

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 June.

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

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From the Editor:

Welcome to the post lockdown issue of Running Commentary. I hope everyone is managing ok in their bubble as we navigate level 3 and look forward to level 2.

I have been working from home since before the lockdown and it brings back memories of the time following the Christchurch earthquakes, when I worked from home for 6 months.



I have twisted Allan MacLaren's arm to write another couple of articles for this edition on his adventures at the World Athletics Championships last year. They are good reading and I have heard a rumor that he is now writing a book.

This weekend I am looking forward to driving to the Burwood Plantations for my first run there for over 6 weeks. Not been able to go to the gym during this period I have had to get innovative using a single dumbbell and weight boot that I haven't used for over 30 years. Using this with pushups, planks and other exercises I have been able to replicate my usual strength training program. With me being so injury prone, this is critical to my running.

Josie has written a good update on the Summer Track season and Tony McManus has provided some great action photo's of our Track & Field athletes.

Tony Prisk

From the President:

I hope this finds all our members, families and extended families safe and well in their COVID-19 lockdown bubbles. The last month has been unprecedented times, but from what I have seen in our community and members we have adhered to the Governments pleas of Stay Home Stay Safe.

During this time, the Executive Committee have been able to hold our monthly meetings via Zoom which proved to be very productive and entertaining. Obviously, our main discussions were on where we stand with all the levels and how our winter season is going to be able run and how or if it will affect the summer season.

As this is all in the unknown, we are getting advice from Athletics Canterbury and being kept up to date on how all levels will run (Sport NZ Alert Levels 1-4 below).

Regarding the Winter Registrations the Committee have decided to put a hold on the Registrations & Fees until we have a clearer picture from Athletics Canterbury on what local events can be organised within Level 2. We know there are intentions to plan and hold some events and maybe adjust the season by extension, but again this is all in the unknown at moment.

Athletics Canterbury update:

Group training, club events, races, and pack runs are not allowed under Level 4 restrictions, (unless those you are training with already live with you, in your bubble). Member engagement via regular communications and Virtual Races is encouraged.

When we return to level 3, individuals will be able to travel to local training venues if they are open, but inter-regional travel is not allowed, and training should still take place within your local area. We urge individuals to remain vigilant about social distancing.

We will keep you posted once we know more.

Do not forget Athletics Canterbury are running virtual runs that you can register from their Facebook Page; I will share on our page when I see them.

On a non COVID-19 related matter I would like to say congratulations to all the Summer Children who competed this season where you won or placed you all did amazing giving all you have to our awesome sport. Also to all the amazing coaches, helpers, parents, siblings. Without you and your support the children wouldn't be where they are today and lastly to huge thank you to Josie and her committee for running such a successful season. You have all done an outstanding job and I look forward to seeing you all again next season.



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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.

It was unfortunate that we had to cancel our major fundraising Run Festival at Tai Tapu this season as the committee had already done a lot of the groundwork and were just gearing up to get it going. But on an exciting front this now gives us time to set up our new 2021 Run Festival back in our Community! If you would like to join/help the organising committee message me.

Lastly its nearly AGM time!! We have set the date for 15th June and at this stage it may be looking like we will have to make this a Zoom AGM depending on what alert level we are, but I will keep you informed about this. If you are wanting to submit any remits and if you are interested in attending the AGM via Zoom or at a meeting please can you start registering your interest on the event I have created.

Thanks & keep safe and stay active.

Kara
Club President



Summer Track Update

The Children's Track & Field season has ended on a high with amazing results at the CCAA Canterbury Championship. Two days jam packed with loads of laughs and even more cheering.

We had a total of 62 Personal Bests achieved, 41 by 18 girls and 21 by 10 boys. Several club records were broken; Holly Gray - G13 Long Jump, Kavanah Lene - G13 Discus, Perez Lene - G11 Shot, Lola Platten-Romero - G9 Discus and Armani Lemalu - B13 Shot Put. Overall our young athletes had received 39 placings in finals, an increase of 23 from the previous season. There were many great performances and Holly Gray's 5 first places in the 100, 200, 400, Long Jump & 60 Hurdles was definitely a stand out. She also came 2nd for overall 13 Girls Champion. Jacinta Hoglund had three 2nd placings and one 3rd place in her first athletics season. Charley Campbell continued her good form with one 1st, two 2nds, & two 3rds and was awarded third place for overall 10 Girls Champion. Kavanah Lene continued to dominate the G13 girls field events with first place in the High Jump & Shot and second in the Discus. And as always Armani Lemalu dominated the B13 Field Events with firsts in Shot & Discus and seconds in 100 & 200, and was awarded third place for overall 13 Boys Champion. It was also awesome to see three NBO Boys in the 100m final. Well done Armani Lemalu, Zion Devon & TK Rawiri. Lola Platten-Romero continued to build on her success at the season's Quadrathons by placing third for overall 9 Girls Champion. There is so much young talent in our club. Every one of our athletes should be proud of themselves as they gave each of their events their all. They were all superstars.

Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the Triangular Meet and Challenge Cup were cancelled and no teams were announced. The Interprovincial Competition was postponed until October. NBO has six athletes named as part of the Canterbury squad, Holly Gray, Kavanah Lene, Armani Lemalu, Amaleila Tiatia. Zion Devon and Keira Richardson-Miller are reserves. Being Zion's first season being named as a reserve is quite impressive. We are all looking forward to seeing them compete in Auckland later this year.

We were unable to hold the Prize-giving celebration in our usual way but instead had to do it via FaceBook Live. A quick but effective way for everyone to learn of their successes over the season. Trophies, medals and certificates will be available for pick up in the near future.

While the season may not have finished with the celebration we all look forward to but the friendships built will always be there. Bring on the 2020/2021 season!

Josie Gray



Running with Sherman or “What has a donkey got to do with the National Masters Track and Field Champs?”

The short answer to that question is that whilst staying in Napier for the aforementioned 2020 Track and Field Champs at the end of February, I was staying in the CBD just round the corner from an excellent bookshop called Wardini Books. There was time each morning to wander about before driving to the venue in Hastings, so I made this dangerous discovery early on my first day. I have developed a modicum of restraint in my old age so on my first visit I limited myself to taking photos of the covers of books that took my eye so I could check out if I could get them through the Library. The 50% success rate meant I would have to practice delayed gratification when it came to Sherman. Those of you who have read a previous book by this author, Christopher McDougall, called “Born to Run” will understand my impatience.

So meanwhile, back in the jungle that was the Nationals, I focused on enjoying the 3 day event. I had 3 other club members to keep me company. Shannon and Allan and Ron McTaggart made the trip. There were also a number of other Canterbury athletes including my track training buddy Bernie Jago plus Andrew Stark, Peter Richards,

Glenn Watts, Shirley Rolston, Michael Bond, Maggie Chorley and Malcolm Cornelius. Apologies to anyone I have left out.

The facility in Hastings is top notch. It too serves several other sports. The stadium is much bigger than our new one, the changing rooms underneath are capacious and there is a great café next to the High Performance facility. Like Nga Puna Wai, though, it can get windy there. The weather over the weekend was predominantly fine and warm. These Masters events are simultaneously very social and competitive. You can resume a longstanding rivalry or discover a new threat in the person of someone who has just moved into your age group. You compete in a band of age groups so there is always someone to chase. I have found that the older I get, the more exciting it is when the youngest ones don't automatically win or when an athlete like Sally Gibbs (50-54) comes in ahead of many of the men as she did in the 5k. She was 4th overall in a time of 17:59.90 a mere 5 weeks after returning to running post injury.

So I was able to cheer enthusiastically when Allan stormed home to his age group wins in the 400, 800, 1500 and 3k. Allan joined me in cheering on Shannon in the 5k and I was able to reunite Ron McTaggart with the shirt he left at last years Cant XC champs when he turned up for his 1500.

I came home with 3 Golds and 2 out of 3 disappointing times which is always motivating for whenever there will be a next time.

There was some great competition. Andrew Stark showed he hasn't lost the killer instinct and Maggie Chorley gave Sally Gibbs some competition. Bernie showed the benefits of our training. Check out the website to see how you might have fared.

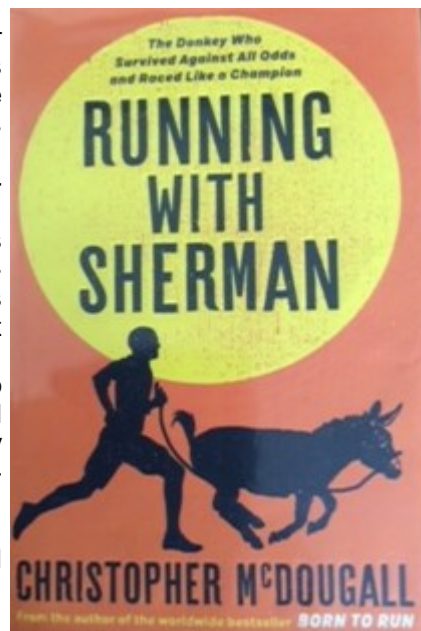
I enjoy the Saturday night dinner as it is a chance to see athletes dressed in normal clothes. We do scrub up well. I look forward to checking out the shoes worn by Wellington runner Michael Wray which are not those you would normally expect to be worn by someone who is possibly an accountant. Bernie, Kevin, Glenn and I finished our Sunday by visiting one of the local wineries. It's a lovely part of the world. Being in Napier gave me the chance to be a tourist as well.

