

THEBLISTER

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SYDNEY STRIDERS RUNNING CLUB ESTABLISHED 1980

JUN - DEC 2019 | ISSUE 136

Chicago Marathon

Stuart aims high and smiles all the way

Striding in France

Far away from Sydney, Darren is still a Strider

Big Apple Pacing

Pacing on the other side of the world



Jimmy Choo to La Sportiva

Shika ditches heels for cramp-ons and a mountain adventure

Popa what?

Anna and Dr Google searches for answers

IAU 50KM World Championships

Team Captain Larissa Tichon gives us a debrief

Strider's Strength

Proven through Geoff's early days of racing to a lung transplant

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Cover Image of Blackmore Running
Festival Pacers, courtesy of Chris
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President's Message

As always, you will be inspired by the final edition of Blister for 2019 which includes Shika's fascinating story of her Everest Marathon experience, Stuart Donaldson's Chicago Marathon race report and Andrew Chau pacing his sister at her debut marathon in New York. Also in this edition is The Run Beyond's 'Passing the Ton' - welcoming their 100th graduate, Patrick McNamara's practical Runner Desk Stretches and Tam Goldbery's Should Runners take Supplements?. Internationally, we received an update from our expat Strider Darren Benson who shared his new life and training plan in France and how it contribute to his amazing new PB, as well as our former Juniors member Josh Phillips sharing his first year in Villanova University running squad in Philadelphia, USA. Lastly, read Anna White's article and you will be amazed at all the information Anna shares.

Thanks to everyone in the Striders family for your contributions.

It's great to reflect on what races you did, what you achieved and to make plans for 2020.

Our committee has worked extremely hard last year to introduce new ideas and keep the club ticking over. A big thank you to each of them. Our AGM is in February aligned to our first super series race The Equaliser. I hope you all can make it.

I want to also acknowledge our two club sponsors in 2019. Julian at the [Sydney Running Centre](#) for our 10k series and also Taras at [Runmore Loans](#) for the Internal Super Series. We are blessed as a club to have their support.

As always if you have ideas for the club please contact myself or any of the committee mentioned on this page.

All the best to you and your family for 2020 and here is to many PB's in the year.

#GoStriders
Jo Cowan, President

Race Report: Chicago Marathon 2019

by Stuart Donaldson

I had just passed my support crew (wife Susan and 6-year-old Stirling) for the fourth and final time, about 35km into the Chicago Marathon. They had done an amazing job of chasing me around the city, giving me goals to run toward and distracting me from the constant pounding on the pavement. Now it was down to me and the last few miles to the finish line...

At the Gold Coast Marathon in 2017, I snuck in under 3 hours for the first time but had since struggled to step up from there. The conditions in Boston in the following year were just crazy, with snow at the start and rain and howling winds for the duration. Berlin was amazing, but jetlag and cramps got to me in the last 5km. It was a great year of amazing travel and wonderful experiences, but not the marathon results I wanted. Instead of putting all my eggs into two big marathon baskets for 2019, I decided to do things differently.

This year, I joined Striders and loaded the year up with races. In the first half of the year, I ran plenty of 10ks, the Albury Half, 6 Foot Track, Canberra Marathon, UTA100 and the Gold Coast Marathon. The big show for 2019 was, of course, Chicago Marathon. I got to know a crew of Striders travelling to these races, as well as many long runs; a source of shared running houses, endless encouragement and banter (cheers to Jacko, Patty, Charl, Andy, Dr. Stu, Sam, Tim and Nice Tim). It's easy to forget how crazy your training is when others have a similar level of crazy. After self-coaching until this point, I also got superstar Dave Criniti on board to put a plan together leading up to Chicago. The puzzle pieces were all there - I just had to put them together.

On race morning, my alarm went off at 5am in our Chicago lodging. Bagels, coffee, race kit on and out the door to join the crowds walking down Michigan Avenue to the starting line. It was crisp, but not too cold or windy - a beautiful day for running. Dave had been sending me messages reminding me not to go out too hot, and to remember that my main goal was to break 2:50, which would be about a six minute PB. I navigated through the security checkpoints and port-a-loo queues and strolled into Corral A with 10 minutes until the start time. Perfect timing.

The gun fired and we were off! GPS was a useless speed marker at the start due to high-rise buildings and an underpass, so I would not know my pace until the first mile marker. I focussed on being extremely comfortable and



Image: Stuart joined Sydney Striders in 2019

starting slow. There would be plenty of time to catch up any lost seconds in the next few hours. Amazingly, at the first mile marker I was much faster than planned, but still felt like I was holding back. I saw my family three times in the first half as we ran an out and back to the north of the city. I hit halfway in 1:21:28, and was really wondering by that point whether I had destroyed my chance of a good time by going out way too fast. However, the mile markers just kept appearing more frequently than I thought they should and I still felt fresh.

I smiled as I ran past people stopping on the side of the road; I smiled as I overtook people, and others overtook me; I smiled as the finish line felt like it was never going to appear.



Image Top: Left to right, Mike Turner, Baskaran Balasingam, Stuart Donaldson Proud finishers of Chicago Marathon 2019

Image Bottom: Stuart stopping for a finisher photo after completing Chicago Marathon

After getting some family high-fives at 35km, I settled into my own head. These were usually the kilometres where things can go wrong. Was I about to cramp, like in Berlin or Canberra? Calculating all the possible outcomes from here and converting from miles to kilometres and back have kept me distracted for a while, including running straight past the aid station serving up beers (damn!). I eventually worked out that I could lock into 4 minute kilometres for the last 5km and still come in well faster than my wildest expectations leading into the race. Just a 20 minute parkrun I told myself, and hopefully no chance of cramping and falling apart at the final hurdle. I had run hundreds of kilometres at that pace in training! That was possible, right?

I smiled. I heard that Kipchoge smiled when things got tough to convince his body and mind to carry on, so I gave it a go. I smiled as I ran past people stopping on the side of the road; I smiled as I overtook people, and others overtook me; I smiled as the finish line felt like it was never going to appear. But inevitably it did. I crossed the finish line in 2:44:03! Unbelievable! Six minutes faster than I was aiming for, and almost a twelve minute PB. I found a beer, my family, and a hot dog (in that order), caught up with some Striders at the post-race party, (including Mike Turner who managed a 2:44:04 without either of us seeing the other for the entire race!) and settled in for an afternoon of celebrating. I still need to pinch myself today to make sure I'm not dreaming. What a race!



From Old Age To Popa What?

by Anna White

A Story Dedicated To My Compassionate Friend Dr Google

Stunned

It was May 2018 Sydney 10 and I was ready to run like I stole something. It had been a difficult two years recovering from a bad stress fracture in my foot but I thought I was back to fitness and ready to return to the 36min??? 10km. However, I was left frustrated, confused and with a bad case of the shakes from the waist down, as I blew up on Olympic Boulevard. I struggled home in pain, convinced something was wrong, but what?

The Trampoline

My plan was to see a sports physician to discuss my vague leg pain, occasional leg swelling, and my increasingly erratic running performance. However, during the 10 day wait for an appointment, things got interesting. I was running alone in Manly when strange things started happening. My legs felt heavy, like I was wading through water, and I had trouble staying on the footpath. I kept drifting to my left. Then I started to lose awareness of where the ground was, it felt like I was running on a trampoline or mattress, the ground no longer felt firm beneath my feet. These odd sensations continued for the three runs that followed and at the Athletics NSW Cross Country relays I stumbled, was airborne, then crash-landed on the grass, breaking two ribs. My confidence was now shot!

Diagnosed With Old Age

The medical testing began and went on and on and on. I had MRI's from brain to pelvis looking for tumours and MS, I had 20 test tubes of blood taken from me testing for rare muscular and genetic conditions, and had nerve conduction tests from brain to fingers and toes. Nothing significant came out of all of this testing, the only diagnosis from the professor of Neurology was old age. According to the Neurologist, because there are athletes in the races I run that are younger than me, the reason I was no longer performing up to my expectations was simply old age. He was ignoring the fact that I wasn't disappointed with my race placing, it was that I felt I was losing the strength and coordination of my legs. Far more significant I would have thought!

The DIY Ultrasound

The extensive testing I had been put through was not only exhausting and expensive but had got me nowhere. I am a Sonographer; my job is to perform ultrasound scans and our accreditation association publishes a journal four times a year



Image: A Sydney Striders top at the Toda Tokyo 10km Presentation.

with various educational articles and case studies. It was now September 2018 and this particular journal edition had an article discussing nerve entrapment within muscle hernias of the lower leg. The small lumps were described with a picture. I looked down at my own legs and thought 'matchy matchy'! So straight to the ultrasound room for a DIY ultrasound my legs went. The self-diagnosis was, yes, these small lumps on my legs were muscle hernias. But what causes these I thought? That was when I decided to ask this question of my friend Dr Google.

A Consultation with Dr Google

Dr Google accepted my question and quickly responded. He thought it was most likely a condition called Chronic Exertional Compartment Syndrome. Working in the medical profession I understood his medical explanation, but for those of you who aren't, our muscles of the lower leg (below the knee) are divided into four groups. They are held in these groups by a thin layer of tissue called a fascia. When we exercise, blood flow to our muscles increases and the muscles expand. If their outer fascia isn't stretchy enough pressure starts to build inside the muscles causing pain and tightness. When the pressure builds even higher, small holes appear in the fascia and the muscle herniates or pushes through this, creating small soft lumps on the lower leg.

The Knitting Needle

My next question to Dr Google was what do I do now? Who do I see? He suggested a compartment pressure test. This involves a knitting needle sized needle attached to a pressure gauge being inserted into each of the four muscle compartments of the leg, pre and post exercise. A significant rise in pressure post exercise indicates a diagnosis of Chronic Exertional Compartment Syndrome. Dr Google had told me who he thought was the most qualified to perform this test for me, so I got my referral from a GP and headed off. The end result, I was left battered and bruised. When I got home my neighbour looked at me stunned and said "what happened to you"? I was covered in bandages and dressing from the knees down. Diagnosis wise, yes, I did have a moderate case of Chronic Exertional Compartment Syndrome, but the test results were not abnormal enough to be the sole cause of my

