

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 November.

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

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From the Editor:

I am pleased to report that Allan is back into writing mode. Although he has been very busy recently (for various reasons) he has provided two very interesting articles for this month's magazine.

The first article is part one of the John Sheddan story. John is one of the club's most accomplished runners. The second article is part one of Allan's adventures at the US Olympic trials.



I have also included an article on Oskia Inkster-Baynes that was published in June on the Athletics New Zealand website. Oskia has overcome a troubled childhood to become one of New Zealand's leading domestic endurance talents. Steve Landells chatted to him and discovered the key role running has played in his life.

In the Cookies column this month he started the GOAT debate (i.e. who is the greatest long distance athlete of all time). I have got a different view to him because I think that we should also be taking into account the competition that was around during the career of the contenders. This would eliminate Nurmi and Zatopek because in their eras there was just not the same competition as in the Gebrelistie/Bekele era. They competed against each other (I will never forget the World Championships 10,000 when they both ran the 2nd 5k in under 13 minutes !) and the proliferation of full time African athletes.

If the focus is on 5k and 10k on the track then I would agree with Allan and my choice would be Bekele at the moment. However, I am starting to swing towards Farah because he is virtually unbeatable over 5k/10k at World Championships and Olympic level. How do you compete against an athlete who is the 6th fastest 1500m runner of all time (3:28.81), can run 1:48 in the last 800m of a 5000m and can run 59 minutes for the half marathon? If he changes the focus of his training next year to breaking world records and achieves the 5k/10k world records, he is my choice.

Tony Prisk

Margaret's Update:

It is not even the end of September yet and already someone has reminded me how many weeks there are until Christmas. (If you guessed about 12, you would be right.) August and September were packed with local and national events at which we had a strong presence. A read through of the results section of the Athletics Canterbury website will show you that NBO is still a strong presence. However the other thing that has stood out for me is the alarming drop in the number of Senior athletes at all of these events. Whilst there are good numbers of children and masters athletes, the numbers of competitors in the senior ranks are getting fewer and fewer. If I compare the Senior Women's entries in the 2011 Canterbury Road Champs with 2016's numbers there is a drop off of 13 to 7 and in the Governors Bay Race the drop off is from 29 to 9. It is not looking much better for Senior Men and this situation is reflected in the fact that there were just 3 Senior Men's Teams in the Takahe to Akaroa Relay. For the first time in the history of both sides of the family, we did not enter a Senior Men's Team.

We have Club members who live elsewhere competing for NBO in the National Road Relay on the 1st of October and I am sure they will be striving to keep us out front. However, looking at the entries for that event, it seems like the numbers are down there too.

This is a huge challenge for Athletics New Zealand to respond to. I do not think we can address it at a local level without more support from the national body. What are your thoughts? How can we keep all those enthusiastic young athletes who are already gearing up for a summer of competing in our sport once they hit high school and beyond?

On a more positive note, I really enjoyed the Paralympics. I saw more of them than I did of those other games in Rio since I do not have Sky. Watching the commitment and intensity of those athletes certainly put my recent ankle injury into perspective. I have been aqua jogging at Jellie Park and quite often was in the lane next to Sophie Pascoe. Her training rate was impressive.

We will celebrate our 2016 Winter season on Sunday October 16th with an afternoon tea at the cashmere Club. This is where I make my annual plea for more of our winter runners to turn up and run track in the summer. You don't have to be a world beater. You can use it as speed work which will benefit you when next winter rolls around. You can use it as a build up to the 5k series in Hagley Park.

Finally I want to encourage those of you who do not yet access our facebook page to do so so you can follow the exploits of our younger members over the summer. Those of you who do look at it will have enjoyed the many photos that Stephen Graham posts over the winter season. He also managed to run some great races and bring his times down, which when you think about it, is what the competitive side of athletics is all about-challenging yourself.

Margaret

Running changes national champion's life:

It may be an exaggeration to say running saved Oska Inkster-Baynes life, but it has certainly changed the course of it...for the better.

A "problem child" in year 10 and 11 at St Andrew's College struggling for a sense of identity and grappling with bouts of depression his life was spinning dangerously out of control.

On the verge of being kicked out of the prestigious Christchurch school, it was his good fortune that his maths teacher happened to be 33-times national distance running champion Phil Costley.

Seeing the potential in Oska – who was an energetic rep standard footballer and touch rugby player – he pulled the then troubled 16-year-old aside and said if he changed his attitude he had the potential to be a good athlete.

"It was a pretty weird conversation to have because I flunked maths at school and I was pretty mean to him (as a maths student)," explains Oska. "He said to me, 'I'll pick you up at 6am in the morning' and the next day we went running around the Port Hills. What that experience showed me was I was not the bee's knees as a runner, but that if I put my mind to it I could be good at it."

Encouraged by the possibilities of running and under Costley's measured guidance, Oska quickly made progress and shortly after taking up the sport struck gold at the Canterbury Schools' Championships for both cross country and on the road.

Some nine years later on from his introduction to the sport of running and Oska cuts a much more content and happy individual. Married with a seven-week-old child, and working as a manager in a thriving business the future looks rosy.

Yet perhaps none of this would have even been possible without running, which he says has "paved the way" for what the 25-year-old has accomplished in his life.

Born and raised in Christchurch, Oska always knew he had good natural endurance.

"I was never the most skilful footballer and I was never going to play for the All Whites, but it was my job to exhaust the guys who were playing left midfield and left back and then (when the opposition players were fatigued) I would run rings around them in the last 20 minutes."

Aged "13 or 14" the St Andrews College student was diagnosed with depression and his behaviour at school deteriorated. Struggling to focus in the classroom, he found salvation - thanks in large part to Costley - through running. It gave Oska a positive focus for his energies and the success proved motivating.

After enjoying some promising early results, Oska later further cemented that potential to finish 11th in the 2010 Melbourne Half-Marathon, aged 19, in a time of 1:12:40 before he and his then girlfriend and now wife, Katy, left Christchurch to set up a new life in Wanaka.

