SYDNEY Striders

The Blister

Edition No. 65: January – February 1997

Striders' Premier Trophy 1996 Goes To Chris Truscott

Under-30 winner for first time in 9 years

Chris Truscott has finally done what he has been threatening to do for a few years now, taking out the Maria Gemenis Cruickshank Outstanding Achievement Award for 1996. Chris accepted the club's premier award at the Striders' annual dinner at Waverton on 6 March.

So once again the pendulum has swung towards Striders' younger members. Chris' victory was just as well-deserved as that of Mathew Kaley (1987), the only other under-30 winner of this prestigious trophy.

Chris Truscott

Chris' 1996 record is impressive indeed: 1:10:06, the fastest ½-marathon by a Strider for 10 years; 1:54:24 for 4th place in the Palm Beach to Manly; 33:05 in a Striders' 10k race and outright winner of the series; 46:42 in the City to Surf; 4:10 for a 1500m track race, and 15:32 for 5000m.

Our congratulations to a worthy winner!

Mark Fiore new Tailford Award Winner

At the same function on 6 March, the Tailford Award for the best Blister article of 1996 was presented to Mark Fiore for his cautionary tale about running in Japan, "Hamburgers and Chips are Good for You" (Blister 63). Mark's article was adjudged best by popular vote of members, beating a sparkling field of literary gems.

What a blast! We got a guernsey too!

Finally we, the Blister editorial team (Graham Butler, Sarah Entwistle, Nick Themsen and Steve Cornelius) are delighted, and somewhat humbled, to report that John Turner chose to present the 1996 President's Award for Excellence to, well, us, the "Gang of 4"! To paraphrase the words of the great English footballer Bobby Charlton, it's a wonderful thing to get rewarded for something you enjoy doing.

We heartily thank John Turner for his vote of confidence, printer Brian Tailford without whom there would be no Blister at all, and the scores of contributors without whom we would largely be printing blank pages. Just keep 'em coming!

Inside this 65th Blister:

- **1996 Prizegiving Brunch: Pictures**
- **Brian Colwell conquers Kilimanjaro**
- **Alex Hamill's A-to-Z of 100th Boston**
- **Joe Degabriele's African Adventure**
- **Mike Ward on the Bogong to Hotham**
- **Kevin Tiller's Fat Ass, er Fat-Ass**
- **Fiona Pelly: Food for Rapid Recovery**
- **Comrades '97: All the info you need**
- **Chris Truscott: A Week in Thredbo**
- **1997 10k Series: First two race results**
- **Race Results: Palm Beach to Manly and Six-Foot Track Marathon**
- **New! Kaptain AnoraK's Kolumn**
- **Triathlon Round-up, Letters Page,**
- **Club News, Striders in Training**

AND MUCH MORE!

The Blister

Journal of Sydney Striders Road Runners' Club, Inc. (Founded 1980). P.O. Box 679, Crows Nest NSW 2065, Australia.

Opinions published in this journal, whether expressed by members or non-members, do not necessarily represent official policy of the club.

Advertising Rates

Full page $100 per issue, ½page $50, ¼page $25.
Classified ads: Single edition $5, full year $25.

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Copy Requirements

Members' contributions usually given priority, but non-members' efforts welcome too. If you use a **computer**, PLEASE submit items on diskette or via email. Typed, faxed or handwritten copy OK also (if legible!), especially shorter items. **Two deadline dates** for each edition published in Club News (starts p3). **Earlier deadline:** photos, graphics, AppleMac stuff, things which need re-typing, scanning or serious re-formatting. **Later deadline:** email submissions or text files on PC compatible diskettes. **Late contributions** printed in the following edition, if still relevant. **Email:** Text in body of email message, send other formats as file attachments. **Disk and file format:** 3½-inch disks. Simple text format much preferred! Your fancy formatting will only have to be edited out! We use **Office 97** (Word, Excel, Access), but can convert many other formats. If in doubt, phone Steve Cornelius. **Graphics:** Colour or black & white photos, line drawings, cartoons etc, welcomed. **Verbal contributions** may be "lost" even if accompanied by a very large bribe. **Disks and photos will be returned**, if you're lucky.

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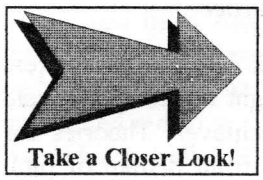
Club News



♦ Club AGM: Sun 11 May

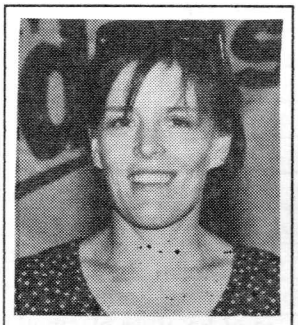
Early warning: This year's Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 11th May, immediately after the Harbourside Hike STaR, at the Waverton Bowling Club. As usual, all Committee positions are up for grabs, so start thinking about your nomination - a chance to be constructively involved in your Club's exciting future. In any case, come along to the meeting - there's breakfast and its FREE!

♦ Canberra, 13 April: Club Marathon Championship

This year we revert to Canberra for the Club's Marathon Championship. Race Director Dave Cundy puts on one of the best marathons in Australia and our top runners always perform well there. A pity it clashes directly with Forster Ironman (13th April 1997), but you can't win 'em all, so to speak. More disappointing is the fact that our preferred venue, Sydney Marathon, is fraught with uncertainty, not to mention the current boycott by leading internationals.

♦ Teaming Up (especially for the SMH Half-Marathon)

from Teams Coordinator Margaret White


Margaret White

Race season is coming up and there is a way to raise our club's profile, win praise and accolades and generally enhance our enjoyment of the events we enter. How? By Teaming Up! Striders' teams enjoyed great results last year. But, as has been previously noted in this journal, we could do better. The first big event catering to teams is of course the SMH ½-Marathon. There are however, many smaller races which also provide prime opportunities to fly the green and white.

If you know other Striders who are entering, or even if you don't, consider a team entry. Send your entry forms, individual or in groups, to me at 56 Third Ave, Willoughby 2068. I'll juggle them to maximise your opportunities and send them in.

♦ Comrades 1997

from Dick Bartlett

Yes it's time to think about taking up the challenge in 1997, the entry forms have arrived. This year it is a "down" run (Pietermaritzburg to Durban), approximately 90k, and will be held on Monday June 16th 1997.

Over the last 7 years Sydney Striders has been well represented, and our green and white colours are recognised by participants and spectators alike. In addition we are well known to the organisers and can be assured of a warm and friendly welcome again this year.

I will be going again (for my 6th) and have volunteered to act as organiser for those of you who may wish to represent the Striders at this, the foremost ultra road race in the world.

I have booked seats on South African Airways for Thur 12 June and they have indicated a special fare of $2,080 plus tax per person Sydney-Joburg-Durban-Joburg-Sydney (subject to 10 travelling out together and there is a possible 3% rise).

I am sure we will be able to organise billets in Durban or Pietermarizburg to save paying hotel bills. Based on the experience of all those who have billeted before(myself included) you can be assured of friendship and hospitality.

Please let me know if you are interested by ringing me on 9953-5317(H), 9375-7976(W) or drop me a note to 1/54 Waters Rd, Cremorne 2090.

[Eds' note: See also our extensive Comrades coverage elsewhere in this Blister.]

♦ Blister Deadlines

from the Blister editors

This table shows the approximate Blister publication schedule for 1997, barring unforeseen events. Deadlines stated for Blister 66 are firm, the others may be a little rubbery (but not much).

The "Photos" deadline dates include anything which has to be re-typed, or heavily re-formatted, or scanned, or converted from Apple Mac format.

Edition	Photos	Text	Distribution
Blister 66	4 May	11 May	Late May
Blister 67	13 July	20 July	Early August
Blister 68	21 Sept	28 Sept	Mid October
Blister 69	23 Nov	30 Nov	Pre-Xmas

♦ Committee Deliberations

summarised by John Turner

For members' information, these were the main items discussed at the meeting of the Club Committee on 21st November 1996:

- Treasurer Taylor reported the Club's finances are satisfactory with a likely small surplus for y/end 1996. Club is operating within budget.
- Agreed we could hold 1997 subscriptions at current levels and also offer members the convenience of a two year subscription at the same annual rate. Also agreed to extend the $28 concession rate to cover students, unemployed, pensioners, interstate and overseas members. A five year subscription alternative was put on hold for the time being.
- Sporting Spectrum's annual management contract reviewed. Current arrangements working well. Increased work for 10K Series justified renewal fee at $500 per month. Also Club opportunity to earn up to $1,000 with marshalls for S. Spectrum's Aust. Corp. Games on 15th March 1997.
- Database shows 310 members plus 46 unfinancials. Time to get tough on unfinancials. Arrears notices to be sent with December mailout of 1997 subs renewals.
- 10K Series Manager Hamilton's report shows 1996 was best yet. Also our two races for charity raised $900 for RNS Cancer Unit. Need to confirm continuing SAA sponsorship and other details for 1997 Series. John Hamilton confirmed he is happy to continue for one more year, but must have a successor for 1998 on.
- Discussed Business Plan Review subcommitee's interim report re Club focus for the next three years. Revised draft to be considered at March 1997 meeting.
- Request from St. Thomas Striders Club, Ontario, for reciprocal relationship agreed to on an informal basis. Exchange of information via e-mail and The Blister.
- Our Public Liability Insurance is to increase in 1997, but can be reduced if we can identify members already covered by a similar policy from another ANSW club.

♦ Classified Ad

Wanted To Buy: Running Pram. Please phone David Blakemore on 049-486243.

♦ Democratic right: (or wrong)

from John Turner

Some 302 of the Club's 330 eligible voters exercised their democratic right not to cast a vote for the 1996 Outstanding Achiever. Theories for this bizarre behaviour range from dislike of pink voting slips to catatonic paralysis about making a decision. We in the engine room are nonplussed. Please tell a Committee member the things you disliked most about what we fondly imagined was a fair democratic process

♦ Club Uniforms

This edition of The Blister contains no uniform list or order form, since negotiations with a potential new uniform supplier are proceeding at the time of going to press. The uniform managers will update members fully in Blister 66. Meanwhile, keep a lookout for new gear which may be available soon at StaRs and other events.

♦ Membership Statistics

data supplied by Kevin Tiller

Figures from Kevin's club database suggest that the club's total membership is still steadily growing, as is the percentage of Striders who are female. Our average age (see last row of table) creeps steadily higher, with numerous members having made the bold leap into their second half-century during the last 12 months! 26% of Striders are now over 50, the highest percentage ever.

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total	267	249	251	273	291	303	312
Male %	84	84	85	81	80	78	77
Female %	16	16	15	19	20	22	23
U-30 %	10	8	7	6	8	9	9
30-39 %	35	33	30	31	28	29	27
40-49 %	40	42	43	44	43	41	38
50-59 %	13	15	17	16	17	17	22
60+ %	2	2	3	3	4	4	4
Avg. Age	41.0	42.0	42.9	43.0	43.4	42.8	43.2

♦ Blister 64 Errata

"Andrew Hallam" (pictured p30) was in fact Andrew Healey and his group was training for 6-Foot Track, not Brindabella. The member pictured on p37 pushing a running stroller was John Preston, not John Prescott. The editor responsible for these errors has been thoroughly chastised, promises to cut down his intake of red wine while writing captions, and apologises unreservedly.

♦ Striders' New Email LiSSt

from Steve Cornelius

If you have access to Email and haven't yet told database manager Kevin Tiller your address, perhaps now is the time to do so. Kevin has negotiated a deal with a service provider in Cairns (would you believe? distance is almost irrelevant on the Net), and close to 60 Striders now participate in the club's new email discussion forum. I propose to refer to it in future as The LiSSt (the SS denoting Sydney Striders).

For those who are new to Internet mailing lists, they work as follows. You subscribe (Kevin will subscribe any Strider who sends him their email address), then you are given a central address to which you mail all your contributions. All messages sent to the LiSSt by any member are automatically distributed to all other members. You can unsubscribe at any time if you wish.

Striders' LiSSt has been up and running only a few weeks now, but has already generated lively discussion on training tips, club policy, club logo and many more topics. It's a contact point which can keep you right up-to-the-minute on the latest Striders' news, for which you might otherwise have to wait 10 weeks for your next Blister. (It's also once acted as an unwitting transmitter of a computer virus, but we've sorted that one and it won't happen again, will it, Mr Culprit?) :-)

Some Striders have already claimed they can't handle the "huge" volume of messages from the LiSSt, currently running at about 4 to 6 a day. I find this attitude somewhat quaint, if nothing else. Firstly, reading email messages is optional, not compulsory – the subject and origin are clearly stated in the subject line, and you can trash them without reading them if you're not interested in a particular thread. Secondly, half a dozen a day is unbelievably mild, as Lists go – ask Kevin Tiller and myself how many we get from Dead Runners' Society and Newcastle United Supporters' Club (The "Toon List") respectively.

The LiSSt is here to stay. Get subscribed now.

♦ Roll of Honour

data supplied by Kevin Tiller

We congratulate the following Striders on achieving significant membership landmarks:

15 Years: Steve Cornelius, Bryce Courtenay
10 Years: David Sill, John Ayliffe,
5 Years: Derek Smith, Christopher Gunns, John Hawkins, Geoffrey Caban, Graeme Hansen.

♦ Editors' Blurb

from the Blister editorial team

Response to our appeal for contributions has been nothing short of formidable! The result is what you see before you now – a Blister which is probably more content-rich than any in the recent history of the club. And to think when we adopted the A4 format 2 years ago, we thought we might have trouble filling 24 pages! Naïve, eh? Thank you all! Again we apologise if some pages look a little crowded. We just don't like leaving stuff out.

UK Correspondent

Particular thanks are due to David Sill, whose tendency to scour the UK for interesting snippets has made him something of an unofficial "UK correspondent" for The Blister. He also writes "When I get settled in one location permanently I plan let the club use me as a UK address/contact point (excluding accommodation!) if they wish". This is indeed a generous offer. Many travelling Striders would appreciate such a contact point, we feel sure, and besides David now has a wealth of information about the UK running scene, which he would be happy to share with visitors. Would any other overseas-based Striders be willing to perform an equivalent role in, say, USA, SE Asia etc?

Send us your diskettes

Just to clarify our copy requirements (see page 2): We now use Office 97 to produce The Blister, but don't be deterred if your computer doesn't. Send us the diskette anyway, since Word97 tends to be able to read most other formats. One disk we recently read successfully was produced in "Q&A" on an old 286! Remember, if your printout looks like it's from a computer but all we get is a hard copy, be assured we WILL be on the phone harassing you for a diskette! We don't mind typing and scanning for those who don't have access to computers, but re-typing stuff that's just sitting on your hard disk isn't our idea of a fun time!

OAA Winners 1982-1996

(see article "Kaptain AnoraK", page 38)

Winners of Maria Gemenis-Cruickshank Outstanding Achievement Award 1982-96

1982	Neil Plevey	1990	Joanne Cowan
1983	Keith Canard	1991	John Turner
1984	Brenda Hamill	1992	Joanne Cowan
1985	Nobby Young	1993	Joanne Cowan
1986	Phil Garvin	1994	Joanne Cowan
1987	Mathew Kaley	1995	Murray Town
1988	Graham Firkin	1996	Chris Truscott
1989	Graham Firkin		

President's Bluster

By John Turner

Did you know that the reason people sweat is so they won't catch fire when making love? Talking of sweaty bodies, have you been to a STaR recently? If you haven't, you're in a minority. Everyone who's anyone is STaRring these days. Never seen so many Striders coming out of the woodwork every Sunday. Sure, the STaR is the very heart and soul of our Club, but why the 1997 resurgence? What's the buzz? Who's to blame?

The first culprit is surely **Kevin O'Kane** and his Marathon Training Group. What a legend! Every week, he consistently cons more than 30 willing acolytes to do things they never thought they were capable of.

Then there's the women. Young ones and less young ones, lots of them - all slim and beautiful but best of all, enthusiastic. In Kevin's MTG, they outnumber the men two to one. How many more will we attract when we finally (real soon now) put them into a cool Melinda Gainsford-type Striders uniform that'll knock your socks off.

Or it could be the men. New brooms, old lags - even **Steve Cornelius** - robust and muscle-bound (except **Mike Ward**, the perpetual beanpole), and so competitive that they don't dare NOT come to a STaR in case someone asks why next week and their excuse isn't good enough.

Actually it's the couples - whether married, engaged or just good friends. "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" isn't so true any more. Some partners are not only joining the STaRs, but beating their other halves as well, eh **Dawn Tiller**?

Next, you can blame **John Hamilton** and his 10K Series team. Why do you think we have lots of new members? No, not because all you existing members are so good looking. It's because new people get hooked on a Saturday 10K, and then naturally want even more fun on Sundays.

But for my money, you need to look deeper. There's a renewed **spirit** in Sydney Striders Club these days. It shows in a myriad of ways. Everything's working pretty well and you members are showing your appreciation by turning up in droves for what your Club has to offer. Our STaR program is the best example.

Murray Town is at the centre of it. He produces the Calendar and co-ordinates every aspect of STaRs. Previously, he and **Dick Bartlett** did the job between them but Dick's moved away now. (Thank you Dick, for your many years of support.)

Hands up those who know how many individual STaRs we run? 15? 20? 25? We always used to say we offered 26. Well, with the first airing of Sue Hill's beaut new "Church Point Challenge" in February, that's exactly the number. For the record, 16 of them are north of the Bridge, 6 south of it, and 4 west. Quite an imbalance, but the reasons are partly historical and partly because that's the way we like it, I guess.

What it means is there are about 35 hosts (some STaRs have two) who are happy to give up 1.75 of their Sunday runs per year (other events replace 6 or 7 of our STaRs over the year) for the sake of their fellow Striders. Add to that the 6 people who host 10Ks, plus the team that actually organises the 10K every month, and you've got a very impressive volunteer force. Probably a thousand hours or more, and that's not counting The Blister, the Club committee, our special events, and whoever publishes our flyers.

Nothing, but nothing, better typifies the spirit of Sydney Striders Club. It's alive and very well! Before we get carried away with all this self-congratulation however, there's at least one more thing we've got to fix, and that's our uniform. Let's face it, some of our experiments were less than successful. Indeed we've never got it right for our women runners. We can't expect to satisfy 100% of our members 100% of the time, because we are talking about clothing.

But we're sure as hell going to try and get it 90% right this time. And we'll listen hardest to our younger, faster members - the ones most likely to get their mugshots in the media, breaking winning tapes while proudly wearing their Striders gear. I mean, old lags like me wouldn't know a fashion statement if it jumped up and bit us on the bum!

Keep on Striding!

John Turner, Club President

Kev's Korner

"When I eventually did get to the next checkpoint it was nowhere to be seen". Kevin Tiller, on the subject of the Fat Ass 54.

Sill-E One-Liners

A sprint at the start ain't worth a fart.

Some runners can get lost running on a treadmill.

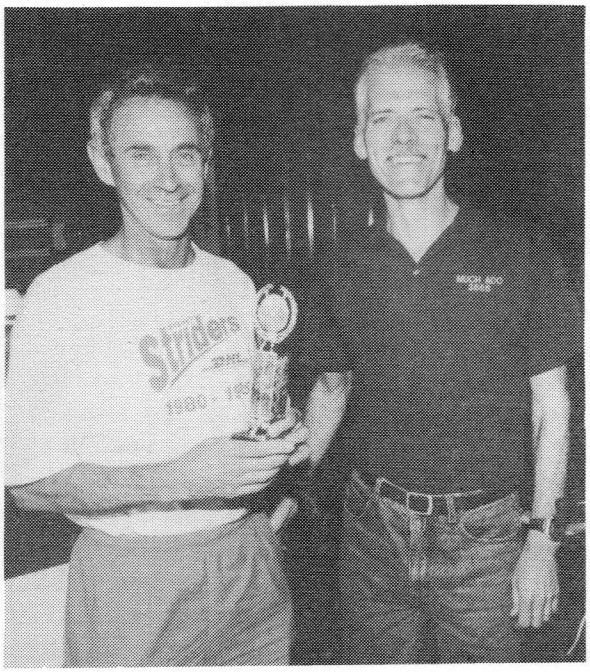
Striders' Presentation Brunch, December '96

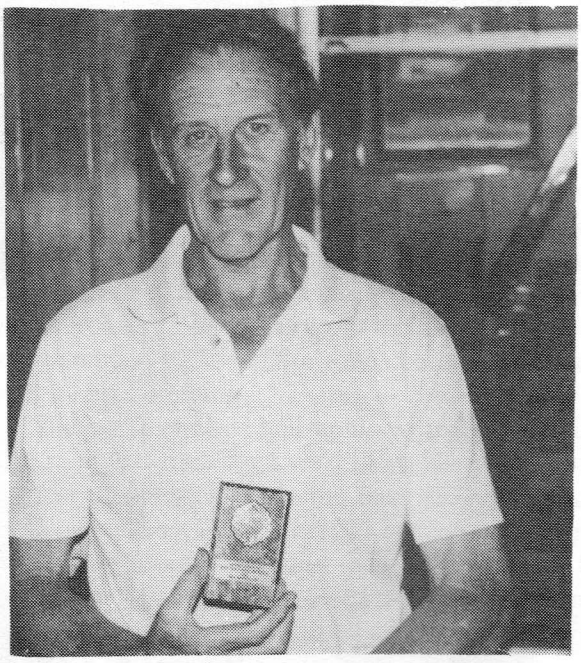
Photos by Graham Butler

Top left: Wendy Downes, winner of the Masters' Half-marathon trophy; Top right: Cathy Dunworth, winner of Debut marathon trophy; Lower left: Amanda Dawson, winner of the 10k Handicap series; Lower right: Rozanne Green, winner of the Encouragement Award.