順位	ナンバー	氏名	氏名カナ	所属クラブ	記録
1	6035	White Anna	ホワイト アナ	南塚連合	0:38:02
2	6045	馬場 望	ウマバタ ノゾミ	ラフラブRC	0:40:45
3	6024	八尾 倫理	ヤチノリ		0:41:54
4	6025	小栗 亜子	オクリ アツコ	丸の内RC	0:42:08
5	6143	水倉 朋子	ミヅクラ トモコ		0:45:24
6	6032	山田 美穂子	ヤマタ ミホ		0:45:43
7	6126	川田 亜実	カワタ アサミ		0:46:24
8	6088	兒玉 望	コタマ ノゾミ		0:46:42
9	6049	一橋 水菜	イツハシ ミナ	ヤマト運輸	0:47:29
10	6118	内之倉 忍穂	ウチノクラ ノホ		0:47:48
11	6018	高橋 美沙	タカハシ ミサ		0:48:04
12	6143	大津 遥香	オオツ ノホ	丸の内RC	0:49:33
13	6124	佐藤 タ可重	サトウ タカシゲ		0:49:57
14	6153	渡辺 水月	ワタベ ミヅキ	横浜川口高校	0:50:20
15	6065	大脇 美希	オオワキ ミキ	東京チーム	0:50:40
16	6082	穴居 野結	アナノノ ヌヰ		0:50:58
17	6078	白渡 朋子	シラヅ アツコ	RC OSK	0:51:04
18	6134	下島 佳	シノジマ ケイ	RUN FUJIEY	0:51:28
19	6068	鶴田 沙穂里	ツルタ サホリ		0:51:08
20	6058	栗原 優子	クリハラ ユウコ		0:52:09
21	6012	柳野 千晶	ヤナノ チル		0:52:49
22	6080	海地 智美	ウミツチ トミ		0:52:58
23	6092	谷井 みほり	ヤニヰ ミホリ	昭和女子大学	0:53:22
24	6076	田中 由美	タナカ ユミ		0:53:41
25	6141	佐藤 幸彦子	サトウ ユキコ	ランナーズハイ	0:53:47
26	6032	佐藤 美穂子	サトウ ミホ		0:53:54
27	6075	石川 美希子	イシカワ ミキ		0:53:55
28	6130	上川 奈々保	カミガハ ナナホ	セツナース	0:54:06
29	6033	篠田 真子	シノダ マコ		0:54:38
30	6090	森田 由佳	モリタ ユキ		0:54:37
31	6029	木村 菜香	キムラ ナカ		0:54:38
32	6102	田原 結代	タハラ ユキ		0:55:29
33	6144	森田 美穂里	モリタ ミホリ	丸の内RC	0:55:33
34	6079	渡辺 美実	ワタベ ミミ		0:55:54
35	6022	渡辺 ともみ	ワタベ トモミ		0:56:04
36	6032	カサハラ	カサハラ		0:56:01
37	6085	山口 弥生	ヤマモト ヤヨイ		0:56:15
38	6037	南星 沙織	ナホシ サオリ		0:56:24
39	6083	古平 美穂	コヘラ ミホ		0:56:47
40	6048	森本 彩菜	モリモト ササキ	さいたま市立南	0:56:59
41	6098	寺井 美恵	テライ ミヰ		0:57:06
42	6011	高田 亜実	タカタ アサミ		0:57:25
43	6108	藤田 智美	フジタ トミ		0:57:41
44	6072	馬場 美穂	ウマバタ ミホ	ハロー薬局	0:57:45
45	6025	森田 美希の	モリタ ミキ		0:57:51
46	6050	平 友紀	ヘイ トモキ		0:57:51
47	6030	森田 美穂	モリタ ミホ		0:58:23



symptoms. It was suggested that I may also have a condition called Popliteal Artery Entrapment Syndrome.

Eureka!

It was time for more testing, this time an ultrasound to check the blood flow through the arteries at the back of my knee. The test was performed whilst I was standing flat footed, then whilst I was standing on my toes. Flat footed the arteries were carrying blood rich in nutrients and oxygen was flowing to my feet, and the veins carrying muscle waste e.g. lactic acid was returning to my heart. When standing on my toes the blood flow in both directions became obstructed; this was abnormal. The muscles of my calf were squashing the artery, vein and the nerve that sat alongside them into the bone at the back of my knee. It appeared I finally had a diagnosis. The condition was called Popliteal Artery Entrapment Syndrome, and I had it in both legs. The condition can be abbreviated to PAES and can be explained as follows

- **Popliteal:** Refers to the area at the back of the knee
- **Artery:** Carries blood away from the heart and down the legs
- **Entrapment:** Means something is being squashed
- **Syndrome:** A condition that is chronic and not going anywhere in a hurry!

...removing my compression socks could resemble a wrestling match as my post-run swollen legs wanted to explode out of the fabric.

To a Different Professor

It was now apparent that the only solution to my problem was surgery. I was referred to a vascular professor who requested another test, this time a CT angiogram to aid planning for surgery. This angiogram involved injecting a CT dye into my arm that passed through my heart and down my legs. During

the scan I had to keep my toes in a pointed position. This foot position caused the arteries and veins to block in the same way they had when I was standing on my toes. When the CT contrast reached the back of my knees it hit this blockage. It was a dead end and the contrast went no further. This helped the surgeon to determine which muscle in my legs was causing the blockage.

A Plan

Surgery was booked for both legs; right leg on the 30th November 2018 and left leg two weeks later on the 15th December 2018. I had been able to continue running during this time but had struggled with pain, cramping, numbness and foot drop. I would cross the finish line of a race and immediately be on the ground in pain as my legs throbbed. The pain would pass after a minute or two and I would get up and walk away but the concept of doing a warm down had become impossible. My calves would tighten when I stopped moving to the point that I couldn't move my ankle

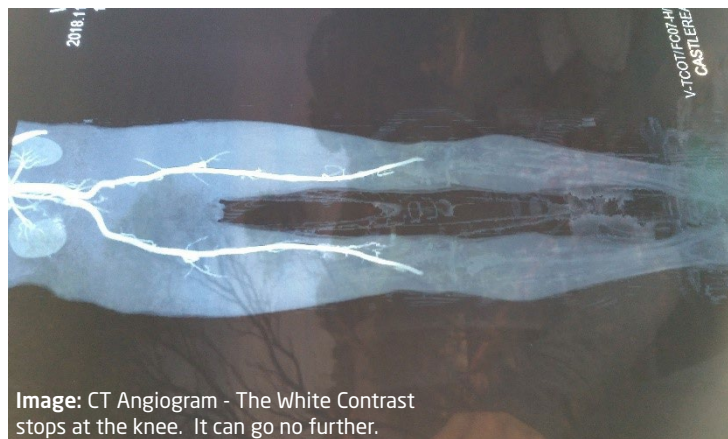


Image: CT Angiogram - The White Contrast stops at the knee. It can go no further.

sufficiently to run. Driving home from races was becoming a slow process as distance such as Homebush to Freshwater required at least one break to walk around, and removing my compression socks could resemble a wrestling match as my post-run swollen legs wanted to explode out of the fabric. I was so relieved to finally have a diagnosis and a plan, but in retrospect glad I had no idea what was still to come.

Squeezing in One last Race

I conveniently had a three week holiday booked to Japan that ended the day before surgery. This holiday included a 10km race in Tokyo. This race was one of the highlight of my 23 years of running. I was lucky enough to win the race in 38



Image: All wrapped up post-surgery.

minutes exactly and was treated by the Japanese as if I had won an Olympic gold medal. Despite having no idea what was being said during the presentation, and being extremely grateful for the masking tape on the stage that indicated where I had to stand, I attempted to show my appreciation, arigatogozaimashita (thank you very much).

Mummification

The surgery went to plan.....or so I was told two weeks after I had my medial gastrocnemius muscles removed. If anatomy is not your strength and you don't know where this muscle is, if you look at the calf muscle of someone with a strong calf, there appears to be two oval shapes. The medial gastroc muscle is the oval that is closer to the inside of the leg. This muscle was removed and the nerve was deliberately cut so that the muscle could not grow back. If it did grow back the PAES would reoccur. The surgeon reported to me that what he had removed from my legs was prime quality meat resembling two beef filet mignons.

I also had the muscle fasciae cut to treat the Chronic Exertional Compartment Syndrome.

I was bandaged from the top of my thigh to the foot, had a 10cm cut at the back of each knee and a 3cm cut down each shin. Recovery was supposed to be complete at 3 months. I did everything I was supposed to do regarding rehab but progress was slow and frustratingly I had ongoing pain and swelling.

Deja Vu

April 2019 I went for a morning run to be greeted by a very familiar feeling in my legs. This was not only upsetting but

something I found difficult to understand. I had had the surgery I needed to have to treat the condition I had, how could I possibly still have symptoms? I went straight back to the surgeon and the CT angiogram was repeated. Things were not as anyone had hoped. The blockage previously seen at the knee level had been fixed but I now had further blockages half way down my calf in both legs. A lot of people have asked me, how can that be? Why was it missed before the first two surgeries?

The answer to this is a bit like a blockage in a water pipe. The CT contrast travelled from my arm to my heart and down my legs until it hit the blockages at the back of my knees. The blockages at this point were so bad that the contrast went no further. This means that the contrast never reached the blockages in the calf. Now that the blockages at my knees were fixed through surgery, the contrast could get a little bit further down my leg, but unfortunately still didn't reach my feet as it was held back again by another obstruction.

Botox

Unhappy would be an understatement when it was confirmed surgery was needed again. At this stage there seemed some confusion between doctors regarding what was now causing the obstruction in my legs. An alternative less invasive, but only temporary, solution was Botox. Botox is occasionally used to treat medical conditions to stop muscle contraction. The idea was to inject the muscles causing the artery compression to stop them contracting. The two muscles in each leg to be injected were called the popliteus and plantaris muscles. The research is vague but an effect should be felt after a week and can last up to three months. I was in agony for a week, a lot of pain for the second week and had

mild improvement for the next six. The conclusion was the treatment was unsuccessful and it was back to surgery. The surgery was to be of exploratory nature, meaning the legs had to be cut open without an exact plan and an attempt would be made to find the problem and then fix it.

Nervous

I was slightly terrified as I checked back into the hospital admissions department on the 2nd August 2019 but I knew I had no choice. I was now worse than pre the first two surgeries. It wasn't about being able to run, I wanted to be able to walk 3km without having to sit down, to drive a car without going numb, to stop the painful leg swelling, and to be able to remove this condition from life that I felt was taking over and affecting my enjoyment of other things.

One of a Kind

My biggest fear post-surgery was that during the operation no cause of my problems would be found or that my problems couldn't be fixed.

When the surgeon walked into my hospital room the morning after surgery and the first thing he said to me was "Have your parents ever told you you're special?" I thought this could be very good or very bad!

I was lucky it was good. The problem was found and hopefully it has been fixed.

The problem that was found had never been seen by the professor of vascular surgery before. This is why he thought I was, or perhaps just my legs, were something special. The surgeon I had performs more operations for PAES than any other surgeon in Australia.

He has never observed the abnormality he saw in my legs and in his research in the days following my surgery he was unable to find the abnormality documented in any medical papers currently published worldwide.

My calf anatomy was slightly reversed. My plantaris muscle was abnormally long and where my artery was supposed to pass over the plantaris tendon, it passed through the centre of this abnormally long muscle.

The plantaris muscle and tendon were removed, and like the medial gastroc muscle these will not grow back. I also had a condition called soleal sling syndrome that required a dissection (splitting) of the soleal muscle's tendon. My surgeon had performed the soleal sling part of the procedure twice before but both patients were ballerinas not runners.

Waiting

Now the waiting begins as the rehabilitation process starts again. After the pain and frustration of the past 18 months, it is not worth rushing. My racing year is definitely done even

though I only successfully completed two races in 2019.

I have been asked many times over the past 12 months 'are you injured again?' No, I am not injured, just recovering from three operations in eight months for a few rare conditions I have been lucky enough to have. They are not caused by running, more a construction/wiring error in my legs since birth. I was 31 at the onset of symptoms which is the right age as these conditions are most commonly diagnosed in the early 30s as the body reaches peak strength, the muscles begin to stiffen, and ongoing compression means the arteries become progressively damaged.

If my running days are done as a result of this it will be hard to accept. I do hope to be able to return to running and if this is possible I am confident there'll be no other set of legs on the start line quite like mine, they are now unique and one of a kind.

Thank you to my Sydney Striders family for the messages, friendship and flowers, I am looking forward to a much better year in 2020!

...the surgeon walked into my hospital room the morning after surgery and the first thing he said to me was "Have your parents ever told you you're special?"

Passing the ton - more than a number

by David Criniti - Founder



As runners, we sometimes think of our experiences numerically; x-many parkruns, a sub-x marathon.

