

RACV

trails



Marysville Marathon

—festival—

united we run

trails



RACV

4:26:37



WENDY THOMAS

WHAT'S
SAID
ON
THE
RUN

WENDY THOMAS
CLUBPERSON OF THE YEAR 2014



2013 MOST IMPROVED
HERNAN "HE-MAN" LOPEZ
WITH THE PRES

WSOTR

WHAT'S SAID ON THE RUN

The newsletter of the Knox
Roadrunners

PO Box 2273
Bayswater Village LPO
Bayswater
3153

November/December/
January Edition



ROADRUNNERS



38 DEGREES AT 53K,
CHECKPOINT THREE AND
SOMEHOW STILL SMILING!



GNW100s

the quest for the KRR miler

When I read that the GNW100s describe themselves as “Australia’s Toughest Trail Ultras,” I figured it was just marketing hype. After all, surely when Bret and Grant told me the 100k was like running a Rollercoaster and Two Bays together they were exaggerating, weren’t they?

As we landed in Newcastle the Friday before the race, the pilot announced that the “main problem” with our arrival was the 35 degree temperatures. Despite the weather forecast being for 26 degrees and showers on race day, somehow I knew we were in for a hot one. A restless night in a camper van it proved to be, especially after the pre-race dinner where all speculation was for a cancelled race. A total fire ban had been called, however the race director assured us that it was for the North of the Hunter, and the race would go on.

Assembling in the middle of Teralba Football Oval was an exciting affair, with the temperature still hovering around the mid 20s. Race entrants are weighed prior to starting, and during the race briefing, it appeared that the race director figured the worst was over in terms of heat, declaring “I think it’s already cooler.”

We started on the main street for a long section of undulating bitumen road before hitting the Great North Walk proper. For those who don’t know, the Great North Walk is a walking track that runs from the North of Newcastle right in to the top of Sydney, spanning nearly 250km. Fortunately, this race only heads to a section that leads onto Patonga Beach, some 173km from our starting point.

The first ten kilometres ticked by in a gentle fashion, with some inclines worthy of walking in the true ultra running fashion. After all, 36 hours is a long time on the feet, and the name of the game is energy conservation rather than bragging rights of hitting the top of each hill first. Finally, we turned off the road and started on the Great North Walk track proper. And folks, this is where it gets ugly. GNW100s

boasts some 3800 metres of ascent in the 100k and 6000 metres of ascent in the 100 mile. To put that in perspective, it’s like running from the club to the peak of Mount Dandenong - ten times. And here was the first. I’d been warned about the infamous Heaton Gap, and after enjoying some undulating trail running, we crossed the highway and the time had come. Nothing prepares you for this one, it goes from virtually sea level to 550m in the space of a kilometre. Stairs aplenty!

As I watched Bret and Grant power their way up the hill, I had a brief moment where I wondered how I was going to finish this race. The climb was relentless, however before long I spied the communications tower that marked the top of Heaton Gap. Relieved, I enjoyed a stretch of pleasant fire road running before doing it all over again.

Following this hill was a “rainforest” section, which basically meant lots of tree cover, some really rough trails, and a keen eye to try and work out where you needed to go. Before long, it was time to ascend again.

