

Official Magazine of

New Brighton Olympic

Athletic Club



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RUNNING COMMENTARY



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Articles

Do you have something interesting which could be included in our magazine?

If you feel that it is interesting we would love to share it with other members.
Articles for the next issue should be sent in by the middle of May.

A big thank you to those members who have contributed to this issue.

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From the Editor:

This months magazine has some great articles from Margaret, Jahan, Josie and Allan.

It was sad to hear that Dave Bates has passed away and Margaret has done a wonderful job of summarizing his long association with Olympic and New Brighton Olympic Athletic Club.



Great to see our Children performing with distinction at the Coalgate games.

Our roving Athletics reporter, Allan McLaren has prepared a very interesting article on his experiences at the World Athletic Championships that were held in Doha, Qatar from 27th September to 6th October 2019.

Tony Prisk



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To see some of my work, check out the PDF versions of
Cant-A-Long, the Canterbury Master's magazine,
on the Canterbury Masters website.

Dave Bates - An Olympic Gentleman:

It is an honour to be entrusted with speaking about Dave and his long association with the Olympic then New Brighton Olympic Athletic Clubs.

I joined the Olympic Harrier Club in 1976, little realizing that in many ways I had found my tribe. Forty-six years later, I can look around and see the many fellow members past and present who have enriched and occasionally challenged my life. Dave was definitely one of the former. Dave and Noeleen Bates and by extension the Miles family, took me under their wing and introduced me to the many aspects of a life permeated with running. I have never been the same since.

When I first met him, Dave was already a core member of the Club which he joined in 1959. My sources tell me this was totally accidental. A staff room conversation at Addington Primary involving a 400m runner, Dave and Ron Stevens led to Dave and George going along with Ron to see what running was all about. And as they say, the rest is history.

Dave discovered a pleasure in running. Whatever the Club gave him he gave back through his service- a total of 23 years in various roles such as Committee member, Treasurer, President and Secretary, a role he picked up after the death of Lionel Fox at a Club run. He was a thoroughly deserving Life Member. Cookie said that serving on the Committee under Dave was a highlight and that" he was one of the best Committee members I've ever served with." Many of us would agree with that.

On Monday after Noeleen's call I began to contact people to pass on the news. Invariably people responded with a story, a memory.

Here are some of their words:

He had determination wrapped in a sense of humour

He had a special thing for the club-a club man

He gave gentle encouragement

He had a way of managing people

He had a positive booming voice

It is hard to think of Dave without Noeleen. They were a package but individuals. We owe many editions of Marathon Post to the Bates household. We owe much typing of Club documents to Noeleen.

Dave clearly liked to share his enthusiasms. There are many different ways to share your running and inviting unsuspecting neophytes to run with your group is one of them. Dave was part of my introduction to the group hill run- a weekly trot up to the Takahe the correct way, which is to head through Macmillan from Hackthorne and then slog up Kidson Tce whilst still talking and giving one another a hard time because running was meant to be social and fun. And boy those older people could run up a hill fast whilst still talking.

Relay running is another bonding experience. Supporting your team member by

calling out encouraging things is a key skill. Dave could come up with the most appropriate words. Back in 1981 I was running the last lap of the Timaru to Waimate Relay and a car slowed down beside me and Dave called out "They've called the game off !" It is no coincidence that I ran 6 min miles for the first time that day.

Dave's skill at managing people was responsible for the Bates Timing Team for the Christchurch Marathon. He and Noeleen and a cast of regulars were fixtures at the finish line and around the course for many years. I got roped in when I came back from living in NM where we were visited by Dave and Noeleen on their travels.

The Olympic 15k race benefitted from the same well-trained group. As that race evolved into the TTRF, Dave and his core team were still there. (2 years ago last time?) Up until a few years ago, Dave would turn out to the Hagley relays and club runs to help record times.

Dave and Noeleen could also be counted on to marshall at whatever Lap of the Takahe to Akaroa Relay we were assigned to.

Dave was an Official for Athletics Canterbury, continuing to serve the sport at QE 2 and NGA Puna Wai when his running days were over. It is no wonder AC gave him a special award for services to Athletics in 2017.

Dave took over as the Olympic Club Patron on the death of Martin Connolly. He maintained that role when we combined with NB to form NBO. He had words of encouragement at the start of each season.