Similarly, at Run Beyond, we've looked forward for a few months now to the ton - our 100th graduate.

And on 24 November that feat was achieved at the Central Coast Half Marathon and 10km, where we had a contingent of students from Chester Hill High School and Narrabeen Sports High take part, bringing our total number of graduates to 109.

However...

... just as a runner, numbers don't reflect the richness of the experiences which those numbers so curtly summarise, such is the case with us.

For each of those 109 graduates has a fascinating story to tell. And as we grow, there's a growing sense of pride that we're able to make some sort of positive contribution to these stories.

One person whose story we feel incredibly fortunate to have contributed to is Esmat.

Esmat graduated from Run Beyond at the same race last year, but he was back again in 2019, and at quite considerable effort, because of his desire to contribute to our community.

Esmat was 17 when he arrived in Australia from Afghanistan, four years ago. Having had little exposure to English while he was in Afghanistan, as well as quite disrupted education in his own language, he was fighting an uphill battle as he was thrust into the rigours of senior education during his first year in the country.

Not one to be overwhelmed by adversity, Esmat embraced the challenges and took on the additional challenge posed by Run Beyond. He was always the first person changed and ready to run each week, and the one asking to run an extra loop of our course at the local park, while the others were adamant they'd done enough.

Despite being the fastest, and the one who could easily outlast all the others, there wasn't an ounce of arrogance to Esmat's demeanour. He never did anything other than offer quiet, sincere encouragement to the others in the team.

It didn't take long for his love of running to prompt him to seek experiences beyond school training sessions, and he soon became a regular at Rhodes parkrun, overcoming his shyness to endear himself to the running community there.

Parkrun seemed to inspire him to more challenges and I was surprised and concerned when he told me at school one day that he'd entered the Sydney Harbour 10. Knowing it wasn't

exactly cheap, and it would probably take a long shift at Kabul House where he was working to pay for the entry, I made him promise to tell me next time he wanted to enter an event to see how we could help.

We did help Esmat and I'm glad we have been in a position to do so. What I'm more thrilled about though, is his determination to help himself and others. He's graduated high school now, but he's still in touch and he's encouraging students as they work towards their goal. When he was told that one of our current students, Mohamed, was nervous about the Central Coast half marathon, he jumped at the chance to pace him - the fact that it is a lengthy drive from Taree where he's now living and working didn't perturb him one iota.

In fact, not only did Esmat drive from



Image: Esmat pacing Mohamed at the Central Coast Half Marathon

Taree to pace Mohamed, but after the half marathon he got back in his car to drive to Sydney, where he was to pick up a friend to take to the airport, before returning to Taree in time for work on Monday. Asking the obvious question, "Why?" I was told that this was the last chance he'd have to see his friend who was returning to Afghanistan.

Esmat, we're proud to have been a part of your story, and so glad to see you contributing to the stories that Mohamed and others have to tell.

Yours in the long run,

Dave

Right: A jubilant Mohamed celebrating the results of his journey

Bottom: Run Beyond at Taree for the Central Coast Half Marathon and 10km



Liked by esmat_asghari7 and others

mo_hassan27 Everyone can achieve their dream!!

It was really big day for myself.

Never forget.

Thanks to @esmat_asghari7

Who make me to fly 🕊️😂

Thanks to MR @davidcriniti and @therunbeyondproject for the LONG journey.

Every Friday after school training!

Supporting two running events #threebridgerun9km and @balmainfunrun 10km and today for #centralcoasthalfmarathon.



Still Striding...In France

by Darren Benson

I think fellow Striders might be interested to hear what I have been up to (and plan to be up to in the future).

I was a regular Strider in the 1990s and 2000s. I do miss the group aspect of the Striders' Sunday long runs as I mostly run solo here. For those that remember, I was often getting lost on the long runs and our 6:30am group regularly came back late after adding on extra kilometres!

It is great to see Striders going from strength to strength.

For over a decade now I have lived abroad; China and now France. With my family we operate a Bed and Breakfast hotel in South West France, 45 minutes from the beach and 45 minutes from the Pyrenees Mountains. We regularly entertain sports-focussed guests - runners, hikers, cyclists.

The Pilgrims route passes by our door.



Image: Winning a 13km trail race in Andrein, France 2018

I have found a little niche here and have been continuing to compete in running and cycling events, with quite a few podium finishes. This year I decided to try again to break my marathon PB, after about 50 attempts and many near-misses, but this time I finally did it.

I finished 22nd in the Barcelona Marathon in March with a time of 2hrs 27mins 49 seconds, not bad for 44-years old.

How my training has changed

The difference, apart from living a much more healthy lifestyle, was my once a week 90 minutes training session behind a friend on a bike. My friend Patrick is a retired French local, passionate about his sport and very generous (tough), accompanying in all weather conditions! I called out the required speed and then chased his back wheel! Patrick will be on-board again for 2020.



Image: Winning the 100km road race in Australia 2005

Other than this change, I had only been running about 100km per week, plus a couple of bike rides, which was a lot less than I used to run in marathon preparation. I also sleep more now since leaving the corporate world. Previously it was about 6 hours per night and now around 8 hours. This seems (in hindsight) a big bonus for recovery after hard training. I tend to do more cycling in summer and running in winter for obvious weather related reasons. However, even when I do not have any specific race planned, I still train 6 days per week, with a mix of running and cycling.

I am now less strict on my training plan and make adjustments as to how I am feeling on the day. I used to train a lot everyday but I found having one day off per week, especially after a big couple of days of training or racing, does a lot of benefit, physically and mentally.

It is ideal for training here as I am mostly on village roads with almost no traffic or otherwise on hiking tracks with a good mix of terrain and elevation.

What is next?

With my marathon goal achieved, there really remained just one more item on the running bucket list.

Back to the 100km to exorcise the demons of my last 100km whilst representing Australia at the World Cup in 2008 which I failed to finish with an asthma attack late in the race. I also wanted to have another crack at a Sub 7-hour 100km.

So, my entry has gone in.

I will be lining up in the Belles 100km in April 2020 which is the French championships.

The aim is to win and break 7 hours...it is good to aim high!

See Darren featured here in: ["Un Australien fait la promotion du Béarn"](#), [Last accessed 18 November 2019]



Image: During the Standard Chartered Marathon in Hong Kong

My training plan for my upcoming 100km race

Typically for a big race I prepare specifically for a period of 10-12 weeks.

The basic plan for the race preparation period will be around 120-150km per week running, plus one easy bike ride, which will include some double session days and a few long trail runs of 3-5 hours. I love getting out on the trails and it is a bit easier on the body.



Image: Finishing the Standard Chartered Marathon in Hong Kong

With 12 weeks to go we will be doing 1 interval session together each week for up to 30km (for the marathon this was 20km). Instead of 1-2km reps we will be doing reps of up to 5km at a less intense pace, around marathon speed.

It would seem however all those extra kilometres when I was young have created a big base of training which allows me to train less now but still achieve good results despite my advancing years. My old coach Martin Thompson (RIP) said it was just like putting deposits in the bank, and there are a lot of deposits after the past 30-odd years pounding the pavement.

I will be doing easy base mileage up to the end of the year, around 80-100km per week with a few local races thrown in to stay sharp and have a bit of fun!



Image: Competing in North Face 100km trail race in Hong Kong 2015 (Photo by Tai Fook)

New York, New York

by Andrew Chau

It was just before midnight on a Sunday. I rolled over to squint at the buzzing phone.

“DO YOU WANT TO DO THE NY MARATHON this year?”

“Sure”, I mumbled as I switched the phone to silent.

Bleary-eyed on Monday morning, I picked up my phone to check the midnight messages from my sister Caroline more thoroughly.

“DO YOU WANT TO DO THE NY MARATHON this year? Friend works at Strava. They have spots available.”

My half-awake reply in the middle of the night:

OMG.

Over the next two days, arrangements were made: a New York Road Runner (NYRR) account was created, emails sent to Strava, the exchange of Aussie dollars to the greenback, and a flight booked to New York City. It was agreed that I would pace Caroline during her first attempt at the marathon distance - a plan hatched by sibling love, but also the reality that my legs would be cooked from the Melbourne marathon three weeks earlier (my ‘A’ race of the year where I ran 2:56:46 - a 1 minute PB).

Who would’ve thought I’d be running a World Marathon Major, much less encouraging my little sister? I’m passionate about running now - but I haven’t always been. When my two sisters, Karen and Caroline, ran their first event in 2012, I cheered from the sidelines but refused to take part myself; running was boring and an inefficient mode of travel (or so I claimed back then). But we siblings are a competitive bunch, and they wore me down. They convinced me to enter the Gold Coast Half Marathon in 2016 - despite pulling out at the last minute themselves! I joined Striders in 2018 and to my absolute amazement, I actually ‘got’ the whole running thing. I was hooked.

My sisters and I kept running, but never together.

With Karen moving to China, Caroline moving to New York, and me living in Sydney, logistics and life got in the way. Still, I knew that Caroline was keen to tick a marathon off her bucket list.

And I wanted to help her achieve it.

In the months leading up to the event, our Whatsapp messages read like a ‘First Marathon - Q&A’. I followed

Caroline’s progress on Strava, giving her kudos on her runs and secretly calculating her predicted finish time. I believed a sub-4 hour finish was possible, but I didn’t want the experience to be so gruelling that it would put her off running forever.

I flew out of Sydney on the Monday before race weekend, landing in New York City on Tuesday morning. After a 27 hour transit (including an unscheduled, 7 hour beer-and-tacos bonanza with school mates in San Francisco) I was a complete wreck. But after a night on Caroline’s couch, it was time to join the pre-race festivities.

Seemingly every running store in NYC was decked out and flogging merchandise. Caroline took a day off work to explore the city and get in the zone with me. We began with a sunrise jog along the Highline to synch our pace, and also for me to check out a project that I had been following since the early 2000s as a bright-eyed landscape architecture student. We chatted about running and marathon preparation. I could sense her nervousness about the big day looming, and I tried to allay her anxieties (probably unsuccessfully). After the bagel breakfast provided by the run hosts, we headed off to the expo for bib pickup, and to collect as much free kit as possible.



The days passed in a blur of tourist hotspots and high calorie snacks. Suddenly race day was upon us. We’d prepped everything the night before: outfits were laid out, pockets stuffed with gels and CrampFix, coffee set for espresso making. The alarm went off at 4:30am and we were out the

Image: Nap-time at the starting village on Staten Island



door at 5:30am, ready to meet Caroline's Adidas Running friends for the 6:15am ferry to Staten Island. Watching the Statue of Liberty from the ferry deck, surrounded by hyped-up runners, was incredible.

The race start village was buzzing, and there were lots of smiling faces handing out free Dunkin' Donuts, coffee, beanies, bagels and bananas. We headed towards the orange start village and prepared to bunker down for the three hour wait until our start. We had brought a shoe box, plastic bags, and a fleece blanket to insulate against the cold. I napped in my blanket cocoon for an hour, waking to the blast of the cannon for the elite wave of runners.

Eventually it was time to be herded into the starting corrals. Clothing and blankets were dumped into the charity bins as we shuffled towards the Verrazano Bridge. We pushed our way further to the front of the group, inching our way towards the 4:00 hour pacer.

