

THEBLISTER

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SYDNEY STRIDERS RUNNING CLUB ESTABLISHED 1980

SEP 2017-MAR 2018 | ISSUE 133

David and his 2:17 Berlin adventure

Long time Strider, David Criniti, shares his experience at the 2017 Berlin Marathon

THE ABC OF THE 6 FOOT TRACK

Paul Brunning shares his knowledge on the 6 foot track marathon

Can we run on a Plant-based diet?

Our in-house nutritionist Nicole Dynan discusses what a plant-based diet is and its potential impacts on our running

How I conquered the World's Toughest Mudder

Holly Inglis reminisces on how she completed this Toughest race

COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLLY INGLIS IN THE WORLD'S TOUGHEST MUDDER 2017

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Sydney Striders President's Message

Hello Striders

Welcome to the first Blister of 2018. There are great stories within this issue that will inspire and encourage you. Got a story? Why not send us your story for the next Blister?

As a reminder, training with Striders is available every Sunday – our Sunday runs (STaRs) are where you meet like-minded runners, who will run at your pace and help you meet your training goals. Please use our Facebook page to post up your training plans and enlist a group of buddies. Training with us at STaRs also means you meet other Striders and post-run there is always a cold drink, some fresh fruit and the chance to swap stories. A lot of members go for coffee afterwards – please come along for a caffeine hit.

Social media posting – we need to be mindful of what we post in Sydney Striders gear as it does reflect on our club. The committee has worked on a new social media code of conduct, and this will be available for review on the website during April.

Our recent AGM saw some committee member changes. Terry McIver has stepped aside from the Vice President's committee role changes and we want to thank Terry for his commitment to the club. Terry will continue to assist Paul at our 10km races and Runmore Loans Internal Super Series events. David Bray will step aside as Database Manager but will still be our Sergeant At Arms. Thank you, David – words cannot express your dedication to the club.

As always, thanks to our great committee who work tirelessly. We are currently looking for an additional member for the Blister team – artwork experience required. If you would like to get more involved in the club, we have a role for you, please contact me.

I wish you all the best with your training and hope you will be achieving many personal bests in 2018.

#GoStriders

Jo Cowan

Be fruitful! Our weekly spread of healthy fruit at the Sydney Striders weekly Sunday run (STaR)



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From left: Carolyn, Jo and Tina helping runners at the bag drop at the Six Foot Track Marathon 2018 start line

THE WORLD'S TOUGHEST MUDDER

HOLLY INGLIS

When you find yourself slogging along in a wetsuit with a neoprene hood and torch on your head, gingerly sliding yourself, yet again, into nipple-high frigid water in the middle of the night, you start to question your life choices and certainly your sanity. Or at least I did, 6 laps into the masochistic 24-hour endurance obstacle race that is The World's Toughest Mudder (WTM). The road to this mid-race existential crisis had started a year prior, when I'd decided to extract the digit, dump the excuses ("the extra kgs are just muscle from strength work"), and get myself properly fit and healthy.

I discovered the world of Tough Mudders after my diabolical first official half marathon. I had loved the training for the half, but the race was a mental cage fight. Were it not for my parents popping up to cheer for me every time I thought it was safe to walk for a bit, I would have sat down and refused to get up. But Tough Mudder was totally different. Breaks are necessary in order to negotiate the obstacles, and the team work required to overcome them keeps you from disappearing into a mental funk. Above all, they are so much fun. Through the people I met completing Tough Mudders across Australia, I heard about this mythical beast of a 24-hour Tough Mudder. Considering the bruises and stiffness that were the aftermath of a Tough Mudder for me, a 24-hour event was lunacy.

I started with smaller goals; a lap each day at Sydney Tough Mudder 2016; two laps in one day at Melbourne Tough Mudder 2016. By the time I reached that latter goal, the idea of WTM must have percolated through my subconscious. As a perverse incentive, I pledged that if I could do the two laps on the one day, a total of 38km when I had not run more than 20km in over 2 years, I would enter World's Toughest Mudder. One week later, I had my ticket.

Determining how to train for an event that is billed as 'the most extreme, imposing, pulse-pounding, heart-stopping 24-hour obstacle course challenge on the planet' is daunting, so naturally I decided to train myself. I've had an association with Sydney Striders practically since my pram days so I decided to make good on my many years of unused family membership and drag myself out of bed with the sparrows and run the club Sunday Training Run (STaR) courses. Mid-week training consisted of some mediocre running and high intensity workouts at CrossFit.

The first big challenge was the True Grit Enduro, my first 24-hour obstacle course race. It was an utter disaster. Injury, equipment failure, terrible weather, you name it, it was there. The icing on the cake was when our tents flooded. I retired at 8 hours and it left me quite despondent. It was at that point that I realised I needed a coach. Thus my running training really started. I also made two new friends; my two 20-litre full jerry cans that my coach liked me to carry around for "grip strength". I finally started to see real changes in body composition, losing centimetres on my hips and waist and gaining them on my biceps and quads. After 11 months, I stripped 3% body fat, developed the strength to do pull-ups, and became a morning exerciser. Then suddenly, race day was upon me.

WTM 2017 was the seventh overall and the fourth and final to be held in Las Vegas. WTM is a 5 mile course packed with 20 obstacles. Unlike regular Tough Mudders, WTM has penalties for obstacles that are not completed. At WTM 2017, they decided to go distance heavy with over 2 miles of penalties, which do not count to your mileage total.



SYDNEY STRIDERS BLISTER

The race started at midday in the dusty, hot desert. I gathered with 1208 other mad idiots. The atmosphere was electric as we all faced this challenge together. Not content with simply doing a 24-hour obstacle course race, I had set myself the goal of 50 miles. I was so pumped when the starter flares went off, that it was next to impossible not to fly through the start chute and out on the first, obstacle-free, sprint lap. The target was 6 min/km or slower, which I consistently broke. Fortunately, walking the hills kept the average pace restrained. The obstacles were opened on a rolling basis, thus as the laps went by there was often an urgent sprint while passing the big ticket obstacles, in the hope of getting one more lap without that obstacle, thus avoiding a potential penalty. As a result the first half of the race was very fast; I completed half my goal in the 8 hours.

Understandably, I was on cloud nine at this stage. It was only 8 hours in and already half done. But as I headed out on my 6th lap, I began dwelling on the fact that half-done still meant half to go. But now all the obstacles were open, so this half was going to be far, far, harder. This was the mental space I was in when I found myself plodding along, full wetsuit, sliding in and out of water obstacles, questioning my sanity. The running and obstacles are a significant challenge but the worst are the multiple water obstacles, including several proper swims through the lake and three separate full underwater immersions. The most horrible was Snot Rocket. The temperatures overnight had dropped to around 10 degrees. Fortunately, most water obstacles were either in the lake, which maintained its cool but not frigid daytime temperatures, or in static small ditches of water that gained some warmth from the multitude of bodies climbing in and out. Snot Rocket, however, involved wading into chest high water, ducking under the surface and underneath a barrier, then climbing up a pipe, Augustus Gloop style, while being pummeled from above with water pumped from the ditch just waded through. Because the water circulated all night, it was progressively cooled by the plummeting night temperatures, thus from lap 5 onwards, Snot Rocket should have been renamed Ice-cream Headache Rocket.



Holly wading through the water in one of the multiple water obstacles



Holly through the Pyramid Scheme obstacle



Holly with Dad Bruce (left) and Mum Dale (right) and her 50 mile bib

The laps after this are a little blurred. I do recall telling myself that I had better get this done because there was no way I was coming back to do this if I didn't reach 50 miles. Laps 7 and 8 are a fog of pain, darkness, cold water and bobbing headlights on the horizon. The moment when I realised that I might actually make it was spotting a pink beanie as I staggered along the path back to the main course after completing yet another penalty. That beanie was on my mum's head.

I cannot describe the elation I felt when I saw my mum. You would have thought I was kidnapped at birth and I was meeting my biological mother for the first time, "Mum? Mum? Is that you?". During the whole event, the unspoken heroes were my parents, Dale Thompson, the Dale of Dale's Demons, and Bruce Inglis, the best pit crew a racer could have. This is not just subjective. Mum and Dad helped out some of my fellow Aussie racers who were having a hard time of it and they were very jealous of my team and extremely grateful for their support. Mum and Dad also made sure I ate, drank and stayed warm. They waited for hours in the hot water lines to make sure I had hot food and drinks at all times. They dressed me. They cheered me on. Mum walked my second last lap with me and was with me for sunrise, which was the most beautiful and inspiring I'd ever seen.

And Dad had incredibly and extremely kindly washed ALL my filthy gear, post-race.

At 22 hours and 6 minutes, I crossed the finish line and claimed my 50 mile bib. I was 10th in my age group and 27th woman overall. A friend who completed the same distance told me that with all the penalties, of which I had done a similar amount, his Garmin had recorded 65 miles. It is interesting because as I write this, I can objectively see that undertaking this is total lunacy. I struggle to express the why and only those who have done it seem to understand.

Personally, achieving my goal of 50 miles at WTM has been exceptionally life affirming. I am in the best physical and mental health ever and I feel like I can achieve anything if I set my mind to it.

Where to now? I have the Toughest Mudder bug now so it is onwards and upwards. One of my heroes that I discovered, and have now met through obstacle course racing, is Deanna Blegg. She is a fellow Aussie, who won WTM 2013, then overcame breast cancer to fight back at the age of 48 to come third at WTM 2017.

I have so much more to do and importantly plenty of time to achieve it. She is an incredible inspiration. My goals this year are to place in the top 10 in my next two Australian endurance obstacle course races. I do have a ticket for WTM 2018 in Atlanta, so we shall see what happens.

MY JOURNEY TO COAST TO KOSCI 2017

Taras Mencinsky

Let's go back to Christmas 2015 to set the scene.

Over the week before Christmas, Sarah and I went to the South Coast town of Kioloa. We dined at the Merry Street restaurant (the only one in town) and talked about plans we had for the new year. After crewing at C2K for Roland Hassall two weeks before, C2K was still pretty fresh in my mind, and I said to Sarah I wanted to give the monster a crack. I don't think either of us knew what that really meant, but after DNF'ing three GNW 100 milers (2009, 2014 and 2015), I knew that I needed to finish a miler one day and if I did, I harboured a deep desire to use that towards qualifying for the greatest Australian ultra of all, Coast to Kosci.

2016 started with a bang. Training began straight away and at pace. By the time 6 Foot Track marathon came along, I was well into it and used this and Mt Solitary as the final hitouts before the start of a series of 100km races.

Sri Chinmoy was a bust. I only managed 104km and injured my calf, right knee and pride...however my highlight of the year was crewing for Roland again in his 2016 C2K conquest.

In short succession, I completed Anzac 100 (which in hindsight was the high water mark of the year!), and then, the event that had me descend into the depths of madness and despair, Sri Chinmoy 24 hour. I can attest that running around a track for 24 hours (I only lasted 14 hours) is not something I want to repeat.

Anyway, Sri Chinmoy was a bust. I only managed 104km and injured my calf, right knee and pride. I was unable to recover in time to prepare properly for GNW and reluctantly withdrew. The highlight of the year was crewing for Roland again in his 2016 C2K conquest.

2017 – A new year, a new start and more importantly, a new strategy. Previously I had (mea culpa here) run a lot of junk miles preparing for ultras. Padding out my kilometres per week with 20-30km of easy flat runs helped the weekly total, but not my fitness or preparedness for tough trail or road ultras. I realised finally that the only way to make C2K a reality was to train hard, get a solid 100 miler under my belt and then finally complete GNW100.

However, 2017 didn't start well. After some indifferent training leading up to 6FT (injuries and illness meant I ran only 20km all of February), I finished 6FT in a PW, with even the sweeper taking pity. Roland (and many others) passed me on Black Range and hardly said anything as he was probably thinking 'this poor bastard is going to die out here and he's got the car key to get home!'

In many respects, that was the low point of the year and I thought, it can only go up from here. I had entered the 2017 Thames Path 100 6 months previously and had the opportunity to join some fellow runners in a charity group entry for the London Marathon.