Dave was a mentor. Ask Tony Coughlan, Stew Taylor or Tony Thorpe the practical ways Dave encouraged their running or a successful career in education. He was a great support to me when I became President. He was always available to chew over an issue or provide some perspective.

I want to leave you with a picture that captures Dave's place in our running whanau. The house in Hillsborough Tce almost up at the end. The garage has trestle tables set up covered in food-back then definitely home baking. The urn and the cups in the red box with the rope handles are there. Sweaty runners are milling about having enjoyed a good group run and now a cup of tea and a good yarn. And the shorts were very short. Some of us are eying the laden lemon tree with citrus envy. There is a box of grapes to take some home from. We listen to some race reports and details of events coming up. There is lots of laughter. We thank our hosts and go home appreciating the fellowship we have shared.

On behalf of the Olympic and NBO Clubs, I want to say thank you Dave for who you were and for your part in establishing and supporting the atmosphere of connection that has been a dominant characteristic of our club. Your shadow is long and will be long remembered.

Margaret



Some summer memories:

As the days shorten and I watch the blackboy peaches get ready to drop so I can beat the birds to them, I look back on the last few months of running and feel a profound gratitude for the role that running plays in my life and for the fact that my body still seems willing to go the distance, albeit not quite as swiftly as it did a few years ago. Racing still seems as hard though. And voltaren competes with coffee as my drug of choice.

Speaking at Dave Bates's funeral on Friday last was the stimulus for looking back and naming the things that cause me to feel that gratitude.

Running with other people.

There have been times when I have trained on my own and often used the time to listen to music or think through a forthcoming lesson or workshop or just enjoy being outdoors, even in the rain.

And then there is the fun that can be had running with a group. That includes conversations, disputations, reminiscences, race dissections and plans for more runs and good old-fashioned bullshitting that goes on between the group. It makes 18k on the hills go by more easily. It's the same energy that helps you run harder in a relay. So thanks you to those of you who have run with me on Sundays on the hills and in the forest this summer. I hope you noticed I suggested a really early run during that really hot period, despite having a scientifically verifiable early bird chronotype.

Then there is the ever-changing group that assembles at Hagley Park on week nights for a rotating menu of effort runs, reps and recovery runs. All speeds catered for. All opinions heard but not necessarily agreed with.

Racing

I'm not a frequent parkrun competitor (see early bird chronotype label), but many of my training partners are and it is a fact that numbers have grown and there are now 3 parkruns that locals can choose from. We compare notes and talk about other places we have visited where we have joined in the local event. The runs they hold on Christmas Day and New Years day are special though and I make a point of getting up for those.

This summer I decided to compete in the Port Hills Tuesday night 5k series. This is a very friendly event as the course allows the runners waiting to do the fun run to cheer on the registered runners as they do the 3 loop course. My challenge is to get to the start of my final lap before too many of the frontrunners lap me. The warm down running the course in the opposite direction allows me to return the favour as I call encouragement to the many runners I know in the fun run.

We had a good turnout of runners from our club with series age group top 3 places going to Mel, Steph, myself, Mark B, and Matt. Andrea won the 3 races she was in. There were good performances from Allan and Clive as well. I was

at the back of the field quite caught up in the weekly tussle with Peter Davidson as we worked together to lower our time each week.

Some of us enjoy the Sri Chinmoy events, especially the post race breakfast. You will find Bruce Woods, Richard Young, Dave Candy, Steph Rumble, Stephen Graham and Shannon Leigh-Litt at many of these. I used two of the 10k events to get ready for my second Buller Marathon Relay. My highlight, though, was the one where Bruce and I both won a spot prize of a beautiful bunch of flowers.

All of these races provide the opportunity to socialize before and after with people who are runners first and whatever else their job label is second. It doesn't matter what school you went to. Running connects you. It is an international community.

The Buller Marathon gives you the opportunity to make your running last a whole weekend. A beautiful drive over and back, plus a scenic course to run on and an after party that goes for hours adds up to a weekend well spent. And you will be sharing it with a good proportion of your running friends. Great runs were had by Allan Staite, Shannon Leigh Litt, Carolyn Forsey, Steph Rumble and her daughter Scarlett doing her first half, Stephen Graham, Toni Taylor and Chrissie Stowell-Collett.

Bruce, Richard, Ronalda and I maintained our 5th position in the Mixed team category in the relay.