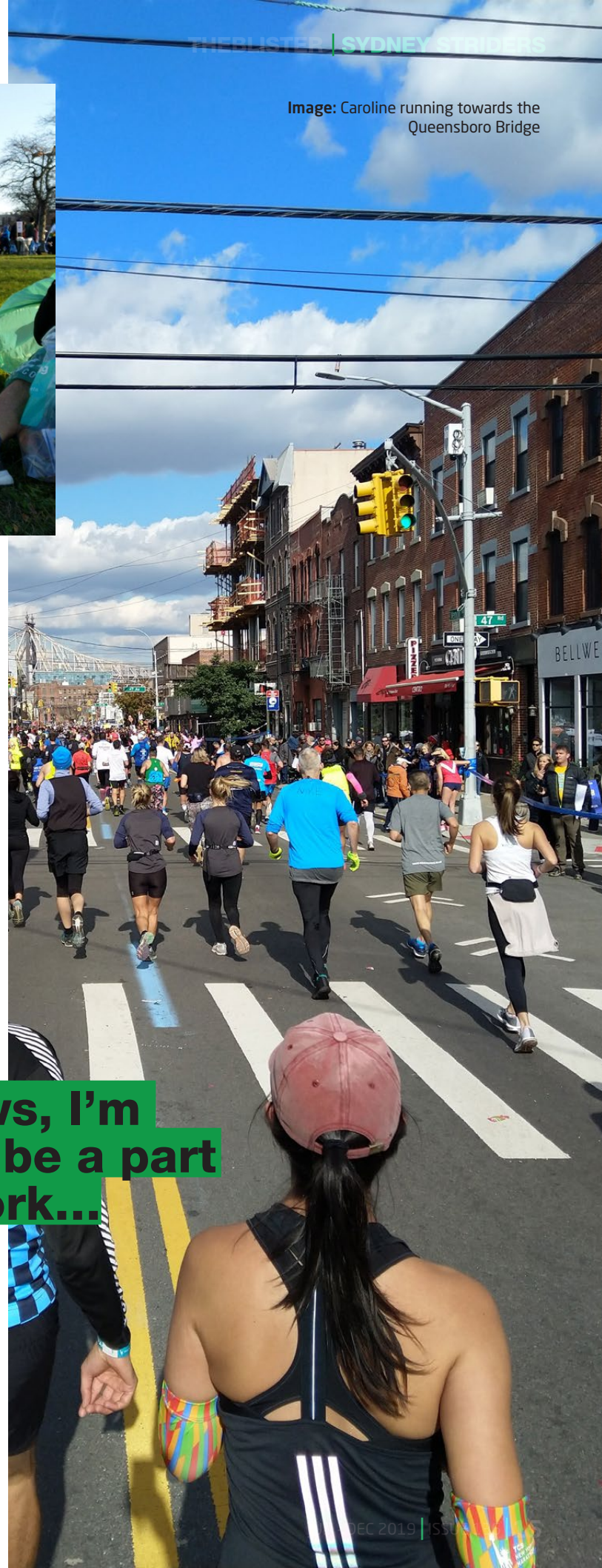
Boom!

Start spreadin' the news, I'm leavin' today, I want to be a part of it, New York, New York...

We were running over the Verrazano Bridge, police helicopters escorting us at the same level next to the bridge, the suspension cables rising up towards the pylons that were getting nearer and nearer. This was the iconic bridge seen in all the photos of the marathon. We made quick work of the biggest climb in the whole race and we were shortly moving down Fourth Avenue towards Brooklyn.

Narrowing down from a 6 lane avenue to a shaded 2 lane road amplified the supporters on course. The crowds Did Not Stop! Caroline had her nickname pinned to her bib, and random

Image: Caroline running towards the Queensboro Bridge



strangers were yelling their guts out for her. At mile 9 the Adidas Runners had set up a cheering squad - they had their flags out, bells out, high-fives out, and vocal cords maxed. It was a moment my sister had been waiting for - having friends and running family elevate her with their enthusiasm. All that support made the first 13.1 miles disappear in what felt like 15 minutes - but was in reality 1:55:59, well below our target time.

New Yorkers talk about the experience of Queensboro Bridge for two main reasons: the elevation and the eerily quiet climb. Throughout the run I talked to Caroline constantly. I would be either giving her a pep-up or cautioning her to pull back. On all the climbs I would say "take it easy going up then we'll roll down the other side. Don't worry about your pace - I've got you covered". On the Queensboro, we began dodging second wave runners who had blown up and were walking. We felt like we were flying through the crowd, a good morale boost as we hit the hardest section of the run - The Great Unknown beyond 20 miles (the longest Caroline had ever run).

We turned into the Bronx to a roar of cheering. At mile 20, I grabbed a plastic cup of black gold (flat Coke) from a supporter, and offered it to Caroline. Her face lit up as she chugged it down. Little did I know that was her last intake of nutrition for the rest of the course...



The last 6 miles took us down Fifth Ave and then into Central Park. Caroline was oddly quiet. She was edging closer and closer to the wall. She let out a groan and said "I think I need to stop and walk". I replied - a little too chirpily - "No you don't. You look fresh!" On she plodded. As we turned into Central Park, Caroline heard friends cheering her name. She picked up pace.

As we rounded the bend at Columbus Circle, I kept yelling "You can do this! It's just around the corner!" I was dodging conked-out runners, turning every few metres to see Caroline hot on my heels. We crossed the line together at exactly the same time: 3:56:46.

"You did it!" I kept repeating, as we weaved through the crowd of exhausted finishers. Caroline was feeling weak and woozy so we took a couple of minutes to catch our breath by the kerb. Seeing her sitting on the right side of the finish line made me feel immensely proud of my little sister.

Caroline will be running the 50th anniversary edition next year, and I haven't ruled out getting the siblings together for a good old fashioned sibling showdown.



Top: Following the blue line through Brooklyn

Left: First marathon completed, with smiles and medals

My First Year At Villanova

Josh Phillips

Q & A with Josh Phillips has just completed his first year at Villanova University in the United States. Questions by Tony Wong

Which college are you attending?

Villanova University

What are you studying?

I was studying Business in my first year; however, I was not enjoying it as much as I thought I would, so I transferred into the Arts & Sciences School and am going to Major in Communication.

What type of scholarship do you have?

I am on a "Full Ride" scholarship. Basically, everything is paid for except my flights between Australia and America when I come home for Christmas and the US summer break.

Are you living on campus?

Yes! I live in an on-campus apartment with 3 mates who are also on the team, Ben, Patrick and Charlie. The apartment has a nice living area with a TV, a full kitchen, two bathrooms and one shower.

Training and racing

How big is the squad in the College?

The XC squad is made up of roughly 20 guys. Those same guys will all run track events ranging from the 800m up to the 10km and Steeplechase. It's a great feeling running with a massive group every day of the week. There are also Sprinters and athletes who do all the field events, but they obviously do their own training with their squad and coaches.

How many coaches are there and what is the coach/athlete ratio?

We have our head coach, Marcus O'Sullivan, (3-time Olympian, multiple World Indoor 1500m titles and one of only three people ever to have run over 100 sub 4min miles in his career), and assistant coach, Matt Valeriani. We also have Kevin, our strength coach, and Cailey and Ty who are the team physios.



Do you have a program just for you or is there a general program for everyone?

Marcus' training philosophy means that everyone's program styles are very similar; however mileage differs based on what event you are running and how old/experienced you are. Workouts are set for everyone (some people do slight variations) and long runs differ based on event and experience. Runs during the week are distances of our choice so long as we hit the required mileage mark that Coach has told us to reach.

What are the training facilities like?

The facilities at Villanova are amazing. We have a massive weight room with everything you could ever need for strength training. We have a 25m indoor pool if we need to use it. Our locker room is spacious and there is an alter G treadmill and other fancy pieces of equipment in the locker rooms as well. We have a Tartan 400m track with artificial grass on the inside, as well as an artificial turf field (500m around) about 100m from my apartment which is great when you need softer surfaces to run on. There is an indoor track (flat 200m) about 2.5 miles down the road at Haverford College that we are able to use for workouts during indoor season when it is snowing. The treatment room where we go for any physiotherapy/medical needs is big. It has cold and hot tubs for recovery, Normatec recovery boots and Stim machines for when we have sore muscles or need some quick treatment. We also have Hyper-volt recovery guns and rollers and the amazing physiotherapists who are there to help when machines can't.

What about support?

Villanova is a Nike sponsored school. So, I will get a full set of Villanova Nike running gear twice a year including Trainers (5-6 pairs a year), Flats (Only need one pair per year), Spikes (a pair for XC and a pair for Track) and every item of running (and some casual) clothing you could possibly need such as 100% waterproof jackets, puffy down jackets for winter, long and short pants and t-shirts, jumpers and spray jackets, running tights and hats. All of which will be in Villanova colorways and with the Villanova "V" or Villanova Wildcat logo. We are pretty spoilt which is nice!

I don't get "paid" to be at Villanova, as the scholarship is kind of like my payment. However, when we go to competitions, we will receive meal money to cover food expenses when we are on the road. This can range from \$40-\$100+ depending on where we are going.

So, if I want to go shopping, or do something fun during a normal week at Nova (like go for coffee, go to the city or watch a movie etc....), I will have to pay for it myself with money I saved up from working back in Australia. I can't get an actual job with the student visa I have, nor do I have time for work between training, school, recovery and social life.



How long did it take you to adjust to training in a college squad?

In some ways, it didn't take long at all and in other ways it has taken a full year. I became friends with everyone very quickly. However training under a different philosophy to those I trained under in Australia was something that took quite an adjustment (i.e. training to heart rate in everything rather than just running hard in workouts like I would in Australia). Also learning that you are not only running for yourself, but for your team and your entire university was something different for me.

How did you do in your first season?

Overall, I went well in my first season. I didn't have any major injuries all year and I averaged about 90km a week which I tried back home and it would sometimes leave me feeling fatigued. I ran a PB of 8:07 in the 3000m and raced my first proper 5000m and ran 14:30, which was not what I hoped for but was still a great experience. In Cross Country our team made Nationals and I placed 162nd (something like 15th freshman (first year) in the nation I think) running a time of 31:09 for 10km over snow and hills in -3-degree Celsius weather! Yes, running 3:07/km pace for 10km only gets you 162nd!

What is your average weekly program like?

- **Monday:** 12-14km jog. (runs are usually at 4:10-4:40/km pace)
- **Tuesday:** Lactate threshold Workout: e.g. 4km w/u, 8-10x1000m @3:05-3:15 pace with 60 sec rest, 4km cooldown + Gym session
- **Wednesday:** Double day: AM - 8km, PM - 11km
- **Thursday:** 15-16km jog
- **Friday:** Progression run workout: 4km warm up, 12-16km progressing through our Heart Rate zones we get through testing (roughly starting at 4:00 pace and getting down to 3:30's), 4km cool down + Gym session
- **Saturday:** Easy day, 6-10km slow (4:30-5:00/km pace)
- **Sunday:** 21-25km Long run
- **Week total** = 65-70 miles / 110-120 km

How did you find the transition from living at home to attending college overseas?

For me it was not too bad. Sure, I miss home but I am not someone that gets severely homesick unless there's a family tragedy or something bad going on at home. I really loved being around runners all the time and having my independence living out of the house has been fun for me. One thing I definitely miss is some of my mum's cooking!

What advice do you have for others who are planning to follow in your footsteps?

If you are really considering it, then start educating yourself on colleges in America. Follow the NCAA seasons and see where good athletes are from and what schools race well (Media Organizations such as FloTrack would be good to follow for this (on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter)) so you can get an idea of the type of college you may want to attend one day.

