



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 April.

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

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the Club Management Committee.**

From the Editor:

The year is going quickly with another track season nearly over and the Commonwealth Games are only a few weeks away.



We have another bumper edition with some great articles from a number of members. Part 2 of the 'Boss and Lady Boss' article written by Allan includes the pinnacle of Peter's career at the Los Angeles Olympics. The first part of this article has created a lot of interest and Jim Sunderland shared the following: "Peter also gave back to the community. He used to camp and fish from his boat at DOC Totaranui Campground. One year Peter arranged with the camp caretaker, Hugh, to log out some old gum trees that were becoming a danger. Peter brought his crew back later in the year to cut down these trees at no cost to DOC." Jim joined the Olympic Club in 1957 and again in 1972 has commented that he had many enjoyable years with the club. It is pleasing that past members are still taking an interest in the club.

I am really enjoying Mel's blogs and have included another two in this edition.

Margaret has been really keen for me to include some photo's of club members in action and the club's designated photographer (Stephen Graham) has managed to locate an action photo of her for this months edition.

Allan has another job at the moment and has put on his detective hat again as the clubs official researcher. He has been spending many hours at the public library researching New Brighton and Olympics club history for a series of articles he is writing on the clubs medalists at national level. Part one is in this edition and you will be surprised at what he has dug up.

Tony Prisk

From Margaret:

This summer athletics season has been an ever-changing succession of extremes. We have had days on end of hot weather that have caused non-morning people like myself to be the first to suggest we do our long Sunday run earlier. Then there have been the days of rain where my back vegetable garden has flooded and I have been tempted to google how to grow rice. And in between, the grass and the weeds have grown faster, fruit has ripened weeks earlier than normal and fans have sold out NZ wide.

And finally, after we managed a meeting with the actual contractors at Rawhiti, before Christmas, we got a watering regime and fertilizer that has had many people commenting that the track looks better than ever. I know there are some bald patches still related to the health of some of the sprinklers, but overall it is mostly green. That does not mean we are not keen to see the completion of the all weather track at Nga Puna Wai. It will be good to have all the field disciplines back in the one place and to have an all-weather track that allows for faster times than are often possible on grass, unless you are Peter Snell.

The next 4 weeks include all the different championship events for all athletes from juniors to masters both at Club and Canterbury level. I am sure we will have many competitors wearing our singlet with pride and doing their best. This is the time when all the training and effort pays off.

Thanks are due to all the parents and coaches of our Junior athletes without whom the summer programme would not happen. Congratulations are also due to our Senior and Masters athletes who have competed on the road and at the track over the summer.

On an International level, we have the Commonwealth Games to look forward to soon. There are a number of Canterbury athletes in the team. I always enjoy watching our NZ athletes perform and it is always a little bit more special when I have seen that athlete compete in person.

Over the last few years, as the numbers of senior athletes competing here in Canterbury has declined, I have worried about the long term future of our Athletics programme. Many of our young athletes take the opportunity of a Sports Scholarship in the USA and it is hard to criticize them for taking up that opportunity. On a practical level back here, what that has meant over the last few summers has been that track races have had all age groups combined because of the small numbers. Or the races have been divided up on the basis of projected times.

However, several weekends ago, I raced the 3000k Canterbury Champs at Rawhiti with the more mature runners. Then there was a second event for much younger women and there were more women in the same race than I had seen for some time. It was won by Rosa Flanagan (no relation, alas) who looks like she is returning to form. What made me feel especially optimistic was that the next morning, on my group run on the Summit Road, (one of the aforementioned earlier starts), we crossed paths with a large group of young women runners including Rosa and Angie Petty and I felt a surge of hope that we still have young people who want to run, jump and throw. And that's why we are all part of NBOL. We may not all be Olympians, but we have fun testing our limits. And we support those of our families who do that.

Margaret



Lap 5 Conspiracy Theories:

At the 2016 Takahe to Akaroa Relay I was telling someone that I believed the records for Lap Five had not been adjusted for the decrease in distance from 11.1km to 10.7km. Daniel Reese of the Canterbury Centre overheard me and basically told me instead of talking about it, write to the Canterbury Centre pointing this out. I thought he knew me better than that. So here is the letter I wrote proving the anomaly.

"Some time ago my son Hayden was saying how he had heard about the legendary time of Paul Smith on this lap. I told him that Paul had the benefit of a strong backwind that year, but even so he ran at an amazing 27:30 10km pace. I doubted that this record would ever be beaten.

Hayden later told me that this 27:30 pace must be a fairy story as 30:41 for 10.7km equates to 28:40 pace. After conceding he was correct, I wondered if I had been duped all those years ago with the legend growing.

I decided to investigate further and have discovered that when Paul broke the record it was over 11.1km, and that the time had not been adjusted to allow for the shorter course.

Please find enclosed two programmes that prove the time has not been adjusted. As you can see the programme in 2003 had the distance at 11.1km and the record at 30:41. This year's programme has the distance at 10.7km with the record still at 30:41. If the record is adjusted for the 10.7km course, running at the same rate equates to a time of 29:35.

I also consider that Sue Bruce should still hold the Women's record, as in 1985 she ran 37:32 for 11.1km which equates to 36:11 for the 10.7km distance. This is far superior to Fiona Crombie's time of 37:30 for 10.7km in 2009.

I have not checked other grades.

In summary I consider that the lap 5 records should be adjusted to allow for the shorter distance."

Since then Daniel has admitted to me a couple of times that it is in his too hard file. It appears that he does not want to tell Fiona Crombie who happens to be a member of his club, that Sue Bruce who was a member of New Brighton is still the worthy holder of the record. Adjusting Paul Smith's time, who was a member of Olympic is not really a problem as his run was so amazing over the longer distance that no one has got near it, even though they are running 400m less.

