races such as Leadville, Badwater and other even more extreme events.

We waited at the finish line to cheer home the finishers who came home after us and enjoyed the fiesta atmosphere, with live Mariachi bands on stage. After about an hour the effects of the race caught up with us and all we wanted to do was have a lie down. I could hear the party from my hotel room continuing well into the night. Viva Chihuahua!

Never before has a book changed our lives in such a profound and positive way; if you haven't read *Born to Run* yet we definitely recommend giving it a read. If you have read it, don't be afraid of the dangers that book discusses. Being in Urique felt as safe as anywhere in the world that we have travelled. It's a lovely part of the world and the race is an experience like no other. I would recommend getting there sooner rather than later.

Three weeks after the race the RD, the famous and much loved Caballo Blanco, unfortunately passed away on a training run. The race will continue into the future with the race becoming his legacy that he will leave behind. He was a very humble and genuine man, despite the fame that *Born to Run* had given him. He gained the trust of the Raramuri and did not seek to profit from the race, simply to try help the Raramuri and preserve their way of life. In order to help continue his work, I encourage people to visit www.norawas.org and make a small tax-deductible donation to help these amazing people preserve one of the only running cultures left on the planet.



Duncan and Anna joined by a little Raramuri boy –
photo courtesy Jovan Atanackovic



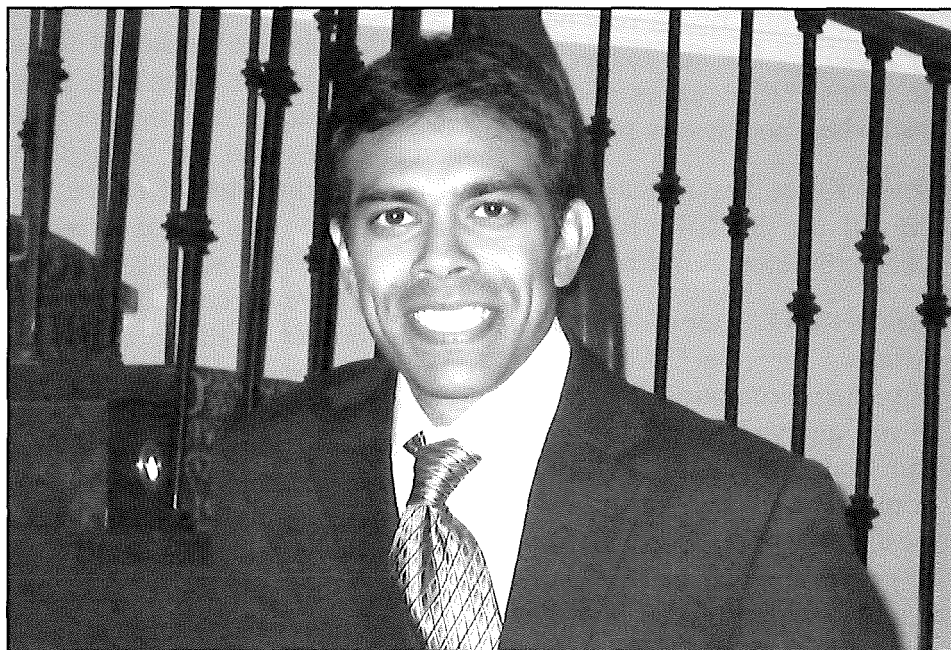
The International Feast

by Nadeem Khan, Director of Communications
of the International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU)

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Ever since the first homo sapiens started to try this new mode of transportation called running, the sport aka the travel mechanism, has been continually evolving. It has made gigantic leaps in the last few years and has made forays into the mainstream sporting world. The media now covers a great deal on the newer high-tech gadgets, the lighter, more efficient running gear, and the rock-solid, proven training plans. One topic that, until recently, was lost in the dust was nutrition, or what powers athletes' tanks around the world. Right now, "nutrition" is the buzzword in international ultrarunning. The subject carries such tremendous weight that the International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU) organized a medical conference based on the subject at their last 100K World Championships in Winschoten, the Netherlands. The presentations were followed by interesting discussions detailing the subject from all corners of the world. This takes us back to our friend, the primate ancestor of the modern day human, and makes us wonder if they secured gel-packs before they headed out to run down their dinner, or suited up with a hydration system for a sufficient supply of water during the long journey.

Our sport has gone quite a distance from where it first started. However, some aspects of the sport have remained universal. The foods provided at aid stations quite aptly mirror the diet that is prevalent in the pertinent culture. This is appropriate as the majority of the athletes at an event are generally from the host country. Some races have easily accessible checkpoints while others are more remote. The offerings present at aid stations have a lot to



Nadeem Khan

do with how hard it is to get to them. Also, the selection available depends on the length of the loops and the distance of the race.

