

Running on Empty

The Newsletter of the Bendigo University Athletics Club

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Gold Coast marathon review

Many BUAC members recently made the trek up north for the annual Gold Coast marathon and running festival. The Gold Coast marathon is considered as Australia's premier running festival with the largest fields, excellent organisation and conditions, and a real carnival atmosphere for the whole weekend. The chance for a small holiday in Queensland's winter warmth is also an advantage!

The 10km event was held on Saturday the third of July, while the 2, 4, 5, 21 and 42km runs were held on Sunday the fourth of July.

In the 10km event, several BUAC members acquitted themselves well. Andy Buchanan led the charge with a 32.42, and 19th place overall, with fourth place in his age group. Ned Slater ran very well, finishing in 41.47 and third in his age group. The ever consistent Jo-anne Keely ran a quick 40.09 and won her age group. Other competitors included Madeline Evely in 42.59, Fraser Walsh in 40.41, Harriette Slater in 49.05, and Lily Walsh in 52.03. Considering the 4800 odd entrants, all of the BUAC 10km runners did well, with most ranking in the top twenty or better for their age group.

The Sunday runs also saw plenty of BUAC members in action. Nic Moloney ran a sizzling 14.08 for the 4km event and finished fourth in his age group. Kevin Walsh was the only BUAC runner in the 21km, and ran the half marathon in 1.34.

Perfect conditions greeted the marathoners, with a large amount of BUAC members ready to test themselves against the legendary 42.195km distance. The course was flat and fast, the crowd enthusiastic and the weather still. A slight headwind and open course in the last 5km made the end section tough with plenty of cramping for BUAC members towards the finish, but no marathon is ever easy.

Marathon legend Rob de Castella was present to start the marathoners on their way. He energetically retold the tale of the Greek warrior Pheidippides, who originally ran the marathon distance 2500 years ago this year, and expired at its completion. For those who have ran a few Melbourne marathons, de Castella gives the exact same speech at the start of every marathon he starts, but it never loses its impact or humour.

The BUAC members and "associates" who ran on the day included:

Jenny Buchanan	3.30 (fifth in age group)
Maria Slater	3.32 (seventh in age group)
Frances Walsh	3.34 (eighth in age group)
Alan Buchanan	3.33
John McGrath	3.41
Dan Slater	4.21 (first marathon)
Simon Austin	3.12 (first marathon)
Pat Kenny	2.41
Jeff Moulday	2.52 (fourth in age group)
Brendan O'Brien	3.14

Well done to everyone who ran over the weekend, and we hope more BUAC members can make it to the Gold Coast in 2011, injury and finances permitting.

Training tips

Building mental and physical stamina

Once you've become used to running and have established some realistic targets for your training, the next technique to learn is how to build up stamina.

Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts to this it really is a case of getting out there and running as much as possible. It's also not enough to just pound the streets; you need to have a good balance in your training of solid, steady running, mixed with faster, more up-tempo bursts.

These up-tempo runs consist of interval training, which means you differ your speed within a run. You could start off doing eight three-minute runs at a very fast pace, with one minute's brisk walk in between each.

This minute of walking gives you a chance to recover, but keeps your heart rate from dropping too much. This is important because you must stay active during this recovery period.

Your slow, steady period involves running for longer at a steadier pace. That may mean anything from 20 minutes for novices to a three-hour run for more experienced athletes.

If you are specifically training for the marathon, I suggest running four to five times a week to build up the stamina you'll need. This should consist of both steady runs, three times weekly, and up-tempo runs twice weekly.

Going to the gym to do some weight training also builds stamina, and it's a crucial part of your training. You can't expect to become a top-class runner without putting in a couple of sessions of weight training each week.

Your goal should not be to bulk up like a bodybuilder, just to tone up and become leaner and stronger. As well as leg exercises, such as lunges and squats, it's important to work on your upper- body strength arms, shoulders, back and abdominals.

Only when your whole body is strong can you become a better and more efficient runner.

For most runners, weight training twice a week is sufficient. Speak to the trainers at your gym about which machines, exercises, weights and repetitions will best help you meet your specific goals. They will also be able to show you proper lifting techniques, so you don't injure yourself.

Mental stamina is a different thing altogether. Running is quite tough mentally, and a running partner can really help you through the bad patches.

Everyone has their own mental ability. While the strong-minded will cope with the boredom better, others may need more support.

It can sometimes be hard to get motivated, but if you've set realistic, achievable short-, medium- and long-range goals, that should help.

Remember, everyone has training plateaus, when stamina and ability seem to level out, and your program is no longer a challenge. When this happens it's time to intensify your training slightly, set new goals and break through to the next level.

Injury tips

Calf Strain

What are the calf muscles?

The calf muscles consist of the **Gastrocnemius** which is the big muscle at the back of the lower leg and the **Soleus** muscle which is a smaller muscle lower down in the leg and under the Gastrocnemius.

Gastrocnemius is the larger of the two muscles which attaches above the knee joint and inserts into the heel bone via the achilles tendon. The Soleus attaches below the knee joint and then also to the heel via the achilles. Either of these two muscles can be strained (torn).