I consider that if Fiona is shown the evidence she will accept it. At the moment I do not consider this is fair and will examine the programme for the next edition of the race with interest. I would be interested to hear what over club members think.

Allan McLaren

The 2018 Summer 5k series:

This 5 event series put on by the Port Hills Club on the loop course around North Hagley Park is a favourite event for many of our members. Most compete in the Registered run, which starts at 5:45 but some members choose to run in the larger field that starts at 6:15. It is a good event to commit to as it gives you the opportunity to challenge yourself to improve your time over the Tuesday night run on 5 consecutive Tuesdays. Of course it is also affected by the weather. Traditionally there is a fierce easterly that can sweep across Hagley Park at that time of day and can be a head wind when you really want to be able to sprint to the finish. Then this year, there was the Tuesday when the temperature was still close to 30 degrees.

There was a great representation of NBOL athletes this year and many featured in the overall rankings.

Mel England took home a trophy for the 35+ age group after a series of consistent runs in the 18min range. Tessa Holland was second in her new age group and Carolyn Forsey won the 55+ group with a PB to cap it off in the final run. Mark Bailey continued to show the younger runners that they had to work hard to beat him and ran consistently in the low 15min mark to take out his category. Mark Reid, who is enjoying a return to earlier form, despite a Hawaii holiday potentially undermining all the training he did for the National Road Relay, also ran well in 2 of the races. He was followed closely in the last race by Chris Mardon. Other good runs in that last race came from Paul Coughlan and Clive Kitchingman.

Over the course of the series other club members competed in both the registered and unregistered race. People I spotted included Bruce Woods, Stephanie Rumble, Peter Coughlan and Stephen Graham. Apologies if I missed anyone. I know members were using it as a warm up for other longer events. I would like to thank Stephen Graham for once again taking great photos.



Clive

Stephanie

Nelson Striders Estimated Half Marathon - Maitai Valley :

This half marathon is quite unique in that you must estimate your own time to run it in, and the ten runners who run closest to their estimated times win a rolled pork roast (the first 5), or bacon & eggs (the next 5) and the *'Trevor Ruffell Tusk Trophy (the Boar's Jaw) is awarded to the Closest Finisher to Estimate.'* No watches or timing devices of any sort are allowed or worn, and there are no 'K' markers. It is NOT a race and there are no prizes for the fastest runners. It is run along the Maitai Valley Road which is tar-sealed to start with, then onto undulating shingle or dirt roads around the river. It is also the cheapest half marathon run I know of. It has only just gone up to \$30 this year, from \$25 which it has been for many years previously. The story below is from the website explaining how the estimated half marathon run came about:

"This unique event was inspired by the Nelson Striders running group who made international press when out for their Sunday morning run up the Maitai Valley in August 1994. What started as a peaceful jog ended up with the group scrambling up a bank to avoid the agitated wild boar. Caretaker Trevor Ruffell came to the rescue and had to drown the pig with his bare hands in the Maitai River.

Runners now compete to win the prestigious Trevor Ruffell Tusk Trophy (aka The Boar's Jaw) by being closest to their estimate over the 21.1km distance up the Maitai Valley. Over the past 18 years winners have all been within 10 seconds of their estimate, with Stu Cottam guessing his exact time in 1998."

The newspaper write up is also below, from the website:

JOGGERS HAIL HERO WHO DROWNED WILD BOAR - Nelson Evening Mail (Wednesday10, 1994) - Kirsty Fyfe

Crocodile Dundee eat your heart out ... a Nelson man became a true hero on Sunday when he saved a group of joggers being chased by a frenzied boar.

Maitai Dam caretaker Trevor Ruffell downplayed his courageous feat when contacted by the Mail this morning, but admitted he drowned the 54kg boar in the Maitai River with his bare hands.

The escapade began when seven members of the Nelson Striders Club were enjoying an early morning jog through the Maitai Valley and spied a wild boar on the opposite side of the river.

When the tusked boar saw them it swam the river and gave chase.

Mr Ruffell couldn't quite believe what he saw when he arrived on the scene in his

After ramming the pig with his ute's bull bar, he grabbed his .22 rifle - but not before his dog had bailed the pig up. 'The dog chased him down to the river where I shot him between the eyes, but he didn't flinch.'

The boar then ripped the dog through the shoulder with its tusks and tried to charge up the opposite side of the bank. 'So I grabbed him by the tail and the back leg and drowned him in the river. He was pretty tired by then.'

Mr Ruffell said it happened so fast he did not even think about his actions before lending a hand.

Joggers Marie Lenting and Averil West said the incident was exciting rather than terrifying and made their adrenalin pump. 'We just couldn't believe a boar would actually swim a river to chase us. The experience was so unreal because it was close to town ... I knew how it felt to be a clown in a bullfight,' Mrs West said.

Mrs Lenting said it had given them 'an awesome buzz' and forced the joggers into a sprint after the boar got within a couple of metres of them. 'We had to climb up a steep bank and cling to the sides while the caretaker chased the boar for us.'

The incident will go down in Nelson Striders' history, as the boar's jaw will be mounted as a trophy for the club's race up the Maitai Valley.

One of the women involved in running this event was on that particular run back in 1994 – 23 years ago!!!

I first ran this half marathon last year, January 2017. I had considered it previously more than once, but thought it would do my head in, not having my timing watch on; not being able to tell how long or far I had been running for or how far or long I had left to go etc. When I finally decided to run it, I figured I could gauge approximately how far I had run or had to go, by where they said the water stations were going to be on the course. So I had a vague guide line to go by.

Last year I did actually 'race' it but was 3.01 minutes out from my estimate. So got nowhere.