Coached by Val Burke and based in an idyllic training environment he continued to show flashes of his raw ability. In 2012 he was crowned New Zealand Half-Marathon champion in Palmerston North and the following year he further underlined his talent by securing top spot the Auckland Half-Marathon. However, despite occasional successes, his four-year period in Wanaka was consistently sabotaged by injury— calf problems in particular derailing his development.

Returning to Christchurch with the aim to start a family, he sought a new coach and linked up with Matt Ingram, the man who guided 2014 national road and cross country champion Callan Moody and three-time New Zealand steeplechase champion Daniel Balchin. Oska instantly felt at ease with Matt and the New Zealand half-marathon champion believes his coach has been instrumental in bringing about the best form of his career.

Operating a less prescribed training programme than in the past, Oska has thrived under Ingram's direction which has given the Cantabrian a sense of ownership of his training.

"Matt always asks what I think I should be doing and what I think I should be working on," explains Oska. "It is not a dictatorship. He is very good at asking me the questions and getting the answers out of me. There are no written workouts on the back of my hand. There is no pressure at all. I have got the love and enjoyment factor back for my running."

Working full-time as the South Island Thirst Manager for SOS Rehydrate, he typically trains twice a day regularly racking up between 150 and 160km a week. Running some "big mileage" but with a focus on quality he carries out the bulk of training on his own – a fact which does not concern the New Brighton Olympic runner.

"I can absorb a good amount of training and I can do it alone," he explains. "The company is few and far between (for training) and I guess I can suffer for a long time without complaining too much."

He enjoyed what he describes as "a pretty good" first year under Matt's direction in 2015. In his first major cross country assault since high school, he earned a bronze medal at the New Zealand Cross Country Championships in Christchurch and also claimed an impressive win in the Wellington Half-Marathon, but two performances in particular convinced Oska he was on the right track.

"I ran the 10km in Christchurch in a PB of 30:21 but I felt I could have run even faster," he insists.

In October last year came further affirmation of his improving form when he took almost a minute-and-a-half from his half-marathon PB to place fourth in Melbourne in 1:05:57.

"I ran faster as the race went on," he adds of his Melbourne performance. "Fifteen kilometres into the race I was speeding up and I ran the last three kilometres in 8:45. If I had run another kilometre, I would have finished on the podium."

This year the good performances have continued. In March's New Zealand Track & Field Championships in Dunedin he earned a silver medal in the 5000m behind Hayden McLaren despite tearing a calf muscle in warm up before the race.

Then earlier this month he shrugged off the inconvenience of near freezing conditions and a mix-up at the end of the race in which the champion went off course in the dying embers of the race to regain his New Zealand Half-Marathon title from Aaron Pulford in 1:06:34 - the second fastest half-marathon time of his career.

With an ability "to hurt for a long-time" but accepting he does not have the natural speed to run a 61-minute half-marathon, Oska believes that his premier event is the marathon and he has tentatively pencilled in next February's Tokyo Marathon for his debut over the 42.2km distance.

Other potential options could be October's Auckland or Melbourne Marathons as he steps up his ambition to target a place on the New Zealand team for the marathon at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.

Yet for Oska the bigger picture is less about his own personal running ambitions, it is more about how the sport has helped him overcome his personal challenges.

"I'm pretty good today," he says of his overall well-being. "You can't run away (from depression) but you can definitely learn to cope."

So where does the Cantabrian believe he would be without running?

"To put it in perspective, I probably wouldn't have finished school," explains Oska, whose first child, Indi, was born seven weeks ago. "I started the sport through Phil, and I believe everything happens for a reason. I then moved to Wanaka, I met a coach and that started a chain reaction, which has allowed other things to happen and I have made the most of those opportunities. I'm never going to be David Rudisha, but I think the most important thing is to be happy and content with what you are doing and to do the best that you can."

Steve Landells

Waiting patiently his time would come - The John Sheddan story (Part 1):

In 1975 John Sheddan a last minute replacement for the New Zealand team, ventured across the globe to Rabat in Morocco to compete in the World Cross Country Championships. After playing catch up, he returned to New Zealand as a member of the victorious team, the only time New Zealand has managed to secure the Championship.

To see how all this came about we must go back to the 17th May 1950 when John Robin Sheddan was born in Christchurch, the second child of Jack and Mamae Sheddan. Jack was a reasonable swimmer in his day winning school titles in Otago. He earned his living as a Clothing Commission Agent, a profession his son would take up years later. A sign of the times Mamae kept the home fires burning, but in later years sold clothing from a shop in Lyttelton the couple had set up. By now Jack and Mamae had moved to Rapaki after adding on to their holiday home.

John has an older sister Huia who was a swimmer like her father and two younger brothers Craig and Warren who have both been competitive runners. In the 60s at a young age Craig won a few cross-country races but he did not continue. As a junior Warren was sensational winning the New Zealand Junior 1500m title in 1973 and 1975. His Coach at the time was John five years his senior.

Initially John grew up in Spreydon and attended Addington Primary, where Dave Bates our club Patron was one of his teachers. The family moved to Hoon Hay where he attended Hoon Hay Primary and later Hillmorton High School. At school like most boys he played rugby, which went well when teams played in weight divisions. However, when this changed to age divisions and you are 5 stone 7lb at High School the future is not quite so rosy. He is often ribbed about his playing days as he played for Sunnyside Spreydon. For a few years he played rugby on Saturday morning and cross-country in the afternoon.

Fearing for his safety in Rugby, his introduction to the Olympic Harrier Club by George Wilson came at an opportune moment. The way the story goes is the Olympic Club established rooms and a track at the Hoon Hay domain in 1963. Ron Stevens, John Macdonald and George Wilson were measuring a track when a young lad Richard Merrifield who was a friend of John's arrived on his cycle to watch. "Hold this end of the tape" George instructed him and the lad did. Richard spread the word with many boys and girls from Hillmorton High joining.