A common theme in races around the world is the frequency of the aid stations. In a certified road 100K race, there is one station every five kilometers. For the shorter, looped events, such as a 24-hour on a 2.5-km loop, there is just one refreshment zone for the runners. This is the norm but not the rule throughout the world for road ultra events.

Let's take a look at aid stations around the world.

In Australia, the aid stations are as diverse as the race distances on offer. Bernadette Benson,

Vice President of the Australian Ultra Runners Association (AURA), and ultrarunning enthusiast Andy Hewat note that, "The Glasshouse Mountain Trail Series with races up to 100 miles have a plethora of food. They serve local fresh strawberries, bananas, watermelons, homemade

Cornish pastries, hot veggie dumplings and fresh-made tomato and avocado sandwiches." In terms of drinks that are available in these races, Benson and Hewat share, "Flat Coke is almost always available, along with water. In addition, tea, coffee and Milo (similar to hot chocolate) are also common." Some Australian food items are not unique, but carry unique names for North American ears. "Lollies" are candy and "snakes" tend to be popular, which have the same consistency as our gummy bears and are naturally shaped like a snake. "Slices" (cakes) are also a common fuel at Australian races.

Moving eastwards, I spoke with Aki Inoue who has been at the helm of Japan's ultrarunning team for the better part of the decade. In reference to aid stations, specifically the drinks served, Inoue says, "Pocari Sweat (isotonic water), Amino Value (BCAA included), Aquarius (Coca Cola Brand), and VAAM (vespa AA included) are a common

fixture at races for marathon and longer distances.” He adds, “Runners enjoy cola, juice or any other refreshments with sugar.” Inoue indicated that the food served depends on the distance of the loop that is being used. For shorter loops, such as in 24-hour events, he says, “Curry rice is very popular in Japan...” But for longer loops, he notes, “Rice cakes and udon/buckwheat noodles are preferred.”

South Korea has recently secured the bid for the 2013 100K World Championships. Bok Jin

Park is the Director of International Affairs for the Korea Ultra Marathon Federation. In reference to my query, Park advises, “Coke and water are quite the popular drinks. However, a lot depends on the distance of the loop and the race, in general.” Food that is available is quite similar to what is served in Japan. Park says, “Chocolate pie, bananas and slices of orange are common. Hot vegetable soup with steamed rice is unique to the region and is quite popular at races.” Rice and noodles are staple to the region and the choice of food at aid stations mirrors the diet quite closely in both these Asian nations.

South Africa has a long tradition of research in ultrarunning thanks to the work of several local researchers and the organization of two of the biggest ultramarathon races in the world,

Comrades and Two Oceans. James Evans, President of Athletics South Africa, expanded on how the races in his region manage the aid stations, “There are water tables every three kilometers. At around the third station, Coke is added to the menu.” He added that there are some races in the neighborhood where Coke and water are present at alternate aid stations.

Evans noted that the food at these refreshment zones, “Bananas, potatoes and chocolate bars, in particular Mars bars, are an important part of the menu at some

of the races.” Drinks take up the majority of the space at the stations. However, there is ample food.

Moving on to Europe, I discussed the status of aid stations with Dr. Stefan Weigelt, in charge of ultrarunning in Germany. He stressed that the quality of the race, to some degree, is judged by the quality of the aid stations available at the race. Drinks are similar to the ones that are served around the world. Dr. Weigelt says, “Water is the drink of choice. Very often there is a sports drink, tea and Coke.” He adds, “At 24-hour events, there is beer (non-alcoholic) as a contrast to all the other sweet drinks.” Food is always an integral part of these aid stations. Dr. Weigelt advises, “In terms of food, banana is a common fixture. Sometimes power bars and oat snacks are important additions to the refreshment zone.” Weigelt adds, “Some races also serve salty crackers for later part of the races and a pasta meal in 24-hour races is very common.”

The dietary habits and cuisine are a bit different in northern Europe. I asked Reima Hartikainen, leader of the Swedish ultrarunning team about aid stations in the Nordic region.

He says, “For drinks we have sports drink, Coke, water, coffee and alcohol-free beer.” This is very similar to other regions with water and Coke being the universal choices. In reference to the food available, Hartikainen notes, “Bananas, chips, soft candy, biscuits, salted cucumber, sandwiches and raisins are the norm.” However, once one ventures into the longer timed events (such as 6, 24 and 48 hours), the diet changes a bit from munchies to solid food.