This year, I decided there was no need to race it – 'run my guts out' – so I added 3 minutes onto the *actual time I ran last year* – in effect increasing my estimate from 2017 by 6 whole minutes. I then ran it at a comfortable moderate pace, and found it much easier to finish than last year. Still did some work running it, but not so knackered by the end.

We were graced with a perfect fine sunny day, probably just getting a bit hotter nearer the end of running it, after several days of near constant rain daily both in Christchurch AND Nelson, in the days leading up to the event. It had been looking like we would be running in the rain on the day, which would both be unpleasant and most likely affect the time I ran it in. It had been raining right up until the actual day. So very lucky to 'get away with it!' (I especially HATE running in the rain).

With none of us wearing any timing devices, it meant we *have to go to the prize giving* to see if we've won anything or not! None of us know what time we've actually run it in, therefore have no idea if we're close to our estimate or not.

So a couple of hours later, down at the local pub / restaurant (almost right across the road from our motel; how totally convenient!), I attended the prize giving. What an absolute buzz it was to not only find I was in the first 5 who ran closest to our estimated times and won a rolled pork roast, but to actually **WIN** the **Trevor Ruffell Tusk Trophy (the Boar's Jaw)** for running the closest estimated time OVERALL – out by only 2 seconds! I would have to say it was probably more exciting winning this totally unique trophy for running a half marathon with a completely different twist to the usual winning for being fastest overall or in one's age group. I was also the 2nd fastest female runner, and that was without racing it.

2018 Results NBS Nelson Striders Half Marathon

Bib no.	First name	Last name	Sex	Distance	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL TIME	DIFFERENCE
17	Tessa	Holland	F	HALF RUN	1:43:43	1:43:41	0:00:02
5	Roger	Golding	M	HALF RUN	1:29:38	1:29:34	0:00:04
33	Ralph	Bradley	M	HALF RUN	2:04:20	2:04:10	0:00:10
85	Alan	West	M	HALF RUN	2:30:52	2:31:02	0:00:10
3	Robbie	Barnes	M	HALF RUN	1:26:30	1:26:17	0:00:13
20	Barry	Rowe	M	HALF RUN	1:50:00	1:49:41	0:00:19
13	Chris	Gates	M	HALF RUN	1:40:23	1:39:55	0:00:28
21	Lynaire	Morgan	F	HALF RUN	1:51:30	1:50:45	0:00:45

The full results are on the website: <http://www.nelsonevents.co.nz/content/nbs-nelson-striders-half-marathon-10km>

There is also a 10K estimated run on as well, with the first 10 closest to their estimates winning the same prizes as the half marathon, but the 10K'ers do not get to compete for the trophy. Both can be walked & estimated.

So if you want to run a very cheap, simple, no fuss, low key, well organised half marathon with a twist and beautiful scenery, I certainly recommend this Nelson half marathon. You don't have to race it or be a fast runner to win! And there is fresh sweet juicy pineapple to eat the minute you finish – a pleasant change to the usual banana often handed out at the end of other half marathons.

Tessa Holland

Tessa competing in Summer 5k series



2018 Buller Gorge Marathon - hard as:

Many who have run the Buller before seem to snigger every time they offer their advice about it.

Now I know why. The New World Buller Gorge Marathon was my slowest marathon, by over half an hour. But this my sixteenth marathon was by far the most scenic, abundant as it is with uniquely West Coast natural beauty.

I ran it (and walked – a lot in the second half!) in 5:03:31! It was heartening to hear that fellow NBO club members at the finish were worried about me, although they were comforted by one (I don't know who) saying that I've probably had a wee problem and would be "plodding along."

The day before I mentioned to my friend Paul, who had arranged the transport and accommodation for us (which is fantastic when someone else does that), that the old velodrome at the finish in Westport's Victoria Square wasn't very steep. Well, after a five hour marathon, it bloody well was!!!

My left hammie strain didn't warm up at all, and at about the halfway mark, clearly marked as the start-line for the half-marathon, I had my first real experience of 'hitting the wall.'

My build-up wasn't great, being mucked around by a constantly hot Christchurch summer. The slightly dodgy hamstring didn't help, and it was aggravated by starting the first few kilometres a tiny bit faster than I should have, and by the constant undulations, and then the heat in the cloudless sky, with little shade on the course.

I ran the first 12 kilometres at 5:45 pace (I should have stuck to 6:00 like normal), and the next eight at 6:00, and then from there 6:30 to 8:00, depending on how much uphill, downhill and shade there was. I just had to do whatever I could to finish, and that drawing on experience, managing water intake (made easier since water was given out in small plastic bottles, and in sponges), running in the shade and the downhills, and walking the up-hills. I just had no push-off from my left leg, and the right leg had to take equally small steps. I was determined to finish, partly because I promised to dedicate this race to one of my cricket girls, who miscarried late last year.

Nearer the end I was walking with a fellow struggler, but I said to him I was determined to run the length of the long bridge into Westport, so I took off a bit. Off the bridge I had a short walk when my fellow struggler passed me! I ran the last 1.2 kilometres along Westport's main street (Palmerston Street), passing my fellow struggler back, and right to the finish in Victoria Square. Locals set up outside their houses and outside the cafes, to cheer everyone along the last kilometre.

The marathon starts in the Buller Gorge just east of Hawks Crag, the one-lane road pick-axed out of the solid rock cliff halfway up the gorge. While you're standing around at the start sand-flies will bite a little, but leave you alone once you're standing in a huddle, and more particularly when the fresh meat alights with the next bus-load of marathoners.

The marathon heads east on State Highway 6 for about eight kilometres before the one switch-back just past Berlins. So by the sixteenth kilometre you're back at the start and actually heading toward Westport in earnest. Running through Hawks Crag (see photo) was a real highlight. But I think the whole concept of a sixteen kilometre switchback may have got to me a bit.