Striders' Presentation Brunch, December '96

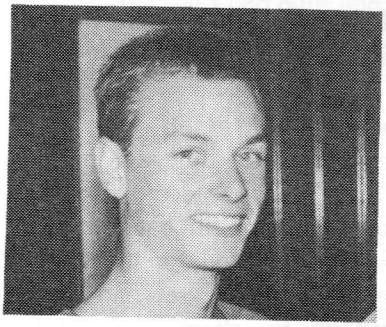
Photos by Graham Butler

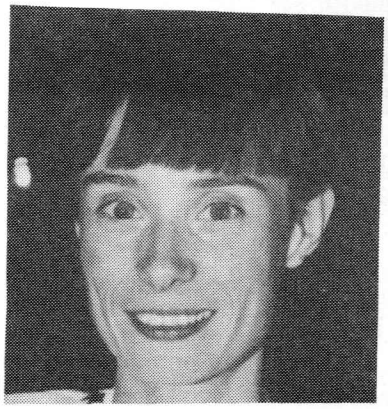




Top left: Jim Screen, winner of the Improvers' Award; Top right: Jonathan Trope, winner of the Masters' Marathon trophy, with presenter Charles Coville; Lower left: Andrew Hallam, winner of the Bret Nichols Memorial trophy for the Equaliser Cross-Country; Lower right: Neil McPherson, winner of the Seniors' Marathon and Half-Marathon trophies.

'96 Outstanding Achievement Award Nominees





3 of the 5 nominees for the Outstanding Achievement Award 1996, at the Xmas Brunch. From top: Joanne Cowan (best marathon and ½-marathon in open and veterans' categories); Darren Benson, (best open marathon and sub-3-hour m'thon improver); Dawn Tiller, female ultra runner of the year. The other 2 nominees were the winner Chris Truscott (see p.1), and John Young, (see p.41, member of the month).

Marathon Improvers 1981-1996

See article "Kaptain AnoraK" page 38

Winners of Sub 3-hour Marathon Improvers' trophy

1981	Dave Cox	3:24:27 to 2:45:02 (19.28%)
1982	Bruce Usher	3:16:48 to 2:38:45 (19.33%)
1983	Wayne Stanton	3:23:39 to 2:49:03 (16.99%)
1984	Peter Donnelley	3:27:20 to 2:47:41 (19.12%)
1985	Mathew Kaley	3:39:11 to 2:59:56 (17.91%)
1986	David Winch	2:55:18 to 2:37:36 (10.10%)
1987	Alex Whitworth	2:55:54 to 2:41:49 (8.01%)
1988	Jeff Gissing	2:48:13 to 2:38:17 (5.91%)
1989	James McDonnell	3:02:55 to 2:51:57 (6.00%)
1990	David Toogood	3:10:47 to 2:51:21 (10.19%)
1991	Geoff Cox	3:27:26 to 2:47:23 (19.31%)
1992	Chris Dwyer	2:51:50 to 2:44:25 (4.32%)
1993	John Craig-Sutherland	3:07:53 to 2:52:47 (8.04%)
1994	Chris Dwyer	2:41:28 to 2:38:30 (1.84%)
1995	Grant Ranken	4:23:53 to 2:56:53 (32.97%)
1996	Darren Benson	2:59:30 to 2:33:19 (14.59%)

Winners of Sub 4-hour Marathon Improvers' trophy

1981	Neil Collum	3:35:42 to 3:12:21 (10.83%)
1982	Peter Ryan	3:49:23 to 3:21:45 (12.05%)
1983	Christine Porter	4:45:00 to 3:28:26 (26.87%)
1984	Mike Foster	3:41:52 to 3:09:06 (14.77%)
1985	Maureen Greenwald	4:53:00 to 3:40:49 (24.64%)
1986	Ross Wall	3:41:09 to 3:19:44 (9.68%)
1987	Rod Garrick	4:09:00 to 3:41:37 (11.00%)
1988	Rod Garrick	3:41:37 to 3:32:59 (3.90%)
1989	Rod Garrick	3:32:59 to 3:18:10 (6.96%)
1990	Margaret Robinson	3:31:46 to 3:23:53 (3.72%)
1991	(not awarded)	
1992	Geoff Taylor	3:39:38 to 3:13:41 (11.82%)
1993	Steve Hitchcock	4:14:17 to 3:12:40 (24.23%)
1994	Peter Cookson	3:50:08 to 3:29:53 (8.80%)
1995	Neil McPherson	4:19:59 to 3:48:22 (12.16%)
1996	Clara Vucetic	3:31:00 to 3:12:53 (8.59%)

Six-Foot Track: Striders' Roll of Honour

Data from Kevin Tiller

		Male		Female	
U-29	1	Michael Burton '91	3:40:31	Dawn Tiller '95	4.10.51
	2	Kevin Tiller '94	4.11.05	Joanne Barton '97	5.36*
	3	Jon Worswick '93	4:25:16	Belinda O'Neil '97	6:10 *
30-39	1	Jon Worswick '96	3:53:42	Dawn Tiller '97	4:16 *
	2	Bruce Inglis '95	3.57.07	Linda Thompson '89	4:19:28
	3	Kelvin Marshall '95	3.57.21	Amanda Dawson '96	5:15:19
40-49	1	Malcolm Satchell '93	3:54:51	Sue Hill '87	5:11:20
	2	Warwick Selby '90	4:02:17	Wendy Downes '93	5:12:50
	3	Don Price '87	4:18:12	Breeda Kelly '96	5:16:27
50-59	1	Jonathan Trope '96	4:36:24	Wendy Downes '96	5:21:56
	2	Alf Field '91	4:43:20	Sue Hill '95	6:01:32
	3	Murray Town '96	5:08:08		
60+	1	Ron Daly '93	6:23:57		
	2	Manfred Fiedler '96	6:45:07		

** 1997 results subject to confirmation from official records. Carl Barker ran 3:46 in 1997 (30-39 group) but was unfinancial.*

Triple Trial And Tribulation

Mike Ward's personal vendetta with the Bogong to Hotham

In 1995, 1996 and 1997 I joined fellow Striders at the bottom of Mount Bogong in North East Victoria to have a go at the annual Bogong to Mount Hotham 60km trail run. Having completed quite a number of bush runs over the years I had few concerns about finishing the event. Sure I'd read Alf Field's comments on it being less a run than a survival course. Sure it may have a few hills but no way could they be as steep as the final climb over the Saddle or up Pluviometer on the Six Foot Track. Why be concerned about a cut-off of 5 hours for 32km - we run that distance every Sunday in half the time. Just allow a little longer for the hills and a slower pace to leave something for the second half. Still loads of time.

Alarm bells should have rung

Such were my thoughts in 1995 when I first tackled this challenge. Sitting in the Pizza parlour in Mount Beauty with John Sutherland and Murray Town the night before the run we all felt confident. The alarm bells should have started ringing when three experienced ultra runners from Victoria joined us and started telling us horror stories of what was before us. They were only kidding us - weren't they ? We found out for ourselves the next day.

All runners congregated at the bottom of Mount Bogong at around 6am keen and raring to go. This is the highest mountain in Victoria so it's a good idea to get it out of the way first. Off up the "Staircase" and up and up into the clouds. Legs feeling a bit tired but should be OK. Reach the top but unable to see anything due to cloud cover. Must keep sight of the bloke in front as I don't know where I'm going and it takes time to stop and read numbers on the ski poles. This is much easier and should get better on the down hill run to Big River. Probably like Brindabella with sweeping slopes perfect for the stretch out of legs. Wrong! Vertical downhill through bush with a track that keeps on disappearing. Over logs, under low branches and on the seat of my pants as I eventually near the river. Wade across holding on to the chain. Find what looks like the track out and off I go - upwards.

Aching quads

This was one of the horror stories from the previous night becoming reality - Duane Spur. It was steep and just kept ascending. Aching quads from the previous up and down. Must keep going. After well over an hour Roper Hut is sighted and the worst is over. On to the flat (relatively speaking) plains and able to break out into a run. Hours and minutes had ticked away and that previously easy cut-off time was racing towards me. I caught up with one of our (tor)mentors from the previous night and together we trundled on with the ever growing knowledge that we had blown it. Still 1km to go when the dreaded 5 hours struck. So we ambled into the half way, collapsed under shade, and competed with the flies for the feast of fruit, cakes and chocolate. I was disappointed with not achieving my goal but somewhat thankful as I don't think that I could have survived a further 28km. There were 11 contestants completing the full distance, 7 of whom were Striders.

History repeated itself

Not to be defeated, I fronted up again in 1996. That year the cut-off had been extended by 2km and 20 minutes. Travelling with a too full backpack I set off speedily to have time in hand for the cut-off. Unfortunately history was to repeat itself and I found myself short of cut-off by about 1km having traversed some of the extra distance through marshy bush. As in 1995 I was relieved to finish at half way. Especially as I'd had a shower, lounge in the motel pool, dinner and a couple of beers by the time the three Victorian runners stumbled back into the motel looking the worse for wear.

So it was back in 1997 to tackle it with fellow Striders Murray ("nothing better to do this weekend") Town and Malcolm Satchell. Malcolm runs well in the bush and on hills so we had convinced him that this would suit him down to the ground. As a concession Geoff Hook had extended the cut-off time by a further 10 minutes without altering the distance. As expected Malcolm soon disappeared, leaving Murray and me to plod on.

Murray bounced in

We've run quite a few ultras together over the last few years and have found that we have a similar pace that gets us there without excessive damage to the body. Going up Mount Bogong I did pull away from him. At Roper Hut I was still feeling good and avoided the prior years' mistake of too much walking. I could see Murray only a couple of minutes behind so I pushed on trying to stay ahead of a couple of runners only doing the first half. They did overtake me with 2km to go but I was unconcerned as I knew that not only had I made it within the time limit but had also managed it within the old time of 5:20. As I bent over getting my breath back and convincing myself that I did want to go on, Murray bounced in, less than a minute behind

me. Malcolm was well ahead of us in 3rd place, only 7 minutes behind Strider Kelvin Marshall.

I felt much more at ease now that the time pressure was off and Murray knew where we were going. We jogged off with tired legs feeling the effect of cumulative climbing and dropping. After about a km (and out of sight of half way) I needed to walk. So we continued alternating running and walking. Murray kept on telling me that this was the place to run as further on the going got rougher. Nevertheless my legs were shot.

Watching the cows and bulls

Eventually we were on the High Plains carefully watching the cows and bulls and calculating whether we could outrun them should they decide to investigate us at closer quarters. The scenery was magnificent and the ground rough. So it was consistent walking. We knew that there were another 2 runners behind us so we didn't feel that we were holding up any of the race officials. The temperature was in the high 20's but we were lucky to have a slight breeze to cool us.

In the far distance (and over at least one range) we thought we could see Mount Hotham. The end was in sight. First, however, it was another vertical descent. May as well run, as walking downhill was painful. According to my calculations only about 10km to go. That's just over the distance we used to run in Lane Cove Park midweek so no problem. How we are so easily fooled! I'd heard about Swindler's Spur but thought no more about it as nothing could be steeper than Duane Spur. It was! Maybe we'd been out for too long or maybe it was steep but I found the climb up torturous. My quads shrieked with pain and I began to get cramp in my feet. If we stopped huge flies settled on us. I looked at Murray and saw that even he was feeling it. At long last we arrived at Derrick Hut. Only 3km to go I said. Wrong - about 5km.

Expletives

The expletives did drop out at that stage. So on and on and of course more up and up though on a less severe incline. Slopes like this would normally have been great to run up, though not to-day.

The end was at long last in sight. Past the car park and on to the road. Up the road and on to the track for the final ascent of a few hundred metres to the top of Mount Hotham. We jogged over the finish line in 10:42 in 5th equal position. Kelvin had finished 2nd in 8:37 and Malcolm 3rd in 9:13. The final two competitors arrived in about an hour after us despite only being 10 minutes behind us at halfway. Striders comprised 4 of the 8 full course finishers. It was now about 6 at night so I can understand the rationale of having a strict cut-off to allow time for action to be taken in the event of accidents or missing runners.

Due to a stuff-up in transport arrangements Malcolm and I were dropped off at Bright en route home whilst Murray got a lift back to the start and then had to drive back to pick us up. So it was about 9.30 when we eventually reached Mount Beauty. Take away pizzas were the order of the day for three weary but satisfied runners.

Many thanks to Murray for helping me round. This is the hardest event I've ever undertaken and his encouragement to keep going was invaluable. For him it must have been but a mere training run compared to his gargantuan effort in the Sri Chinmoy ultra triathlon. How can I complain about a 60km trail run when he completed a 100 km run **after** a 15 km swim and 400 km bike ride ? I'll leave him to tell that story.

Mount Bogong to Hotham, 12 Nov 1996: Race Results

1 Peter Mitchell, 33, VIC	8:02:26
2 Kelvin Marshall, 32, VIC	8:37:52
3 Malcolm Satchell, 46, NSW	9:13:34
4 Kevin Tory, 27, VIC	9:38:39
5= Mike Ward, 44, NSW	10:42:23
5= Murray Town, 51, NSW	10:42:23
7= Jim Grelis, 45, VIC	11:44:10
7= Peter Bearsley, 54, VIC.	11:44:10

Is this the silliest hat in Striders' history or what? Club President John Turner hams it up at the pre-Xmas brunch.

Boston by the Alphabet

by Alex Hamill

(26 reasons why Striders Brenda Hamill, Bryce Courtenay, Alf Field, Geoff Taylor and Alex Hamill believe this may have just been the Race of the Century)

Arriving is half the battle:The logistics in actually getting to the start were staggering. Whilst the race didn't start 'til noon, we had to leave our hotel at 6.00am and join the parade of 800 school buses shipping runners to the start at Hopkinton. 40,000 runners on muddy fields surrounding a local school and cramped into tents with temperatures down around 5° is not a pretty sight. In typical American fashion though, they did everything to make us feel comfortable - croissants, bagels, donuts, hot coffee, gatorade and water all readily available and gleefully served by pleasant young hostesses.

Bandits: Part of the lore of Boston are the "Bandits" who can't make the official entry and run at the back of the field. It's said they sometimes number almost half of the accepted entries. Race organisers were worried if 20,000 Bandits turned up to join 40,000 official runners there was some potential for disaster. Fortunately sanity prevailed and most of them stayed away. There were few and far from being embarrassed, most wore T-shirts proclaiming their status with signs like 'Robber Runner'.

Computer chip: Boston solved the problem of time wasted before you make the start-line by asking all runners to tie a little bit of round plastic to their shoes. This would clock your time from the moment you crossed the start and stop at the finish line. I'm not really into technology (I was fortunate to be too young for Vietnam and too old for computers) so I didn't believe it actually happened...but it did (although in the case of mine it was obviously a very slow chip.)

Doughnut anybody?: Having decided that lying in a cramped tent with mud oozing underneath through our bed of Boston newspaper wasn't much fun, the Australian contingent of Alf Field, Bryce Courtenay, Danny Culbert, Brian Conroy and I managed to discover a sunny field behind the tents known only to those with local knowledge. We had plenty of room, it was warm and we were at least able to walk around. About an hour before official race start the crowd around us started to murmur and we assumed they were all moving towards the line. Not so...all attention was focused on an elderly Norwegian couple. The male had decided that it was time to Vaseline up so he simply dropped all his clothes while his wife held out the world's largest pot of vaseline into which he stuck his gnarled fingers. Removing great dobs of the stuff he began to stick it into every orifice in his body. This was no quick routine. This guy carefully rubbed vaseline like he was expecting to do more than just run. At this precise moment one of the smiling hostesses entered the field and cried out 'doughnut anybody?" to which Danny Culbert screamed -"this guy doesn't need it, he's already got one".

Expo Excellence: The pre-race Expo was a sight to behold. A runners Easter Show with over 200 stands offering every miracle aid to running from tablets to toeless shoes to Tshirts.

Failed to compare: Heartbreak Hill did exactly that. For all Striders who fear the wrath of Boston's Heartbreak Hill, fear no more, a mere undulation compared to Sydney's City to Surf.

Getting Bloody Cold: When we finally got to the Boston Common for the finish about 5.00pm the temperature had dropped from a pleasant 55F at the start to a distinctly cool 40F. The Space Blankets we'd been handed at the finish warmed us up but everyone was desperate to get their clothes which had been loaded in buses clearly numbered before the start. The only problem was that our bus wasn't in sequence and Alf Field and I spent a freezing 45mins trying to locate our desperately needed Striders tracksuit tops.

Hopkinton: This small rural town has but one claim to fame. It's exactly 42 kilometres from Boston. A two lane road obviously meant that a fast start was impossible, indeed our group didn't reach the first mile mark until 49 minutes after the starter's gun had fired.

In Memoriam: It was amazing to see how many runners carry "In Memoriam" messages on their Tshirt naming the relative or friend and the date they passed away. I'm told by Bryce this is a worldwide Aids Awareness move and is becoming very common in the US.

Just one mistake (do they call me Pierre the Bridge Builder). I suggested to our cold, hungry and tired group that catching a train was the best way to get back to our hotel - wrong. Not only was everyone else able to catch a cab easily we took a further two hours to get back. (At least

Bryce had fun - playing his world famous author line with every pretty girl on the train). We didn't make it into the hotel until 8.00pm. So the day which had started at 5.00am finished 15 hours later. That's a longer day than Comrades but at least the beer afterwards tasted just as sweet.

Kelley John: 88 years old, 61 starts, 58 finishes in the celebrated Boston Marathon. Need we say more. John Kelley was at the start.(and probably finished in front of us). What a legend!

Louise Sauvage: Deserves a mention if only for the fact that she was the highest placed Australian winning $6,000 for coming second in the wheelchair division in the remarkable time of 1.54.39.

Moses Tanui: Moses collected a cool $100,000 for his winning 2.09.16 time which was a bit off the 2.07.15 record. He was one of seven Kenyans in the top ten places.

Nuptials on the way: Most runners stopped for a quick toilet or a drink. One couple decided to stop for a wedding ceremony. Denise Schwabb and Edward Walters demanded a necessarily brief (15 mins 37 secs) wedding ceremony in the middle of the marathon after running the first 14 miles in about 2 hours. They stopped just shy of the church, doffed their Tshirts and donned white formal tops. The Reverend Craig Adams unfortunately couldn't miss the opportunity for another great American cliché and closed the ceremony saying "To run this far was an effort but the contest you face beyond the finish line is going to be even greater".

Obsession with the weather: Any of you who travel in the States will marvel at the wonderful obsession the Americans have with the weather. The totally dedicated weather channel has one of the highest audiences of any cable station. As it snowed three days prior to the event the obsession with what the weather would be like on race day was magnified many times over. The snow melted and the sun shone on race day but ironically the day afterward New England was hit with the heaviest storms in months and completely flooded. The God of Marathons certainly smiled on Monday April 15, 1996.

Phoning home: At about the 26K mark we just had to ask a "30 something woman" who had been chatting on her mobile for at least 10 minutes as she jogged along "who are you calling?", "Just my babysitter in Denver. I wanted to make sure the kids are ok".

Queer Running: Take your pick. Guys dressed as fairies, ballerinas, a man carrying a plastic house, priests, nuns, and hundreds of other candidates for the funny farm all featured at Boston.

Running backwards: Kai MacDonald ran the whole event backwards, shirtless with "Yes the wrong way" plastered across his chest..

Sorry Striders: This was the greatest and the only thing that Striders Brenda, Geoff, Bryce, Alf and I had to be sorry about was that only five of us made the journey. Be sure you don't miss the Bi Centenary Boston.

Thirty-eight thousand: Something has to be said for the amazing efficiency with which the race organisers handled over 38,000 runners (+ Bandits),a world record crowd. No drama, no aggro and the festive feeling was pervasive.

Uta Pippig: The race of the day came from German Uta Pippig who won the women's division in 2.27.12 suffering from cramps, diahhorea and exhaustion. She actually lost the lead and managed to regain it with 2K to go. Unfortunately Uta spent 3 days in hospital afterward but the $100,000 prize money was probably fair compensation.

Very very slow start: If you are looking for a PB this wasn't it. Apart from the 30 minutes it took us to make the start line, it was a further 19 to the first mile. When you add in 20 drink stops and 5 toilet breaks for our group you can see why the very very slow start translated to a very very slow run.

Welesley College: At exactly half way you hit Welesley College. This famous female only school is an architectural joy and I don't mean the building! 5,000 co-eds line the streets outside the college screaming support with their hands held high asking you to give them a high five. It was so much fun we were tempted to run around the block and do it again.

Xtra special: Mention has to be made of Alf Field's remarkable effort. He finished in Boston in a very respectable 3.37 then, flying to various cities for business, managed to conquer London in just over 3.40 less than a week later.

Yu Wen-Shi: I was tempted to suggest that Yu Wen-Shi was included because she was the first across the line in the 60-over Women category (which she was) but the real reason is I couldn't think of anything else that started with Y.

ZZZs: Thousands of these were certainly stacked up as we finally hit the cot about 1.00am - 20 hours after the alarm had dragged us out of bed on what was to be one of the greatest races of all time.

The Fat Ass 54

by Kevin Tiller

I know you've all read hundreds of race reports before, but this race was hard work to run and will be much easier to read. It's the FAT ASS 54 Miler (alternative title: Firth's 10th Frisky Filthy Formidably Fabulous Feckless Fight The Flab Fat-Ass Fifty Four Finally Finishing in Farnham).

As expected, it was 54 miles, starting from Sevenoaks in Kent, finishing in Farnham, Surrey. It was a cross-country trail race mainly on little footpaths that make up the North Downs Way long-distance footpath.

No wimps

The entry form suggested "No support, no awards, no wimps. Modest welcome at the finish. Route instructions for runners. Only very experienced runners should contemplate running with no support. Winter race over muddy North Downs, with certain unique flavour which some feel is an acquired taste. Good atmosphere; if you meet anyone".

Dawn decided that she fell into the wimps category as Britain had suffered from a week of freezing weather and the day was forecast to have a top temperature of about minus 1°C(!!) I decided to run, partly as I like off-road races, and partly to encounter old running pal David Sill who recently moved from Sydney to Leeds, England. We thought that we were experienced enough to run with no support and that was the plan. To let us know what it was all about the entry form prompted us to confirm:

"I know and therefore will not complain that the North Downs are neither flat, paved nor lit and that in the month of January the weather could become a little inclement making shoes muddy. I realise that if I take longer than 11 and a half hours some of the very nice people running the event will have gone home or be in the nearest pub but I will phone or fax them to ensure they know what happened to me."

