

Adrian's 2014 Melbourne Marathon Report

The elusive sub-3 marathon

I had tried a few sub-3 times 20011 and 2012 and before, including on the Ocean Road and had blown up. These had not even touched my then pb.

My previous marathon pb was 3:06 in the 2013 Melbourne Marathon. That pb and the 3:10 in the 2012 Melbourne Marathon were both off minimal training (no 30 km runs, two or three 20 km runs and nothing in the teens - just 40-50 km of weekday runs). I felt awesome for both and finished strongly. I suspect the key to both was not setting out to a sub-3 time. The 3:06/3:10 runs above had dropped my pb essentially by me tricking myself into not doing a sub-3. Being underdone seemed to work for me... Would some "overdoing" and a renewed sub-3 goal interfere?

2014 marathon preparation

This year I did a few 30 km runs and generally 60 km a week with a few up to 70 or 80 km. . I had also started training at the Tuesday/Thursday Miler hard sessions in about June this year. Off the strength of this, I got a 85:30 for the Burnley Half Marathon and finished the last 5 km strongly. This put me in the ballpark for a sub 3 time (at least in my mind).

The weeks before the race could have been better. We had some friends and their kids from overseas to stay for a week with us in early October (9 people, including 5 kids, 4 of which were under 6 years of age) in our 3 bedroom place. I also talked myself into some final hard sessions two weeks out which really knocked me flat. Not ideal when my "secret weapon" in 2012/2013 seemed to be a 12 week advanced taper program.

The run

First half

The first half went mainly to plan. I was not feeling super fresh but the legs were doing their thing. The first 10 (see the data below on final page) was basically bang on for pace. The second 10 was probably a little too fast. I saw Racer in way out in front of me partway through but then only saw him after the race. He was moving when I saw him!

I did the half in about 89 minutes or just under. I could still see the yellow balloon attached to House bobbing away happily in front of me. For some reasons the race organisers had a 20 km "gate" but not 21.1 km. I mulled on this heading out towards Black Rock.

Chris and the Milers had done a great job handing out drinks each 7 km. Gels had gone in on time and intact to Chris calling me (and Nick who had not bolted away yet) "tough-guy".

Second half

Coming back into St Kilda and then down St Kilda Road I started to slow up. Maybe the freshness thing had reared its head. Fortunately, I got distracted for a little bit by the "milling half-marathoners" (curse their pb-inhibiting, slow-gaited, black hearts) getting close to the Arts Centre bottleneck and going up under City Rd. A bit of gentle persuasion was good for the lungs.

Unfortunately, the distractions went their own way leaving me to start on the dreaded half reverse Tan. My time was a-ticking away and I was feeling worse. My gels had all gone in on time so was no issue with carbs going in. The support crew were looking a bit tenderly at me. Chris was not calling me "tough-guy" anymore. Maybe the energy would kick back in.

A little further on and the sub-3 was starting to look very doubtful indeed, even to a highly optimistic, wavering, tough-guy. Was a bit of strategy going to work in my favour? A quick walk followed by a faster run. Desperate times and desperate measures. I took that option and walked for about 100 m.

Never doubt that there is always a Miler watching your every move, everywhere. "Hey, Adrian! What's going on..?", says Ross. Goodbye. goodbye, tough-guy.

That was the only walk and I cannot say that it did much good for the overall time, I also cannot say it did that much bad which had not already been done... The last 5 km were slow. There was no injection of energy. This was a different race to the previous year. Why hadn't I tricked myself again this year into not trying for a sub-3 time.

Over the line in 3:07:53 and I saw a gaggle of Milers, mostly super-sub-3 people who had really nailed the run. Precision red machines. I skulked around a bit, shook a few hands and then headed home.

The wash up

I was about a minute off from my 2013 time. I was fresh then but had not put much time in. This year was a disappointment given the superior effort.

With the benefit of some sulking, time to invent a lot of excuses and, most importantly, comparing my time to the 80+ category, I am walking away disappointed but not totally bereft. I could have blown the time out a lot more. The sub-3 odyssey requires you to risk a getting a potentially worse time in the hope of getting a great time. One minute was not a lot to have lost given this.

Back to drawing board. The strategy for the next marathon will be either (a) a "not sub-3 trick" with bugger-all training (this will cover me if I have no time to train); or (b) do a lot more training and try to abide by the advice of Milers on hand. I am going to go with plan (b) if I can.

Statistics are over the page

Lap	Distance	Time	Pace	GAP	Elev
1	1.0 km	4:14	4:14 /km		4:00 /km 11 m
2	1.0 km	4:07	4:07 /km		4:04 /km -2 m
3	1.0 km	4:07	4:07 /km		3:57 /km 6 m
4	1.0 km	4:10	4:10 /km		3:59 /km 3 m
5	1.0 km	4:09	4:09 /km		3:59 /km 5 m
6	1.0 km	4:11	4:11 /km		4:14 /km -9 m
7	1.0 km	4:10	4:10 /km		4:23 /km -12 m
8	1.0 km	4:14	4:14 /km		4:09 /km 3 m
9	1.0 km	4:14	4:14 /km		4:05 /km 4 m
10	1.0 km	4:15	4:15 /km		4:17 /km -5 m
11	1.0 km	4:08	4:08 /km		4:09 /km 1 m
12	1.0 km	4:06	4:06 /km		4:07 /km -1 m
13	1.0 km	4:05	4:05 /km		4:05 /km 1 m
14	1.0 km	4:07	4:07 /km		4:04 /km 2 m
15	1.0 km	4:13	4:13 /km		4:05 /km 5 m
16	1.0 km	4:12	4:12 /km		4:18 /km -6 m
17	1.0 km	4:13	4:13 /km		4:14 /km -3 m
18	1.0 km	4:16	4:16 /km		4:15 /km 1 m
19	1.0 km	4:12	4:12 /km		4:12 /km -1 m
20	1.0 km	4:05	4:05 /km		4:07 /km -1 m
21	1.0 km	4:13	4:13 /km		4:13 /km 0 m
22	1.0 km	4:13	4:13 /km		4:10 /km 1 m
23	1.0 km	4:09	4:09 /km		4:08 /km 2 m
24	1.0 km	4:11	4:11 /km		4:11 /km -5 m
25	1.0 km	4:18	4:18 /km		4:14 /km 2 m
26	1.0 km	4:18	4:18 /km		4:17 /km 0 m
27	1.0 km	4:10	4:10 /km		4:11 /km -1 m
28	1.0 km	4:18	4:18 /km		4:15 /km 2 m
29	1.0 km	4:21	4:21 /km		4:23 /km -2 m
30	1.0 km	4:19	4:19 /km		4:10 /km 3 m
31	1.0 km	4:24	4:24 /km		4:13 /km 7 m
32	1.0 km	4:23	4:23 /km		4:16 /km 3 m
33	1.0 km	4:18	4:18 /km		4:14 /km 0 m
34	1.0 km	4:41	4:41 /km		4:19 /km 15 m
35	1.0 km	4:27	4:27 /km		4:41 /km -16 m
36	1.0 km	5:06	5:06 /km		4:26 /km -3 m
37	1.0 km	5:00	5:00 /km		5:37 /km 3 m
38	1.0 km	5:59	5:59 /km		5:43 /km 9 m
39	1.0 km	4:55	4:55 /km		5:01 /km -6 m
40	1.0 km	4:53	4:53 /km		4:50 /km -3 m
41	1.0 km	5:07	5:07 /km		5:08 /km -3 m
42	1.0 km	5:26	5:26 /km		5:22 /km -5 m
43	0.6 km	3:10	4:56 /km		4:45 /km 3 m