The bush and the river are constant companions for almost the entire race. I enjoyed running over the three or four high bridges. I've run marathons over the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Brisbane's Story Bridge, and we all take our quaint 'English' bridges over Christchurch's Avon River marathon circuit for granted, but there's something special about the high bridges over the gushing waters of Buller's tributaries. The view upstream into the mountains as you run over the bridge into Westport near the end is lovely.

The course is sealed the entire way, and the course is described as undulating. There are in fact almost constant inclines and declines, although none are really that steep. While the course is obviously downhill overall, if you add up all of the inclines, that's over 500 metres, which is twice the height of the Evans Pass (between Sumner and Lyttelton).

I was amazed how many familiar faces there were from the Christchurch running scene, and in particular from our club. This year's marathon was won by Samuel Wreford (2:16:03) and Hannah Oldroyd (2:56:16).

From NBO, Bruce Woods (4:34:18) finished, and in the Pulse Energy Half-Marathon the following NBO club members also finished, Mel Angland (1:24:09 – second in the 35-44 women), Tessa Holland (1:35:21 – second in 45-54 women), Carolyn Forsey (1:41:56 – first in the 55-64 women), Stephanie Rumble (1:44:35), Russell O'Malley (1:49:00) and Kevin Papps (1:52:10).

We stayed in an extended bach in Carter's Beach. The bach took me back to the days I remember New Zealand was when I was a kid. There was a nice outlet a few doors down that covered a lot of bases: restaurant, bar (with proper glass jugs), sports TV, dairy, ice-cream parlour, hamburger bar, and I think you could post a letter there too. The beach-front took a bit of a battering from the previous weekend's storm, but otherwise the beach was a lovely place for a stroll.

We drove home via the Buller Gorge, but this time in heavy rain. The river was up and there were many more waterfalls than on race day. At Hawks Crag there was a curtain of water on the left hand side of the car, as water just ran off the huge cliff above the road. That was spectacular, as was the compulsory pie in Culverden!

I am determined to do better next year! Going back, to reclaim the Buller!

Stephen Graham



Mel's Blog - Use it or lose it:

Do you drive to work each day? Watch television in the evening? Or sit in front of a computer screen most days?.....Don't worry, if you answered "yes" to all three of these questions then you are exactly like me!

Our modern lifestyle promotes many sedentary activities, meaning our bodies can become functionally weak and even simple activity can make us prone to injury! Because what happens to muscle when we don't use it? Simple. It shrinks. It's called muscle atrophy. There is much truth in the saying that "if you don't use it, you lose it!"

Since returning to running after the birth of my second son, Logan, I have focused on functional strength as part of my running routine and I believe it is an essential component of injury prevention.

Functional strength training attempts to adapt or develop exercises which allow us to perform the activities of daily life more easily and without injuries.

In the context of running, functional training involves mainly weight bearing activities targeted at the core muscles of the abdomen, lower back and glutes.

One of the biggest challenges I faced after the birth of Logan was strengthening my core again. I developed diastasis recti (separation of the abdominal muscles) during pregnancy and was also recovering from a subsequent cesarean section. I eased back into running slowly and wore a core compression sleeve for around twelve months after Logan's birth to support my core as I returned to running.

As part of my rehabilitation and return to running, I was fortunate to meet Shelly Stevens from Onelife. As a personal trainer, Shelly helped me to activate my transverse abdominals (deep innermost abdominal muscles) using simple breathing techniques. It became evident that simple breathing techniques were far more important than abdominal crunches!

All of my functional strength training is done at home when I get the time (usually twice a week). No gym required!

This strength training provides the balance that my muscles need to recover from my running routine. If I start to feel a niggle, I think of the muscles that feed into that area. The niggle can often be a symptom of muscles becoming unbalanced.

For example:

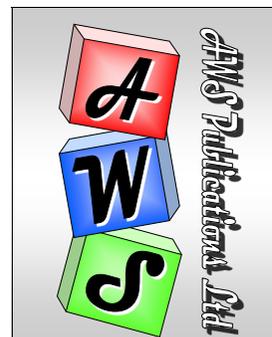
- Sore shins (shin splints) can be the result of tight calf muscles with weak muscles in the front of the shin.
- Hamstring pain can actually be a result of tight hip flexors that tilt the pelvis out of correct alignment.
- Plantar fascia pain can result from tight muscles in the calf and soleus.
- Hip flexor pain can be caused by weak glutes and tightness through the quads.

By recognising the muscle imbalance and/or tightness, then addressing it, I can often prevent an injury from occurring or getting worse. This is something I have learnt the hard way, having had many injuries in the past! These days, consistency with my running is the most important thing and prevention is ALWAYS better than a cure!

Whatever your routine, it is worthwhile to include some functional strength training. So pick your time, put on your gear and do it; because one thing is clear: if you don't use it, you will lose it!

Mel Angland

Credits: *Shelly Stevens, Onelife personal training, Rolleston.*



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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.

Junior Track & Field:



Oceania Masters Track & Field Champs - Dunedin:

Going to my first ever Oceania competition provided me with another first-a race pack which included a miniature bottle of whiskey, appropriately named “The Spirit of Dunedin”.

Held over the week of 20th-27th January at the Caledonian Ground at Logan Park, the event was well organized by Athletics Otago and Otago Masters Athletics. We athletes had to cope with the extremely hot temperatures for the time it took for each event, but the officials were out there all day. This was the week of the TV report that NZ stores had run out of fans, except for the Briscoes store in Dunedin, which was no longer true by the time I went looking for one. I cannot ever remember being so hot in Dunedin.

I had a steep learning curve about the difference between competition at this level and the National Masters Champs I have been to in the last 10 years. The first lesson was “Read the rules.” I have no real excuse for neglecting to do this. My first race was the 800m on Sunday morning. I had left my bag in the stand with other members of the Canterbury contingent and went up to have a last drink of water. I was asked ‘when do you have to be at the Call centre?’