As you go into your last two years of High School, try and become consistent with training over the winter months and try to make Nationals and get a good result as Cross Country is a big thing in America. Focus on training and get a good base so that when you get to track season you can run some faster times. This may mean racing open aged races to get pulled along rather than winning! The beauty of our sport is that you don't need to film yourself to get noticed like soccer or basketball. If you run fast the coaches will come after you! In your last year of High School start emailing coaches and see what type of athlete they're after.

Ask around and get information; plenty of Aussie athletes are in America, chances are you know some of them or their Aussie coaches! Message around and get an idea about it. Feel free to message me and I can even help you with getting in touch with people/pointing you in the right direction.

#ToughThursday

Fun, camaraderie and a hard workout

by Gilbert Gaddi and George Herisson

If you've ever driven past Mowbray Road in Lane Cove North on a rainy Thursday night and seen a couple of those unmistakable green and white Strider tops maniacally doing hill repeats, your eyes are not deceiving you. We are maniacally doing those hill repeats! Why? Because a little rain doesn't scare the #ToughThursday crew. Plus, running in the rain doing 12 minutes hill repeats makes you a legit badass. Truth.

But fear not, we only do those gnarly hill repeats when local council closes the grounds due to wet weather. Otherwise, you'll find us doing varied running sessions from 7pm-8pm at the track.

Piqued your interest yet? Okay, let's backtrack a bit. Here's a little history about #ToughThursday.

It started more than a year ago when we felt that there was a need to do some serious speed sessions on a track. Too many other running clubs had their own weekly intervals going, and being one of Australia's biggest (and best) clubs ever (Yes? Yes!), we felt that it was about time to run our very own. After a bit of research was done for an appropriate venue (thanks Brenda), we then got some qualified and willing coaches to be on a roster. I met up with VP Chris and Juniors coach, Anthony Wong, to consult about the sessions, and then after getting the green light from the Committee - Voila! #ToughThursday was born.

The very first session that we had was the Mona Fartlek, headed by Jacko on the 28 June 2018 in the middle of winter. Fast forward to today and we've done more than 70 sessions! Thanks to all the volunteer coaches who made these sessions possible - Amy Cheung, Brenda Gaddi, Kathy Johnsun, Lesley Mason, Matt McCarron, and Paul Sowden. Special mention to George Herisson as well for leading some of the main sessions while he was recovering from an injury.

But enough of the Whats and the Hows.

Let us hear the WHYs from some of our crew...

Lesley: "Attending #ToughThursday regularly will make you a stronger and faster runner!"

Breck: "For me #ToughThursday is a great bunch of people who push me to run faster."

Baskaran: "TT sessions are never boring as the sessions involve a rotation of different types of intervals. It's good training from a 5K to marathon distance."

Riley: "I enjoy the opportunity to diversify my training a little bit and enjoy the social side of things too."

Harley: "I ran a new PB at Corporate Cup. My previous PB was 35 minutes and I ran 28:45, thanks to #ToughThursday."

Karen (who also started bringing her daughter Emily): "#ToughThursdays are fantastic and have helped me with my pacing."

Farah: "ToughThursdays are a bit of a release for me. It comes kinda at the end of the week, I get to blow off some steam and get to have a great run with some great people. Every time I come, I meet someone different and it's actually quite incredible that feeling at 8pm when I walk out of the session even when it's dark."

Linda: "I work much harder at #ToughThursday than I would ever do if I was training on my own. And it's made me realise



Image: Working the stabilising obliques with a side plank

Image: The diverse crew that keeps coming back



that I can run faster if I really push myself. It is always hard but really fun and has helped me a lot. "

Lisa: "Tough Thursday is the trainer I can't afford to get me to my running goal! People tell me what to do and keep me honest on my running ability. Plus encouraging words and advice for all things running from a friendly relaxed group. I love it!"

Jackie: "#ToughThursdays are exactly what it says on the packet TOUGH! But the rewards are so worth it. Thank you to Gilbert and his crew of coaches. "

So there you go, now you know what #ToughThursday is all about.

You!

We try to emphasise having fun with all our sessions and we try to make it as varied as we can. At the start of every third month, we do a 3k time trial to assess where our fitness is at. We are also rolling out a new program, where we will have guest coaches every quarter. If anyone has someone in mind who'd be happy to donate their time and expertise in running special sessions, feel free to send me a message. We are also open to other volunteer coaches too. If you want to be part of the roster, get in touch with Gilbert Gaddi via messenger or email socialmedia@sydneystriders.org.au

Also remember, if you want other Strider sessions during the week, there is

the Centennial Park group headed by Shaun Atchison on Wednesdays and Fridays, 1km repeats with Dale Thompson at Lane Cove National Park every Tuesdays and Saturdays (when there is no 10k race) and the Wednesday St Ives group headed by Peter Woods. All details are on our website.

Give #ToughThursday a try. You won't regret it.

#GoStriders.



Image: Keith Bateman giving us tips

From Jimmy Choo to La Sportiva

By Shika Raju

Everyone knows my love of shoes...so much so that I decided to buy the best looking mountaineering shoes in the market because of their style and colour.

This is a brief story about my road marathon to mountaineering journey. I will try not to bore you with too much details. I want to emphasise the importance of having a vision board and a plan to conquer your dream.

First step towards Mountaineering - Vision Board

I always had a dream of climbing Everest but I wasn't in the right mindset to start preparing to achieve my dream until I started running marathons. Marathons have taught me discipline, accountability and strategy. In March 2018 I decided it was time to set up my game and start working towards my dream of climbing Everest.

My first step was to research everything mountaineering and find the right contacts. I got in touch with Adventure Consultants asking for guidance and recommendations and they gave me a step-by-step guidance plan which included doing a mountaineering course followed by climbing a 6000 metre peak. To make sense of these overwhelming information, I created a vision board and included everything I had to do. Halfway through the vision board and research



Image: Swapping high heels for a real high experience

I realised it would cost me around \$250k to \$300k to reach Everest. I thought this was achievable if I can stop buying shoes - but it never happened because I am still buying shoes!

After the vision board exercise, I had to put my plan into action, so I registered for 2019 Everest Marathon and included Island Peak (6189 metre peak) in the Himalayas as my first climb. This was one tick on my vision board and the next was to register for the mountaineering course in New Zealand which I completed in December 2018. This course taught me everything about mountaineering and I even jumped into a 40 metre crevasse!

The big question was... "now what?"... I've started my journey and have now learned the difference between hardshell, softshell, ascender, descender, carabiners, and most importantly, shoes. As the months went by, I started moving from Jimmy Choo to Mountain Equipment. I bought everything that was colour coordinated, even paying a premium for a hardshell that matched my alpine backpack...all up costing close to an equivalent of 20 pairs of Jimmy Choo shoes.

Training

As part of the training strategy for Everest Marathon and climbing 6000 metre peak, I had to form a team of experts to make me strong. My running coach transitioned me from



Image: Navigating a glacier

road to trail runner... I had to learn everything about trail running in six months. My strength coach focused on building my strength, especially my legs and upper back. Luckily I was a Crossfitter for many years so I knew a lot of compound movements that helped me transition into strength very easily.

Going to the Himalayas

The day finally arrived when I left Australia for Nepal. I fell in love with Kathmandu, the craziness of the city and the wonderful people made the journey more exciting. When I arrived in Kathmandu I met my fellow team mates; there were seven of us in the group and we were the first marathon group to arrive in Kathmandu. During the 23 days of trekking to Island Peak base camp, I went through different parts of the Himalayas surreal, to be in such a beautiful place surrounded by 8000 metre peaks. As we made our way to Island Peak Base camp the altitude increased, making it harder to breathe and five steps felt like 500 metres. There were lots of challenging moments along the way, however I enjoyed every minute of my time. I can honestly say that I lived in the moment and it was beautiful. I wasn't bothered by a pit toilet, eating a minimal selection of food, or having a very basic shower facility at tea lodges that cost \$US10 (but the water was hot).



Climbing Island Peak (6189 metres)

Finally we arrived at Island Peak Base Camp (5600 metres). This is where the true impact of altitude was felt. Due to lack of oxygen, it was a battlefield getting into a tent and changing into climbing gear for the summit. We rested for a few hours and were ready to start our summit to Island Peak. It was midnight when we got up, had porridge and started walking in the dark. It took five hours to reach the glacier point of the mountain. We were scrambling along the way; I have never seen so many big rocks in my life. When daylight arrived I could see how far we had come and my first thought was "how did I climb this?" At the glacier point, we put our crampons on and got roped up and started walking to the summit. Along the way we had to cross horizontal and vertical ladders as there were steep ice and snow slopes. My only thought was "just get through this"; I didn't give myself time to think about the fear or danger. I conquered each ladder

and focused on getting to the summit. Time was running out, we had to get to the summit by 8am before the wind picked up. Although I was exhausted, I kept focusing on getting to the summit. The last 150 metres of headwall to the ridge of the summit were the hardest. Although there was fixed rope to the ridge, there was lots of climbing and pulling, plus the lack of oxygen made it worse... I couldn't breathe but I wasn't going to give up. After 30 minutes, I got to the summit and it was the most wonderful feeling in the world. I had climbed one of the most technical mountains in the Himalayan region,



Left: Following the signs to the top
Top Right: Following the ridge to Island Peak
Bottom Right: Everest Base Camp Marker



but it wasn't over... what goes up must come down. After being on the summit for a short time, I started to descend by jumping off the mountain and rappelling down which was fun until we got to the end of the glacier point. From there it became mentally challenging; I was so exhausted that I was on the verge of crying but I had to keep going because there was nowhere else to go. Finally, I arrived at the base camp and that was the happiest moment of my life.

From Island Peak to Everest Marathon

After summiting Island Peak, we made our way to Everest Base camp (EBC), staying at different lodges, which took us three days to reach. Unfortunately, I caught a cold after summiting Island Peak so I was coughing and very unwell. When we arrived at EBC we met our fellow marathoners and were allocated to our tent for the night. Camping at EBC was very special because the tents are for the Everest expedition. However at the end of May, Everest expedition is over so everyone returns home and the tents are left for the marathoners. On the morning of the Everest Marathon, it was so cold and my condition was not good but I was determined to finish the marathon. The marathon was so hard and being sick contributed to the challenging conditions, but I crossed the finish line.

Next Step on the Vision Board

Let's return to my vision board. I came home from the Himalayas and ticked off 6000 metre peak and marathon.

This is what I now have on my vision board:

- June 2020 - Run Inca Trail to Machu Picchu marathon (booked)
- September 2020 - Run Sydney Marathon
- October 2020 - Climb Mera Peak (6400 metres) and Baruntse (7200 metres) in the Himalayas (booked)
- December 2020 - Climb Mt Aspiring in New Zealand (training climb)
- May 2021 - Climb Cho Oyu (8201metres) in the Himalayas
- September 2021 - Climb Mont Blanc (training climb)
- December 2021 - Climb Mt Cook in New Zealand (training climb)
- April 2022 - Climb Everest (8848 metres)

Image: Getting ready for the mountain marathon



A Strider's Journey from the Early Days to a Lung Transplant

By Geoff Cox

It was 1980 and I was twenty years old, waiting for the presentation at the Great Nosh, and was handed a flyer with some information about the Sydney Striders. It was a new club for runners who wanted to do a Sunday training run (STaR) of around thirty kilometres, starting at 6am. I dismissed this as ludicrous on both counts. As fate would have it, however, a former workmate of mine, Mike Anschultz, did become a member and he convinced me that running thirty kilometres wasn't as ridiculous as I thought. Mike had the distinction of becoming the second Strider after Charles Coville to break three hours for the marathon, so the training had worked for him.