Yes ok, in case you were wondering, I bought two books, both gifts. On my return home, to my delight, my request for "Running With Sherman" from the library was answered sooner than I expected. I was soon burning the midnight oil entranced by the story of how Chris, with the help of his wife and the local Amish neighbours rehabilitated the seriously mistreated donkey and discovered the world of competitive burro racing. Who knew? I spent 12 years living next to Colorado in ignorance of this amazing and demanding sport.

This book is a 'must read'. Like his other book, Chris digresses into the backgrounds of the people who help with Sherman. We learn much about how his Amish neighbours live, autism, dealing with depression and wonderful stories of the connection and communication between humans and animals. The people you meet in the course of this story are a delight. I enjoyed Linda and Karin, the "in the vulnerable age group" Ladies whose diesel pick up and giant horse float got the team from Pennsylvania to Leadville. This is all in the context of the "will they do it?" structure of turning a practically terminal animal into a winner. Any athlete will identify with the trials and tribulations of training, failing and coming back again.

Along the way you will be both informed and entertained. Maybe even inspired. Check it out.

Margaret



In my previous article I advised that the Championship had the best performances in history.

Top billing was a World Record in the women 400m hurdles, where two Americans Dalilah Muhammad 52.16 and 19-year-old Sydney McLaughlin 52.23 going under the old mark. I also saw another event where the World Record was broken twice, but not that impressed as it was a new event the 4x400m Mixed Relay. Four other teams went under the old mark. It did not really have the very best 400m runners, but it did allow Allyson Felix in her twilight to collect her 12th gold medal at a World Championship.

The men's sprints went to form with Christian Coleman 100m and Noah Lyles in the 200m. In a minor upset Steven Gardner won the 400m. Both Coleman and Gardner ran the 6th fastest times in history.

In the men's middle distances, Donovan Brazier led the whole way for an American Record and 9th fastest of all-time. Timothy Cheruyot of Kenya did a Filbert Bayi in the 1500m leading the whole way and going under 3:30.

The long distance races the 5000m and 10,000m bucked the normal trends with fast times. In the 5000m Muktar Edris of Ethiopia retained his title which was actually a surprise as he had done nothing since the last Championship and only got there as courtesy of being the title-holder. Jacob Ingebrigtsen of Norway who had only just turned 19, tried to steal the race with 350m to go but tied up in the straight for a creditable fourth.

In the 10,000m my favourite athlete at present Joshua Cheptegei of Uganda prevailing in a fast time. What I loved about this race was that in the final straight you could actually see endurance winning over speed. Yomif Kejelcha of Ethiopia the faster man as World Record holder for the indoor mile, initially closed to Cheptegei's shoulder where it remained stable for a few seconds, with Cheptegei slowly pulling away again.

The 400m Hurdles was primed for a great race as Karsten Warholm of Norway, Rai Benjamin of USA and Abderrahman Samba of Qatar in the last year closing on the World Record of Kevin Young which has stood since 1992. Samba had the weight of his nation on his back, but due to injury earlier in the season was never a factor, but did pick up the bronze medal for the host nation. I love watching Warholm who is a very modest man, but very aggressive in his pre-race routine which is basically beating himself up into a frenzy. Always a fast starter he held off the American challenge.

The 3000m steeplechase was a classic, with the title-holder Conseslus Kipruto of Kenya, desperate to keep up his country's tradition. He had been injured almost all season and in the Diamond League final only three weeks before, he could only manage seventh. With 50m to go Lamecha Girma of Ethiopia was leading and it was obvious Kipruto was going to run out of real estate as he closed. Although I was sitting over the finish line I swear that Kipruto did not make it, and after a long wait the camera said otherwise prevailing by a hundredth of a second. What could he have done if fit.

In the field events I have already covered the shotput. The event that brought the stadium to a crescendo was the night Mutaz Essa Barshin of Qatar won the high jump with a leap of 2.37m to the delight of the home nation. He had two blips at 2.33m and just got over on his third. There were still two jumpers ahead of him until he cleared 2.37m.

Other standouts were Christian Taylor of the USA winning the triple jump for the fourth time, Tajay Gayle of Jamaica upsetting the long jump field with a world leader and national record of 8.69m. The pole vault was very exciting with Sam Kendricks of the USA holding his nerve over the young Mondo Duplantis who competes for Sweden due to his mother's nationality, although he was born and has always lived in the USA. Only 18 at the champs, he has since raised the World Record twice to 6.18m. Kevin Mayer of France the world record holder for the Decathlon led for seven events, but broke down in the pole vault leaving the way open for Niklas Kaul of Germany.