Thermal long johns

I had spent the few days prior to the run testing out various combinations of cold weather running gear, as I am not accustomed to wearing much more than shorts and T-Shirt. On the day, 7am turned up, very dark, very very cold, very windy with occasional snow flurries. I wore ALL my cold weather gear. Simple. As it turned out I wore this for the entire day without removing anything: socks, shoes, underpants, thermal long johns, tights, 2 thermal long-sleeved tops, Striders singlet, waterproof, windproof coat, woolly hat, neck warmer.

Dave and I planned to run approx 9 hours, this being governed more by the fact that we would finish around 4pm when it would get dark, than actual running ability. 54 miles of complicated footpaths with meagre, if any, food or drink in terrible weather conditions was hardly likely to be run faster than 50 miles of virtually flat, perfect aid, perfect weather as we had at the Sunmart 50 (where I ran 9:40). Our plans were optimistic...

Out of the 40+ registered for the run, only 20 actually made it to the start to hand over their 6 pounds cash. We all set off in the dark. We started running with a group that included the Race Director, Alan Deacon. They planned to run 10 hours, and had managed to run under 10 hours the previous 8 years, so obviously he knew the way and what he was capable of. Two minutes into the race Dave and I decided, therefore, that 10 hours was what we would aim for. We had read the race instructions, and decided that there was NO WAY we wanted to have to follow them as they were too complicated, and especially we did not want to risk getting lost in the dark. If someone knew the way then bugger it - we would follow them.

Die a long slow death

Dave was especially pleased when they decided to walk the big hills, and wait for a re-group after crossing stiles. I prefer the come-out-with-all-guns-blazing-then-die-a-long-slow-death approach, but figured I could really die on this one if I wasn't careful. There was a LOT of snow and ice around and I didn't want to risk my never having DNFed streak. Our group resembled some kind of Army group march - we numbered 9 or 10 people at times, all trying to keep the Race Director in sight, like a bunch of squaddies keeping the sergeant major in sight.

Whenever the race director's group stopped at a check/aid-point we all stopped. Dave and I were virtually the only ones carrying all our own gear. At least our bottles of water were VERY cold.

At one point Dave and I were nattering along at the back of the group and missed a turn, but luckily guessed a few other tracks correctly and found our way back onto the North Downs Way, unbelievably right behind the main group - I don't even think they noticed we were gone for 20 minutes or so. The race was not along a pre-determined route, it appeared, as long as you made

the correct checkpoints, so we were still legal. We even saw fellow internet ultra society member, Dave Palen, who introduced himself part of the way on the run. We had been running with him for almost 2 hours before he recognised us (we wouldn't have guessed him either if left up to our own devices).

Hurtle down the footpaths

The halfway point was at Box Hill, at approx 5+ hours, where someone saved my life with a couple of cups of tomato soup. I had been continually slipping off the back of the group and was barely managing to keep up. A warm drink and time to really re-group was what I needed. The course had displayed some rare beauty - very wintry scenes of snow covered hills, frosted trees etc. Virtually all of the course was on snow and ice so the beauty was wearing off as I just hoping to get to the end.

When Alan decided it was time to go, we all quickly left. It was grim. I was dropping off the back within minutes. I ran up every hill, pushed and strained. I tried everything, even chocolate Pocket Rockets, but at some point I just never saw them again. I should have admitted this to myself, but continued to hurtle down the narrow footpaths as quickly as I could go. I should have stopped and read my directions as when I eventually did get to the next checkpoint it was nowhere to be seen. I had gone wrong and not even known it!

Bought a VegeBurger

To make it worse, I didn't have a map, just the course instructions, which meant that other than retrace my steps I had no way of getting back on course. I guessed that I had gone wrong miles back (literally) and set off to find a better route. I got to the nearest village, and managed to buy a map (!!). From there I decided to run by road to the next checkpoint- some 4 miles distance. This I did. At this point (Newlands Corner), I realised that not only would I be very late, and finish in the dark, but I would be all on my own, as I hadn't seen anyone for about 2 hours. Luckily there was a tea Shop open, so I bought a cup of tomato soup (Saved my life again) and a VegeBurger as I figured I'd need something warm inside me. I ate these whilst walking along the track and deciding on my plan of action.

I decided that firstly there was no way I'd quit. Secondly I'd keep going all night if I had to, even though I had to go to a nephew's christening in the morning. Thirdly, I'd relish the pain and suffering as we are taught at the Sydney Striders that this is the way of things.

By now it was getting darker, so I pressed on, map in hand this time. Within an hour or so it got dark and I also ran with a torch in hand. I made good progress, even though it was soon pitch black. It was the first time I had to race with a torch. I have run before at night on an athletic track, and I have done bush runs along trails known to me in the dark, but had never raced in the dark on trails before. I found it easier to read an instruction by torchlight, turn it off, stagger to an appropriate point then turn on the light again.

On and on for 12 pages

After an hour of this, I was almost interrupted having a drink, a Pee, and a Gu by another runner catching me up. Rory and I quickly became friends and ran the last 2 hours to the finish together. It helps to have someone to run with in the dark. If you have never run the English countryside footpaths then it is certainly an experience. Try this one in the dark, in sub-zero temps after you have been running for 10 hours: "Cross RD and go thru hedge to L of house around edge of golf course for 600 yds to go over stile to RD. TL and in 450yds TR at "T" by clubhouse. Follow RD for 660 yds and TL (just past pair of cottages on R) (acorn on fence L) and pass between barriers. Go along path between fences thru barriers to RD. TL and in 30 yds TR on TK by Mulberry Cottage. Follow ahead for 360yds to TR on wide XTK at SP to TL in 160 yds up steps just before field. Over stile ahead between fences then hedges to stile. "

It goes on and on for 12 pages. At one point we read about following a wall for 120 yards and Rory said "What wall ?". Turned on the torch and there was a wall 100 yards long by 10 feet tall about 3 feet to his left !

I finished in 13 hours 3 minutes for another personal worst. Still I had a great time ! Dave ran 10 hours 49 mins and finished with the Race Director.

10k Series 1996: Errata

by Raymond Potter

Mike Wilson was on the end of some pretty shoddy race calculations. His handicap had erroneously shrunk from 44.22 to 35.53 without him taking one step in race 8! As a result he got a total of 37 handicap points at year-end instead of 78. He was actually 5th on the ladder. His race 10 target time should have been 43.21 and he ran 42.21; what a blinder. Mike my apologies, I did recalculate the races from 7 on again with your new targets.

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How Not to Train for Brindabella - but Who Cares!

by Brian Colwell

It was immediately after the 1996 Forster Ironman (at which I was a spectator for a change) that I discovered that my lobbying at work for a redundancy package had been successful. "Whoopee!" I thought, and over the next few weeks (partly while enjoying a month in the Queensland sun) I had booked a ticket to go back to the U.K. for the first time in almost 20 years plus made a list of all my "must do" things for a trip I planned to make to Africa. I also discovered that, unlike my previous travels around the globe in the seventies, when I just threw a few things in a backpack and took off, a bit more organisation was required. Nevertheless, after sorting out financial affairs and storing, throwing or giving away various possessions I was on my way in late June.

Ron the Pom

Those who have been around the Striders long enough will remember my long time mate Ron (the POM) Feeney. Well he is still fit, into triathlons these days, and he and his wife Ann gave me a key to their house in Pinner (North West London) and said "make yourself at home". So I did, basing myself there and driving all over the U.K. for about two months in a small, old, cheap, but amazingly reliable little car I bought. I ran on the Sussex Downs and the Cornish Hills, Mountain biked in the Fens, hiked on Dartmoor, walked part of the Cornish Coastal Track, pottered through the Peak District, went Fell Walking (and some running) in the Lake District, swam across England's deepest lake (brrr!) hiked to the top of Snowdon and of course tried numerous of the "Real Ales" that the U.K. has to offer. I looked up family and lots of old friends (some of whom I hadn't told I was coming after 20 years away!) plus made plenty of new friends, mainly hiking and Youth(?!) Hostelling. Well, I may not be as young as most in the YHA's, but I had a ball anyway.

Also had a couple of weeks in France, saw the sights of Paris, looked up friends in Antibes (one of whom is a 9h.30. Ironman - so did some pretty heavyweight training there), lazed on beaches in that Millionaires' playground, hired a bike and rode 100k around the Carmargue and experienced a journey through the Channel Tunnel.

Strange fetish

Now came the time when the training all fell apart - but it was worth it all for the experience that was Africa. I kicked off that trip by maintaining this strange fetish that Striders members seem to have for wanting to climb to the highest point of whatever far flung corner of the globe they happen to have found themselves in. Yes, I joined a trek to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, 5895m and the highest mountain in Africa. It isn't a technical climb, but the altitude (especially when you have just flown in from sea level) makes it very tough. I suffered the usual headaches and nausea of altitude sickness and felt so crook on the final night that I couldn't sleep at all.

Not that you get much chance for slumber. They wake you at midnight to start the final ascent by flashlight, so it was head down and keep on plodding ever upward until we reached Gillmans Point (5685m) at first light. Once we were that close, nothing was going to stop me (even throwing up all over the landscape about 30mins from the top!) and at 7.25am on Thursday 12th September we proudly stood atop Uhuru Peak. I hugged Toni (the ex swimmer, ski bum, keen mountain biking and very fit American girl who became a good friend on the way up), shook hands with Jackson (our guide) savoured the experience, the view, the feeling of elation and gave thanks that I was one of the few of our party who made it. One other plus I discovered on the way down is that my long held fear of heights seems to have lessened dramatically. Perhaps I had left that at the peak??

Head impaled on a stake

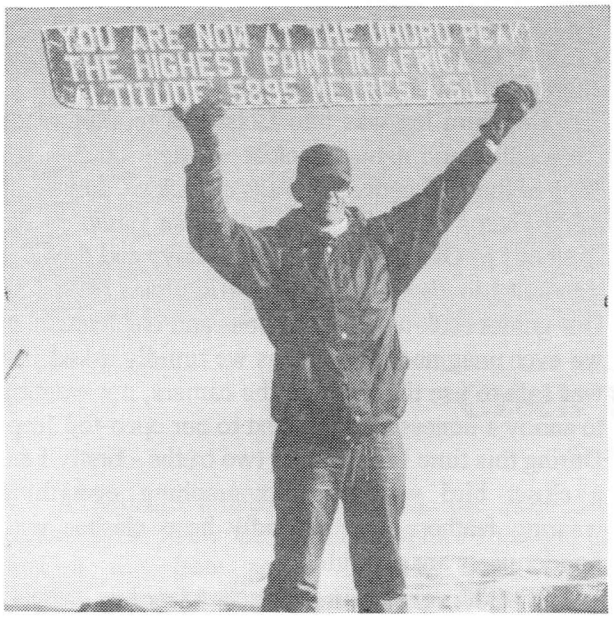
The next item on the agenda was an overland truck/camping safari through Uganda and into Zaire to see the Mountain Gorillas. We were very lucky to get in as the Zaire border post had been shelled a few days before (half the immigration building was rubble when we arrived) the chief administrator beheaded and his head impaled on a stake. In the two and a half hour walk to Djomba we saw villages partly burnt out, also by the Rwandan rebels, in an area that shortly after became a war zone. Despite all that, hacking through the jungle and spending an hour within arms length of such impressive but gentle creatures was absolutely incredible. So close, one of them grabbed hold of my camera strap and I found myself playing tug of war with a gorilla for my camera! No feeling of threat however - it was just a young one full of playful curiosity. Oh, and I did manage to keep my camera

After this it was back to Nairobi, where I managed one of my few (four) runs in two months

in Africa. Nairobi is not one of the nicest cities around (frequently referred to as "Nairobbery") so I was glad to soon be back on the road into Tanzania and heading for Ngorongoro Crater. This and the other game parks I saw (in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe) were fantastic. I saw almost all the wild game animals and got some great photos. Some of the campsites were interesting. At various different places we were sharing them with baboons, warthogs and hyenas, - and at QE2 National Park in Uganda even had hippos browsing around the tents in the evening!

Communication was limited

So many highlights - including the people themselves whom I found amazingly friendly, especially the kids. One rather "special" memory is of another run down a dirt road from a campsite in the back of nowhere in southern Tanzania, when I felt like the Pied Piper, attracting a succession of kids who wanted to run with me. They included one lad of about 12 who, dressed in long trousers, shirt and thongs, kept up with me at about four an a half minute km. pace, smiling all the way. Communication was limited - but sharing the pleasure of running said it all.



Brian Colwell adds Kilimanjaro to the list of Strider-conquered peaks.

Zanzibar (the Spice Island) was a fascinating place and one of the few real swims I did was the approx. 2km circumnavigation of Prison Island, offshore from Zanzibar town, where there was a great coral reef and a colony of Giant Tortoises. From there it was down the shores of Lake Malawi (50km wide and 300km long - like a freshwater sea) and that was idyllic beaches/tropical paradise stuff. Very easy to take! It was also at Chitimba Bay that I had my one long run - about 17km uphill to the Presbyterian Mission at Livingstonia, then 17km back. All this for a bet with our courier that he would pay my bar bill if I did it!

Following this it was on through Zambia to Victoria Falls on the Zambia/Zimbabwe border. Of course I had to go Whitewater Rafting down the Zambezi - and that was sensational. The best whitewater in the world, at a time when the rapids are at their wildest. 18 rapids over 24km, we flipped the raft in the biggest possible way on the worst rapid of all, I took another ducking on the way down, but managed to be the only one to stay in the raft on the final rapid (they call it "Oblivion") where just about every raft flips. One of the most exciting experiences of my life - highly recommended.

Nervously over my shoulder

Also a "stand out" memory was tracking Rhino on foot in the Matopos, just outside Bulawayo. I now have a photo of me looking a little nervously over my shoulder at a Rhino just a very few metres behind me - but what was really magical was getting within about 5metres of a 2 or 3 day old baby rhino suckling on its mother. Slightly scary but absolutely unbelievable. All in all a great trip - and all I really did was scratch the surface of what Africa has to offer.

So it came to be that at the end of October I was on a flight from Nairobi back to London for a quick round of farewells to family and friends in the South East, plus a final taste of English running. This included slogging round part of the "Sisters Marathon", 26 miles of muddy fields, soggy clay and dirt tracks on some of the hillier parts of the South Downs outside Eastbourne and then hammering my legs in the Harrow Half Marathon. On the afternoon of the 8th of November I arrived back in Sydney, on the morning of the 9th Mike Ward picked me up for the drive to Canberra and early morning on the 10th I am standing, shivering, jet lagged, untrained and half asleep at the summit of Mt.Ginini waiting for the starter's gun for Brindabella Classic number ten.

Being brainless and stupid must help to some degree, because about six hours and seventeen minutes later I shuffle stiffly across the finish line

(over an hour slower than the previous year) to maintain my finishing record. Mike, of course, had done so about 1½ hours before. To think I introduced him to ultra running and haven't beaten him on this course yet. Ungrateful creature. Maybe if I break both his legs (just joking, Mike).

Hey, better yet, Mike, have you ever thought about taking a trip overseas for a few months and doing no training while you are away, then coming back a day or two before Brindy? Well, I can dream, can't I??!!

One Step, One Trip, One Lifetime

by Joe Degabriele

1995, my 40th year, proved to be a most interesting one. I gave up Touch Football because I was tired of all the competitive pressures and decided that I'd run my first marathon.

Under the watchful eye of Dr. Ritchie, I made steady progress which was mapped against the monthly 10k runs and was looking forward to a slow but steady marathon. But in May the competitive spirit cut in after Mark Fiore told me I was in the running for the 10k Handicap. I put in some effort to improve my time but thought I blew it through work commitments and running my first marathon a week before the September run.

As the series worked out, there were two others determined to have a go for the handicap trophy, Manfred Fiedler and Brenda Kearns, and it was only a drama-filled last run through Lane Cove River park that proved to be the decider.

It was a real thrill at the 1995 Xmas brunch to receive the prize, a return airfare to Johannesburg from South African Airways' Elizabeth Campbell. Having ventured as far as Bali in my time, I'm not exactly your world traveller and I've always been wary of travelling. Nevertheless Deborah and I decided to make this a holiday of a lifetime, exploring South Africa and realms beyond.

Not knowing the first thing about Africa was the next challenge, so with a little research, some great hints from John Ayliffe, and a lot of help from Elizabeth (SAA) and Elaine (Hartleys), I started to map out a 45-day adventure into the unknown. Luckily the St. George Bank let us extend the mortgage to pay for the trip because we had never planned or saved for this trip.

We're outa here

So on the 4th of April 1996 Deborah and I caught our jet plane out of here to over there. Well in brief we had an absolutely fabulous time, sampling a good slice of Southern Africa.

Johannesburg holds concerns for wary travellers, so we listened to the locals and had no problems, even venturing out of the comfort of Sandton to visit Soweto and Gold Reef City while acclimatising. Then we set off for our first stumble of 18 days self-drive in a rented VW Golf for the beauty of the mountains and canyons of the Eastern Transvaal, Swaziland and Kawizulu Natal.

From Durban we flew to P.E.(Port Elizabeth) to drive along the coastal garden route to Cape Town, spending sometime at Plettenberg Bay and Oudtshoorn along the way. 5 days in scenic Cape Town under Table Mountain was thrilling as we took in Stellenbosch (SA's wine region), Cape Point and False Bay.

The next step of our holiday was the magnificent Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, seeing the Falls instead just a visual sensational but an incredible physical one as the Falls' power send showers of mist hundreds of feet into the air soaking all the viewing platform. Flying over the Falls in a microlight (a hang glider with a seat and an engine) was terrifying and exhilarating being buffed by the air and spray while at the same time appearing interested in the Falls immediately below.

Our third leg was into Botswana to experience the wildlife and nature at close quarters on the Salt Pans of the Makgadikgadi Pans at Jack's Camp for 3 days. Then a quick flight to Xakanaxa Camp on the wetlands of Okavango Delta for 3 days and then the standout Lloyds Camp in semi-arid plains of Savuti. Our guides took us closer to lions and elephants than we ever imagined possible, as we timidly asked if it was safe to use the flash on the camera, not wanting to annoy a lioness walking next to our open-top Jeep. During this time I discovered two truths - firstly I am a closet bird watcher, photographing everything wearing feathers, and secondly head clashes with Landcruisers are painful.

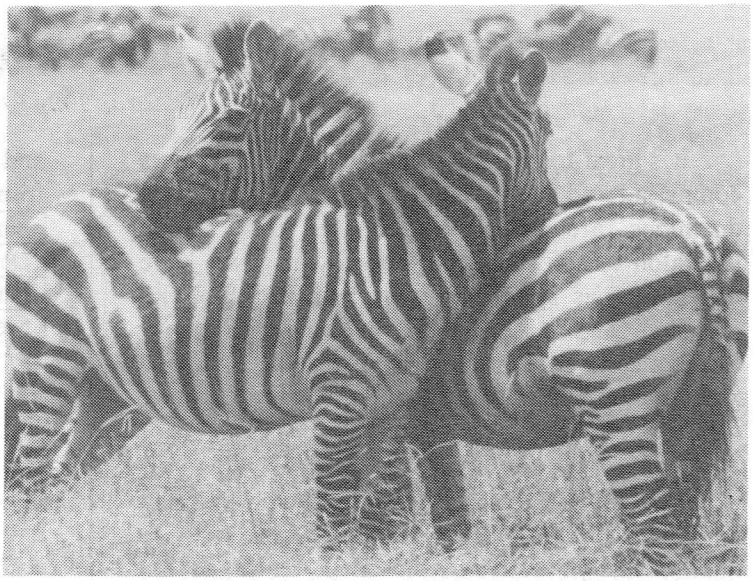
200 screaming South Africans

Our fourth hop was a 7 day safari through the north west of Tanzania to see the Serengeti Plains, Ngorongoro Carter and Lake Manyara seeing the great herds on their annual migration. Whilst the tour was great, losing my fight with a caterpillar was humbling and life scaring. Before coming home, our fifth skip was some luxury and relaxation back in South Africa at Sun City and Warmbath.

Our last day in Africa was spent in

Johannesburg watching the Super 12 final in a crowded Sports Bar in Sandton, the only Aussies amongst two hundred screaming South Africans as Natal embarrassed Queensland, then Jeff Fenech lower the flag against another South African. Well they had a good day.

After 45 days we were both looking forward to getting back into the routine of normal life but we returned with great memories of a different and exciting world along a few souvenirs and 1,600 photos. All I can say is thank you to the Sydney Striders and SAA for organising the 1995 Handicap series and providing the motivation for a trip of a lifetime.



Above and below right: You don't get happy snaps like these on an ordinary holiday! A small part of Joe Degabriele's African adventure. Below left: Joe's 1995 luck still holds! At the 1996 Xmas Brunch, he won a dozen fine wines, a raffle prize donated by Scott Crawford and others.

Czech These Ultras

By John Turner

A postcard arrived on my desk the other day containing so many foreign hieroglyphics I thought at first it was from another of SW Bag's scaley international non-associates. On closer inspection, it offered more information than I care to know about long distance running in abstruse parts of the world. Just in case there exists in our club someone crazy enough to contemplate these events, here's an edited list:

- 2nd Gemma 48-hr nonstop indoor ultra, March 25-27 1997, Brno, Moravia, Czech Republic.
- 1st Sikkim Rhododendron Ultra, April 22-28, 1997, Nth Sikkim nr. Kanchenjunga, India. A mere 300k (7 m'thons) in 7 days, at altitudes 700-3900m.

Sadly the supposed deadline for these ultras was 15 January so you've missed out this year. But dry your eyes because there's still time to enter the following:

- 6th MUM (Moravian UltraMarathon), July 6-12, 1997, 300k in 7 days, Sth Moravia, CZ;
- 1st TMMTR (TransMoravian Masochist Trail Race) July 18, 1997, 100 miles nonstop.

Deadline for both these events is 15 May. The latter is a qualifier for the Western States 100 miler in Squaw Valley or the 50 mile MMTR in Virginia, USA. Now we're talking. Send your flood of applications to: Dr. Tomas Rusek, Czech Assn. of Ultrarunners, Mutenicka 6/11, CZ 62800 Brno-Vinohrady. Tel: +42 5 4421 3307. Fax: +42 5 4421 4241. Are you listening Dave Sill?