As these were on consecutive weeks (TP100 starts at Richmond and follows the Thames River to Oxford) in late April, I had 6 weeks from 6FT till London Marathon to get fit and be ready for a miler. Easy! I sat down and wrote my hasty training plan, which was anchored by a, roughly, 50km run every Saturday or Sunday. No junk miles, plenty of hills and then a few more hills thrown in for good measure. One of the long weekend runs was Jabulani and even though it was only a month after 6FT, this time I ended with a PB and strong finish.

I won't go into too much detail on London and TP100 but I finished both and couldn't be more satisfied.

I submitted my application for C2K. I made reference to my previous DNF's to highlight how I had changed my attitude and commitment to ultra running, and how I now respected what was needed to be part of such a great event....and I was in!

The elation of being accepted only just shaded the rising fear of what's in front of me...

I left the UK with two more lessons learnt. First, pacing is key, and second, get through the night whatever it takes. With that in mind, I arrived back in Sydney and had the next big goal ahead of me, GNW100.

Once again, I wrote a training plan (10 weeks this time) and kept up the regime of hills and long runs and maintained the discipline I had applied for TP100. Training was hard, solitary and relentless (for me, anyway). I'm not a huge mileage runner, but I was doing around 100km/wk on average and none of it was wasted. I was tired, sore and cranky.

Once again though, the training kept me in good stead, and after starting GNW100 (with Roland again) very slowly and leisurely, I made it to Yarramalong, and finally, out of Yarramalong! Thanks to Michael Key for pacing me through the night and the 72km to the finish. And thanks also to Stefica Key for crewing through the night and day and keeping me fed, watered and motivated. From Somersby to the finish, Mike and I cranked it up and ran as if on air. It was a great day.

So, after finally achieving two major goals, the last was in sight. I submitted my application for C2K. I made references to my previous DNF's as it was important to highlight how I had changed my attitude and commitment to ultra running, and how I respected what was needed to be part of such a great event.

After that, I left it in the hands of the Race Director and hoped I had done enough. The outcome of the applications was scheduled for October 1. I was in Melbourne for the AFL Grand Final on the last weekend in September and on landing back at Sydney on Sunday morning (October 1), I had an email flash up from the C2K Race Director. I was in! The elation of being accepted only just shaded the rising fear of what I had in front of me.

Along with crewing for Roland twice, I also crewed for Roger Hanney in 2012. My experience over these three previous C2K races resulted in my forming a very simple, albeit totally subjective observation. That was when it comes to ultra running, there are two types of race directors. Those that revel in making their races tough, uncompromising and expect high attrition rates, and those that wanted runners to finish. I'm not saying either approach is better than the other, far from it. Every race is unique and race directors do an amazing job. But I came to believe Paul Every and Diane Weaver, the heart and soul of C2K, wanted all participants to experience everything this incredible race has to offer, and be at the presentation on Sunday as a finisher. And for a race as difficult and challenging as C2K, that meant selecting athletes they believed had the capacity to finish and find a way through the inevitable dark space that every runner finds themselves in when engaged in attempting a race than takes anywhere from 24 to 46 hours.

I had witnessed some mind blowing efforts of grit, tenacity and persistence in 2012, 2015 and 2016, with runners finishing after overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and I was absolutely, 100% unconvinced whether I could do the same. I felt a bit like an impostor. However, this feeling soon passed. I had done a lot of work in 2017 and knew the answer to the question, "Was I capable?", was solely within my control and therefore, as long as I did what needed to be done in training, the race would take care of itself. The next thing I did was write a training program!

One of the main lessons I have learned over the past few years is that training, both mental and physical is what gets you to the finish in a race. The old adage that how you go on race day depends on how you trained xx (you need to figure out what that number is for you) weeks before hand holds true. That knowledge gave me the self-belief and motivation to get up and train whether it was early, late, cold or hot, if I was sore, cranky, flat or, on the rare occasion, feeling good!

Finally, the day came when I headed down the highway to Eden with my trusty crew, Dave Clear, Roland Hassall and Mike Evans. That night we all went to the pre-race briefing and dinner and met up with many friends, old and new, and received our last minute instructions and best wishes from Paul and Diane.

The following morning, at 5:30am, I toed the start line at C2K. The morning was glorious, anticipation was high and everyone was smiling. Strangely, I felt calm, with no nerves or doubts. The countdown was on and then we were off...

p.s. I finished C2K in 42 hours, 23 minutes and 34 seconds. There were some seriously rough times, but with the help of my incredible crew, medics, volunteers and the race officials, I crossed the finish line just before midnight on Saturday and was able to collect my Akubra the following day. The race was everything I expected, and I will always cherish the memory of being a part of it.



With my eldest son, Tom, who crewed Day 1

THE RUN BEYOND PROJECT UPDATE

David Criniti



The past few months have seen some significant milestones for The Run Beyond Project. For the first time, on 19 November, 2017, we had two schools completing a goal event simultaneously, when students from Chifley College, Shalvey Campus and Westfield Sports High, competed at the Balmain Fun Run.

Under the guidance of generous teachers Ben Berriman and Melissa Jane, the students performed amazingly well, not letting the heat or the hills deter them from achieving their goals and having fun in the process.

The Run Beyond Project provides a gateway for students in to the running community. The Balmain Fun Run is a particularly suitable event to achieve that goal with a fantastic community atmosphere surrounding the day. The students engaged with the running community throughout the morning and a couple even enjoyed their 15 minutes of fame by participating in a radio interview post-race. We were proud to see them representing The Run Beyond Project, their schools and their families so admirably, and it was a pleasure to meet a few family members who were able to come along and support on the day.



The Run Beyond Crew at the Balmain Fun Run 2017

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The following weekend saw a pilgrimage north, to the Central Coast Half Marathon & 10km Fun Run, where students from Evans High School took on even more oppressive conditions than those dished out at Balmain the week prior. Again, nothing the course nor Mother Nature threw at the students could deter their feisty spirits, with the students demonstrating tremendous grit to earn their finishers' medals.

Fast forward to January, 2018, and it was the chance for the Chester Hill High School students to shine at the Cadbury Half Marathon in Hobart. These students had been training for the event since July, at which point a half marathon seemed like an impossible undertaking.

The Run Beyond Project is about promoting goal-setting, commitment and resilience in students in need. The students demonstrated these qualities in spades over the intervening 6 months and hit the start line daunted but well prepared for the challenge.

With the event planted squarely in the middle of school holidays the students demonstrated an ability to apply these skills independently, committing to their final weeks of training without being scrutinised by the watchful eye of a teacher.

As we all know, there's no hiding on race day. When the gun fires, truths are told. And it is pleasing to report the truth told on the 14th of January was that the students had given up their time in their holidays to do the work required. As is the case each year, jokes abounded about the chocolate rewards on offer at the finish line, but the students went away with lessons and experiences will last immeasurably longer than a simple sweet.

2018 will see The Run Beyond Project continue to expand. We're starting at new schools and will hopefully have our first interstate school commencing shortly. We're using running - the common thread that brings all of us, from our myriad walks of life, together - to empower these students to take on the world, and we're eternally indebted to the supporters who allow this to happen.

Thanks again to Knightswood House, Running Science, 2ndskin, Bioathletic and our beloved Sydney Striders for their continued support. Want to get on board? Let us know. Know a teacher with kids in need. Put them in touch so we can help more kids in more schools.



Smile of the Day goes to Corey who completed his first half marathon at the Central Coast Half Marathon.



Some more big smiles as the Central Coast 10k commences.



The Cheso boys proudly wearing their medals after completing their debut half marathon.

Contact us at:

contact@therunbeyondproject.com to lend your support, or make a donation through the website at **www.therunbeyondproject.com/donate.php**

Until the next update!



The ABC of the Six Foot Track

Now I'm the first to admit that I'm not that flash running cross country or trails. Many more Striders have faster times than I do on the Equaliser race course compared to City 2 Surf and also Six Foot Track compared to a road marathon.

Equaliser PB – 1:07:48 compared to City 2 Surf PB – 55:04. Maybe I just suck off-road but I always say that I refuse to run hard down a rocky trail. If we could just organise a split mat at the drink station, I'm sure my back end would be fast. Haha!

Six Foot Track PB – 4:56:17 compared to Road Marathon PB – 2:57:45. Most people would say I have the speed to run Six Foot fast, but having fallen over going to the river three times, with two bad ones, I don't feel the need for speed.

In May 2015, I tore my right hamstring (middle of muscle) and again in May 2016 in the same spot. It was fixed by Sydney Marathon in 2016 which I proceeded to run in 3:38 without much training. All good.

My old school had an athletics challenge against other GPS schools in October 2016. Think of a bunch of 50 and 51 year olds, who mostly don't do any training, doing sports we did at school! Long story short, during a relay I tore my right hamstring again, but this time much worse and down towards the back of the knee.



Six Foot 2017 - The Pluviometer

Six weeks of physio and I still don't think it feels that good. Oh great, I'd better enter Six Foot as 2017 for the buckle.

In January 2017 I hurt my left Achilles, apparently because I was putting more weight on it due to the right hamstring. Actually I think it had more to do with a calf cramp at the end of Christchurch Marathon in 2016. But what would I know?

Go to physio on the Wednesday before Six Foot in March and the physio straps up my hamstring at the knee to help it pull correctly. It worked well during the race but the Achilles was another matter.

...In hindsight I should have dropped back to wave 4 which had a sweeper who would have abused/pushed me to run/hobble faster...

Race day and I have done no long runs, think 25ks at the most, and I can't get faster than 5:30/k pace and no hills as that pulls the hamstring. Good to go for 45ks. Start wave 3 as the 3:38 at Sydney gave me that one. In hindsight I should have dropped back to 4 which had a sweeper who would have abused/pushed me to run/hobble faster.

The basic of the race was the hamstring was ok, Achilles hurt like hell. Think, walking backwards up the deviation hills due to the pain. Where was Dale Thompson with her bike (2007)?

I hobbled to the finish line in 7:02:24. Officially listed as Finished after cut off. Hence the ABC 702 time. As I crossed I bent down in pain and almost had a medal put around my neck. I was willing to hobble to the bus with my stolen medal before it was ripped away.

Back this year to get a buckle maybe.

In spite of my soft PB at Six Foot I do love a good run in the bush if you take out the rocks and stairs.

Paul completed this year's Six Foot Track Marathon in 6:49:02.

The buckle is now his.

THE FOUR BEST REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD SWITCH TO TRAIL RUNNING

Mark Green

Trail running has boomed in popularity in recent years. A handful of years ago it was a fairly obscure sport, with a small but dedicated, group of fans. Today it is one of the fastest growing sectors of the running world, with new events popping up all over the globe, and big brand companies like Salomon and Hoka One One sponsoring race teams to travel the world.

The distances of trail events vary from 5km right through to 250km multi-day stage races and the terrain varies from gently undulating forestry tracks, through to steep, technical alpine single track, with as much as 16,000m of climbing in a single event – that's the equivalent of climbing Mt Everest twice!

If you've been thinking about getting out for a trail run, or have friends try to convince you to join them, you should definitely give it a go. It can be a whole different experience to running on the road.

Mark Green owns The Body Mechanic physiotherapy clinic, which specialises in the treatment and rehabilitation of runners and running-related injuries.

<https://thebodymechanic.com.au/>



HOW DO YOU KNOW IF TRAIL RUNNING IS FOR YOU?

Trail running, in theory, is for everyone. If you believe evolutionary scientists' opinion that humans have evolved to be long distance running machines, then trail running makes a lot of sense. Back in our caveman days we used to chase animals for days across the African savannahs. According to these scientists, it is our ability to run long distances, which kept our species alive.

Here are four questions to ask yourself if you are wondering whether you should take the plunge and start trail running.