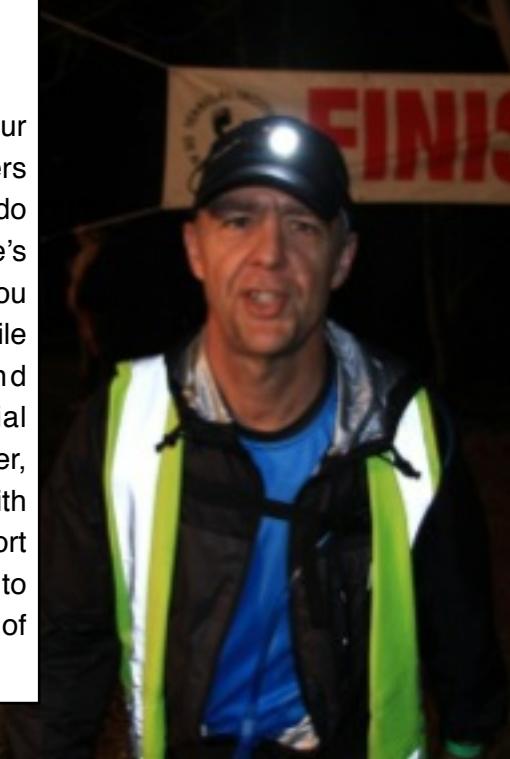
For those of you who have run Rollercoaster, think of Dodds track - and double it. This hill was so potent it has a “hugging post” half way up. I started to wonder if the post was hugged to prevent one sliding back down, however I took solace in the fact that most of the runners around me were struggling as well. Bret and Grant kindly waited for me at the top, and we set off on a couple of easy kilometres to checkpoint one. Unfortunately, the heat was starting to really turn up here, soaring into the 30s.

Getting into checkpoint one was fantastic. Cold drinks and a seat were most welcoming, and our time was right on plan. However, before long we were back out on the trail. The road to checkpoint two is considered one of the “easier” parts of the course, but by now, the temperature was well into the 30s, slowing our progress to a walk. There really was no other way to get through the hottest part of the day with a chance to keep running all night.



Our support crew. The unsung heroes of GNW100s.

Despite our mixed success during this race, our support crew of Neil Woods and Steve Masters were absolutely resolute in their mission to do whatever they could to see us through. There's something special about a team that just let you get on with the task of running an ultra while providing a positive atmosphere and encouragement to keep going. A special mention needs to go to my partner's father, Steve Masters, for giving up a weekend with very short notice to help Neil out with support duties. Gentlemen, we are forever indebted to your efforts over the weekend, and a big part of my success is down to you two.



The temperature continued to soar, and the wind peaked around the 45km/h mark. Yes, it was hot. It wasn't uncommon to see runners sitting on logs or rocks, absolutely spent, wondering how they were going to get to the next checkpoint to withdraw.

Unfortunately, the heat started to cook Bret. Grant and I attempted to nurse him through the stage as best we could, and before long, we emerged onto the infamous Congewai Road.

This part of the race is often remarked as the hottest - in fact, my watch recorded the temperature here at 38.5 degrees. The worst part of this, though, is that it involves a 6km trek along a bitumen road to the second checkpoint. Hot ain't the word for it really - it was a stinker. Up until now, I'd managed the heat quite well. Now I was melting.

We managed to stagger into checkpoint two, having lost between 4-5 kilos each according to the medical staff. I joked that they should put this diet on television as it was the most effective one I'd ever seen, then set about trying to cool down.

The checkpoint resembled a war zone, with people on IV drips and generally collapsed wherever they could. Word was that 50 people had retired up to checkpoint two. To give you some idea of the carnage, 150 started this race.

On the road out of Congewai, and into stage three, it was clear that the heat had taken its toll on Bret. I realised that, in turn, it would take it out of Grant too - for if Bret retired, Grant faced the insurmountable task of running 70km on his own, through Sunday morning and into the afternoon to reach his goal of seeing Patonga beach. The third stage also had the notoriety of containing another couple of big, sharp hills to add to the challenge.

Eventually, Bret conceded defeat and asked Grant to go on with me to see me through my first 100k. With the cutoff looming as a definite challenge to finishing, it was a difficult decision to make. Neither Grant or I wanted to leave

Bret, but realised that if we didn't, it would be DNFs all round. Luckily, Bret managed to join forces with ultra running legend Andy Hewatt to get to checkpoint three, who unfortunately ended his run of seven finishes with a DNF due to injuries.