S-TRI-ders' Round-Up

By Sarah Entwistle

It's great to see a growing number of Striders competing so successfully in triathlons and duathlons around NSW. So far this season (triathlon season runs from July to June), we have had numerous age group wins both in NSW and interstate, and in April there will no fewer than 9 Striders competing at the Forster Ironman. Here is a quick round-up of races over the last few months.

The IronMan Qualifiers

Yes. Thanks to IMG who market the Ironman name worldwide, from now on if you want to qualify for the Hawaiian Ironman, you have to qualify for Forster first through one of several Ironman Qualifying races around Australia. Some of us, like Gary Leahey, Jonathon Worswick and Sarah Entwistle, did well enough at last year's Ironman to qualify for this year's event; while Murray Town and John Preston automatically qualified as they have competed in five or more Ironmans (or is that Ironmen?). Other Striders, competing for the first time, had to try and qualify at either the Forster Half Ironman or Callala Bay Half Ironman late last year. Here are the results:

Forster Tuncurry Half Ironman, 17-Nov-96
1.9k swim, 90k bike, 21.1k run.

Apparently a tough and very competitive race for the 650 competitors with a strong headwind and Forster's notoriously rough roads. After completing this race, Mark Fiore said he now understands why triathletes seem to run so slowly.

Mark Fiore	5:29:21
Derek Smith	5:49:07 3rd 55-59
Brenda Hamill	5:49:37 2nd 50-54 (qualified)

Callala Bay Half Ironman, 17-Dec-96
1.9k swim, 90k bike, 21.1k run

Warm and sunny weather made this a very enjoyable weekend for the 500 competitors who descended on this scenic Bay near Nowra on the South Coast. Conditions for the swim were idyllic which made for fast times, the bike course was thankfully short as the road surface was very rough and dead, and the run was a mix of road and track.

Gary Leahey had an ankle injury didn't do the run, but the rest of us ran away with the trophies, all winning our age groups. This race is very well organised and recommended for next year.

NB: If you wonder what happened to Graham and Barbara Firkin, there they were cheering us on from their new home at Callala Bay.

Sarah Entwistle	4:53:26 1st 45-49F,10th female
Derek Smith	5:03:40 1st 55-59 (qualified)
Paula Whitehouse	5:09:21 1st 35-39F (qualified)
Merri Mack	5:57:50 1st 50-54F (qualified)

The 1997 Ironman

So if you're not doing the Canberra Marathon and want to experience a great event, then come up to sunny Forster for the weekend of 12-13 April and watch what promises to be the most tightly contested Australian Ironman yet. The top Ironman triathletes from around the world will be there including eight-time Hawaiian Ironman champion Paula Newby-Fraser. Even the spectators are celebrities with newly retired Ironman legend Mark Allen supporting wife Julie Moss, and Australian legend Greg Welch supporting wife Sian. Just don't eat the oysters!!

Sri Chinmoy Peace Triathlon Festival, Canberra 14/15/16-Feb-97

This weekend is second only to Noosa in terms of enormity and atmosphere. This year there were six separate triathlons over the three days involving more than 3,500 competitors, plus a Sports Expo at the Convention Centre. In addition to the popular Sprint Triathlon on Saturday afternoon, and the traditional Long Course Peace Triathlon on Sunday, there was a three day ultra-triathlon (check out our February Member of the Month, Murray Town), a new 'classic' distance race on Saturday morning, plus a 'Junior Joyathon' and corporate teams 'Joyathon' on the Friday.

Sri Chinmoy Long Course Triathlon
2.2k swim, 80k bike, 20k run

Most of us were there for the Long Course 'Peace' Triathlon on Sunday which took place while the ultra competitors were working their way through the 100k run. Their 1.4k run loop took them through the middle of the transition area so they had plenty of support each time they went through. "Go Murray! It's only another 56 laps!"

The whole weekend was exceptionally hot which affected most people on the run and meant generally slower times. However, Brenda Hamill and John Turner (back from injury) both won their age groups, and Derek Smith took second. Gary

Leahey dehydrated on the run, and it was Sarah's turn to pull out after the bike with yet another injury. In fact Murray seemed in better shape than most of us, and he'd been hard at it for 33 hours!

Mark Fiore	5:01:10
Derek Smith	5:11:52 2nd 55-59
Gary Leahey	5:12:53
Brian Colwell	5:15:14
Brenda Hamill	5:21:26 1st 50-54F
John Turner	6:08:32 1st 60+
Merri Mack	6:29:33 3rd 50-54F

Tina Campbell, Wendy Downes and Sharon McGann came 9th in the Long Course team event; and Alex Hamill came 2nd in his category in the Sprint event on Saturday afternoon. Apologies if I have missed anyone.

1997 NSW Triathlon Championships
Wyong, 5-Jan-97
1500m swim, 40k bike, 10k run

This was the first event in the four race NSW Triathlon State Cup which also consists of the NSW Sprint Championships at Drummoyne (cancelled because of the shark scare), the NSW Long Course Championships at Cowra in mid March, and the NSW Club Championships at Nelson Bay in May.

This was a very successful event on a new traffic-free course with a high standard of competitor. Even two times World Champion Michellie Jones was there. Brenda Hamill excelled herself again to take first place in her category, Derek Smith also had a good race to place second, and Gary Leahey did well to be fastest Strider having just come back from injury.

Gary Leahey	2:17:14
Chris Gunns	2:24:13
Alex Hamill	2:29:00
Derek Smith	2:33:29 2nd 55-59
Peter Hammerschmidt	2:39:21
Brenda Hamill	2:41:59 1st 50-54F

Brenda's Wheels on Fire

Turning 50 has obviously inspired Brenda Hamill to tackle triathlon with a vengeance. A novice cyclist, Brenda has placed 1st or 2nd in her category in every event she has raced in this season, qualifying for both the Forster Ironman in April, and the 1997 ITU Triathlon World Championships in Perth in November.

Brenda's onslaught began with a 2nd at Noosa in October, another 2nd at the Forster Half Ironman in November, and a win at the St George Triathlon Tour Selection Race in Canberra in December. So far in 1997, she has taken 2nd in the NSW Triathlon State Championships, 1st at Sri Chinmoy Peace Triathlon, 1st in the Avia Sprint Triathlon at Pier One, and two 1st places in the Brooks Series at Kurnell. Phew!

Husband Alex has also been firing this season with a 4th at Noosa, followed by a 2nd at the St George Selection Race which means that both Hamills will be taking on the world in Perth. Since January, Alex has taken 1st at the Avia Sprint race, 2nd at the Sri Chinmoy Sprint Triathlon and a 2nd and 3rd in the Brooks Series (he's obviously conceded that its Brenda's year to do the long stuff!).

JWL Challenge, Mt Buller to Melbourne
30-Nov to 1-Dec-96

If you are looking for a Murray style challenge then try this one for size. Starting with a 30k run down Mt Buller, you then kayak 22k on Lake Eildon, cycle 50k to Marysville, run another 20k, cycle 80k and finish with a 28k kayak down the Yarra to Melbourne. And if you think that doesn't sound too bad, then consider that it was so cold at the start that the diesel in the two support vehicles froze, as did all the locks on the cars.

There were 90 individual starters and around 200 participants in teams of 2, 3 or 6 people. Murray, true to form, did admirably well and finished 5th in the Vets category, but poor Gary Leahey, who was persuaded by Murray to enter the race as good training for Forster, had a disastrous time. Within the first 10k of the extreme bush run down Mt Buller, Gary had fallen over twice, first fracturing his elbow and then spraining his ankle!

TRIATHLON RESULTS:
PLEASE TELL US

We would like to make this a regular page, so please keep me up to date on how you are going. All results are enthusiastically received - please fax them to me on 02-9247-4525 or email:entwispr @ hutch.com.au

Kev's Korner 2

The battle for timely copy

"When's the absolute drop-dead limit for this Blister?". (Kevin Tiller, obliquely letting us know that he can't take seriously any deadline which the Blister editors are not willing to die defending).

Y'All ComeBack Soon Now

By Steve Cornelius

Saturday 11 January 1997

Dear Diary: Returned from Tasmanian holiday today. Walked a lot through bush, but ate and drank copiously there. As one does. Yep, one certainly does. How do I feel? Corpulent, rotund, well-rounded. Feel a bit like a Tooheys.

Apprehensively, even gingerly, approach bathroom scales. Note, peripherally, before standing on same, that previous user has set the little needle thingy at minus two kilograms instead of zero, presumably with intention to delude self about ability to maintain rigorous slimming schedule. No such psychological props necessary for me, ho no indeed. Re-set needle thingy to proper place, zero, then boldly go where no man has, etc, i.e. onto the scales.

Faaarrrk! Eighty-five kilograms. Accustomed to dealing with computers, await inevitable error message. Surely "General Protection Fault" will soon appear? Or "Insufficient memory to update screen"? At the very least "Please wait: your request is being processed"?

No such thing. These are simple bathroom scales, not a Pentium 133. Step off scales and re-set needle thingy to minus two. Step on again. Eighty-three now. Not so bad now. Much better now, in fact. Phew.

Only eleven kilograms over what my racing weight was back in 1984. But this situation will certainly require remedial treatment. Perhaps even a Running ComeBack, after years of inactivity. Well, so be it. After all, odd-numbered years are otherwise such a sad waste of time, no soccer World Cup, no Olympic Games, not even a Commonwealth Games.

Tomorrow morning will be the beginning of the rest of my life. But first let's go out for dinner. Would you like any fries with that order? How do you mean, fries? Oh, chips. Yes, a large, please. Plenty of salt.

Sunday 12 January 1997

Dear Diary: I know what. Have hardly run for close on two years, so will start with nice easy 3k run, dead flat. Get in car, head for Manly beach. Parking within cooee of beach an unforeseen problem, but eventually score spot by simple expedient of threatening to brain two or three rivals with jack handle. Parking spot is further from beach than my house is, but undeterred, walk back to South Steyne Surf Club.

Take off northwards towards Queenscliff. Suddenly realise I have lungs. This fact has not been readily apparent these last two years, but soon accustom myself to the burning, stinging sensation in them. Take 2 antacid tablets, always to hand. However, another physiological phenomenon manifests itself, external this time rather than internal. Begin to realise I have breasts too.

Breasts are, in theory, objects I hold in high esteem, at once useful, decorative, and a source of pleasure. At least, on women they are, but not on ME. Have often thought female runners might benefit from having detachable ones, which they could check into cloakroom before races and collect later. Save all that clanking up and down. Muse, briefly, on whether women look at men's jutty-out bits and entertain similar thoughts. Conclude, on balance, probably not.

But wait, there's more. I seem also to be wearing lifebelt, without any discernible intention to enter water. Understand, in sublime moment of revelation, where eleven (or was it thirteen?) extra kilograms now distributed. Effect is as if I have called into Franklins before run, purchased 11 (or 13, what's the diff?) one-kilo packs of raw sugar, placed them in plakky bag, and tied them around waist. That's after taking two out and putting them in my bra. Am not actually wearing bra, you understand, but you get the idea.

My permanent lifebelt and proto-tits have life of their own. Their movement suggests many vivid metaphors, perhaps most attractive being slow-motion movement of models' hair in shampoo commercials, most apt being that of wet cement in bucket. Stagger, heaving, through 3k and collapse back into car, gasping for breath.

On turning ignition key, radio blares Mick Jagger classic "You can't always get what you want". How true. Jagger persists, wailing "but if you try sometimes, you just might find, you get what you need". Entertain numerous thoughts, some pragmatic, some lewd beyond description, about "what I need" right now. Just when will I get these things which I need? And how hard will I have to try?

Sunday 19 January 1997

Dear Diary: Woolwich, my first StaR run for very long time, my StaR Comeback in fact. Notice that friendly host Paul Lunsmann is already, at 6.45 am, placing large iced cake on table with attractive tablecloth. *[continued p27].*

March, 1997

Sydney Striders Road Runners' Club

Marathon Training Group

and Half Marathon

Edited, written, produced and distributed by Kevin O'Kane
Tel: 9449 1435 (H) 9283 3355 (Bus.)

Who is that man?

NAME: S.W. Bag

OCCUPATION: Whinger

AGE: Ageless

BEST RUNNING MOMENT: Hearing that Bruce Murray had "accidentally" connected his elbow to Nobby Young's nose while Nobby was trying to pull down Bruce's shorts

WORST RUNNING MOMENT: Realising I would have to run 10k's backwards whistling Dixie after Nobby completed his round Australia walk

1997AIM: Whinge more than in 1996 (but that's Impossible)

Overheard

1. From Bill Blecha, on hearing that Nobby young was walking to Tasmania: "He always said that he could walk on water".

2. Comment from unnamed source, in response to an observation that Bruce Murray's running was going better since his long standing groin injury improved: "Bruce's groin has been around so long that it should be a member". Hmmm - well, yes.

Who are you?

Answer A

Statistically speaking, the mythical average Group member is a 44 year old female manager. Her vital statistics are:

10k PB	47.36;
City to Surf PB	68.55;
Half Marathon PB	106.10;
Marathon PB	4.05

Answer B

You are the Marathon Training Group. I'm not. You are the ones who stay together, pulling along any strugglers. You get up early to train, and you run the races. So enjoy yourselves.

Third time ?

Lesley Clarke, one of the "advanced" group, is on a roll, one way or another. She was one half (with Elana Leigh) of the simultaneous swan-dive onto the bitumen (one on each side of the road) during the Balmain Bungle. And after the Berowra run, Lesley had not one, but TWO, flat tyres on the way home. Anyone need a lift to the Six Foot Track? Good luck, Lesley.

Go for it!

"A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has unlimited enthusiasm" *Charles Schwab*

INSIDE

2 Who's in the 1997 Group
2 Training run times
3 The power of the positive
4 Hills

Who's in the Group

Julia Stenton
Tina Campbell*
Elana Leigh
Michael Bailey
Rozanne Green
Tony Brown
Kevin O'Kane*
Keith Jackson
Peter Cookson
Brad Renshaw
Margaret Smith
Kirsten Themsen

Nick Themsen
Ruth McColl
Fiona Pelly
Lynndy Bennett
Steve Cornelius*
Neil McPherson
Sonja Navakas
Paul Kotala
Ros Lloyd
Patti Crummack
Carol Taylor
Deirdre Stewart

Bill Blecha
Ron Daly
Beverley Ryan
Ted Brailey
Pauline Flanagan
Lesley Clarke
Lyn Herisson
Fran Laurent
Jacques Laurent
Margaret White

Training run times

Long Run Sunday Definite times for March and April)

Fit Group

March/April	6.00 a.m.	At STaR venues	30 kms

The rest

March	6.30 a.m.	At STaR venues	20 to 25 kms
April	6.00 a.m.	At StaR venues	20 to 30 kms

Mid-Week

Thursday 6.00 p.m.	9.5kms	Waverton Bowling Club	Variable pace

You can also do a 5km short version.

The Power of the Positive

"The whole idea is not to beat other runners. The competition is against the little voice inside you that wants to quit." *George Sheehan*

The mind has much more of an effect on your running than you give it credit for. This works both ways. A negative or equivocal attitude will have its inevitable result just as surely as a positive one. If you say "I can't run in summer because it's too hot, you will, no doubt, put in a shocker on the first hot day - "See, it's just like I said." If you go to bed on a cold winter's night, saying to yourself "I might run in the morning", you have already decided in your heart that you won't. On the other hand, if you know your goal, be it a race, a level of fitness or just a mid-week speed session, and you are commited to achieving it, you're more than half way there. The Marathon Training Group can help you set those goals and to help all Group members to achieve theirs.

Goal-setting

Set goals that are reachable. An impossible goal will only turn you off when you inevitably fail. And set different goals every day to keep yourself on track. It's hard to focus continually on a race in 6 months time. Worry about adding 5 kms to your weekly mileage, or 2 repetitions to your intervals. One almighty goal, such as a marathon, can deter you rather than motivate you if it becomes the sole reason for your running. Keep in mind the physical and mental benefits of just getting out there. That doesn't mean you don't set big goals. They're just not everything.

Be flexible

Runners are notorious for their inflexibility, mental as well as physical. Early night every Saturday. No alcohol. No caffeine. No fatty foods. Run A every Monday. Run B every Tuesday etc. **Get a life!** Unlock the prison walls of your mind. Enjoy a good red. Run somewhere else on Monday. Maybe even eat a meat pie.....(then again maybe not). Variety is the spice of life.

Address your fatigue

You can't afford to panic when tiredness comes, as it will. Accept that you will feel fatigued, and deal with it positively. "I won't acknowledge pain until I finish." "It will all be over in 10 minutes". This really can work. Or you can shift your attention to some other aspect, like your foot placement, or your knee lift, or your breathing. Fatigue can disappear as quickly as it came on.

Visualise

If you visualise the race or run a dozen times, or a hundred times, before you do it, the chances are that it will happen just as you saw it in your mind's eye. You are best to practise this late at night, or early morning, when there are fewer distractions. Run over the whole thing from start to finish. For example, for a marathon, think about getting up, taking a shower, puttiong on your gear etc., right up to your triumphant surge across the finish line. Your brain, after a while, doesn't distinguish between the real and the imagined. It responds to all images as if they are real. Practice makes perfect, so start early. It works, whether you expect it to or not. Just ask Breeda Kelly. Breeda followed my suggestion to visualise before Canberra 1996, and was startled, to say the least, when the image she had practised of a surging finish popped vividly into her head in the heat of the marathon. By "coincidence", Breeda finished very strongly. Watch the negatives, though. If you visualise doubt, pain and anxiety, that's what you'll experience.

Expect the blahs

You are going to have some days when you are unmotivated, when you don't really want to run. Expect them, but don't welcome them. That way, you will be better prepared to deal with them. Tell yourself that the bad days will soon pass, which they will. Don't just sulk - concentrate on doing something about it. Maybe you need some variety, or a day off, or just a Mars bar. Don't get anxious. If you wait it out, you'll soon be wondering what you were worried about.

Anyway, above all, don't forget to train your mind as well as your body. You come as a package.

Hills (also known as inclines, mountains, undulations, "not another one" and "Oh God!")

General

By hills, I am mostly talking about uphills. Not too many runners are intimidated by downhills (Attunga Street and the start of the Six Foot track excepted). You can't avoid them, and they are great training, so you may as well run them properly.

Posture

Just as on the flat, you run up hills best if you are upright. If you bend your waist and head over the hill, you move your centre of gravity and make harder work of it. There is never any reason for bending your head over while running. You may, of course, have to lean *slightly* (still keeping head, shoulders and hips in line) in order to keep your balance, but no more than that. If your back is tight and/or sore, you're too far forward. Try walking up a few flights of stairs. Start out with correct posture, then bend your head over. Finally, bend from the waist, then straighten up. See how much harder you work when you're bent over.

Technique

Economy and rhythm are the keys to successful hill running. Even more than on the flat, you need to run hills within yourself. Low knee lift, rapid short steps with light push-off, controlled (but not frozen) arm movements are the way to go. You have to be very careful to stay relaxed and to keep up your rhythm, arms and legs working together. On a recent run, I noticed two runner regularly drop off as soon as they hit a hill, even though they kept up easily otherwise. One bent over, head forward, causing him to work against himself. He took slow, plodding steps. The other locked hands in front, which is about the best way known to prevent rhythm developing. These runners worked harder, but ran much slower.

Mental

As I said last month, if you start out saying "I can't run hills", then you won't. They may not excite you, but, if you eliminate the negativity, they need not bother you unduly. Also, keep your concentration over the top - don't say "I've got there", and back off. Keep running.

Racing

Particularly in long races, you're better of going up hills within your comfort zone. Save the extra effort for the more level bits. What you gain by surging up hills you more than lose when the course levels out. The exception is if you are racing an individual or a group. If you feel OK, you might well gain a considerable psychological benefit by opening up a gap on a hill. By the time your rival(s) look up, you might be 200 metres ahead. In races, hills provide variety for mind and muscles fatigued by interminable flat stretches. All of my best races, without exception, have been on courses which are at least slightly hilly.

Downhills

Running down hills puts a great strain on your quads and knees. The aching legs after the City to Surf are from the downhills, not the uphills. It is just as important to run the downhills under control as the uphills. Because you can hit the ground with a force several times your bodyweight, you can easily do yourself an injury by bounding down hills, particularly steep ones. Concentrate on rhythm and control. (OK, so I charge down hills sometimes. I like it.)

Benefits

Hill training strengthens your legs, lungs and heart. Why not take advantage of their innate advantages for training. Because so many people run hills badly, they give you an edge in races if you can run them sensibly and positively. Really!

[Y'All ComeBack Soon Now, continued from p22]:
Resolve to arrange close encounter of first, second, third, and possibly fourth kind with said cake in not too distant future.

Take off with so-called Marathon Training Group, despite inability to conceive of run as long as marathon. This is the 10 k group, as advertised, isn't it? Dear oh dear, apparently not. If you just want to run that sort of distance, you're a sad loser. Slap your wrist. Run back to base with the only other sad loser in sight. Then go to your room.

Shamble back to StaR venue after doing more exercise in last hour than in entire previous 12 months. Keep rendezvous with iced cake, particularly corner slice with extra icing. Examine extremely wet, sweaty singlet. If I haven't lost weight after sweating THAT amount, I'm a Hezb'Allah Militiaman.

At home later, apprehensively approach bathroom scales again. Squint disbelievingly at little needle thingy, then slump despondently towards toilet pedestal, adopting "driving-the-porcelain-bus" posture. Admit that, against all odds, I am in fact a Hezb'Allah Militiaman.

Monday 20 January 1997

Dear Diary: Plainly this Running ComeBack thing will take more than just a quick run. It will also require a diet. Perhaps if I change my preferred lunch order, 2 Battered Savs, 4 Potato Scallops, a cream doughnut, a litre of full cream milk and a 100 gram Cadbury's Fruit and Nut? Dodge into Angus and Robertson's, buy diet book.