A training group was established under the guidance of George Wilson. George coached him until 1971 and from then on he was self-coached, but George still kindly acted as an Adviser. In 1976 Neville Reid became his Mentor and Adviser and he says he has also had a lot of help from Ron Stevens over the years.

So in 1963 at age 13 he was underway winning the Kennett Cup in the Junior Colts section. He recalls cycling to Riccarton Racecourse and as young boy very excited when being presented with a silver cup. He thought this was all right and that was probably the spark that lit the flame.

A year later the Canterbury Cross Country Champs were on a tough hilly course out at the Ashley Forest. The age groups were different in those days and he was now a Senior Colt, which we think was U17. In this race he was third to an older Richard Taylor who went on to light up the 1974 Commonwealth Games on day one, and John Tomlinson of New Brighton who was to become his adversary throughout his junior career.

A year later in 1965 he was second behind John Tomlinson in the Champs but in 1966 and now in the Junior Section he reversed this result winning his first Canterbury title. His first Nationals which were held in New Plymouth followed in fine and warm conditions, where he finished 19th. The winner was Kevin Harvey of Auckland who went on to retain his Junior title a year later on a flat course in Invercargill. John made a monumental improvement to 18th. Kevin never carried this form on when he turned Senior, but some of the names that followed are the who's who of athletics in New Zealand, Euan Robertson, John Dixon and Dick Quax. In the Canterbury Champs he was beaten by Wayne Lambert with John Tomlinson third.

In his final Junior year which in those days was age 18 he was undefeated all year, but in a big upset John Tomlinson defeated him on the hilly terrain of Rosewall in Timaru. John rectified this anomaly by finishing fifth in the Nationals held over an undulating course in Rotorua in fine and warm conditions. The winner was another outstanding Junior who did not transfer that to the Senior ranks in Billy Waters of Wellington, with a young Rod Dixon of Nelson emerging in second.

Now let me back track and get you up to date with John's athletic results as a Junior. At age 14 he won the mile in the U17 grade and was credited with a Canterbury record of 4:44.1. John explained that this was more a Best Performance as it was the first year the U17's had run that distance. It seems strange today, but before that they were not allowed to race further than 800m.

A year later and still in the same grade he was surprisingly beaten in the mile at the champs to his club mate Bruce Wernham. His U17 career seemed to go on forever and in 1967 he regained his mile title.

Now a Junior he took out the 3 mile and 3000m steeplechase at the Canterbury Champs. He then traveled to Whangarei who were hosting the first ever Nationals in Northland. In heavy rain on the Friday he gained his first medal at National level with a second in the steeplechase to Billy Waters of Wellington but ahead of Nathan Healey. As you would expect on the day you are not competing, the Saturday was fine and humid. Although John was not that proficient on the technical side of steeplechasing, the stop start nature of the event appeared to suit him.

In 1969 his final Junior year he retained his 3 mile and steeplechase titles at the Canterbury Champs. In a replica of the year before he was once again second to Billy Waters in the steeplechase at the Nationals. These Champs were held at Rugby Park in his hometown in warm conditions. I am even told the Governor-General Arthur Porritt who had an interest in athletics made an appearance. Arthur won the bronze medal in the 100m at the 1924 Olympics in Paris. In later years the race was immortalized in the movie Chariots of Fire. John followed up his steeplechase medal the next day, with silver in the 3 miles to Martin Simmonds of the Waikato, but defeated the third place-getter Roger Sowman of Nelson for the first time.

His final act as a Junior was an attempt on the Junior 2 mile record held by Rex Maddaford at 9:02. Competing against Roger Sowman, he won the race, but fell a frustrating three seconds short in a fast 9:05.

Now a Senior John was third in the Canterbury cross-country Champs and the record will show he was only 21st in the Nationals in Gisborne, which on the surface does not sound that flash until you are aware of the ordeal that befell the Canterbury team. Due to fog the team was stranded at Christchurch Airport and ended up having to make alternative travel arrangements. This involved rail-car to Picton, the ferry to Wellington and then a bus overnight arriving in Gisborne in the early morning of the race. It is not surprising the team performed poorly.

On to the summer season where he won the Canterbury steeplechase and was second in the 5000m which had finally gone metric to fit in with the Olympics.

Improvement was coming and in 1970 still only 20 he had his best cross-country results. After winning the Canterbury Champs by a wide margin, hopes were high for a top placing in the Nationals at Paekakariki, just north of Wellington. In a major breakthrough the record will show, that John was second 13 seconds behind an ex club member Geoff Pyne who had returned from his scholarship in the USA, but now running for Auckland. Although this was by far his best result to date, he was a little disappointed because he finished so full of running, that he feels he should have won it with an earlier drive for home.

So how do you explain a distant fifth in his final Junior year to second in the Open grade only two years later at only 20? John explained that he came to the realization he was not training enough. Talking to his rival Brent Rollo and his Coach Brian Curle he found he was only doing two thirds of what Brent was training. More mileage followed which included Gebbies on a Thursday, which all runners worth their salt know has a very long hill section. Although John was running up to 120 miles a week, he stressed that it was different to Arthur Lydiard in that it was on two runs a day. He also said his runs were at a fast clip; he did not believe in long slow distance. On Monday in the cross-country season it was not uncommon to do a workout of 2 x 2 miles at a quick pace.

In the summer season a 2mile workout was common place and he would often not be racing fresh as he only eased up for the important races. During the athletic season he would often on a Saturday run a 10 mile on the beach from Broad Park and then compete at QEII in the afternoon. However, he does wonder if he over-trained at times and was paranoid about missing a day.

Back in the 70s there were not many opportunities to represent New Zealand or travel overseas, so making the team for the World Cross-Country Champs was the ambition of most distance runners. Although a forerunner for the team with his second in the nationals, you have to perform in a trial in Trentham early in the new year.