I’m not sure why nobody commented on my NBOL singlet at that point, but I was soon informed that I had to check in at the Call Centre 25 minutes before my event. I had to ask where it was and made haste across the field where people were warming up. I got there in time but was immediately told that I couldn’t compete as I was not in the correct singlet. I should have been in a NZ singlet as I was not just an athlete but a representative of my country. Apparently I was not the first person to miss this crucial piece of information as I was told they had ‘loaner’ uniforms available, usually. At this point they had a men’s large available. So I went and transferred my numbers and put it on. It was like one of the mini dresses you would have seen me in half a century ago.

The next bit of pre-race process was that we all had to sit on benches in the call centre and wait until we could be escorted to the stadium and the start. This gave some of my fellow competitors the chance to smarten me up a bit. The consensus was that a knot on one side of the bottom of the singlet would bunch it up and stop it flapping. And allow my shorts to be visible. And so it proved to be. Nothing to be done about the size of the armholes though. I promised faithfully to bring it right back after the race and we then got to walk in a convoy over to the track. Not the kind of warm up I am used to. We did have a small amount of time to do some strides before we lined up for the race. Afterwards I kept my word and took the singlet back. Then, for some strange reason, I read the rules and discovered that you had to be in your proper singlet if you were getting a medal. Loris to the rescue. Unfortunately, Loris Reed was injured and was unable to run. She loaned me her singlet. This came in very handy, as it was not possible to buy a singlet because of supply issues. I got to wear it again for the 1500m and the medley relay.

It was a great experience to be there and cheer for club members and other Canterbury athletes I have known for years. I now understand why some of them have been enthusiastic attenders at previous Games. The competition is still serious and results include the age grade percentile. People train hard and push themselves. Sometimes it is tempting to look back at the results from years ago and lament the passing of time, but we all push ourselves to the limit of our fitness at the time. I watched people 20 years older still pushing their limits and I hope I can do the same.

We had a good Canterbury contingent. From NBOL we had Tony McManus who won 4 medals and Lyn Osmer who won 2. Other athletes and medal winners from Canterbury were Louise Martin, Lois Anderson, Bev Church, Malcolm Cornelius, Maggie Chorley, Michael Bond, Glen Watts, Bernie Jago and Loris Reed who did compete in the Javelin.

The other memorable part of this trip to Dunedin was my visit to the Albatross Research Centre and the tour down to the beach to watch the little blue penguins come ashore at dusk and scurry up the beach to their burrows. The medals for this Champs use a penguin outline around athlete figures. I haven't drunk the whiskey- I may age it for another 8 years, but I do look at the medal and remember the penguins. Check them out online. They are pretty athletic animals.

Margaret



The Boss and Lady Boss/ The Peter & Wendy Renner Story P2:

For 1984 there was only one aim for Peter the Los Angeles Olympics. After qualifying running a solo 8-25.0 he retained his national steeplechase title, and added the 5000m. In probably the pinnacle of his career he ran 8-22.95 in his heat to move to second on the NZ all-time list. In the semi-final two days later Peter led nearly the entire race, before easing up to qualify for the final in a magnificent NZ record of 8-18.2. At this point we all saw Peter as a medal possibility, which unfortunately only added to the pressure placed on him. Apparently well meant messages were placed on his door, which made him feel he had the whole of New Zealand on his shoulders. The final is hard to explain, in most respects being very exciting from a New Zealand point of view for 90% of the race. Peter's final placing of 11th in 8.29.0 does not really tell the full story. Peter actually led for most of the race running a consistent 70 seconds per lap. With three laps to go he put in a 68 to actually get a small break on the field. His next lap was 72, which meant the field closed, leaving Peter a sitting duck for the last lap. He had bravely run himself out and had nothing left for the last lap. The writer probably being a bit analytical wonders if he had not put in that 68 and run another 70, that he might have had a kick left.

During the Games, John Walker jacked up an Asics contract for him, and one of the conditions was that if he made the final, they would give him a round the world ticket so he could perform in Europe. One interesting factor about his race is that if he had finished say 8th by sitting, he would probably have not been noticed. As it was he gained a lot of respect with the Kenyans even calling him Peter Snell. As such the promoter in Europe were pleased to have him, as they knew with Peter in the field the race would always be fast. John Walker was happy to assist him in negotiating with the promoters, but was very impressed when Peter did it himself. He was even able to get Wendy a smaller contract with Asics and for her to join him in Europe. It appeared you had to be thinking on your feet after each meeting, negotiating travel expenses to another meeting and agreeing what you are worth. To my surprise Peter advises that promoters were coming to him. One thing must be pointed out, that although Peter did quite nicely out of at first shamateurism, and then prize money, as he owned his own business, being away affected his earnings. The two probably cancelled each other out, but he did get to see the world. In all his races in Europe he managed to finish in the top three. The highlight was ironically Koblenz, the only race where the promoter did not want him. It was only because the manager for the American Steve Scott went into bat for him, that he was added to the field. In the race he was pace-maker for the Olympic silver medallist Mamoud of France, but hung on strongly at the end to break the NZ record in a very fast time of 8-14.05. This time ranked him 6th fastest in 1984, and would have been good enough for third at the Olympics.

1985 started off with the customary National Steeplechase title, and complementing it by winning the 10,000m. On the grass at Wanganui while only finishing 7th, he achieved a goal of any distance runner by just squeaking inside the 4 minute mile in a time of 3-59.7. The highlight of 1985 would have to be his first international victory in the steeplechase at the 5th Pacific Conference Games held in Berkley, USA. On the down side he had another bad run in the World Cup this time in Canberra, and failed to qualify in the 3000m at the World Indoor Champs in Paris.