Bad news from diet book. List of forbidden nutriment includes not only Battered Savs and Potato Scallops, but also most other items previously considered necessary to make life worthwhile, e.g. Schwarzwaldertorte, Belgian chocolates, Galantine of Quail with Caramelised Onion Brioche and relish and chutney, Hamburger with the works, Barbecue Chicken with Provençale Vegetables and Roast Capsicum Tapenade, all flavours of Homer Hudson ice-cream, Beef Dopiaza, Arnott's TimTams, and anything which pretentious multi-cultural restaurateurs bill as "x on a bed of y", where "x" equals anything, and "y" equals anything else. Oh yes, and Dmitri's special Yeeros with Chili sauce, and anything whose name includes the word "Coulis".

Worse news. All booze is fattening, even non-beer items previously considered to be calorie neutral. Author of diet book considers one, or possibly two, standard drinks per day to be consistent with weight loss.

Find out, after some confusion, what "standard drink" means. Fall about in paroxysmic fit of mirth, caused by inability to believe anyone could seriously offer anyone else such small quantity of alcohol, consistent with maintaining social credibility. Wonder, briefly, whether "two per day", in this context, is not misprint for "ten per day". Decide to contact author and offer services as proof-reader for her next book.

There is some good news, however. Some foods are not only calorie neutral, but also ideologically sound. 438 varieties of lettuce, for example, plus mung beans, lentils, low-joule yogurt. Ah, yummy. Can't wait. Not.

Saturday 25 January 1997

Dear Diary: Throw tantrum. Resolve not to accept any further advice whatever from Nutrition Nazi in book or Fitness Fascists at StaR runs. Resolve that if progress is to be made, it will have to be by expedient of running more, rather than eating and drinking less. More is less (more running is less weight in imaginary lifebelt and bra). Less is more (less weight is more ability to run). More is more (more running is more fun). Less is less (less attention to diet is less feeling like I live in a monastery).

Sunday 2 February 1997

No problem. Soon the old familiar stiffness returns to the calves and thighs but disappears the next day. That curious old oxygen-unfamiliarity returns to the lungs but oddly, doesn't feel at all unpleasant, that old ability to roll endlessly down life's highways creeps back into the legs and body, that old endorphin high sidles into the brain. Even the little needle thingy on previously recalcitrant bathroom scales begins to bend towards the 80kg mark. Proto-funbags begin to shrink.

I'm on the ComeBack trail. Y'all ComeBack Soon Now, won't y'all?

President's Trophy for Ultramarathoners 1984-96

(see article "Kaptain AnoraK", page 38)

Winners of President's Trophy for Ultramarathoners 1984-1996

1984	Nobby Young	1991	David Williams
1985	Nobby Young	1992	David Sill
1986	Dan Gray	1993	Steve Urwin
1987	Dan Gray	1994	David Sill
1988	Martin Thompson	1995	Kelvin Marshall
1989	Graham Firkin	1996	Kelvin Marshall
1990	Carl Barker		

Rapid Recovery For Peak Performance

by Fiona Pelly BSc DND APD, Sports Dietitian (phone 9888-3638)

Muscles are primed to replace carbohydrate stores (glycogen) immediately after exercise. The more depleted the muscle, the faster it will replenish glycogen BUT it can only do so if carbohydrate is supplied. The rate of glycogen use depends upon:

1) **Duration** - the longer the exercise the more carbos will be used;
2) **Intensity** - glycogen stores will last much longer at 60% VO2 max (lower intensity) than 80% (high intensity). At very low intensity, glycogen will last for hours;
3) **Storage of glycogen**- after a heavy training week, stores will be more depleted;
4) **Environmental temperature** - more glycogen is used in hot conditions due to increased blood flow and temperature in the muscle. Altitude training spares glycogen and increases use of fatty acids;
5) **How well trained you are** - at the commencement of your training program, less is stored. With time muscles are trained to increase storage;
6) **Type of sport** - eg. Swimming has a higher glycogen use than running.

Muscles are more depleted than normal after a race because of its high intensity.

The best recovery is achieved by commencing replacement of carbohydrate stores within the first hour after exercise completion. The first 15 mins are the most vital. The amount needed for recovery is about 50 grams of carbohydrate (see suggestions below). The following 24hours is also important so don't eat junk on your rest day! If sufficient carbohydrate is supplied, glycogen can be restored after 8 hours as opposed to 24 - 36 hours. This is very important as it means you will return to training fresh after your weekend race. Aim for a total of 500-800 gms carbohydrate over 24 hours.

If you are particularly sore and/or fatigued the day after a run, it may indicate poor recovery. If this soreness and/or fatigue lasts for 2-3 days, you are NOT recovering well. Alcohol will also increase muscle soreness. Delayed onset muscle soreness (from hill running, heavy weights etc) can be overcome by early recovery.

Recovery Plan

If necessary, carry recovery food & drink with you. Drink 1-1.5 litres of sports drink in the first 30 minutes after intense training or a race. Withholding for more than 2 hours results in poor glycogen resynthesis. Sports drinks are ideal as they are absorbed quickly and replace both fluid and carbohydrate. Soft drinks will supply carbohydrate, however it is harder to drink enough of a carbonated drink to replace all fluid lost. Most people sweat at the rate of 1-2 litres per hour. However if the weather is hotter than normal you may lose 3-4 litres of sweat. Obviously men sweat more than women as will those with a larger body size. Because there is so much variation, weigh yourself before and after a hard run. One kilogram lost equates to 1 Litre that needs to be replaced. You may be surprised by the result. NOTE: Coke/Diet Coke are diuretics due to the caffeine and will NOT assist with fluid replacement possibily leading to further dehydration.

Eat carbohydrate-rich foods

Remember if you choose water or a diet soft drink, you are NOT replacing carbohydrate so carbohydrate rich food needs to be eaten. As soon as you feel you can stomach it (within the first hour after running), eat carbohydrate-rich foods that are preferentially absorbed into the muscles quickly (eg. banana roll, jelly beans, watermelon, pineapple, rockmelon, bread and honey, carbohydrate gels or soft drink (not Coke). Follow up with carbohydrate-rich meals and snacks regularly throughout the day (every 3 to 4 hours) Include some fruit in first 8 hours of recovery to help replace carbohydrate stores in the liver.

Decrease exercise during recovery for maximum replacement of carbohydrate stores.

Recovery Foods (50gms of carbohydrate)

- 800-1000mls sports drink;
- 800mls cordial;
- 500mls soft drink, flavoured mineral water or fruit juice;
- 250mls High carbohydrate drink (eg. Gatorload, Exceed);
- 250-350mls Sustagen or home-made smoothie;
- 50gms jelly beans;
- 1 honey / jam sandwich with lots of honey / jam;
- 1 English muffin with 1 tablespoon honey / jam;
- 1.5 crumpets with jam / honey;
- 1 thick pancake with maple syrup;
- Bowl of Sustain or 3 Weetbix with low fat milk;
- Large banana, large slices of watermelon, rockmelon & pineapple;
- Rice pudding with sugar and low fat milk;
- 2 large baked potatoes;
- Mars Bar (high in fat!).

Race Fixtures for Striders' International Travellers

Fixtures supplied by Dave Cundy, PR Manager for the Association of International Marathons (AIMS)

[Editors' note: An update to this list, including many more races recognised by AIMS and IAAF, arrived after our deadline. It included a wide variety of race distances (this list is predominantly marathons). If you are planning an overseas trip, there is very likely a race you could enter. Contact Dave Cundy direct on 019-440-330. Alternatively Steve Cornelius (9977-3267) has the complete list and will be happy to give out details. The Blister takes no responsibility for any inaccuracy in this list, which had to be completely re-typed. All races are marathons unless stated.]

AUSTRALASIA

Australia: 13 Jul: Gold Coast; 31 Aug: Sydney; **NZ:** 3 May: Rotorua (Fletcher Challenge); 26 Oct: Auckland.

ASIA

Cambodia: 21 Dec: Angkor Wat (½M'thon); **India:** 23 Dec: New Delhi (10k); **Indonesia:** 30 Mar: Malang; **Japan:** 22 Jun: Lake Saroma (100k); 20 Jul: Sapporo (½M'thon); 16 Nov: Tokyo (Women's M'thon); 23 Nov: Amagasaki; 23 Nov: Lake Kawaguchi; 23 Nov: Tsukuba; 7 Dec: Fukuoka; **Korea:** 16 Mar: Dong-A; 6 Apr: Seoul (relay); **Macau:** 7 Dec: Macau; **Thailand:** 14 Sep: River Kwai (½M'thon).

AFRICA

South Africa: 29 Mar: Cape Town (2 Oceans 56k Ultra); 16 Jun: Comrades Ultra; 30 Nov: Soweto; **Tanzania:** 3 Aug: Arusha (Mount Meru M'thon).

EUROPE

Austria: 25 May: Vienna; **Belgium:** 13 Apr: Antwerp; **Croatia:** 12 Oct: Zagreb; **Czech Republic:** 25 May: Prague; **Denmark:** 18 May: Copenhagen; **England:** 13 Apr: London; **Estonia:** 21 Jun Tallinn; 14 Sep: Tallinn (½M'thon); **Finland:** 6 Jul: Paavo Nurmi M'thon; 16 Aug: Helsinki; **France:** 6 Apr: Paris; 27 Apr: Paris (La Corneuve 15k); **Germany:** 6 Apr: Berlin (½M'thon); 27 Apr: Hamburg; 4 May: Munich; 4 May: Berlin (25k); 28 Sep: Berlin; 26 Oct: Frankfurt; **Greece:** 26 Oct: Heraklion (Crete); **Hungary:** 7 Sep: Budapest (½M'thon); 13 Sep: Miskolc (Mountain M'thon); 28 Sep: Budapest; **Iceland:** 24 Aug: Reykjavik; **Italy:** 16 Mar: Rome; 31 Mar: Gualtieri (½M'thon); 11 May: Turin; **Italy:** 26 Oct: Venice (M'thon for UNICEF); 30 Nov: Florence; **Luxembourg:** 28 Sep: Grevenmacher (½M'thon); 26 Oct: Echternach; **Malta:** 14-16 Nov: International Malta Challenge M'thon; **Netherlands:** 23 Mar: Den Haag (½M'thon); 20 Apr: Rotterdam; 8 Jun: Enschede; 2 Nov: Amsterdam (M'thon + ½M'thon); **Norway:** 5 Jul: Tromso (Midnight Sun M'thon); **Poland:** 27 Apr: Wroclaw; 13 Sep: Pila (15k); **Portugal:** 23 Nov: Lisbon; **Romania:** 11 Oct: Bucharest; **Slovakia:** 5 Oct: Kosice (Peace M'thon + IAAF World ½M'thn + M'thon Champs); **Spain:** 16 Mar: Barcelona; 27 Apr: Madrid; 12 Oct: Langreo; 7 Dec: Mallorca; **Sweden:** 24 May: Goteborg (½M'thon); 7 Jun: Stockholm; **Switzerland:** 6 Sep: Interlaken (Jungfrau M'thon); 19 Oct: Lausanne; **Turkey:** 7 Apr: Bursa (½M'thon); 5 Oct: Istanbul; **Yugoslavia:** 19 Apr: Belgrade.

NORTH AMERICA

Canada: 4 May: Vancouver; **USA:** 21 Apr: Boston; 27 Apr: Big Sur; 28 Sep: Portland; 19 Oct: Chicago; 26 Oct: Washington DC (Marine Corps M'thon); 2 Nov: New York City; 14 Dec: Honolulu.

LATIN AMERICA

Argentina: 7 Sep: Buenos Aires (½-M'thn); 14 Sep: M'thon de la Republica; **Brazil:** 25 May: Porto Alegre; 8 Jun: Sao Paulo; 27 Jul: Blumenau; **Costa Rica:** 6 Dec: venue not stated; **Cuba:** 16 Nov: Havana; **Mexico:** 24 Aug: Mexico City.

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Letters to the Editor

Newfound(land?) friends in Ontario

[Eds' note: An exchange of email messages between Noel Mackay of Canada's St Thomas Striders and our President John Turner (after one of their members found our Web homepage) has resulted in the establishment of an informal association between the two clubs. This is an edited text of their latest email].

John,

Thanks for getting back to me. I am, and our club will be, very pleased to strike up this connection with the Sydney Striders. We are getting into our Christmas season here and all the social events that go along with it, a very busy time of year for us. St. Thomas, Ontario is located between Toronto and Detroit and just off the north shore of Lake Erie. Our town is has a population of 32,000 and is an auto industry town, there is a very large Ford plant and Freightliner truck plant here. Many people here also work in London, Ontario, including me, and make the half hour drive to work every day. Pass on your mailing address and I'll see that you get some more info on St. Thomas and area as well as our club newsletter. Happy running and good luck singing 10 white boomers in the coming weeks!

Noel Mackay,

St Thomas Striders, Ontario

Jim's poison pen

Dear Sir and Madam,

I nominate Jim Screen's article covering the Royal National Park 50km run for the Tailford Award because of its unusual honesty in admitting that he actually had a fall. The wild willingness to sully my reputation for being unsteady despite serious attempts to start and finish this run in a sober condition and only falling over three times showed total disrespect in my view.

I feel the admission that he also staggered and fell in the above run justifies my forgiveness as does my fear that his tendency to cover all private matters in his *Blister* ramblings as demonstrated in the Willy to Billy and Brindabella reports could again see damaging publicity from Jim's writings.

For my own reputation's protection I confirm my nomination of Jim's RNP report for the Tailford Award and also for the other two reports referred to above. I am hopeful that a win by Jim of this acclaimed literary award will sate his tendency to blow people away with his poison pen.

Yours sincerely, Michael J. Wilson

Fascist rabble

Dear Sir,

I am distraught. You have destroyed our trust. All these years we believed you implicitly. How can you treat our faith so cruelly? Like every thinking Strider, I subscribe to *The Blister* for only one reason: the Race Director's letter. Indeed we sustain our fragile existences solely in the comforting certainty that it's only two months before the next one brings meaning to our otherwise worthless lives.

And so it was until ....Blister #64. Now my Biretta is poised at my temple while I await your answer, but I fear it's hopeless. Can it be that (*gasp*) these Race Directors' letters ain't (*sob*), maybe never have been, genuine? OK, I admit I've had my suspicions, but this ... this? Oh, it's too much. The RD letter in #64 purports, I say again purports, to be from, and I quote: "the I.P.A.".

Sir, I challenge you. Since when did that ultra-right fascist underground rabble, the shadowy International Phonetic Association ever organise a marathon? I simply don't believe it. Please tell me there's some dreadful mistake. Please tell me your correspondent's "IPA" stands instead for that highly revered Institute of Pubic Administrators.

Mind you, on reflection, whether S.W.Bag ran their scurvy marathon or not, it's just the scurrilous organisation he would belong to. So, in future, please respect the sensitivities of your delicate readers before accepting any correspondence related to that odious blot on the landscape, S.W.Bag.

Yours sceptically, ☺☙♦☙ ❄☥☼☠☜☼

El Presidente, Wingding Usucapion Sublate Society

Disappointed

Dear Sir,

I was very disappointed to hear that one of your correspondents doubts the existence of the marathons of Lop Nor, Satu Mare, Santo Niño, Jullundhur, Angoulême, Figueras, Roskilde, Norrköping, the Esperantistoj, and the IPA. We take every care to ensure that marathons at least exist before we grant them our accreditation.

Sincerely, Etienne Personne

Chairman, Fédération Internationale de Grands Marathons Essentiellement Non-existants ou Ténébreux (F.I.G.M.E.N.T.)

rue Nulle Part, Menton, France

Letters to the Editor

Rambo the dog

Dear Sir, I refer to Peter Cookson's letter re the Duck and his request for further tales of encounters with animal, vegetable and mineral.

Some years ago I was running with a group of Striders near Brown's Waterhole when we encountered a macho looking guy and his equally macho looking dog. I was at the back of the pack as we passed them in single file. Without warning this vicious, rabid animal (the dog) placed his fangs in my backside. My concerned friends stopped and we had words with this Rambo type. "It won't hurt anybody" said Rambo to our incredulous group. Feeling that matters could get worse we moved on.

I was most fortunate in that this caring group did include two doctors of medicine with many years experience. One looked at the wound, confirmed that I had been bitten and recommended that I see a doctor. The other waited 'til we were back at the car and wrote me a prescription for penicillin. I consider myself very fortunate. Some doctors won't give any opinion until they see your Medicare card or better still, cash.

Things did improve however when I visited our local surgery and was able to have my injured part tended by the only doctor on call - a female.

Regards, Mike Ward

Tasmanian Paper Tigers

Dear Sir,

I recently visited Cradle Mountain National Park in Tasmania and had the pleasure of walking 2 sections of the supposedly infamous "Overland Track", scene of the Cradle Mountain Ultra.

Those who have completed this race often use your pages to claim superhero status, creating the impression they have tamed one of the world's toughest trail runs across supremely inhospitable country, scrabbling up mountainsides and wading through swamps. This is very far from the truth.

The sections which I walked (2k from the race start near Waldheim, and the last 16k from Narcissus to Cynthia Bay) are almost entirely FLAT, and much of the track is wide, clear and fitted with robust boardwalk by the excellent Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

I therefore conclude that the Cradle Mountain Ultra is a race for WUSSES and PAPER TIGERS. I urge readers who have not yet visited this area not to be taken in by the outrageous claims they may have read in your journal about the race.

Sincerely, S.W. Bag

Senile old Bag

Dear Sir,

I detect clear signs of senility in the writings of your correspondent S.W. Bag and feel that his family and friends should be warned so that they can commit him to a compassionate institution at an early date to avoid any damage that he might do to himself or the wider community.

His letter smearing those who have participated in the Cradle Mountain Overland Track marathon is a case in point. At the peak of his journalistic prowess he would never have used words like "WUSSES" (not a word to be found in any reputable dictionary) or "PAPER TIGERS". Nor would he have dared in days gone by to make judgements on the severity of a course after experiencing only a tiny portion of its delights.

If S.W. Bag had attempted to at least walk (forget about running) the entire overland track and seen people sink up to their armpits in black bogs, seen leeches the size of sausages hanging off people, scaled the near vertical cliffs and had encounters with Tasmanian black tiger snakes several metres long and as thick as a man's forearm, then he might have had a different perspective of the Overland Track.

So why didn't Mr Bag walk the entire Overland Track, seeing that he had gone to all the trouble and expense of getting there? One must conclude that the only "WUSS" or "PAPER TIGER" around is the one that Mr Bag sees in the mirror when he shaves in the morning!

It is indeed sad to witness the degeneration of a great talent.

Sincerely, Alf Field

Excellence Award and Tailford Award 1992-96

(see article "Kaptain AnoraK", page 38)

President's Award for Excellence

1992	Wendy Downes	1994	Roger Rigby
1993	Kevin Tiller	1995	Kevin O'Kane
1996	Blister editorial team (Graham Butler, Sarah Entwistle, Nick Themsen, Steve Cornelius)		

Tailford Award for Best of The Blister

1992	John Turner
1993	Steve Cornelius
1994	Steve Cornelius
1995	Harvey Blue
1996	Mark Fiore

Striders Kill Palm Beach to Manly

By John Turner

It remains to be seen how much longer the Palm Beach to Manly organisers will put up with this situation. In this year's race, held in brilliant cool sunshine on the 4th of January, Sydney Striders made up the biggest contingent (40 out of 300 odd), blitzed the field, and took home most of the prizes. Daylight was second to this year's first woman, Joanne Cowan (1:55:03 - a two minute PB!), nearly 15 minutes ahead of the next lady. Jo was 14th overall and won the Female 40-49 trophy for good measure.

Duelling duo

And Strider John Young (1:45:25), outright race winner, was a mere four minutes outside Greg Welch's course record, set eight years ago. Close behind John came our famous duelling duo, Chris Truscott (1:50) and Darren Benson (1:51), in fifth and seventh places overall.

Striders figured in all but one of the other age group wins too. Congratulations to Penny Smith (1st F50-59), Ray Potter (1st M50-59), and Bruce Murray (1st M60+).

Race future in doubt

There is some doubt whether the race will be held again. This is a matter of concern to our dedicated January competitors, but of supreme indifference to those of us who believe 5am starts are unconstitutional.

The reason for its possible demise is not because Striders always win, nor is it because of the proven mental infirmity of all competitors (5am start indeed!), but because the police are unhappy about it, for God's sake.

Do the Macarena

Can you believe that? Here is a coastal run, no intersecting roads, very competently organised, all finished before most people are even out of bed on a Saturday morning, last 2K totally off-road, and they want to close it down.

Yeah, right up there with the risk of being seen to do the Macarena! Talk about a Police State. Striders' results opposite.

1	John Young	1:45:25
2	Chris Truscott	1:50:04
3	Darren Benson	1:51:40
4	Joanne Cowan	1:55:03
5	Phil Hugill	1:59:18
6	Wayne Stanton	1:59:20
7	Richard Briscoe	1:59:24
8	Ray Potter	2:04:16
9	Andrew Hallam	2:05:32
10	George Lisson	2:06:46
11	Mark Fiore	2:06:48
12	Charles Coville	2:08:57
13	Rod Lovel	2:09:30
14	Phil Boswell	2:12:38
15	Peter Truscott	2:14:16
16	Tim Austin	2:16:42
17	David Solomon	2:20:22
18	John Walker	2:20:38
19	Scott Crawford	2:20:51
20	Keith White	2:22:12
21	Mahmoud El-Khansa	2:22:40
22	Derek Smith	2:23:13
23	Joanne Barton	2:25:12
24	Clara Vucetic	2:26:33
25	Amanda Dawson	2:27:30
26	Andrew Grant	2:29:00
27	Bruce Murray	2:30:17
28	Cameron McCullagh	2:35:48
29	Doug Lee	2:38:48
30	David Theriault	2:40:48
31	Peter Cookson	2:40:57
32	Paula Whitehouse	2:43:00
33	Julie Wessels	2:47:30
34	Penny Smith	2:47:46
35	Dick Bartlett	2:48:42
36	Max Coleman	2:57:15
37	Margaret White	2:58:16
38	Kevin O'Kane	2:58:16
39	Lesley Clark	3:06:09
	Breeda Kelly	DNF

10k Handicap Series Winners 1987-1996

(see article "Kaptain Anorak" page 38)

1987	Nobby Young
1988	Scott Crawford
1989	Phil Garvin
1990	Bret Nichols

1991	Mark Robinson
1992	John Hodges
1993	Peter Corte
1994	Richard Field

1995	Joe Degabriele
1996	Amanda Dawson

Six Foot Track Marathon

Results from Kevin Tiller, Sat 1 March 1997

The high temperatures did not faze 40 Striders who persevered and finished THE trail running event in Australia. With renewed sponsorship by Rockport shoes, this 46km event from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves in the Blue Mountains attracted 411 starters. Organisation has improved such that this event can lay claim to be the best organised off-road event in the country, especially given distance and terrain.