Winning the only ballot of his life was going to make the task even tougher. In those days New Zealand had compulsory military training for those unlucky to have their birth dates drawn in the ballot. Although it did not help his chances, John said he did not mind his three month stint at Burnham, although he did find it difficult taking orders from Corporals who were younger than him. He enjoyed the long walks with packs and often they would be relieved of their packs and ordered to run back to camp, where obviously he enjoyed an advantage. His old sparring partner Roger Sowman was in the same intake. John was able to train by running out to the gates at The Old West Coast Road and back a few times, but speedwork was out of the question. Funnily, none of this nearly came about because he almost failed the medical due to the flatness of his feet. For some reason the army have a thing about flat feet, but obviously some of the world's top athletes do not realize they should not be running so fast.

The cross-country trial in 1971 will go down in the annals of the sport, more resembling a battlefield and MASH unit rather than a cross-country race. Held in a valley in very hot conditions which is bad enough, to make matters worse a few days before the grass had been mowed. This was like hay lying on top of the surface which intensified the inferno. John said it felt as if heat was being blown up from the ground like central heating. Athletes fell like flies with only 14 completing the course. In sight of the finish John was running in sixth place just ahead of fellow Christchurch athlete Philip Watson. John then collapsed allowing Philip to pass him, but unbeknown to John, Philip had collapsed a few meters later. After lying there for some time John forced himself up, to stumble across the line in 14th and last place, thinking he had blown his chances of making the team. He did not realize poor Philip had woken up in a medical tent and had not made the finish. Rod Dixon who finished second to Geoff Pyne was so delirious that he fought St John Ambulance staff, saying he had a race to complete. However, the selectors named John for the team, on the basis of his second place at Nationals and the fact his preparation had been hampered by military training.

So in 1971 he was off to his first World Cross Country Champs to be held in San Sebastian in Spain. The team flew to London where they were billeted. He recalls a tough workout at one of the large parks, where basically to fine tune for what lay ahead, they raced each other.

It was then a flight across the channel to Ghent for a warm-up race in the Belgian Champs, two weeks before the worlds. A horn is sounded one minute before the start, but unfamiliar with the local customs the New Zealand team was still in their tracksuits when the gun sounded. After giving the locals a healthy start, the New Zealand Team took off in hot pursuit. John can't remember his performance, but it was a good blowout for what lay ahead.

They continued to San Sebastian for the grand finale where they stayed in a hotel. John said there was great team bonding, the result of being away together for a few weeks. Unfortunately, there are few opportunities like that today. The race was held at the Lassarte Hippodrome which is another name for a race-course in very muddy conditions, which suited Canterbury teammate Eddie Gray who ran the race of his life for third. David Bedford of England easily won the race from Trevor Wright also of England who later immigrated to New Zealand. A young Rod Dixon stamped his future in tenth with John running a steady race in 58th the fifth New Zealander to finish. New Zealand was fourth in the team's race only eight points behind France. It possibly could have been better if Gavin Thorley had not been spiked at the start and not finished the race. Sadly, with teams starting in narrow shutes it is not uncommon to clip one of your teammates. It was pleasing that the women finished second in their race. With smaller aeroplanes in those days there were many refueling stops on their return to New Zealand through the Middle East and Ceylon.

Back in New Zealand it was straight into the cross-country season with the nationals in North Taieri where the weather was dry and sunny. Rod Dixon showed how much he had developed winning by a large margin with John on the wrong end of a group in sixth. However, he was still ahead of athletes of the caliber of Euan Robertson and John Dixon.

At 21 with an uninterrupted athletic season he won the Canterbury steeplechase title in a Canterbury Record of 8:50.6. You have to remember in those days the choice of surface was grass at Rugby Park. He was also second in the 1500 and 5000m.

Before the start of the 1972 cross-country season he had a more important engagement when in April he married Allanah. He met Allanah through athletics who was a proficient sprinter and long jumper for the Technical Club. The couple has two boys Dean born in 1974 and Kurt in 1976. Dean developed into a top 400 and 800m runner winning medals at national level. Kurt is a Manager at the Hanmer Lodge and is responsible for his three grandchildren.

Marriage obviously agreed with him as he regained his Canterbury cross-country title. At the New Zealand Champs in Cornwall Park in Auckland he was a close fourth ahead of Euan Robertson and Jeff Julian. His mate Eddie Gray finally took the title edging evergreen Jack Foster.

The New Zealand Road Champs in Nelson later in the year was one of his finest, but again he came agonizingly close to taking that elusive title. In the race over 15km the weather changed four times. It started off hot, then hailed, then poured with rain before coming out stinking hot. Jeff Julian in his twilight years won by 10 seconds, but the measure of John's run is he beat Rod Dixon who finished third by 16 seconds. You have to remember Rod had just returned from the Munich Olympics with the bronze medal in the 1500m.

John was anxious to have another crack at the World Champs in March 1973 to be held in Waregem in Belgium. He found time to win the Canterbury 5000 and 10,000m and was sixth in the all important trial at Trentham that thankfully was not as hot as previously. In this trial the Healey twins took off early and were never headed. John said that they could have gone with them but it was a bit like yacht racing where you minimize the risk by covering the important places to make the team. By taking off early you ran the risk of folding. In a group of four they played it safe doing just what they had to do with John finishing in sixth to qualify for another overseas trip.

Initially the team was based in a hotel near Crystal Palace. He said the training facilities were the best he had ever encountered and they also had access to a good swimming pool. In those days on the flight over, airlines were much more liberal and they would lie across three seats or have two lying on seats sticking out into the aisle or even on the floor next to the seat.

In London the team had a perfect lead up race when they were given permission to compete in the English Cross-Country Champs, over a tough 9 mile course at Parliament Hill Fields. This gave them the benefit of competing against the top English athletes who would be their main competition in Belgium. An impressive sight a record field of 1195 brightly clad athletes battled uphill to secure advantageous positions in the early stages. The race was won by team mate Rod Dixon who to the surprise of the English crowd cleared out from their favourite son Dave Bedford. To give you a feeling for the race Rod Dixon said, "That start was incredible; I was going as hard as I could, and then I looked across and every guy was moving up on me! I've never seen anything like it before." After surviving the fast start, John ran the race of his life, mixing it with some of the world's top athletes. He held on for a commendable 8th, the same time as Bernie Ford of England who was 7th. To put his performance into context, he was only five seconds behind Tony Simmons who went on to finish 4th in the 10,000m at the Montreal Olympics. He was ahead of New Zealands Brian Rose and Richard Taylor and an Olympic medalist and world record holder in Brendan Foster.