1. ARE YOU LACKING MOTIVATION OR LOSING ENTHUSIASM WITH YOUR CURRENT TRAINING AND RACING REGIME?

The old saying that "A change is as good as a holiday" couldn't be more true when it comes to getting on the trails. You will experience different places, different scenery, and possibly different running companions. It might be the perfect way to renew your running motivation in 2018



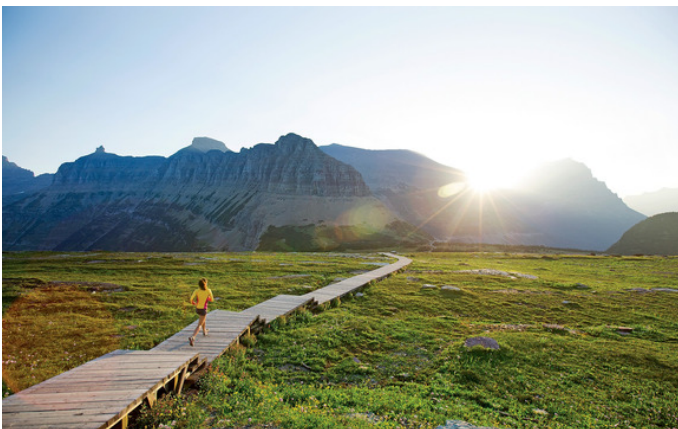
2. HAVE YOU BEEN STRUGGLING WITH INJURIES OR NIGGLES LATELY?

Trail running is a lot more forgiving on the body for most people. Most running injuries are caused by repetition (i.e. the same stride pattern repeated thousands of times). Running on trails breaks up your stride pattern – there will be long strides, short strides, wide strides and high strides, depending on the nature of the terrain. This means you are loading your muscles and joints slightly differently each time you land – therefore less chance of an overuse (repetition) injury.



3. WOULD YOU LIKE AN EXCUSE TO TRAVEL TO SOME BEAUTIFUL PARTS OF THE GLOBE?

Trail runs tend to be in National Parks or other areas of scenic beauty. They are often in fairly secluded locations that very few people ever get to see. If you want to combine travelling, running and visiting some spectacular natural environments, what better way to do it?



4. WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET A FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY OF LIKE-MINDED RUNNERS?

Trail running events tend to have a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere compared to road runs. It is as much about being surrounded by nature and competing against the elements, as it is racing each other. If you roll an ankle, or run out of water out on the trails, your fellow competitors will stop and help you, rather than jump over you in the race to the finish line.

ARE YOU MANAGING A RUNNING ADDICTION?



WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR YOUR FIRST TRAIL RUN?

DON'T JUMP STRAIGHT IN AT THE DEEP END

This should be pretty obvious, but if you haven't run on trails before, don't start with a long or technical route. Ease yourself into it gently, ideally with people familiar with the trails, so that you enjoy and appreciate those first few runs.

Even if you have run several road marathons, you will be surprised how tiring you will initially find running even 10km on a technical trail. There is a lot more concentration required watching where you are putting your feet. Road runners find this exhausting in the initial stages. Like everything in life, practice makes perfect – so it is something you adapt to and improve at with time.



**No
Jumping**



DO YOU NEED DIFFERENT SHOES?

When you first get started on the trails you can wear your existing road shoes. Trail shoes have significantly more tread and better grip than road shoes, but otherwise they are essentially the same. Once you get the "bug" and run more and more trails, you can decide whether to invest in a pair of trail shoes.

DO YOU NEED TO TRAIN DIFFERENTLY?

Initially your training can remain the same (assuming you don't start with a hard, hilly and technical trail). If you can comfortably run 15km on the road, then you could jump straight into a 10km trail run and have the fitness to enjoy it.

You are likely to encounter a lot more hills on the trails than you will be used to on the road. If trail running is something you are going to stick with, then training on hilly routes, and incorporating some hill repeats into your weekly program, would be beneficial.

DO YOU RUN WITH DIFFERENT TECHNIQUE ON TRAILS?

The same basic principles of good running technique apply just as much on trails as they do on the road.

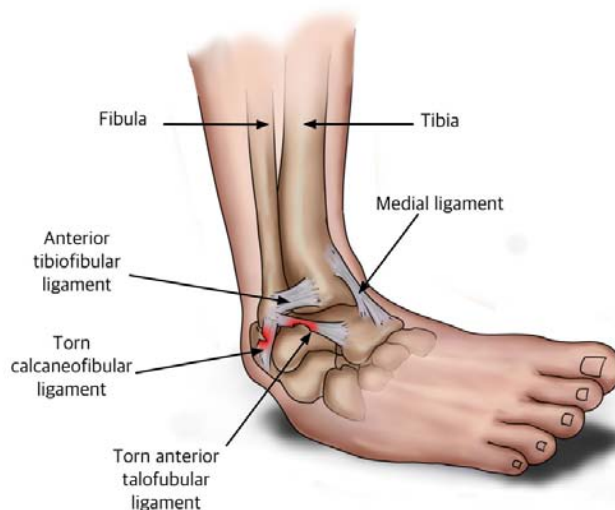
- Upright posture
- Short strides
- High cadence

Although more forgiving on overuse injuries, the hilly terrain and irregular stride pattern means you put your muscles and joints through a bigger range of motion. Having efficient gluteal muscles, and sufficient flexibility and mobility in your hips is very useful to be able to maintain good trail running technique.

HAVE YOU HAD A HISTORY OF ANKLE INJURIES?

One of the most common injuries in trail running is a sprained ankle. If you have had a history of ankle sprains, you should look into strapping techniques or ankle braces for your first few runs. As you get used to running trails and start developing more strength in the lower leg and ankles, you might find you can gradually wean yourself off the strapping or bracing.

Ankle Sprain



Convinced to give trails a try? The Body Mechanic offers a four week trail clinic. Please visit: http://www.tbmlockerroom.com/how_to_train_for_trails/

Interested in improving your running technique? The Body Mechanic is offering all Blister readers \$50 off Running Gait Assessment until 31 May 2018. Mention "Blister" at the time of booking.

Please visit: <http://thebodymechanic.com.au/running-gait-assessment/>

Mark Green (pictured) was the winner of Ultra-Trail 50km 2016

The Marathon – A Game of Inches

David Criniti

It had originally been the quest for a sub 2:20. It had been a bloody long quest too; 6 years and counting. I'd landed just on the wrong side of that number in 2011 at the Gold Coast, where I stopped the clock at 2:20:55. From that point on, it wouldn't be too much of a stretch to say I'd become obsessed with the sub 2:20 goal.

SYDNEYSTRIDERS BLISTER

While it seemed tantalisingly close, at just over a second a km faster than my PB, injuries and the vagaries of life ensured that it wouldn't be an easily-won 56 seconds.

2012 saw me deliberating about whether to attack it as I again made my way north to the Gold Coast. Deciding I hadn't done enough long runs in my limited preparation, I entered the half the day before and ran a surprising 67:13, which was fantastic, but only left my wondering "what if?" Would a tilt at the marathon have yielded that mystical sub 2:20? Of course "what ifs" count for nothing, and I just had to set about having another tilt. Another round of injuries meant that this didn't occur until December 2014 at Fukuoka. I was fit, but something told me that I just didn't quite have it. Hitting half-way in 70:06 confirmed this was in fact the case, and I faded to a 2:22:01 – my third fastest, and still a pleasing result, but one which left the obsession still well and truly alive.

You guessed it, another round of injuries ensued. This time, a posterior impingement which represented the most serious injury I'd ever had. May 2016 saw me under the knife and off running entirely for 6 weeks, but with Dr Andrew Wines confident of a full recovery.

The remainder of that year was spent returning to fitness, during which time I decided that Berlin 2017 would be my next serious attempt at the magical mark. Although the year started slow, with a 2:33 at Hobart, I was making steady progress. April saw me under 2:30 for the first time in over 2 years, with a 2:27 at Canberra, but it was still over 2km shy of where I needed to be to finish with a 2:1x.

200km weeks mounted and results continued to improve. June saw a 31:19 in Launceston, which marked a significant step forward, being almost 2 minutes quicker than the 33:11s I'd be required to reproduce 4.2195 times to achieve the goal.



Another step forward came at the Gold Coast where I ran 31:09 in the 10km on the Saturday, followed by the half on the Sunday. I deemed it too risky to race the marathon so close to Berlin, but decided that this strategy would give me an idea of my ability to do the second half on tired legs. I figured that going sub 70, after racing the 10 the previous day, would instill a confidence about running the same in the second half of Berlin a couple months later. To run well under the sub 70 goal and produce a 67:49 was a fantastic confidence boost!

Another few 200km weeks under the belt and a further confidence boost arrived after what I now regard as a key training session in my marathon prep – a hard 32k, aiming for as close to race pace as possible. I did this up at North Head, starting at the Stone Arch, and following North Head Scenic Drive around the same loop as the 10k course does. Each lap is a little over 4.5k, with 7 yielding just over 32.

On August 26, Simon Wolnizer was recruited to conduct pacing duties on the bike, and he did so with aplomb, leading me around to a 1:47:26, which was a 3:19 pace average. Figuring this was hillier, hotter and windier than the conditions I would likely face in Berlin, I started to allow myself some genuine belief! But believing is one thing. Putting it into practice is another.

SYDNEYSTRIDERS BLISTER

Let's cut to race day. Staying at an Airbnb about 3km from the start, I'd ordered a taxi to get me there about 100 minutes before the gun. What I didn't count on was to wake up to persistent rain. It was a fine line. Sit around in the rain for ages and risk getting cold and cramping up, or get there late and risk a panicked rush. I got in the taxi at the prescribed time and recalled that I did in fact have another option. Mid ride, I directed the driver to the official race hotel. Having somehow secured an 'elite' start, I was entitled to meet there and get bussed to the start line with all of the Big Guns, which meant I could stay dry in the foyer until that time.

It was a bit of a buzz seeing some of the Africans milling about. I got chatting to one guy who had been recruited to pace one of the leading female runners. I memorised his kit and made a mental note that I might jump on that bus, although I had ideally decided by this point that I was targeting 2:18:30, and he was setting off around 2:20 pace.

Before long we were being corralled onto the buses and dropped at the Tiergarten, where the race was to commence 40 minutes hence. The rain had not subsided, which threw up some questions about the impact this would have on times. Alas, I'd come here to do my best, and I focused on my final preparations.

Luckily the elite compound consisted of a suitably large marquee in which we could conduct our pre-race routines in relative comfort before doing a few strides along some of the Tiergarten's many meandering paths. Before long, we'd completed this process and were being ushered through the barricades and between the makeshift grandstands, into the starting area, where we were in the fortunate position of being able to join the masses from the front.

At this time I met a couple of the Aussies running who were aiming for similar times to me, including Brady Threfall, Mitchel Brown and Julian Spence, along with Brad Croker, who'd acquired a recent injury and was only running the first half. We exchanged a few nervous words and waited as the final announcements were made.

And we commenced.

The rain had not abated, so we made our way down the wide opening straight, splashing each other as we jostled for position and tried to find our pace. And that's what it's all about – finding the right pace. 16:25 was my pace. My 5k split pace, that is - the pace required to run 2:18:30, which the training and racing over the previous months had lead me to believe I was capable of.

But was I?

I wondered about this as I crossed the 5k timing mat at the Kleiner Tiergarten, where I found myself 11 seconds down on this pace, passing the mark in 16:36, when a 16:25 was required for my goal. Was the weather playing a bigger part than I'd bargained on? Were my ambitions too lofty? Had I just started too conservatively?

Hearing the lead vehicles surrounding the top women only moments behind, I wondered whether my best strategy might be to tack onto their group. They'd have a gaggle of pace-makers to break the wind, but would they take me to a sub 2:20 finish, let alone a 2:18:30?

I decided to trust in my training and my pre-race prediction, and up the ante.

I moved away from the group I was with and leapfrogged one or two more as I made my way towards 10km. I'd launched off the front of one group at about 8km with a fellow runner who was doing a lot of the work. As we got into the final couple hundred metres before the 10k timing mat, however, he took the pace to another level and I had to let him go. It was with some surprise that I saw him stop his watch and step to the side, just after completing the opening 10k on Linienstraße. It was a mid-race reminder of the importance of running one's own race!

I continued to run mine, enjoying the crowd support as I had a few sections with the road to myself on the occasions when I found myself in "no-man's land". I'd passed 10km in 32:57, after a second 5km segment of 16:21, which was considerably faster than the first. From here, I pressed on to reach 15km in 49:16, with a 16:20 split. I was getting faster, and at this stage was only 2 seconds behind 2:18:30 pace.

Hearing the lead vehicles surrounding the top women only moments behind, I wondered whether my best strategy might be to tack onto their group..... I decided to trust in my training and my pre-race prediction, and up the ante.