“In the 6-hour, we have Swedish meatballs, hot dogs and warm soup,” he adds, “In 24/48 hours, same as the 6-hour, but we also have lasagne, chilli and pasta with meat sauce.”

South America is known for its fine cuisine and in particular, the stress on meat, as an essential part

of the diet. I had the opportunity to chat with Ellie Greenwood, former British 100K World Champion and a resident of Alberta, Canada, on her experience with aid stations in a race she did in Chile. The aid stations were no different from what runners are accustomed to seeing in North America, Greenwood said, “Water, electrolyte and Coke were a common fixture at the aid stations approximately every 10 kilometers.” “I tend to carry my own food. But since the race was organized in a North American way, gels, fruits and chips would be quite prevalent.”

There is no doubt that aid stations are significant but their importance is paramount when the weather elements come into play. Richard Donovan, the current record holder for seven marathons on seven continents, and the race director for the southernmost 100K in the world with his race in Antarctica, discusses the aid stations in the race. “The course incorporates four loops of 25 kilometers. There are aid stations every eight kilometers with biscuits, chocolate, water, Coke, crisps (chips) and any specialist food (energy gels) that athletes may have decided to drop off.” He did add that a few hours in the race, the Coke does seem to freeze, bringing an extra challenge to the race.

Having completed extensive research from coast to coast to coast and beyond, we can see that there are some similarities and some distinct differences in the make-up of aid stations around the globe. Regardless of why one enters a refreshment zone, whether it is to pick up an alcohol free beer in Germany, drink some Coke in South Africa, eat some lollies in Australia, or devour a bit of curry rice in Japan, one can rest assured that the brightly lit tent at the middle of the night is a feast for sore eyes. But chances are that no matter how comfortable and home-like these aid stations are, the ultra athlete will soon be back out where they feel the most at home – on the trails and the roads.



Rethinking Aid Station Food Choices

by Sunny Blende, M.S., Sports Nutritionist

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Imagine it is Sunday morning and you're staying at a nice hotel that offers their famous Weekend Brunch. As you enter the dining room and are greeted by a long buffet table with its array of colorful, enticing treats that you usually do not eat, you're overwhelmed with choices. The cheerful hostess hands you a plate, you begin to choose a little of this, a little of that...and an hour later you're saying to yourself, "What was I thinking?" Although the aid stations in an ultra and the buffet table at the brunch are not that similar (we do not usually see gel packs and cut-up sports bars at the hotel spread), what about the "real" (?) food we see – you know, the chips and sandwich creme cookies. We know these are probably filled with partially hydrogenated oils and other ingredients we would never think of eating at home, so why do we grab these at mile 45? Answer: Because they're THERE! What if we had some other choices?

It turns out there are some races, both nationally and internationally, that do offer some unusual and different options. Not all of these options are an improvement on the "healthy ingredients" list, but some of them qualify. And some of the other ones, put out by devious aid station personnel as a joke, turn out to be better received than you would imagine (e.g. "Peepadillas" – pink marshmallow peeps melted on flour tortillas!).

We're not talking sports nutrition products, which are reliable staples at many aid stations and are engineered to provide the correct balance of liquids, electrolytes and carbohydrates. And we are not trying to deprive the volunteers at the aid stations who have been working long hours at all odd times of the

day and night of a few handfuls of M&Ms. No, we're speaking of the, "OH MY GOD, I got this real food at mile 77 and it was the BEST thing I ever ate," kind of choices.

What Science Says Our Bodies Need

Research has shown us that endurance athletes do best with processing the simplest carbohydrates possible while also staying on top of hydration and electrolytes. Those "research" endurance studies usually consist of athletes performing "exhaustive" exercise for just two to three hours. Imagine grad student research assistants taking readings and data for a full 24 hours while the ultrarunner test subject runs on a treadmill wearing a mask that measures oxygen consumption and carbon dioxide expired. You can see why research only takes us so far.

What Ultrarunners Say Their Bodies Need

The usual aid station fare, including the sports nutrition products, is often fine for the first third to half of most ultras. The "real" food on the table normally includes bananas, oranges, melons, potatoes and salt, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and tortilla chips, and these seem to work pretty well for most runners. The additions of cookies, cut-up candy bars and jelly beans or M&M-type sugar sweets are not really necessary and they often just add to the sugar overload that most runners feel as the hours, day, and race go on. If a runner has been participating in ultras for many years, their stomachs are usually conditioned to some solid foods and indeed, they

may not want to add more sugar to the umpteen thousands of sugared sports products they have already consumed in their running careers.