Grant and I got on with the task of getting to checkpoint three. We ran to try and claw back some time, but the technical trail slowed us down. So did the presence of a small snake at one point, however a little bit of gentle persuasion got it out of the way. We made checkpoint three with 25 minutes in the bank, and headed out to the final section, which contains 10km of sealed road.

At three in the morning, walking 10km of road feels endless. At least the cool change had come on, bringing the rain with it. All I can remember about this section is the gradual uphill of it all, and the fact that my mind was empty. A pacer had joined us, and the extra company was most welcome.

I remember coming to the last 4km and thinking "if this was a normal 100k race I'd be done by now." But no, the infamous GNW100s is actually 103.9km. Let me tell you, those last 3km were filled with "are we there yet?" moments. Grant had forged ahead, and every time I saw him stop I figured that was the end. Every time he turned around and kept walking I groaned!

Eventually we made Yarramalong School, checkpoint 4 and the 100k finish. I was the last 100k entrant to cross the line within the cutoff - I had ten minutes to spare. At one point I said to the pacer "I'm going to be last!" She replied "Last over the line maybe, but 80 people entered the 100k." I was number 28 to finish, which goes to show just how difficult the race was. The final stats show an overall completion rate of 39% of competitors.

While it was a disappointing day for Bret and Grant, they are the true heroes of this one. For despite knowing their race was over, they stayed positive and helped me cross the line. Again, gentlemen, I owe you both big time!



marysville marathon

Yet another bunch of great results at the Marysville Marathon for a dedicated crew of Roadrunners, with Tigger dominating the men's half, Sam Defanis winning the men's 10km 60+ category and Alan Willis putting in a solid 50k, yet deciding to actually do 54.8k! As Ultraman would say, ultras are addictive...

50K

Alan Willis 5:50:46

Men's marathon

Mark Boyle 4:15:45

Men's Half

Bryan Ackerly 1:13:11 & 1st place

David Gracie 2:18:53

Women's Half

Nicky Dawber 2:08:19

Nicola Gracie 2:16:14

Jacqui Carter 2:21:44

Mens 10K

Sam Defanis 49:48, 1st in 60+ category

Women's 10k

Wendy Thomas 1:26:39



KNOW YOUR MEMBER

MARK "HAMMO" PRYN

First things first, where does your nickname come from ?

My middle name is "Hamilton" hence "Hamo".

What do you do for a living ?

Mostly accounting and company secretarial work and since 2010 I have run a small financial consulting practice. Prior to that I've been lucky in my working career as I've basically had three long term jobs over a 26 year period.

Tell us about your family ?

Cath and I will have been married 26 years in April. Cath is a primary school teacher who prefers tennis to running and tires from my running stories. We have three daughters, Emma, 20 years old, studying at Latrobe Uni to become a dietitian, Sophie, 17 years old, about to start Year 12 and a keen netballer, and Lily, 15 years old, about to start Year 10 and also a keen netballer. And finally, Paddy, our 11 year old Labrador, himself a former runner now with bad back legs.

My family is either very patient in indulging me with my weekly running activities or maybe they're just glad to have me out of the house.

How did you come to join KRR ?

I have always run and I have always wanted to run a marathon, moreso after Gav Morton -my old mate from Blackburn High - completed his first marathon in 1990.

By the mid 2000's with dodgy knees and an increasing waistline, the idea of running a marathon seemed to be another missed opportunity. However, I had my knee cleaned up and in 2010 I landed a comfy contract which allowed for lunchtime runs along the Yarra River. I lost some weight, the knees were happier and I found some form.

So .. Gavin invited me to run the 2010 Puffing Billy run with the club and I signed up as a member in June. That year, I completed my first marathon a month before turning 50 – which was a great learning experience and a huge thrill.

I would never have run a marathon without joining KRR. I enjoy the club environment; the banter before, during and after the run and keeping tabs on how well others are running and their

achievements. I appreciate the focus on safety and the club's capacity to accommodate a growing membership with a wide range of running abilities.