It turned out that the rain wasn't bothering me as much as I'd worried it might have been at the 5k mark. What did worry me though, a couple km later, was the sound of footsteps approaching from behind...a few sets of footsteps, in fact! Was I slowing down? My Garmin didn't seem to be indicating that this was the case!

It turned out to be a group of runners being dragged along by Swiss Olympic Athlete (76th, Marathon, Rio 2016 - 2:21:13) Christian Kreienbühl.

Kreienbühl would turn out to be a bit of a godsend for me, doing a lot of the work between 17k, where he caught me, and 30k, where he powered ahead. Initially, as mentioned, there was a group, and we sailed through 20km before reaching halfway in 69:10. This had me on track for 2:18:20, and I told myself that I was feeling much better than I had when I'd gone through the 20k mark in my recent training session at North Head. I even entertained thoughts of a negative split at this point, but I didn't want to get carried away.

The race, as they say, doesn't begin until 30km. Well the crowds and the bands, neither of whom were perturbed by the rain, helped those kms go by relatively quickly...although the latter ones seemed to be going a little slower. We passed 25km in 1:21:56, a 16:20 over the 20-25km segment, and then 30km in 1:38:08, a 16:13 5k split – my fastest of the race, despite being the 'hilliest', incorporating a 15m elevation gain!

Christian, however, was predominantly in charge of this pace, and as we caught a group of fading runners at the 30km timing mat, I suspected I might have to let him go ahead.

We'd hit a drink station just metres before this point and he'd navigated himself around this group while I was still negotiating my drink. It didn't take long for a 15 metres gap to open. It was bridgeable, but at what cost?

I knew I was about 20 seconds up on 2:18:30 pace, but questions started flashing through my mind – "Will the piano fall today?" "How much can I lose per km and still scrape under 2:20?"

In the end, letting him go was probably a good decision. I still covered the 30-35k section in 16:15 – my second fastest 5k segment of the race – but Christian covered it 14 seconds faster. If I'd stuck with him for that 5k, it most likely would have been my undoing!

As it happened, even my more sedate pace was taking its toll, and time started to slow after 35. Chicago's Brandon Mull came through the 35k timing mat 2 seconds behind me, and promptly stormed past, reaching 40km a whopping 25 seconds ahead of me.

This was a nervous 5k segment for me, with more and more doubts starting to creep in as my legs felt the strain of trying to maintain a pace well in excess of anything I'd done previously over this distance.

The crowds and the bands helped enormously, though my acknowledgement of them, which was quite animated in the earlier stages, but by now bordered on displays of indifference (or was it just agony??), surely didn't indicate how appreciative I was!

SYDNEYSTRIDERS BLISTER

I'd been to this race many years previously, spectating, and I was familiar with the last few km of the course. More so perhaps, as a result of watching and re-watching Kenenisa Bekele outkick Wilson Kipsang in the dying stages of the 2016 race, to take an incredible victory in 2:03:03. At any rate, I weathered the small rise at 38k, knowing it was pretty much pancake flat from there. In reality, the entirety of the course is pretty much pancake flat, but at 38k a molehill really does seem like a mountain!

Not long after 38k, the course hits Potsdamer Platz and heads away from the finish along Leipziger Str, before turning at 40k and making its way back.

40k was reached in 2:10:56, after a 16:34 split, my slowest of the race with the exception of my opening 16:36. It was here that a switch was flicked. I knew I was 23 sec up on 2:18:30 pace and I had a taste for home. Perhaps this indicates that I wasn't as tenacious as I could have been between 35-40, during which time my pace slipped to 3:19. At any rate, I'm thankful it didn't precede a finishing fade. On the contrary, I upped the pace as we hit the Unter Den Linden and the crowds grew and the noise rose metre by metre!

A commentator excitedly called me through the kilometre to go mark and I relished the atmosphere, knowing the agony would soon subside.

The finishing straight is heralded by the iconic Brandenburg Gate and as this came into view and got closer and closer, a sense of elation continued to build. The sub 2:20 had been a monkey on my back since 2011, and I'd shed that monkey with time to spare. Passing through the Brandenburg Gate, with about 350m to run, it dawned on me that a sub 2:18 was possible. Grandstands lined both sides of the street for the long straight to the finish, and there was an undeniable electricity in the air as I stormed down the straight and across the line, stopping the clock at 2:17:57.

I won't rabbit on too much more about the emotions post-finish - at times like this I'm reminded of the Radiohead lyric "Don't get sentimental, it always ends up drivin'" - other than to say it was an incredibly satisfying day, and an enormous relief to tick that one off. It was great to share the day with the Horsburghs too. Tim, Cat, Bruce and Sue all let me gatecrash their family reunion, which was much appreciated, even if they did cart me around for a tour of the Berlin Dome past 10:00pm on race day, when I was essentially the living dead.

It was also wonderful to see how many others among the Striders and the broader running community followed the journey. I was amazed by, and greatly appreciated, the messages, comments on social media, and other expressions of support from far and wide.

At any rate, you're only as good as your last race, so I'd better get back to my Tokyo prep, with that less than 3 weeks away at the time of writing.

Split	Time	Diff	min/km	km/h	Predicted Finish	Performance relative to 2:18:30 splits
5	0:16:36	16:36	3:20	18.08	2:20:05	0:00:11
10	0:32:57	16:21	3:17	18.36	2:19:02	0:00:08
15	0:49:16	16:20	3:16	18.38	2:18:35	0:00:02
20	1:05:36	16:21	3:17	18.36	2:18:24	0:00:03
21.0975	1:09:10	3:35	3:16	18.45	2:18:20	0:00:05
25	1:21:56	12:46	3:17	18.34	2:18:17	0:00:08
30	1:38:08	16:13	3:15	18.51	2:18:01	0:00:20
35	1:54:23	16:15	3:15	18.47	2:17:54	0:00:30
40	2:10:56	16:34	3:19	18.12	2:18:07	0:00:22
42.195	2:17:57	7:01	3:12	18.77	2:17:57	0:00:33
1st half	69:10					
2nd half	68:47					

Sydney Striders Superseries 2018

With a new year comes new and exciting adventures. We've looked at our listings from previous years and have gone with a whole new target for 2018. This year we've decided to tackle the big running festivals and have included each event into the list. This is to allow runners of all abilities, distances and groups to gain some points while attending the festival with friends or family.

Because of this, we've extended the traditional list of 28 + 2 wild cheetahs out to 30 + 2 wild cheetahs. We'll see how this goes for 2018 and will keep you posted if we plan to continue this strategy in 2019. Lastly, we've updated the rules and descriptions of the Super Series competition so that new Sydney Strider members are able to work out the awesome internal club competition they can now take part in. As always any questions please contact us on superseries@sydneystrider.org.au

Below you'll find all those new fun details including the 2018 listing of events.

Happy running you legends!

Chris "Jacko" Jackson & Simon "Hollywood" Wolnizer



Chris Truscott won The Equaliser on 25 February 2018.
Image courtesy of Maria Yiasemides, The Equaliser February 2018

Super Series Rules Overview

The Super Series competition is to reward runners who consistently perform in a variety of races throughout the year. A total of 30 races are selected each season to provide a diverse range of events, from 10k to ultra-distance over different terrains. Having a large number of events affords runners more options to maximise their super series points throughout the year. These races have been selected based on your feedback and will continue to reflect that feedback year to year.

In addition to the 30 named events, participants may also run both a half and full marathon of their choice that is not listed. These races may be submitted to **results@sydneystriders.org.au** as "Wild Cheetahs" and will count towards a runner's total point score. Only the fastest half and full marathon from each runner will count toward their score and must be either 21.1km or 42.2km. For example, 50km race cannot be modified for your marathon wild cheetah entry.

While points will be displayed for every event, only a runner's 8 highest scoring events will count towards their total score. The points allocated to each race depend on distance, difficulty, club participation and of course performance. Additionally a participant must volunteer at least once during that year.

Scoring

Events with up to 19 Striders participating in a category, will be allocated points as follows: 1st place: 25 points / 2nd place 21 pts / 3rd place 18 pts / 4th place 16 pts / 5th place 15 pts / 14 pts etc... / 19th place: 1 pt. Events with 24+ Striders participating in a category are allocated points on an incrementally increasing scale based on the total number of Striders in that category. For example, assuming 30 Striders in category: 1st place: 36 points / 2nd place: 32 pts / 3rd place: 29 pts / 4th place: 27 pts / 5th place: 26 pts / 25 pts: etc.... / 30th place: 1 pt.

A difficulty bonus will be assigned to each race to acknowledge the greater preparation, effort and recovery involved in longer and more difficult events:

Where events offer a team listing option, 2 bonus points will be awarded to members who enter under the Striders team option to encourage visibility of our club at these events, the results listing and competitiveness in team awards on offer. The team entry passwords are published on the Sydney Striders Members Facebook page.

Volunteer requirement

To be eligible for any awards at the end of the season, you must have officially volunteered (and have it recorded) for the club during that year.

Results confirmation

Results for the 28 listed events are collated by volunteers. This is done on a name matching basis and will only appear if you have entered the event with the same name as per your striders membership. Any event outside the listed super series events must be submitted to **results@sydneystriders.org.au** if you wish for them to be reflected in either the "Wild Cheetah" or club ladders. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to check and confirm results have been captured and recorded correctly. All decisions in relation to the Super Series are at the total discretion of the Super Series Director.



第70回 福岡国際マラソン選手権大会

THE 70th FUKUOKA INTERNATIONAL OPEN MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIP 兼第16回世界陸上競技選手権大会(2017/ロンドン)代表選手選考競技会

■主管
福岡陸上競技協会
■支援
福岡県警察
陸上自衛隊福岡駐屯地
■協賛
マイナビ
■協力
シチズン時計

■主催
日本陸上競技連盟
朝日新聞社
テレビ朝日
九州朝日放送
■後援
国際陸上競技連盟
福岡県
福岡県教育委員会
福岡市
福岡市教育委員会
日刊スポーツ新聞社

MARATHON #32: FUKOKA

Neil Pearson



#32 - Fukoka -- 4/12/16 -- 2:28:36 - 68th - 4th AG

And so to Fukuoka. I arrived on Thursday morning, flying overnight from Sydney. I'd made sure my hotel was close to the running stadium where the start/finish line is, so after I dropped off my bags, I went for a walk up there to get my bearings.

SYDNEYSTRIDERS BLISTER

There would be two starts - group A (that I'd just got into by 8 seconds) starting in the stadium and group B who'd do half a lap of a nearby lake before joining the race. Now I knew where to go and had also found a great place for my final lead-up runs.

Friday and Saturday were mostly spent wandering around the city, checking out the sights and trying to find places where I could carb load for the race. As it turned out, this was quite a difficult task as most of menus were either in Japanese, or only had pictures showing what the meal was. I wasn't going to risk either of those options. One place I ventured into did have an English menu so I took a look inside there. I could choose from Whale Bacon, BBQ horse, chicken tendons or vegetables topped with "delicious" offal. Pot noodle it would have to be then.

The race would start at 12:10 on Sunday, so a very late start compared to the typical Australian early morning starts. I had to be there at 9:30 to drop off my special drinks and then I headed to the pre-fab dressing rooms where all the runners would change. At 10:30, we all trooped out to register and then trooped back in again. Another hour went by waiting and the rain that had threatened started to come down heavily. I stayed inside hoping it would pass.

Ten minutes before the start, the rain had eased a lot, and I ventured out to the track and did a little light jogging. Then, on cue, we took our places at the start and we were off. We'd do four laps of the track and then out onto the streets.

This was my first sign of how quickly everyone goes off at the start, as I left the track last, about 15 seconds down on the person in front. And my pace was bang on. As we joined with group B, it was clear they had gone off at a similar clip. I saw quite a few high 400 numbered runners, who would have qualified with a 2:35 marathon, but had now decided they could run a 2:25 on race day.

Of course, I ignored them as much as I could and settled in. A big group caught me about 6km and I jumped in with them. We went though 10k in 34:50 but after that, I picked up my pace, aiming for 17:15 for each 5k. I slowly started reeling in the people in front, big packs of runners in some cases, and held strong until about 30k.