After really good team bonding it was a quick trip across to Belgium. Again the Champs were held on a Hippodrome, but the race was marred by protestors who broke into the race protesting against the participation of two teams from Ireland instead of a united one. Rod Dixon was one of the more affected and was punched in the stomach. He was a brave third behind Pekka Paivarinta of Finland and Mariano Haro of Spain who was also hindered by the protestors in second. Mariano went on to be the bridesmaid four times. I also understand Euan Robertson was hindered by the protestors. John although evading the trouble makers, was having problems of his own, managing to get a whole spike plate that had fallen off from someone's shoes embedded in the sole of his shoe. With his foot bloodied he finished a gallant 59th.

(to be continued in the next edition)

Allan MacLaren

New Zealand Cross Country Team, 1975



Robyn's Sunday Run:

Thankyou Dave, Margaret, Dianne, Stephanie, Nigel, Richard, Kevin, Carolyn, Bruce, Stephen and his car, also Shannon Paul and Mark for joining me on Robyn's Memorial Sunday run from Diamond Harbour to Lyttelton. The ferry ride a first for some [and recommended to everyone] was an enjoyable way to prepare for the run ahead.

It was a splendid if not chilly start to the day. Snow greeted us on the Peninsula but we were soon warmed by the welcome rays of sunshine on our backs. As we made our way around the bays conversation ebbed and flowed allowing space for personnel reflection or light hearted banter. Due to injury and differing fitness levels the presence of Stephen and his car were appreciated by the few who require a short intermission. It was great to see the dedication and effort everyone put in to making it an enjoyable morning.

John, leaving Diamond Harbour later in the morning on his bike, caught up with runners just before Lyttelton.

A convivial get together at Lyttelton Coffee Co rounded off the morning nicely. I am quite sure Robyn would have admired the spirit of the run and the dedication of each and every one who ran for their own personal goals and to enjoy what our great environment has to offer.

Breathe In Smile Out and never ever give up.

Toni Taylor

Brisbane Marathon:

My first marathon outside of New Zealand was the 2016 *intraining* Brisbane Marathon. I'm sure the 8° fine weather with its gentle breeze, and the 6.00am start (while I was still on NZ time – 8.00am) helped a lot. Only twice did the sun come out from behind white clouds, resulting in an instant doubling of warmth, and sweat! And humidity wasn't a factor.

Put that into the mix, the feel-good factor about running a marathon in an Australian city show-casing itself, over the Story Bridge and along the inner city banks of the Brisbane River, and everything falling into place, I ran my second fastest marathon – again, after doing the same in Wellington six weeks earlier.

I ran 4:05:49, 11 seconds faster than Wellington, and 24 seconds faster than 2013 in Dunedin. Although, I didn't know this until a couple of days afterwards, because my watch didn't link in until 200 metres into the race, and that's after five minutes just getting to the start line, in a narrow starting chute.

I was actually just under three hours at the 30km mark, but it took all I had to space out my remaining energy over the last ten kilometres. The second time you go over the Go Between Bridge, just after 36 kilometres, it was steep for my tired legs, including down the other side: the legs just couldn't absorb faster impacts. That bridge was so much easier when it was at the 15km mark!

Having said that, the course is rather flat, but there are a few inclines, in the first three kilometres to get up to the city-side footpath of the Story Bridge, a back-road at the 13km mark, the Goodwill Bridge at the 21km mark, and after 42km's, where the constant gradual incline up around the Queensland University of Technology to get to the finish line, was a little annoying!

The course otherwise follows shared pathways either side of the banks of the scenic Brisbane River, with the marathon route running over much of the 'first lap' again, just with longer switch-backs. There were four switch-backs in all, although it meant there were twice the normal number of water-stations available.

The last switch-back was a little demoralising, taking in nearly two kilometres heading away from the finishing line, and nearly two kilometres back (from 36.5km to the 40km mark), but by then I was counting down the small numbers: only five kilometres to go; 4 ... ; 3

At the end you had to wait until they checked on their tablet that you'd recorded times at the turning points, before they'd give you a finisher's shirt and a medal. My 12th marathon will be Sri Chinmoy's Marathon in South Hagley Park on Sunday, 25 September.

Stephen Graham

Herd on the road - The Greatest of all time:

The subject often crops up, especially when talking to Allan McL, as to who is the greatest long distance runner of all time. By long distant we mean basically 5k and 10k on the track. Allan favours Kenenisa Bekele and I Haile Gebrselassie. I thought that these decisions may be just a gut reaction, and decided to check it out in a more scientific manner.



Basically there are four contenders. Paavo Nurmi (Finland), Emil Zatopek (Czechoslovakia), Bekele (Ethiopia) and Gebrselassie (Ethiopia). But how to compare them? Lots look at world records held and Olympic medals won. Nurmi set 22 world records and won 12 olympic medals, 9 gold. Zatopek 8 world records and 5 olympic medals, 4 gold. Gebrselassie 27 world records, 2 olympic medals, both gold and also 7 world championship medals. Bekele 4 world records, 4 olympic medals, 3 of the gold and 6 world championship medals. However these statistics don't tell the whole story and can lie a bit. Of Nurmi's world records some are at obscure distances such as relays, linier distances or linier and metric distances made in the same race.

I decided not to summarize the various world records, suffice to say all four have created heaps. But world records can flatter, with relays, obscure distances and multiple records set in one race. I decided instead to compare the amount of time that each advanced previous records by. This proved to be most interesting with Nurmi advancing the 5k record by a total of 8 seconds and the 10k by 52 seconds. Zatopek advanced them by 1 second and 41 seconds, Gebrselassie 19 and 30 seconds respectively and Bekele 2 seconds and 5 seconds. By this measurement Bekele drops from contention.