This is your 15 minutes of KRR fame ... boast for us ... which runs are you most proud of and what are your favourite runs?

I have already mentioned my first marathon.

Puffing Billy is a favourite run – though it does seem to be getting hillier each year. I have run the race almost 10 times since the late eighties. I have never beaten the train but I used to get a lot closer.

I don't like runs that finish along Dandenong Creek through Ringwood Golf Course, unless I am in front of Dave Gracie or Peter Seymour (which is rare).

Last year (2013) I enjoyed running the Bellarine Train Run-17km and the Silvan Dam Half Marathon-despite being slightly under the weather. The Bellarine Run saw David Gracie, Kathy Souter and I, all finish within a minute of each other.

What are your next running goals ?

I have the Two Bays and Roller Coaster coming up. This year I plan to focus on half marathons and to improve my 10km times.

(Note: Mark successfully ticked off goal #1 with the 2014 28km Two Bays in a time of 3.02!)

Tell us about your life outside of KRR ?

Driving teenage girls around takes up a fair bit of time , other than that I enjoy red wine (too much), reading, crosswords, surf beaches, gardening, a passing interest in politics, and getting away with the family to our caravan on Phillip Island. I am also a keen swimmer.

And to just to put paid to those rumours that I'm a Collingwood supporter (cue picture with Mark, Gav and Joffa from a previous WSOTR) ... I barrack for Essendon, and I'm a member of Melbourne.

Tell us something about yourself we don't know.

I studied Norwegian for four years.





MARK BOYLE
A SOLID FINISH
TO A FIRST ULTRA

Two Bays

Trail Run

2014 commenced with another cracker of a trail run on the Mornington Peninsula, with a 28k trot from Dromana to Cape Schanck... and back again for those choosing a 56k jaunt. KRR had a big contingent in the 28k, and five in the 56k, including Bret, Grant and I, who clearly hadn't learnt from GNW, and the ultra running debut of Laurie Dalton and Mark Boyle, who spent the Sunday putting in some solid performances and adding their first ultra medal to the collection.

There were some stellar performances in the shorter version, on what is a stunning course. The weather, though a little less kind than last year, was still perfect for summer, with light winds and a gentle breeze. Organised by our very own Clarkey, Two Bays is a great event and one I'd encourage every Roadrunner to have a crack at.

56k

Mark Boyle 7:04 (first ultra)

Laurie 7:26 (first ultra)

Adam 7:21

Bret 6:52

Grant 6:52

28K

Anja 3:04

Carolyn 3:49

Fiona 3:41

Kathy 3:45

Nigel 3:28

Kim 3:22

Jason Stirling 3:08

David Gracie 3:02

Mark Prynn 3:02

John Sig 2:46

Peter Seymour 2:45

Sandy 2:36

Ross 2:10

Alan 2:30

Stacey 3:41

Trevor (Stacey's Dad) 3:41

Todd Keating (Janita's husband) 3:17





Despite the threat of 2013's KRR Xmas party becoming a dry event due to an executive committee oversight, pleading by our new president managed to secure the long-awaited opening of the bar. This marked the beginning of a lively time had by all, with Dave Souter and Bryan "Tigger" Ackerly demonstrating their superior dance stylings. This is even more impressive considering Tigger's recent knee injury, which despite reports to the contrary, may have been sustained during a high risk breakdancing move judging by his antics on the night.

The evening also saw Wendy Thomas awarded with the Clubperson of the Year award for her contribution to the club, friendly nature and volunteer work at a number of events. Hernan Lopez was an absent winner of the Greg Palmer Most Improved Award, instead being notified of his success by social media whilst in Mexico. Another deserving winner, Hernan has managed to obliterate his PB at Melbourne by over twenty minutes.

We also celebrated Dave Weedon's "Spartan" bus driving year (with the presentation of possibly the only Bus Spartan Shirt in known existence), and Mike Bower's contribution to the club, as an ex-president, former committee member and editor-in-chief of *What's Said on the Run*.