Track Racing

We have a vibrant and successful Junior Track and Field section with dedicated coaches and committed parents. The organizing group gives hours of their time to delivering training sessions, updating facebook and sorting entries for competitions both weekly and nationally. If you have been following facebook you will know how successful our young athletes have been.

We older athletes are much fewer but we do still get out there. Some of us are about to go to the Masters Nationals in Hastings. This is a different kind of running and until you have tried it, you can't imagine how tight your legs can be after running a mere 800 metres. Combining track training with preparing for Buller was an interesting experience and I have been struggling to find the required level of pain tolerance that an 800 calls for. Even at the back of the field. Again, I am grateful that I can still trot round a track and I know this coming weekend I will see athletes older than me pushing them selves to their best.

So there is a lot to be grateful for. Yes there are health and well-being benefits to staying fit and engaging in a sport such as running and throwing and jumping. But the main one is the joy that comes from sharing these activities with other people. Even when they beat you.

Margaret

Coalgate's 2020 - Christchurch:

Thirty-eight children from grade 7-14 competed this year! What an amazing weekend we had. To say we cleaned up would be an understatement with the results we had.

Thursday parents were bustling around picking up their future Olympians competitor packs ready for 3 days of competition ahead. Those who had been to past Colgate games knew that once you get to the track at the crack of dawn there was a very good chance you would not leave until sunset so it was important to have everything organised the night before.

As a parent of a 13 boy the most important part was “have you got your age patch and number?” (Tip: if you can’t find it try the bottom of your washing machine as they think leaving it on the singlet when it goes in the wash the week before “saves them time!”).

Friday 17th January - Day one

Gazebo is up and flags are flying. Everyone staking their claim in and around what became fondly known as “home base” for our NBOL family!

Off to get our merchandise from the Marino family run merchandise tent! Secured some fantastic duo pens and a visor. In hindsight I perhaps should’ve invested in a sombrero, poncho and a couple of gallons of sunscreen but I digress.

A fantastic group shot of our athletes, the infamous clubs march past and they’re off...

Ending the day with a catch up organised by our one and only Steve Anngow at the beach cafe.

Saturday 18th January - Day Two

Coffee, check! Age patch, check! Spikes and drink bottle, check!
Wish I knew where I put my programme!!!

Another fantastic day of competition for NBOL.

Sunday 19th January - Day three

Adrenaline, excitement and anticipation far out weighing the Sunburn, wind burn, sore muscles and tired athletes!

Everyone was now in the routine of knowing where to go and what to expect. Some excellent results and some very proud families!!!!

RESULTS:

Grade 7

The Girls Relay team was 2nd with Annabel, Esta, Neave and Amanika

Neave was 3rd in Long Jump

Josh came 1st in Long Jump, 60m and 200m and 3rd in 100m

Esta got a 1st in Long Jump and 3rd 200m

Grade 8

Fern came 3rd Discus and 2nd Shot Put

Libby was 2nd in 200 and 60m, and 3rd in 100m

Grade 9

The Girls Relay team came 2nd with Georgie, Fern, Sienna and Lola

Lola was 1st in Shot Put, 2nd in 100m and Discus

Georgie came 3rd in 60m, 100m and Long Jump

Sienna was 2nd in 100m, 200m and Long Jump, and 3rd in 100m

Grade 10

Otto came 3rd in 1500m and 2nd in Long Jump

Grade 11

Jacinta was 1st in Long Jump

Grade 12

The Boys Relay team 3rd with Connor, Henry, Jordan and Amasio.

Grade 13

The Girls Relay team came 3rd with Keira, Kavanah, Amaleila and Holly

The Boys Relay team came 3rd with TK, Armani, Toi and Zion

Holly came 3rd in Long Jump and 400m, and 2nd in 80m Hurdles
Kavanah came 3rd equal in High Jump and 1st in Shot Put
Armani was 1st Shot Put and Discus, and 3rd in 100m

Well done to all our amazing NBOL kids. You are all winners and you have made us all so proud!

Hats off to our red shirts Bronwyn and Kevin! You guys are there not just at Colgate's but also all of our inter clubs, trainings and championships giving up your time so our kids can compete. Absolute legends!

Massive shout out to Kara Marino. Club president, Colgate's treasurer, merchandise seller, past children's club captain, affectionately known as mum to far more children than she has birthed, and who I call 'the yes lady'.

The hours this woman put into not only the Colgate games (that should perhaps be renamed the Marino games) but into constantly supporting our children's summer section is incredible! We love you and appreciate you!