Striders' highlights :

Carl Barker (returned from the UK on holiday) finished 3rd in the male section and Dawn Tiller finished 1st in the female section (her 3rd win from 3 starts). She was 11th outright! Many "new" striders completed their first 6 Foot Track, whilst some (well, Murray Town at least) completed their sixth and were awarded the famed buckle.

Male	1st	Andrew Kromer	3:38
	2nd	Greg Love	3:43
	3rd	Carl Barker	3:46
Female	1st	Dawn Tiller	4:16
	2nd	Louise O'Brien	4:54
	3rd	Christina Porral	5:05

Striders' Times

1	Carl Barker	3:46
2	Chris Smith	4:12
3	Dawn Tiller	4:16
4=	Richard Briscoe	4:20
4=	Kelvin Marshall	4:20
6	Phil Hugill	4:27
7	Malcolm Satchell	4:37
8	George Lisson	4:39
9	Kevin Tiller	4:41
10	Grahame Murphy	4:56
11	Murray Town	5:00
12=	Mike Ward	5:03
12=	Martin Fryer	5:03
14	Steve Urwin	5:04
15	Alf Field	5:08
16	Tim Austin	5:09
17	Graeme Shipley	5:14
18	Peter Hammerschmidt	5:16
19	Brian Colwell	5:18
20	John Hodges	5:20
21	David Soloman	5:28
22	Breeda Kelly	5:29
23	Cameron McCullagh	5:30
24=	Chris O'Neil	5:36
24=	Joanne Barton	5:36
26=	Wayne McCarthy	5:41
26=	Paula Whitehouse	5:41
28	Ed Packel	5:45
29	Graham Butler	5:48
30=	Lesley Clarke	5:50
30=	Michael Wilson	5:50
31	Paul Brabender	5:52
32	Brenda Kearns	5:54
33	Jim Screen	5:55
34	Roger Rigby	6:03
35	Belinda O'Neil	6:10
36	Peter Cookson	6:15
37	Brent Waters	6:20
38	Margaret White	6:28
39=	Robi Russell	6:47
39=	Paul Russell	6:47
41	Keith White	*
42	Susan Griffith	*

* Times not known. Keith White sprained ankle but finished)

Dawn's First 50-Miler

Email from Kevin Tiller during recent USA trip

Well Dawny ran her first 50 mile/80k race at the weekend [13/12/96] on forest trails round a lake about 80k north of Houston, Texas. Needless to say, she thrashed me to bits, running 7:35 against my 9:35. She came 7th overall, and 3rd in her age group (31-39). This was pretty good as it was also the US 50 mile championships and there were runners there from all over the US.

My excuse was that I was vomited 3 or 4 times at the 30km mark after having too much gatorade and potatoes. For her efforts Dawn won a trophy of a bronze horse set on granite - perfect for carting around the world .. NOT!

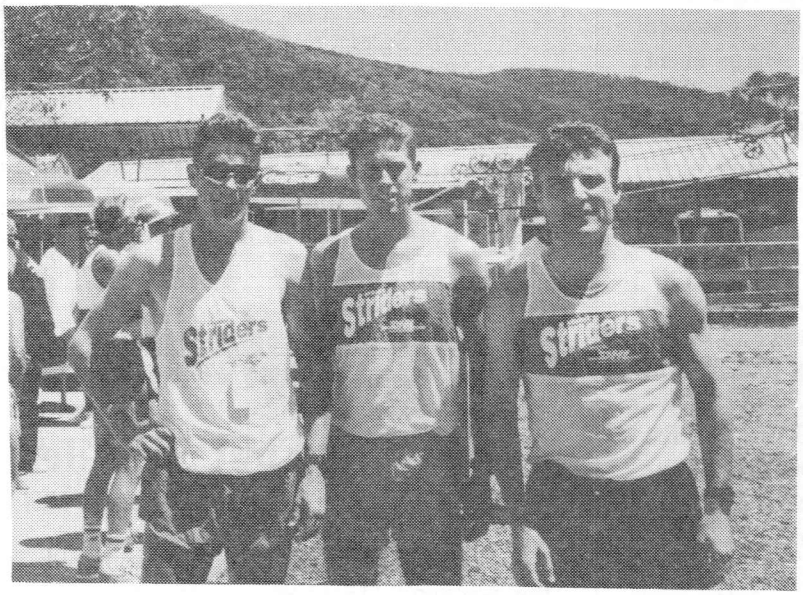
Course was pretty goodand flat, round a lake in the forest, mostly very runnable paths, some firetrail. Didn't compare to 6FT or Brindabella.

The event was combined with a 50km and there were 300+ runners in the 50 miles, and 500+ in the 50km - it was a BIG event. They gave away freebies such as bags, T-shirts, bumbags, waterbottles to all entrants and a really neat race jacket and embroidered rug (!!) with the race logo on for all finishers.

We had quite a busy week as we had a couple days in San Francisco where we stayed with an ultrarunning friend. A couple of highlights were a run on some local trails there with a few friends, then a beer/pizza night with some of his mates - including (Comrades winner) Ann Trason's hubbie who is also extremely mean over 80-100km. We then had a few days in Houston for the race (only JUST found a babysitter for Jazmin).The day after, we flew off to the UK.

Thredbo Running Week, January 10th - 20th 1997

by Chris Truscott



(Left to right): Chris Truscott, Dean Degan and John Young at the start of the Crackenback Challenge 2k

What a week it was! Thredbo Invitational Running week celebrated its 17th year running (excuse the pun) and was yet again an enjoyable holiday for everyone who went down for it.

Amongst the few hundred strong group of runners were a sprinkling of Striders, half of whom were from the one family. I might add however we did manage a pretty good showing when it came to racing and indeed socialising.

The Crackenback Challenge saw brand new member Dean Degan shoot to stardom when he pulled out a spectacular performance to finish 2nd behind nine time winner Dave Osmond. Dean then established "mountain goat" status when he finished 3rd in the Kosciusko Classic, 20 seconds in front of the author.

But on the flat road of Thredbo Village a different story was told when Dean was relegated to 4th Strider behind John Young (3rd outright), myself (4th), and Darren Benson (5th). We last heard that Dean was heading off to the Himalayas to prepare for next year's Crackenback Challenge and a possible 1st place. Good luck Deano!

John Young also had a great week. His 3rd placing in the 6km fun run was followed by 2nd place in the Kosciusko Classic 8km and 4th place in the second 6km fun run (I might add that the first three places went to Grand Prix Triathletes including one Mr G. Welsch, who were all down there for altitude training also).

John also proved himself as an avid golfer and "dare taker" at one stage trying to have us believe that the Earth in fact had two moons. It was a side of John that we would prefer to leave to him (no hard feelings John).

As for the other Truscotts, Peter & Jenny, they produced good performances also in all major races and training runs, (in the 32km Epic the winds reached speeds in excess of 120km, so strong that it blew Peter's Oakleys off his face and over a cliff - quite an expensive training run). Pete however bounced back from his tragic loss to show us that dancing does not have to be restricted to the floor but instead a more elevated position such as a restaurant table provides for a more suitable location. Whereas Jenny showed us that going out with Darren does have its disadvantages (actually we're not sure who gave who the virus).

Paul Tate, another new member, started his comeback after injury but 10 minutes later found the Pub and TAB and set up camp for the week with Paul Arthur.

We featured well in the International Players Tennis Championship Cup, having myself, Darren and new member Errol Bekir all narrowly missing out on a Semi Final berth. At the Trivia night we learnt that 1994 City to Surf winner Paul Arthur didn't quite know if John Morapedi or Darren Wilson won the 1996 title, but that's alright, Paul didn't really know any of the answers. Lucky we had John Sauer in our team, (and of course myself).

Almost everyone who went down to Thredbo scored a PB as far as weekly mileage was concerned and came back slightly drained but definitely fitter from the altitude conditions.

For those who are interested in going down for Running Week 1998 it usually starts on the second Saturday of January. That means we only have about 350 odd days to recover!

Striders' 10k Race Series 1997

Series Director's notes by John Hamilton. Race results and standings by Ray Potter

The 1997 10k Series is proudly sponsored by:

- **South African Airways** - providing 2 return tickets to S.Africa. One for the winner of the Striders' Handicap Competition, the other for a lucky runner who completes at least 5 races.
- **Australian Runner and Athlete Magazine** - if you take out a subscription at a 10k Race your entry to that 10k Race is free.
- **Gatorade** and **The Runners' Shop.**

Race 1 - Mrs Macquarie's Chair, 1 Feb '97

My thanks to Breeda Kelly, Chris Robb, John Turner, Jonathon Worswick, together with the 10k Race Host: Sarah Entwistle who provided Sydney Strider power to allow the 10k Race to be conducted relatively smoothly. A great start was made to this year's 10k Series: 165 runners (97 Sydney Striders and 68 guests) enjoyed the scenic course skirting the Botanical Gardens and the City.

Race 2 - North Head 1 March '97

Many thanks to Dave Ritchie who agreed to act as Race Host for this event. Dave and all the 10k Race Team enjoyed seeing you at the race !!! Thank yous go to:

- **Derek Smith** who brings the 10k Race Gear to each and every event.
- **Ray Potter** for continuing to do a tremendous job with the results.
- **Joanne Cowan** who has offered help with PR.
- **Steve Jackson** who has volunteered to put out km signs at each 10k Race.

Thank you very much Derek, Ray, Joanne and Steve (offers of help at any 10k Race will be gratefully accepted, as will all bribes !!!). See you there in 1997, and please bring a friend so he or she can participate in the joy of running the Sydney Striders 10k Races.

1997 10k Race entry fees:

$5 for Striders, $8 for guests. Races 5 and 10, the charity ones, $7 for Striders and $10 for guests.

Race 1 Results, The Domain 1 Feb 97

Name	Race Time	Tar--get	Hcap Posn	Next T'get	Race Posn
Craig Thom	41.23	43.00	1	41.42	31
Matthew Hammond	36.04	37.01	2	36.15	4
Scott Crawford	41.28	42.01	3	41.35	33
Malcolm Satchell	39.31	40.00	4	39.37	18
Raymond Potter	38.32	39.00	5	38.38	13
Joanne Cowan	36.37	37.00	6	36.42	1
John Young	32.44	33.00	7	32.47	1
Maxwell Coleman	49.56	50.00	8	49.57	62
Lyn Allan	49.58	50.01	9	49.59	7
Mahmoud El-Khansa	45.02	45.00	10	45.00	47
Paul Glare	45.06	45.00	11	45.01	48
George Herisson	41.17	41.01	12	41.03	29
Charles Coville	40.18	40.00	13	40.02	24
Christopher Dwyer	35.20	35.01	14	35.03	3
Jeff Lie	41.25	41.01	15	41.03	32
Mike Ward	40.33	40.01	16	40.04	27
Richard Briscoe	36.37	36.00	17	36.04	5
Tony Hatch	43.41	43.00	18	43.04	44
Jonathan Trope	38.23	37.33	19	37.38	12
Tony Brown	49.52	49.00	20	49.05	61
Philip Boswell	39.56	39.00	21	39.06	20
Steven Holland	37.59	37.00	22	37.06	8
Peter Truscott	39.01	38.01	23	38.07	16
Grahame Murphy	38.05	37.01	24	37.07	10
Fiona Pelly	46.06	45.00	25	45.07	4
Kirsten Themsen	54.13	53.00	26	53.07	13
Joseph Vucetic	40.28	39.01	27	39.10	25
Peter Cobley	40.32	39.01	28	39.10	26
George Lisson	39.34	38.00	29	38.09	19
Ian MacArthur	50.15	48.30	30	48.41	64
Chris Truscott	34.48	33.01	31	33.12	2
Manfred Fiedler	46.53	45.01	32	45.12	53
Steve Cornelius	52.54	51.01	33	51.12	71
Rozanne Green	52.58	51.00	34	51.12	11
Penny Taylor/Smith	52.02	50.01	35	50.13	10
Ted Bailey	52.03	50.01	36	50.13	70
Andrew Smith	38.03	36.00	37	36.12	9
Mark Fiore	40.07	38.01	38	38.14	21
Rod Lovel	40.14	38.00	39	38.13	22
Peter Dulson	41.20	39.01	40	39.15	30
Bruce Murray	46.21	44.01	41	44.15	51
Kevin O'Kane	47.21	45.00	42	45.14	56
Sally Taggart	44.29	42.01	43	42.16	2
Andrew Hallam	37.35	35.01	44	35.16	7
Philip Hugill	38.36	36.00	45	36.15	14
David Solomon	43.38	41.00	46	41.15	43
Charles Reis	44.43	42.00	47	42.15	46
Hakan Parsson	42.49	40.00	48	40.15	39
John Simmonds	56.02	53.01	49	53.16	72
Phillip Barrow	42.27	39.09	50	39.24	37
Amanda Dawson	46.20	43.00	51	43.15	5
John Hodges	43.25	40.00	52	40.15	42
Chris McLean	41.36	38.00	53	38.15	34
Steve Zolessi	44.40	41.01	54	41.16	45
Stephen Jackson	38.48	35.01	55	35.16	15
John Hawkins	46.47	43.00	56	43.15	52
Stephen Urwin	42.48	39.00	57	39.15	38

Name	Race Time	Tar--get	Hcap Posn	Next T'get	Race Posn
Darren Benson	37.02	33.01	58	33.16	6
James Howard	43.11	39.00	59	39.15	41
Graham Butler	46.17	41.45	60	42.00	50
Neil McPherson	48.45	44.01	61	44.16	58
Barney Gordon	49.50	45.01	62	45.16	60
Frank Dearn	62.13	57.00	63	57.15	73
Megan Glasby	61.48	56.01	64	56.16	15
Pirooz Mehrabani	64.18	57.00	65	57.15	74
David Ritchie	50.02	41.32	66	41.47	63
Robert Inglis	51.49	43.00	67	43.15	69
John Preston	49.33	40.43	68	40.58	59
Phil Madden	51.02	40.01	69	40.16	68
Christopher Smith	38.12		70	38.35	11
Geoff Cool	39.13		71	39.37	17
Tim Austin	40.15		72	40.39	23
Peter Dwyer	41.16		73	41.41	28
Michael Hirner	41.40		74	42.05	35
Jonathon Smuskrwitz	42.15		75	42.40	36
Dan Katz	43.00		76	43.26	40
Jenny Truscott	45.26		77	45.53	3
Paul Brabender	45.42		78	46.09	49
Craig Schlitter	47.12		79	47.40	54
Greg Coffey	47.17		80	47.45	55
Dianne Berger	47.25		81	47.53	6
Doug Lee	47.52		82	48.21	57
Annalise Williams	50.01		83	50.31	8
Mike Brimfield	50.25		84	50.55	65
Philip Kennedy	50.38		85	51.08	66
Julie Wessels	50.45		86	51.15	9
Paul Tate	50.52		87	51.23	67
Margaret White	54.09		88	54.41	12
Carolyn Ryan	58.09		89	58.44	14
Sally Cornelius	70.24		90	71.06	16
Debbie Coulter	70.25		91	71.07	17

Race 2 Results, North Head 1 Mar 97

Name	Race Time	Tar--get	Hcap Posn	Next T'get	Race Posn
Philip Kennedy	44.10	51.08	1	45.34	32
Debbie Coulter	64.30	71.07	2	65.49	19
Sally Cornelius	64.31	71.06	3	65.50	20
Jenny Truscott	39.38	45.53	4	40.53	2
Steve Cornelius	47.13	51.12	5	48.01	40
Dianne Berger	44.38	47.53	6	45.17	6
Greg Coffey	44.44	47.45	7	45.20	34
Doug Lee	45.54	48.21	8	46.23	37
Peter Dwyer	39.19	41.41	9	39.47	17
Craig Schlitter	46.01	47.40	10	46.21	38
Ted Bailey	48.41	50.13	11	48.59	46
Maxwell Coleman	48.28	49.57	12	48.46	45
Craig Thom	40.15	41.42	13	40.32	21
Mahmoud El-Khansa	43.35	45.00	14	43.52	31
Scott Crawford	40.27	41.35	15	40.41	22
John Simmonds	52.26	53.16	16	52.36	49
Raymond Potter	37.51	38.38	17	38.00	13
Kirsten Themsen	52.21	53.07	18	52.30	14
Annalise Williams	49.46	50.31	19	49.55	12
Tony Hatch	42.21	43.04	20	42.30	28
Penny Smith	49.33	50.13	21	49.41	11
Philip Boswell	38.30	39.06	22	38.37	14
Rod Lovel	37.38	38.13	23	37.45	10
Fiona Pelly	44.35	45.07	24	44.41	5
John Young	32.17	32.47	25	32.23	1
Christopher Dwyer	34.35	35.03	26	34.41	4
Peter Truscott	37.42	38.07	27	37.47	12
Jeff Lie	40.51	41.03	28	40.53	24
Chris Truscott	33.06	33.12	29	33.07	2
Rozanne Green	51.07	51.12	30	51.08	13
Paul Kotala	45.21	45.19	31	45.19	36
Joanne Cowan	36.48	36.42	32	36.42	1
Joseph Vucetic	39.27	39.10	33	39.11	18
Sonja Navakas	47.25	47.00	34	47.03	9
Charles Reis	42.51	42.15	35	42.19	30
Andrew Smith	37.02	36.12	36	36.17	7
Darren Benson	34.07	33.16	37	33.21	3
Sally Taggart	43.22	42.16	38	42.22	3
Mark Fiore	39.28	38.14	39	38.21	19
Hakan Parsson	41.31	40.15	40	40.23	27
Wayne Stanton	37.21	36.00	41	36.08	8
Frank Dearn	58.42	57.15	42	57.24	53
Peter Cobley	40.44	39.10	43	39.19	23
Geoff Cox	37.35	36.01	44	36.10	9
John Shepherd	42.44	41.00	45	41.10	29
Tom Burnell	55.57	54.01	46	54.13	52
James Howard	41.17	39.15	47	39.27	26
Clara Vucetic	44.04	42.00	48	42.12	4
Stephen Guy	45.06	43.00	49	43.13	35
Neil McPherson	46.23	44.16	50	44.29	39
Nick Themsen	47.42	45.01	51	45.16	44
Jeff Gissing	39.52	37.00	52	37.15	20
Tony Byrne	47.19	44.01	53	44.16	42
John Hawkins	47.30	43.15	54	43.30	43
David Ritchie	47.16	41.47	55	42.02	41
Kevin O'Kane	51.08	45.14	56	45.29	47
Joe Degabriele	51.39	44.00	57	44.15	48
Dean Degan	34.52		58	35.13	5
Stephan Parker	34.58		59	35.19	6
David Marsh	37.41		60	38.04	11
Ross Sinclair	38.47		61	39.10	15
Dan Leavy	38.52		62	39.15	16
Martin Cahnbley	41.08		63	41.33	25
Phil Naylor	44.16		64	44.43	33
Paula Leavy	45.41		65	46.08	7
Robin Cameron	46.10		66	46.38	8
Paulina Flanagan	48.43		67	49.12	10
Phil Madden	53.18		68	53.50	50
Bill Blecha	53.42		69	54.14	51
Sally Crawford	56.22		70	56.56	15
Sue Thompson	56.30		71	57.04	16
Patty Crummack	60.29		72	61.05	17
Lynn Herrison	62.33		73	63.11	18

Outright Comp to Race 2

Minimum pts for listing: 6

Name	R1	R2	Tot
Joanne Cowan	22	22	44
John Young	22	22	44
Chris Truscott	21	21	42
Jenny Truscott	20	21	41
Sally Taggart	21	20	41
Christopher Dwyer	20	19	39
Darren Benson	17	20	37
Fiona Pelly	19	18	37
Dianne Berger	17	17	34
Andrew Smith	14	16	30
Annalise Williams	15	11	26
Penny Smith	13	12	25
Rozanne Green	12	10	22
Raymond Potter	10	10	20
Clara Vucetic		19	19
Kirsten Themsen	10	9	19
Matthew Hammond	19		19
Amanda Dawson	18		18
Dean Degan		18	18
Peter Truscott	7	11	18
Richard Briscoe	18		18
Stephan Parker		17	17
Andrew Hallam	16		16
Lyn Allan	16		16
Paula Leavy		16	16
Robin Cameron		15	15
Rod Lovel	2	13	15
Steven Holland	15		15
Wayne Stanton		15	15
Geoff Cox		14	14
Julie Wessels	14		14
Sonja Navakas		14	14
Grahame Murphy	13		13
Paulina Flanagan		13	13
Christopher Smith	12		12
David Marsh		12	12
Philip Boswell	3	9	12
Jonathan Trope	11		11
Margaret White	11		11
Debbie Coulter	6	4	10
Sally Cornelius	7	3	10
Carolyn Ryan	9		9
Philip Hugill	9		9
Megan Glasby	8		8
Peter Dwyer	2	6	8
Ross Sinclair		8	8
Sally Crawford		8	8
Stephen Jackson	8		8
Dan Leavy		7	7
Joseph Vucetic	2	5	7
Sue Thompson		7	7
Geoff Cool	6		6
Mark Fiore	2	4	6
Patty Crummack		6	6

Handicap Comp to Race 2

Minimum pts for listing: 6

Name	R1	R2	Tot
Craig Thom	22	10	32
Scott Crawford	20	8	28
Maxwell Coleman	15	11	26
Philip Kennedy	2	22	24
Raymond Potter	18	6	24
Debbie Coulter	2	21	23
Mahmoud El-Khansa	13	9	22
Sally Cornelius	2	20	22
Jenny Truscott	2	19	21
Matthew Hammond	21		21
Steve Cornelius	2	18	20
Dianne Berger	2	17	19
Joanne Cowan	17	2	19
Malcolm Satchell	19		19
Greg Coffey	2	16	18
John Young	16	2	18
Doug Lee	2	15	17
Peter Dwyer	2	14	16
Craig Schlitter	2	13	15
Lyn Allan	14		14
Ted Bailey	2	12	14
Paul Glare	12		12
Christopher Dwyer	9	2	11
George Herisson	11		11
Charles Coville	10		10
Jeff Lie	8	2	10
John Simmonds	2	7	9
Tony Hatch	5	3	8
Kirsten Themsen	2	5	7
Mike Ward	7		7
Annalise Williams	2	4	6
Richard Briscoe	6		6

Acinonyx Jubatus Sponsorshipus

by Tina Campbell

You maybe interested to know that our club has been sponsoring the Cheetahs at the Western Plains Zoo (Augustus, Tsavo, Zenith, Chase, Sarge, Dani and Mawimbi) since Sept 1989 as part of the Zoo's animal sponsorship program.