And for the newer ultrarunner, they may just need something different – partly for comfort food and partly because of GI distress. Solid, real food starts to become very appetizing. The only issue or problem with adding this more complex, real food is usually the fiber, especially if the runner is still going at a fast pace. We often tell athletes, "Don't try anything new on race day," but for many mid-pack and further-back runners, something novel sounds like heaven. And truth be told, it is often one of the frontrunners who stops for a cup of soup or some other treat at the latter stages of the race. The most often heard comment is, "Do you have something salty? I am so sick of sweet and sugar!"

Some Race Directors and Ultrarunners Comment:

Luis Escobar, RD and Ultrarunner

"This is a great topic – non-traditional aid station foods. As you know I have been organizing and volunteering at running events for several years – while I think there will always be a need for

sports products – there is absolutely a trend away from packaged sport foods – the Chris Scott Coyote events are a fine example of that. At most of these events you will find pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, grilled cheese sandwiches, Wild Bill Kee's world famous chicken and bean burritos – but you will also find a collection of popular novelty

foods – we put goofy food on the tables as a joke but then hungry runners actually prefer and rely on the stuff – the “Elvis Sandwich” of fried banana and peanut butter on butter grilled white bread – always popular – chicken tamales are easy to carry and easy to eat – when we offer chorizo and egg burritos, we can’t make them fast enough! This spring at our Born To Run 100 we plan to serve SPAM Musubi, which is something I learned at the HURT 100 in Oahu. Bottom line is when we are hungry we want to eat real food – it seems to me that our bodies know what we need – some of this stuff may seem gross – but – if it works – it works! Bon Appétit.”

Beat Jegerlehner, Ultrarunner and Stage Race Runner

“I’ve done two European races (Tor Des Géants, a 200-mile race in Italy, and TOE, a 110-mile race in France). Both races are very mountainous and thus progress is usually slow. The aid station food is fairly different from the standard U.S. fare. There are some cookies, white bread (Italian or baguette), some fruit (usually oranges, sometimes melon and apple), various meats (salami, dried cured beef – not really similar to beef jerky, cooked ham), and various cheeses – Fontina, Parmesan. Many of the stations tend to also provide local specialties – special meats, cheeses and desserts. Some of the stations in the TDG also had polenta (somehow they made it taste particularly good, with a lot of herbs). Potato chips may or may not be available as well. They are usually pretty light on sweets, as I said some cookies and in TDG they had some odd sesame candy sticks for example, but not the mass of sweet stuff you usually get here. There are usually a few energy type bars, but again less than what you’d expect. The ‘basic’ aid station fare is actually not very varied in both races, though the local specialties

make up for it – many of the stations are in mountain huts which also offer other things like sodas, espresso and such. Another interesting point is that both races provided sparkling water (which I find extremely refreshing, especially once you’re sick of Coke, which is also provided).”

Janet Bodle, Ultrarunner and Trail Marathon-or-Ultra-in-Every-State Runner

“I’ll never forget having vanilla frozen yogurt at about mile 35 at American River 50M one year when it was really hot – the best. All over the country it seemed to be the same thing – peanut butter sandwiches, chips, M&Ms. What differed was the post-race meals – like jambalaya

in Oklahoma, and in Texas for the Sunmart 50/50, there was a huge pre-race breakfast of sausage, eggs, grits and pancakes – unbelievable!”

Rob Byrne, RD and Ultrarunner

“Some of my favorites – in Germany I did a 52-mile race and the only food at the aid station was sausage, rolls, and carbonated mineral water. In Greece – yogurt, honey, bread. In the Netherlands – only water. One of my overall observations is that runners eat, and aid stations provide, much less food than at American

races. Here we tend to lay out huge buffets; in Europe you’re lucky to get more than water. If you need more you have to supply it yourself.”

George Miller, Running Coach and Ultrarunner

“My Coastside Running Club will be staffing the 2012 Western States 100 Auburn Lakes Trail Aid Station and we are looking into breakfast burritos along with spaghetti and meatballs, chili, and turkey sandwiches. I HATE

aid station food at ultras – it’s crap. Don’t get me wrong, I have a huge sweet tooth for chocolate, I love potato chips, cookies are my fave, but in moderation with decent food and definitely NOT during an ultra! We’ll have the standard food there because people expect it but we want to have MEALS there to help runners finish the last 15 miles feeling strong!”

What Sunny Says on the Subject of Aid Station Food

Most of the fare seen on the aid station tables is fine, but it would be nice to have a few more healthy choices for the ultrarunner who is actually “hungry” during the latter part of an event. Although our muscles are still craving glucose for their energy (think gels for their simple carbs), our liver is looking for other sources of energy to run the rest of our body.