Shout out also to all the parent helpers on long jump duty, family and friends who came out to support our kids and my awesome radio coms team.

And last but absolutely not least Josie Gray! Children's Summer Club Captain. Not a job many would envy and definitely not a job for the faint hearted. You are such an amazing example of just getting it done!

Best of luck for the rest of the season team!

Jahan

Doha World Championships - 2019:

I thought I had got away with it, because I hadn't heard from Tony for some time, but he was insistent that I had to write an article on my experiences at the World Athletics Championships, that were held in Doha, Qatar from the 27th September to 6th October 2019.

2019 was a very good year for me, getting married in February, the plan was to have a delayed honeymoon of six weeks in Europe. I had no intention of attending the Champs as we had agreed we didn't want separate trips from now on. However, one day I was showing Lesley this amazing stadium in Doha, but adding "of course I won't be going," when she turned and said, "why won't you be going?" I thought this was an excellent attitude and confirmed my choice of partner. As she pointed out, it was only 10 days out of 6 weeks. I may not be the quickest person on the planet, but I did not require more prompting, phoning my usual athletic travel buddy, Ian Lauder who resides in Geneva.

To be honest I would rather talk about the rest of the holiday. Just briefly, we spent two nights in Dubai reaching the top of the tallest building in the world by the fastest lift in the world. Surprisingly, after bracing myself for g force, you could hardly feel the lift. We then spent time in Budapest, Vienna and Prague, with a side trip to Slovakia. All very good. Then the highlight, a tour through Croatia and the magnificent islands, which I would highly recommend. The tour finished in Venice, after a perfect day which included exploring Postojna Caves in Slovenia, which amazingly involved a 5km journey by rail to the heart of the cave.

After a few days in Venice, Lesley flew to London to visit friends and I set sail for the milder climate of Doha, arriving just after midnight, connecting with my friend who had beaten me by half an hour. Customs were very efficient and even at this early hour, I witnessed many famous athletes. It was then a taxi ride to the Copthorne Hotel our residence for the next 10 days. Being an oil rich nation, taxis are very cheap. Our room was not available, so for the first night we had to rough it in the Ambassador Suite, which was huge and had a separate lounge with a Statesman type desk. I had visions of entertaining dignitaries, or even better famous athletes. I could have got used to this, apart from the sharing a king size bed bit. The next night we were returned to the status quo.

We were treated very well at breakfast and only had to twitch for someone to come running. Obviously, I was still displaying that aura of Ambassadorship. A bit of background on Qatar that occupies the north eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Qatar has a population of 2.6 million with only 313,000 being Qatari citizens. Doha the capital has a population of 797,000. The country has the highest per capita income in the world, backed by the world's third largest natural gas and oil reserves. Oil was discovered in 1940, transforming the economy. Before that the focus was on fishing and pearl hunting. Arabic is the official language, but as usual we were privileged that most people spoke English. Culture is significantly influenced by Islam. A reassuring fact is that

crime is non-existent. Apart from the Museum of Islamic Art, there was no obvious places or landmarks to visit.

It has been established that Qatar were only awarded the Champs due to bribes. Former IAAF President Lamine Diack from Senegal, now 86, along with his son Massata are to stand trial for money laundering and corruption. He also took bribes for covering up positive doping tests.

Qatar has also secured the World Football Cup in suspicious circumstances, which will take place in 2022. Unfortunately for us, Doha's infrastructure appeared to be geared up for the Football Cup and was nowhere ready for the Athletic Champs. Doha's roads were very crowded with lots of new roads under construction. Building work was everywhere and metros were nearing completion. Hopefully, when the metros are in full operation, the traffic problems will ease, because as it is now the Football World Cup would be a disaster. The metro consists of three lines radiating out from the City Centre. The Red Line had opened four months before our arrival which was useful to getting to the City Centre. The Green Line that would have gone to the stadium and made life easier, opened two months later, along with the Gold Line.

Our first attempt at getting to the Khalifa International Stadium, did not go well. We had been told that free shuttles would be leaving from the metro station which was a convenient 200m from our Hotel. This was with much relief as when we were in Qatar it was the hottest country in the world, getting up to 43°C. Thank goodness the metro was air-conditioned.