I feel we must also look at the claims of those who don't have both heaps of world records and medals. Two immediately spring to mind. Ron Clarke (Australia) set 17 records during his career but "only" managed to win 1 olympic medal. A bronze in Tokyo in 1964. But who can forget his European tour in 1965 when in a 44 day spell ran 18 races setting 12 world records. Surely he must be considered in the mix.

Similarly Mo Farah (Great Britain) should also be considered. Mo doesn't hold any world records worth thinking about but look at his competitive record. 4 olympic gold (the double, double), 6 world championship medals, 5 gold (almost the treble, double) and 6 European Championship medals, 5 gold. Mo has been described as the most successful individual athlete in championship history and that must count for something.

I must admit that after researching the various athletes for this article I think I might change my allegiance to Paavo Nurmi as the greatest long distance athlete of all time. But you make your own decision.

Cookie

Afternoon of Miles:

While mulling over ideas for different events to hold at our Saturday Club runs, I came up with the idea for the "Afternoon of Miles". It was (loosely) based on an evening track meeting I ran in with John Argue, in New York City, some years ago. They ran, what they called "Speed Development" nights where, each week, they organised a night where they would hold a series of one mile races, two mile races, or three mile races. Races were graded and runners would turn up each week and race the grade they fitted in to. The idea was to encourage runners to try track racing.

With our "Afternoon of Miles" the idea was to run a scratch start mile race for all entrants. Twenty minutes later the second mile was a handicap start, and a further twenty minutes later the final mile was a "chasing start" race. The "chasing start" idea came to me while watching the Winter Olympics earlier in the year. The final of a women's cross country skiing race was held on this basis. The fastest qualifier starts first followed at intervals by the rest of the field. The intervals being the time competitors were being in qualifying. The first person to cross the finish line is the winner.

I have seen "chasing starts" used in multi day orienteering events and can appreciate the drama they produce. For our event the "chasing start" concept really needed more starters to be more successful. What did impress me was the ability of our older/slower members to handle three one mile races, on a very soft track with foot long grass, in an hour.

Cookie



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AFTERNOON OF MILES

16th July 2016

LOVELOCK MILE

Scratch Start

<u>Place</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	Clive Kitchingman	6.12
2	Nigel Whalley	6.41
3	Kevin Papps	7.07
4	Russell O'Malley	7.24
5	Shannon-Leigh Litt	7.35
6	Margaret Flanagan	7.39
7	Martin Cockrem	8.37
8	Grame Pendrigh	10.03

SNELL MILE

Handicap Start

		Time	Handicap	Nett
1	Peter Coughlan	9.22	Go	9.22
2	Grame Pendrigh	9.28	Go	9.28
3	Shannon-Leigh Litt	9.29	2.24	7.05
4	Margaret Flanagan	9.52	2.24	7.28
5	Clive Kitchingman	9.56	3.51	6.05
6	Russell O'Malley	9.58	2.39	7.19
7	Martin Cockrem	10.01	1.26	8.35
8	<u>Nigel Whalley</u>	10.04	3.23	6.41
9	Kevin Papps	10.38	3.07	7.31

WALKER MILE

Chasing Start

1	Clive Kitchingman	6.18	Go	6.18
2	Nigel Whalley	7.31	0.38	6.53
3	Shannon-Leigh Litt	8.11	1.00	7.11
4	Kevin Papps	8.26	0.55	7.31
5	Margaret Flanagan	8.51	1.23	7.28
6	Russell O'Malley	9.02	1.11	7.51
7	Martin Cockrem	10.45	2.01	8.44
8	Peter Coughlan	11.35	2.01	9.35
9	Graeme Pendrigh	11.36	2.01	9.35

Greta Valley Marathon Relay - Saturday 3rd September:

Unless there are more teams at next year's event, next year's will be the last Greta Valley Relay.

I call on the club to challenge all other clubs to top our club's entry numbers next year, and for our club to put up a prize for the most participants (perhaps six wine bottles), that we would want to take home ourselves!

Our club's three teams had a fantastic day out in the country on a lovely sunny day.

We contributed three teams out of the small total of 16 teams there, and some of those were non-club corporate teams.

We have to thank John Kerrison, who always backs up for the club when needed, and he never pulls out of a team-relay run. John ran the 4.6 km lap 1 for NBO-9, jokingly blaming a (non-existent) stiff head wind for his 33.26 time. Kelvin Rowe was a few minutes ahead, running 30.57 for NBO-8. John Mulvaney lapped up his NBO senior men's team selection with 26.25 to get his team off to a good start.

We also thank Allan McLaren for his steady last lap 6.0 km run for NBO-8, his first run in ages. Allan was a little disappointed with his 39.02 but he managed to hold NBO-8's lead over NBO-9. Allan looked rather fresh crossing the finish line, from the neck up anyway! Dave Candy finished for NBO-9 a few minutes later with 35.59, after biking the first five laps, while Martin Cockram was already waiting for the rest of us in the pub, running 37.06 for the senior men.

It's interesting listening to the runners prattling on about easy laps and difficult laps. Everyone else's laps are the easy ones, but 'mine' is the most difficult. But I can't help but think that Alex sold a hospital pass to an unsuspecting Russell O'Malley by giving him the multi-gullied (there's actually only three, Russ) 8.2 km lap 4. But he ran a creditable 47.45 for NBO-9, while Richard Young ran 44.00 for NBO-8 and Clive Kitchingham 38.32 for the senior men.

I thought I started 7.5 km lap 3 at a good clip, but Evan Young (who would later run the lap at 30.54 for the seniors) was moved to enquire whether I was merely warming-up! I quite enjoyed my run for NBO-8 (36.06). I was determined to hold out Tessa Holland. Tessa ran 34.12 for NBO-9, but I had a four minute head start on her.

