

Editors Email (Diane): newsletter@townsvilleroadrunners.com.au

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About 8k

President's report December 2015

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the 'ville
 The Road Runners were running on the river and hills
 The footpaths were humming with the drumming of feet
 In hope of some water to fend off the heat
 The children were nestled all snug in their beds
 With dreams of our Junior series in their heads
 Be you a dasher, a blitzer or puffer
 If you are out of ideas for a grand stocking stuffer
 Then lend me your ear for I'll tell you right now
 That I have a gift that will raise an eyebrow
 It will make its recipient jump up for joy
 It's the equivalent of a kid with a toy
 A girl with a doll or a boy with a bat
 A bone for your dog or some string for your cat
 If you're scratching your head thinking "too good to be true!"
 Then I'll give you a hint, they're predominantly blue
 They fit like a charm and the fabric it breathes
 They're just like a shirt with no collar or sleeves
 They look like a charm and are top quality
 If you want a new singlet then come get one from me



In serious news-the club is moving at pace, with a calendar for next year nearly ready to race with a lot of old courses we don't need to fix, and a couple of new concepts all thrown in the mix! I can't tell you what because I can't make it rhyme, but I assure you-you will find out all in due time. It might come as a shock, you might find it scary, but have you ever considered being secretary? The job has its trials but in the end it is fun, I mention this simply because we need one! We are making it work for the time being with Ant, but he's trying to do EVERYTHING and he basically can't! So be it you or someone you know is high rated, work with us and you'll be appreciated. The Running Fest is growing in 2016, early bird registration is open (for the keen) -it costs less to be early if Santa brings you coal, but the best motivation is to set a big goal...

Thanks for this year folks, it has really been fun!
 Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good run.

Tony Gordon



SPEED BUMPS

WE'VE lost four much-loved old friends this year, all great characters. News of the death of **Peter Schultz** was relayed last week by his son, Mark, of Summerland Point, NSW. Mark said Peter had died peacefully in a nursing home on December 10. A renowned artist, sailor and wooden boat builder, Peter had been living beside Lake Macquarie, south of Newcastle, since the death of wife Nina, earlier this year. Both made their mark with Townsville Road Runners. Nina founded *About 8k* and Peter chronicled the club's favourite runs in oil paintings full of action and colour. Before moving south, he gave away prints of his tribute to the last King of the Castle race up the Goat Track, run in 2000. Maybe Peter's pictures and Nina's words will revive running someday, when our crack-of-dawn huffing and puffing is an unlikely legend.

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LOST was probably a poor choice of words. **Peter and Nina, Ron James and Errol Young** left big footprints on life. Stories abound about their cheek and courage. The crowd of 250 at **Ron's** farewell in Queen's Gardens last month heard from his son **Murray** about his ad lib water-skiing on fence palings, his fortress-like hockey goalkeeping for Queensland and the origin of his boyhood nickname, Schamper, a 1930s' cartoon character. Ron had recently mastered one song on the guitar. It was *Hang Down Your Head Tom Dooley*, which friends sang awkwardly in his honour last month, accompanied by **Cat Johnson** and **Isa Marinan**. At the start of the year, **Errol's** very unexpected funeral ended with *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life*.

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CONGRATULATIONS to **Ed Dawson** for graduating in veterinary science from JCU and landing a job with a practice in Gladstone. Ed and his dad, **William**, enjoyed an off-season run and yarn at Riverway last Saturday. He plans to concentrate on sprint-distance triathlons for next year at least. After hearing **Dee Flynn-Pittar's** account of the recent Busselton Ironman event, Ed joked he was allowing himself at least 10 years' preparation.

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TONY Ford is organising a reunion next April for members of coach **Bill Caulfield's** 1970s and '80s training squads. The night at the Shamrock Hotel, Palmer St, on April 9, will feature film clips from the golden days of Townsville track and road running. Bill, an ex-West Australian 800m, 1500m and mile champion, is in good nick for a 79-year-old, having finished first in his age group in 10km division of the Melbourne running festival in October. All runners are welcome, \$20 a head. Call Tony, 0402-444947, for more details.