At that point, I was maybe slightly ahead of my PB but my legs were starting to tire. Then, at 32k, we turned for home and it became obvious the slight headwind would put the PB out of reach.



One of the dressing rooms where runners can get change

I struggled on, telling myself to keep my cadence up and try to keep form, but a glance down to notice a 3:40 split told me the slowdown was on. The crowds along the way had been brilliant, especially little children who seemed to make the most of their opportunity to scream encouragement at the top of their voices when finally they were told they could do so.

If anything the noise got a bit louder as we approached the stadium again for one more lap of honour. The clock told me I was just behind my PB and less than 20 minutes behind the winner, but I still had that lap to go.

It certainly isn't the quickest lap I've ever done but I got round and finished in 2:28:36. Overall, I'm quite pleased with that - not a PB but given the training I managed this year, a great result.

70回	68	52	ニール・ピアソン PEARSON, Neil	オーストラリア AUS	17:18	34:49	52:02	1:09:14	1:13:06	1:26:29	1:43:59	2:02:00	2:20:26	2:28:36
70回	69	340	小野 智之 ONO, Tomoyuki	まどかR C 福岡	17:27	34:50	52:14	1:09:38	1:13:29	1:27:02	1:44:44	2:02:37	2:20:41	2:28:37
70回	70	232	薮谷 忠大 YABUTANI, Tadahiro	蒼穹クラブ 京都	17:10	34:33	52:02	1:09:38	1:13:29	1:27:02	1:44:44	2:02:36	2:20:39	2:28:39
70回	71	243	高浜 邦晃 TAKAHAMA, Kunaki	直鞍クラブ 福岡	17:26	34:49	52:03	1:09:37	1:13:28	1:27:02	1:44:45	2:02:37	2:20:38	2:28:45
70回	72	133	森川 友道 MORIKAWA, Tomomichi	豊中市役所R C 大阪	17:13	34:34	52:03	1:09:38	1:13:30	1:27:03	1:44:44	2:02:28	2:20:45	2:28:47
70回	73	236	松尾 維大 MATSUO, Yukihiro	大阪陸協 大阪	17:30	35:10	53:00	1:11:01	1:14:56	1:28:27	1:45:53	2:03:03	2:20:48	2:28:48
70回	74	234	永井 誠 NAGAI, Makoto	埼玉陸協 埼玉	17:27	34:50	52:14	1:09:44	1:13:35	1:27:13	1:44:56	2:02:55	2:21:07	2:28:54
70回	75	136	東本 裕斗 HIGASHIMOTO, Yuto	J A三重中央 三重	16:53	33:52	51:05	1:08:28	1:12:16	1:25:42	1:43:41	2:01:24	2:19:54	2:28:55
70回	76	134	野本 哲晃 TEAM野人		16:42	33:51	51:05	1:08:27	1:12:17	1:25:55	1:43:44	2:02:08	2:20:47	2:28:57



(Top) Neil's race splits - see top row, and (below) his race day gear flat lay

That night, I went along to the reception for the athletes and tried some of the Japanese food, although to be honest I didn't really get much more daring the sashimi on offer. We watched a re-run of the race then and I saw how well Yuki Kawauchi had done.

Struggling with injury, he showed what he is all about by finishing 3rd in 2:09 on quite a tough day. That night, he also showed it by speaking to the almost endless queue of admirers. It's no wonder people in Japan, and around the world, revere him.

Today I caught the Shinkashen (bullet train) down to Hiroshima. Over 300 kms travelled in about an hour. You notice the acceleration a little as the train pulls out, but once moving, the speed isn't as obvious as you'd think it would be. And of course, each departure and each arrival happened to the second.

In Hiroshima, I went to the peace park, which is now where the atomic bomb detonated on the 6th August 1945. It was very sobering walking round there and the museum, reading the stories of what took place that day, and the aftermath that would affect the people for decades.

And so now my marathons are up to date. It has been good to write about them and it's brought back many memories. I can definitely say there will be no more this year but I might have already signed up for a couple for next year.

If you've been following, you can probably work out which two!

Excerpts from <https://www.facebook.com/neilpearsonruns/>

Rekindling my love of running

Matt Dawson

In late 2015, after seven years in the running wilderness, I set my sights on qualifying for the New York Marathon. In 2008 a chronic groin injury led to an extended period on the sideline and years of bitter frustration.

Prior to that I was a decent junior middle-distance runner (800m – 1:58, 1500m – 3:59) in Perth. I was never going to be ‘great’ (but probably didn’t realise that at the time). Nonetheless, I really loved competitive running and ‘being a runner’ had become a core part of my identity and something that brought me much satisfaction.

Following an unsuccessful surgery, I was forced to give up running at the age of 23. I tried everything (and I mean everything) to get back into training and competition but nothing worked. The pain continued and got worse.

While I got on with the rest of my life, I never really accepted what my body was telling me. I persisted, seeing every medical specialist under the sun. They didn’t really have an explanation or solution for me.

Eventually things started improving in late 2013 and I was able to do a bit of jogging, but it was still very much one step forward, two steps back. I did the City to Surf in 2014 (56 minutes) and eventually decided to set myself a stretch goal of running a marathon. I didn’t really think my body would hold up to the training.

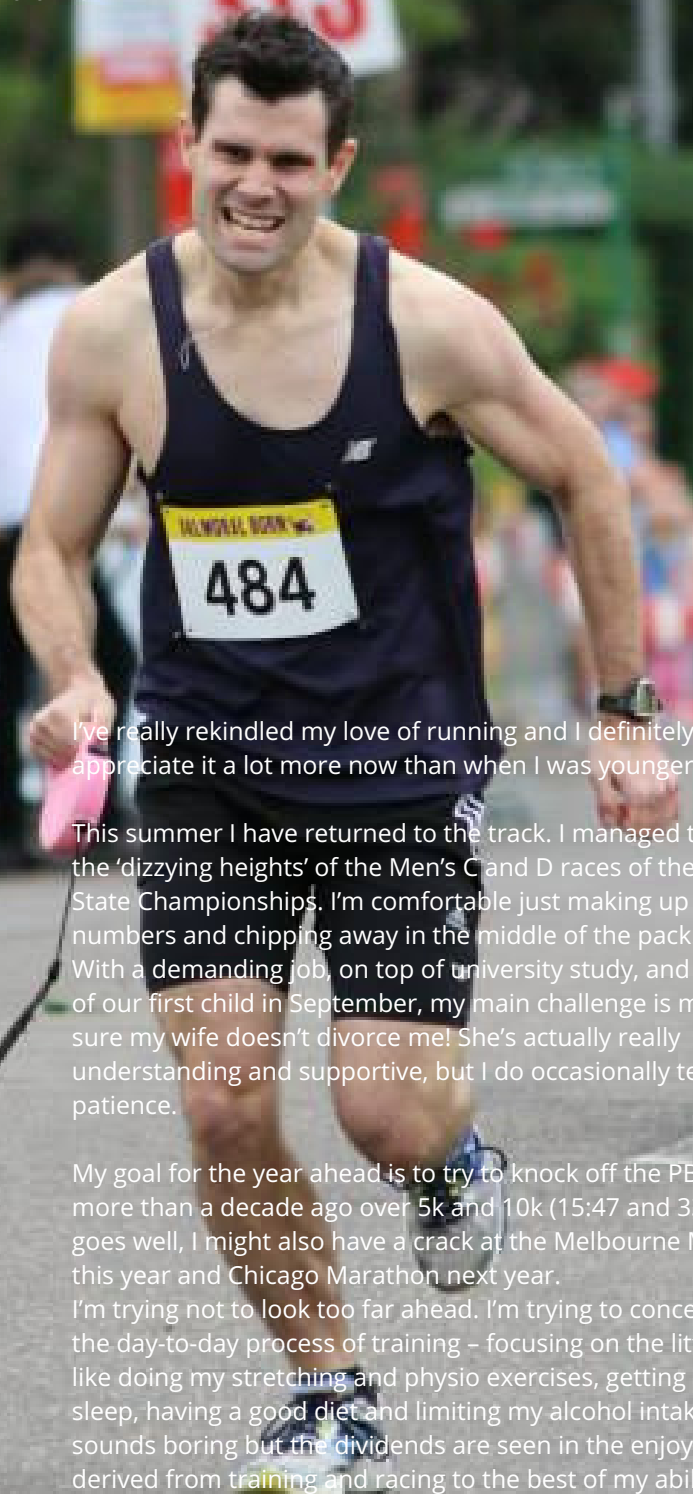
In late 2015, I went for a jog with a work acquaintance who suggested I join the SWEAT training squad. I was initially reticent because they train at Centennial Park and I live on the lower north shore. Eventually I decided to give it a go, and on the day of the 2015 Melbourne Cup, I turned up to my first training session.

Less than a month later I found myself on the start line of the Central Coast Half Marathon, where I needed to run sub 81 minutes to qualify for the 2016 New York Marathon. Having never run a half marathon, or anything near that distance, I was extremely nervous. After feeling like gold for the first 14 kilometres, I hit the wall badly and dropped off my goal pace over next six kilometres. I slowly resigned myself to the fact that I wasn’t going to get the qualifying time for New York. At 20 kilometres I looked at my watch and realised that if I could run the last 1.1 kilometres in less than four minutes, I might still have a chance. I dug really deep and managed to stop the clock at 80:45. I was over the moon.

While I got on with the rest of my life, I never really accepted what my body was telling me. I persisted, seeing every medical specialist under the sun. They didn’t really have an explanation or solution for me.

Fast forward a year, despite an injury-plagued preparation, I ran New York. I was very underdone and thought I was going to die out on the course, but stumbled to the finish line in 3:12. I knew I could do a lot better. My first marathon definitely served to motivate me to work harder and smarter.

During 2017 I became much more consistent in training and had fewer injuries to set me back. I ran PBs in the half (78:13) and City to Surf (50:43), and even came 2nd in the open race (everyone minus the elites) in the Balmoral Burn (1:33 – 420m).



I've really rekindled my love of running and I definitely appreciate it a lot more now than when I was younger.

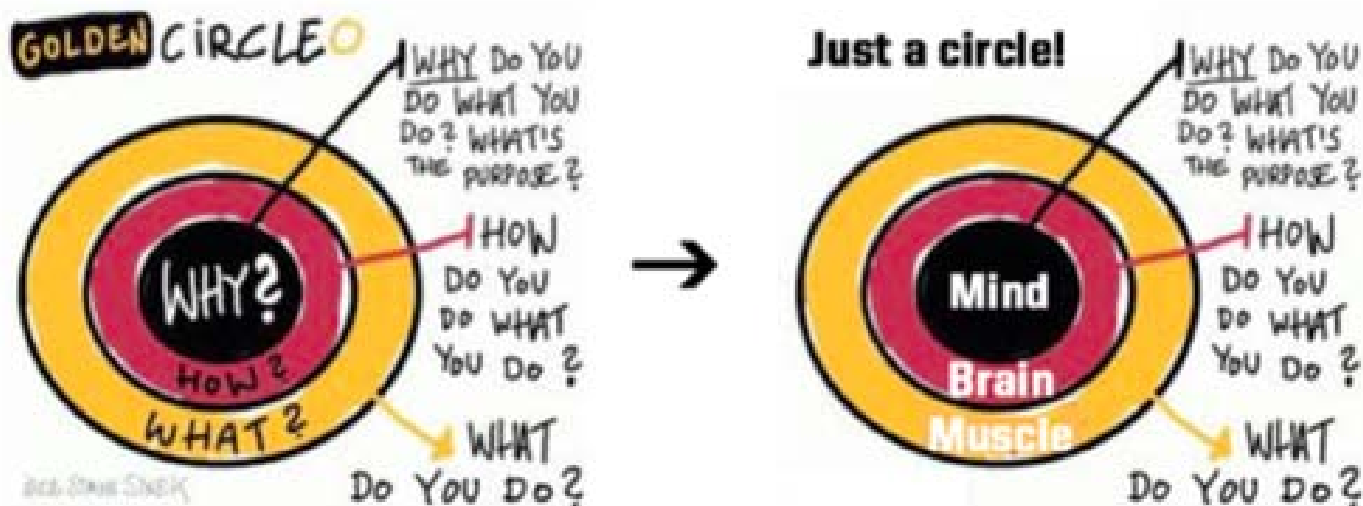
This summer I have returned to the track. I managed to reach the 'dizzying heights' of the Men's C and D races of the 3 and 5k State Championships. I'm comfortable just making up the numbers and chipping away in the middle of the pack. With a demanding job, on top of university study, and the arrival of our first child in September, my main challenge is making sure my wife doesn't divorce me! She's actually really understanding and supportive, but I do occasionally test her patience.