Lap 5 (8.0 km) seemed a bit harder as most of the trees that sheltered the long tar-sealed incline have been chopped down. So the sun beat down on the runners there, Nigel Whalley ran 37.09 for NBO-8, Ronald Reid 38.24 for NBO-9 and Dave Macdonald 33.11 for the senior men.

That leaves the 7.9 km lap 2 to be mentioned, that's the one where you can see ahead of you all of the one kilometre uphill section of the road as you head toward Motunau Beach, after you've already run six kilometres. Hayden Zervos blasted a fast 31.34 for the seniors, John Clancy 35.57 for NBO-8 and Toni Taylor 42.01 for NBO-9.

The senior men's team ran the 42.2 marathon relay in 3.17.42, while NBO-8 and NBO-9 ran 3.43.11 and 3.48.41 respectively. None of our three teams were in the money, but we made a good showing, won a few spot prizes and we had a great day out.

Stephen Graham

Herd on the road - Connelly Cup 5k handicap:

The final handicap event of the year, the Connelly Cup, turned out to be a rather dramatic affair. Graeme Pendrigh led onto the track with 400 metres to go, and looked to have the race sown up. He had physical problems with 30 metres to go and stopped but managed to get mobile again and held off the fast finishing Kevin Papps by 8 seconds, with co-marker Richard Young a further 11 seconds back. Peter Coughlan running second on entering the driveway to the track, was swamped on the final circuit of the track and finished 8th. Ironically Kevin, who was called up to the start late, would have won the event if he had gone off his correct handicap. Likewise, Neville Reid also started late, and he could have won if he had gone off the correct mark. Shows the importance of keeping an eye on the starting sequence.



New buddy, Allan Staite, took fastest time for the men with 17 min 08 and Shannon-Leigh Litt fastest women's time with 20 min 54. Carolyn Forsey won the Connelly Cup for women and Graeme Pendrigh for the men.

Alex Cook

CONNELLY CUP 5k HANDICAP 24th September 2016

Place	Name	Time	Handicap	Nett	
1	Graeme Pendrigh	29.46	Go	29.46	1st Man
2	<u>Kevin Papps</u>	<u>29.54</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>22.54</u>	
3	<u>Richard Young</u>	<u>30.05</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>23.05</u>	
4	Allan Staite	30.08	13	17.08	
5	Evan Young	30.14	10.5	19.44	
6	Clive Kitchingman	30.24	10.5	19.54	
7	Carolyn Forsey	30.26	8	22.26	1st Woman
8	Peter Coughlan	30.31	0.5	30.01	
9	Tessa Holland	30.49	9	21.49	
10	Shannon-Leigh Litt	30.54	10	20.54	
11	David Macdonald	30.55	11.5	19.25	
12	Neville Reid	31.36	2	29.36	
13	John Mulvaney	31.37	3.5	28.07	
14	Dave Candy	31.37	4.5	27.07	
15	Ronalda Reid	32.34	7.5	25.04	
16	Stephen Graham	33.11	7.5	25.41	
17=	Aaron Reid	49.51			
17=	Carolyn Reid	49.51			

PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES

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Richard Hopkins MHSc. BSc. Ad Dip Phys (OMT). Dip MT.

Spinal Injuries
Sports Injuries
Muscle balance assessment
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Trials and Tribulations - The US Olympic trials (Part 1):

The US Olympic Trials are probably the most cut-throat athletic competition in the world. Because they have such an abundance of top athletes the equation is simple, the first three in each event go to the Olympics if they have met the qualifying time or distance. It is not uncommon to see athletes diving for the line to secure that important third place. An example of their depth is the 100m hurdles where they have six women ranked in the top eight in the world, vying for three spots. The world record holder Kenni Harrison missed out in sixth place.

So how did I end up at this salubrious meeting? Basically, fellow track nerd and ex club member Ian Lauder who now lives in Geneva talked me into it. As I had never been to the USA I did my own thing for two weeks before meeting him in Seattle.

I flew to San Francisco and had my first taste of US customs, which is a drawn out affair but I have to say everyone was polite. It was then on to the city of blinding light, Las Vegas staying at the Tropicana. The airport is so close to the main part of Las Vegas known as the Strip, that the round trip in a shuttle is only \$15. Las Vegas is not a place I would want to stay for a long time but it was a great quick fix. The Strip itself is like going to many different countries over 2km. We have an Eiffel Tower, a pyramid, a Venetian quarters and even a replica of the Sistine Chapel. At Planet Hollywood and Caesars Palace even though you were indoors there was a sky that even changed from day and night. The Bellagio musical fountains were amazing. Each hotel was like a town in itself and thank goodness air-conditioning is prevalent. I forgot to mention that it was 42°C but as it is a dry heat I found it bearable.

In Las Vegas I managed to fit in three shows, KA Cirque du Soleil, David Copperfield the Magician, a lifelong dream and the Blue Man Group which was ironic as they were playing in Christchurch at the same time.

I had booked my first ever tour which was to be over a week covering the Grand Canyon and National Parks. We had a welcome dinner where I met my roommate for the next seven nights a huge American from Springfield by the name of Leroy. Leroy was harmless, but his many heroes' stories became a bit of a joke for the entire tour group. When he told me had a sleep apnoea machine and all his diabetic paraphernalia in the fridge, I was concerned what I was getting into. Due to a mix-up at the Tropicana on the first night, we were allegedly sharing a king size bed. That was never going to happen and Leroy was given a room with two beds. The only problem was that I was not told to change rooms. In view of this a Security Guard broke into my room at 11:00pm and gave me a hell of a fright. He apologised and said he was checking the room.

I was a wee bit apprehensive about meeting 30 other people for the tour, but within minutes everyone was getting on with no prima donnas. The short version is I had a ball. Besides Americans there was a Kiwi couple and a few Australians.

