

Gold Coast Marathon Report

Like Bacchus and the other Milers who competed this is a bit of a therapy session for me having not achieved my goals at Gold Coast (GC).

Background

Dates back to mid December 2010 when I hurt my right upper hamstring in the midst of the training for Boston. This did not prevent me from running but was a bit restrictive for the next 5 months training but managed to complete Boston in a time I was happy with. After returning the hamstring injury reappeared and the whole AV season was a cycle of injury, physio, a few weeks rest, back running, injury again. Just when I thought it was never going to go away it improved in October and starting to get consistent training without any racing. The first test was a Collingwood 5 k track race on December 11, not a great result started off well for the first 2 kms but proceeded to struggle after that and ended up just getting under 20 minutes, back to the drawing board. The next few weeks the training was consistent without injury.

Training

January – Spending a bit of time down at Anglesea was a good time to get some training in as I had done the previous few years. Was initially toying with the idea of doing New York, after the great experience of Boston but that thought was shelved as other things were going to get in the way in 2012. Week ending (w/e) 8/1 54 kms, 15/1 56 kms, 22/1 64 kms, 29/1 61 kms.

February –

Probably the thought of doing GC entered my mind some time during this month. The thought of doing it with other Milers was a motivation plus given my injury history didn't think I would last till Melbourne and also had to have hernia operation at some stage during the year. W/E 5/2 67 kms, 12/2 69 kms, 19/2 56 kms incl 10 km track race 39-10, not a great time but signs of improvement. W/E 26/2 67 kms.

March – W/E 4/3 36 kms. Reduced mileage due to being in London that week but managed 3 runs along the Thames through St James, Green, & Hyde Parks. Was lucky with the weather. W/E 11/3 70 kms, 18/3 77.5 kms, w/e 25/3 71 kms.

April – W/E 1 / 4 71 kms, 8/4 80 kms, 15/4 80 kms, 22/4 76 kms (incl Jells Park relays), 29/4 87 kms.

May – W/E 6 / 4 81 kms (incl Balnarring 8 km CC 31-46), 13/5 93 kms, 20 / 5 95 kms including Sydney half marathon in 83-00, wasn't a pb but 6 weeks out was a positive indication that everything was on track. Great Lurch was ran and did very good time (45 seconds ahead). Officially entered GC shortly after the half. W/E 27/5 77 kms including Flemington 10 k 37-45. Kms were down due to recovery from half and wanting to have a rest day on the Sunday after the 2 races in 7 days.

June – W/E 3/6 104 kms, W/E 10/6 90 kms including Ballarat 15 k in 56-45 a 30 second pb, good sign 3 weeks out. W/E 17/6 77 kms, W/E 50 kms incl Brimbank Park 16 k CC jogging with Slips in 67-32, felt very comfortable and was a 3 ½ minute pb over that course which is a fair sign of the poor efforts done in the past for one reason or another.

Summary

The training had been really good and unlike my 2 previous marathon efforts (which happen to be my 2 best times), apart from the odd niggle, no injuries, no need to visit the physio. The training for most weeks had been the Milers sessions on Monday & Tuesday lunchtimes with extra added during peak weeks, Wednesday WKK with extra before, Thursday nights with the Collingwood group, Friday mornings, and a long run on a Saturday or race. I like to have Sunday off and did not do a long run after a Saturday race. It was great sharing some of the marathon specific training sessions with Slips, Lurch, Thai, & Tony George. The Thursday sessions were really good, generally with Paul Munro, Liam Magee, & Patto, they are much faster runners than me but it helped push and motivate. There was a few marathon paced sessions at Princes Park which felt good. The WKK generally with Slips, Grunter, Smurf, TW (until he disappeared), occasionally Smoothy, MJ, & Woolies was a consistent medium long run. The long runs consisted of 2 34 km runs, 2 other runs of over 2 hrs and another just under 2 hrs in hilly terrain around Anglesea.

The Week Before

Here's where the excuses start or reasons why I perhaps didn't achieve what I wanted to during the Marathon. Tuesday, bad tooth ache, quick trip to the dentist fixed it. The week of June 30 is my biggest week for the year and ended up being quite stressful with long hours and not getting the sleep needed. Added to this we had a major family disruption which happened later in the week and continued to play out when I arrived on the Gold Coast to the point where I thought of returning home that day. Amongst all that got a marathon paced lap of the Tan in on the Wednesday and another easy run Friday morning.