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TALKING about the Melbourne festival, **Pete Neimanis** reckons the organisers' Very Important Runner service is worth the \$90 extra he paid for some well-deserved TLC before and after the half-marathon. Perks included breakfast and lunch perched in the Melbourne Cricket Ground's Dean Jones Bar, easy access to the MCG's WCs and a guaranteed space behind the guns at the start. Pete is making a steady recovery from chemotherapy and looking forward to further progress next year.



SPEED BUMPS hears a marathoner in Pete's large Running Works squad gave some free TLC to a distressed fellow competitor with cramping feet. The Townsville runner stopped, helped the other runner remove her shoes and massaged her feet. Resuming, the Townsville girl finished a few seconds over her sub-four hour goal but was apparently not bothered, happy to have been able to give a hand.

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ROBERT Ellershaw has capped his strong year of on and off-road distance running with a trip to Athens, home of the original marathon. He rates the Athens Marathon as his most satisfying 42.2km, being part adventure, part homage to tradition and part international love-in. Robert has put together photos and a story for the next issue of *About 8k*.

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FOR ANYONE wondering what's happened to **Wayne Roy**, the answer is he's gone rowing and no-one, including him, knows exactly when he will be back. His excitement after visiting Melbourne for the first time, for the recent Head of the Yarra regatta, suggests it could be a while. Wayne's Riverway club men's eight finished 10th out of 22 teams in their age category of the 8.6km time trial and **Bev** and a Riverway clubmate competed in a composite women's crew. "Conditions were great," Wayne said last week. "It was 35 degrees but the North Queensland crews were prepared, because we had trained in heat and humidity. We had a great time in Melbourne - the crew did well, we all came out of it with happy experiences." The Townsville JCU club sent a women's eight to the regatta too. The only other Queensland entries were from Brisbane. Wayne, who coaches his club and Townsville Grammar School, was inspired by the power of the winning Melbourne University eight. He is already looking forward to future Yarra regattas.



Melbourne Marathon *by John Nuttall*

After the Cowboys slaughtered the Broncos in the NRL Grand Final in Sydney, it wasn't hard to go forward and enter the Melbourne Marathon two weekends later. Especially when about 30-40 members of the athletic community in Townsville all had the same idea. The same level of adrenaline as mine must have been pumping through their bodies after seeing JT punt "that ball" through the sticks to bring the Holy Grail to the North - I could fill 10 pages on that subject but alas, running is the theme, the MCG is the scene.

I'd decided on a road trip to check out a mate in NSW and my son in Brisbane - saved me trying to find a home for my dog, who lounged serenely in the back of the van throughout the trip, one eye open, one eye closed - "are we there yet?"

So there we were, outside the MCG at 7.30am on Saturday 17 October, doing the Heroes Walk after commandeering Don Bradman's old parking spot right outside the front door. Lots of sporting heroes resplendent in bronze - Neil Harvey, Betty Cuthbert and Ron Barassi, to name a few. Well worth the trip just to take in the atmosphere, the home of Australian sporting legends. Even Tash the dog said "he was a pretty good bat" as she gazed up at Bill Ponsford.



I'd booked in the night before at a place in Preston (cheap as chips and everything you need for \$69 a night - Bell City Hotel), and thought the best plan was to get in and out of town early to beat the traffic. It worked perfectly - I was home and in a relaxed mode by 9.30am in preparation for the run the next day.

Melbourne Marathon is one of the premier events on the Aussie running calendar, and for the tragics, it's a must do. The southern capital had turned on a perfect morning to run 42.2k - eleven to twelve degrees early on with a light breeze - perfect for us guys from north of the border. The only Townsville runners I saw before the start were Liz Maguire and Glen Davies - Liz going on to cap a stellar year by bringing home a bronze medal for representing Qld in the half marathon F45 group with a 1.27.11. Glen also had a great run to record 3.39.52 after suffering a number of injuries over the last few years.