When we are exercising at intensity, any glucose that gets into the blood stream is going to go straight to the muscles – remember “fight or flight”? But other forms of nutrients (proteins and fats, and other sugars besides glucose) are going to go to the liver to be broken down and/or converted to usable energy. This is where our feeling of satiety comes in. Hard to believe that despite consistently pouring gel packs into our bodies we can actually still become “hungry.” Behold REAL FOOD!

I usually tell ultrarunners NOT to try anything new in a race, but sometimes you just have to go with what your body is telling you. And if that is to wolf down that rice ball or spam concoction, and if more traditional food is not working, then give it a try...a little at a time. As we expand the new choices on the Aid Station tables, maybe some of these real food options may become “standard” fare too!

**Happy 25th
Birthday, AURA!**

CALENDAR

**Our first
calendar**

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- Aug.23 50 MILE ROAD RACE (C.H.A.S.E. Carnival) Victorial Champion-
ship, Ballarat, Vic. Wendouree A.C., P.O.Box 511, Ballarat
3550 or ph.Andrew Bush (053)321434.
- Sept 6 SYDNEY TO WOLLONGONG - approx.50 mile road race, NSW, contact
Tom Gillis, 7 Wilmot Street, Sydney 2000 NSW.4am start.
- Sept 5/6 24 HOUR TRACK RACE - Queensland, 400 metre track, contact
Andy Semple, Q'ld Marathon Club, P.O. Box 192, Everton Park,
Queensland 4053. or phone (07)3555740
- Sept 13 100KM TRACK RACE at Coburg, Vic, Harold Stevens Athletic Track,
400m track, 7am start, \$10 entry, contact Kevin Cassidy,
4 Grandview Road, Preston 3072 Vic. ph.(03)4783687 for entry
forms.
- Sept 19 50 MILE ROAD RACE at Bathurst, NSW, 7am start at the Court-
house, Russell Street, Bathurst. Time limit 10 hours, entry
fee \$15, closing date Sept 4, contact Ian Taylor, 206 Rankin
Street, Bathurst 2795 ph.(063)313230(home) (063)315344 work.
- Oct 3/4 24 HOUR TRACK RACE (Aust.Championship) Adelaide, SA, Sri
Chinmoy Running Team, c/- Boundless Life Health Foods, 101A
Walkerville Terrace, Walkerville, 5081 SA, ph (08)3449433.
\$65 entry fee,
- Oct 11 50 MILE ROAD RACE. Q'ld, around Queensland University, St.Lucia,
contact Andy Semple, Q'ld Marathon Club, P.O.Box 192, Everton
Park, Queensland, 4053 or phone (07)3555740. Race starts 1am!!
- Oct 90KM ROAD RACE, SA, Adelaide to Victor Harbour, contact the
Distance Runners' Club of South Australia, P.O.Box 102,
Goodwood, 5034 South Australia.
- Oct.16 48/24 HOUR RUNS, WA, 1km circuit around an oval, Perth, WA.
17 & 18 48 Hour starts 12 noon Friday and 24 Hour starts 12 noon Sat-
urday. Entry fee \$25, McGillivray Oval, Sports Complex, Uni-
versity of W.A. Contact Ross Parker in Perth (09)4017797 or
Val Case in Melbourne (03)4893050
- Nov 16-22 6 DAY TRACK RACE, Colac, 400metre grass track, contact Colac
6 Day Race Committee, P.O. Box 367, Colac 3250, Vic.(052)234129
- Dec 26 Bogong to Hotham Event, Victoria, mountain trail run, 6.15am
start, approx 60km, and incorporating approximately 3,000 metres
climb! Phone (03)8789285, Russell Bulman. Course may be changed
to Mt.McKay (42km)
- 1988
- Jan 23, 48/24 HOUR RUNS, Vic. Australia Day long weekend, 400m track,
24 & 25 Aberfeldie, Corio Street, Aberfeldie (Mel.map 2806), 48 Hour
starts 12 noon Saturday, 24 Hour starts 12 noon Sunday. \$35
and \$25 entry fees. Contact Stephen Foulkes, P.O.Box 1048,
Carlton 3053. Ph.(03) 6528376. Bi-centennial celebration runs.
(business phone no.)
- Feb ? CRADLE MOUNTAIN RUN, Tasmania, starts at northern end of Cradle
Mountain/Lake St.Clair National Park, finishes at Cynthea Bay
at southern end of the park, approx.85-90km of tough mountain
trail running with lots of bog! Contact Richard Pickup, P.O.
Box 946, Launceston 7250, ph.(003)954294.