Both muscles act to plantarflex the ankle (point the foot away from the body). As gastrocnemius attaches above the knee it also helps with bending the knee. In this position, with the knee bent, soleus becomes the main plantarflexor. If the **Soleus muscle** is damaged you might get pain lower in the leg and also pain when you contract the muscle against resistance with the knee bent.

All muscle strains are graded from 1-3, with grade 1 being a minor tear, with up to 10% of fibres involved. A grade 2 tear involves up to 90% of the muscle fibres and a grade 3 is over 90% of fibres torn, or a **full rupture**. This usually occurs at the muscular tendinous junction or the achilles tendon itself.

Symptoms of calf strain include:

Grade 1:

- A twinge of pain in the back of the lower leg.
- May be able to play on.
- Tightness and aching in the 2-5 days after.

Grade 2

- Sharp pain in the back of the lower leg.
- Pain when walking.
- There may be swelling in the calf.
- Mild to moderate bruising.
- Pain on resisted plantarflexion.
- Tightness and aching for a week or more.

Grade 3

- Severe immediate pain.
- A sudden pain at the back of the leg, often at the muscular tendinous junction.
- Inability to contract the muscle.
- Considerable bruising and swelling.
- In the case of a full rupture, often the muscle can be seen to be bunched up towards the top of the calf.

A calf strain may be more likely in athletes who have tight calf muscles.

Treatment of calf strain

What can the athlete do?

Applying R.I.C.E. (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) is essential.

Cold therapy should be applied as soon as possible to help to quickly stop any internal bleeding.

Use a compression bandage or sleeve.

See a sports injury professional who can advise on treatment and rehabilitation.

Wear a heel pad to raise the heel and shorten the calf muscle hence taking some of the strain off it.

It is a good idea to put heel pads in both shoes or one leg will be longer than the other creating an imbalance and possibly leading to other injuries including back injuries.

What could a sports injury specialist do

Prescribe anti-inflammatory medication e.g. ibuprofen which is beneficial in the first few days after the injury.

Use ultrasound treatment.

Use sports massage techniques after the initial acute phase.

Prescribe a full rehabilitation programme.

Once the initial healing has taken place it is essential the lower leg is fully strengthened in order to reduce the likelihood that the injury will reoccur or have an adverse effect on future performances.

Who's hot, and who's not

Who's hot..... to all of those BUAC members who ran or volunteered in the Coliban relays.

Who's not..... Andrew "Moe" Evelyn, who was punched in the back of the head while breaking up a scuffle between Eaglehawk and Strathfieldsaye players during a recent Bendigo Football League game. Moe has downplayed the punch, and recently told a Running on Empty staff member, "it was nothing".

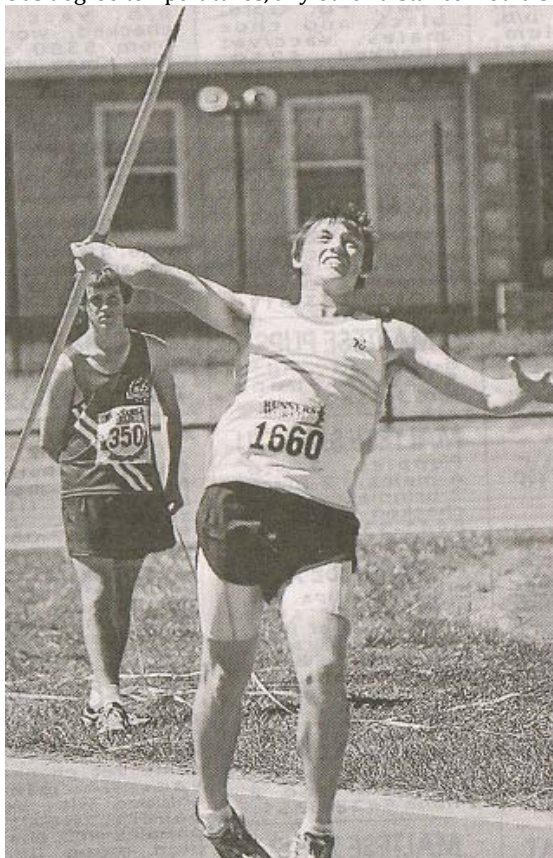
Media watch



Is it Iceman from the movie "Top Gun"? No, it's a posse of steely faced BUAC runners looking for some trouble.



Marathon ace Lisa Wilkinson photographed in the Bendigo Advertiser looking rather comfortable during a 10km race. After recently coming second in a 50km race after getting slightly lost and covering 55km in high 30s degree temperatures, any other distance would seem comfortable.



BUACs "Mr Versatile" Tim McCullagh is known for his prowess in track, and field, events. Here is a snap of Tim throwing a javelin during an 800m race. Athletics Bendigo have cautioned Tim for this behaviour, as he was aiming at the leaders of the race at the time.

Internet stuff

Visit “www.bendigouni.com” for all of your BUAC news, and join “Bendigo University Athletics Club - Uni Pride!” if you are a Facebook user. It’s better than listening to the wireless!

Race day contacts

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Feel free to make suggestions, or to submit information and pictures, to help fill these pages. Contact the editor, Pat Kenny by email on mpken1@bigpond.com with any information (preferably true).