When Deek speaks, runners listen, so it was appropriate that after a few words from our best marathoner, he set us on our way around the streets of Melbourne. Unlike most international marathons where there's a wall of runners for 4-5 kms, I found open space within a couple of hundred metres, so I could settle into a pace and try to relax. This course has a number of u-turns where you can spy people ahead and behind you, so it wasn't long before I saw the first Townsvillian, Jenny Harris (looking just like she was jogging around the river), then came Trevor Brown who acknowledged me twice on his way to a magic PB of 3.34, then Mick Harris, who must have run a great 20k, but alas was walking when I passed him near the half marathon mark - better luck next time, Mick. I saw Craig Mottram out front a couple of times and wondered what he was doing running a marathon, until I saw Jess Trengrove tucked in behind him and realised the plan, pacing one of our young runners to a record - good onya Craig. I saw a number of faces I knew but couldn't put a name to, mostly Pete's



Running Works group, then Toni Ferguson and Alan Elsdon-Bell (who were yakking on like they were on a Sunday long run). I later heard on the grapevine (Facebook) of a few debut marathons and PBs, none more so than Yadsie's 28 min PB – very satisfying, I'd say. I'd been in the MCG once before when Greg Chappell visited most parts of the ground with his stroke play against Pakistan in 1973-74, but it wasn't as satisfying as running around the perimeter to finish the 2015 marathon. As I sauntered down the ramp, I heard Pete Neimanis shout out congratulations to me and I thought, what fortitude this man has, after a horrific year – he joins his group on an end of season jaunt to Melbourne and doesn't just encourage them, but joins in with a 2.15 half marathon – good onya Pete!

Tales of two runs

Running away from home. Most finely tuned athletes enjoy it. Finding new tracks through unexplored country, that is, not packing jocks and socks and shooting through in a huff or a hurry. Some Townsville Road Runners make an art form of the former, most famously Scotty McInnes, an aficionado of obscure marathons and little-known ocean and lake swims. Dee Flynn Pittar runs away from home a lot too, so About 8k's reporter caught up with her this month to get the pick of her latest adventures. Maybe not surprisingly it was not the Bunbury Iron Man which she and Billy Guy recently completed in Western Australia, but an event closer to home, the 74km Kuranda to Port Douglas Ultra Trail Marthon, held in August. Dee recommends this event, despite its challenging start up the Bump Track from Kuranda. "Running through the pristine Kuranda rainforest was a magic experience—especially the rain," she said. "It's a very well-organised ultra, with fantastic volunteers. For me the beauty of the run was the last 4km, running barefoot on the beach and in the water to the finish at Port Douglas."



A couple of months ago, Andre Mentor returned to his home town, Cape Town, and found himself running a very satisfying marathon. "I didn't plan to do it," Andre said. "It was six weeks after my first marathon, at the Townsville Running Festival and the marathon in Cape Town just popped up while I was there on holidays. A mate said, 'just do it'. It's the best thing I've done. It was a relaxed and very beautiful run in the city of my birth with Tabletop always in sight. I am the first member of my family to run distances and they bought tickets for the supporters bus, showing up during the course to cheer me on."





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Trail Tragedy: Robbed by a dirty low-down stick-in-the-leaf-litter!