My goal for the year ahead is to try to knock off the PBs that I set more than a decade ago over 5k and 10k (15:47 and 33:46). If all goes well, I might also have a crack at the Melbourne Marathon this year and Chicago Marathon next year.

I'm trying not to look too far ahead. I'm trying to concentrate on the day-to-day process of training – focusing on the little things, like doing my stretching and physio exercises, getting enough sleep, having a good diet and limiting my alcohol intake. It sounds boring but the dividends are seen in the enjoyment derived from training and racing to the best of my ability.

Mindmap your race

Luca Turrini



"How did you train your mind to tackle 24 hours on a treadmill?"

This is the question I get asked most often about my 24 hour treadmill stint. And it's the right question to ask - that run was 99% mental and 1% physical.

I feel I was lucky to recognise this disproportion about the run and be very intentional with my mental preparation, to which I dedicated more time than my physical training. If for no other reasons, while running all the time is physically and practically impossible, the opposite is true for thinking about running!

What worked well for me was becoming 100% crystal clear on my WHY, WHAT and HOW. And be comfortable with it, removing choices and options to bail out.

I am a strong believer and advocate of Simon Sinek's "Start with Why" movement. If you don't know him I encourage you to read his books or simply watch his TED Talk.

Essentially he describes a pattern adopted by successful leaders and companies, which he calls the golden circle. These successful people and companies, think, act and communicate from the inside of the circle to the outside, which is the complete opposite of everyone else. They start from the reason they get up in the morning or their company exists (the WHY), not from the process (the HOW) or their product (the WHAT). In other words they start from a purpose, not from the product.

I believe this applies to many other aspects of life, including endurance running. Particularly for something out there like running on the spot for 24 hours!

Everyone has different ways to find their clarity. Some people love their spreadsheets and data, others draw their path from start to finish with the obstacle half way to find the way around it.

I visualise things and love dot lists. And to marry the two things I create mind maps.

My mind map for the 24 hours challenge evolved over 4 months. I printed it and hung it up on my bathroom window so I could see it daily and add leaves or improve points continuously.

By the end, the map was so clear in my head I could go back to it on my daily decisions and, most importantly, during the race.

In the lowest moments, when I was hurtingting mentally and physically, I found comfort in knowing it was all part of a big plan. "It's all-right" I kept saying to myself "Here are the reasons WHY you are doing this.. and here is WHAT you are actually doing.. and here is the HOW"

Admittedly, this is the first time I have formalised my WHY/WHAT/HOW for a running race but I am hopeful I can find a structure and a set of "rules" which I can use for other challenges.



Like most runners I suffer of FOMO every weekend when I see posts about races. It would be great to use this mind map as an independent judge on the races I should take on and those I should miss.

Check out a great free tool **Xmind** - happy mind mapping everyone!

PLANT-BASED DIETS AND RUNNING

Nicole Dynan (APD/SD)

Nicole Dynan is the principal dietitian at The Good Nutrition Company and an Accredited Practising Dietitian & Accredited Sports Dietitian based in Leichhardt, Balmain and Neutral Bay in Sydney. www.goodnutritionco.com



THE GOOD NUTRITION co.



A number of world-class athletes, such as ultrarunner Scott Jurek and tennis star Venus Williams, have jumped on board the plant-based diet wagon and attribute their ongoing success to the dietary change.

When it comes to running, a purely plant-based diet can be balanced and effective if planned well, but it shouldn't be assumed that it is automatically healthier. Vegans and vegetarians need to work hard to ensure that 'nutrients at risk' like protein, zinc, iron, omega 3s, calcium and B12, are in their foods. Opting for fortified drinks and foods, such as soy drinks with added calcium, can help.

Energy

Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of fuel for high intensity exercise and this macro is found in abundance in plant-based foods such as starchy vegetables. These include potato, sweet-potato, pumpkin, peas and corn. Wholegrains such as quinoa, rice, oats and legumes, are also good sources of carbohydrates.

Slow release carbs, found in most fruits, vegetables and wholegrains, can help runners sustain good energy levels during their training and on race day, whereas fast release carbs, found in plant foods like potatoes, dried fruit and juices, can provide a boost of rapidly absorbed energy to top-up energy stores closer to or during an event.

Energy can also be enhanced on a plant-based diet as plants are loaded with minerals to help you power through your training sessions.

A recent poll revealed that 11.2% of Australians are favouring a plant-based diet and there is evidence that the numbers are growing. In fact, Australia is now the third fastest growing vegan market in the world, after the United Arab Emirates and China. Whilst the trend is firmly established with female Millennials, the general increase in interest in veganism could be for any number of reasons, including concerns for animal welfare, health improvements, weight management, cultural reasons, or the desire for a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Mediterranean Chickpeas on Toast

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small shallot, finely diced
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- ¼ tsp sweet or smoky paprika
- ¼ tsp cumin
- black pepper, to taste
- 200g of crushed tinned tomatoes or 1 large tomato (skinned & chopped)
- 1 cup of cooked chickpeas
- 2 slices of wholegrain sour dough bread, toasted
- fresh parsley and / or dill, to garnish (optional)
- a few pitted Kalamata olives, to garnish (optional)
- ore fruit like pomegranate seeds

METHOD

1. Heat up olive oil in a medium pan.
2. Add shallots and garlic until soft.
3. Add all the spices to the pan. Fry for 1-2 minutes whilst stirring.
4. Add tomatoes with a couple of tablespoons of water. Simmer on low-medium heat until the sauce has thickened.
5. Mix in cooked chickpeas and let them warm through in the sauce. Season with black pepper.
6. Serve on toasted bread with a sprinkle of fresh herbs and a few black olives.



Recipe and photo courtesy of Lazycat kitchen
<https://www.lazycatkitchen.com/greek-chickpeas-on-toast/>

Health & Immunity

Plant-based eaters typically have lower BMI's, a reduced risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and high cholesterol, and possibly even high blood pressure. There is even some evidence that vegans may have a lower risk of certain cancers.

Some of the factors that may be contributing to these health benefits include a higher intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and fibre and a lower intake of saturated fat and cholesterol.

Plant diets that are typically rich in fibre, vitamins and minerals can support cellular growth and repair, digestion and immunity.

Rigorous exercise can have a short-term detrimental impact on immune defences, so eating a diet high in vitamin-rich fruit and vegetables is a must for runners; and more fibre can help to fill you up.

Recovery

While animal-based foods are a great source of protein for recovery after exercise, plant-based foods can provide us with an equally suitable alternative.

Plant-based foods that are packed with protein include lentils, beans, tofu, tempeh, edamame, soy milk or yoghurt, seeds, nuts and wholegrains. While some plant-based foods contain complete proteins (soy, quinoa, amaranth and buckwheat), eating a wide variety of plant-based foods and wholegrains can help to ensure that you get the amino acid combinations you need from any plant protein. Plant-based protein supplements, such as brown rice or pea protein powder, can be used for convenience if needed.

Timing is everything

Eating small, frequent meals and snacks is key to getting the nutrients and energy you need on a plant-based diet. Muscles can only absorb a certain amount of protein at any one time, so spreading protein intake out across your meals and snacks each day can be a more effective way to build muscle and balance energy levels.

Regular meals and snacks containing protein help optimise amino acid levels in the blood and facilitate muscle development.

When it comes to eating after training, a snack or meal rich in carbohydrate and moderate-protein consumed within 30 minutes of training will help muscle growth by increasing the production of anabolic hormones and supplying amino acids for protein synthesis.

6 simple tips to help plan your plant-based diet:

1. Include at least 3 serves of legumes each day. These could include scrambled tofu, bean burrito bowls, hummus dips or wraps, vegetarian burgers and soy milk.
2. Eat good sources of Vitamin C with meals and snacks to boost iron absorption. These could include citrus fruit, tomatoes, capsicum, strawberries and green leafy vegetables. Example meals could look like lentil soup with spinach and tomatoes or porridge with strawberries.
3. Include sources of calcium in meals. Calcium-rich foods can be found in all vegan food groups such as fortified rice, almond or soy milks and yoghurts, tofu and tempeh, green leafy vegetables such as kale and bok choy, and other plant foods such as Lebanese cucumbers, broccoli, oranges and dried figs.
4. Include a daily serve of healthy fats such as 1 teaspoon of flaxseed oil or olive oil, 30g or ¼ cup of nuts and/or seeds or ¼ avocado.
5. Choose foods that enhance iron and zinc absorption. Phytates (antioxidants) in grains, legumes, nuts and seeds can slow the absorption of minerals in foods. Choosing wholegrain breads made with yeast or sourdough, toasted nuts and seeds and sprouted grains and legumes can help ensure good absorption of iron and zinc.
6. Take supplements where needed. Vitamin B12 is only found in animal products but can be obtained through some fortified plant based foods. Supplements are often prescribed by doctors to help vegans meet the needs of this vitamin as it is important for many functions in the body. Other nutrients that may require supplementation if dietary planning is inadequate include iodine, vitamin D, Omega-3, iron and zinc.

A final word ...

Going vegan or vegetarian may not work for everyone, but using some of the lessons learnt from populations who consume plant-based diets may help improve your energy and running performance.

Increasing your consumption of fruit to two serves per day (e.g. 1 apple or banana and 1 cup chopped fruit) and vegetables to five serves per day (e.g. 5 cups salad or 2.5 cups cooked vegetables) may help you reap some of the rewards from plant-based eating.

THE IMPACT OF STRENGTH DEFICITS ON PAIN AND PERFORMANCE

Owen Hynes

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KIESER
BE STRONG, STAY STRONG

Individualised strength training regimes are beneficial in improving running times and decreasing injury risk. Strengthening in a gym setting is a popular method of training as the equipment can accommodate high load exercises in a controlled environment. However, travelling for work seems to be more and more commonplace these days which can take us away from our exercise facilities. I am often asked by patients for a set of exercises that are running specific and that can be performed while away from the gym. Below is a list of six exercises that I typically recommend and that can be completed in under 30 minutes.



1. Heel Rise

A heel raise predominantly strengthens the top of the calf muscle known as the gastrocnemius. The gastrocnemius is a part of a group of muscles called the plantar flexors which are the main contributors to forward acceleration in the second half of the stance phase of running.

Midfoot and forefoot strikers tend to load the plantarflexes more so than heel strikers. As a result, reduced strength in this muscle group can lead to an increased risk of injury such as an Achilles strain in midfoot and forefoot runners. To perform a heel raise correctly, ensure that the feet are hip width apart and that the arches do not 'roll' in or out.

2. Bent knee heel raises

Often the forgotten exercise amongst the running population, a bent knee heel raise targets the lower calf muscle known as soleus. If you have ever been for a run on the sand and woken up the next morning with stiffness in the lower part of the calf, chances are your soleus has tightened up.

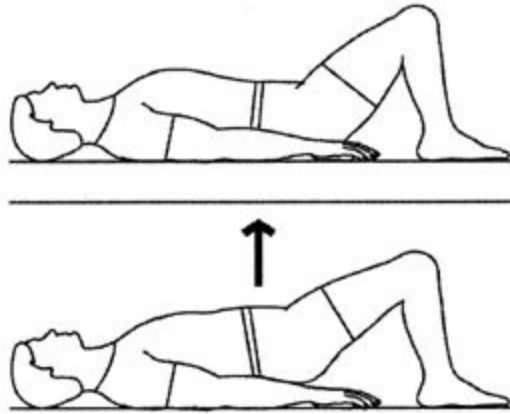
Weakness of the soleus has been linked with an increased chance of suffering from an Achilles injury. Considering that a reported 57% of elite runners have sustained an Achilles injury (Knobloch, 2008), there is scope to reduce the risk through appropriate strength training of this muscle.