Along with other prospective spectators from many nations, we waited and we waited for these so called shuttles. Everywhere we went in Doha, there were Volunteers in yellow uniforms, who were very eager to help and very friendly, but a pattern emerged that even if they didn't know the answer to your question, they would tell you something anyway under the misapprehension this was helping, but it did not. In the end giving up on the shuttles we shared taxis. The usual small talk, I was asked where I came from and you obviously know the answer, "Christchurch, New Zealand." "What a coincidence" came the reply, "I'm also from Christchurch, but in England."

We finally reached the stadium and what a stadium it is. However, we had to endure the heat during the protracted security check. Every day there seemed to be a problem. You couldn't take water into the stadium, but it was not readily available inside. You would walk through a scanner which showed nothing, but they still felt the need to frisk you. I should have known better but I had the nail scissors from my first aid kit confiscated, but admittedly they let me collect it on the way out. The funny thing was that when I went to find them days later, I found them loose in my bag, yet I had gone through the scanner many times since. One day a running book caused great consternation. Obviously, complaints must have been made as on the fourth day they were giving away free bottles of water and were less officious.

After all this negativity, the stadium was the best I have ever been in. The

stadium from the outside lights up at night with an array of colours and right next door is a hotel named The Torch Doha obviously due to its shape. Again amazing lights radiated from it. Oh! to be able to afford staying there. A roof covers the western side of the stadium and the eastern side has a large arch which is used as a platform for firework displays.

Once inside the stadium it was very comfortable. Due to the supply and demand thing, we were over the finish line at a cost which was only 10% the price of London two years earlier, which was good for us. However, it is not good after basically buying the Champs, it was not supported by the Qatari locals. The higher up stalls were covered in flags to create the illusion of the stadium being fuller than it was. In desperation the Organising Committee gave thousands of tickets away to local workers and school children.

A huge rap for the seats which were the most comfortable I have ever encountered, and that was by a country mile. Made of leather, they were firm but not hard, had arm rests and kept your back straight. Each seat underneath had tiny grills and a diffuser that blew cool air, but even more impressive it is designed to miss you and not hit you directly, hug you gently like sitting in a cool bubble. This is a cue to introduce the most amazing feature of this stadium. Although it is outdoors it is fully air-conditioned, keeping spectators and competitors at a constant 23°. Dr Saud Abdul Ghan, the Sudan born Mechanical Engineer behind the ground breaking cooling technology is known as "Dr Cool." 170 turrets at the side of the track blast out freezing air. He said, "We pump the exact amount of cool air in the exact place and then recycle it all the time; we never throw it away. There are grills on the floor. We take it from the top and recycle it back."

Whilst the air-conditioning is imperative in Doha due to the intense heat and humidity, I did wonder if climate controlled stadiums could be the norm in the future for big events. One major advantage was that the wind was never more or less than .01, so no races were over the legal limit for wind assistance. Distance runners were not scared to lead as they would not be destroyed by the wind, and this transferred to the fast times. The fact is that the performances at this Championship were the best ever.

Another modern trend is that there were no printed programmes, as the stadium had Wi-Fi available to the spectators. This had the advantage of allowing the programme to be constantly updated with names and you could click on an athlete for a resume. Also results at your fingertips.

Another improvement was that there was only one session per day, although it was long and finished late. This was preferable than having to come back again as in the past. However, there is still grounds for major improvements. In my opinion the IAAF is sabotaging many events, especially distance races by excluding them from the Diamond League, as they are condensing the programme to 90 minutes. The theory being to make it more exciting and appealing to the general public. At the Champs it was the complete opposite,

with ridiculous time gaps between events which I believe could have been halved.

The only final which started on the first day but only just, was the women's marathon at 11:59am. Although the longest running event, cruelly they would not have the benefit of air-conditioning. The theory behind the starting time was that the temperature is lower late at night, but what the IAAF had not counted on was that the humidity increases at night.

In 33° heat and 73% humidity the athletes took off on the six lap course on Doha's iconic Corniche Promenade, against a background of a beautiful illuminated skyline which was cold comfort for the competitors. A makeshift Hospital set up next to the finish line resembled a battlefield. Of the 70 starters only 40 were to finish. The victor was Ruth Chepngetich of Kenya, over the defending champion Rose Chelimo of Bahrain. The winning time of 2:32:43 was the slowest time in Champs history by two minutes. Third place went to a 39 year old Namibian, Helalia Johannes.