Racing through the tour, we had a small section on Route 66 heading for the Grand Canyon where we stayed in the heart of the park. The view at dusk will be forever engrained. The next night we stayed at a Resort in Sedona, probably the best accommodation of the tour, with a huge pool and its own golf course. Sedona is surrounded by spectacular rock formations and the scene of many Westerns, most notably John Wayne. On a jeep tour you were just waiting for the Apaches to come over the rocks. The formations at Monument Valley were stunning and then onto beautiful Lake Powell for two nights. One of the highlights of the trip was rafting down the Colorado River around Horseshoe Bend. We also took a cruise into Antelope Canyon. The next two days were exploring Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon which I would have to say were even more spectacular than the Grand Canyon. At times we were at some pretty decent altitudes of 8000 feet and I wondered what the fuss was about, but admittedly I did not go for a run. However, one day at 9100 feet at Rainbow Point in Bryce Canyon, breathing was becoming laboured and the throat drying up.

After returning to Las Vegas it was a flight to Seattle on the West Coast, a beautiful city with obviously the ocean and many lakes. Pike Place Market with a fish market as its base, would have to be one of the best in the world and took up many hours of shopping and eating time.

I did a day tour of Seattle where I was warned of 4 laws which are still in force in Seattle, which are as follows:

1. You are not allowed to bring an ugly horse into the city.
2. You are not allowed to put polka dots on the American flag.
3. If you have a cold you are not allowed out on the streets.
4. If you are coming to Seattle to commit a crime, you have to report your intentions before you enter the city.

You will be pleased to know I was clear on all counts so the tour began. A lot of famous people & Enterprises have hailed from Seattle. Bill Gates & Peter Allen who started Microsoft in 1975. Jimmy Hendrix was born here & Bruce Lee spent a lot of time. Add Starbucks, Costco, Expedia, Boeing & Amazon that originated from Seattle. Also Pearl Jam & Nirvana. Add Grey's Anatomy & 50 Shades of Grey & The Deadliest Catch.

I did an awesome tour of the Boeing Factory in Everett which is just north of Seattle, which Hayden my son felt was his birth right as he is a pilot & wasted on me. This factory is in The Guinness Book of Records as the largest building in the world in volume. No cameras or cellphones re allowed at the actual factory. Basically we saw the assembling of the Boeing 747, 777 & 787 Dreamliner. It was hard to comprehend that each aeroplane costs 300 million dollars. How do airlines make a profit? The completed aeroplanes are lined up ready for their owners in what is known as the field of dreams. This field had 6 Billion Dollars worth of aeroplanes on display. Apparently, the first overseas country to purchase an aeroplane was little old New Zealand. This was two B & W float planes which the Government purchased with a view to starting airmail in this country. Believe it or not paint adds weight to the aeroplane and when Air NZ wanted a black one for you know who, they had to take out two seats to balance the weight.

Finally I was reunited with Ian, followed by a slow boat to China, which was actually a Greyhound bus to Eugene where the trials were being held. We stopped for 20 minutes in Portland, the headquarters for Nike and where the recent World Indoor Athletics Champs were held. Sadly, my only memory of Portland is homeless people with needles amongst lots of rubbish.

Apparently the Friday we were travelling was the start of the school holidays, with the highway being very congested. It started to look like we would not make the 10,000m that night starring Galen Rupp. When the bus finally arrived we only had an hour to spare with plan A being to put our luggage in lockers at the bus station and head straight for the track. No lockers. Plan B find the Railway Station and use lockers there. After wasting valuable time finding the station, again no lockers. Plan C we flagged down a taxi who took us to our motel, where we dropped off our bags at reception, no time to check in and jumped back into the taxi to the track. No queues at security thankfully, so we were just in time to see Galen secure his eighth national title in a row.

Eugene the home of the Trials is not an easy place to get to cheaply being 13 hours by road from San Francisco and 6 hours from Seattle the other way. Eugene is an athletics mecca and is known as Track Town USA.

The University of Oregon dominates the town and includes the athletic stadium known as Hayward Field, named after the Track Coach Bill Hayward who ran the programme from 1904 to 1907. Many top athletes have competed for the University of Oregon, the latest hero Galen Rupp, but the person who dominates the landscape around here is the late Steve Prefontaine. This seems to be because of his never say die attitude in races, where he would do most of the leading in races even when people would sit on him. From a New Zealand point of view, his legendary status seems strange when he did not medal at the Olympics or ever defeat our own Rod Dixon. However, like most athletes I made the pilgrimage up a steep hill to Pre's Rock, which is the spot where Pre died in a car accident in 1975. There was a poignant array of track spikes, trophies, medals, personal notes, race numbers, friendship bracelets, singlets and other assorted items all arranged individually at the base of the rock. Pre also has a trail named after him being 5.5km long with a surface of woodchips, but again to a New Zealander who is used to the outdoors it was not that impressive.

The late Bill Bowerman a Track Coach at the University is very prominent with a life size statue at the stadium. Bill coached 31 Olympic athletes and is credited with the jogging boom in the USA. However, it was a visit to New Zealand in the early 60s where Arthur Lydiard introduced him to jogging. Bill was also a founder of Nike.

I had heard so much about this stadium in that it had held many Olympic Trials and also the Prefontaine Diamond League Meeting each year. However, there were a few things that surprised me such as no toilets or food outlets in the stadium. This meant you had to go outside and although it was not too far I found it a bit unusual for a top stadium. It is good that the seats are close to the action,

The World Athletic Champs are being held in Eugene in 2021 and at present the stadium is not up to scratch. There are plans to pull it down and start again. You also wonder if there will be enough accommodation in this small town. Nike money is huge around here so it won't be problem coming up with the readies. For example in 2011 when Nike founder Phil Knight paid the majority of the 220 million needed to build the Matthew Knight Arena a multi-function arena at the University of Oregon. The only catch was that it had to be named after his son who died in a scuba diving accident at age 34. Yet Phil Knight's book 'Shoe Dog' portrayed that they did not get on. Whilst in some respects the money on tap from Nike for athletics is a good thing, there is also the negative side that they can exert too much control.

(to be continued in the next edition)

Allan McLaren



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