We started sponsorship of the 'fast cats' for several reasons: Our club symbol is on the (very) endangered animal list, and we had plenty of 'spare' money in the bank due to the club's involvement with the Sussan 10km race series.

Cheetahs are very endangered, being susceptible to many diseases and deformities such as liver and kidney disease, cryptoid and pneumonia due to inbreeding. It is thought that this problem of inbreeding began when most Cheetahs were killed off, leaving only a small amount to breed. Western Plains is the first Zoo in Australia to have successfully bred Cheetahs.

Music Quiz

By Terry McIver

Blister 64 answers: (1) Tiny Tim (sang "Tiptoe thru the tulips"); (2) Sting, now a solo singer, was with "Police"; (3) Sandie Shaw never wore shoes on stage; (4) George Martin, the Beatles' producer; (5) Billy Fury.

Tina Campbell got 4 pts (we don't know if Sandie Shaw **liked** wearing shoes, all we know is she didn't wear them on stage). David Ritchie also got 4 (Pete Best used to BE a Beatle in the early days but was never known as the 5th Beatle). George Herisson got 1 point, please keep having a go.

Five more for next time: (1) What was the first Australian-recorded song to enter the British pop-music charts (name artist and song)? (2) What was the first million-selling record by Australian artists (name artists and song)? (3) What was Paul Gadd better known as? (4) Which Beatle had a number 1 hit which also sold over a million copies after they broke up and went solo? (5) Which 50s rock and roll singer started going deaf when young but still went on to be a great entertainer?

Kaptain AnoraK's Kolumn

Notes by Steve Cornelius, data from SC and Kevin Tiller

You won't find this definition in a dictionary: **Anorak** ('ænəræk) n. **1** Subscriber to Internet discussion group or mailing list, whose contributions are mainly based on (often pointlessly pedantic) statistical analysis or obscure facts and figures. **2** One who maintains lists or databases of such facts and figures. [Origin: all-weather outer garment of same name. Derives from widespread, if inaccurate, belief that such persons' sartorial standards must necessarily reflect their perceived character, i.e.nerdish, unfashionable].

Kevin Tiller and I are engaged in the long-winded task of researching and compiling a complete set of Sydney Striders' records and archives, so I suppose you could (and probably will) call us the club's tame Anoraks. We're not really sure why it's never been done before. At least it hasn't been done definitively, although there have been spurts of ad hoc record keeping down through the years since Striders' foundation.

So we've given birth to this new Blister feature, Kaptain AnoraK's Kolumn (incorporating Kaptain AnoraK's Klaims), which will appear in as many editions as possible and publish selected records from the club's past and present. There's a long way to go, but this is a starting point. The idea is to create a dynamic Striders' records archive by generating general interest in, and possibly also friendly rivalry over, records held by members.

THIS IS **YOUR** COLUMN. Many records are easily researchable, but many only exist in the memories of Striders' individual members. We want them ALL. Some will have been lost for all time, but many are reclaimable, and we invite you to claim YOURS. Or tell us about other people's.

The point is, it's not only the Joanne Cowans, the Phil Garvins, the Darren Bensons and the Graham Firkins who hold club records. Records come in all shapes and sizes. For example, I myself have never been the world's fastest runner, but even I claim at least one Striders' record. Here it is, to get the ball rolling:

Klaim 1: First ultramarathon (any race >42.2k) ever completed by a Striders' member within official race time limit: **Steve Cornelius**, Wollongong to Sydney 50-miler 1983, in 8:21:19.

Go ahead, send in your KounterKlaim. Points to note about this particular Klaim: (1) Many early members had completed ultras in their native South Africa in the 1970s, but not as a Strider; (2) Derek White ran Sydney-Wollongong 1982, the first recorded ultra by a Strider, we think, but finished outside the race time limit in about 13 hours; (3) I only just made it, since Dave Williams came steaming up to the finish only 63 seconds adrift!

Here we go with a few more:

Klaim 2: Longest triathlon ever completed by a Strider: **Murray Town:** 14-16 Feb 1997, completed Sri Chinmoy 3-day ultra triathlon. Approx. times: swim 15k (6:50), cycle 400k (16:30), run 100k (10:45). Won 50+ age group.

Klaim 3: Only Striders to complete all 10 Brindabella Classics: **Brian Colwell and Mike Ward** (only 2 other runners klaim this feat, Ted Lillis and Grahame Kerruish (Mountain Man)).

Klaim 3: Only Strider to finish any race in exact multiple of 1 hour: **Terry McIver**, 7:00:00 for Sydney-Wollongong 50-miler 1988.

Klaim 4: Closest shave in Comrades 90k ultra: **Roger Rigby**, 10:59:43, only 17 seconds inside race time limit of 11 hours in 1995 event.

Klaim 5: Only Strider to win Marathon Improvers' trophy 3 times: the immortal **Rod Garrick**, who performed a feat many considered impossible, winning sub-4-hour improvers' trophy for 3 consecutive years 1987-88-89.

Klaim 6: Longest winning streak for any major Striders' prize: **Phil Garvin** won male best open marathon trophy 8 consecutive years 1985-92, the first being a tie with Win Ahlmann. NB Joanne Cowan is currently sitting on 7 consecutive female best marathons (1990-96), and will equal Phil's record if she takes it out again this year.

Klaim 7: Largest percentage improvement in marathon PB in a single year: **Grant Ranken** in 1995: 32.97% (from 4:23:53 to 2:56:53).

Klaim 8: Most completions of Wollongong 50-miler: 4 each (consecutive) by **Steve Cornelius** (1983-86) and **Graham Firkin** (1985-88).

Klaim 9: Longest distance ever run by a Strider: 1,015km by **Graham Firkin**, completing the 1989(?) Westfield Sydney-to-Melbourne.

Here's a really silly one:

Klaim 10: Earliest drink-stop in any organised race: **Brian Colwell,** after 10 metres of a Striders' Internal Handicap Half-Marathon (date to be checked, but it was mid-to-late 1980s) at North Ryde. The drink stop was intended as a 7k refreshment, but happened to be 10m from start.

OVER TO YOU. Record types can include:

- The first Strider to do such and such;
- Most completions of such and such;
- Fastest (or slowest) such and such;
- Biggest improvement in such and such;
- Longest or shortest such and such (Keep it Klean, please);
- Most consecutive such and such;
- Most adverse conditions in such and such;
- Oldest or youngest such and such;
- Most unusual or downright silliest.
- Or whatever your imagination runs to.

Who has completed the most marathons (Dick Bartlett are you out there?). Who has done the most Six-Foot Tracks (Brian Colwell, can you fill us in?). Who remembers the American academic, what the hell was his name, who ran with us in the early 1980s and completed the unique "3 in 3 under 3" (3 sub-3-hour marathons on 3 consecutive weekends)? What is the club record for 10k, half-marathon, City-to-Surf? Has any Strider done all 26 City-to-Surfs (Jim Donovan, how close?). Has anyone run further backwards than S.W.Bag (10k, wearing a silly hat and whistling "Dixie")?

Time to make your Klaim. Kaptain AnoraK will verify as many of your Klaims as he Kan, but largely it's going to be your word against everyone else's, until you're KontradiKted. Meanwhile, a few records we've checked are listed below and throughout this Blister – the major perpetual trophy winners since the club's inception. In future editions we'll publish age group winners and whatever other records we can get our hands on. Perhaps one day the whole lot will get published as part of an official history of Sydney Striders. Meanwhile, the ball is in your court.

Our belief is that at least 50% of Striders hold some kind of club record – all you have to do is tell Kaptain AnoraK, publish your Klaim, then wait to see if anyone shoots it down.

Fastest Marathon (male) 1980-96

1980	Charles Coville	2:50:08
1981	Bruce Robertson	2:39:40
1982	Robert Harrison	2:33:46
1983	Godfrey Franz	2:29:46
1984	Win Ahlmann	2:26:57
1985	Win Ahlmann and Phil Garvin	2:24:26
1986	Phil Garvin	2:21:56
1987	Phil Garvin	2:26:54
1988	Phil Garvin	2:30:30
1989	Phil Garvin	2:25:34
1990	Phil Garvin	2:29:26
1991	Phil Garvin	2:29:46
1992	Phil Garvin	2:33:47
1993	Chris McLean	2:37:47
1994	Chris Dwyer	2:38:32
1995	Chris Truscott	2:47:23
1996	Darren Benson	2:33:19

Fastest Marathon (female) 1983-96

1983	Jenny Walker	2:57:40
1984	Sue Hill	2:59:15
1985	Sue Hill	3:11:11
1986	Janice Morton-Evans	3:06:34
1987	Tina Campbell	3:00:32
1988	Linda Thompson	2:49:34
1989	Linda Thompson	2:54:00
1990	Joanne Cowan	2:52:44
1991	Joanne Cowan	2:46:18
1992	Joanne Cowan	2:42:31
1993	Joanne Cowan	2:42:00
1994	Joanne Cowan	2:40:12
1995	Joanne Cowan	2:41:48
1996	Joanne Cowan	2:47:22

Fastest Debut Marathon (male) 1980-96

1980	Mike Anschutz	2:58:21
1981	Ray Doran	2:59:24
1982	Bob Shaw	2:48:15
1983	Win Ahlmann	2:35:59
1984	Don Price	3:07:04
1985	Alex Whitworth	2:55:54
1986	Gavin Morisset	3:14:43
1987	Warwick Selby	2:51:59
1988	Paul Lunsmann	3:30:17
1989	James McDonnell	3:02:55
1990	Ron Daley	3:28:46
1991	Peter Corte	3:02:00
1992	Paul Mandle	2:59:14
1993	Paul Kotala	4:22:18
1994	Darren Benson	2:59:30
1995	Michael Wilson	3:39:54
1996	John Young	2:35:30

Fastest Debut Marathon (female) 1983-96

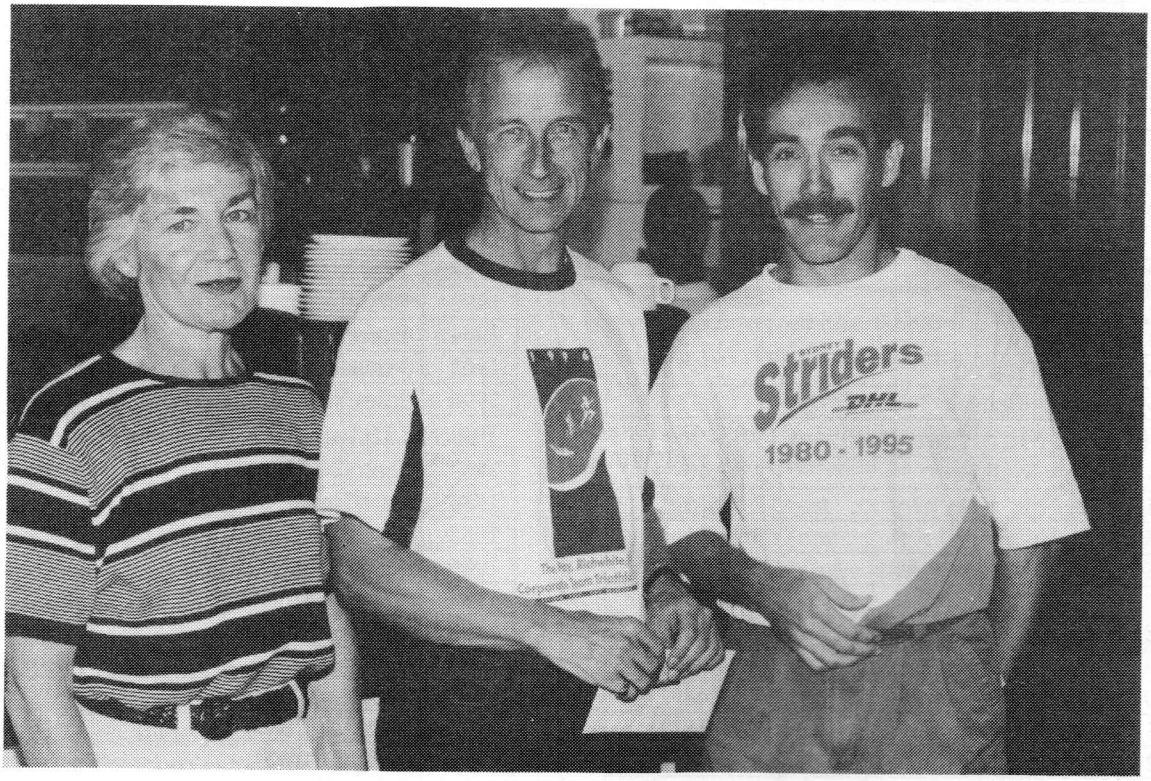
1983	Jenny McCoy	4:19:40
1984	Patti Burke	3:54:01
1985	(not awarded)	
1986	Janice Morton-Evans	3:15:22
1987	Chris Matthews	4:23:30
1988	Susan Griffiths	3:37:47
1989	Joanne Cowan	3:04:35
1990	(not awarded)	
1991	Sue Roberts	3:11:45
1992	(not awarded)	
1993	Dawn Tiller	3:09:13
1994	Sue Maher	3:47:00
1995	Fiona Pelly	3:49:59
1996	Cathy Dunworth	3:26:26

Personal Profile: 10k Series Director John Hamilton

Compiled by Sarah Entwistle

Full name	John Richard Hamilton
Place of birth	Epping NSW on 20 July 1955
Age	41
Star sign	Cancer
Family	Lorna and Lisa (10), Daniel (9), Sarah (6)
Occupation	Technology Planner
Best feature	Ability to read STaR maps and go where no Strider has gone before (ie, correct STaR route), and ignore inane protestations of other Striders (who are still out there running around somewhere)!!!
Worst feature	I take on too much.
Favourite non-running reading	Jilly Cooper books
Favourite music	Elton John
Favourite food	Lots of it, particularly pasta dishes.
Best time of day	Early in the morning.
Other pastimes	House renovator, woodcraft, swimming, Cub Scout Leader.
Dreams & ambitions	Finish the house renovations, make a piece of furniture, beat Kieren Perkins over any distance !!!, become proficient at public speaking, see more of Oz and the world.
Years running	Very nearly 20.

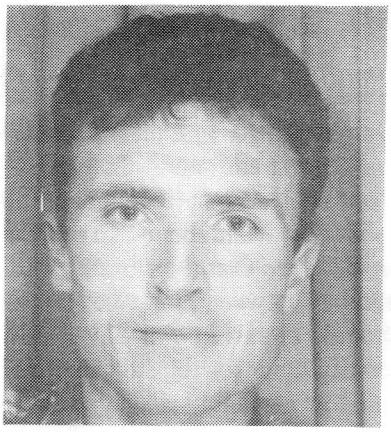
Why started running	Had to find something which exercised the body to counter part time uni which exercised/destroyed the brain.
Person most admired	Deek.
Sporting ambitions	(1) At the moment: recover from an injury. I've done it before, I'll do it again. (2) Get back to STaRs - how I miss the intellectual conversation, the subtle innuendo, the Exocet sarcasm, the repartee. (3) Run a 10k Race. (4) Get back on the half circuit. (5) Do the Canberra Marathon again. (6) Learn to swim. (7) Learn to ride a bike.
Races/events you are most proud of	A 10k Race in Centennial Park in the early 90s where it all came together and I came home with Matt Kaley in a 34:something; and my first Canberra Marathon where I did a PB of 2:47:22.
Training partners	The best training partners I've ever had: the 6:20 STaR group.
Pre-race preparation	Get up early enough to get to the start on time !!!



10k Series Director John Hamilton (right) at Striders' Xmas Brunch in December 1996. Left: Elizabeth Campbell representing series sponsors South African Airways. Centre: Luck was on the side of John Walker, winner of the random draw prize, an SAA ticket to South Africa.

Member of the Month

By Sarah Entwistle



Above: John Young
Below: Murray Town

January: John Young

Following a very speedy 1996, John Young is our very deserving January Member of the Month for getting 1997 off to an even speedier start with an outright win in the Palm Beach to Manly, in a near record time of 1:45:25. This win was quickly followed by victory in the Striders 10k in the Domain, and first Strider home at North Head, beaten only by Paul Arthur and a visiting South African.

As most of you will have read in the nominations for the 1996 outstanding achievement award, John's debut marathon in Sydney was an incredible 2:35:48, and he is hoping to better this at Canberra in April. Best of luck, John, for an even more impressive 1997.

Date	Event	Result
5 Jan 97	P/Beach-Manly 30k	1:45:25 (1st)
1 Feb 97	Striders 10k, Domain	32:41 (1st)
1 Mar 97	Striders 10k, North Head	32:17 (3rd, 1st Strider)

February: Murray Town

Murray really excelled himself this month by completing an event in Canberra that most of us would have nightmares just thinking about. As we all know, Murray can't resist a challenge, and not content like the rest of us triathletes with the usual Sri Chinmoy long course triathlon, he couldn't resist the appeal of the three day ultra event. Not surprisingly there were only 10 individual starters and 3 teams for the 15k swim, 400k bike, and 100k run. And if that doesn't sound bad enough, try doing it in laps - 30x500m swim, 100x4k bike and 75x1.4k run (Yes. They did have a lap counter for each competitor). The swim started at 7.00am on Friday morning, the bike 10pm Friday night, and the run at midnight on Saturday, with a cut-off time of 4pm Sunday. Murray finished with hours to spare, and his only mishap was falling asleep on his bike at around 5.30am on Saturday morning. However, being Murray he managed to cross a ditch into a hedge and was still upright when he woke up.

We all think you're mad, Murray, but congratulations on taking out 5th place in 33:55:45, and putting in the third fastest run of the event. We saw Murray at the finish, and he was still walking and talking, albeit with a slightly stunned expression on his face.

Murray's training for this event included the almost as exhausting JLW Challenge (see Triathlon page for more details) in early December, and the 60k Bogong to Hotham race in January. And only two weeks after Sri Chinmoy (heaps of recovery time by Murray's standards), he put in a strong performance at the Six Foot Track to be 10th Strider home in 5:00. Murray's next major event is the Forster Ironman. Should be a breeze!!

Date	Event	Results
30 Nov-to 1 Dec 96	JLW Challenge - 30k run, 22k kayak, 50k bike, 20k run, 80k bike, 28k kayak	17:30:00
5 Jan 97	Bogong to Hotham 60k	10:30:00?
14 to 16 Feb 97	Sri Chinmoy Ultra Triathlon - 15k swim, 400k bike, 100k run	33: 55:45 (6:50 swim, 16:20 bike, 10:45 run, 5th overall.
1 Mar 97	Six Foot Track, 46k	5:00:00

The Comrades Marathon

A round-up of information and history for Striders planning a trip to South Africa in June

Comrades Race Info 1997

by Rob Smorfitt

Direction: "Up" (Durban to Pietermaritzburg)
Distance: 89 km (54 miles). **Date:** 16 June 1997.
Origins: The Comrades Marathon started in 1921 when 34 determined runners left Pietermaritzburg for Durban to commemorate their comrades who fell during the Great War. This traditional event has occurred every year except the World War II years, and has grown from 34 to over 13000 runners. Comrades is a cherished national treasure and attracts thousands of runners, spectators and television viewers every year. We invite you to come and participate in this great event and experience one of Africa's greatest adventures.
Location: KwaZulu Natal is often referred to as the 'Garden Province' of South Africa, a province of extremes. The coastal regions being lush with green sub-tropical vegetation, the Midlands with their rolling grass hills and meandering lanes and finally the giant basalt peaks and deeply gorged out river valleys of the breathtaking Drakensberg. This is also the home to the Zulu nation and the greatest ultra distance road race - the Comrades Marathon. The 1997 Comrades Marathon is a 'down run' starting in Pietermaritzburg at 6.00am and finishing in Durban at 5.00pm.
Entry fee: US$70.00 which includes: Special runner's package. Viewing of the route by coach. Visit to the Comrades Marathon museum. Special international area at Runner's Expo to collect race numbers etc. Race brochure, map and race results. Medal and badge to all finishers. Special international area at race finish. Tog bag service.
Climate and temperature: Sub-tropical climate with an average maximum of 26°C.
Qualification: All runners must qualify by running a standard marathon within 4hrs 30min between 31 Aug 1996 and 1 May 1997. Entrants must be 18 years or older on date of qualifying race. Closing date for entries 2 May 1997.

Prize money: Men, 1st to 10th: R65000, R25000, R15000, R10000, R9000, R8000, R7000, R6000, R5000, R4000. Women, 1st to 5th: R65000, R25000, R15000, R10000, R9000. All of these positions get a pure gold medal.
For more information and entry forms write to: Comrades Marathon, PO Box 100621, Scottsville 3209, S.Africa, or fax 27-331-42-7548 or e-mail Comrades@alpha.futurenet.co.za

The Comrades Story

By Rob Smorfitt (Comrades Marathon Association)

Can anyone deny that after seventy odd years, Comrades Marathon and Comrades Day has become a well loved national institution? Would Vic Clapham or Mantabeni "Greatheart" Newton have ever believed that their brain child of a 90km ultramarathon between the two largest cities of Natal would endure? To have developed so phenomenally and to register a field of nearly 15,000 athletes as well as a vast spectator audience both along the route and on TV would have probably exceeded their wildest dreams. Even the Olympic Games association so far has not given consideration to such an event.