In the women's events I have already mentioned the world record in the 400m hurdles. In the sprints Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce of Jamaica who specialises in hyphenated names, won yet another 100m title in 4th fastest all-time. She did not run the 200m and neither did Shaunae Miller-Uibo of Bahamas who had been the best 200m runner all year, but also over 400m which she was preserving herself for. This left the way open for Diana Asher-Smith GB, but in saying that her time of 21.88 is fast. Sadly, for Miller-Uibo although in the 400m she ran 4th fastest of all-time she did not win the race, beaten by Salwa Eid Naser of Bahrain who starts very fast and managed to hold on. It was a great race. Miller-Uibo is married to Maicel Uibo of the Ukraine who was second in the Decathlon. Equal bragging rights there.

The 800m was always going to be interesting as the athletes who have been dominating such as Caster Semenya are only allowed to compete now as a woman if they lower their testosterone. This left Ajee Wilson USA as favourite, but she tied up in the straight leaving Halimah Nakaayi Uganda a surprised winner.

The double achieved by Sifan Hassan Netherlands was unbelievable for the range; the 1500m in the second fastest all-time and the 10,000, in a very fast time. In both races she simply blew away the competition, including Helen Obiri Kenya who recovered from the shock to take the 5000m in another good time. The steeplechase went to form with Beatrice Chepkoech Kenya the world record holder going under 9 minutes. Another fast time in the shorter hurdles over 100m with Nia Ali USA over her world record compatriot Kendra Harrison.

I found the field events frustrating from a New Zealand stand point because the shotput was won with a throw Valerie Adams used to do in her warmup. Also with Elisa McCartney injured when she was capable of a medal. People don't realise she is 4th on the all-time list.

Mariya Lasitskene competing as an Authorised Neutral Athlete and has absolutely dominated the event for a few years, won again but only on a countback over Mahuchikh Ukraine who broke the world U20 record. Malaika Mihambo Germany in long jump and Yulima Rojas Venezuela in the triple jump dominated their events with top distances.

In the Heptathlon Katarina Johnson-Thompson GBR who has showed promise on many occasions, finally ended her string of disasters beating the Olympic champion.

I'll finish off with two upsets with an American DeAnna Price winning the hammer and Kelsey-Lee Barber Australia in the javelin. With one throw to go Barber was only a distant fourth, but she surprised everyone including herself by pulling out a mere victory.

The next champs were supposed to be in 2021 in Eugene, Oregon but have been moved to 2022 because of the virus. It will be a busy year with the Commonwealth Games and European Champs in the same year.

Allan MacLaren

IAAF Heritage World Athletics Champs Exhibition:

Whilst attending the World Athletic Champs in Doha, we heard there was an exhibition on with memorabilia and film of all the previous Championships which started in 1983.

On one particular day there was going to be a special media event involving a donation from a couple of famous athletes, but the real attraction for me was that my boyhood hero Lasse Viren of Finland a four-time Olympic Champion would be in attendance.

Information on where it was being held was a bit vague and we spent much time in pursuit of the exhibition, to learn that it was only 100m from the Food Court which we frequented on a daily basis.

As it turned out Lasse Viren was not there, but to a Track Nerd it was a smorgasbord of famous athletes from the past and present.

The formal part of the proceedings was Ashton Eaton twice Decathlon Olympic Champion and his wife Brianne Theisen a Heptathlon Olympic Bronze Medallist donating their kits and numbers from the World Indoor Champs in 2016 which they both won. Seb Coe double Olympic 1500m Champion accepted the donation on behalf of the IAAF.

There were many other famous athletes, many of them working as IAAF Ambassadors. Whilst being in awe and a bit nervous approaching them, they were all very friendly and happy to be photographed with you. It is hard not to be a name dropper but there was Mike Powell the World Record Holder in the Long Jump, David Rudisha double Olympic Champion and World Record holder in the 800m, Daley Thomson another Double Olympic Champion in the Decathlon, Steve Cram a 1500m World Champion, Sally Pearson Olympic Hurdles Champion, Conseslus Kipruto reigning Olympic Steeplechase Champion and the famous Norwegian Ingebrigtsen Family with the prodigious 19-year-old Jacob. I felt sorry for Stefan Holm of Sweden the 2004 Olympic High Jump Champion, as it appeared many did not know who he was. A very interesting character at only 1-81m tall, he is quite small for a high jumper, he holds the unofficial World Record for jumping above his own height at 59cm. He also jumped 2.06m as a forty-year-old.

Two people I got in meaningful conversation with were both Irish. John Treacy won two World Cross-Country Champs in the late 70s and then in the 1984 Olympics, amazingly gained the silver medal in his debut marathon. Eamonn Coghlan who won the 5000m at the initial World Champs even told me that John Walker was coming to visit him in Ireland as if I was a personal friend. As you can imagine my ego was in overdrive.

Anyway, that is enough crowing for one article.



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