By a miracle the men's race a week later was less brutal; it was the only time I can recall the weather like this. Although it was 29°, the humidity was a lot less at 43.6% and there was even a slight cooling breeze. The race was won by Ethiopian Lelisa Desisa who out sprinted countryman Mosinet Geremew in a time of 2:10:42. Amos Kipruto of Kenya took the bronze. Britain's Callum Hawkins who you may recall collapsed from heat exhaustion when he had a substantial lead in the Commonwealth Games, only missed a medal by six seconds in fourth. Considering the conditions, New Zealanders Malcolm Hicks and Caden Shields ran well in times of 2:17:45 and 2:18:08. They had acclimatised in a two-week heat training camp in Cyprus. Paul Hamblyn one of the coaches at the camp was sitting near us one day and told us what they had learnt about heat training, and although it was very interesting I can't remember the salient points.

As usual I have gotten ahead of myself and once again back in the stadium day one has come to an end. We were now faced with the unenviable task of working out how to get back to the hotel without blowing the budget? Most people were piling into the metro station across from the stadium, with our understanding that the trains went to the City Centre where we could change to a line we were familiar with that took us close to the hotel. This is where we learnt that this line was not open yet and the crowds were using it to cross under the busy road. A bus was the next option and in a mild panic we entered a bus which I can only describe as cattle class. We had to stand the whole way and had no idea where we were heading? This is where the Volunteers in their bright yellow uniforms came into their own, with a diverse array of advice and kindly grabbing seats that came available to themselves. This torture lasted 90 minutes but admittedly the Volunteers did advise us the correct stop to disengage to join the line for freedom.

A well earned sleep and we were ready to fight another day. The first thing we had

learnt was that the Metro could get us to the City Centre which had a huge shopping centre and more importantly an extensive food court and also a supermarket. From then on we congregated there every day at mid-day for our main meal and then brought food at the supermarket to consume in the stadium. It appeared most other athletic supporters had come to the same conclusion. Food outlets at the stadium were very sparse and not that great. Every previous World Champs I have attended have had a large fan zone outside the stadium with athletic stalls, games, merchandise food outlets and a small theatre where you could meet famous athletes at certain times. This Champs lacked this with the biggest surprise being no official tee-shirts.

Admittedly, the metro is new, but after experiencing the crowds on many metros around the world, this one was deserted. There was never a fear of not finding an empty seat. I found it humorous that generally there appeared to be more metro employees than passengers and they would surround you eager to impart the obvious. Some trains would pull in getting your expectations up but turned out to be test trains that would then move on without passengers. This line also appeared to go to the airport but as Ian found out it was still in the test phase. He went to do a dummy run one day and his conversation with a metro employee, went like this. "Is this train going to the airport?" Asked Ian. "Yes Sir, this train is going to the airport." After a long pause "but the doors will not be opening."

We were assured by the volunteers that the shuttles would definitely be arriving for Day 2, but as was the pattern it was to no avail. It was here we discovered the wonderful world of Uber and never looked back. This was so easy and cheap and we never paid more than NZ\$20. Due to the traffic it still took some time. I found the driving in Doha quite aggressive with jockeying for positions very competitive. Horns would be in a constant chant and this intrigued me as it didn't appear to be just for venting one's anger and letting someone know they have made a mistake. It was like a form of morse code and the horns would keep talking back to each other. I never did work it out and even googled it but it appeared there were various toots to let other motorists know when you were coming through, so don't change lanes etc.

Of the twenty Uber rides we took, only one of the drivers was a Qatari citizen. This sort of summed up Qatar with a heavy reliance on migrant labour. With prompting, drivers were happy to share their background, that I found very interesting and make me realise how well off we are. Most were from India with a few from Pakistan and Africa. You would hear stories of how this was an opportunity for them for a better life, enabling them to send money home to family who were obviously struggling. On average they could afford to return home once every two years to catch up with family. Working 16 hours a day came up a lot and to them it was a privilege, where to me it would be a nightmare.

The second day was memorable for finally seeing a medal ceremony. This made me realise how much we are now in the digital world. The traditional raising of flags on a pole to signify the countries of the medallists, had been replaced by

digital images on the big screen.