Day Before the Race

Landed around 10-30 am and caught the bus to the Broadbeach Convention centre. Collected the race number and caught up with Slips, Lurch, CC, House, Stoltzy, for the official lunch. It was excellent with Mona & Jesinta Campbell hosting (apart from her visual attraction, her running knowledge wasn't bad either), interviews with Deeks, Lisa Ondieki, Lee Troop, Pat Carroll, Michael Shelley, & Lisa Weightman. Got to chat to Deeks & Pat Carroll after the lunch. After that it was off to the Casino where House, Stoltzy, & Bacchus were on the poker table.

Dinner that night after wandering around looking for a place that would serve rice, through default settled on La Porcetta. Despite waiting for a long time and poor service it filled us up. House's pizza with the lot was impressive, not your typical pre-marathon meal. Returned to the apartment to see the Bombers flog the Bulldogs, went to bed at ¾ time but might as well have stayed up. Bacchus had warned me about this but I was about to experience it. There was a party going on next door till all hours, burnouts in the street, fire alarms going off, would have been lucky to get 3 hours sleep. Tip, don't stay near Cavill Ave.

Race Day

Got up around 5 am and got organised. Myself, Bacchus, & House got on a bus just after 6 am. Like Bacchus entered the John for what was hopefully the last London Fog. After dropping the bags off caught up with Slips, Lurch, & Jarrod.

The Race

Got to the start line just after 7 am. Slips and Bacchus had priority starts so the rest of us were in the next section. Once the gun went off it was a bit crowded for the first 1 km but cleared up after that. Settled into a comfortable pace around 3 kms and caught up with Cliff a guy I know through work you was running his first marathon, it was not long after this that I caught up with Robyn as well, also running her first marathon. Went through 5 kms in 19-39, 10 kms in 39-27, 15 kms in 59-14. The first 15 kms was great, felt good and was a little nostalgic for me, passing some of the places I had stayed with my family some 20 – 25 years ago. Just before the turnaround good to see Campbell Maffett, Paul Munro, Bacchus & Slips all going well. Also a good mate of mine who was on holiday with his family in Burleigh Heads was there with his wife and 4 kids, spotted them and gave them high fives. After the turnaround good to see Tony George, Thai, House, Peely, Lurch, CC all travelling well. Somewhere just prior to the turnaround the group had increased to 6 and the pace was good, hoping I could maintain it. Crossed 20 kms in 79-19, and the half in 83-41, well within the goal pace. Got to a roundabout at Mermaid Beach and I was being dropped by the group. It was 22 kms and knew I was gone. Being on my own, it was now a physical and mental battle. Crossed 25 kms in 1-39-46 still on target but the slide had begun. The next 5 kms were difficult from Surfers Paradise to Southport, the pace had dropped but was actually feeling worse than the pace indicated. Crossed 30 kms in 2-01-04, still in a position to do a good time but sub 2-50 was gone.

I had been told by several people who had done this race before and from the lunch the day before that crossing past the finish line was a psychological battle. I had dismissed this as I thought if you were feeling it like that at that point in the race you weren't good enough. Funny enough it had come back to bite me. The thought at that point was to pull out, I have given it a go and not going to achieve my goal, could put it down as a bad day and have a go at Melbourne, anyway I had enough excuses (see the week before). Having not pulled out of a marathon before in my life, decided to keep going, once you have pulled out once it would be easy to do it again. The pace had slowed dramatically, crossed 35 kms in 2-24-20, got passed by Tony George and Thai around or just before that time and had been waiting for them to pass me. The urge to walk at this point was strong, I had done it before in Sydney 2000 so there wouldn't be any shame in doing it again, was really struggling physically and emotionally. Not long after this saw Slips, then Bacchus going in the opposite direction, Bacchus wasn't having the best day, few minutes later was shocked to see Paul Munro who I thought given his training and racing form would go close to breaking 2-30, it wasn't to be either for him on the day. Not long after that Robyn passed in the opposite direction, ended up running a great debut marathon.