I joined the club in September 1980. In those days STaRs started from members' houses, so I arrived for my first run which started in Artarmon. My plan was to do the 'short' option, which was more like twenty kilometres. When we reached the point where the short option diverged from the main run, nobody turned so it was run alone or keep going. I chose to keep going and arrived back at Artarmon a very tired boy. Nevertheless, I became a Strider and have been ever since.

In those days it seemed like everybody in the Striders wanted to break three hours for the marathon and I became one of them. I entered the Harbord Diggers Marathon, held in April 1981, confident that I could break the three hour barrier. Prior to the marathon, the Striders had put on an internal 25 km event called 'The Bayview Burn Up', which used part of the actual course and I had run 1:40 for that, so I knew the speed was there.

Marathon day arrived.

We ran north from Manly at what seemed like a comfortable pace which, if maintained, would see me finishing in under three hours. On the run back to Manly it became a much different story. By thirty-five kilometres I had hit 'the wall' and was walking as much as I was 'running' along. Three hours came and went. I finally crossed the line in three hours and twenty-seven minutes, which in retrospect is not a bad time for a first marathon, but I was both disappointed and exhausted. In fact, you might say it had scarred me as I didn't attempt another marathon for ten years.

In 1985 I left Sydney, initially moving to Bathurst. While I rarely was able to train with the Striders, I maintained my connection to the club, running in my Striders top in races in country NSW, inter-state and overseas. I did return to Sydney for a few years in the mid-nineties and became a regular, for

a time, at Striders' runs. In 1998 I moved to Canberra where I have been ever since.

I enjoyed competing when I was in my prime and achieved some reasonable results which included a PB of 47:40 in the City to Surf, a 10km time of 33:30 running the Harrow 10K in the UK (which got me 70th place, very competitive!) and a sub 1:15 for the half. I also did triathlons in the days when you toed the starting line with the likes of Greg Welsh and Brad Bevan. It was now time, however, to have another crack at the marathon.

The race was the Honolulu Marathon (1991). I had a good build up, running my long training runs with other Bathurst runners who would do part of the run with me. It all came together on the day; I ran 2:55:58 with a negative split. As a result of this, I won my one and only Striders award, for the 'Most improved sub-three-hour marathon'.

In my early forties my back started to give me trouble, to the point where I was forced to give up running, start Pilates and exercise without the same impact and stress on the body. My body appreciated the change in routine and generally I felt



Image: Esrom Run Bathurst 1987

better for it. However, one thing I did start to notice was that I couldn't maintain my effort when exercising. I would go to the pool with the intention of swimming a kilometre warm-up, only to have to stop after a shorter distance, as I was becoming breathless. I put this down to getting older and not training as hard as I used to. I was to find out that neither of these were the reason for my decline, rather I had inherited a little known genetic condition called alpha 1 anti-trypsin deficiency.

The event that led to my diagnosis was a severe case of influenza (in 2008) with a very nasty and persistent cough. With this illness I had noticeable breathing difficulties. My GP listened to my story of decreasing exercise tolerance and breathing problems and did not hesitate to send me to a thoracic surgeon.

The specialist ran a series of tests and then called me back in to give me the news that I had alpha 1, a condition I had never heard of. Essentially my lungs have no protection and so over the years they have gradually deteriorated and were no longer working as they should.

It was advised that I continue to exercise regularly, try to avoid illness, and when travelling, stay away from polluted cities.

For the next decade my exercise capacity gradually declined. At first, I could walk without problems but running or swimming longer distances was very difficult. Then I began to breathe more heavily when just walking. In 2015, I was referred to the Heart and Lung Transplant clinic at St Vincent's.

As my condition deteriorated, to the point where any light activity (e.g. having a shower) left me breathless, the need to have a lung transplant sooner rather than later became apparent. In mid-2018, I started my transplant workup. This involved multiple tests to see if I was a suitable patient for a transplant. While they knew my lungs were 'rubbish',

they needed to see if the rest of my body would hold up to the rigours of a transplant and if I was psychologically able to follow through with the routines I would be required to maintain post-transplant.

On May 3, 2019, I was put on the transplant list. At 10:30pm on May 14, my phone rang and I received the good news that they had received lungs that may be suitable for me. I had only been on the list for twelve days. Some people wait months or even years; I was very lucky.

We were soon heading up the Hume Highway to Sydney and at 5am I was being wheeled to the operating theatre.

The surgeons completed their delicate work around lunchtime, and I was taken to ICU, still well and truly out of it. I don't recall anything from that day or the next, although apparently, I did begin to respond to the nurses' questions. My first recollections were being in ICU two days post-transplant.

The operation, along with problems which developed prior to my transplant, meant that I had problems with swallowing, speaking, and I weighed less than 60kg. It was not a pleasant time; the special food and drinks were definitely not very appetising.

On Monday May 20th I was moved upstairs to a regular ward. I was receiving 'food' through a nasal tube, as a supplement to what I could eat myself.

I was in hospital for six weeks, which is longer than most transplant patients. The reason for my extended stay was the



Image: Leisure Coast Triathlon 1984



Image: Geoff enjoying the Coastal Walk between Coogee and Bronte

need to drain fluid and air from around the lungs. This was done by attaching drains to my chest. I had as many as four at one stage, which made it very difficult to move around.

While in hospital I was very fortunate to have my wife, Dianne, by my side every day. At first, many basic activities would have been very difficult without her assistance. All transplant patients get the shakes as a result of the medications they have to take, so eating, for example, can be problematic. I also enjoyed a couple of visits from Brian Colwell, a Strider, who has been a member since the early days.

The lung transplant team monitor you very closely in the first

few months after transplant, and you have to stay in Sydney. I had to go to the hospital most days for tests and to see the doctors. They also run a rehab program at the hospital gym twice a week. I gradually got stronger and by the end of my time in Sydney (after three months) I was able to walk along the cliff top path of the southern beaches.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the donor, who I virtually know nothing about. Without their family thinking of others, I would not have received the call that night. I can't thank them enough.

Please have that conversation with your family about organ donation if you haven't done so already.



Image: Honolulu
Marathon 1991



“Run-cation” Report: Osaka Marathon 2019

By Belinda Louey

I joined Sydney Striders this year to jettison my running goals after a year of up and down injury and motivation. It has really opened up my world of running in more ways than I ever imagined.

Amongst trail races, marathons, road racing, relays, ultras ... And then these enlivened discussions around destination marathons and `World Majors`. Wasn't running in Australia hard enough?! I wondered what the attraction of running overseas was? Was it the feeling of stepping out onto the world stage? Running and representing your country as an athlete? Or was it purely the enticement of a 'runcation' for all the months of hard training?

I had to experience this for myself.

When a Major is not a Major?

Osaka Marathon seemed like a good choice for a literal taste as far as international marathons go. Whilst not a World Major, it is the second largest marathon in Japan after Tokyo Marathon, drawing in a running community of 32,000 plus die-hard marathon runners. It seemed like a nice, relatively flat course too. But these seemed secondary considerations when the research indicated an amazing on-course smorgasbord of local delights that awaited runners at the 29th kilometre mark. Did someone say “Party food in a marathon”? Or “Marathon Party Food”? I was hooked! But more on this later...

Gather and Feast

I was fortunate enough to find a few hungry Strider members in: Amy Cheung, Baskaran Balasingam and Kim Chai to join in the culinary (I mean, running!) journey. I gleaned a lot from their knowledge and running experience and it was great to have some shared travel memories together. Fortune favours those with hungry goals it seems so, with balloted entries confirmed, it was “Osaka - here we come!”

Our training paralleled with much discussion on foodie finds and eating bucket-lists in the lead-up to the marathon. “Train hard, eat all you want!” became like a mantra and certainly added to the motivation.

The road to race day

Day 1 The combination of lack of sleep and poor airplane food on an overnight flight left me a little worse for wear upon arrival to Osaka. Fatigue had caught up and I felt it in my legs. If you know Japan, you would also know that stairs are everywhere so it was quite the plod to get to my accommodation. (Tip 1 - Allow plenty of time to get ready for your race week preparations.)

Day 2 Off to the race expo to collect bibs. This provided a great insight into the long-anticipated marathon race eats that we expected on race day. With three halls covering sponsors, demos, sporting paraphernalia, freebies and a massive food hall, is there ever such a bad time to start carb-loading?!

(Tip 2 - As with anything marathon-related, pace it!)

Day 3 No such thing as real rest and relaxation in this mega-city. Despite doing a reconnaissance mission of the starting route, the day was spent pre-planning ongoing holiday stuff, walking, shopping and eyeing off post-marathon celebratory eats and seeking out carb-loading food choices. (Tip 3 - carb-load carefully and don't try anything new. Though no harm looking at what's good to eat, don't get carried away!)

Day 4 Race day. Though chilly weather had set in the days prior to the marathon, we were blessed with the best winter sunny start. Did I mention the massive field of runners I was up against? Japanese people move frenetically at times but this was a real conglomerate of ants hustling and jostling for starting positions. Were they as hungry as me, I wondered!? We would soon see. I was caught up in the second start so as the field moved off, it seemed a bit of a crawl to navigate through the steady stomp of feet for the first few kilometres. I was far from seeing any relative pacers to follow so made do with those around me, weaving when required and moving steadily along. At least I could enjoy some of the sights of Osaka, I guess. (Tip 4 - get to the start gate earlier than you think! If you can rope in a friend/partner/family member to check-in bag drop whilst you line up for port-a-loos, even better!)

The Course

First course, second course, third course, dessert - well not quite, but alongside the hospitable and large crowd that gathered to cheer on runners, there were plenty of food choices dotted along the marathon route! Expect mochi and bananas at 8km, sweets, grapes and cake at 17km. I loved the novelty of the signs designating “water/hydration” or



Image: Striders in Osaka

Belinda, Kingsley, Kim, Baskaran, Amy



"meal service" along the route. And then the 29th km - the Maido Aid Station, is where you can expect croquettes, cakes, fruit, mochi, sushi (yes!!), fruit and candy should you need it. Hopefully, if you're quick! Unfortunately, for me, I was pretty focused on my running at that stage (though my splits show I did slow down here to have a look at the temptations!) It seems the idea of eating at this point was secondary and difficult to my running plan...

The Finish Line

It was quite a looping road to the finish line but well worth surging toward. More food awaits as well as a nice celebratory towel, finish photos, a few sore toes and a rainbow of memories with Osaka Castle as the backdrop. With a few undulations and somewhat vast inclines between 28-35km, it wasn't the entirely flat course I expected. But it was a mission accomplished. I enjoyed the spirit of the crowds, the amazing sea of runners as you looped around and the overall atmosphere. (Final tip - train for the pain. A marathon is always longer than you think - be ready for it!)

A recovery of sorts - the travel blurb bit...

My active holiday continued post-marathon when I decided to incorporate some side adventure exploring the beautiful coastal trails south of Japan, known as Kumano Kodo. Though not something I would recommend immediately post-marathon, it was an experience not to be missed. A short travel distance from Osaka, it is one of the most scenic and rugged place if you are the avid trail-lover. More pilgrimage than trail-blazing, there were undulations, inclines, elevations and the most technical terrain ever, leaving you breathless at every craggy step. And if not rockiness then did I mention the marathon stone steps you might encounter!? Though I have yet to embark on 6-Foot Track or any ultras, the 12 hours I experienced here left me in awe of those runners who are always willing to pit themselves at this level. There are no tips I can really impart here except I know fortitude is required. The rugged beauty and sheer effort required certainly made the marathon look easy!