3. Lunge

A lunge is a great functional exercise that targets the larger muscle groups of the lower limbs, the glutes, hamstrings and quads, while also working the smaller stabiliser muscles. Weakness of the quads can lead to a number of gait compensations which can lead to overuse injuries. One of the major functions of the quad muscles is to limit how much flexion the knee goes into upon foot strike and into mid-stance. If there is reduced quad strength, the knee flexes further than is ideal which can lead to a number of injuries including patella tendinopathy, patellofemoral pain (runner's knee) and plantar fasciitis. When lunging, keep the hips level and ensure that the front knee faces forward and does not rotate inwards. To progress, hold onto some weights in either hand (though make sure to keep the elbows slightly bent to reduce any strain on the neck).





4. Bridge

A bridge will focus mainly on the hamstring and the gluteus maximus muscles. The glute maximus is the largest muscle in the human body and plays a role in controlling trunk position as well as generating forward momentum. It is very common to see a distance runner with weak/ underactive glutes which can severely reduce their running times and increase their risk of developing an overuse injury.

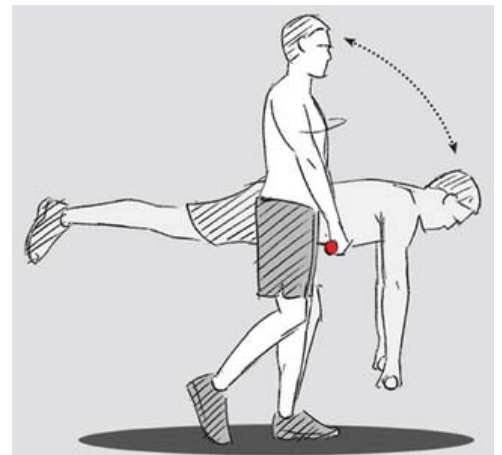
When performing the bridge, engage the glute maximus just prior to lifting the bottom off the floor so that it contracts prior to the hamstrings. There are a number of variations of the bridge such as:

- Double leg bridge on floor
- Single leg bridge
- Double/ Single leg on chair
- Double/ single on Swiss ball (for added core stability)

5. Arabesque

The arabesque predominantly targets the glute and hamstring muscles, while also working on balance and stability. It differs from the bridge in the fact that the muscles are working eccentrically (contracting while lengthening). While running, when the lead leg is in the air, the hamstrings contract to prevent us from taking too long a stride.

This is important as an overstride is linked to many overuse injuries including lower back pain, hamstring injuries, ITB pain and patellofemoral pain. When performing the arabesque, prevent your back from arching and do not flex the trunk past the point where a moderate contraction is felt in the hamstring. For those who have never performed the arabesque before, learning the technique from a physio or Pilates instructor is a good idea to ensure correct technique.

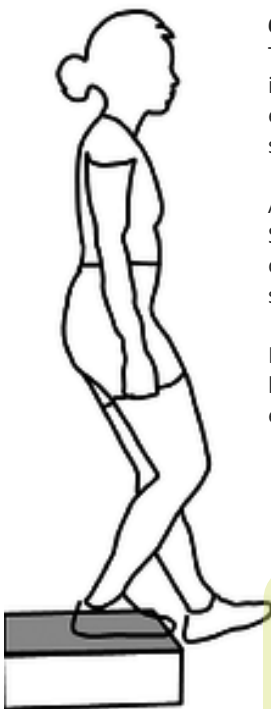


6. Toe taps

Toe taps strengthen muscles such as the quads, glute maximus and glute medius. Glute medius is an important muscle in controlling lower limb biomechanics. Weakness through this muscle can lead to excessive rotation through the thigh and shank which can increase the risk of developing injuries such as shin splints and patellofemoral pain.

A 2008 study by Knobloch reported that 47% of elite long-distance runners suffered from anterior knee pain. Strengthening the hip and core muscles such as glute medius resulted in the fastest reduction in pain when compared to strengthening the quads alone. To perform a toe tap, stand on a small step and move into a squat position of moderate depth.

Lift one foot off the step and lightly tap the ground in front then behind the step and continue until you feel a burn in the side of the bottom on the stationary leg. The key points of a toe tap is to keep the hips level with each other and to keep the knee of the stationary leg facing straight ahead.



For our runners at Kieser, we perform a 1-hour assessment. This involves a thorough history, biomechanical analysis and strength testing relevant to the condition/ patients' goals.

If you would like to book in for an assessment or treatment, mention that you are a Sydney Striders and receive 20% off your consultation.

For further information, please contact Owen Hynes at owen.hynes@kieser.com.au

Juniors' Corner

Tony Wong

Membership

Current Membership is 96, 20 fewer than same time last year.

Anyone interested in training with us please contact juniorinfo@sydneystriders.org.au.

Party

This year's party was hosted by Nicky Solomon & Paul. Thanks to Alistair and Deborah Keep for sponsoring us with a huge amount of Lindt chocolates which can be seen in the photo of the prizes display. David Criniti came to help present prizes and to be on the celebrity interviewee panel with our very own Australian Internationals, Josh Phillips and Kieren Tall. There were also spot prizes, presentations, two types of trivia and a slide show ongoing, with great food and drink on tap. What a fantastic day it was!



Getting ready for desserts

Around the track

NSW Relays Championship – 4/5 November 2017

Seven teams competed at the State Relays and three sets of medals were won. The under 18 girls won gold in the 4x1500m, the under 14 girls silver in the 4x1500m and the under 16 girls bronze in the 4x800m. This year's moment of the championship, which got everyone out of their seats, belonged to Charlie Arnott who chased down someone twice her size with 250m to go and brought the team home in 2nd place in the under 14 girls 4x1500m.

NSW 3000m Championship - 11 November 2017

Kieren Tall was the fastest Strider on the night with his 8:27.16, while Mia Hinchcliff, Jessica Gocher, Ciara Sinclair and Rafi Gordon all ran inside their National Qualifiers. Here is the All Time Top 10 and Age Bests for the girls and boys. The three girls now occupy 4th, 5th and 7th in the Girls' All Time Top 10, while Benjamin Jagger, in his final few months as a junior, slotted into 4th on the Boys' All Time list with his 8:51. Please note these times were from ANSW events, where everyone was competing as Sydney Striders, and National events.



Trophies to be given out

SYDNEYSTRIDERS BLISTER



Happy girls' team at the NSW Relays Championships

3000m All Time Top 10

Time	Women	Age*	Rank	Time	Men	Age*
9.54.93	Nicola Hogg	14	1	8.17.96	Josh Phillips	17
10.00.74	Hannah Gibson	17	2	8.27.16	Kieren Tall	19
10.16.15	Emma Mahon	14	3	8.49.75	Daniel Francken	18
10.31.09	Mia Hinchcliff	15	4	8.51.08	Ben Jagger	19
10.32.72	Jessica Gocher	12	5	9.00.09	Luke Simson	16
10.33.02	Sophie Gocher	14	6	9.06.14	Thomas Davies	15
10.35.58	Ciara Sinclair	14	7	9.06.79	Harlan Mulherin	19
10.41.18	Olivia Hogg	15	8	9.07.79	Bryn Lynch	16
10.46.15	Hannah Lovlin	14	9	9.09.16	Liam Gorman	16
10.49.66	Astrid Kingsmill	16	10	9.09.33	Lachlan Cooper	14

*ANSW age at the time.

NSW Clubs Championship and State 5k- 2/3 December 2017

In the State 5k, Kieren Tall was the fastest Strider on the night with his 14:38.56, while Harlan Mulherin won the Men's C race with his 15:41.51 and became only the 5th Junior Strider to run under 16 minutes.

In the other events, congratulations to everyone who ran PBs, but a special mention to the following:

- Keeley Homes who won the under 14 boys and girls combined 1500m walk.
 - Billie Taylor who won the under 18, 16 and Masters female combined 1500m.
 - Rafi Gordon who won the under 14 boys 1500m.
- Australian All Schools Athletics Championship – 8-10 December 2017

Emma O'Reilly was our sole representative in Adelaide. Over the course of the weekend, she broke the 400m club record twice and finished 4th in the under 16 girls 400m in a time of 56:92 seconds.

Elsewhere on the track

Josh Phillips set a new 800m record of one minute 53.53 seconds.



Uncle Dave with the mums who help, Junior Info Sarah Cole and Juniors' Uniform Robyn O'Reilly



The Interview: Caroline interviewing Kieren Tall, David Criniti and Josh Phillips

SYDNEY STRIDERS BLISTER

Handicap Races

The Winter Mile Handicap was won by Ewan Keep, improving by 32 seconds to run 6:43, while Alexandra Sinclair won the 5k Handicap, improving by 2 minutes and 58 seconds to run 21:29. At the time of typing, we have just run the Christmas handicap mile, and this was won by Joel Solomon, who improved by 24 seconds, to break 6 minutes for the first time.



The start of the under 14 and 18 girls' 4x1500m



Curtis Kingsmill and Peter Gardiner in the 4x1500m at State Relays



Emily Gocher and Ciara Sinclair in the 4x1500m at State Relays

SYDNEY STRIDERS BLISTER

Graduation – Class of 2017

We farewell 3 distinguished juniors who be heading to the senior ranks.

Ben Jagger

1. How old were you when you joined Sydney Striders?

I first joined Striders when I was 12 years old, just starting high school.

2. What attracted you to the club? Not a lot! Originally I joined because my mum made me join, and I didn't want to go because I knew nothing about it, but I enjoyed the opportunity to race more.

3. Did you run much prior to joining Striders? I ran occasionally, mostly with school and Little Athletics, I never really played team/ball sports.

4. What was your first event in Striders' colours? I believe my first race was the Miranda cross-country relay - still one of my favourite races to this day.

5. Tell us your top three achievements while being a member of Sydney Striders My top achievements would definitely include:

- Making it to Nationals in both steeplechase and cross country
- Being able to run a half marathon for the first time
- Most recently it would be getting my 3000m time below 9 minutes and my 800m time below 2minutes.

6. What is your fondest memory of the club?

My fondest memory would have to be vomiting for the first time after a race, due to a 4x800m relay.

7. What have you been doing since finishing high school?

Ever since I finished high school I've mostly been focusing on improving my running, alongside attending my first year at Uni.



Ben's recent appearance on track



A younger Ben at a Strider race

8. Do you find it harder to fit training in since you left school? (Tell us your training regime and how it fits in with your everyday life)

Training is often harder to fit into my schedule, at least on the days I have Uni late into the afternoon; this mostly applies to the training sessions I do on Tuesday and Thursday which take place in the afternoon. If Uni clashes with those I simply go to a morning session instead. Apart from that I run every day except Friday to keep my fitness up. This mostly involves a quick tempo run on Monday and Wednesday, followed by some sort of race on Saturday, finishing off the week with a long run of 10km to 14km at a steady pace.

9. What are your future running goals, short and long term? My short-term goals would have to be getting my 1500m time below 4min, and trying to get my 5000m time below 16min, something I hope to achieve in the near future. As for long term, I don't really have a set plan as I'm still finding my ideal race and distance but one thing I know that I want to do for sure is run a marathon at some point.

10. What advice do you have for the younger members of the club? The only real advice I feel confident in giving, apart from 'run faster', is to stick with their running and training as they get older, especially during the later years of high school and the HSC and as they move into university. I have seen it too many times where a talented athlete focuses all their effort on studies or other interests, that they leave their running behind, and by the time they return to the sport they've lost a lot of fitness and don't perform as well as they used to and give up. It's important to keep running, even if it's a small amount just to keep fit, as it helps relieve stress and gives you time to yourself and that way, when you move back to competing, you should still be on par with the competition, with rivals that once left you in the dirt being within reach as they didn't keep this in mind. Finally, I would like to thank Tony and Caroline for the fantastic opportunity. Junior Striders has been a huge part of my life and I won't forget the experiences I've had with the club anytime soon.

SYDNEY STRIDERS BLISTER

Harlan Mulherin

1. How old were you when you joined Sydney Striders?

I was 14 years old.

2. What attracted you to the club?

I joined the club because I had become friends with Josh Phillips through training with him on a Monday night when Striders training combined with Little Athletics training. I was already running quite a bit by that stage and was enjoying it, so I thought it would help my running to join the club.