I would hate you to think Wendy had been idle during this period. In 1984 she was third in the National 10,000m in Auckland, and had run a 5000m in 16-23.54 to rank 10th on the NZ all-time list. In 1985 at Dunedin she moved up a notch to finish second in the 10,000m in a time of 34-21.42 that was good enough for 7th on the old time list. On the 15th June 1985, Wendy chose a low-key marathon in Duluth, Minnesota to make her debut. Aptly named the Grandmas Marathon, it has been said that if you want to know what you will look like in twenty years time, look at yourself in the mirror at the completion of a marathon. This marathon had no prize money and that irritated Peter, the ultimate professional, who felt she should have tried something like New York. However, Asics did come to the party and paid for the airfares. Although Wendy ran a very impressive debut the final result was heart breaking. Leading with 200m to go the roar from the crowd was deafening, and she assumed it was for her. What she did not realize partly due to the noise, was that she was being caught, and was unaware until she was passed in sight of the finish. All the same, second in 2hrs 39-54, 8th on the all-time NZ list was something to be proud of.

With Peter a certainty for the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games in 1986, Wendy entered the Houston Marathon in January 1986 in the hope of joining him by breaking the qualifying time for the marathon, that was only 3 minutes faster than her debut. Unfortunately, the race did not go to plan, and after 10miles she was walking from leg cramps caused by a problem in her back. She decided to pull out at halfway, as there was no chance of qualifying, and to not hurt her other chance of qualifying for the world cross- country champs in Switzerland. In the qualifying race over 5000m at the national champs in Wellington she finished second to clinch a spot.

So the husband and wife combination headed off to the World Cross-Country Champs in Neufchatel, Switzerland. The team spent some time in an Italian training camp really focusing for a good effort. The women team members who apparently eat like sparrows were not affected, but the men struggled on their diet of pasta for lunch, breakfast and dinner. Ultimately it affected their performance with Peter in 106th place. Wendy in a world class performance was 23rd with the team in second place only two points from the winner England. Initially the NZ team was announced the winners, but it was discovered one of the English runners had been missed. When you consider Zola Budd the winner of the race is really South African, you can see Wendy was robbed of a world title. She followed this up with another impressive performance in finishing 9th in the Cinque Mulini in Milan.

While Peter was readying himself for the Commonwealth Games, Wendy attacked the American Road circuit, with her best performance 8th in the Boulder to Boulder Classic. She also ran the Grandmas marathon again in a time of 2-43 in 8th place. She then met up with Peter in England and spent the Commonwealth Games with him in Edinburgh. With The Games boycotted by the Kenyans Peter was a top medal prospect. With 250m to go in the steeplechase Peter had 10m on 3rd with a gap of 20m to the 4th runner. At this point a medal looked certain, and even Peter can't explain what happened in the last few meters to drop to 4th. There was some controversy, as it appeared Roger Hackney who had finished second, had not cleared the water jump correctly, but the positions were retained.

Wendy had time to reflect at the Games, and was wrestling with her emotions. She was sort of looking for some sort of closure on her running career, happy her goals had been met, and wanting something else in life. The timing was perfect to have a family, with Amy born in 1987 and Scott 1988. Both have shown their parents athletic attributes, but are more into other sports. This has not stopped them from winning school and North Canterbury zone titles in cross-country, and finishing in the top 10 in the Canterbury Schools. Amy's pursuits are horse-riding, ballet and dancing, with music and drama for good measure. Scott really enjoys basketball and plays cricket in the summer.

Peter who had been racing on the European circuit for years decided to give it away, as he did not like spending so much time away from his family. As a result he decided to give marathons a go, the reasoning being you only needed to be away a couple of weeks, as you were not going onto the next race. He made his debut in the Rotorua marathon in April 1987 finishing second to John Campbell in a time of 2hrs-19-13, which he described as a fast training run. Six weeks later he entered his first international marathon in Sydney. In terrible conditions he came away with the winners cheque of A\$10,000 in a fast 2hrs 14-09. Experts at the race felt it was worth 2hs 11-00 in normal conditions. By the end of 1987 he had won the NZ title in Auckland in a time of 2 hrs 15-32. In 1987 he was voted NZ athlete of the year with track, cross-country, road and marathon titles.

In 1988 he was again second in the Rotorua marathon this time to Paul Ballinger in a time of 2hrs 17-50. In 1989 he reclaimed the national steeplechase and 5000m titles, and in 1990 won the steeplechase to qualify for his third Commonwealth Games. Determined to do well in his last Games he even started training twice a day. Unfortunately, at the same time Peter was having health problems, and even had a seizure at work. He never really got going in the Games race, but still managed a respectable 8th holding off the other New Zealanders who he had seen as a threat. Also that year Peter regained his national road title in his birthplace Mosgiel, and had another go at the marathon. This time he won his second international marathon Sacramento in his best time of 2-12-30. In Pittsburgh 1991 in a marathon he feels he should have won, he was beaten by 13seconds. His time of 2hrs 16-42 was very good in the hot and very hilly conditions. He followed that up with a 10th in the prestigious New York marathon in a time of 2hs 15-45. In 1992 we see another 10,000m title and a NZ half marathon title at Buller in a time of 1-03-45. He was disappointed with his 5th place in the San Francisco marathon a race he feels he should have won. The Los Angeles marathon went much better with a third place in the good time of 2-14-13. The course is regarded as a slow one with the race in hot conditions. The winner was the 1984 Olympic silver medallist John Treacy of Ireland. Peter did very nicely out of this race as he got an unexpected bonus by winning the Friendship Cup. This was a team event in which he was paired with Erin Baker who was eighth in the women's race. He had another attempt at Los Angeles in 1993 and led the race for a long time, before drifting to eighth in a time of 2-15-00.