by Dave Vance

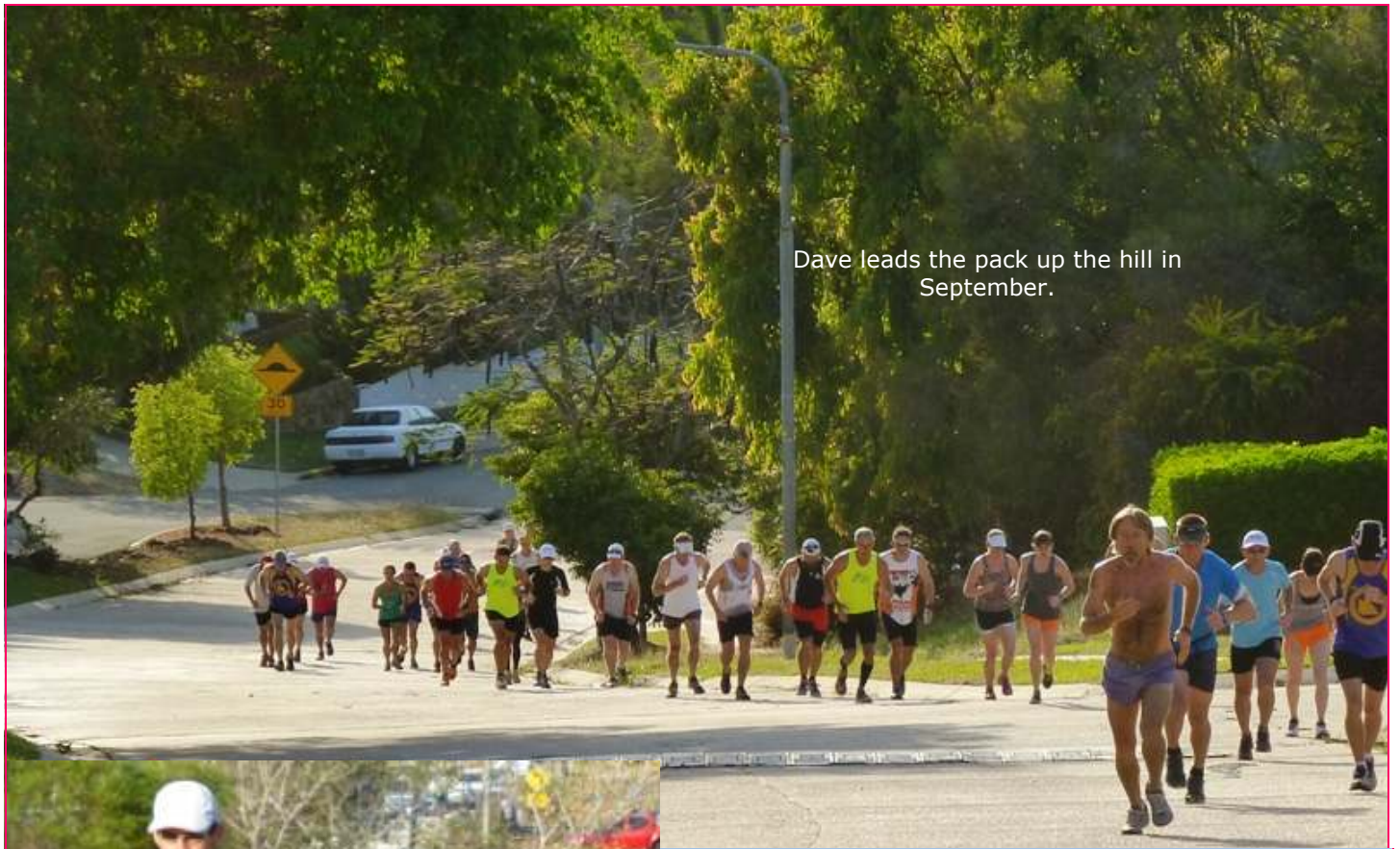
Due to weekend work I was unfortunately unable to participate in most TRR events this year. I had a weekend where both market work-trucks were broken down and I was therefore able to participate in the Three-Day Marathon, undertrained, but a good race for second in age group, failing in a valiant attempt in the last race to beat the improving Peter Andress at all let alone by the necessary 3 minutes (note Peter went on to record a sub-40 min for the 10k at the Dam, at 50+ y of age...). Some months later I finally entered, and completed, the Targa mountain bike race, a gruelling enough thing of 5-odd hours for me on my trusty old \$115 (second-hand) Avanti Comp amongst all the multi-thousand-dollar machines of the others (last of only five in age group but not by a big margin and not outlying the group), and this would be of some use as training for the Dam Good 43 km trail race if I should wind up doing that, as out-of-the-saddle mountain biking is close enough biomechanically to running up steep inclines. I interrupted the longer-distance training for a memorable 3rd in age group in a very close race in the QAA's long distance championship with Michael Fitsimmons eventually prevailing on his 50th birthday for line honours and Cameron Wallace back a little of him for 2nd.

So, having trained well much as per last year for the Dam Good 43 km trail run with its net and total elevation gains of 3,000' and 7,500', at Paluma, where I had placed 2nd overall last year (obvious lack of real 'guns'), the 43 km event was unfortunately eventually cancelled due to lack of entrants, leaving me to enter the 25km 3,000' total elevation gain event instead.