Top Left: Getting to the start at Japan's second most popular marathon

Bottom Left: Celebrating a marathon finish with the iconic Glico Man

Bottom Right: Post-race recover on the trails of Kumano Kodo



Run Rupal Run

Email from Rupal Ramesh Shah

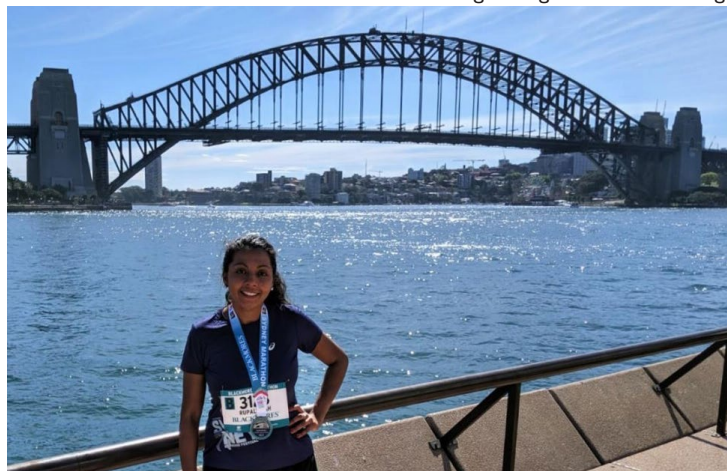
Introduction by Amy Cheung

Rupal was a visitor from Haiti who completed the Sydney Marathon on 15 September 2019. Overwhelmed by the largely unsheltered course and sweltering heat on race day, Rupal struggled to keep up with the 4:30 pacer, and eventually slowed down to finish at 6:00. With the help of Sydney Strider sweeper John Kaparelis, not only Rupal was able to complete Sydney Marathon, she also completed a marathon in each of the seven continents in the world (yes, including Antarctica). Sydney Marathon was also her 11th Marathon, in 11 years. She has also completed all six World Marathon Majors, starting with Chicago in 2008 and finished with London in 2017.

Below is a heartfelt email from Rupal, praising John and his dedication as the Sydney Marathon race sweeper.



Top Right: A proud finisher
Bottom Left: Finishing strong with the Haiti flag



Dear Sir or Madam,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Rupal Shah and I ran the Sydney Blackmores Marathon on Sunday, September 15, 2019. I want to write a complimentary note for John from Sydney Striders, the last race pacer ("sweeper"). He made sure that all the stragglers like me who were struggling to complete in under 6 hours would run and complete successfully.

He used some great strategies! He would, enthusiastically and in a loud voice, yell at all of us slow runners. He used statements like, 'You can do it,' 'Don't stop,' and 'Pick up your pace.' All of these statements helped and made a huge difference. He would come close to us and say things like, 'You can do it.' Even though that's a simple statement, the difference it made at that moment when we had been running for almost 6 hours and were mentally exhausted, was huge.

For me, it was because of John that I completed the race. If he wasn't there at the end to personally cheer on us and to enthusiastically push us to do it, I wouldn't have completed it! I have to admit him and I have to thank him for my race medal. I loved everything about him being the last pacer and I strongly suggest for him to do it in the future as well.

I saw John at the end of the marathon and thanked him in person. I hear he carried a couple of tired runners to ensure they would cross the finish line. As a runner who is slow, I understand what it means to finish, even if it takes a long time. I know every runner wants to finish so I appreciated hearing that story and hearing how much John helped each runner to make it across that finish line.

I want to make sure you and your group recognise him for his good work. He is amazing at what he does and for runners like me, I'd call him my running angel. I want to genuinely express my gratitude to him. I hope your team will recognise him for his excellent pacer skills!

With Sincere Gratitude,

Rupal

Race Report: IAU 50KM World Championships, Romania 2019

By Larissa Tichon

Race day - 1 September 2019

I'd kind of kept in the Sydney timezone a little in the lead up so got up at 3am quite naturally and had my breakfast of a cup of muesli, 5 snackaballs and a Carmen's protein muesli bar. I had been reading my 7th book, 'Finish the Race' and selected my verse to meditate on:

'For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.' (2 Timothy 1:7). A pivotal verse to get rid of any race nerves and focus on what is possible through Christ.

Once everyone got up, we took our token pre-race uniform photos, had a little debrief to discuss race strategy, and hopped on the bus to the start line.

And we're off!

We set off at 8am into the cute little city of Brasov with some of the world's best marathoners and 50km runners. I'd planned to go out conservatively with Clare at 4:15min/km and thought of the race as a 'run with Clare for at least the first two laps', making the thought of doing hot laps around Brasov city less daunting without my usual headphones and one song on repeat. After the first kilometre, it was clear she wasn't sticking to her premeditated 4:15min/km:

"Clare, I'm going to pull back to 4:12. See you out there!"

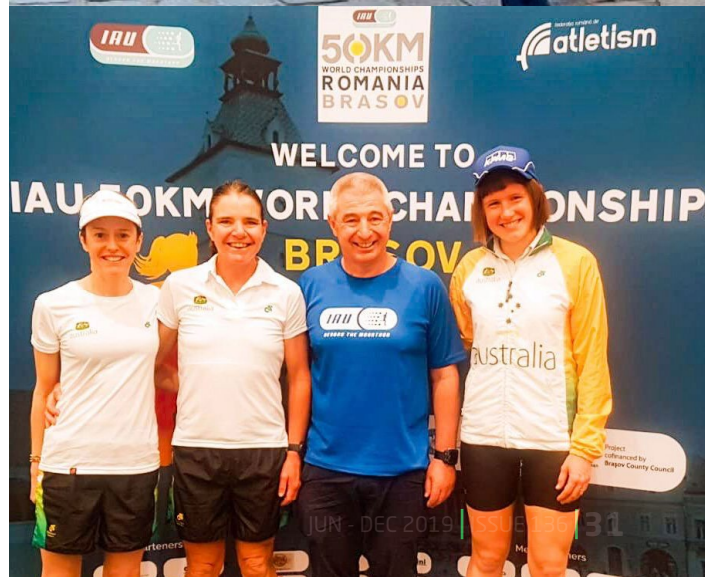
"Okay Larissa - I'm feeling really good. Sorry!"

I felt the fight within me as her team captain to tell Clare to slow down from 4min/km pace which would set her up for sub 3h20, a time I think she could achieve next year with the training she does with the defence force, her killer running sessions (I'm still nauseous at the idea of her 8 x 1 mile with 1 mile float session!), and the six childbirths she's endured. I let her continue on and encouraged her as I saw her many times on the out and back 9km course on repeat.

With the expected high of 28 degrees Celsius, starting off just short of 70% humidity, I opted to run by feel quite early on and stopped looking at my watch. The course had a gradual uphill in one direction and a gradual down in the other direction. The turnaround point at 4.5km was unmanned by our Australian support crew of two (with my husband, Jerel, appointed as the on-the-ground Australian team manager just two days before). I grabbed water where I could, at the start/finish turnaround point, pouring it first over the body to cool myself and drinking the remains. I was carrying 14 gels in my belt that I ingested whenever I had water (at about lap 4 I was given a yellow card for having a race belt which I later found out was a mistake by one of the Romanian officials).

I got a stitch at about 27km and ran that out until about 32km. The no-music factor felt fine! I just kept repeating 'love, power and self-discipline' mixed in with 'aussie aussie aussie oi oi oi!' A big leap since

Top: The opening parade of the Championship
Bottom: The Australian team and Coach.



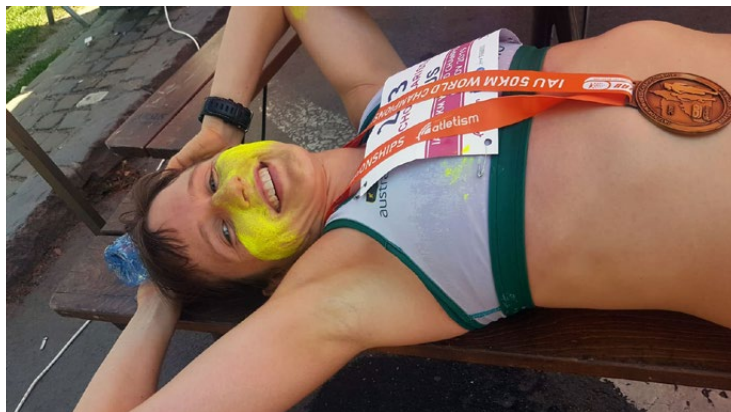
last year at the 100km World Championships where I was periodically crying at running around a cornfield in the middle of Croatia with no music to tune out to and get over 'hitting the wall'.

From 32km til the finish I held on at effort by feel, bringing it home in a time about 20 minute off my best-case scenario goal and 10 minutes shy of my personal best, placing 42nd. Clare finished 30th and Karen had to pull out at 41km - she will be back. I'm super proud of both their efforts for their debut race.

At the after-party, with my new IAU official of the Spanish speaking type network loving their Spanish-speaking Australian, I remarked there had been too many years of heat-wave world championships. "Can we please have a winter race?"

"We have some exciting news and would love to welcome you in our country next year. November just North of Madrid. 10 degrees - you will love it Larissa!"

With that we partied until the early hours of the morning - 30 countries, 35 languages, one community. We were united.



Lessons I learnt as both an athlete and team captain representing Australia at the 50km World Championships

Things that went well:

- Make your training fun and varied. Most of my running was at easy talking pace, spread across up to 7 sessions with our KPMG running club, 20% of my 160km weeks on speed work, and a few fun races. My running community played such an important role when I was grieving the loss of my brother. I have had this strong drive to want to continue building these communities and relationships through running.
- Overcoming my music-dependency. It was only this time last year I was told that one of the race rules for World Championships was 'no music'. I had buried myself in my room the eve before race day memorising songs. It was such an exposure not having music for that race - I cried multiple times. This year I had slowly weaned myself off music by moving from headphones, to speakers, to self-prescribed exposure therapy, running many track races with no music.
- Doing your own pre-race routine is important, but seizing

the opportunities to meet the international network is also important. Getting more and more involved in the international running community, IAU VP Nick Bester was diligent in ensuring I was networking appropriately. After-all I had met Nick just this time last year at World Championships by handing him a koala key ring that led to talking about Comrades, and not only joining the Nedbank Green Dream Team, but also adopting a mentor who has been so pivotal in founding and growing KPMG RunWELL.

- Learning from the team as a leader. We had a spread of strong-willed women on the team, ranging in backgrounds, ages and life circumstances. First up we had Karen Pienar, aged 41, a very driven, achievement-orientated and self-disciplined senior executive from Adelaide. Then there was Clare Palmer, aged 45, a mother of 6 from country NSW, super strong-willed thanks to both her motherhood as well as her role in the Australian defence-force (don't get on her bad side!). I learnt a lot from both of them over the 5 days we spent together. We didn't let age, titles, or achievements get in the way of learning from each other.
- There are some things you can't control but you can do the best you can with what you have. I know I operate best running at about 3 degrees, and anywhere between day 7 and 25 of my cycle. This race was 28 degrees and I was on day 2. I put aside my general perfectionistic tendencies and ran to effort/feel, finishing knowing I couldn't have given any more!