One benefit of running marathons in the United States was the entire family would get an exceptional holiday, hopefully paid by Peter's performance. They would get to meet Peter's Uncle Ian who is a doctor living in Los Angeles, and visit Disneyland etc. This was great, but the parents got concerned when one of the children asked when they would be going to Disneyland this year. The parents concerned that the kids were starting to see this as normal and not a privilege, decided to bring a halt to the proceedings.

As previously pointed out Peter enjoyed the relays and was rapt to be a member of the winning National Road relay team in 1993 when it was held in the Takahe to Akaroa. Whilst New Brighton had won many National Road relay titles, the one on their own turf had always eluded them. He wanted to retire, but the club begged him to run for another year which he did adding another relay title. Around this time Peter was having trouble with his back and was told that running was not helping it. After all those years of constant training and racing, basically he had had a guts full, and this gave him a good excuse to retire. Although he says he could have continued, it did clear the back up, even with his manual work.

I am pleased to report that the Renner family is doing very nicely, owning Renner Logging, a business which Peter bought from his father. They have built it up from four to twenty employees and have machinery worth more than the average house. Although you could class Peter as the Managing Director he is very much a hands on boss setting the example. You will never stop Peter from hard work. They live in Rangiora in what I would describe as a country estate.

The parents still keep fit with Wendy still running every second day, and regularly attending a gym. They both played together in a touch rugby team, but Peter was forced to resign because he was too rough and competitive. These days Peter keeps fit by playing flanker in golden oldies rugby. Obviously his job and love of fishing and hunting also help in this regard.

Thank you, Peter and Wendy for sharing your story. From a writing point of you it has felt like a marathon with so many successes to write about.

Allan McLaren



Peter auditioning for a part in "Seaspray".
On way to Canterbury cross-country title.



Wendy leads club mate Sara Harnett.



Peter Renner and Neil Lowsley on the way to Commonwealth Games qualifying time.

A Measure of Success:

I have always thought that the club should have a list of all their medallists at National level. With my research when writing the New Brighton 75th Anniversary book, it was a simple exercise to complete that task for that club. I then set about compiling a list for the combined club, New Brighton Olympic, which again fell into place. I also wanted to focus on the Olympic club which has proved more arduous, partly because they did not always have an Athletic section and some of their more prominent athletes have also competed for other clubs. I am still refining that list. Please note, that these lists do not include children, where New Brighton has been strong over the years nor veterans where Olympic has been outstanding. It is virtually impossible to cover these two sections of the club.

I think you will be surprised and very proud when I give you the totals which are as follows:

New Brighton

Gold 82
Silver 89
Bronze 57
Total 228

Olympic

Gold 18
Silver 23
Bronze 10
Total 51

New Brighton Olympic

Gold 18
Silver 26
Bronze 4
Total 48

The plan over the next few editions of Running Commentary is to go through each decade in respect of medals at National level, and hopefully tell you about each athlete. I will also try to give you information on successes at Canterbury Championship level. I will also do a special article on New Brighton and Olympics amazing record in the New Zealand Road Relay and Takahe to Akaroa Relay.

But first, how did these two great clubs come about. New Brighton was the first to kick off when on the 23rd May 1928, the Mayor of the Borough of New Brighton, Captain Owles, called a General Meeting in the Joyland Theatre. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of an Amateur Athletic Club in the Borough. All interested residents, along with sporting bodies, schools and churches were invited. Captain Owles presided over the meeting, attended by 25 keen people.

In his opening address he presented his reasons for calling the meeting, which was to foster track and field athletics for all the young people of the Borough (obviously veterans unheard of in those days). An interim committee was selected to officially form the club. Subsequently, they were approved for affiliation to the Canterbury Centre. In contrast to Olympic, New Brighton was solely an athletic club until 1963, when a cross-country section was added.

In 1963 the club faced extinction, through flagging interest and a lack of support. A hard core of officials gathered to consider the situation and at the time, could have let the club go under, amalgamate with another club, or 'get stuck in' a phrase coined by the Club Captain Max Gosney.

Getting stuck in is exactly what they did, and with enthusiasm created from fundraising activities it was decided to stage a relay between the New Brighton Athletic Club and the Anglican Harrier Club. This was to be the longest relay in New Zealand from New Brighton to Motueka, carrying a message between the two Mayors. After the tremendous effort put in by the runners and supporters who thoroughly enjoyed themselves, G Grant M Gosney and C Wood decided there was enough support to start a Harrier section.

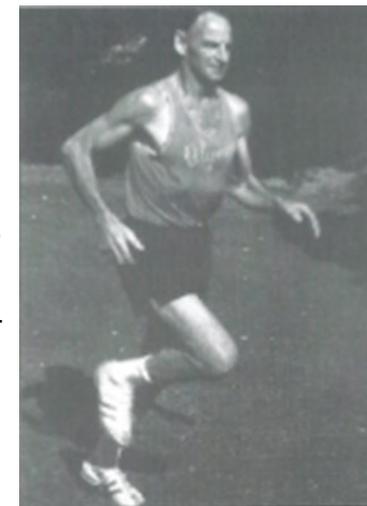
The initial run over varying distances took place from the home of Mr and Mrs Grant at Breezes Road at the end of April 1963.

On the 13th July 1963 in appalling conditions, Peter Snell, Olympic Gold Medalist and World Record Holder officially opened the Harrier Section and led a group of 150 boys and girls on a training run.

Olympic got underway when a harrier Club was formed at the end of 1948. A month after the 1948 Takaha to Akaroa Relay, Fred Mair called a meeting at his home to discuss the formation of a new harrier club. Although a member of the Baptist Club, he was concerned there was only one open club in Christchurch, that is a club not associated with an institution. Other than Christchurch, all other harrier clubs in the city had associations with either a church, the University, the Technical College or the Scout Movement.