From a New Zealand perspective Tom Walsh was our only real chance of hearing the national anthem, and for 99% of his shot put event this was a formality. I still struggle with the final outcome. In the very first round Tom was out to 22:90 which was unbelievable, as it was the fourth longest put in history and the best since 1990. No one approached this mark but suddenly in the last round Joe Kovacs who won in 2015, delivered one out of the box besting Tom's mark by 1cm. If that was not enough Ryan Crouser the Olympic Champion then equalled Tom's mark, but courtesy of a better second mark relegated Tom to third. As last thrower, Tom had one last chance to rectify this anomaly and put everything into it, but could not keep inside the circle. It's sad when a bronze medal is kind of disappointing. Spare a thought for Darlan Roman of Brazil, who was 30cm ahead of the previous Championship record but was only fourth.

The mascot for the Champs was "Falah" an anthropomorphic falcon dressed in the maroon colour of the flag of Qatar.

There were plenty of pyrotechnics, but those light show introductions before showcase events attracted many gasps and almost as much comment. For some the razz-matazz of laser beams and light productions signalled the way to the sport's future, whilst for others including experienced athletes all those flashing lights and music was distracting. I myself though they were amazing, it is hard to explain but I will try. The lights went out and then suddenly hyped up music came on; each athlete would be introduced but their name in huge letters and colours of their country would do a fast lap of the track with an array of colours and lights. It made a heavy weight boxing introduction pale in comparison.

With more than 130 cameras roaming through every nook and camera we were taken closer to the action than ever before. There were body cams, rail cams, drones and zip wires, while we learned instantly about everything from a sprinter's top speed to a thrower's projector. Whether an underside view of an athlete's knee caps and nostrils really gives us that intense moment just before a race, let's leave to the eye of the beholder. Certainly, for some sprinters the much hyped block cams were all a bit too close and personal. It was not a good look.

Allan

Children's Track and Field:

The Children's Track & Field season started for us on Tuesday 1st October with the first of two Have A Go nights. We have had approximately 84 children come and training with us since. The two training sessions per week have had great attendance, even on the cold damp evenings. They have joined for differing reasons, some simply for fitness, others wanting to do well in School Athletics and many wishing to participate in the weekly Saturday Interclub competition but all are striving to achieve their personal bests. There is so much enthusiasm from these young athletes that parents and coaches alike are enjoying seeing them participate.

It was wonderful to hear about how well our athletes did in the recent School Zone competition which took place Tuesday 13 November across the city. Facebook was a wonderful way for us to learn just how well they all did, with many moving onto the Canterbury Primary School Championship being held 4th December.



The first Interclub competition started on Saturday 19th October. Already this season we are seeing some spectacular results. On October 26 three NBO club records were broken by Perez Lene Girls 11 in Shot Put (SP) with a distance of 8.89m, Kavanah Lene Girls 13 in High Jump (HJ) with a height of 1.35m and Armani Lemalu Boys 13 in Discus with a distance 40.35.

On the 9th November, we had 5 club records broken or equalled. Perez broke Girls 11 SP record with a distance of 9.28. Holly broke Meredith's 2016 200m record with a time of 28.98. Kavanah equalled Erin Mander's record in both the SP with a distance of 9.78m. The Boys 13 (Armani, Zion, Toi and TK), 4 X 100 Relay Team broke the 2011 record and ran 51.84.

In the Quadrathon held on 23 November we had three medal winners, Amasion Tiatia who came 2nd in Grade 11 Boys, while Holly Gray came 3rd and Kavanah Lene came 1st in Grade 13 Girls. Perez, Kavanah and Holly all broke Club Records:

- Perez Yr 11 SP 9.34m her own record.
- Kavanah Yr 13 SP 10.96m and HJ 1.40m.
- Holly 200m of 27.97 her own record and 800m in 2.35.56 Meredith's 2016 record.

Amazingly 17 NBO athletes recorded 38 PB's on the day. They were:- Charley, Mika, Kaia, Perez, Samara, Zara, Amaleila, Kavanah, Holly, Mason, Kyro, Amasio, Jordan, Zion, Tyrone, Iziah & Kegan.

On 30 November the Boys 13 (Armani, Zion, Toi and TK) - 4 X 100 Relay 51.58. took over 3 seconds off 2011 record. Holly broke her own 800 record from last week by almost 2 seconds and also Brian Winter's 2011 80m hurdles record by over 1 second. Kavanah again broke her own HJ record from last week with a new height of 1.50m.

But the results are simply the icing on the cake because the most incredible thing to see is the friendships being formed, not just by the children but the parents as well. The 2019/2020 season is shaping up to be an amazing one indeed.

Josie

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