According to well known Comrades historian and veteran, Vernon Jones, the Comrades from small beginnings, "has survived a number of vicissitudes, including a world War, and a great economic depression" and no doubt the present woes of the South African socio-economic situation will be in time recorded in the annals of the race. Bob Lambert also remembers the great drought of 1987 when sea water had to be desalinated and when strict water restrictions necessitated the introduction of water sachets. Dr John Godlonton, a long serving Executive member and director of the famous Medical Tent would testify to many a rigorous testing for exceptionally high health standards as well as numerous amazing anecdotes.

Morris Alexander in his running classic "The Comrades Marathon Story" describes how the Comrades has become "a huge athletic festival, the greatest free show on the South African sporting calendar and which is beginning to feature in the international sporting arena". Members of the CMA committee who have recently been guests at the Greek, Swiss and New York marathons would eagerly give witness to this statement. All the credit must be given to the many sports administrators and public officials who have patiently seen their way to put the spirit of sportsmanship first.

In its early years the Comrades was viewed by the orthodox athletics establishment in South Africa as a form of freakish pedestrianism, but is now widely acknowledged to be one of the "Everests" of road running. It is in reality three different races on the same course on the same day.

Leading the field of more than 14000 are some 50 highly trained athletes who contest the individual and team honours with an intensity not surpassed at the Olympic Games. Then follow those, just as well trained but with less of nature's athletic gifts, who strive mightily to win the silver medals that are awarded to those who complete the course in under 7½ hours. The third race is for the great majority of men and women whose only ambition is to reach the finishing line before the pistol is fired at 5.00pm.

Since 1976 women have competed officially on the same terms as men. The small initial entry, when five finished the course, soon led to far wider participation. The introduction in 1977 of the Comrades Bowl for the first lady and with it the principal of a race within the main race, with the duplication of several awards, provided the incentive for ever increasing entries and in high class performances. In 1988 540 women completed the race, led home by Frith van der Merwe in the world class time of 6hr s 32mins.

Over the years the Comrades has acquired its own special set of honours, awards and traditions. Since its inception the leading runner has carried a letter of greetings from the Mayor of one city to the other. Traditionally runners retain their competing numbers from one year to another; after ten successful runs it is reserved for its owner for all time and he is presented with a set of distinctive green numbers for his subsequent use. In 1983 Leige Boulle earned his 39th medal while wearing number 141 and many others have earned Double Green Numbers by exceeding 20 medals. Earning a Green Number was at one time rated as a special distinction but in recent years it has become quite a routine achievement.

Although the name "Comrades" was acquired fortuitously from the original promoting body of war veterans, it is yet appropriate because it epitomises the camaraderie and the tradition of mutual help among the rank and file who earn their bronze medals up to 5.00pm.

Many sportsmen, famous in national team games, have been drawn to the Comrades, among them rugby springboks Bill Payn, Keith Oxlee, Don Walton, Wilf Rosenberg, Wynand Claasen and Dawie de Villiers, and cricket springboks Peter Pollock, "Buster" Farrer and David Pithey. Stories of heroic triumphs over adversity are legion. The late Ian Jardine, in his last years totally blind, won the Founder's trophy (for the oldest competitor to finish) an incredible 13 times, the last when 67 years old. Sarel Snyman overcame severe and crippling war wounds to win his Double Green Number 189. Wally Hayward's come-back at 79 years of age, after an incredible break of over 20 years is a story which will reach the museum annals.

The success of the Comrades Marathon is due largely to a small band of dedicated people who spend thousands of man- hours organising one of the greatest road shows on earth. This group, the Comrades Marathon Association works throughout the year to make the race the huge success that it is. From Comrades House in Pietermaritzburg, the CMA plans the event, setting up portfolios that will cover catering for 14,000 runners, the start, the finish, the finances, medical matters and the Comrades Expo (a runners trade fair held before the race.) History was made in the colourful career of the Comrades Marathon in 1989, when Samuel Tshabalala (32) became the first black runner to win the race in a time of 5hr 35mins 51secs. And to show that black ultramarathoners have begun to dominate the front rankings, no fewer than six gold medals went to blacks in the 1989 race.

"The Comrades is the greatest race of them all" says Creigh Kelley, US Sports Specialist. "Running Comrades is like having a baby, you forget the agony very quickly". "Then you want to do it again" said a female runner. Finally Philip Jones said "I have known no day in all my life like this". Which neatly sums it all up.

[This article and the Comrades '97 Race Info above were found on the: Comrades Marathon Association's World Wide Web pages].

To Hill and Gone (or How To Make Comrades Easier)

By Owen Anderson, PhD

Hills are what make the Comrades such an enormous challenge. If you're unprepared, they'll make the difference between finishing and missing the cutoff. Here's how to make the best of the hill-training time you have left.

Hill training provides a great mental break from flat-ground ambling, improves leg-muscle power, expands stride length, enhances running economy, and protects leg muscles against soreness. Problem is, many runners are not sure exactly how to hill train, and just going out and running on hills now and then won't help running performances very much. In order to benefit maximally, you need the right kind of hills and the appropriate workouts.

To help you create an ideal hill-training program, we've posed the most commonly asked questions about hill sessions below. The responses should stimulate you to carry out your hill training faithfully and systematically, which will make you a more powerful, speedier runner.

Q: What kinds of hills are optimal for improving performances ? You need to find two different kinds of hills. In order to maximally boost leg-muscle power, one should be a scarily steep slope measuring at least 25 metres from bottom to top - the kind which makes you plead with your city council to put an oxygen tent at the summit.

To upgrade the aerobic capabilities and improve the fatigue resistance of your leg muscles, you'll also need a set of hills - more moderate in nature - upon which you can cavort for 25 to 30 minutes or more at a time without getting bored or dead-tired (a hilly park, sand dunes along the shore, or some rolling terrain in the country all work well for this).

Q: Why is hill training such a good idea? You're probably aware that most runners need to carry out some form of strength training, since it reinforces tendons and ligaments, lowers fatigue during running, reduces injury rates, and improves running form.

However, the various forms of strength training don't have equal effects on your running performances. The bad news is that the strength-building activities which most runners emphasise, including knee extensions, leg curls, leg and shoulder presses, double-leg squats, biceps curls, etc, probably are the least helpful of all the resistance routines because they don't do a good job of replicating the neuromuscular patterns required for running. Knee extensions, for example, are usually carried out while sitting at an exercise machine. It's true that these extensions force your quads to work hard, and strong quads are needed for running, but because you are in a seated position your quads work in isolation from the other muscles in your legs and aren't required to support your body weight. As a result, your quads become adept at exerting power while you are sitting down, not while you are actually running a race.

The basic problem is that most strength routines focus on individual joints and small numbers of muscles and don't require your muscles to support full body weight, as they do during running.

In contrast, running up hills forces the muscles in your hips, legs, ankles and feet to contract in a coordinated fashion while supporting full body weight, as they would during regular running, and to contract more powerfully than normal, because they must overcome gravity to move you up the hill. This increased stress on the muscles leads to dramatic increases in power while running, which translates into longer, faster running strides. Small wonder that the Kenyans are the best runners in the world, in spite of the fact that they never go to the gym. Their "gym" consists of the hills and mountains of Kenya - upon which they train ceaselessly!

Q: What does scientific research say about hill training? Scientific research is very favourable. For example, several years ago, investigators at the famed Karolinska Institute in Stockholm asked 11 accomplished Swedish marathon runners to include hill training in their normal routine. After just 12 weeks, the Swedes' running efficiency improved by about three percent, enough to shave 60 to 90 seconds from 10km race times and over six minutes from marathon clockings. In addition, noted Swedish researcher Bengt Saltin, PhD, has determined that hill-training runners have much higher concentrations of "aerobic enzymes" in their leg muscles, compared to flat-ground runners (aerobic enzymes are the chemicals which allow muscles to function at high levels for long periods without fatigue).

Q: I've never trained systematically on hills before. How do I start? It's easy to integrate hill work into your present training. Simply start with one hill workout per week, utilising one of the sessions described below. After a couple of months, you'll be ready to move into a special six-week training period which emphasises hill workouts. During this period, alternate two hill sessions one week with one the following week (for a total of nine hill sessions during the six-week period). The hill efforts can be substituted for the speed training you would normally carry out. After this six-week period, you'll emerge with more powerful legs and faster strides.

It's ideal to put this kind of period near the beginning of your racing season, because the upswings in power you achieve will translate into faster performances during the season. As mentioned, you'll need two kinds of hills - a very steep incline to maximally boost power, and more moderate hills to improve your resistance to fatigue during strenuous running.

Q: What are the four best hill sessions? You can't go wrong with the following four gems:

Workout 1: Warm up by jogging easily for 10-15 minutes, and then carry out "repeats" on the

scarily steep slope we mentioned above. On the ascent, try to always run at an intensity that feels tougher than your fastest race pace. Recover by jogging easily back to the bottom, and surge upward as soon as you feel ready. Start with four or five reps for your first session, and gradually increase the difficulty of the workout by adding more reps and shortening the amount of time you spend recovering.

Workout 2: After a thorough warm-up, "bound" up the same steep slope you use for workout 1. To bound, spring from foot to foot with an exaggerated vertical body motion, making sure that you emphasise "high knees" and full stretching of the Achilles tendons as your feet hit the ground (to do this, land on your toes with each footstrike and "rock" back onto your heel before springing upward and forward). Recover by jogging back down the hill, and begin with just four to five reps per workout, gradually increasing the number over time. Bounding is a great altemative to normal uphill running, because it dramatically bolsters leg-muscle power and - by upgrading Achilles-tendon elasticity - promotes greater running efficiency (bounding up hills was the technique emphasised by the Swedish marathoners mentioned above).

Workout 3: Over rolling terrain (hilly countryside, sand dunes, etc) run continuously for about 25 minutes at a pace which feels slightly less intense than 10km race pace. Try to "attack" the hills, increasing your pace to race speed as you ascend, and emphasise staying relaxed, balanced and under control on the downslopes. Try to choose a course over which you're almost always moving uphill or downhill.

Workout 4: If the weather stinks or you don't feel like driving to your favourite hill(s), you can always carry out a "hill" workout on a stair machine, bearing in mind that the "descending escalator" machines are definitely preferable to the traditional platform-type devices. After a good warmup, altemate formidable one-minute intervals at a high intensity with easy, three-minute recovery climbs. Start with just four one-minute intervals per sessions, but gradually increase the number and shorten the recovery periods.

Q: How often should I do hill repeats? Do hills about 3 times every 2 weeks during those periods of training when you're trying to improve muscle power and running economy (you should have 2 to 3 of these periods per year, lasting for about 6 weeks each). During the rest of the year, you can hill train about once every 2 weeks.

Q: How many hill repeats should I do? Always use the principle of progression: Start with a small number of repeats (4 to 5) and increase the number over time. Never make your hill-repeat distance more than the total volume of interval training you can normally handle each week..

Q: Downhill running is tough for me. I can't seem to get coordinated, and I'm never sure whether I should try to run fast or slow: What should I do? It's important to learn to run at an accelerated - not a conservative - pace on downhills. From a physiological standpoint, you can increase your pace on downslopes by 10-15 percent without increasing oxygen consumption, heart rate, or perceived regularly in training (after practice, you'll gain ground on other runners who aren't so skilled at 'downsloping')

As you run downhill, avoid the common tendency to lean backward, and don't try to keep a tight rein on your downward movement. Lean forward slightly and let gravity do the work for you, simply bouncing from one foot to the other. Try this first on moderate hills until you've mastered the technique, and then move on to tougher hills, where more coordination will be demanded. Above all else, stay relaxed on downhills: They represent a great opportunity for you to move fast while not using much energy.

Q: I've read that downhill running can prevent muscle soreness, but how much downhill running is actually needed? About 15 minutes of downhill effort can protect you for a month or more, but don't try this quantity your first time out. Run downhill for only a few minutes during your first session, and gradually increase the dose (by a couple of minutes per week) over a period of several weeks. Carrying out any of the first three workouts described above (but not the stair-machine exertion) should vaccinate your muscles against soreness pretty effectively (although remember that the first session will probably be soreness-inducing). It's nice to know that during your hill workouts you benefit greatly from both the uphill surges and the downhill rambles !

Q: Are any special strategies required for hill race courses? Yep, don't forget that if there are early hills (in the first mile or two) you should be careful to run at slower than your expected race pace until you "clear" these hills. Otherwise, your muscle cells may increase in acidity so much that you'll have big trouble with the rest of the race. Save savage attacks on hills for late in the competition. Also, don't forget that if your race hills near the end, you should practice running hills in training after you have already run for an hour or more - to simulate hill running while tired.

Nobby: the Saga Continues

Email from Kevin Tiller

For those of you who are new to the Striders, we used to have an eccentric President for 5 years in the late 80s and early 90s: Nobby Young (OK, he was a bit of an egomaniac also).

He walked around Australia for a year a couple of years back, and now he has just left for a 10 year walk around the world. He is a fruit loop of the first degree. Still, he has got a web page (that works now) which will be updated periodically: http://www.nobby.com. Incidentally he still holds the club record for the distance run in 24 hours – about 205k.

The person updating the webpage had to this say : "I am not actually in direct email contact with nobby (yet). He is carrying a Sharp Zaurus palmtop computer with him, but he doesn't have net access with it. The only way he is able to see his site or check any mail is by finding people along the way with a computer and net connection. We have arranged for a section of the site to be setup (invisible to the public) that Nobby can go to to read any mail messages that come through for him. If you want to send mail to Nobby, just forward it to walmac@acay.com.au and I will see to it that he gets it. The site is in the really early stages of production, expect to see a lot of improvements over the next few weeks. I hope you continue to enjoy it. Kind regards, Chris Walker, Walmac Interactive Media."

[Eds' note: we didn't reprint the article from the Sydney Morning Herald (18 Jan 97) since we figured just about everyone would have read it. If you want a photocopy contact Steve Cornelius.]

Race Results

Supplied by Kevin Tiller

Kelvin Marshall's recent exploits

12/12/96: 50k track race, Coburg Vic, 3:43:48 (1st)
5/1/97: 60k Bogong to Hotham, 8:37:52 (2nd)
26/1/97: 50k Mansfield to Mt Buller, 4:28:04 (1st)
16/2/97: 10k Cubitt Classic, 38:00 (PB)

How Wrong Can You Be?

We have before us a 1996 Sydney marathon Finisher's Certificate stating "Alf Field, 4:00:03" placed "797th of 1329 Total Finisher (sic)" and "92nd of 154 males aged 35 to 39"!!!! As Alf himself confessed, "It's nearly 20 years since I competed in this age group!".

"Raz" Awards

presented by Scott Crawford

A number of "Raz" Awards were also presented at the Outstanding Achievements Award dinner on 6 March before a packed house. The big winner was Murray Town with 3 awards. Other worthy recipients were Peter Corte, Raymond Potter, Steve Cornelius, Keith & Margaret White, and John Preston (aka Prescott). The awards were

- **The "Raindrops keep falling on my head Award":** to Keith & Margaret White, for their organisation of the Picnic Relay, which was completely rained out.
- **The "Nobel Prize for Medicine":** to Raymond Potter, for the computer virus transmitted to 60 Striders' Computers via the Striders' mailing list February 1997.
- **The "Fruit Loop Award":** to Murray Town, for his completion of the 3 Day Sri Chinmoy Triathlon, February 1997 (15 k swim, 400k bike, 100k run).
- **The "Wettex Award":** to Murray Town, for falling in the Brindabella Classic with 3 Squeezies in his pocket which burst and oozed their sticky contents down his legs, November 1996.
- **The "Feet on the Ground Award":** to Murray Town for falling asleep on his bike, riding into a hedge, and carrying on with the race without his feet touching the ground (Sri Chinmoy Ultra-Tri).
- **The "Mistaken Identity Award":** to Dr. Peter Corte, for there being no truth in the rumour that an event exists by the name of the "Fat Ass 54", since Peter is not 54.
- **The "Tired Old Triathlete Award":** to John Preston (aka Prescott), for being sighted with baby carriage in training for the Father & Child category in the 2012 City to Surf.
- **The "South African Airlines Award":** to Steve Cornelius, for being terrified that Sally Cornelius will win the 10 km handicap series and that he will have to buy himself a ticket to South Africa.

Wisdom

Supplied by one of our overseas correspondents

Never raise your hands to your kids. It leaves your groin unprotected.

Happiness is not getting what you want, but wanting what you have.

Striders in Training

Listing maintained by Kevin O'Kane

Please notify additions or corrections to Kevin O'Kane (B) 9283-3355 (H) 9449-1435 (NB NOT the Blister editors, please!). This listing can include any regular running, cycling, swimming, walking group which Striders might like to join. If you spot errors or omissions, DON'T ASSUME SOMEONE ELSE WILL LET US KNOW! Details which are new or changed in this edition are marked with a ★.

What and When	Who	Where
Achilles Running Club: Assisting disabled walkers, runners. Sundays 8am. Contact Chris Robb 9959-4269	Wendy Downes, Chris Robb, Rozanne Green	Hyde Park near St James Station, Elizabeth St, Sydney
Equaliser A.M. Group: 12k or so, Wednesdays ★5.45am. Contact Kevin O'Kane 9283-3355	Keith White, Breeda Kelly, Kevin O'Kane	Acron Oval, Acron Rd, St Ives
Equaliser P.M. Group: Up to 14k. Wednesdays 6.00pm. Contact Mike Ward 9957-3566	Mike Ward + ?	Wyatt Reserve, Wyatt Ave, Belrose
Lane Cove River Runners: About 10k. Tuesdays and Fridays 5.45pm. Contact Mike Ward 9957-3566	Mike Ward, Amanda Dawson, Scott Crawford, Rod Lovell, George Lisson	Lane Cove River Park, Fullers Bridge entrance, Fullers Rd, Chatswood West
Marathon Training Group: About 10k. Thursdays 6.00pm. Contact Kevin O'Kane 9283-3355	Kevin O'Kane, Nick Themsen, Kirsten Themsen and others	Waverton Bowling Club, Woolcott St, Waverton
★**Sun Alliance & Royal 5k Handicap:** Wednesdays 12.10 pm. Contact Tina Campbell 9978-9973 or Cameron Osborne 9978-9976	Tina Campbell, Cameron Osborne	Western Park, Pacific Highway, Chatswood (next to Chatswood Toyota)
Veterans' Track: 3000m or 5000m. 6.00pm Thursdays	Various members, infrequently	Hensley Athletic Field, Corish Circle, Pagewood

In Your Next Blister

By Steve Cornelius

Blister 66, due out in late May, will feature:

- Full coverage of April's Canberra Marathon;
- Pictures from the Awards Night on 6 March;
- Results of races 3 and 4 in the 10k series;
- A ladder of some sort (did you notice it was missing in this Blister for the first time in about 60 issues?);
- A club logo and uniform update;
- More from Kaptain Anorak (aided by YOU, I hope!);
- And much much more.

There will also be a write-up on some interesting stuff David Sill picked up from the UK's Road Runners' Club. The RRC run an "Individual Standards Scheme", in which runners can qualify for the award of an annual certificate of 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th class, depending on their performances in at least 3 races of differing distances in a calendar year.

A standards award for Sydney Striders would be a very fine thing, maybe, but that's not what interested me most about it. More interesting perhaps is that one could potentially use RRC's collection of qualifying times (over 1,000 data points) to devise a comparison formula which would "correct" any race result, allowing for 4 factors: age, gender, distance and terrain.

If anyone, particularly those associated with Veterans' athletics or sports medicine, has any existing documentation on effects of aging on race performances, difference between male and female athletic standards, or the "slow-down" factor for longer races, I'd be glad to hear from you.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AUSTRALIA,
YOU CAN RUN OR WALK THE OFFICIAL MARATHON DISTANCE OF 42.195 KM IN THREE STAGES OVER TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS IN THE SCENIC GROUNDS OF PARRAMATTA PARK, NSW

3 STAGE
marathon
Parramatta Park
Sat 26 & Sun 27 April 1997

A.A. CERTIFIED ACCURATE COURSES

10.000km (Stage1)
Saturday 8:00am Fun Run
11.0975km (Stage 2)
Saturday 4:00pm marathoners only
21.0975km (Stage 3)
Sunday 7:30am Half Marathon
PLUS
Saturday 11:00am Under 16 Junior Jog 3.000km
Saturday 1:30pm Community Walk 6.000km
Enquiries
Derek Foley (02) 9597 6750
Entries close Fri 18 April

Run Sydney Striders' SAA 10k Series and you could end up in AFRICA.

Sydney Striders' 1997 Open 10k Races and 5k Walks.
6 scenic Sydney courses. Start 7am sharp, 1st Saturday of the month.
Registration on race day from 6am.

Two return tickets to South Africa to be won, courtesy of our major sponsor, **South African Airways.** One will go to the winner of the ever-popular Handicap Division, open to Striders only (so why not become a member soon?). The other will be a lucky draw prize, open to everyone completing five events.

SYDNEY Striders

SAA SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

Africa's Warmest Welcome

Runners The Shop RANDWICK

Gatorade Thirst Quencher

Australian Runner and Athlete Magazine

Entry fee includes refreshments. Register on the day.
Entry fees for 1997: Striders $5, Non-members $8,
Runs for Charity: Striders $7, Non-members $10
First Saturday of every month, Race starts 7 am prompt.
Enquiries: Chris Robb (02)-9959-4269.

Remainder of 1997 Programme:

5 April 1997:	Shelley Beach Park, Manly (East end of Bower St)
3 May 1997:	Meadowbank Park (South end of Adelaide St - Parramatta River end)
7 Jun 1997:	**Run For Charity:** Lane Cove River Park, Chatswood West (Fullers Bridge)
5 Jul 1997:	North Head (Corner Darley Rd and North Head Scenic Drive)
2 Aug 1997:	Trafalgar Park, Marsfield (Corner Trafalgar Place and Waterloo Rd)
6 Sep 1997:	Shelley Beach Park, Manly (East end of Bower St)
4 Oct 1997:	Meadowbank Park (South end of Adelaide St - Parramatta River end)
1 Nov 1997:	**Run For Charity:** Lane Cove River Park, Chatswood West (Fullers Bridge)