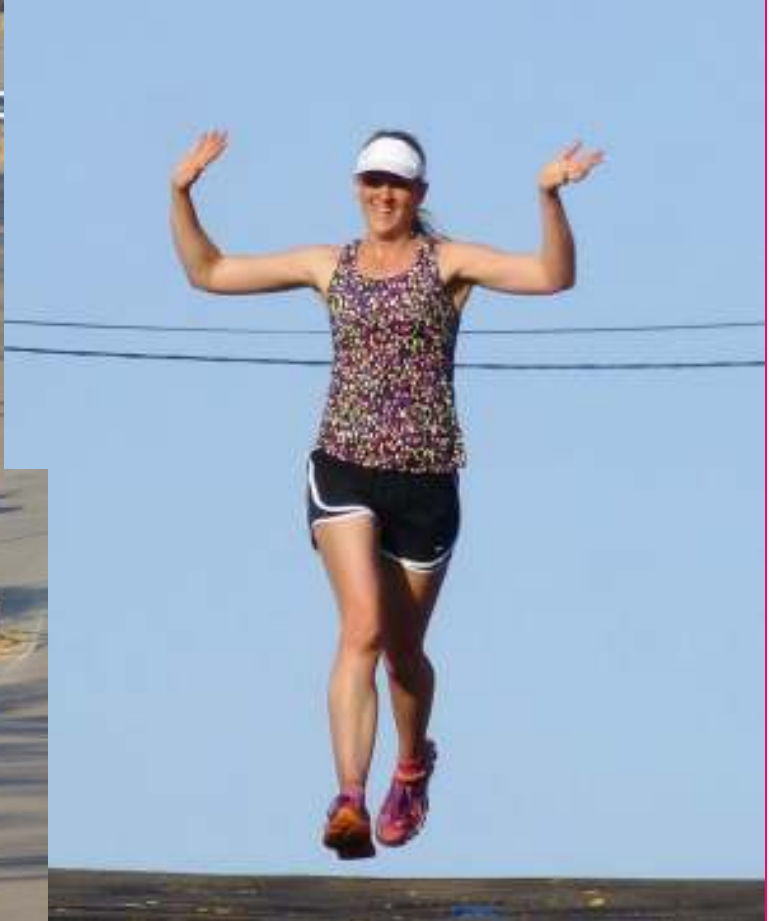
I was running third overall, and first in age group well ahead of my two rivals there, Arnstein Prytz and Cameron Wallace (Cameron having set a pace from the outset that I thought was not sustainable without accident for him, in which I was correct as he had connected a knee with a rock before I went past him at about 45 minutes), about an hour in, going really well navigating the fairly technical tree roots and rocks throughout, and just starting to congratulate myself for that, and feeling sure that neither of those two would beat me there (I was well ahead), when I encountered a 60 cm stick lined up with my direction of travel and sitting on top of what turned out *not* to be the only few mm of leaf-litter that was everywhere else on the track, but about 30+ mm of leaf-litter - my right foot landed just in front of the stick and I expected it to clear it on the recovery - rather, my foot sank into the leaf-litter and on the recovery that end of the stick became caught on the top of the front of my shoe - the stick being thus lifted and driven forward, the other end of it promptly stuck in the ground - I was thus half tripped, half pole-vaulted up in the air - I came down not on anything flat or soft, but on a big tree root across the track, with enough force to knock the bark off the root and to make my left shin immediately swell up about a cm and a half over the upper 10 cm of it, such that I wondered (and I am used to a fair bit of impact there via martial arts) for a few seconds if my tibia was broken, with my leg bent such that my femur attempted to escape the knee joint anteriorly, tearing completely in half my posterior cruciate ligament and damaging associated structures - I was much less than happy to soon realize that the race for me (which was looking to be one of my best ever) was over, with a slow one-hour walk to the nearest 4-wheel-drive and so on out back to the Coaster, which I was just able to drive home. Arnstein prevailed for a narrow win over Cameron in our age group, which was 3rd and I think 4th overall. MRIs later, it seems there is little chance of the completely torn posterior cruciate ligament being able to re-grow and re-model back into something without too much slack, and I now have an appointment at Orthopaedics and Physio at the hospital with a reconstruction operation looking to me to be the only course that could have a satisfactory outcome.



For the moment for me it's just walking and cycling, with the other knee structures recovering not too badly, it seems. Running and kicking will have to wait it seems... Here's to a satisfactory comeback sometime in the near future... Happy 2016 all.



Dave leads the pack up the hill in September.





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