THE SWEEP

THE BACK PAGE MUSINGS OF AN ANONYMOUS RUNNER

Hello listeners. After the rambling, incoherent tripe dished out on a weekly basis by the last president and the tame, politically correct stuff coming from the current penguin hugger, *The Sweep* has decided - and just in time - to tell it how it is, or at least, how it should be. So let's go.

The trouble with society today is that we are all turning soft and fluffy, celebrating mediocrity and kidding ourselves that we are magnificently wonderful when in reality, we aren't. And until we realise what a bunch a of sensitive petunias we are, we won't get out of our own shadow long enough to actually progress up the evolutionary scale in some meaningful way. Third grade graduation ceremonies, participation awards for all - in place of victory parades for the conquering hero, eliminating the scores from competition and being afraid to refer to golliwogs by their proper name is just the start of what will see the gradual erosion and eventual demise of civilisation as a whole and in the interim, true athletic endeavour.

The only solution to this inevitable slippery slide to the depths of obscurity is to ensure we recall and restore some real dignity to the world of running as an immediate priority. Bluntly, that means getting rid of some of these questionable new fad running events that have started to pollute our beloved sport of late.

Now I'm not talking about trail running. Sure, it's all a bit "hairy armpit" with this getting back to nature. Yes, the possum-spotting, stump jumpers are a bit weird and I don't care if there's another kangaroo over there – seen one, seen them all. But I am prepared to concede that given their ability to do this back to nature stuff for hour after hour, including sometimes all through the night, earns them a shred of respect. Nor do I have any real problem with triathletes. This is despite the tendency of these spinach smoothie sucking obsessive types to talk of nothing else, for some male competitors to dress in lycra suits to the point of looking like condoms stuffed with walnuts and; for most of the women look like they need to sit down to a good feed of roast beef, gravy and extra helpings of Yorkshire pudding – often. No, wacko tendencies aside, their commitment to a degree of extreme beyond most mortals earns them all a solid 'thumbs up' from *The Sweep*.

No, what I'm talking about are these weird fun runs that have sprung up everywhere like Scotch thistles. Examples include dressing up in Santa suits or running (and I use the word with some disdain) around an oval getting sacks of colour thrown at you so that you look like a reject from a casting call for Oompah Loompahs in the latest *Charlie Wonka's Chocolate* film, or some such drivel. Add to these the supposedly rugged '*Stampede*' or '*Rough Mugger*' or some such pseudo army things where you get a bit of mud on you, zapped with a few electric wires and have to jump over some hay bales. Doing this is not an event. It's a normal Saturday afternoon with the cattle prod and 'Spotty' Clarke, 'Sniffy' Brown and George 'Poo-pants' Murray in the heifer's paddock.

But if you really want to know what gets up my craw it's when you hear these people telling their friends and workmates next day that they did their first "marathon" on the weekend!! My giddy aunt! Clifffy Young would be pushing aside the Sebagos and going zombie on their mad-cow brains if he heard that. It's a travesty and an insult to the days when manscaping was what you did with a bulldozer, women struggled the good fight for equality on the marathon track and those who couldn't compete paid due respect and stayed out of the bloody way. No, this new fangled stuff will be the ruin of us all.

Instead, my call to arms is to remember what real running was and get back to it, damned quick. Take Deeks in the '82 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. He ran down those Africans and won, not just sporting a real bloke's porn star moustache and a pair of shorts with no bloody Lycra included but all the while with a crook guts and sponging a rampant case of diarrhoea away into his shoes - and not a jot of complaint. Now, there's dignity for you!

Got a burr in the Brooks? Contact: "The Sweep": C-WSOTR at adamsearby@bigpond.com

The Sweep is a new, high quality addition to the esteemed periodical that is *What's Said on the Run*. It aims to probe current affairs as they relate to the fine sport of running.