Things that I'd do differently next time:

- Don't overload on electrolytes. In the days leading up, in my initial fear of the hot conditions for race day, I was having approximately 4 Hydrolyte tablets a day. Whilst a great source of salt to replace from sweating, given I was doing very minimal sweating in those few days it just meant the accumulation of these salts, meaning my body was retaining fluid much more readily, and a little heavier at the start line.
- Don't forget to prepare for race conditions. I had been in my element flying through the gorgeous wintry running conditions in Sydney and had neglected the European and Northern Hemisphere summer heat/humidity race conditions. Factoring in some steam room training would have been useful.
- Leading a team requires a bigger picture focus. In preparing on race morning, I could have spent a bit more time with each team member to run through their thoughts and strategy for the race. While a debrief is important, a tailored 1:1 prebrief is just as important.
- Don't be afraid to be super conservative. Robert Boyce, knowing my natural strengths, had warned me not to shoot for a personal best on race day. Knowing I was in the fittest form I had ever been in, I didn't listen to him but rather revised my race plan to be a 'little slower'. If I were to do the race all over again I probably would have started another 10 seconds per kilometre slower.

If you would like to see my video summary, please find me @ [runwithlarissa](#) on Instagram.

Should runners take supplements?

By Tamar Goldbery

BA (Psych) BHSc (Complementary medicine)

Nutritional foods, functional foods, vitamins, minerals, protein powders, supplementation, eating healthy, macro nutrition, micro nutrition... arghhhhhhhh so many views, so much evidence for and against supplementing training with essential nutrients to support the endurance of the activity and boosting performance.

I cannot begin to tell you how many times I have tried to write this article over the past month and the hours of research I have done to collate the information. I have found many studies that support the use of supplements and some that say that supplements don't improve performance at all.

So, for me, after much deliberating, I turned the tables to you... my Striders family, and asked the empirical question "Who uses supplements in their training regime?"

I found that most of you rely on a healthy diet, and some of you, who shall remain nameless, eat an unhealthy diet so that they can run it off!

With the abundance of conflicting evidence out there, I thought I would tell you the logic behind my decision to start supplementing my running a few months ago and the vast improvement it has made.

I have a Bachelor of Health Science in Complementary Medicine and work for a large company in nutritional and functional foods, so all logic states that I SHOULD be taking supplements to support and boost my training, but I hadn't. So a few months ago I researched what the top endurance athletes around the world took and recommended for training and tried it for myself. Once I understood HOW the body was going to utilise them and better support me, I started taking them and I cannot begin to tell you how much they helped!!



Here is what I found works for me:

Co-enzyme Q10

Acts like a spark plug to the cells for energy. It plays a vital role in the body's energy supply, it helps the body convert the nutrients that you eat into energy. All cells require Q10 with the heart and muscles having a large demand. Evidence suggests 300mg for over 6 weeks can improve performance substantially.

Beetroot powder

A nutrient rich fuel. Enhances speed and power in running. Beetroot contains high levels of chemicals called nitrates, which have been shown to boost exercise performance. Nitric oxide has been shown to reduce the amount of oxygen your muscles need for exercise and may enhance athletic performance. 1-2 tablespoons an hour to two before training helps boost power... but a warning, it tastes HORRID!

Multivitamin and mineral supplement

Essential for energy metabolism. Acts in turning what you eat into energy. Some of them help produce energy during exercise; others help produce red blood cells, synthesize protein and repair strained tissues.

Vitamin C

Supports in recovery from fatigue and soreness post run. Vitamin C aids in the growth and repair of tissue in the body. It isn't stored in the body, so it is important to supplement after a run to support inflammation and muscle recovery. 1000mg-2000mg a day post run.

Fish oil

Supports recovery and injury prevention. Can support the body in warding off the damaging effects of inflammation. Up to 3000mg a day post run.

Apart from that, I will leave you with something to think about. If you do decide to rely solely on food for your training, that is more than ok, just be mindful that you need the right amount of vitamins and minerals as well as protein and carbohydrates and fibre. Eating healthy can be done but you need to be smart about it and supplement where you can. Functional foods and nutritional medicine is a massively growing part of the health industry and for good reason - convenience, soils are deficient in minerals, and cost. At the end of the day, you need to make a decision that is best for you. I resisted for many years and now I have a mix of both supplements and a healthy diet.

Runner Desk Stretches

By Patrick McNamara

Runner-specific stretches and strength drills at your standing desk

There is now completely undeniable evidence about the pros of strength training for running in terms of increasing performance and reducing injury risk. Here are a few drills you can do at work, especially for those at a stand-up desk. Have fun!

1. Take your shoes off!

Free the foot for a stronger foot.

There is now some really cool evidence that being barefoot or wearing "minimal" shoes has a very similar effect as specific foot-strengthening drills. A strong foot is a healthy foot. Simply standing and moving around your workspace shoe-less is such a quick win if your office allows.

2. Single Leg Calf Raise

Slow these down. 3 seconds up, 3 seconds down. Do as many as you can. 30 high quality reps in a row on each leg should be the target. Feel the burn!

3. Toe Yoga

This one needs to be done barefoot. Try and lift your big toe whilst keeping the other 4 toes on the ground. And vice versa, lift the outer 4 toes whilst keeping the big toe planted on the ground. Toe dexterity is a good indicator of foot health. This one requires practice. Stick at it and after a few weeks you should see some improvement.

4. Bulgarian Split Squat

Place one foot on a chair behind you, and lower down into a half-squat, half-lunge, and then push back up. 10-15 of these on each side should have you feeling your quads and/or glutes depending on your technique.

Remember, "strength" for a runner doesn't have to involve a 60 minute gym session. Strength can be a 10 minute session where 2-3 drills done really effectively will reap maximal gain.

You can't go wrong getting strong.

For any further questions or enquiries, contact Patty at patrick.mcnamara@imovephysio.com.au



Image: Single Leg Calf Raise in the top position



Image: Bulgarian Split Squat in the lowered position



Juniors Corner

By Tony Wong and Caroline Yarnell
RUN C&T

Quick Stats

65 Members

9 Represented NSW in the
2019 Australian Cross-
Country Championships

1 Represented Australia in
the 2019 Oceania Games



Top: Juniors at the Sydney 10
Middle: Under 14s 2.5k at the Sydney 10
Bottom: The start line of the 5k at the
Sydney 10



Middle Left: The under 14 girls gold medal winning team at the NSW Cross Country Relays at Miranda

Middle Right: Under 14s 2.5k at the Sydney 10

Bottom: Start of the 4x3km at the NSW Cross Country Relays at Miranda





Image: Astrid Kingsmill at the NSW Cross Country Championship at Nowra. Astrid went on to win the F18-34 Age Group in the 2019 Sydney Striders 10k series



Image: Nerves before the start of the under 14 girls' race in the NSW Cross Country Championship at Nowra



Top: The 9 Sydney Striders who represented NSW in the 2019 Australian Cross Country Championship

Middle Left: Chiara Galletta handing over to Sienna Villacorta in the under 14 girls event at the Street Relays

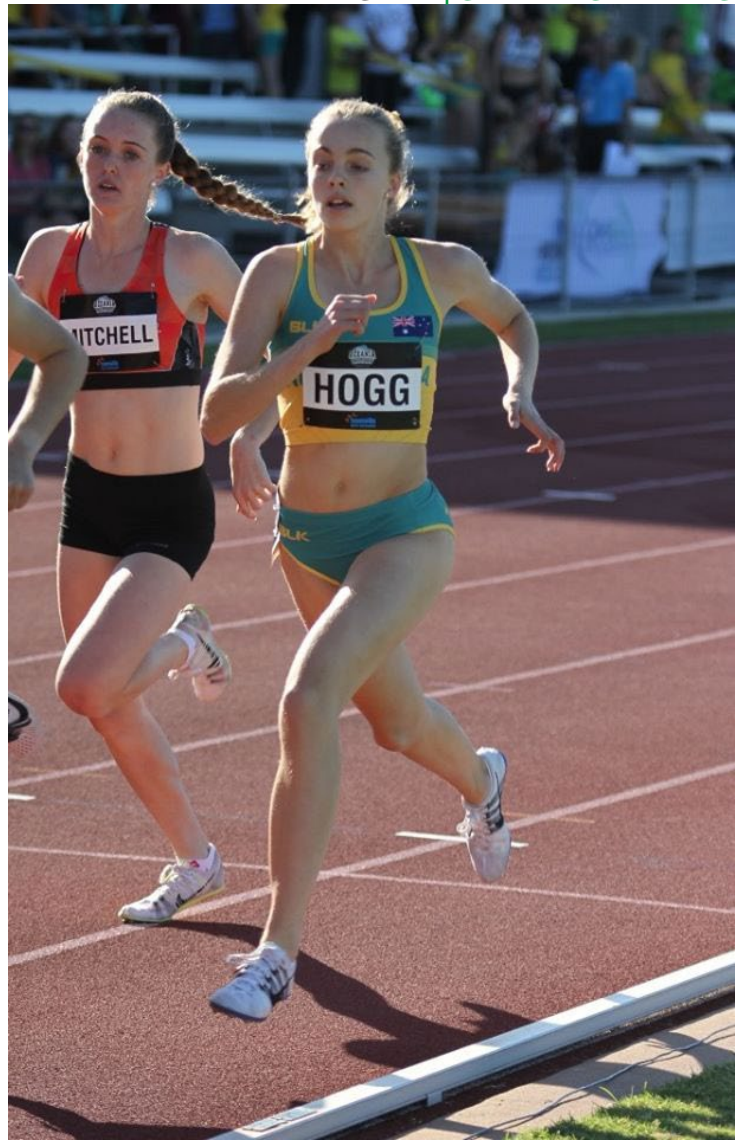
Middle Right: Charlie Arnott handing over to Alexandra Sinclair in the under 16 girls event at the Street Relays

Bottom: Start of the 4x2km at the Street Relays at Ourimbah





Top: Hill sprints are taken very seriously at training
Middle: The squad was joined by their new Assistant Coach Josh Phillips at Manly Beach
Above: Josh Phillips, Nicola Hogg (2018/19 Summer Athlete of the Year), Mercy Nathanael and Charlie Arnott (Joint winners of the 2018 Winter Athlete of the Year) at the 2019 Annual Awards Party



Above: Nicola Hogg in Australian Colours in the 2019 Oceania Athletic Championship at Townsville

Below: Josh Phillips and Nicola Hogg sharing training and competition tips at our Pizza Night



Last Word

By Gilbert Gaddi

It's been truly exciting for the club this year! There have been events left, right and centre, and that's just the major ones. How's your running been? Hopefully, no injuries!

Summer's well and truly here and a little (or a lot) of smoke does not deter our runners from hitting the pavement or the local trails. Do exercise a bit of caution though, as it may be dangerous out there. Check your local air quality index, or better yet - stay indoors!

Have you been checking out our Instagram lately? Brenda has been hard at work posting all the stories on our page. It's all in good fun. She also sets up the STaR events on Facebook so you get reminded every week so better not miss it!

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](#)

Join the [Members only group](#)

Or the [Marathon Training Group](#)

And the [Race Pacers Group](#)

We are on Instagram: [@sydney_striders](#)

Twitter: [@sydneystriders](#)

Be seeing you on the road, trail, and during the STaRs.

#GoStriders!



Top: Course Marking for Rhodes Rumble

Middle: The STaR group enjoying Cooks River Recuperator in Ashfield

Bottom: Our STaR group at the Sydney Marathon Sneak Preview STaR in North Sydney