At 37 kms Peely & House came past. Peely was running really well and ended up doing a negative split on his marathon debut, great performance, he has a lot of talent, sub 2-40 is well within his reach. Fortunately for me, House offered to stay with me which I gladly accepted as at that point I was physically and emotionally drained. Despite the slowing in pace a sub 3 hour was salvageable. At 38 kms I was just about to say to House I am going to have to walk, you go on. The words didn't come out of my mouth and House calculated there was a distance of The Tan to go. At 40 kms the finish was within reach and the pace picked up slightly. Mona went past not long after this offered us encouragement, his sub 3 is a few minutes under 3. Mona did slow up in the last 500 metres to call people through so we went past him. Got to the finish line in a net time of 2-57-59, good to salvage a sub 3 hr having done 6 marathons between 3 hr 50 sec & 3 hr 5 min. Very grateful to

House for dragging me through the 5 kms, wouldn't have broken 3 hrs without him, great guy. After the events of the past week it was very emotional crossing the finish line.

split point	split time	s/rank	race time	r/rank	activity	distance	pace	speed
Five Kilometre Splits								
5KM	00:19:39	121	00:19:39	114	RUN	5.00	03:55	15.27
10KM	00:19:48	102	00:39:27	108	RUN	5.00	03:57	15.15
15KM	00:19:47	106	00:59:14	107	RUN	5.00	03:57	15.16
20KM	00:20:05	123	01:19:19	107	RUN	5.00	04:01	14.94
25KM	00:20:26	141	01:39:46	116	RUN	5.00	04:05	14.67
30KM	00:21:17	200	02:01:04	110	RUN	5.00	04:15	14.09
35KM	00:23:16	318	02:24:20	124	RUN	5.00	04:39	12.89
40KM	00:23:47	272	02:48:08	131	RUN	5.00	04:45	12.61
Finish	00:09:51	196	02:57:59	145	RUN	2.20	04:28	13.39
Half Way Splits								
Half Way	01:23:41	92	01:23:41	109	RUN	21.10	03:57	15.13
Finish	01:34:17	196	02:57:59	145	RUN	21.10	04:28	13.43

Post Race

Caught up with Tony George, Peely, & Thai at the finish line. A pb by Tony was an excellent run & Thai also did well. After slowly walking through the cool down area caught up with Slips & Bacchus. Great run by Slips, wasn't a pb but given the conditions was excellent plus winning his age group, what an inspiration. Bacchus did not have his best day but he will return better from the experience. Lurch and CC also came through and also didn't have their best days. Lurch had put in an enormous amount of training and really deserved a sub 3, unfortunately it didn't fall that way. Keep trying you will get there, it took till my 6th attempt to break 3 hrs.

We eventually got a bus back to the accommodation. My initial intention was to go for a swim but the pull of the pub became too strong. Despite most of us not having great results, it was an excellent afternoon at Waxy's. House, Bacchus, Slips, Stoltzy & Mike Taylor were leading the charge.

Good to see Thai, Lurch, Jay Philpotts, Malcolm Campbell & Peely making an appearance for a few beers. House as the chief social organiser of the Milers and very experienced when it comes to Surfers made the call that Melba's was the next destination. The nightclub has been going for over 30 years and had the look of an oversized canteen. The steak, chips, & beer for \$6 was great value. Had plenty of beers, we all jumped around, and the memory got a bit hazy from there.

The next morning the pain of the hangover was worse than the muscle soreness from the marathon, not ideal for recovery but it was fun at the time.

Post Mortem

Not the result in the marathon I was looking for and after all the hard work it is disappointing. I thought the training had put me in a position to do a pb. My week leading into the marathon couldn't of helped or am I not good enough to sustain the pace for an extended period? Was the heat a factor? Don't know but most people seemed to suffer during the last 12 kms which was in full sun and a warming temperature. Ideally the race would have started at least half an hour earlier.

On the whole an excellent weekend, great bunch of guys to do a marathon and celebrate with. A really well organised race, good course. Would I do it again? You never say never but unlikely, not while I work in an industry where June 30 is the peak of workflow. The half may be an option as it was a good fun weekend.

What's Next ?

It hasn't put me off marathons, just as determined. The training and experience of the last 3 marathons with trips either overseas or interstate has been very worthwhile and something I want to experience again. I have pulled up quite well from the marathon and have a decision to make whether to defer my hernia operation and keep running or go ahead with it, which means season over.