Mair along with Noel Smith, Ron Crowcott, Les Dix, Max Carter and Lionel Fox agreed to hold a second larger meeting and by the end of March 1949 the club had a name, a constitution, colours and held its first annual meeting and first official run, which was from Des Walsh's home with 21 runners attending. The name 'Olympic' was chosen because it stands for the greatest and best as in Olympic Games. The way the story goes is that on the Friday night of the Canterbury Athletic Champs, Fred was told that the New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association had granted permission for the club and the name Olympic. He was so excited that he went out and won the Canterbury six-mile title.



Fred Mair

The athletics section of the club was formed by Fred Mair, Ron Abernethy and Brian Whittington in 1952. It had started with 15 members and by 1954 had increased to 30 and used Williamson Park, now a housing area, as a training ground. Although in 1959 six members represented Canterbury it went into recess. It was restarted in 1961 with only seven members but in 1963 saw a move to Hoon Hay Domain. The way the story goes is that George Wilson, John MacDonald and Ron Stevens were measuring out a track, when a young lad Richard Merrifield rode up on his bike to watch. "Hold the end of this tape," George instructed him and the lad did. He soon brought along John Sheddan and pupils from Hillmorton High School. This was very fortunate for the later success of both sections of the club.

Mid-week meetings were held with anything from 100 to 200 children taking part, and by 1964 many had been introduced to interclub competition at Rugby Park.

Clubrooms were later built at the Domain which became the venue for many winter runs, but they were never really a success during the summer. The advent of women members revealed that the one room with open showers was not really suitable. Eventually, the club became nomadic again and the rooms were handed over to the Suburbs Rugby Club. A bit disappointing after the planning, negotiating and fund raising that went into it.

In the next instalment I will bring you up to date with how our athletes fared in the 1930s and 40s. This will give me more time to get up to speed with Olympic who were very strong in the 50s.

Allan McLaren

Mel's Blog - Trust Yourself:

It was the 3rd August 2011; my son's first birthday. However, rather than waking up in the comforts of our own home to celebrate the occasion, I was waking up in the isolation unit of the Christchurch children's hospital ward.

My son, Luke, had been unwell for several weeks. I had visited the doctor countless times with him and we had already been referred to the hospital once, only to be sent home several hours later. After much persistence and eventually a chest x-ray, Luke was finally diagnosed with pneumonia and could be treated with intravenous antibiotics.

It had been a stressful few weeks. I had been told by several doctors that Luke had a virus, there was nothing they could do and so they sent us home.

His health deteriorated and I wasn't convinced it was just a virus, so I kept taking him back to the doctor. My husband questioned "how many times are you going to take Luke back to the doctor?"I reflected and I questioned myself.

But, I knew in my heart that he wasn't well, so I persisted.

And I am forever grateful that I did.

Bacterial pneumonia can be fatal if left untreated. It is one of the leading causes of death in children under five years worldwide, but it can be successfully treated with the correct antibiotics.



Luke unwell in hospital on intravenous antibiotics and oxygen.

Luke recovered well, but then two months after this ordeal, he was again unwell. His symptoms were exactly the same. I knew he had pneumonia again so I took him back to the doctor.

We were referred to the hospital, only to be told by the doctor that "every time Luke becomes sick, we can't just assume it is pneumonia."

I questioned myself again.

But, I had learnt from previous experience to trust myself.

I work in healthcare and I am a Registered Medical Laboratory Scientist, so I wasn't afraid to question the diagnosis.

I took Luke back to the hospital and I requested that he have a chest x-ray, or that he was prescribed antibiotics. We were not leaving until he had one or the other.

The doctor finally agreed to give him a chest x-ray and the result confirmed my concern had been justified. He did have pneumonia again, only this time it was in his other lung. He was again treated with antibiotics.

This experience had taught me A LOT.

It reinforced to me that we have instinct for a reason, and that sometimes you need to challenge and question what you may be told.

I applied the lessons learnt from this experience more recently when I was referred to a podiatrist for foot related problems which impaired my running.

As you already know, getting the right running shoes for your feet is essential!

My podiatrist recommended I wear orthotics and so I had some made. But, they didn't feel right. Instinct was telling me I needed to approach this differently.

I did my research based on what I felt worked for me. I returned to the podiatrist, this time asking if we could experiment with a modified innersole. He was open to the idea and willing to try.

I transitioned easily to the modified innersole, and they were super comfortable! My suggestion had worked well.

Experience has taught me a few key things that are important to consider in regards to running shoes:

– Be guided by your podiatrist but assertive about what feels right for you. Working together towards a solution is essential.

– Always check the heel to toe drop on a shoe (even updated versions). If you run in a shoe that has a lower heel to toe drop than the body is accustomed, there is risk of injuring the achilles tendon.

– I always buy a running shoe half a size bigger than my actual shoe size because my feet swell when I run.

– The right shoes, in my opinion, should never give you blisters.

– When I have the opportunity, I always walk in bare feet to strengthen my toes as well as the stabilising tendons and muscles in my feet.

– I keep any calluses at bay by exfoliating/trimming them. If they get too big, they can affect how my foot fits the shoe.

For me, finding the right running shoe (with innersole modifications) has created the foundation on which I am able to train consistently.

Ultimately, I think there are many facets of life where we can have successful outcomes via thoughtful questioning, collaboration and trust in our instinct; if only we allow ourselves!

As Albert Einstein once said ” The important thing is not to stop questioning” and “Education is not the learning of facts, but training of the mind to think”. So just remember, next time you question yourself, instead acknowledge your instinct; you know more than you think, all you have to do is Trust Yourself.

Mel England

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