3. Did you run much prior to joining Striders?

I did Little Athletics for three years before I joined Striders.

4. What was your first event in Striders' colours?

State Relays 4x1500m when I was 14 years old running for the U16.

5. Tell us your top three achievements while being a member of Sydney Striders.

My three biggest achievements were competing at Nationals for both athletics and cross country in 2016/2017, winning the U20 club championships and running an awesome time in the Sydney 10 in early 2016.

6. What is your fondest memory of the club?

My fondest memory of the club would be going to relay races and competing alongside my best mates.

7. What have you been doing since finishing high school?

I have been training, working and investigating possible careers.

8. Do you find it harder to fit training in since you left school? (Tell us your training regime and how it fits in with your everyday life)

Not yet, however it would be a bit tricky to fit in if I was working full time and I'm sure trying to fit uni in will make it a challenge. My current training regime consists of two interval sessions, (short intervals and long intervals) on a Monday and Thursday respectively, a long run (Sunday) and tempo run (Saturday) and two easier runs (Tuesday & Wednesday).

9. What are your future running goals, short and long term?

My future running goals: in the near future I would like to make it to Nationals in the 5000m event, which requires me to run a time under 15:30, and continue to drop my 10000m time. In the long term I would like to compete in both the Commonwealth Games (not the one in early 2018) and the Olympic Games. One day I would also like to have a crack at Steve Moneghetti's City to Surf record.

10. What advice do you have for the younger members of the club?

Train consistently is probably the most crucial advice I can give anyone, not just juniors, and of course listen to your body, it will tell you how it's operating. If you're doing too much it'll let you know in the form of an injury or sickness.



A younger Harlan on track



A recent Harlan at Homebush 2017

Kieren Tall

1. How old were you when you joined Sydney Striders?

15 years old.

2. What attracted you to the club?

I was looking to step up my training and find a group of people to run with who were performing at National level during the cross country season in 2013. While competing at my first Nationals Cross Country in Tasmania, I found myself having a chat to one infamous Josh Phillips, who introduced me to the club. Josh and I go a long way back; we have been racing each other since the age of seven, starting with triathlon, and eventually we've both moved across to distance running. Sure enough, a few weeks later I turned up to my first session with Caroline and Tony, finding myself shocked at both the sheer size of the group and the depth of talented athletes to train with. Not only was I impressed by the quality of the training, athletes and coaches, but I felt very included and at home in a social respect.

3. Did you run much prior to joining Striders?

I've been competing in triathlons since I was six years old, and while triathlon has been my main sport up until a few months ago, I've always loved running since a very young age. Although my running training was a little irregular at times, I was training all year round... just not at the level I needed in order to be competitive in the races I wanted to be winning and achieving in. After a disappointing result in my first Nationals Cross Country, I found myself hunting for a more run specific training group where I could step up my training and make some gains. I needed people my own speed and faster to push me along, and under the guidance of Caroline and Tony I found a lot more direction and purpose with my training.

4. What was your first event in Striders' colours?

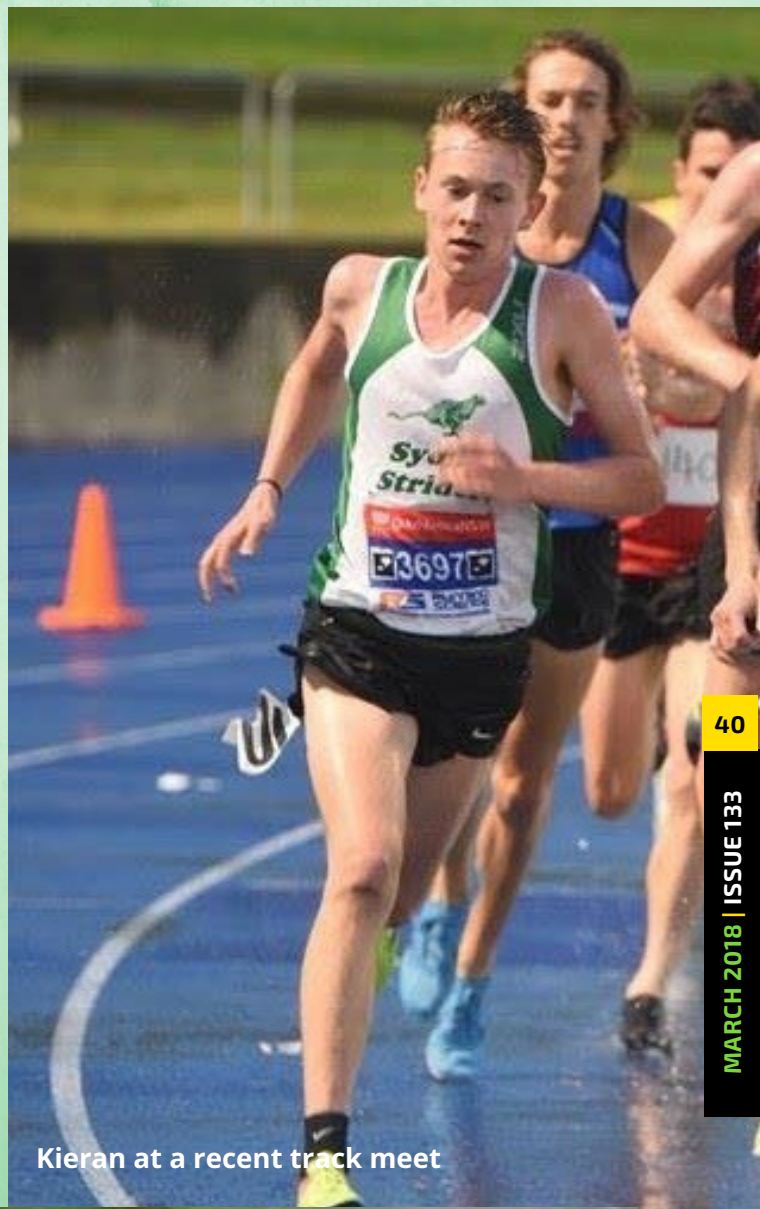
I believe it may have been the State 3km Championships, where I ran 8:50 as a 16-year-old. This was a massive improvement from my previous performances, and not only had I taken 20-30 seconds off my previous PR, but Tony had predicted my time down to the second. I still had a long way to go, but for the first time, I'd found myself to be competitive in the "big races" of distance running.

5. Tell us your top 3 achievements while being a member of Sydney Striders

There is no doubt in my mind that since I joined Striders back in 2013, my running has improved significantly. I owe a lot of this to Caroline and Tony, especially during high school where I trained at least twice a week with the group. My most significant achievement would have to be being the fastest Australian by almost 30 seconds at the World Junior Cross Country Championships in Kampala, Uganda. I ended up being 48th in the world, and as much as you'll laugh, I believe I was the 3rd white person. I've also been the State U20 5000m champion two or three years in a row on track, running 14:30 as an 18-year-old, along with the State 5000m and 10000m champion on the road.

6. What have you been doing since finishing high school?

Post HSC I decided to take a gap year to find part time work and focus on my training. Although I've had a few nasty injuries over winter, I have started to find some form again in the last few weeks with the Commonwealth Games Trials approaching early next year. I've also been working at the Athlete's Foot Mosman since early 2017... on that note, if anyone needs a hand with shoes (or anything running related), feel free to drop in or send me a message, I'm always happy to help.



Kieran at a recent track meet



Young Kieran on the track

7. Do you find it harder to fit training in since you left school? (Tell us your training regime and how it fits in with your everyday life)

I've definitely found it more difficult to fit in training since I started working. Compared to being at school, full or part time work is a lot more demanding, tiring, and sometimes time-consuming, especially when you add studying at university to the equation. Part of growing up for me has been developing as a person rather than just as a runner. This year I've learnt what it's like to fund myself, pay the bills, and balance training with work and other commitments. I'm either running, cycling or doing strength and conditioning work (which I need to do a lot more of) every day of the week. If I'm going to have a rest day, it'll usually be on Friday. My workouts are on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, with Tuesday being track / speed based, Thursday being threshold and Saturday being a combination of threshold and hills. Sunday is long run day and the other days are for aerobic / recovery runs. Since moving out of the junior ranks of Striders, I've been training with Sydney Track Club (STC) coached under Nick Bromley, training alongside some of Australia's best distance runners. Our current group consists of myself, Kevin Batt, Jack Stapleton, Ed Goddard, Josh Phillips, Will Austin-Cray, Charlie Hunter, Ben Quinn, Finbarr Warren, Thomas Harvey and Liam Gorman.

8. What are your future running goals, short and long term?

I'm aiming to break 14 minutes for 5000m in the next year or so, along with breaking 30 minutes for 10000m on both road and track. I'm hoping to get a start at the Commonwealth Games trials in February too. I'm making the transition from the "little boy races" of U20s to the big boy league of open elite racing, so the next few years won't be easy. For those of you who watch the legal drama "Suits", it's quite comparable to Mike Ross's first few months at one of the biggest law firms in New York City, Pearson Spectre Litt. I'm looking forward to working hard and seeing how far I can go as a professional runner. Long term I've got my eye on racing at elite level, both on track and on road. I'd really love to make a career out of running and end up as world champion at something, along with getting a medal at the Olympics and Commonwealth Games.

9. What advice do you have for the younger members of the club?

I really don't want to sound like a parent here, but... if you don't plan ahead and look after yourself, it becomes very easy to miss sessions, cut corners and get sick or injured. When you want to race at international level, or even simply stay happy, healthy and fit, turning up to training only constitutes a fraction of what needs to be done to perform and race well. Nutrition and hydration, sleep, mental preparation and strength and conditioning all come into play too. It's really vital to balance the rest of your life with running, to balance relationships, family, work and a social life with one of the hardest endurance sports on the planet. No matter what level of runner you are, if you want to enjoy the sport and make improvements, turning up to training alone isn't enough. When I don't race well and come home disappointed from a big race, I look at all the aspects of my life rather than simply reviewing my last few training sessions. Ask yourself questions like 'Have I gotten enough sleep?' 'Have I been overly stressed or distracted by work or family or other relationships?' 'What have I eaten or drunk that could've affected my performance?' 'Did I choose the right equipment (shoes, clothing etc.) for the race conditions?' We are often our harshest critics as endurance athletes, so learning to use criticism or feedback in a constructive manner is important to ensure that running stays a positive and enjoyable part of your life. All in all, if you read one line of this whole interview... you have to love what you do. The people that get the most out of this sport absolutely love it. I look forward to every run. For me, running is both an outlet for stress relief and something that I use to get through whatever life throws at me. I really don't know what I'd do without it.



From left: Gilbert, Leigh, Rado, Jonathan, and Horrie at the Six Foot Track Marathon 2018

THE LAST WORD

By yer Social Media Admin
Gilbert D'Awesome (find me on Strava)

Cold weather's coming up which means.... Running Season!
That is if the cold winter air actually comes. Climate change anyone?

Aaaaanywayyy, I trust that you're hard at work preparing for whatever race you're targeting. Whether it be the Australian Running Festival in Canberra, the Ultra Trail Australia series, the SMH Half, City2Surf or maybe an overseas marathon, trust that you can always find a running buddy within the club. Amongst the 800+ members, I'm pretty sure there should be one or a few that you can run with.

Just as a reminder that due to the pervasiveness of social media, we also need to be careful on what we post online. As a good rule, I encourage all members to "think before posting". Members should recognize that even if posting to a private section of a social networking site - comments can appear in public areas through a variety of means and can easily be found. Members should avoid posting something they will regret now or later. As usual for social media stuff, tag us on twitter, Instagram or Facebook using the hashtag #SydneyStriders or #GoStriders! Feel free to post pics on the Facebook page too! Here's a list of our social media channels...

Our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/SydneyStriders?fref=ts>

Join the Members only group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SydneyStriders/?fref=ts>

Or the Marathon Training Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/115776728632956/?fref=ts>

And the Race Pacers Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/520230171443125/?fref=ts>

We are on Instagram: @sydney_striders, Twitter: @sydneystriders and you can browse our blog on Tumblr too: <http://sydney-striders.tumblr.com/>
Be seeing you on the road, on trail, and during the STaRs.

#GoStriders!